

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**MONDAY, 12 DECEMBER 1910**

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proposals should be tabled. There are already on the business-paper some sixteen items, which in themselves should engage the attention of this House for a couple of months at least, and yet the Premier is determined to close the session in ten days. I contend that it is not possible for this Assembly, or for any other Assembly, to give proper consideration to these railways and also intelligently to discuss the various items on the business-paper; and I ask the Premier: Is it prudent, is it fair, to rush the business through in this hasty manner? It is all very well for the hon. gentleman. He will be able to say later on, "Look at the record I put up! Look at the number of railways and Bills I put through! It is a record for Queensland, and alone I did it!" (Hear, hear! and laughter.) But it is not a fair thing to ask this House to rush through with a scheme of this sort for the hon. gentleman's glorification.

The PREMIER: Butchered to make a Kidston's holiday!

Mr. LENNON: The hon. gentleman may go to London later on, and he may point to the record he put up in this House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member must not impute motives.

Mr. LENNON: I am not imputing motives. The Premier may go to London. That is not imputing motives. It is merely hinting most delicately at the possibility of such a thing, and I think that might pass muster. (Laughter.) However, I say that members on either side are not in a proper condition, either mentally or physically, to take all these measures properly into consideration, and I make a last appeal, coupled with a protest against the rushing of business through in such a manner. I hope the Premier will yet reconsider his decision—although I know he is strong enough to do as he pleases in the matter—and that he will treat the matter in a practical, business-like way, and postpone the consideration of these resolutions until after Christmas, and come back for a short session to pass them in the way they ought to be passed in any decent, deliberative Assembly.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Kidston, *Rockhampton*): I am really glad, after all, that we have met on Monday, seeing hon. members are in such a good temper, and I have no doubt that if, like the little boy who shivered on the bank, they will just plunge in, we shall get the business done.

Mr. MANN (*Cairns*): I just rise for the purpose of saying that, in order to enable the House to arrive at a decision as to whether these railways are justified or not, they ought to have been introduced early in the session, so that members could have made inquiries about them. Of course, we shall be told that we have got the Commissioner's reports, but the hon. member for Rockhampton North, in speaking on the North Coast Railway Bill the other night, questioned very seriously the report which was laid before the House on that line by a Government official. It would have been conducive to the passage of these proposals in a speedy way if the Government had announced at the beginning of the session what lines they intended going on with, and had given members a chance of visiting the districts with a view to judging of the merits of the lines for themselves.

MONDAY, 12 DECEMBER, 1910.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (W. D. Armstrong, Esq., *Lockyer*) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

#### MARY VALLEY RAILWAY.

##### MOTION TO GO INTO COMMITTEE.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. W. T. Paget, *Mackay*) said: I beg to move—

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 Mary Valley Railway (from Keerton to Imbil), in length 24 miles 30 chains.

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. LENNON (*Herbert*) said: I called "Not formal" to this and the three other railway proposals which appear on the business-paper for the purpose of securing an opportunity of protesting against the action of the Government. I consider that it is an outrage on parliamentary government that, in the closing hours of the session, four railway

[*Mr. Armstrong.*

Mr. MULLAN: They did not know themselves what lines they were going to bring in.

Mr. MANN: That is quite possible, but it would save discussion if the Government tabled their railway proposals at the beginning of the session, so that members might have an opportunity of deciding whether they are good propositions or not, and whether the routes adopted by the Government are the best that could have been chosen. I know nothing about any of the lines which we are asked to consider to-day, except that I have read the Commissioner's reports and looked at the plans; but I should have liked to visit the different districts and satisfied myself that the railways are required, that the best routes have been chosen, and that the Government are justified in introducing the railways. A member who represents an agricultural district like myself is unwilling to block the passage of a railway into an agricultural district. While I welcome some of these railway proposals, I must enter my protest against the manner in which they have been brought in, and against the shortness of time which is allowed to members to inquire into the merits of the various lines. If I should vote for any of the lines, I must practically vote blind, as all I have to guide me are the official reports, and we have heard members on the other side seriously challenging the reports which have been tabled in regard to other railways.

Mr. KEOGH (*Rosewood*): In rising to have something to say with regard to the railways now before the House, I may say that I do not intend in the slightest to interfere with these lines, but I most decidedly have to state that some of the contemplated surveys that have been promised in my electorate have not been fulfilled. (Laughter.)

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. KEOGH: While I have been a firm supporter of the present Administration, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will you allow me to say that I cannot see my way faithfully in carrying out what I have heretofore done with regard to the present Administration in these matters.

Mr. MURPHY: We don't want you, Dinny. (Laughter.)

Mr. KEOGH: Some considerable time ago I was promised not only by the present Administration—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order. The railway policy of the Government is not before the Chamber at this stage. The question is the specific resolution, that I leave the chair, and I ask the hon. member to confine his remarks to that question.

Mr. KEOGH: I think that I am quite within my rights in saying that what has been promised should be carried out. I can point out where the present Secretary for Railways has promised it in many instances, and in regard to the line in his own electorate towards Rockhampton all these surveys have been made and never brought before the House, and nobody asked for them.

Mr. HAMILTON: Yet you voted for them.

Mr. KEOGH: No; I did not.

Mr. HAMILTON: You walked outside, then.

Mr. KEOGH: Again, there have been surveys made and pointed out by the hon. member for Fassfern. He was able to pull it out of his pocket the other day and say to me,

"Here is a survey that has been made, and I have my letter from the Minister for Railways." (Laughter). Let me say that surveys that should have been carried out between Rosewood and Rosevale—(laughter)—have not yet been made.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I cannot allow the hon. member to further debate this subject. He must come to the specific question before the House.

Mr. KEOGH: Surely I should be in the position, at all events, to point out that the present Administration—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will get his opportunity at a later period. His opportunity does not exist now. I ask him to keep to the question before the House.

Mr. KEOGH: I seem to be blocked in every instance. I have been blocked on two occasions already on this matter. The only thing I will have to do is simply this: I will take your advice, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I say here that unless those surveys are made for me from Rosewood to Rosevale, I certainly will not support this Administration. (Loud Opposition laughter.)

Mr. RYLAND (*Gympie*), who was indistinctly heard in the gallery, said: I regret that the Minister has not given us some information about this railway.

The PREMIER: You will not allow him to give any information. You will not give him an opportunity.

The HOME SECRETARY: You are delaying it now. We are doing business now.

Mr. RYLAND: When we get into Committee I will only have ten minutes under the Sessional Orders in which to express my views, and I would first like to get some information about this extension.

The PREMIER: You are simply trying to block it.

Mr. RYLAND: I am not trying to block it. The best information as regards this railway is not put before the House. It is pointed out in the Commissioner's report that there will actually be a deficiency in this line, and I would like to know how that deficiency is arrived at. The Commissioner estimates the cost of the line at £200,000, and that there will be a deficiency of £4,600 a year.

The PREMIER: Do you say that you do not want the railway?

Mr. RYLAND: In this area which will be tapped by the railway I notice that there are a number of large timber reserves, and it is estimated by experts that you have 500,000,000 feet of pine alone in one State forest there. The estimate supplied by the Chamber of Commerce is that the timber is worth 1s. per 100 feet, but when the railway is built through this timber reserve the timber will be worth 2s.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Well, what about it?

Mr. RYLAND: The State will receive an increase in the value of the State forest of £250,000, so that in that one item alone the cost of the railway will be more than paid for, as the Commissioner estimates the cost of the line at something under £200,000.

The PREMIER: Is that why you don't want the Deputy Speaker to leave the chair?

Mr. RYLAND: I want to see every information placed before the House before

*Mr. Ryland.*

we go into Committee. I believe that this will be one of the best paying lines that we can have. There is no possibility of there being a deficiency, as, on that one item alone—the timber in the State forest—there will be an increase in value equal to the whole cost of the line. When we go into Committee I am confined to a ten-minutes' speech, and I could not talk about the reserves in that district in ten minutes. The Commissioner says—

The country is eminently suitable for dairying, and there are already a number of grazing selections which will bring cattle traffic to the railway.

Then there is the increase in the value of the timber as well.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That has nothing to do with the Railway Department.

Mr. RYLAND: It means an increased value to the Crown caused by building the railway.

The PREMIER: Do you want the railway or not?

Mr. RYLAND: I want the railway, but I do not want the railway to come before the Committee unless we have got all the information about it. I do not want the Commissioner to say that the railway is not going to pay. There is another matter which I will not have an opportunity of speaking on in Committee. The Gympie Council have decided to pay one-third of the deficiency. That is a large item, seeing that other councils in other towns have only been asked to pay one-tenth of the deficiency.

Mr. MURPHY: They offered it themselves.

Mr. RYLAND: I do not think they were justified in offering it themselves.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: They made the offer voluntarily.

Mr. RYLAND: It is going to benefit Brisbane far more than Gympie. The Minister knows that. And I do not think Gympie should be asked to pay one-third. We will not have an opportunity of speaking on this question in Committee in the ten minutes allowed us by the Sessional Orders. Question put and passed.

#### COMMITTEE.

(Mr. K. M. Grant, Rockhampton, in the chair.)

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS, in moving—

1. That the House approves of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed Mary Valley Railway (from Keefton to Imbil), in length 24 miles 30 chains.

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 took the opportunity, in January last year, to visit the locality with Mr. Thallon, the Commissioner for Railways, in connection with the rival routes for the construction of a railway into the Mary Valley, one from Eumundi, and the other practically the route that had been surveyed twenty-three or twenty-four years back as the route for a railway from Brisbane to Gympie. It was a moot question as to the best way in which the Mary Valley, with its extensive rich lands, should be opened up—whether towards Gympie from Woodford over the Conondale Range, or whether the first section should be built from the Gympie end. After visiting the locality, Mr. Thallon and I came to the

[Mr. Ryland.

conclusion that it would be unwise to recommend the construction of the line from Eumundi, for the reason that it would be more expensive than the other, and it would be inadvisable to start the railway over the Conondale Range. After our visit I had a surveyor put on, with the result that it was found extremely difficult to get away from Gympie up the Mary Valley economically; and I did not think it advisable to start from the Woodford end owing to the fact that there would immediately have been the Conondale Range to contend with. After a great deal of trouble and investigation, it was decided a little while ago that the junction should be made a mile or so nearer to Gympie than Keefton, which will give a good low-level crossing of the Mary River. That was probably the best route to be found. Any members who know the country must agree that there are extensive areas of rich land there. A very great deal of this country has been selected; but, owing to the distance from market, the land has not been put to the best use. There is a great deal of dairying carried on; and from one end the cream is sent to Gympie, while further up the valley the cream and produce are sent to Eumundi, a distance of 18 or 20 miles; but, when there is better railway accommodation, I am confident that the whole of the country will become very closely settled, and intensely cultivated. Not only is it a line for the promotion of very much closer settlement, but there are large areas of Crown lands which will be made available by this line—about 37,000 or 40,000 acres; and there are also very large areas of timber country. The junior member for Gympie probably can bear me out when I say that from reports that have been made, principally by people interested in the timber industry, it is estimated that in the district generally there is about 400,000,000 feet of pine in the Brooloo Scrub, within 12 or 14 miles.

Mr. MURPHY: Are you going to establish State sawmills there?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is a matter that does not lie within the scope of the motion before the Committee. Let us build the railway first. I understand from those members specially interested in the district that the timber lands have been cut up into quite small areas, and it has been open to anyone for some time past to take up those small areas; and the timber-getters who have those small areas are carting pine 20 and 25 miles into Gympie. I am given to understand, on good authority, that there are about 400,000,000 feet of pine in the Brooloo Scrub, 220,000,000 feet between Coonangibber and Yabba Creeks, and 19,000,000 feet between Kandanga Creek and Nambour Creek. If the railway is built, the Government must get an increased royalty on timber in that country. I believe the royalty on pine, which is 1s. per 100 feet, can easily be increased to 2s. per 100 feet.

Mr. HAMILTON: Have a lot of those timber areas been sold?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No.

Mr. HAMILTON: Has the timber been sold?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No. I said just now that a portion of this timber country had been cut up into small lots, and the timber-getters have taken these small lots, and are carting pine from the Brooloo Scrub into Gympie, 25 miles. If the

idea is warranted as to the increase in royalty, from the Brooloo Scrub [4 p.m.] alone the Lands Department will get an increase in revenue of £200,000 in royalty. Of course, it is not possible for me, as Minister for Railways, to handle any of that money; it does not come to the Railway Department, it goes to the Lands Department. But the carriage of such an enormous quantity of timber over the railway, and over what I hope will be an extension of the railway too, must certainly prove very profitable indeed. I will say, with respect to the first section of 24 miles 30 chains, that I hope in the near future the North Coast line at this junction will be connected with Woodford so as to make another link throughout the country in the interests of closer settlement, and also in the interest of being able to handle the exceptionally heavy traffic that comes down that line now—even better than it is handled at the present time. Of course, that is a matter, probably, that will not come about for some years to come. I would point out, with respect to the scarcity of pine, that some years ago fruit cases cost the fruit-growers 4d. to 6d. each, and they now cost them up to 1s. 4d. each.

Mr. HAMILTON: Who gets the benefit of that? The timber ring?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Because the timber is so exceptionally difficult to get at. I have no reason at all but to think that when we get one or two or three railways built into timber areas the price of timber will very materially fall, and it should do so. However, I have nothing whatever to do with timber. I am not asking the Committee to pass this railway, or any other railway, in the interests of the timber ring. I am asking the Committee to approve of the plans of this railway for the purpose of promoting closer settlement, and the amount of timber that is there must assist the settler in paying the cost of working and the interest of 3 per cent. on the capital cost of this line. I have already said that I inspected this district with Mr. Thallon with a view to its suitability for closer settlement, and I have no hesitation at all in saying that I believe that this is a railway that will promote closer settlement, and will be of very great value to those people who are at present carting their produce too many miles. With respect to the guarantee, some time ago the Gympie City Council, whose area is not within the benefited area or railway district, voluntarily offered, if the line were built, to take up one-third of what we may term the guarantee on this line; and I, as Minister for Railways, was very pleased to get that offer, because it showed me that they, at any rate, considered that their city must benefit very materially from the building of this railway, although for certain physical reasons it was practically impossible—except at a very much greater cost than it will be to join at Keefton—to take the railway right into Gympie itself. I visited the city of Gympie, at their invitation, a few weeks ago, and most of the gentlemen I spoke to agreed with me that it was not advisable to try to take the line right into the city of Gympie owing to the extra cost. Owing to the difficulty we have had in finding a proper getaway from the valley on to what is known as the North Coast line, the agreement with the city council has not been signed, but that agreement will

be signed and will be brought up—because before the agreement is ratified it must be brought up for the approval of Parliament—next session. That will not be done this session. The Commissioner, in his report, says—

The district is very hilly, but a large proportion of the land is of good quality suitable for agriculture; and there are numerous rich alluvial flats in the vicinity of the Mary River and the creeks mentioned above, and considerable areas of scrub. The country is eminently suitable for dairying, and there are already a number of grazing selections which will bring cattle traffic to the railway. Land has already been taken up in small areas on both sides of the Mary River and the various creeks, but there is still an area of 37,000 acres available for selection to the westward, principally between Amamoor and Kandanga Creeks.

The Commissioner also refers to the timber reserves that the Government have in their hands and that are within the benefited area. The Commissioner goes on to say that it is advisable at the present time that a low-level system should be adopted. Of course if a high-level system were adopted, the exceedingly high cost—approximately £7,808 per mile—would be very largely increased, and at the present time there is really no occasion for it. The Commissioner reports that the line will cost £190,321, which is equal, at 3 per cent., to £5,700, and he also reports that the net revenue will be £1,400 per annum, leaving £4,300 to be found, of which the Gympie City Council's share, on their one-third responsibility, will be £1,433. But I will again point out that the Gympie City Council, in wisely offering to take up their portion of this responsibility, foresee that it is just as well that they should have two strings to their bow. In the past Gympie has been almost, if not quite, the foremost gold-producing centre in the State, but we do know, of course, that the gold production there has not been what it used to be, and it is an exceedingly wise thing for the Gympie City Council to try to turn their city into the centre of a big farming district.

Mr. RYLAND: They are paying too much.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: All I can say is that the city of Gympie is going to very materially benefit from the building of this railway, and that was their voluntary offer. I did not ask for it—they offered that to me, which I, as Secretary for Railways, was very pleased to get. Surely a wealthy city like Gympie can afford to pay that amount, and why should the junior member for Gympie say they should only pay a lesser proportion?

Mr. MULCAHY: They do not object at all.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I have taken out the figures for the information of hon. members, and would point out that, further on in his report, the Commissioner says—

The expenditure with a daily train service I estimate at £3,600 per annum, leaving about £1,400 towards interest on the capital; but there is no doubt this will improve within a short time, as I anticipate considerable traffic in agricultural produce, timber, live stock, dairying products, etc.

I quite agree with the Commissioner in his forecast of what traffic there will be on this railway within the near future. In fact, I think the Commissioner is very conservative in his estimate, and I have very much pleasure also, from my personal knowledge of the locality, in backing up the recommendation of the Commissioner in his report, and in moving the motion standing in my name.

*Hon. W. T. Paget.]*

Mr. RYLAND: The Minister has told us that the Gympie Council are willing to shoulder one-third of the responsibility, but at the same time £1,400 is a big amount to have to meet altogether.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The Gympie Council think it won't be anything at all.

Mr. RYLAND: The people will have an opportunity of voting on it. My opinion is that the city of Brisbane will equally benefit with Gympie.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I think a lot of the trade will go to Maryborough as well as to Gympie.

Mr. RYLAND: The Commissioner says, in his report—

The expenditure with a daily train service I estimate at £3,600 per annum, leaving about £1,400 towards interest on the capital; but there is no doubt this will improve within a short time, as I anticipate considerable traffic in agricultural produce, timber, live stock, dairying products, etc.

Seeing the great reserves of timber there, I think the value of that timber, and the enhanced value given to other properties, should be devoted towards paying off the interest and redemption of the line. A business man carrying on a sound business would let that go to meet the interest and redemption. But the Government have not said one word, in connection with any of these railways, about meeting the interest and redemption on the lines. It is borrow, borrow, all the time, and do nothing else. The profits earned should go to pay off the interest and redemption in connection with the railways. Another thing, we are told one reserve contains 400,000,000 feet of timber. It would be a good business proposition for the Government to start a sawmill there and work this timber for the benefit of the State. The timber ring will take the enhanced value that has been produced by the building of the railway—

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member cannot discuss the advisableness of starting State sawmills under this proposal.

Mr. RYLAND: I am pointing out what can be done to meet the interest on this railway, and, if they did that, I am of opinion there would be no difficulty at all.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I have got a note from the Principal Shorthand Writer that they cannot hear the hon. member upstairs. I would like him to speak a little louder for their convenience, and for the convenience of hon. members generally.

Mr. RYLAND: I have nothing more to say than that I believe that this will be a good proposal, and that it will produce a large amount of enhanced value on the benefited area. The only thing I regret is that advantage will not be taken of the full enhanced value which is produced in this area to pay off the loan money, as there is no provision made in this proposal to pay it off. I might also say here that people in the district have expected this railway for some time, and I believe that the return from the timber itself will meet the expenses of the railway. It will be a good agricultural district. I do not think there is any cause to fear that there will be any financial loss in working the line.

Mr. WALKER (*Wide Bay*): Needless to say, I am very pleased that this railway has

[*Mr. Ryland.*

been tabled this session. I understand the people of this particular area have been agitating for this line for something like ten or fifteen years.

Mr. MURPHY: I know people who have been waiting for a quarter of a century.

Mr. WALKER: No doubt it will come to them if they wait a little longer.

Mr. MURPHY: Yes; it may come in a hundred years hence.

Mr. WALKER: One thing I regret, and that is that the line should be such a costly one.

Mr. MANN: Is there no other available route?

Mr. WALKER: On going over the cost of the construction, I find it a great deal more than I dreamed it would be. I think when the line is constructed the Railway Department will get a very agreeable surprise, and that it will be a good deal cheaper than they estimate at the present time. You will notice that they provide for a low-level bridge over the Mary River. I think that is to be regretted. I would not mind a low-level bridge over the various creeks, because they rise up and down quickly; but the Mary River is bigger, and will probably be in flood two or three days at a time, and in the wet season probably more. The benefited area, I think, has been struck very well, and certainly on a large scale, but it takes in a good deal of land on the eastern side of the river at the upper end, and I hardly think it would be fair to include those people in the benefited area, unless there are one or two bridges taken across the river and brought into the scheme. This would bring them into close touch with the railway, and only then would it be right to bring them into the benefited area. With regard to routes, as the Minister has pointed out, we have had surveyors there for some considerable time. I understand, when the advocacy of the Brisbane line was going on, the old Government had a surveyor there to survey a line with the object of reaching Brisbane. It was found too costly, and for that, and probably some other reasons, they built the North Coast line; in other words, we have four railway surveys into that district. If the Government intended to build a line from Gympie or Keef-ton to Woodford, it was the correct thing, but if it was a branch line it would be wrong altogether. I am sorry the Commissioner did not take that into consideration in framing his report, but I was pleased to hear the Minister for Railways mention it. If it had been a branch line, I think the correct thing would have been to take it from Cooroy, because it is on a higher altitude and would go through good land; but, as it goes through to Woodford, I think the best route has been adopted. Along the Mary Valley there is a very large area of first-class agricultural land, and a little distance from it there is first-class dairying land, both forest and scrub land. On the western side of the river there are three or four large creeks, which might almost be termed rivers—namely, the Amamoor, Kadanga, and Yabba Creeks. On these creeks, and extending back for a distance of 10 or 15 miles, there is a considerable percentage of agricultural land, more particularly on Yabba Creek. I do not think there is finer country to be found anywhere than exists in that locality. When the timber areas are thrown open we shall be

able to settle a great number of people there. As several members of the Opposition who visited the district a few years ago know, farmers in that district are carting their produce 25 and 30 miles to market.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: What sort of farmers?

Mr. WALKER: Most of the farmers there grow maize principally. There are also a large number of dairy farmers who are sending their cream a little over 30 miles, and it is well known that when cream is carried that distance in carts at this time of the year it deteriorates in quality. As the Minister for Railways said, the timber asset of the district is a very big one. On the Brooloo State Forest there are something like 400,000,000 feet of soft wood. So far only two blocks of the Brooloo Scrub have been sold, and of those only one is worked, operations having been commenced a few months ago. There are two very small sawmills there. But, apart from the quantity of pine in the district, there is a very large supply of hardwood. I do not think you can get a finer sample of hardwood for mining purposes and railway building than is obtainable there, and this timber will be of great value in the construction of other railways in country where there is not a sufficient supply of suitable timber. The hardwood has never been touched, owing to the fact that it is so far away from market. I notice that something has been said about a timber ring. There may be timber rings in some places, but there are none in the Wide Bay district. With regard to the Brooloo Forest, I may point out that something like two years ago the Minister for Lands made a special rule respecting the taking up and working of that timber. I only wish the same rule was applied to the whole of our timber reserves. The rule is that the land can only be taken up in small areas, the maximum area being a block containing 250,000 feet of timber, and nobody can alter that rule, so that no person can go there and take up the whole area.

Mr. COYNE: Is there no such thing as dummying?

Mr. WALKER: No. I could give details of the scheme, but I do not wish to waste the time of the Committee in doing so.

Mr. MURPHY: We should like to hear the details.

Mr. WALKER: Well, I may state that no one can take up more than one block of 250,000 feet of timber; he must have a special license, he must shift a certain quantity of timber off each block, and he can work only one block at a time; but as soon as he has finished taking the timber off one block he can apply for another at the price fixed annually. At the present time there are thirty or forty teams hauling the timber, which is sent to Brisbane and Gympie. The haulage costs about 5s. per 100 feet, while the railway will be able to do that work for about 1s. per 100 feet. No doubt the Crown will charge 1s. 6d. or 2s. per 100 feet royalty, but even then we shall be able to land the timber in Brisbane or Maryborough 2s. or 3s. per 100 feet cheaper than we can at the present time. In addition to the timber in the Brooloo Scrub, there are, on the western side, something like 40,000 acres of a timber reserve, and about two-thirds of that land is suitable for close settlement, which means that in the near future we shall have one of the most successful railway lines, from an agricultural point of view, that we have in

Queensland. Gympie has been noted as a mining centre, but it will yet become a thriving agricultural centre. Not only in the Mary Valley, but out as far as Widgee, Woolooga, and Glastonbury there is good country for close settlement. Woolooga has cut up very well, every acre of the land thrown open having been taken up, and the other day an application was sent in for another reserve. On the eastern side of Gympie there is the very fine scrub known as Kin Kin Scrub, so well known to hon. members; so that from every point of view the district promises to become one of the most prosperous agricultural and dairying centres in the whole of Australia. I was informed by a member on this side of the House, just before the House met, that Gympie compares very favourably with the famous mining centre of Victoria—Ballarat, with which he is very well acquainted. The two districts are similar in many respects, and, viewing the whole circumstances of the case, I think we can only come to the one conclusion, and that is that this mining district will become a very successful farming district. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

Mr. FOLEY (*Townsville*): Before the motion is put, I wish to add the following words at the end of the first resolution, namely: "And that the railway be constructed by day labour."

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I cannot accept that amendment, as it is beyond the scope of the resolutions. Our own Standing Orders are very explicit on the subject. If hon. members will turn to Standing Order 157, they will find that it reads—

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

The House has only asked the Committee to approve or disapprove of the plan, section, and book of reference of this railway, and anything else outside that is out of order.

Mr. FOLEY: I think that, if the Committee approve of this railway being built, they have a right to say how it shall be built.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: No; the House has simply asked the Committee to consider these resolutions, and only these resolutions can be considered.

Mr. MANN: I would point out to you, Sir, that last year, when we were dealing with a similar motion with regard to the Pittsworth-Milmerran Railway, and Mr. Armstrong was in the chair, the junior member for Gympie moved that the following new paragraph be inserted after paragraph 1:—

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

You will carefully note, Mr. Grant, that I am not challenging your ruling, because I believe it is a good one; but I am just [4.30 p.m.] pointing out that on at least one previous occasion the Committee were allowed to discuss a similar amendment on a similar resolution, so that there is a precedent for the amendment moved by the hon. the junior member for Townsville.

Mr. MURPHY (*Croydon*): I think the precedent laid down by Mr. Armstrong was a good one. In dealing with a resolution of this nature, I think we have a perfect right to make any amendment that the Committee may feel disposed to make. While we may

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approve of the plan, section, and book of reference submitted by the Secretary for Railways, surely we have a right to say how the railway is to be constructed.

The PREMIER: You cannot discuss that now.

Mr. MURPHY: I can discuss anything I like, because I may move that the Chairman's ruling be disagreed with.

The PREMIER: You cannot discuss the ruling without moving that motion.

Mr. MURPHY: Possibly I may not.

The PREMIER: There is another question before the Committee at present.

Mr. MURPHY: I have no desire to be a disturbing element, and I do not propose to move that the Chairman's ruling be disagreed with, because a discussion on that question might take up a considerable amount of time. If you rule me out of order, Mr. Grant, unless there is a motion submitted to disagree with your ruling, I shall accept your ruling. If you say it is better not to discuss the question, I am quite prepared to sit down.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I have allowed both the hon. member for Cairns and the hon. member for Croydon to speak because I recognise that my ruling conflicts with previous rulings; but I am very confident that my ruling is the correct one. Our Standing Orders are very explicit on the matter, and "May" is equally explicit. On page 33 I find this passage—

A Committee can only consider those matters which have been committed to them by the House. If it be desirable that other matters should also be considered, an instruction is given by the House to empower the Committee to entertain them.

The House is a sovereign body, and may override the Committee; but the Committee can only consider those matters which have been referred to it by the House.

Mr. RYLAND: Your ruling, Mr. Grant, appears to confine the discussion very considerably.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Is the hon. member going to move that my ruling be disagreed with? If he is not, I would remind him that the question before the Committee is that the resolutions be agreed to.

Mr. MULCAHY (*Gympie*): Those who are interested in the district in which it is proposed to build this line have been agitating for the construction of the railway for quite a number of years. Apart altogether from the fact that it is in my electorate to some extent, I maintain that the railway will be beneficial to the State. Many years ago I discussed the matter with the Chief Engineer for Railways, and he said that, while he had nothing to do with the policy of any Government as to where they would run lines, from an engineering point of view and from a railway point of view, if he were consulted, he would advocate the construction of a loop line from somewhere near Gympie to Caboolture. There is no doubt about the character of the country, both from a timber and from an agricultural standpoint, and you cannot go far wrong in making railways up the valleys of our principal rivers. There is plenty of water and good land along the valleys of rivers like the Burnett and the Mary. As the hon. member for Wide Bay has stated, there are several large tributaries on the western side of the Mary—10, 15, or 20 miles long—with big watersheds. The land is excellent. When the soft timber is taken out of the scrubs, there are tens of

[*Mr. Murphy.*

thousands of acres of rich volcanic soil admirably adapted for dairying and agriculture. There is one feature that is very pleasing to me in connection with this proposal. Notwithstanding all the efforts that have been made for many years, the timber still remains in the hands of the State. In 1901 or 1902, when the late Mr. O'Connell was Secretary for Lands, there was a great agitation to allow all this timber to be sold to a timber ring; but from that day to this every attempt in that direction has been resisted. The control of all this splendid timber is in the hands of the Government, and I have no hesitation in saying that it constitutes the finest forest in the State. My colleague has stated that he considers the Gympie Council have offered too much. Now, I disagree entirely with him on that point. The Gympie Council have no fear—and neither have the Gympie people—of the success of the railway, and therefore they are willing to give any guarantee, and they have no hesitation in doing so. I venture to say that, if my colleague thinks over the matter a little more, he will agree with me that there are not three people in Gympie who are against this railway, or who have any fear about the guarantee. The line will open up a large area of agricultural land; and, notwithstanding what the Government may say, there are hundreds of people there who are anxious to get on to this land.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I believe that.

Mr. MULCAHY: The whole of the country along the line is good.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It is difficult country to get into.

Mr. MULCAHY: I want to assure hon. members with regard to the guarantee that the Gympie Council, acting on behalf of the Gympie people, have no hesitation in accepting the full responsibility. Of course, it has been said that those who want a railway always say that it is bound to be a good railway.

Mr. MURPHY: Hear, hear!

Mr. MULCAHY: The hon. member for Croydon says "Hear hear!" I hope that in the near future the hon. member will get a railway—although I am not quite sure whether he wants to have a railway built or not—and I shall have much pleasure in supporting it if it is anything like the proposal before the Committee. If all the loan money were spent on railways of this nature, there would be no losses at all, as they would all be reproductive. The district which this line is to traverse has great possibilities. Let me just cite one fact as an illustration. During the last eight years the number of ratepayers in the Widgee Shire—which includes the railway district—has increased from 1,500 to over 3,000. That shows that there is a large amount of settlement taking place in that district. I am quite sure that if this railway is built then in the next eight years the population there will be doubled. I have great pleasure in supporting the proposal.

Mr. FORSYTH (*Moreton*): I am very glad to hear the remarks of the senior member for Gympie. He speaks with a knowledge of the country, and he believes all he says about it. The information given by the hon. member for Gympie and the hon. member for Wide Bay should be sufficient for this Committee to pass this particular railway. I remember, some time ago, we had a deputa-

tion to the Secretary for Railways with regard to taking this line from Eumundi. At that time it was thought that that was the best place to take it from, although the Minister for Railways at the time thought that the best place to take it from would be Woodford. Since then it has been discovered that the best route to take it would be over the range from Keefton. Although it will cost a lot of money, it will open up a huge area of country, and it will tap a large area of pine forest, which is just what is wanted in Queensland at the present day. I believe, myself, that the line will eventually have to go to Woodford, and it will then open up first-class country, as stated by the senior member for Gympie. There will have to be a loop line there extending from Caboolture to Gympie. We know that there is a great pressure of traffic on the North Coast Railway at the present time, and we will be able to take the pressure off that line as far as Gympie by constructing the loop line, as I suggest, from Caboolture to Gympie. It will open up a large quantity of Crown land and a lot of rich dairying country. We have heard a great deal about this Brooloo Scrub, which contains from 300,000,000 to 400,000,000 feet of pine. It is to be regretted that the Railway Department cannot get some of the royalty which the Government will receive from this pine, as there is no doubt it will be greatly increased by the building of the railway. There are certain areas of land in the benefited area, and they will be justly entitled to pay the same as everyone else, but if the Railway Department only got the royalty on the timber through which the line will pass there would be no trouble about the construction of the line at all. I have given this matter some attention and have discussed it with many men who have been there, and there is no doubt that if the Railway Department could only get the royalty paid on the timber in the Brooloo Scrub, then it would pay for the construction of the railway itself.

Mr. RYLAND: That is just what I said.

Mr. FORSYTH: We know that the Lands Department get that money. At the present time the royalty on the timber is 1s. per 100 feet, but I honestly believe that when this railway is built the Government will get a royalty of 2s. per 100 feet from it. The Secretary for Lands himself told me that in some cases he is getting royalty as high as 2s. 10d. per 100 feet. That is a pretty high figure.

Mr. HAMILTON: It is not much when you consider what the public have to pay for timber.

Mr. FORSYTH: As has mentioned by other speakers, this line will open up a huge area of dairying and agricultural land. It is all good land and well watered. There will be no scarcity of water and no drought. It affords me great pleasure to support the resolution, because I think that the line will pay well and will be the means of settling a large number of people on the land.

Mr. HAMILTON (*Gregory*): I do not rise with any intention of opposing the line, but this line is like a good many others that we have passed here. Last year we passed a line up in this country, which we were told would open up large areas of pine. The only objection I have to these lines is that we are opening up huge areas of timber country for

the benefit of the timber rings in Brisbane, and it is making the timber for house-building much dearer to the public. The hon. member for Moreton talked about the royalty of 2s. per 100 feet being high, but it is not so high when you consider that the timber ring who get this timber saw it at their mills and sell it to the public for £1 3s. to £1 6s. per 100 feet. There is a tremendous profit on it for the sawmillers. When the Government build these railways, which are going to tap such large areas of timber forests and open up such large areas of land, they should start State sawmills and burst up the timber ring in Brisbane. It is time that the Government took a hand in this matter. In the last three or four years the cost of timber has doubled itself, and in some instances almost trebled.

Mr. FORSYTH: We cannot get the timber.

Mr. HAMILTON: Last session we passed a railway up in the Nanango district, and we were told that if we let the railway go through that it would tap large areas of timber land, and that the Queensland Pine Company would put up large distilling works there and go in for another industry. What has become of those distilling works? They have done nothing towards it yet. I do not object to the railway, but I know that when these timber areas are tapped in this way that it means dearer timber to the public unless the Government go in for State sawmills. Timber is up to £1 6s. per 100 feet at the present time, and it should be made cheaper when these pine forests are opened up.

Mr. MULCAHY: There is a great opportunity for it here.

Mr. HAMILTON: I would like to ask the Minister for Railways if he can give us any information about these distilling works that the Queensland Pine Company were going to establish. So far as this particular line is concerned, I consider that 3 or 4 miles of this line will open up more agricultural land than the whole 200 miles from Rockhampton to Mackay. I hope the Government will consider what I have said about establishing State sawmilling plants, so that the public will be able to be supplied with house-building timber much cheaper than they are at the present time.

Mr. NEVITT (*Carpentaria*): I do not rise for the purpose of opposing this railway, because some two years ago I had the privilege of going over the route of this railway, and, although I went as far as the Brooloo school, I did not get up as far as the scrub. It seems to me that it is a very expensive railway, and, after the timber is taken off, I am satisfied that no agricultural country will be able to pay interest upon a railway that is going to cost over £7,000 a mile to build. Seeing that there is such a large area of Crown land containing timber, which the Minister thinks will bring in a royalty of 1s. per 100 feet, that will mean altogether £200,000, as there are 400,000,000 feet of timber there.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: But it is only one crop.

Mr. NEVITT: I have a suggestion to make. I consider that a portion of this money should be utilised to reduce the capitalisation of the railway, so that when the timber is exhausted there will not be such a heavy capital to pay interest on. I question whether any agricultural railway in Australia will pay interest on a line costing £7,000 a mile. Even

*Mr. Nevitt* ]

if you only take half what is realised from the timber on the 2s. basis, that is sufficient to pay the whole of the capital cost of the railway.

Mr. MURPHY: What about the betterment?

Mr. NEVITT: Any private land it goes through should pay a proportion of the increased value. It is surprising how the members representing the district affected by this line question the official report of the department. I admit that those members are conversant with the country, but the Commissioner also is conversant with the country—he has been through the country.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The constructing engineers make the estimate of the cost.

Mr. NEVITT: I understand that Mr. Thallon has the knowledge as to whether the line will pay or otherwise. It is he who makes the estimate as to whether the traffic will pay interest on the money invested, and he states that it will not pay interest on the money invested. Yet those three members say it will pay and leave a substantial balance.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I said the Commissioner's estimate was conservative.

Mr. NEVITT: The fact remains that he said the line would not pay. I admit that the country is very good agricultural country, and therefore I do not feel justified in opposing the railway; still I think the Government should take into consideration some means by which the Railway Department should get a portion of the money received on account of the timber. The royalty on 400,000,000 feet will amount to £200,000; and I maintain that 50 per cent. at least should go towards reducing the capital cost. That would mean that the people in the district would in all probability be able to make the line pay.

Mr. WIENHOLT (*Fassifern*): In rising to support this proposal I wish to say it is gratifying to find that the Government have introduced this railway and three other railways as purely agricultural lines after getting through the big lines in the West and on the coast. I hope there will be other agricultural lines to come this session; but, even if some of us are disappointed this session. I think we may live in faith and hope that next session other small lines will be built. The introduction of these lines shows that the Government can not only grasp the necessity for the big lines we have already passed but that they can also grasp the necessity for pushing on small lines in agricultural districts.

Mr. MURPHY: In connection with this railway, I would like to know where the money for its construction is to come from. Is money to be borrowed in addition to the £7,000,000 or £8,000,000 that will have to be borrowed for railways already passed this session? Some time ago we agreed that the Government should raise £2,000,000 for the purpose of building railways—principally agricultural railways.

Hon. R. PHILP: These are all new.

Mr. MURPHY: Then the cost of this will be added to the £7,000,000, and I propose to vote against it. I am not in favour of a big loan policy—adding millions to the national

[*Mr. Nevitt.*

debt—and I will vote against every railway introduced. If this House likes to spend £7,000,000—

Mr. HAMILTON: It will take £10,000,000 before the lines we passed the other day are finished.

Mr. MURPHY: We know the result of the last £10,000,000 loan. For years things were so bad in Queensland that you could not get a coat of paint put on a school out back. The senior member for Townsville had to introduce a Retrenchment Bill, and the new Government had to reimpose the Retrenchment Bill.

Hon. R. PHILP: It was owing to the drought.

Mr. MURPHY: I admit that the drought had a good deal to do with it. Men were working for almost nothing. And now they want to go in for another £10,000,000 loan. The hon. member for Carpentaria said the royalty on the timber ought to go towards paying for the railway. As a matter of fact the Railway Act of 1906 was passed in order to make the land through which a railway runs bear the cost of any loss. These timber reserves belong to the community of Queensland; they do not belong merely to the people along this railway, and the money should go to the Lands Department.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: These lands have to bear their proportion of any loss.

Mr. MURPHY: The State has to pay 1 per cent. out of the ordinary revenue; and if the State owns the land it will have to pay its share. The Commissioner recommends this railway, and hon. members who know the district say it will open up good agricultural country. I have always advocated that railways should be constructed with the idea of promoting settlement. This railway may promote settlement; but it is also going to add considerably to our State indebtedness, and I intend to oppose it, as well as every other railway, for the simple reason that I do not think Queensland can afford to spend so much money on railway construction.

Hon. R. PHILP: I intend supporting this line. I would not have voted for the Great Western Railway or the North Coast Railway if I had thought no other lines were to be brought forward. (Hear, hear!) It was understood that we were to have lines in agricultural districts, and this line will be very profitable to the State. It may not pay directly, but it will pay indirectly. It will double the value of the timber reserves, which will provide almost the capital cost of the railway. And every new settler we get on the land is worth £1 5s. per annum from the Commonwealth Government. I have only known another line like this that we have built, and that is the Kingaroy line. That line has been a splendid paying line, because of the timber and the good agricultural land through which it goes. It has not only given an immense amount of traffic to the railway but it has also settled a great number of people on the splendid land about there, which otherwise would not have been settled. I cannot understand anyone who has any faith in the future of this great country wanting to vote against this line. I remember the late member for Moreton told me that he estimated there were about 500,000,000 feet of timber in this district. Surely we ought to tap that? At the present time we cannot get sufficient timber, and have to send to America for it. We have Oregon pine coming here in

shiploads, and, while I am speaking, I think the Railway Department are to be blamed, as they have not sufficient timber trucks. I have heard of timber lying at sidings six or eight weeks at times, as there were not sufficient trucks. I think the Minister, when he builds all these railways, ought to get sufficient rolling-stock for the traffic. I know there are plenty of people in Queensland who can make rolling-stock as well as the Ipswich workshops. There is a splendid establishment in Townsville where they can make rolling-stock, and I saw the other day where they could not get any orders.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order!

HON. R. PHILP: I may be out of order, but I would like to point out that if we had more rolling-stock now we would not have a dearth in timber; and I hope, after the passing of these railways, that the Minister will see that orders are given broadcast throughout Queensland to make rolling-stock for Queensland, because that is the greatest blot we have at the present time, and if we are going to double our railways—as I hope we will do—we must build sufficient rolling-stock to keep those railways going. I think this is one of the best lines we have had put before us for some time. It is a line going to good timber, and nearly all Crown land. What more can we ask? The line will probably settle a thousand people on this land, and we will get an enormous quantity of freight over the line in a very short time. I hope the line will be passed without further talk.

Mr. WINSTANLEY (*Charters Towers*): I have listened very carefully to the arguments which have been adduced in favour of this line, and in the minds of a great many of them it will pay; but I should like to know from the Minister for Railways what assurance can be given to this Committee that the Government are going to get an increased royalty on the timber tapped by this line. It is a very easy matter to say what we are going to get.

HON. R. PHILP: All the timber is sold by auction now.

Mr. MANN: It is all sold already.

Mr. FORSYTH: It is not all sold.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Who is right and who is wrong? Has the timber been sold or has it not been sold? I think the Committee has a right to know, before this railway goes through, whether the Government is going to get an increased royalty on this timber? If it is sold, it will mean a very small amount indeed, and the country is not going to get the benefit to which they are entitled by the construction of this line. It is a well-known fact that a few persons in Brisbane, who have control of the timber trade, get an exorbitant price, and it looks as if this railway is not going to be for the benefit of the country as a whole, but for the benefit of a few individuals. Speaking of railways generally, it is a well-known fact that timber won't last for ever. At the rate the timber reserves and forests are being destroyed at the present time they will not last very long, and for that reason it does seem to me that the country—the general revenue—should get more from these timber reserves than it is likely to get under existing conditions. It seems to me, just because the line is going to be built—that public works are to be carried out—is quite sufficient for some hon. members to advo-

cate the line, and the expenditure of public money without considering what the future will be, and it is doubtful whether all the railways passed in such fearful haste in the past have realised our expectations of them by a very long way. We know we have had droughts in the past, and it is just possible we may have the same experience again. We are now having our seven years of plenty, and it is just possible we may have seven years of drought to follow, and if we do, after this money is spent, before the railway has time to bring in revenue, Queensland will be in for a very bad time, and I think we go a little bit too fast without giving that consideration we ought to give before spending all this money. Before I sit down I would like to move the addition to the resolutions of the following words:—"No adult person shall be employed on the construction of this railway at a wage of less than 8s. per day."

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! That is a matter that should have been discussed in the House.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: I think we can discuss it now.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! The Committee are asked to consider certain resolutions, and those only can be considered, everything else being out of order. The House may do anything it likes, but the Committee can only do what the House directs it to do.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: It places the Committee in a very peculiar position. In one session the Committee are allowed to do certain things, and they take it for granted they can do the same the next session, and then there is a different ruling. It certainly places the Committee in a very peculiar position.

Mr. CORSER (*Maryborough*): I am very pleased that this railway has been brought before the House. The line is proposed to be constructed through a district where, not only are there very large areas of timber—no less than 639,000,000 feet—that is, pine and hardwood—but also it will open up a very large area of Crown land. The Railway Commissioner speaks of 37,000 acres of land for selection on the western side, and then he speaks also of the Government holding a dozen timber reserves within the benefited area. These timber reserves and the 37,000 acres are mostly good agricultural land, and the enhanced value of those lands will be very material indeed by the construction of this railway. The hon. member who has just resumed his seat expressed a doubt as to whether most of those large timber reserves had been leased or not. I can assure that hon. member that there are only two small sections out of the whole of those large reserves that have been leased up to the present time; the rest are absolutely in the hands of the Crown, and consequently when they are offered for sale at public auction they will probably realise what was realised only on the 4th of this month for timber at Blackbutt, sold at Nanango, where an area of pine was put up for sale at public auction and realised 2s. 9½d. per 100 feet. If the Crown is only receiving 1s. now, it means a rise of 1s. 9½d., which will reach the revenue through the Lands Department. Besides that, look at the enhanced value of the agricultural land that will be opened up! I have no fear of the ultimate result of the construction of this line. I believe it will be a good paying line, and it will certainly

*Mr. Corser.]*

stamp Gympie with the prosperity it deserves. They have already, under considerable difficulties, settled a large area of lands for as far a distance as they can go without railway communication round about Gympie, and this line will enable them to settle a larger area. I am convinced that in a short time the line will be a very remunerative one, taking everything into consideration.

Mr. MANN: If we had not passed railways through the House involving such a large expenditure of loan money, every member of the House ought to welcome a line to open up good agricultural country. My only fear is that the Great Western Railway and the North Coast Railway will prevent the Government building a number of railways of this character to open up agricultural country. The Government have only come down with four railways of this character, while I am satisfied that without any trouble they could get a list of fifteen or twenty railways which require building within the next three or four years.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is so; there is no reason why they should not be built.

Mr. MANN: I think we ought to get some more information. The Commissioner ought to tell us what lines are likely to be finished during the next few months, and what number of men—not alone navvies, but surveyors and engineers—are likely to be available. Has he got sufficient men to carry out all the railways brought before the House? And if he has not sufficient men, what steps is he taking to get more men?

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Is this line to be constructed by the day-labour system.

Mr. MANN: As the hon. member interjects, whether the line is to be built by the day-labour system or if by the contract system, what wages are the Government going to compel the contractors to pay? The information we have got might be greatly extended. For example, I find there are 37,000 acres available for selection westward, principally between Amamoor and Kandanga Creeks, but not a word is said about the quality of the land—it may be good, bad, or indifferent. It would not have taken much more space to describe the bulk of the land as being good agricultural land, or poor land, as the case might be.

Mr. WALKER: You can see it on the plan.

Mr. MANN: You only see what is on the railway line; you do not see what is in the district. You are only told on these plans what sort of country the railway is passing through. The country a quarter or half a mile away may be very different altogether. For example, you may find the line is running over a ridge with boulders, and very poor country, but apart from that ridge the country may be quite good. The plans only show the country actually traversed by the railway, and not the quality of the land which the railway is opening up.

Mr. WALKER: Study the benefited area.

Mr. MANN: If you study the benefited area you may get a better idea, but it would have been much better if it had been set down in the report what the land was like the railway was going to benefit. Here we have 37,000 acres still available for selection, and not a word said about the quality. I may just say a word or two about the timber reserves. It is very strange to me that some of the big timber men did not get a hold of

these some time ago, and collar a bigger area of country than what the senior member for Maryborough says they have got. He says they have only got two sections.

Mr. WALKER: Two small bullock paddocks.

Mr. MANN: I am very pleased that they have such a small area of this country. I have heard different suggestions made in the House with regard to what ought to be done with the royalty derived from the sale of this timber. I claim that the royalty should be used for reforestation purposes, either on these reserves or on some other country suitable for reforestation. Members may claim that this land should be all thrown open for cultivation, but anyone who has studied the question of forestry must admit that we must spend largely in the near future in planting areas. I also notice that there are three rather sharp curves, and if the line is purely a branch line, and the trains will only run at a speed of 16 or 13 miles an hour, the 6-chain curves won't matter; but, if ever this line should be joined on to the main line, and there is a higher rate of speed, I think the 6-chain curves would be too sharp. Then, further on, the report says—

At Amamoor, Kandanga, and Yabba Creeks the plans show high-level bridges, but further surveys may prove that sites for low-level bridges can be obtained; if so, a saving of about £17,000 will be effected.

If we pass these plans and specifications, I would like to ask the Minister how far they can deviate?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Ten chains.

Mr. MANN: Ten chains to find one of these low-level sites.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: We have had surveyors in that district eighteen months.

Mr. MANN: You may happen to find one just at the last moment, and if we pass these plans and specifications, if it is 11 chains away from the line of mark—

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I do not suppose you will find one.

Mr. MANN: I was just pointing out this weakness. The first 1½ mile of the line going out from Cairns there are five bridges and a very sharp curve. If they had gone 3 chains nearer the sea beach they could have got a straight run out as far as Edgèhill without a single bridge or a curve. That shows how near the surveyors went to a better route. The same thing may happen in this case. We may have a low-level site found, which may happen to be too far away for the line to deviate to get across at that particular point. A more careful search should have been made for a site.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: They made every search, I assure you, for eighteen months.

Mr. MANN: If this careful search was made, why was this paragraph put in? When the survey is made, and it is found that sites can be obtained for low-level bridges, what provision has the Minister made to allow of the site being used?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: When the working survey is made, it is very often found that the deviation is possible.

Mr. MANN: The Commissioner is not satisfied that a site will not be found, because he says that further surveys may find such a site. I notice that the city of Gympie has shown its willingness to shoulder responsi-

[Mr. Corser.

bility. That looks very well on paper, but I would like to know how long they are guaranteeing this one-third?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It must be guaranteed under the provisions of the 1906 Act, until the railway has paid working expenses and interest for three years.

Mr. MANN: They can make that line pay for three years easily by rushing in this timber.

Mr. CORSER: There will be revenue from the carriage of cream cans.

Mr. MANN: The thing that brings revenue to the railways is heavy goods—timber and general goods. There is very little in carrying cream cans, and if the people in Gympie are wise, the council will try to get hold of that timber belt, and for three years, while they are responsible for this one-third guarantee, rush as much timber over that piece of the railway as they possibly can. This guarantee for three years is not worth a snap of the fingers. The line will pay through the timber traffic alone, if the timber is there that we are told is to be obtained in the district; and for that reason I do not think the Gympie City Council have taken a very heavy burden on their shoulders in undertaking part of the guarantee.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The senior member for Townsville stated that we should not build all our rolling-stock in the Ipswich workshops, but that we should have some built in private workshops.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: He specially mentioned Townsville.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I presume the Secretary for Railways will connect his remarks with the railway before the Committee?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes; I shall connect my remarks with the railway before the Committee. A certain sum is put down by the Commissioner for rolling-stock, and I wish to show that the fear entertained that we shall not have sufficient rolling-stock is groundless. During the last two years we have built 95 engines at a cost of £328,050, 42 lavatory cars at a cost of £60,446, 29 other carriages at a cost of £23,619, and 1,003 wagons at a cost of £157,524; total, 1,169 vehicles at a cost of £569,639. Of these, 11 engines and 698 wagons were built in the Ipswich workshops at a cost of £137,682, and 84 engines and 305 wagons were built under contract for £347,892. On the 30th June we had under construction 19 engines, estimated to cost £68,970; 12 lavatory cars, estimated to cost £16,740; 35 other carriages, estimated to cost £29,247; and 650 wagons, estimated to cost £110,725; total number of vehicles, 616; total estimated cost, £231,682. Of these, 9 engines and 361 wagons are being built in the Ipswich workshops, at an estimated cost of £92,261; and 10 engines and 289 wagons are being built under contract at an estimated cost of £93,434. It is proposed during the current year to build 38 additional engines, 24 lavatory carriages, and 865 wagons. If hon. members will turn to pages 98 and 99 of the Commissioner's report they will find that last year we added 38 engines and 523 wagons to our rolling-stock, so that it can hardly be said that during the last two years we have not been pushing on with the construction of rolling-stock.

Mr. BOOKER (*Maryborough*): To show the confidence that the local people have in the future of the Mary River district I may just mention that when the sale of the Traveston Estate took place, before there was any knowledge just where this railway would go, the land was purchased by local people, who have a knowledge of the richness of the Mary lands, at prices ranging from £2 to £10 per acre. That, I think, clearly indicates the richness and productiveness of the Mary River lands. One great recommendation of this railway is that it will open up large areas of timber lands. It is well known to those who know anything about the timber industry that supplies at the present time are nothing like up to the demand for log timber. During the last twelve months the largest mill in Maryborough, that of Messrs. Hyne and Son, has had repeatedly to hang up, and at other times to work only half-time, because they could not get timber. I take it that with the construction of this railway we shall have a repetition of our experience in connection with the extension from Wondai to Kingaroy. The timber is there, the people are waiting for the timber, and the people in the country are waiting for sawn timber to make their improvements. The timber industry gives employment to thousands of people directly and indirectly, and I think it is the duty of the Government to submit a proposition of this kind, as the construction of this railway will be the means of affording lucrative employment to a great number of people. I do not know of any better means of finding employment for the people than the opening up of agricultural and timber areas by the building of this railway. At present the Kingaroy timber area is supplying timber to Bundaberg, Maryborough, Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne; and the consideration of the line now before the Committee will open up other large timber areas, so that I cannot follow hon. members opposite in opposing this proposition.

Mr. MURPHY: We are not opposing it.

Mr. BOOKER: Hon. members opposite claim to represent the workers of the country, and they should take into consideration the fact that the building of this line will afford employment to thousands of people directly and indirectly.

Mr. HARDACRE (*Leichhardt*): I merely wish to indicate my position with regard to this railway. I protest against the resolution as I have protested against the proposals with regard to other railways, on the ground that we have not got sufficient information. It is the old move of bringing forward railways in a haphazard fashion, without sufficient information to enable members to form an opinion as to the wisdom or otherwise of the proposition. But if there is one railway of which I approve more than another, it is the line now before the Committee. It has been before us for many years, it will traverse good country and open up a large area of timber land, and we have more information with regard to it than we have been furnished with in regard to other railway proposals. The recommendation from the Commissioner is the strongest recommendation we have had from that officer. But in voting for this railway it does not necessarily follow that we are committed to voting for a loan to build the line.

Mr. MURPHY: What rot!

*Mr. Hardacre.*

The TREASURER: How are you going to build it without a loan?

Mr. HARDACRE: I wish to make myself clear on this point. If we vote for these resolutions we merely indicate that we approve of the plan, section, and book of reference of the line—we merely declare that the proposed route is a good one. When we come to the question of finding the money, we can say whether we think a loan should be floated or not. I shall object to the loan proposal when it comes before the House.

The TREASURER: Do you expect this railway to be built out of revenue?

Mr. HARDACRE: No, I do not; but I say these resolutions are merely a declaration of the opinion as to which way the railway should go—that it is a railway which should be constructed some time or other; but the finding of the money for its construction is a different question altogether. This proposal is a mere declaration of policy, just as the Great Western Railway Bill was a declaration of policy, but the question of finding the money for the line is a different matter.

The TREASURER: How do you propose to find it?

Mr. HARDACRE: We may not want to find it at all just now; we may decide to find it later on. If the line is to [5.30 p.m.] be built out of loans for other works, then I am going to oppose it. Before we enter upon any railway proposals at all, we should have a loan account placed before us to show how much loan money is in hand, how many railways we have already authorised to build out of that loan money, and what balance, if any, is left.

The TREASURER: You will find all that information in the Financial Statement and the Treasurer's tables, and in the Auditor-General's report.

Mr. HARDACRE: But we should have that information before us when we are asked to consider the railway policy of the Government. Of course we can discuss that when we come to consider the question of finding the money for all these railways. In the meantime I am going to support this resolution approving of the plan, section, and book of reference, and my approval will stop there. When we come to the question of finding the money I shall then decide whether we should find the money now or in some other session. I am voting purely for what is now before the Committee. Some hon. members voted for the North Coast Railway Bill, but that did not commit them to voting for a big loan policy. That is entirely a different question.

The TREASURER: How else can the railway be built?

Mr. HARDACRE: They may say, "We do not want to borrow the money now. We are merely deciding now whether the railway is a good one, and whether it should be constructed; but we are not going to find the money for two, three, or five years." One of the reasons why I am induced to vote for this railway is because it will open up a good deal of timber country. Whilst I agree with those hon. members who advocate the establishment of a State sawmill, I am concerned more than anything else about opening up timber country. It is not a very difficult thing to establish a sawmill. The price of timber is high, and there would be

[*Mr. Hardacre.*]

scores of men prepared to establish a sawmill. You can do it for £1,000 if you can only get timber. I am of the opinion that we should do something to bring down the price of timber. Sawmills will be established if timber country is opened up, and they will compete with existing sawmills, and in that way they may bring down the price of timber. It will help to break up the ring.

The PREMIER: If we had a sawmill, we could have high wages for labour and low prices for timber. (Laughter.)

Mr. HARDACRE: It would go in that direction. There are economic reasons why, unless something is done in that direction, the whole of the benefit will go into the hands of private individuals. I do not think that it commits us to find the money for the railway if we vote for these resolutions, unless we want to find it. (Laughter.) I am voting for the resolutions on that distinct understanding. When we come to the question of finding the money, I shall exercise my own judgment as to whether I shall vote for it or not.

Mr. MURPHY: I really cannot understand the attitude taken up by the hon. member for Leichhardt. He says it is very desirable that this railway should be built—that it will open up big timber reserves, and that it will promote settlement, and he is going to vote for the railway; but, when he has voted for the railway, he is not going to vote to borrow the money with which to build the railway. The position I take up with regard to the railway is this: I say it will open up good country and big timber reserves, but I am going to vote against it because I am not in favour of a big loan policy. Is that not the proper attitude to take up?

The PREMIER: It is the logical attitude to take up.

Mr. HARDACRE: That question is not before us just now.

The TREASURER: It is consistent, at any rate.

Mr. MURPHY: I am always consistent. On 23rd December, 1908, we passed a loan of £3,208,000, and amongst the parliamentary papers for that year you will find full particulars of the loan. I take exception to this railway because I am against a further loan policy.

The PREMIER: There is no question of a loan before the Committee just now.

Mr. MURPHY: Not except so far as it explains my objection to this railway. We have already given the Government authority to borrow £3,208,000, but, as the Premier is not anxious to have the particulars of that loan placed before the Committee at the present time, I shall reserve giving the details until the Loan Bill comes along. Within the last two years we have given the Government authority to borrow over £3,000,000 for railways, and they talk about more railways being required for settlement. First of all we shall have the Secretary for Railways telling us that we have built 4,000 miles of railway, and that we have got a greater mileage than any other State in the Commonwealth in proportion to population.

Mr. MANN: And a bigger debt per head.

Mr. MURPHY: And now the Government want to build more railways. I think that the proper policy for the Government to adopt would be to promote settlement along

the railways we have already built. Has the fullest advantage been taken of the railways already constructed? I do not think so. I am not taking exception to the report of the Commissioner upon this railway. I am not finding fault with the advocacy of the line by hon. members. Mr. Phillips and other engineers had previously pointed out that there is good agricultural land and timber along the route of the railway; but I am going to vote against the railway, when the Loan Bill is introduced, because I am not going to be in the position that the deputy leader of the Opposition was in when the Loan Bill for £3,000,000 was before us. I am not going to have the Premier saying to me, as he said to the hon. member, "You voted for all these railways, what exception can you take to the loan policy of the Government now?"

The PREMIER: You are going to be consistent, and hang Queensland.

Mr. MURPHY: No. I am going to be consistent, and try to save Queensland. That is the policy that the hon. gentleman himself taught us when I came here in 1904. It is his own policy. If the hon. gentleman changes, is that any reason why I, who was a pupil of the hon. gentleman, should change also?

The PREMIER: Certainly.

Mr. MURPHY: Not at all. The hon. gentleman has run away from his policy of steady development and sober prosperity, and has gone in for a big boom policy; and I am not prepared to follow him. I am not prepared to vote for a big loan policy. I could quote speeches delivered by the hon. gentleman to show the curse this big loan policy has been to Queensland. I want to see Queensland progress steadily and healthily; and because I desire that I am not going to vote for any of the railways that the Government are now introducing in order to pacify some of their supporters.

The PREMIER: Although the hon. member for Gympie promised to support a railway in your electorate. (Laughter.)

Mr. MURPHY: If a railway was proposed in my district at the present time, and it meant a big addition to the public debt, I would not vote for it. (Laughter.)

Mr. CORSER: Next, please!

Mr. MURPHY: The hon. member for Maryborough says "Next, please!" Well, his railway is next on the list, and we shall have the hon. member for Bundaberg and the hon. member for Musgrave criticising it pretty adversely. I suppose I shall be the only member in the Chamber who will vote against this railway. Somehow, I often find myself just by myself, as it were. I was by myself when I kept the Premier in office; I was by myself when I did not get the Premier out of office; and I suppose I shall be by myself now. (Laughter.)

The ACTING CHAIRMAN indicated that the hon. member's time had expired.

Mr. RYLAND: I cannot agree with the hon. member for Croydon when he says that when we vote for this railway we necessarily vote for a loan policy. Surely I can vote for public works without it being said that I am voting in favour of a loan policy! There are other ways of carrying out public works than by loan. The Premier himself has carried out public works out of revenue, and it can be done again. I consider that we should spend

a certain amount of revenue on public works every year as a sinking fund. At the present time we do not put by one penny as a sinking fund. If we spent £1,000,000 a year out of revenue on public works that would be creating a sinking fund, because we would be increasing our assets without increasing our liability, and it would return more money to the State instead of increasing the interest bill.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I think that the hon. member is slightly departing from the question. That is not the question before the Committee.

Mr. RYLAND: There have been a good many speakers out of order. It is not necessary for me to change my vote on this railway because I am against a loan policy, because I see other ways of paying for the construction of the line. Take the case of our Australian Parliament. We have one party there in favour of borrowing and another party opposed to borrowing, and the Government in power now are in favour of building up an Australian navy out of revenue. The result is that to-day we have the two Australian destroyers, the beginning of the Australian navy, landed in Australian waters, and no loan money at all spent in the purchase of them.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope that the hon. member will keep to the question before the Committee, which is the approval or disapproval of the plan, section, and book of reference.

Mr. RYLAND: I am going to vote for this railway, but I intend to vote against the loan policy of the Government. The hon. member for Cairns, in speaking about the one-third which the Gympie Council had agreed to guarantee towards the cost of this line, said that the Gympie Council were prepared to pay that amount, and he says that it is not a very big thing. I say that it is a big thing. I hope that the Minister will not ask that such a big guarantee should be imposed on the Gympie Council.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I did not ask them. They offered it.

Mr. RYLAND: In the case of the North Coast Railway, the Cairns Council have to pay one-tenth, the Mackay Council one-tenth, Rockhampton one-fifth, and Townsville one-fifth. Why, then, should the Minister make the Gympie people pay one-third just because they are a benevolent people there? It is not fair.

Mr. FORSYTH: They offered it voluntarily.

Mr. RYLAND: Even if they did offer it, I do not think that the Minister should take it from so generous a people. The Government should deal with all alike, and treat all in a fair and square business-like manner, and take no advantage of anyone. I should say that one-tenth was a fair thing for Gympie and one-tenth for Brisbane, because Brisbane is going to get the greater benefit from this railway, as the majority of the timber from there will come down to Brisbane, instead of going to Gympie.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN indicated that the hon. member's time had expired.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN (*Kennedy*): It is very nice to go from sheep to timber. We heard a lot in connection with the railway Bills last week about the country carrying sheep, and now we hear a lot of talk about timber. I

Mr. O'Sullivan.]

do not see where the Government has made any provision for reserving any of our timber areas for future requirements.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! The question before the Committee is the approval or disapproval of the plan, section, and book of reference, and not in regard to reserving forests.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: This railway is to serve the country where there is timber, and ostensibly to gather the timber now growing there, and I am giving my views against the depletion of our timber areas in this way.

Mr. CORSER: It will also settle people on the land.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: If you take away all that timber without making provision for growing timber to take its place, it will not be long before all the timber is sent to the mill. This railway is not going to benefit anyone up there except the speculator in connection with the timber country. That is what is behind this railway proposal.

The TREASURER: You do not really believe that?

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: The Commissioner says that it will be an expensive railway to build, and it will be years before it will pay. It will pay indirectly by the timber upon it, but the debt of the railway will be there for ever, according to the policy of this Government, because they never make any effort to have a sinking fund, so as to wipe out the whole of the indebtedness on this railway. The Government are not looking after the interests of the country in connection with this railway. The hon. member for Maryborough talks about the enhanced value of the land which will follow the building of the railway, but he will never be the man to help the State to recover some of that enhanced value. That is a reason why I think it is a mad policy, because I think that, although the railway will pay indirectly, it will never pay off the debt. That is not a good policy for the State, as we have pledged ourselves too much already. I think I shall have to oppose it on that ground. This is done for a sop to those who accepted the Great Western Railway and the Great Northern Railway. The members who will be served by this railway will be able to justify their votes on the big railways and the great boom policy of the Government by pointing to this railway. They voted for the other railways because they got this railway.

Mr. MULCAHY: I must apologise to the Committee for getting up a second time, as I want to see the railway passed, but I want to say a word or two in reply to the hon. member for Kennedy. The hon. member for Kennedy simply makes an assertion. Anyone can make an assertion. I can say myself that the hon. member had certain designs and just make the bald statement. As a matter of fact there is nothing at all in the statement about catching votes or this being a sop for the Great Western Railway and coastal railway at all. The matter has been clearly put before the people who are interested, and the people who will have to pay if there is a deficit on this line. The people have been consulted on it, and they are in favour of it. I notice that those who are farthest away and who know the least about it are more inclined to criticise it than anyone else. I have some knowledge of the views of the people interested in this matter, as I have been amongst them for thirty years, and I also know something about the district and have

[*Mr. O'Sullivan.*]

a good knowledge of the country, and I can say that the hon. member for Kennedy is altogether wrong. He is absolutely wrong. The people there have been consulted, and they are the best judges of the matter. The people who live 1,000 miles away know absolutely nothing about it.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: What I said about this railway was in the public interest. I am looking to the future as well as hon. members who are supporting the line. We have heard about there being so many million feet of timber; and I think the people who have got in already want to make what they have got more valuable by the building of this railway. It has been said that there are so many timber reserves owned by the Government; but the members representing the district will bring pressure to bear on the Minister for Lands to throw open those reserves for agricultural purposes.

Mr. CORSER: He would not do it. You try it.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: It has been done before. There was a discussion between the late Minister and the present Minister as to the pressure brought to bear to get some particular forest reserve thrown open. My objections to the construction of this line are quite above-board. It is not because I live in the North that I should shut my eyes to what is done for the South, any more than Southern members should shut their eyes to what is done for the North. Some members object to the line because of the loan policy involved in the building of these railways, and it has been asked how they are to be built without borrowing the money? If we were to show how to build railways without going to the loan market, you would rule us out of order, although we could show to the country how we could build railways without pledging ourselves to "Cohen" every time. It would be against the forms of the House to do so now, but when we get out into the country we will show how the country could be developed without pledging ourselves head and shoulders to a foreign money market. Even if we showed explicitly and clearly, you would not see a bit of it in the Press of Brisbane.

Mr. COLLINS (*Burke*): I voted against the big railway propositions of the Government, believing it was their intention to go in for a big loan policy; and I am opposed to this line for the same reason. We might be able to propound a scheme of railway construction without a loan policy; but as we are not the Government, and believing that the Government intend to go in for a loan policy, and having voted against the other railways, I intend to vote against this. I know it is fairly good country, but if the question goes to a division I shall be found voting against it, to be logical and consistent in my opposition to their loan policy.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The ACTING CHAIRMAN reported the resolutions.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I move that the resolutions be now agreed to by the House.

Mr. MANN: I wish to insert the following amendment:—

3. That this House approves that a minimum wage of 8s. 6d. per day be paid to the adult workers thereon.

It is quite possible that this railway may be

built by contract, as the Minister may want to give somebody a big job as a test to see whether day labour or the contract system is the best, and I want to insert this so that at least a fairly decent wage may be paid. Strikes have occurred on every railway built during the last two or three years, and we want that done away with. Every member should deplore seeing men go out on strike because the Government refuse to meet them in the matter of wages. The Government may be paying a good wage, but we want proof; and I have never seen men asking for a wage that is unreasonable—only a fair thing. In view of the general prosperity, and the fact that the cost of living has gone up very much during the last two or three years, I think there should be a general uplifting of wages. When times are bad wages are reduced; and we think it is only a fair thing, seeing that the Government have been raising the wages of the higher-paid public servants, that the men doing the hard work—the dirty work, if I

[7 p.m.] may use the term—of railway making should get a living wage. These men have a good deal of broken time on account of wet weather, and if they average £1 a week and rations they do well under present conditions. It is said that low wages are paid in the agricultural industry, and that may apply to Southern Queensland, but right throughout the North the lowest is about £1 5s. a week and found; and I think the wages paid to men working on railways should at least equal the wages paid to those men. I do not wish to labour the question any further, and I will conclude by moving the amendment which has been handed to you, Sir.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The wording of the resolutions, as hon. members will notice, is the question of approving of a certain route of railway. There is no question with regard to construction. At the present juncture this House has no knowledge as to whether the line will be proceeded with or not. Up to the present there is no question of finance raised in the resolutions. The amendment of the hon. member for Cairns imposes a charge on the revenue. At present there is no recommendation to the House in regard to it, and I therefore rule that the amendment is out of order.

Mr. MANN: I beg to move that your ruling be disagreed to, for the reason that a similar question was brought before Mr. Speaker Bell, and the same point of order was raised by the hon. Mr. Philp, the member for Townsville, and Mr. Speaker Bell disallowed the point of order, and ruled that the amendment was properly before the House. In fact, the Premier raised a point of order. It will be found on page 167 of *Hansard*, vol. civ., 1909, as follows:—

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.

A similar amendment was not moved yesterday, and I just wish you to know that the Premier did not take the point of order that you, Sir, have taken. He merely claimed

that, as the matter had already been decided by the Committee, it could not be put before the House. Mr. Speaker Bell replied—

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.

Then the hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Philp, raised a point of order. He said—

There is no rate of wages mentioned in the 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. This is a matter for the Commissioner for Railways.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! May I interrupt the hon. member? The hon. member for Townsville overlooked the fact—he said there had been a message. I say there has been no message presented relating to these resolutions.

Mr. MANN: I just wish to point out that, although the hon. member for Townsville raised a point of order, the Speaker took no notice of it, and allowed the amendment, "That the words proposed to be inserted be so inserted," to go to a division. Then, later on, I moved another amendment on an almost similar basis. The previous amendment was Mr. Lesina's amendment, and then I moved, "That the rate be on a similar basis to that paid in New South Wales," and the member for Townsville took the same point of order, and the Speaker said—

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

Hon. R. PHILP: Yes.

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. I 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 is 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.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member for Cairns: Was any amendment mentioned after Mr. Lesina's amendment had been defeated?

Mr. MANN: There was in the first instance—8s. a day; and I moved practically a similar amendment, and I ask you to note this: That the Premier again took a point of order, as follows:—

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."

Mr. Mann.]

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—

You will note, Mr. Speaker, that an amendment had been moved—

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. 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.

That is the ruling of Mr. Speaker Bell, a man who gave very careful consideration to the Standing Orders of this House, and it is on that ruling that I move that your ruling be disagreed to. I may be wrong in doing so, but we have that precedent; and of course it is for you to uphold it if you please. But while I have that precedent I think I am justified in moving that your ruling be disagreed to.

The PREMIER: I rise to support your ruling, because, apart altogether from the question of whether it is proper to insert an amendment with regard to wages before His Excellency has asked the House for any money in connection with the railway at all—

Mr. MAY: Have you got the money for the other railways yet?

The PREMIER: When the Government asks for money, and in pursuance of that the House goes to the consideration of ways and means, the matter may be different. But putting that aspect of the question altogether aside, I think that this aspect of the case will appeal to hon. members. This is not the first time this motion has been before the House.

Mr. MANN: The first time this amount has been.

The PREMIER: It has had this motion before it already, and remitted the motion to the Committee. The Committee was unable to alter it in the way desired by the hon. member for Cairns, because the House had given no instructions to the Committee. The Committee had to keep to the instructions given it, and now—after the question has been before the House, been remitted to the Committee, and comes back to the House for confirmation or rejection by the House—the hon. member wants to alter it altogether.

Mr. MANN: What was the use of moving it before we accepted the railway? The railway has been accepted, and now we move this.

The PREMIER: It seems to me that if any hon. member wants to amend this motion in the direction indicated, the proper way to do it is when the motion comes before the House; when the House is remitting it to the Committee to give an instruction to the Committee to alter the motion accordingly.

Mr. MANN: The Committee may refuse to carry the railway—there may be no necessity to make a rate of wages.

The PREMIER: I do not know whether the question of wages can be brought up

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then, because no money has been asked for the railway. But if the House has remitted this resolution to a Committee without giving any instructions to the Committee on this head, and the Committee consider the matter and send it back to the House for their approval, it is manifestly bad procedure to commence altering such an important matter now, and for that reason I quite agree with your ruling.

Mr. MURPHY: I would like to point out that when this railway went into Committee there was a possibility that the Committee would not agree to the plans and books of reference—the Committee might not have agreed to the construction of the railway either. Now, the Committee did agree to the plans and books of reference, and went further—it agreed that the matter should be transmitted to the Legislative Council for their approval also. We come back to the House with you in the chair, and we say the Committee, having agreed to pass this railway, should have the right to insert the rate of wages which should be paid. The Premier has pointed out that we have asked for no money, and that is quite true, but is not this the proper time to lay down what we propose to pay on that railway?

The PREMIER: Certainly this is not the proper time.

Mr. MURPHY: That would be an intimation to the Government to ask for money to construct this railway at that particular rate of pay. I think the hon. member for Cairns was in order in moving his amendment. Various Speakers look at matters from what they believe to be the proper standard, and I hope the hon. gentleman will not press this matter to a division, but that he will accept your ruling. Mr. Speaker Bell ruled from his point of view believing it was right, and I believe that during the tea hour you gave the matter consideration, and came to the conclusion that the ruling you proposed to give was a correct one.

Mr. McLACHLAN: I regret, Sir, that you have seen fit to rule in this direction, because I contend that the situation to-night is exactly the same as we had last year when a similar matter was brought before the House. I would like to refer to Standing Order No. 178, which reads as follows:—

Resolutions reported from a Committee of the whole House shall be read by the Clerk throughout without a question, and may be agreed to or disagreed to by the House, or agreed to with amendments, or recommitted to the Committee; or the further consideration thereof may be postponed.

It seems to me that, under that Standing Order, we have a right in the House to amend any set of resolutions that may be sent to the House from the Committee. Under that Standing Order there is quite a number of powers conferred upon the House. I contend that we are perfectly in order, under that Standing Order, in endeavouring to amend the resolutions as sent from a Committee of the Whole to the House.

Mr. MANN: I desire to withdraw the motion, with the intention of moving it on the next Railway Bill. If we get it in one Bill, it will satisfy me, because the same rate must be paid on all the lines before us.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion be withdrawn?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!  
Motion withdrawn accordingly.

Question—That the report be adopted—put and passed.

## WOODFORD TO KILCOY RAILWAY.

## PROPOSAL TO GO INTO COMMITTEE.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I beg to move—

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 extension from Woodford to Kilcoy, in length 17 miles 29 chains.

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. MANN: Before we agree to the motion, I desire to move, as an amendment, that after paragraph 1 there be inserted a new paragraph as follows:—

2. That this House approves that a minimum wage of 8s. 6d. per day be paid to the adult workers thereon.

As hon. members have already heard my arguments in favour of paying the wage mentioned, I shall not labour the question any further, but shall content myself with simply moving the amendment in order to widen the scope of the resolutions.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I give the same ruling on this amendment as I gave on the last motion before the House—that as this amendment proposes a charge, and there is no message from His Excellency the Governor recommending the necessary appropriation for the railway before the House, the amendment cannot be put.

Mr. MANN: I wish to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this amendment—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The amendment is not before the House, as I have ruled it out of order.

Mr. MURPHY: Mr. Deputy Speaker.—As you have ruled the amendment out of order, I now ask your ruling as to whether these resolutions are properly before the House? These resolutions deal with the construction of a railway; the construction of a railway means the expenditure of money, and I take it that before a proposal of this kind can be properly before the House there must be a message from His Excellency the Governor recommending the necessary appropriation. I therefore ask your ruling as to whether we can debate the question of the construction of a railway when no message with regard to it has been received from the Governor?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member has asked my ruling as to whether the resolutions are properly before the House. If they were not properly before the House, they would not be on the business-paper. All the House is asked to do by this motion is to approve of the plan and specification of the proposed railway as laid on the table of the House. The question of ways and means is a matter which the House will have to consider later on.

Mr. MURPHY: Well, the amendment having been ruled out of order, I propose before you leave the chair to say a few words on the motion.

The PREMIER: You have spoken on this before.

Mr. MURPHY: No; only on a point of order. If I am out of order the Deputy Speaker will call me to order and not the Premier. I object to the motion moved by the Secretary for Railways, because if I agree

to the plan, section, and book of reference of this proposed railway extension from Woodford to Kilcoy, in length 17 miles 29 chains, it means that I agree to an addition to the loan liability of the State. Moreover, I may be agreeing to the construction of a railway on which the men will be paid a small rate of wages. But, leaving that matter at one side, I take the same objection to this motion as I took to the previous motion, that the loan burden of Queensland at the present time is £74 per head of the population, and that by passing these railways we shall increase that burden by £12 or £14 per head. I do not think we shall be acting rightly or justly towards the State if we rush railways through in this manner, and so increase the burdens of the people. Before we agree to the motion it should be shown that there will be a large increase of population to help us to bear the enormous interest burden which the construction of these railways will entail upon the people, and as that has not been shown I object to going into Committee to consider this question.

Mr. MULLAN (*Charters Towers*): I wish to move as an amendment that the following words be inserted at the end of the first paragraph, after the word "chains":—

The construction of this line shall be by day labour.

I do not think that amendment will impose any additional liability upon the revenue or the loan fund, and it requires very little argument from me to show that the amendment is a reasonable and desirable one. We know very well that if the railway is built by contract there is a possibility that the taxpayer will have to pay very dearly for it. A contractor must have a big inducement in the way of big profits, and the only way he can get those profits is by robbing the State or sweating the men whom he employs. We want to avoid that unsatisfactory and undesirable state of affairs by compelling the Government to build this railway in the way they have been building railways in the past. If we adopt the contract system, somebody will have to pay the piper. There will be a duplication of supervision—the Government will have an engineer supervising the construction work, and the contractor will also have an engineer supervising the work, and the country must pay for that double supervision. That kind of thing does not make for economy. Having regard to our experience in the past with the contract system, and to the fact that we have been very successful in building railways on the day-labour system, I think we should adhere to the day-labour system until it is proved that it is unsatisfactory. All the evidence we have goes to show that it is working satisfactorily, and the only reason I can see for departing from it is that we are going to embark on a huge policy of "borrow, boom, and burst"; that the Government, in order to sustain that policy, will have to embark on the additional policy of placating their followers, and that an easy way of doing that is to offer them contracts. If this House is actuated by a desire to stand by the best interests of the country, and to consult the wishes of the taxpayers, who will have to bear the burden, I ask it to accept the amendment I have just proposed.

Mr. MURPHY: I shall have very much pleasure in voting for the amendment.

The PREMIER: Or any other amendment.

Mr. MURPHY: We have heard that the Premier intends to improve the condition of the men working on the railways,

*Mr. Murphy.]*

and, if the railways are still built by day labour, the hon. gentleman [7.30 p.m.] will be in a position to improve the condition of the men who have been engaged in building our railways for some years past. I think the majority of hon. members believe that our railways should be constructed by day labour; but we have to try to get an amendment of this nature inserted in these railway proposals because we recognise that the Secretary for Railways is extremely anxious to revert to the contract system, and this amendment will safeguard the working classes against the hon. gentleman.

Mr. MANN: I trust that the Government will accept the amendment, because, if they build the railways themselves, they can do for the men all that has been foreshadowed by the Premier to make their condition better. They can see that the men enjoy some social intercourse in the evenings away from hotels. They can have a club or an institute.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Premier has made no remarks upon that subject so far. Will the hon. member confine himself to the question before the House?

Mr. MANN: If the Premier has not said it, he ought to have said it. (Laughter.) If the contract system is introduced, the Government cannot lay down terms and conditions. They cannot tell a contractor that he must have a reading-room at every camp, with good wholesome literature for the men. They cannot insist upon proper sanitary conveniences being provided, or that the men shall be able to play draughts or chess or take part in other recreations to while away their evenings. But, if the Government build the railways themselves, they can provide all these things for the men without any trouble, and I am quite sure the men will appreciate it. If the Premier insists upon contractors doing these things, they will allege—and allege rightly—that they have never tried these conditions before, and that they prefer to see the men religiously get drunk after every payday and turn up “stiff” on the following Monday. They prefer men of that class, because they always have them under the lash. I hope the Government do not want to see men of that class working on the railways. I trust they desire to see men at work who will save their money, select land along the railway, and make homes for themselves when the railway is finished. For that reason—not to labour the question—I am supporting the amendment, as I believe it is a good one, and that it is the only way whereby the Government can keep control of the men and see that they do not waste their money on strong drink. From what has been said in this Chamber, it is evident that, even if you prevent hotels from opening along a railway line you will still have sly grog shanties; and the only way to keep the men out of those shanties is by providing them with some other attraction. I trust the Government will accept the amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I have not the slightest intention of accepting the amendment.

Mr. MANN: No; you are a contractor's man.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Despite what the hon. member for Cairns

*Mr. Murphy.*

and the hon. member for Croydon say, I am not a contractor's man, and the proof of that is to be found in the fact that whilst I have been Secretary for Railways not one contract has been let for a line of railway.

Mr. MULLAN: You tried to let a contract for the Boyne Valley Railway.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I am not going to enter into an argument with the hon. member to-night on that question. I have frequently stated the reason why some of the railway officials desire a contract to be let for the construction of a railway, and hon. members are perfectly cognisant of that reason. There is not the slightest necessity for the amendment in view of the fact that not one railway has been built by contract in Queensland since 1900.

The PREMIER: They know quite well they are only thumping a straw man.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: There is, therefore, no necessity for bringing forward such a proposal as this to tie the hands of the Government in the future.

Mr. MAY: “Prevention is better than cure.”

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

AYES, 23.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Way
„ Breslin	„ Mulcahy
„ Collins	„ Mullan
„ Coyne	„ Murphy
„ Crawford	„ McLachlan
„ Ferricks	„ Nevitt
„ Foley	„ O'Sullivan
„ Hamilton	„ Payne
„ Harlaere	„ Ryan
„ Lennon	„ Ryland
„ Mann	„ Winstanley
„ Maughan	

*Tellers:* Mr. Crawford and Mr. Ryan.

NOES, 30.

Mr. Allan	Mr. Grayson
„ Appel	„ Gunn
„ Barnes, G. P.	„ Hawthorn
„ Barnes, W. H.	„ Hodge
„ Booker	„ Hunter, D.
„ Bouchard	„ Keogh
„ Brennan	„ Kidston
„ Bridges	„ Paget
„ Corser	„ Petrie
„ Cottell	„ Philp
„ Cribb	„ Stodart
„ Denham	„ Swayne
„ Forrest	„ Tolmie
„ Forsyth	„ Walker
„ Grant	„ Wienholt

*Tellers:* Mr. Grayson and Mr. Swayne.

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Blair and Mr. Douglas.

Noes—Mr. Somerset and Mr. Rankin.

Resolved in the negative.

Original question put and passed.

COMMITTEE.

APPROVAL OF PLAN, ETC.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS, in moving—

1. That the House approves of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed extension from Woodford to Kilcoy, in length 17 miles 29 chains.

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: This forms part of the original line

from Caboolture to Woodford. It should never have stopped at Woodford. It should have been completed through to Kilcoy, thus giving the people on the Kilcoy repurchased estate that railway communication with the North Coast Railway that they were led to expect they would get.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Hear, hear! They were promised it.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I do not know whether they were promised it, but there was an implied promise that when that estate was purchased there would be railway communication there from the North Coast Railway.

The PREMIER: If they were not promised, the promise is now being carried out. (Laughter.)

Mr. LENNON: They were promised.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The extension of the Caboolture Railway to Woodford was passed in April, 1908, and it was completed at the beginning of this year. At the beginning of last year I had an opportunity of going to Kilcoy with Mr. Lethem, Chief Railway Surveyor, and Mr. Thallon, Commissioner for Railways, in order to inspect the country up there, and also to propose a route over which the survey should be made. The previous survey was carried for a few miles beyond Woodford. After inspecting the country on both sides of the railway, the two officials of the Railway Department and myself thought it was advisable that the survey should not be carried along the north side of the river over the ridgy country, but that it should be carried along the south side where there was better country. That was done, and I now ask the Committee to approve of this proposed extension. There is no question that along the route of this proposed extension there are large areas of good agricultural country in the flats, and there is also good agricultural country in other parts, and the balance of the country is eminently suitable for dairying.

Mr. COLLINS: Is there not any amount of sand there?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It is eminently suitable for dairying. This line will tap an enormous extent of timber country. We have just approved of a railway which goes into timber country.

Mr. MURPHY: Do the Government own this timber land?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: With the positive dearth there is of timber for building purposes at the present time it is wise that we should not have one or two, but five or six railways that will tend to make timber cheaper for the people who wish to build homes.

Mr. MANN: Why don't you build a railway into the Atherton Scrub and get to the soft timbers?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: On the Kilcoy Estate at the present time there are between 1,000 and 1,500 people settled, and the chief industry there is dairying. They do not carry on much cultivation for the reason that they have had a good many difficulties to contend with, especially before the Woodford line was built, owing to the fact that the road from Woodford to Caboolture was an exceedingly rough one. This line goes through 36,000 acres of good country, including 16,000 acres of reserves, but it will serve an area of 367,000 acres, the

majority of which is alienated or in process of alienation. In 1906 two officers of the Railway Department, Messrs. Palmer and Dwyer, reported on the timber possibilities or capabilities of that district. I do not wish to read the whole of the report, but they say here—

Neurum Creek.—Ironbark and blue gum for milling, 16,000,000 ft.; ironbark for railway bridges, 8,000,000 ft.; pine (hoop), 24,000,000 ft. Haulage to Woodford 6 to 10 miles.

Oakey Creek.—Ironbark for mill purposes, 14,400,000 ft.; ironbark for railway bridges, 1,600,000 ft.; pine (hoop), 60,000,000 ft.; crow's ash, yellow-wood, etc., 2,000,000 ft.

They say that the haulage to Woodford would be from 14 to 18 miles. On Splitter's Creek and the Deer Reserve there is ironbark for milling, 40,000,000 feet; pine (hoop), 64,000,000 feet. Again, on Sheep Station Creek and Jimna Ranges there is ironbark for milling, 160,000,000 feet; ironbark for railway bridge timber, 40,000,000 feet; blackbutt, blue gum, and tallow-wood, 320,000,000 feet; pine (hoop and bunya), 240,000,000 feet; crow's ash, yellow-wood, and other scrub hardwoods and silky oak, 15,000,000 feet.

Mr. LENNON: Are the figures reliable?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes. This is a report by Messrs. A. C. H. Palmer and P. Dwyer. They say they actually saw this timber. They saw the whole of the country.

Mr. COYNE: How could they measure the whole of the timber?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: They averaged it. I suppose—

Mr. LENNON: Do you know the basis?

The TREASURER: You are too critical.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The Commissioner, in his report, estimates that, apart from the timber which will be put on the rails at Woodford, about 2,000,000 tons of hardwood and 500,000 tons of pine will come to the line at various points between Woodford and Kilcoy.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: How does he get that?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I suppose every hon. member knows that about 300 feet of hardwood or 700 feet of pine go to the ton. This extension of 17 miles to Kilcoy will practically complete this railway for many years to come; but I dare say that in years to come an extension will be made connecting Kilcoy with Blackbutt. The Commissioner also says in his report—

There are considerable areas of agricultural land along the Stanley River and in the vicinity of Neurum Creek, and there is scrub land between the Stanley River and Sandy Creek. Fertile valleys are drained by the Kilcoy and Sheep Station Creeks, from which a considerable amount of agricultural traffic may be expected. The district is very suitable for dairying, but timber will be the principal source of traffic for some years.

Further, he says—

Much of the hardwood is suitable for long girders, piles, etc.

With reference to that remark, I would remind hon. members that we are building quite a number of railways; and I think it is an excellent thing, from a railway construction point of view, that we should be able to economically tap these large timber areas that contain such an enormous quantity of railway timber. The estimated cost of the line is £97,131, or £5,595 per mile. I wish to

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draw attention specially to a paragraph on page 2 of the Commissioner's report respecting the Railway district, as follows:—

The map showing the boundaries of the areas which in my opinion will be benefited by this line is bound with the plan and section, and I desire to point out that it is the same benefited area as was proclaimed for the railway from Caboolture to Woodford. Although the plans of the Caboolture to Kilcoy Railway have had to be submitted to Parliament in two sections (Caboolture to Woodford and Woodford to Kilcoy), it is my intention to keep one set of accounts for the whole line.

That means that the benefited area, or railway district, for the railway from Caboolture to Woodford is the same railway district that is proposed for the whole line from Caboolture to Kilcoy. Mr. Thallon, on page 3 of his report, says—

I estimate the revenue on the proposed extension after the first year at £300 per mile, which will give £5,175 per annum. The expenditure I estimate at £2,175 per annum, leaving a net revenue of £3,000 per annum to pay interest on the capital.

Hon. members will see that the total estimated cost, including rolling-stock, is £101,131; therefore the Commissioner estimates the net revenue at 3 per cent. on the capital cost of construction; and he estimates there will be no responsibility on the shoulders of the ratepayers within the railway district. He says—

From what I have seen myself, when travelling through the Kilcoy district, I am of opinion that the railway will be a payable one, and I recommend its construction.

I also recommend the plans to the favourable consideration of the Committee. I believe it is a railway that will pay from the jump; and it certainly will be a very great convenience to the settlers between Woodford and Kilcoy.

Mr. MANN: I rise for the purpose of saying that I would have supported this railway with much more readiness if we had been allowed to insert amendments in regard to rate of pay and the work being done by day labour. However, on the whole, the Commissioner speaks favourably of the line, but he pins his faith mostly on the timber traffic. I notice he says that "Messrs. Palmer (assistant engineer) and Dwyer (timber expert), after spending nineteen days exploring the country thoroughly, reported having seen enormous quantities of marketable timber." I am sorry the Minister for Lands is not here, because I wish to remind that hon. gentleman that this "Dwyer (timber expert)" recommended for a State forest a certain area of land which the Minister for Lands afterwards found was not worth reserving as a State forest.

The PREMIER: That has nothing to do with this motion.

Mr. MANN: It has a great deal to do with it. A certain area of land was reserved on his report; and the Minister declared, after examination, that

[8 p.m.] there was only a very small portion of it suitable for a forest reserve.

Mr. WALKER: What are you referring to?

Mr. MANN: I am referring to Tuchekeoi. Allow me to inform the hon. member that if a timber expert makes a wrong report once, he may do it again. Does the hon. member say now that the Tuchekeoi land was fit for afforestation?

Mr. WALKER: I will explain it later.

Mr. MANN: When it suits him he takes Mr. Dwyer's report, and when it does not suit

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him he goes to the Lands Department and says Mr. Dwyer made a wrong report, and gets another report made on Tuchekeoi Reserve, and got it thrown open for selection.

The PREMIER: That is exactly what you are doing.

Mr. MANN: I am pointing out that we are asked to build a railway on Mr. Dwyer's report.

The PREMIER: You supported him before.

Mr. MANN: I questioned very much the wisdom of throwing that land open for selection until such time as a thorough inspection was made, and if anybody refers to my speech they will find I did not commit myself in any way.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member will not pursue that subject, as it is outside the question before the Committee. He is quite right to refer to it, as he wishes to make a point with regard to following the report of the inspector, but he cannot discuss it at length.

Mr. MANN: I wish to point out in reply to the interjection of the Premier that I let the late Minister for Lands, Mr. Bell, and the present Minister for Lands, Mr. Denham, fight it out for themselves.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

Mr. MANN: I am just pointing out to the Committee that when we have had an expert making one mistake, we should be very careful about accepting his report on another occasion. That is the whole point I wish to make, and I have made it very effectively, although it won't change anyone's vote.

The PREMIER: Are you not going to vote for the line?

Mr. MANN: No; I am going to vote against the Government, because I want more information. I want to know if the timber is there, because I have found that very often when you send two men to report on timber you very rarely, if ever, get a similar report from the two men. Some men go into a scrub, and, if they see half a dozen trees, they get an idea that the whole scrub is the same. If it was found advisable to send another man to report on the Tuchekeoi lands, I think we ought to send another man to report on this country, and I can only emphasise my opinion by voting against this railway, because I say quite frankly, without getting some confirmation of Dwyer's report, I am going to oppose it. He may be a timber expert, but I want to know whether he went over this country or not, or whether he spent the nineteen days camping in the scrub and having a good time shooting and fishing? I am not saying that he did that, but having got one wrong report from him, I am not going to trust another, and for that reason I intend to record my vote against this railway. There may be another reason. If we examine into it closely, we find that the Commissioner himself is not too clear about what revenue the line will return. He estimated that the line from Caboolture to Woodford would earn about £300 a year, and for seven months it only earned £153.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Is that not near enough?

Mr. MANN: No, it is not near enough, for very often when a line is first built going through timber country there is a lot of timber waiting to be taken away.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: As a matter of fact there was none in connection with the Woodford line.

Mr. MANN: When the Tolga to Johnstone line was built there were hundreds of thousands of feet lying there waiting for a train to come along and take it away, and, in fact, it took a train a day more than what the Government anticipated to cope with the timber traffic, and if they had the rolling-stock they could have had running two special timber trains to cope with the timber that was there. That was in a very wet season, and if it had been dry they would have stuck the train up altogether. In spite of the fact that we were told the timber would be the best paying traffic on the Woodford line, we find in seven months the line only earned £153. I do not think the proposed line is justified when we know of other lines that would pay from the jump. No doubt this line was brought down to placate the hon. member for Moreton. He could not get a line from Terror's Creek, so this one has been brought down instead.

Mr. FORSYTH: It is to be regretted the hon. member for Cairns does not try to get a little more information before he addresses the Committee. He simply goes on Mr. Dwyer's report, but the report was got up by Mr. Palmer, an officer of the department.

Mr. MANN: He is an engineer, not a timber expert.

Mr. FORSYTH: It is his report the Government go by, although Mr. Dwyer knows the country very well. But we go on Mr. Palmer's report, and, as the Secretary for Railways says, this man has practically seen the timber, and he goes further than that, and says a good deal of country was undoubtedly missed. In his report Mr. Palmer says—

It would be almost impossible to over-estimate the quantity of timber on the watershed of this creek (Sheep Station Creek and Jimna Ranges) and on the creeks of the Mary River and Mossdale Creek.

This report took about nineteen days to get up, and they were assisted, of course, by the people of the district. Therefore I say the hon. member for Cairns should not go by the report of Mr. Dwyer, but rather by the report of the Crown officer who was sent there specially to report on the timber. That is the position. Really, when one looks at the figures, one can scarcely credit the enormous quantity of timber that is there. Mr. Palmer, as is stated in the report, gives the total quantity of hardwood, and he states in his report how much on each particular creek, and it runs into about 900,000,000 feet of hardwood, and the pine runs into about 753,000,000 feet of timber, or about 1,600,000,000 feet of timber altogether. One can scarcely credit figures like that, they are so enormous; and I say at the present time at Woodford they have some difficulty in getting the timber away that is there. There are as many as twenty-two teams a day coming into Woodford and discharging timber there, and there are about sixty to eighty teams at the present time engaged hauling timber to Woodford. This will give hon. members some idea of what the country is. It is quite true, as the Minister for Railways says, that this line really should have been passed by the House as from Caboolture to Kilcoy in the first instance, and the late member for Moreton, Mr. J. D. Campbell,

knowing that country so well, did his utmost to get the Government to pass plans and specifications from Caboolture to Kilcoy and make Caboolture the first section. He could not get that, so he took it to Woodford. If this report is correct, I know of no district in Queensland at the present time where there appears to be such an enormous quantity of timber suitable for railway bridges and sleepers. I have just totted up the quantity of timber suitable for bridges, and it runs up to between 90,000,000 and 100,000,000 feet.

Mr. MULLAN: How much on Crown lands?

Mr. FORSYTH: I went into that matter with one or two gentlemen who know this district very well. According to a report I have got there were 48,000,000 feet of timber on Neurum Creek, 75 per cent. of which is on Crown land; at Oakey Creek 78,000,000 feet, 60 per cent. of which is on Crown land; and on Splitter's Creek and Deer Reserve, 108,000,000 feet, nearly all of which is on Crown land. With regard to royalty, I have a list of all the timber on Sheep Station Creek and Jimna Ranges. The totals I have given come to 775,000,000 feet. If you take only half that, and base it upon 9d. per 100 feet hardwood, which is an exceptionally low figure, it will bring in £145,000. At Kilcoy Creek there is about 72,000,000 feet, nearly all hardwood. Taking half that amount it will bring in £13,500. There is 78,000,000 feet at Oakey Creek, half of which would bring in £14,625, and 108,000,000 at Splitter's Creek, half of which would bring £52,800. The total royalty based on one half of the timber, according to Mr. Palmer's report, would bring in £193,750. But we must bear in mind that there is a considerable portion of land already sold, and, therefore, these people who have got their land now would get the benefit of this timber. The large majority of the selectors in that district, both at Kilcoy and Woodford, are people who have purchased land from the Government and settled down. There were two very large estates taken up by the Government—the Durundur Estate and the Kilcoy Estate—and sold to selectors, and all that land has been settled. I do not think there is a single block which has not been taken up. One can tell how many people there are at Kilcoy from the roll, on which there are 450 names, so that there must be 1,300 people in that district, and it is one of the most flourishing districts in Queensland. There is a large quantity of cream sent from the dairy farms. There is a co-operative factory at Woodford, owned by the farmers, and they purpose as soon as this line goes out to put up a factory at Kilcoy for the benefit of the people in that district. We all know that when you leave Woodford you go into good country; it gets better all the way until you come to Kilcoy. Anyone who sees the scrub land there, with a creek of running water, will see what splendid country it is for agriculture, but at present the land cartage in addition to the railway carriage does not leave much for the farmers. While there was no distinct promise made with regard to the railway, there is not the slightest doubt that when those men took up selections at Durundur and Kilcoy they were under the impression that the Government were going to help them. If the Government settle the people on the land it is only right they should give them the means of getting their produce to market as cheaply and expeditiously as possible. Taking into consideration the large

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area of agricultural land, and the enormous quantity of timber throughout the whole of that district, I do not think anyone can possibly object to this line. It is different from the last line. The Commissioner states that he believes that this section of the line will bring in £300 a mile. That would mean that there would be £3,000 left to pay the interest upon the money expended, which is about £100,000, so that the burden on the State will be nil. The Minister for Railways has been there, and has all the information from his officers, and he must be satisfied that it will pay. I feel certain that a large amount of development in the district will take place as soon as this line is started. A great many people will take up land, and sawmills will be started, and a large quantity of timber will be cut and brought down to market. It has been said that this will be the means of bringing down the price of timber. One reason why timber is so dear at the present time is because the Victorian Government is sending men up from Victoria all around these districts to men who have got the timber, and they are giving a big price for it. The regular millers cannot get the timber unless they give a very large price. The timber-getters are making good wages.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: They work long hours.

Mr. FORSYTH: Yes; they earn what they make, but they are doing very much better now than what they have done for the past four or five years. I saw some of the teamsters' wages-sheet lately, and some wages went from £40 to £64 a month for one team. The teamsters own some of these blocks, and they are selling the timber to the Victorian Government. I sincerely hope that when this line is opened it may have the effect of making timber more easily procurable than it is now. I commend this line to the House.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN indicated that the hon. member's time had expired.

Mr. MANN: I just wish to get in a quotation from the Minister for Lands to show what he thought about the position with regard to Mr. Dwyer's report. We find this in *Hansard* for 1909, page 1209—

But before any area was absolutely locked up, apart from getting the authority of Parliament, there should be not a cursory inspection of a reservation at the instance of an irresponsible person, such as Mr. Dwyer, but a careful inspection by a competent person, to obviate the necessity of coming to the House to ask that any portion be deleted.

That is Mr. Denham's opinion of Mr. Dwyer. He would not even lock up an area of land for a State forest on that gentleman's report, though an error in such a case could be rectified in a year or two by throwing the land open for selection, as was done in the case of the Tuchekei lands. Yet the Government ask us to pass this railway, which will cost about £6,000 per mile, or a total of about £100,000, on the recommendation of this person Dwyer, who, the Minister for Lands says, is not capable of reporting even on a State forest. I think the Government should get a report from another man on the timber resources of this district before asking the Committee to pass this railway. What ground has this Committee for believing that Mr. Dwyer has given a reliable report in regard to the quantities of timber available in the district which will be served by the proposed railway? What proof have we that he has not blundered in this matter as he did in the case of the Tuchekei Forest? When the hon. mem-

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ber for North Rockhampton was speaking on the North Coast Railway he said the report of Mr. Cooke was entirely wrong, inasmuch as that officer stated there was very little agricultural country between Rockhampton and Broadsound, while as a matter of fact the hon. member knew there was a lot of splendid agricultural country as far as Yaamba, though he had no personal knowledge of the land beyond that point. When it suited hon. members opposite to take a Government officer's report they took it, but when it did not suit them they had no hesitation in saying that they did not agree with it. It would be an easy thing to send Mr. Burnett, who reported on the Tuchekei Forest, to report on the timber resources of this district. If that gentleman reported on the matter, and his report was favourable, we could pass this railway early next year, but I do not think we should be asked to pass it on the report of a man whom the Minister for Lands has condemned.

Mr. WALKER: I have read the report on this railway and have gone carefully into the whole matter, and I am convinced that Mr. Dwyer has given a correct report. Mr. Dwyer is a good man with regard to timber. When he was asked to make a report on the Tuchekei Reserve, he reported in favour of it being retained as a State forest, because it had splendid hardwood timber along the ridges, and the land was proclaimed as a State forest. Afterwards, when closer settlement took place along the coast, it was found that the scrub land was suited for paspalum, and it was accordingly thrown open for settlement, but the ridge country, which grows splendid ironbark, and which Mr. Dwyer recommended should be retained for reforestation, was kept for that purpose. Mr. Dwyer has been employed by the department to report on timber lands along the Central Railway and in other places, and I do not think there is a man in Queensland who is more capable of giving a reliable estimate of the value of timber lands. In fact he has made his living in the timber trade for a number of years. I think this railway should have been built at the time the Woodford Railway was constructed, as it is one which will open up a great deal of good country and pay handsomely. It is also one which should be made in the interest of the early settlers at Kilcoy, and I hope it will be built before very long.

Mr. MANN: I would point out with regard to Mr. Dwyer's report on the Tuchekei Forest that—

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! We cannot have a discussion on the Tuchekei lands or on the report made on those lands. Such a discussion has no reference to the question before the Committee. I allowed the hon. member to make a passing reference to it for the purpose of illustrating his argument, but it will not be in order to discuss the matter further.

Mr. MANN: The passing of this railway should depend upon our having full information with regard to it. The Minister for Lands said that Mr. Dwyer, who has reported on the timber in the district, is an irresponsible person.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. MANN: Did not the hon. member hear what I read from the speech of the Minister for Lands at page 1209 of *Hansard* for 1909?

There is only a saddle or ridge running through that land on which there are 3 or 4 chains of hardwood timber on each side.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. MANN: However, since you will not allow me to proceed on that line, I can only say that I am still of opinion that, if the Minister for Lands was right with regard to Mr. Dwyer's report on the Tuchekei lands, we should have a report from another man on the timber resources of this district.

Mr. MULCAHY: I rise to support this proposal. I have been many times over the country that will be served by this railway, and I am bound to say that it is a pity the line was stopped at Woodford. It should have gone on to Kilcoy in the first instance. Leaving Woodford, the country improves right out to Hopetoun, and I think it is a right thing to build this line. With regard to expert advice, it does not follow that if a man, even if that man be a Minister, says a man is not competent to give a reliable report, that that man should be condemned. I know Mr. Dwyer very well indeed, and I know that he has a very intimate knowledge of the value of timber, having been among timber all his life. He has made a success of timber-getting, and has been employed frequently by the Government, as well as by private individuals, to report on timber country.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He is a timber man.

Mr. MULCAHY: Yes, he is a timber man, and a very excellent judge of timber. Let me say to the hon. member for Cairns that he should not believe too much of what was said about the Tuchekei lands. I am convinced that Mr. Dwyer is a capable and competent man to report on timber country. I support this line, not only because of his report, but also because I have an intimate knowledge of the timber resources of the country it will traverse, and am of opinion that the line should be constructed.

HON. R. PHILP: I am very pleased the Government have brought in this railway proposal. I have always been a [8.30 p.m.] supporter of this railway. I know a good deal of the country myself. For years there has been a standing promise that the line would be extended to Kilcoy, and the Government are only now fulfilling that promise. The line will open up a lot of splendid agricultural land and an enormous quantity of timber land. I have heard the late member for Moreton, both in this House and out of it, talk about the enormous quantity of timber there is in this district. He was a timber man, and knew what he was talking about. I also know Mr. Palmer and Mr. Dwyer, and I know that Mr. Dwyer is a thoroughly competent man, and a man who has made a living—and a very good living—out of timber, and knows all about it. I am very sorry we cannot discuss the question of afforestation during this debate. We are building railways into some of the finest timber country in Southern Queensland, and I am sorry to see that it is desired to fell all this timber and drag it to market. We should keep our timber reserves as permanent reserves, and only cut down the matured timber. I would like to be allowed to read reports of what is being done in a poor country like South Australia in regard to afforestation.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I cannot allow the question of afforestation to be discussed during this debate.

HON. R. PHILP: I want the Secretary for Railways and the Secretary for Lands to remember that there ought to be permanent timber reserves. If properly conserved, we should always have timber in this country. I believe timber is the best crop than can be grown. In a poor country like Scotland, timber is worth £200 an acre. (Laughter.)

Mr. MURPHY: Trust a Scotchman for getting it in.

HON. R. PHILP: It is astonishing how the value of timber is rising. It has been found that the very best timber that can be got for railway work is Queensland timber. A great number of people will be settled there if this line is built.

Mr. COTTELL: They are already settled there.

HON. R. PHILP: Nothing like as many as will be settled when the line is built. I would never have voted for the first section of the line if I had thought it was to stop at Woodford. I said at the time that it should go on to Kilcoy. We have beautiful agricultural land, and we want to see it settled; and the way to settle it is to build railways into it. I am always prepared to support any railway which will open up agricultural land and good timber country, as this line will do.

Mr. MURPHY: I do not propose to take exception to the reports furnished by experts regarding the immense quantity of timber which will be tapped by this railway; nor do I propose to take any exception to the statement that good agricultural land will be opened up. I notice that there will be a good deal to pay for land resumptions, but, of course, those included in the betterment area will have to pay for that as well as find the 3 per cent. on the cost of construction. I rise for the purpose of entering a formal protest against the railway being built. Being opposed to a big loan policy, I must protect myself by stating that I intend to vote against this railway. I did not call for a division on the other line because I knew there would be only two or three voting against it. The Commissioner recommends this line, and the members who are interested in the district, who are thoroughly acquainted with the district, believe it will be a paying proposition. The hon. member for Moreton pointed out what would be received by the State in timber royalties from the country that will be opened up by the railway. In reply to an interjection made by me, the hon. member seemed to imply that I was suggesting that this timber should be sold in order that the money should be used for the construction of the railway. Now, I do not propose that at all, because earlier in the evening I pointed out that the timber really belonged to the people of Queensland, and that, under the Railway Act of 1906, the land through which the railway will run will have to bear a burden equal to 3 per cent. on the cost of the railway. It is a remarkable thing that no Australian Government ever proposed to build a railway out of revenue. Yet we find private companies have built lines out of what might be termed revenue. I do not know that the

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Mount Molloy line was built out of borrowed money. I do not know that the Stannary Hills Tramway was built out of borrowed money.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! The subject which the hon. member is now discussing would be more appropriately discussed when the Loan Bill is before the Chamber.

Mr. MURPHY: I take the same exception to this railway that I took to the previous line. I believe this district is capable of close settlement, and I believe that the railway would open up a tremendous area of timber country; but I do not believe that the users of that timber will benefit by the construction of this railway. I do not think there will be any great reduction in the price of timber, because we know that in all the Australian cities there is a big timber ring which is "rooking" the public. We are going to spend something like £6,000 a mile to construct a railway which will put thousands of pounds into the pockets of the timber ring. We are told that the line will put £200,000 into the coffers of the State. Well, if it does, I think it will be found that it will benefit the timber ring of Brisbane to the extent of £2,000,000. In other States we find the Government proposing to establish State brickworks because of the existence of a brick ring.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. MURPHY: I just want to point out that, while in other States they are considering the question of establishing State brickworks, we are proposing to construct a railway which will not benefit the users of timber in this State to any great extent. It is simply going to enrich those who have already made immense fortunes by controlling the timber trade of Brisbane.

Mr. MAUGHAN (*Ipswich*): I have very great pleasure in supporting this resolution. Knowing something of the district, as I do, I am in a position to give the railway my whole-hearted support. I know every inch of the district in which it is proposed to construct the line, and I can only say that the successful settlement of the Kilcoy and Durundur estates was made possible by the fact that every settler who settled on that country realised that it would not be very long before the railway would be extended to Kilcoy. I should just like to say that, had he been present to-day, there would not have been a more strenuous supporter of this resolution than the leader of the Opposition, Mr. Bowman. Some few months ago, the Minister will recollect, the senior member for Fortitude Valley, Mr. Bowman, and myself, formed portion of a large deputation, chiefly composed of residents of the particular district through which this railway will run, and we waited on the Minister.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is so.

Mr. MAUGHAN: It is only fair for me to say that on that occasion the senior member for Fortitude Valley promised that when this railway came before the House he would give it his whole-hearted support. It will be remembered that when the first section—Caboolture to Woodford—was going through the House, it was regarded as simply the first section of what would be a very important railway proposal in the near future. It was realised then by both sides of the House that the Caboolture to Woodford line would not become a good paying line until the extension to Kilcoy

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was approved of by this House. That is being done now. So far as the producers are concerned, apart from the timber-getters—I refer to the dairymen and the people settled on the land generally along this line—it will prove a great boon to them. It will open up a lot of fine country and promote a good deal of settlement, and anything which this House can do to make it easier for the man on the land—the timber-getter, the manufacturer of cheese and butter, the producer of maize and milk—anything we can do to make it easier for the producer to bring his produce to market as cheaply and as expeditiously as possible, should receive the support of this House.

Mr. MANN: We can only have a certain amount of railways.

Mr. MAUGHAN: After all, it is a matter for the people directly interested in that district. They, after all, are responsible. We have our responsibilities here, but when we discover that those who are directly interested in the matter really desire this railway we should simply come here and register their ideas in this Chamber. I have great pleasure in supporting the proposal. There is one little point which I would like to see amended in Mr. Thallon's report, and that is where he refers to the fact that provision is made for three wayside stations. I should like to see four stations.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is a matter for adjustment in the permanent survey.

Mr. MAUGHAN: I am sure that if there were four stations instead of three, as provided for here, that it would meet with the desire of a large portion of the people settled in that district.

Mr. COTTELL (*Toowong*): I do not rise for the purpose of opposing this railway, but I think there are other places where railways might have been built before this. (Hear, hear.) I know this country, and my objection to it is that practically the railway goes through private land all the way. We will not open one acre of Government land by this railway.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Oh yes. There are some. I gave the area.

Mr. COTTELL: It goes through a lot of private land. I object to the railway to this extent: I consider that the benefited area should be enlarged. We are taking the same benefited area for Woodford to Kilcoy as we had from Caboolture to Woodford. I consider that it should include Yabba and Jimna on the north-west, Belford on the north, and part of Mount Mee on the south. They certainly receive some benefit and should be included.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Mount Mee goes to Strathpine.

Mr. COTTELL: Not all of it. There is no doubt that many thousands more feet will be carried to Caboolture from Kilcoy than was carried from Woodford, but I consider that it is a good level road from Kilcoy to Woodford, and after they got the railway from Caboolture to Woodford it was easy for the teams to take it to Woodford. It would be just as easy to take the timber by teams to Woodford as it would to Kilcoy.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It saves 17 miles. That means two days by bullock team.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: And two good days.

Mr. COTTELL: I never drove a bullock team, so I know nothing about it.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I have, and I know all about it.

Mr. COTTELL: I think the Government could build better lines than the Woodford to Kilcoy line. I think if they had continued the Woodford line north to meet the Mary Valley line it would have been a lot better.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That can come another time.

Mr. COTTELL: I do not know if I am allowed to talk about timber, but I think it is time that the Government stopped the export of sleepers from Queensland, especially from the country districts.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: We have no power to stop it.

Mr. COTTELL: I would not call the country from Woodford to Kilcoy agricultural country, and I think that the Government could have built better railways elsewhere.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: I am pleased to hear the hon. member say that the Government could have chosen a better route. He showed very clearly that this railway is going to open up a lot of private land, and I am very glad that he pointed that out. I heard the Minister for Railways say by interjection that this line was going to pay very handsomely. I do not think that 3 per cent. is paying very handsomely.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: You are putting words into my mouth. I did not say handsomely at all.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: The hon. member was emphatic that it was going to pay. I do not think that returning 3 per cent. is paying at all. We have got nothing to allow for depreciation or for a sinking fund; we have just got £3,000 out of the capital expended amounting to £100,000. That is not very good business. It has been pointed out by the hon. member for Cairns that the line is not going to be such a good thing for the country. We are again going to tap our timber reserves, and I consider that we are going along too far. I impress upon the Minister that he should reserve thousands and thousands of feet of this timber for the Government's own use. You are going to build thousands of miles of railway, and there is the upkeep of these railways to think of, such as replacing sleepers and all that, and we will want the timber for that purpose, and we will have none left. It will be a ruinous policy for the country. We should make provision to conserve the hardwoods for our own use. This building of railways into our timber reserves seems to mean that we are going to use our machinery of government to exploit the timber reserves for the private capitalist. I am sure that will be the greatest thing in connection with this railway. It is going to serve private interests more than anything else. The hon. member for Ipswich pointed out that settlers have been waiting a long time for this line, and that is the only recommendation I see in it. I hope the timber-getters spoken of by the hon. member for Moreton will be able to make a little money, so as to be able to settle on the land, because that is another way in which the railway may do good. I think we are passing too many railways; we

are heaping up our indebtedness out of all proportion, and that overshadows all the good reasons in favour of the railway. If the line does not pay, the people in the benefited area will have to foot the bill, but the general public will also lose  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on the deal.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Three-quarters per cent.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: On the net amount you get from the loan you will be paying  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. You will be paying  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. for £97; and half a year will elapse before you can operate on the loan.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! The question of the loan is not before the Committee.

Mr. MAUGHAN: The hon. member is in doubt as to the possibility of the line paying. If he looks at the last report of the Commissioner for Railways, page 16, he will find that the passenger traffic during last year represented no less than 5,000 tickets on that small section between Caboolture and Woodford.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: For the six months?

Mr. MAUGHAN: Yes, it was only for six months. On page 62 of the report he will see that during the six months the revenue was £2,707, while the expenditure was £1,549, or a net revenue of £1,158, showing a percentage of £1 5s. 6d., which, under all the circumstances, is better than we expected. And directly we get to Woodford we have some of the most magnificent country in Queensland. If from Caboolture to Woodford we can show such results, I think the figures will be quadrupled when the line is extended.

Mr. MULLAN: I may point out that most of the revenue now obtained on this line is derived from the country beyond Woodford; and therefore the extension will absorb revenue already included in the Commissioner's report, and will not augment the revenue as much as is supposed. The hon. member for Kennedy deplored the fact of there being so much private land traversed by the railway, and the Minister supposes that the burden, if there is any loss, will be borne by the private owner; but the only thing the private owner guarantees is 3 per cent. on the capital expended until the line has been paying 3 per cent. for three years. He contributes nothing to the redemption of the money expended on the line. The cost to the taxpayer will be over £100,000, and there is no question that the lands traversed by the line will be increased in value by considerably more than the cost of its construction, and it would be a fair thing to ask them to do more than guarantee 3 per cent. for three years. I think they should help to pay the redemption of the money expended. Then the hon. member for Moreton pointed out the enormous amount that would be derived by the Government in the shape of royalties on the timber—amounting to something over £190,000. Would it not be a fair thing for the Government to make provision for the redemption of the cost of construction by asking that this money should be put into a sinking fund for that purpose? That would be statesmanship. I think the line will pay, but I think the absence of some provision for redemption of the cost of construction is not fair to the general taxpayer.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! A discussion on that matter would be more appropriate when the vote for this line comes

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up for consideration. We are now only asked to approve of the plan and specifications.

Mr. MULLAN: I think it is within the province of this House to have included in the resolutions we are asked to pass, a further resolution that sufficient [9 p.m.] of the royalty derived from the timber by the Government should be devoted to the redemption of the money expended in the construction of the railway. Had that been done, according to the figures given by the hon. member for Moreton, the line would have been built without any cost to the general taxpayer, and we would have had £90,000 surplus from the royalties on timber alone. Even that method is not the best, because I believe the lands in the vicinity will be enormously enhanced in value by the construction of this railway, and they should bear the cost of construction. Over and over again I have pointed out in this House the way in which the general taxpayers of Queensland are being unfairly dealt with by the fact that we are spending enormous sums on railway construction—

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

Mr. MULLAN: For which the State does not receive any adequate recompense.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order, order! That question does not come within the scope of the question before the Committee, which is to approve or disapprove of the plan, section, and book of reference of a certain railway.

Mr. MULLAN: I am pointing out something which the Government should have undertaken, and which some Government some day will undertake in the interests of the general taxpayer.

HON. E. B. FORREST (*Brisbane North*): The hon. member for Kennedy when speaking said the timber reserves were being exploited for private gain. No doubt private gain comes in to some extent, but let me say that the public want these timber reserves exploited very much, and it is only through private gain that the public can get them exploited. If the hon. member had any knowledge of what is going on in regard to the building trade, he would have understood that it is almost impossible to get timber to carry on the work. The price of timber has nearly doubled during the last year or so, and I say it is utterly impossible to get timber to carry on the industries and also building. Take the men engaged in the fruit industry. They cannot get timber for their fruit cases.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I hope the hon. member will connect his remarks to the question before the Committee, which is the approval or disapproval of plan, section, and book of reference.

HON. E. B. FORREST: If ever there was a line which ought to be constructed, to my mind, we have the one before us now. Everybody who has spoken about this line says it is going to develop all sorts of industries. Everything good that has been said about any line has been said about this one. I have not heard a sound objection to the line, and surely it ought to go through without wasting an hour or two on it! Everything that could be said from an industrial point of view, a dairying point of view, a farming point of view, from every point of

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view, has been said of this line, and why not let us get on and pass the line?

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The ACTING CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to certain resolutions.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I beg to move that the resolutions be agreed to by the House.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: I move that after the first resolution, the following words be inserted:—"That the railway be constructed by day labour." I think that would be a wise thing.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That has already been discussed when the resolutions were before the House.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: I beg your pardon; I thought we were on the next railway.

Question put and passed.

#### ALLORA TO GOOMBURRA RAILWAY.

##### PROPOSAL TO GO INTO COMMITTEE.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Mr. Deputy Speaker,—I beg to move—

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 extension from Allora to Goomburra, in length 8 miles 57½ chains.

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. O'SULLIVAN: I have much pleasure in moving that the following words be inserted after the first resolution:—"and that the railway be constructed by day labour." I do not think it needs any recommendation on the part of this House for the Government to adopt the system of day labour. I was very pleased to see in the Press that the Premier has decided to go in for an up-to-date way of providing for the pleasures and better living of men employed in the future in the construction of railways. I think that the credit of that can be given to the hon. member for Burke, who urged that the conditions of the workers in the construction of our railways could be very much improved. He urged that there should be certain things provided for the comfort and happiness of those workers, who were drawn away from cities and towns, to recompense them in some measure for the hardships entailed. We on this side are beginning to arouse public opinion to the need of better conditions prevailing on the construction of railways.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Does the hon. member move his amendment in connection with day labour or contract labour?

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: It applies more to day labour, in this way, that the contractor has no care as to how his employees are provided for. It is in the interests of a Government to see that the employees of contractors, and more particularly the employees in their own service, should have proper conditions. That argument applies very forcibly to any construction of railways, and by day labour more than by any other method. I do not wish to labour the matter, because it has been discussed so often. I think the Minister may accept the amendment, putting it in this concise form.

Mr. MAY: I support the amendment of the hon. member for Kennedy. I have

always been one of those who believed the day-labour system should be carried out in connection with the whole of our railways. We have had several railways put before us, and we have not yet been able to get this amendment included. We on this side are always willing to try and bring forward anything of a railway policy or the construction of railway lines which will be remunerative, and make the districts through which they run productive. We also believe that we have to protect the interests of the workers, whom we on this side mostly represent, and that they should work under fair conditions. We have always advocated that there should be a minimum wage in all the railway schemes which have been put forward, but we have been unsuccessful in getting the principle inserted, and also unsuccessful in getting the day-labour system properly enunciated by the Minister.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He built all railways by day labour.

Mr. MAY: We wish to have the railways built entirely by day labour. There have been hints thrown out in the Press—it has been hinted by the Minister—

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I did not hint about it at all.

Mr. MAY: The Minister said that he wished to have a trial of the contract system. We on this side want no trial of the contract system. We know how bad it has been in the past, and we do not want any more of it in the future. We know if you pay a man a fair day's wage, he will do a fair day's work. As I mentioned before, on the construction of a line between Hughenden and Richmond they paid a meagre wage, and the work was scamped. As long as I am here, I shall always try and do my best for the day-labour system. We want to have a straightforward policy of day labour enunciated by the Government.

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

AYES, 22.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Maughan
„ Breslin	„ May
„ Collins	„ Mulcahy
„ Coyne	„ Mullan
„ Crawford	„ Murphy
„ Ferricks	„ McLachlan
„ Foley	„ Nevitt
„ Hamilton	„ O'Sullivan
„ Harlaere	„ Payne
„ Lennon	„ Ryan
„ Mann	„ Winstanley

Tellers: Mr. Breslin and Mr. Ferricks,

NOES, 30.

Mr. Allan	Mr. Grayson
„ Appel	„ Gunn
„ Barnes, G. P.	„ Ilawthorn
„ Barnes, W. H.	„ Hodge
„ Booker	„ Hunter, D.
„ Bouehard	„ Keogh
„ Brennan	„ Kidston
„ Bridges	„ Paget
„ Corser	„ Petrie
„ Cottell	„ Philp
„ Cribb	„ Stodart
„ Denham	„ Swayne
„ Forrest	„ Tolmie
„ Forsyth	„ Walker
„ Grant	„ Wienholt

Tellers: Mr. Corser and Mr. Wienholt.

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Blair, Mr. Douglas, and Mr. Lesina.  
Noes—Mr. Somerset, Mr. Rankin, and Mr. Fox,  
Resolved in the negative.

Original question put and passed.

#### COMMITTEE.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I beg to move—

1. That the House approves of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed extension from Allora to Goomburra, in length 8 miles 57½ chains.

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

This is not a railway running into a timber district, but is a short extension of a line that is at present working—what is known as the Allora line. It is 8 miles 57½ chains in length, and will traverse the Dalrymple Creek Valley. The object of the line is to make available the whole of the extremely fertile land that is at present being worked, and that will in the future be worked, in that valley. There are some 10,000 acres of land at present under cultivation which will be served by this proposed extension, and there is no question but that after the railway is built many more thousands of acres will be put under close cultivation.

Mr. COLLINS: Crown lands?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No; the railway district is within the confines of the Dalrymple Creek Valley, comprising 58,200 acres, and practically the whole of that land is alienated. There are practically no Crown lands in the district, except at the head of the valley. This is not a section of the *via recta*.

Mr. MURPHY: I am glad you have made that plain.

Mr. MANN: It could be made a section couldn't it?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I wish to make it clear that it is not a section of the *via recta*. It is a short extension of a railway which was built under the 1895 Guarantee Act, and its object is to open up the balance of the Dalrymple Creek lands. I visited the district myself last year, and rode and drove up the valley, and saw for myself that the areas of land referred to in the Commissioner's report are some of the richest lands on the Darling Downs. The Commissioner, I regret to say, is compelled to make the following remarks in his report:—

I have made inquiries with the view of taking the line along Warwick street (which is just beyond Allora Station) or moving the passenger station to Darling street, so as to avoid shunting trains into and out of Allora Station, but met with strong opposition on the part of the townspeople to either scheme. There is no alternative but to leave the station in its present position, which will involve inconvenience to the department and delay to passengers to and from places beyond Allora.

Mr. MURPHY: Why not postpone the railway?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: In reply to the hon member I would point out that in my opinion the town-people of Allora in acting in that way are going against their own interests, but I am not prepared to postpone the building of this railway for twelve months, because it is to be built for the benefit of the settlers round Allora, and not for the benefit of the residents of the township.

Mr. MURPHY: Are there any big areas where this railway is going?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No.

Mr. MURPHY: Only small holdings?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Comparatively small holdings. The Commissioner speaks very highly of the character of the country through which the line is to go, and estimated the cost of the 8 miles 57½ chains at £20,638. He says—

The present engine and carriages will be able

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to conduct the traffic on the extension, but a few extra wagons will be required—say, £2,000, making a total cost of £22,638.

Further on he says —

REVENUE AND EXPENSES.—The present line from Hendon to Allora (3 miles 49 chains in length) last year earned £1,834, or £508 per mile, and returned interest at the rate of £5 6s. 11d. per cent. on the capital invested. I cannot anticipate the same earnings per mile from this extension to commence with, because the Allora Branch was built under the Railways Guarantee Act of 1895, and the rates and fares were fixed at higher figures than State railways generally, but I look forward to a revenue of £250 per mile, or say £2,190.

I wished to bring the Allora Railway, which was built under the Railways Guarantee Act of 1895, within the railway district of the proposed railway. I thought it was only fair that [9.30 p.m.] the present guarantee should be done away with, and that the whole branch from Hendon to Goomburra should be brought under the Act of 1906. But I received some very strong objections to my proposal. I think those objections were unwarrantable; but, sooner than place any disability on the people who reside a number of miles beyond Allora, and who have great difficulty in getting their produce to market in wet weather over the heavy soil, I did not press my proposal. I think that the people who objected were not acting in their own best interests, and certainly they were not trying to help those who live beyond Allora.

Mr. FOLEY: They seem to do as they like up there.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It is not a question of doing what they like. They guarantee the existing line under the Act of 1895, and I desired to bring them under the Act of 1906 so that all those between Goomburra and Hendon, instead of having to pay the State railway rate from Goomburra to Allora and the existing high rate on the line from Allora to Hendon, would have paid a uniform State rate right through.

Mr. MURPHY: How much are the rates between Hendon and Allora above the present State rates—50 per cent.?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I cannot say from memory, but they are considerably more than the present State rates. However, the matter is practically in their own hands. I did my best to get one rate right through to simplify the accounts, and also to reduce the rates for people who have no railway communication at present. Mr. Thallon expects that there will be no call upon the rate-payers under the Act of 1906 to provide interest on the capital cost of construction. He recommends the construction of the line, and I also recommend the Committee to accept the proposal.

Mr. MAY: I have studied the plans of the railway, and I find the line will run practically parallel to the Maryvale Railway. I think the two lines are in too close proximity.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Not for farming lines.

Mr. MAY: According to the plan, the two termini are not more than 4 miles apart.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: But there is a mountain between.

Mr. MAY: The benefited area extends close up to Cunningham's Gap, and it must not be forgotten that there will be another proposal to bring a line through the Gap—the via recta—and there will be another benefited area there in connection with that line. The two lines may be 8 miles apart for a part of the distance, but

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at the terminal points they are only 4 miles apart. Is it justifiable to build railways so close together in view of the fact that there are many sparsely settled districts that have no railways at all? We want railways built to districts that have no railway communication. We are one and all agreed that the via recta should be built, and yet we are now asked to build a line that will damn that line, to put it in expressive language.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. MAY: I use the word as meaning blocking, as we block water; I do not place the construction on the word which you have put on it, Mr. Grant. (Laughter.) I think this line should not be constructed until we have given full consideration to the via recta, which most of us, whether we belong to the North or to the South, consider to be absolutely necessary for Queensland. I have nothing to gain from the via recta. I do not know what support the Government are getting in return for the construction of this line, but I do not think we should ever build a line in this direction when we have a line 4 miles distant. I shall vote against the resolution.

Mr. GRAYSON (Cunningham): I would like to state that the hon. member for Flinders is entirely wrong in regard to the distances. From Warwick to Allora, where this line branches off, is 14 miles. If the hon. member had ever been up the Goomburra Valley, I do not think he would have made the speech he has. I have no hesitation in supporting this line. (Laughter.) It is an extension of the Allora Railway. That line was constructed thirteen years ago. It was one of the first lines constructed under the Railways Guarantee Act of 1895. I believe I am correct in stating that for the last eight or nine years it has been paying from 5 to 7 per cent. interest on the cost of construction.

Mr. D. HUNTER: But they have been paying high rates.

Mr. GRAYSON: It is quite true they have been paying special rates, but it was very wise for the Allora people to pay special rates to make the line pay.

Mr. MURPHY: Does not the guarantee end next year.

Mr. GRAYSON: Yes. Under the Act of 1895 the guarantee ceases at the end of fourteen years, so that the Government will take the line over in twelve months. I have known the country between Allora and Goomburra for the last forty-five years, and I can say that there is no more fertile valley in the whole of Queensland than the Goomburra Valley. In the guaranteed area there are at least 10,500 acres of land under intense cultivation. The total area in the benefited area is 77,670 acres, and the shire valuation of that area is £126,212.

Mr. FOLEY: A land tax would go well there.

Mr. GRAYSON: It is estimated that the agricultural land there totals 35,000 acres.

Mr. MURPHY: All small holdings?

Mr. GRAYSON: The number of landholders on that 35,000 acres is 150. (Hear, hear!) So that it will be seen that there are no large holdings there. They are all small holdings. I am of the same opinion as the Commissioner. The line will pay right from the start, because the land there is under intense cultivation, and when the line is constructed there will be several thousand acres more brought under intense cultivation. This line would have been constructed years ago but for the fact that 15,000 acres in the Goomburra Valley was held by Mr. Donkin. About seven years ago the Government pur-

chased the old Goomburra estate, and when the land was thrown open every acre of it was snapped up as soon as it was thrown open, and all that land has been brought under intense cultivation. This proposed line is  $8\frac{1}{2}$  miles long, and there are farmers and settlers 7 miles from its terminal point.

Mr. MANN: That is the benefited area although they do not get any benefit.

Mr. GRAYSON: They all get a benefit.

Mr. MANN: There should be a different rate-struck.

Mr. GRAYSON: There are no engineering difficulties on the line.

Mr. COLLINS: It took a bit of engineering to get it. (Laughter.)

Mr. GRAYSON: There will only be one bridge on the line, and the Government will require to purchase only 15 acres of land on the route, as the line will run along the main road nearly all the way to Goomburra township. The Commissioner states—

REVENUE AND EXPENSES.—The present line from Hendon to Allora (3 miles 49 chains in length) last year earned £1,834, or £508 per mile, and returned interest at the rate of £5 6s. 11d. per cent. on the capital invested. I cannot anticipate the same earnings per mile from this extension to commence with, because the Allora Branch was built under the Railways Guarantee Act of 1895, and the rates and fares were fixed at higher figures than State railways generally, but I look forward to a revenue of £250 per mile, or say £2,190.

The working expenses will amount to about £1,500 per annum, leaving a net revenue of £690, which will provide 3 per cent. interest upon the cost, so that I do not anticipate the ratepayers being called upon to contribute, at all events after the first year.

And he winds up with—

RECOMMENDATION.—I know this country well, and recommend the construction of this railway.

The Commissioner knows the country well, and he knows it will pay. The Minister for Lands also knows it, and if the necessity demanded it he could put in a good word. I do not wish to delay the Committee, except to say that this line has every justification for its construction.

Mr. CRAWFORD (*Fitzroy*): I am very doubtful as to the amount of support I shall give to this railway. It appears to me that it is a very short railway, and from what I have heard from the Minister and from the hon. member who has just resumed his seat, I am not at all convinced that it is a necessary line. So far as I can gather from looking on the map, that part of the district is already well served by the Maryvale Railway, and those who live in the vicinity of that railway are well served compared with people in other parts of the State. The Minister referred briefly to the difficulties—and the Commissioner also to the difficulties—in the way of the selectors, but I notice that the Minister slurred it over without going into details, so that we do not know whether the roads there are good or not.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: They are very heavy indeed.

Mr. GRAYSON: They could not be worse.

Mr. CRAWFORD: The roads there have been worked for a number of years, but it is not raining there all the year round. I cannot think that the roads are so bad that the people there cannot get over them at all. They have only to go a short distance to a railway line, while others 20 miles away probably have worse roads to travel over, and have a harder task trying to make a living. The hon. member for Cunningham did not bring forward any evidence

to show that the line was necessary. I notice that the line backs out of the town instead of running straightforward from the commencement. That ought to be seriously considered, because later on we shall be called upon to pass enough money to provide for straightening the railway, and I think we should do that straight away instead of taking the line into Allora and backing out again. Neither the Minister, the Commissioner, nor the member for the district has shown me that the line is absolutely necessary, and if a vote is taken I shall consider how I shall vote. (Laughter.)

Mr. TOLMIE (*Drayton and Toowoomba*): I have much pleasure in supporting this line, as it will be of immense service to the State and to this particular district. Hon. members are suffering from a disadvantage in connection with this line that I suffered from myself in connection with other lines, in that I did not know the country they passed through. They have not had opportunities of seeing the district.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Yes, we have.

Mr. TOLMIE: I say that some members have not had an opportunity of seeing the district through which the line runs. If they had had that opportunity they would immediately say that this line should be constructed. The Goomburra Valley might even be termed the "Avoca of Queensland." It is extremely fertile country, and it is not likely to cost the State anything from the time the line is constructed. The hon. member for Fitzroy spoke about the roads. I can assure him that the roads are rich black soil, which is very tenacious in wet weather, and the farmers experience great difficulty in getting their produce to market. The farmers' produce is generally a perishable quantity, and as it changes its value very rapidly, it is necessary that the farmer should get it to market as quickly as possible. Hon. members will be doing justice to the railway by allowing it to go through without a dissentient voice. The Commissioner points out that the survey of the line commences 10 chains before the Allora station is reached. It is only a matter of 100 or 150 yards from where the present station is to where the Commissioner proposed to put it; and if the Minister or the Commissioner were to declare that the station was going to be shifted it would be an easy matter to do so, and the people of Allora would have to put up with the consequences. I have an objection to the tendency we have in Queensland to do so much crayfishing at our railway stations in large centres such as Toowoomba and Maryborough—going into the station backwards. It is not a good thing, and this line could be carried round on a curve without difficulty. This line is well deserving of support. Even the hon. member for Rosewood can support it. All he has to do is to continue it over the range, when it will drop down to the parish of Rosevale, where he wants a survey made.

Mr. MULCAHY: I have much pleasure in supporting this line. I know the country; I was there thirty-five years ago. Though the people of Allora do not fall in with the view held by the Commissioner in regard to the station, I fail to see why other people should be penalised. Long before I came to this House I was a great believer in taking railways into agricultural districts, and extending them; and I will give my hearty support to this line.

Mr. MAUGHAN: I think we can claim to have something like 4,000 miles of railway communication in Queensland; but the proportion of agricultural lines to the other lines is so small that when a proposition to construct a railway through a distinctly agricultural area comes

*Mr. Maughan.]*

before the House it will have to be a very bad line before I will oppose it. I want to see many more agricultural lines built.

Mr. COLLINS: Do you want more in the South?

Mr. MAUGHAN: Yes. I am prepared to support any proposition for railway construction, whether north, south, east, or west, if the Minister can show that it is good business; and the mere fact of a particular Government coming forward with a railway proposition does not weigh with me one atom as long as it has official sanction and the line is a good line—that it will help the people it is destined to help, particularly the producer—the man who is taking a tremendous risk from one year's end to the other, the man who, in wet weather particularly, finds it most difficult to get his produce to market. I say we should do everything possible to help those men, and railways of this character appeal to me. If it would be in order, I could point to more than one place in that splendid West Moreton district where railways should be constructed even at the present time. Many years ago, when the Hendon to Allora railway was proposed, some members strongly urged that it should be carried even further, and their desire was more than justified. I know that country pretty well, and I think the line will pay handsomely. We are guided by our experts even from a financial point of view.

Mr. MURPHY: An expert recommended the Great Western line.

Mr. MAUGHAN: I dare say he did; but I am dealing with this line now. Let us take the figures for the year ending June 30th in connection with the Hendon to Allora branch, and see the percentage of net revenue. In the year 1905-6 it was £5 19s. 2d.; the next year it was £5 8s.; the following year, £4 8s. 6d.; then it was £5 4s. 9d.; and in 1909-10 it rose to £5 6s. 11d. I think the proposed extension will make it a much better paying line than it is to-day, and I will give it my support.

Mr. MANN: We hear a great deal about making railways to encourage close settlement, but in this case the land is already pretty well settled.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Why should not those people have a railway?

Mr. MANN: I am not saying that they should not have a railway; I am saying that the land is settled. I think this is a case in which the Renard road train might be used.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: A dozen of them would be wanted.

Mr. MANN: Why not get a dozen if they would be required.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: They would get logged.

Mr. MANN: Where is the Renard road train working now?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Between Goondiwindi and Texas.

Mr. MANN: If it is likely to get bogged, why not have broader wheels? I do not think the country would hang up the train more than two or three days, and if the weather is very wet, the farmer cannot go to the railway station. Seeing the dog-in-the-manger attitude adopted by the Allora people, I think this line might be left over till they get into a more reasonable frame of mind. And in dealing with these railways, the Government should give us full information. We should have a big map of the Darling Downs showing all the railway systems. The hon. member for Flinders says this is part of what ought to be the benefited area of the

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via recta, and in looking over the map issued by the Railway Department, I notice [10 p.m.] that some of the lines on the Darling Downs go very close to each other; and while I admit that the country is very good, that is no justification for having railways running only 8 miles apart, when there are other lands in the district waiting for railways. To get a fair knowledge of what the Government is doing, we ought to have a map showing all the Darling Downs district and the different lines of railway, because passing railways like this, piecemeal, we hardly know what we are doing. There is no doubt this line will pay. It is not like a proposition that will not pay, but the question arises in my mind whether there are any other districts which require a railway more than this.

Mr. FOLEY: What about the North?

Mr. MANN: I am not at liberty to discuss that proposition, but there are districts in the North and South which are very much more in need of railway communication than this district.

Mr. TOLME: It is very much required.

Mr. MANN: There is no doubt the hon. member for Drayton and Toowoomba made out a very good case for the railway, and no doubt in wet weather it is very awkward to get along to those places, but there are other places suffering the same inconvenience. In fact, during wet weather in the Atherton Scrub, you can hardly go 2 miles, and they are just as much in need of a railway as these people between Allora and Goomburra. Instead of the Government going on with the policy of bringing down two or three of these paltry lines, they should bring down twenty or thirty, and it would be much better to spend the money on such railways than spending it on the Great Western Railway and the North Coast Railway. I think myself that the Government are not giving the Committee all the information they might. I do not care to vote against the line, because it is a line that will pay, and I think we are always justified in voting for railways into agricultural districts.

Mr. WIENHOLT: So many things have been said about this railway that I do not wish to take up the time of the Committee by repeating them. I have the honour to be a native of this part of the State, and I wish to state that there is not the slightest doubt but that this line is well warranted and well needed. I do not say that there are not other parts of the State where a line might be needed more than this, but there is no doubt the Goomburra Valley can well do with a railway. There is one part of the report that I object to, and that is the question of shunting into Allora Station.

Mr. MAUGHAN: The Commissioner should put his foot down.

Mr. WIENHOLT: Yes. This line is not being built for the benefit of Allora. Anyone who studies the map will see what will happen, possibly in the near future—it certainly will happen at some future date—that will be that this branch line will go over the Gap to the Maryvale line and will eventually become the via recta to Brisbane. There is only a short distance between the Goomburra Valley and the Maryvale Valley, and I have not the slightest doubt that in years to come there will be an agitation to have these lines connected, and that will accentuate any fault that is made now as regards shunting the train into Allora Station. I cannot quite understand it. It seems to me the Commissioner is absolutely in the hands of certain interested people in Allora. There should be some means by which we could look ahead. It is the principle I object to, and some day we

shall have to spend a lot of money in resum<sup>ing</sup> land. I hope something can be done to obviate that inconvenience. I do not intend to vote against the line, but I certainly have a strong objection to that particular part.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The hon. member for Flinders just now, no doubt in ignorance of the conditions which prevail in the Goomburra Valley, stated that there was no justification for the building of this line, and also that it was unnecessary. I am quite sure had he, like many other hon. members, traversed that valley—had he any knowledge at all of the district—he would not have spoken as he had this evening. Not only is the line necessary—and in proof of that it should be repeated that the whole area is under intense cultivation—but the Allora district ranks first; at any rate, is on an equality with Warwick and the Killarney districts in its average wheat yield. Last year certainly the average was only about 13 bushels, but the previous year's yield was over 20 bushels, and it would be manifestly absurd to attempt to carry the grain of that district by the Renard train. It would be impossible for any one or any dozen Renard trains to undertake the carriage of wheat in the wheat season from the Goomburra Valley, and the same thing applies in an ordinary maize year. Reference has been made by one or two speakers to the fact that the line at Allora will back in instead of coming in on a straight course.

Mr. MAUGHAN: That is the blot on the proposal.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: No doubt, but at the same time it must be remembered that if the line came directly into Allora it would run down one of the main streets unless a deviation is made; and if the railway station had to be removed, it would have to be taken a considerable distance beyond the town, and that would be an inconvenience to the residents of the town.

Mr. MAUGHAN: That is not necessary surely?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: If I am not mistaken, it will move it about 15 chains further on—that is, if the course suggested by the hon. member for Fassifern were adopted. I am sure it would be quite impossible to exaggerate the fertility of the Goomburra Valley. Certainly I know of no more fertile district on the Darling Downs than that valley; and the Scotch Commissioners, who visited the valley, were altogether charmed with it.

Mr. MURPHY: And they also said there was no land available for immigrants.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: That is perfectly true. The land there is thickly settled, and, what is more, the people on the land make the best possible use of it. (Hear, hear!) The Minister, when speaking, stated that there was no timber in the district.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I said that it was not a timber district.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: As a matter of fact, 8 or 10 miles beyond, excellent timbers are procurable, and, indeed, one of the most go-ahead sawmills on the Darling Downs is situated in the township of Allora. I think the Commissioner puts this matter in a nutshell, and his remarks must be endorsed by every man who has cast his eye over the Goomburra Valley.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: I have listened attentively to what has been said about this railway, and, while not objecting to railway lines being made into agricultural districts to enable farmers to get their produce to market, there is a limit to which this can be carried. It has been pointed out that there are three lines on the Darling

Downs running parallel, at a distance of 20 miles from each other—the Crow's Nest line, the Goombungee line, and the Cooyar line; and the Goombungee line between the two is not going to be a paying concern. This line will run direct into the country that belongs to the Maryvale line, and it is a moot point whether the two will pay. There are a good many places in Queensland of which the same could be said as has been said about this line, and it seems to me that some districts are being favoured at the expense of others. I think that we should make agricultural lines, not where they are wanted, but where they are wanted most, and there are other districts with a better claim than this one, not only as regards the necessity for their construction, but as far as their earning power is concerned. The construction of this line will not mean the production of a bushel of wheat more.

Mr. GRAYSON: Yes, it will.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: The hon. member who has just sat down has told us that the country is under intense cultivation.

Mr. GRAYSON: Not all of it.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: I question very much whether there will be an increase of freights over this line. I can quite understand that it is going to be a convenience to farmers in that district, who will only have to cart their wheat 2 miles instead of 8 miles. The hon. member for Toowoomba said that the scenery would warrant the construction of the line, but I doubt whether the passengers who will be carried on this railway will contribute very much to the revenue of the line. If the goods traffic won't make it pay, the passenger traffic will not. It has always been the settled policy of the Government not to build lines that would enter into competition with existing lines, but we are departing from that policy, and running lines out contiguous to each other, which will rob each other of country which might be served by one line, and that will mean a reduced earning power to both of these lines. As to the position of the station at Allora, that is a matter which arises in nearly every line brought before the House. If it suits the property-owners to have it in some particular spot, they will do all in their power to get it there; but if it is against the interests of a half a dozen of them, there is a determined agitation to keep it away. While it would not be wise for the Commissioner to have unlimited power, he should have some say in this matter, and it would have been better if the line had been left until the Allora people were prepared to come to something like reasonable terms in regard to the station. Everybody knows what an inconvenience it will be, not only to the department, but to the people who use the line, not to be able to get straight in and out of the station. On this occasion, seeing that the people are only 8 miles away from the present terminus, the Government might have left this line over till next session to see if the Allora people were not willing to have the station put where it would have been in the interests of the community as a whole.

Mr. TOLMIE: The Commissioner can put the station anywhere he likes.

Mr. COLLINS: I shall want to hear more than I have heard up to the present before I support this railway. I can understand the reason why the Great Western Railway had such an easy passage on that side. I said that we should find a number of members would be getting railways in their particular districts, and we see they are now getting them. I would like the Minister to give us some information in connection with the land owners in that district. I

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notice on the plans two large estates in the name of A. Wienholt.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That was many years ago.

Mr. COLLINS: We should have a plan of the landowners in that district so that we should know whether these railways were being run to suit private individuals or in the interests of the State. Here we have a proposal to build a line which will run within 4 miles of another railway. There are any number of places where money could be better spent in opening up the country than in this particular district. It seems to me it is being done to placate certain members on that side of the House for the vote they gave on the Great Western Railway.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Oh, no, no!

Mr. COLLINS: I have a right to assume that, because there was not a single member who crossed the floor of the House to vote against that proposal. These should have been submitted before the Great Western Railway. No wonder they were solid on that side with regard to the Great Western Railway. I can draw my own conclusions, especially when I see plans and specifications such as these placed before us. It seems to me a waste of public money to run two lines within 4 miles distance from each other. The member for the district, and the Minister, who are asking us to vote for this railway, should give us more information than we have at the present time. Why does the Maryvale Railway take a big sweep towards the Wienholt Estate, and the other railway also take a big sweep towards that estate?

Mr. MANN: There seems to be a feeling amongst members that the Commissioner ought to run this railway in the way best suited to meet the convenience of the public, and I move that after the word "chains," at the end of paragraph 1, there be inserted the words—

provided the railway station is shifted to Darling street.

I think that when the people of Allora see that this Committee means to stand no monkeying with the traffic on this railway, and that if they point blank refuse to allow the Commissioner to handle this line in the best possible manner, this Committee will teach them not to act like the dog in the manger, they will adopt a more reasonable attitude. We ought to show them that we will not allow them to penalise any section of the travelling public.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I think there is no occasion for the amendment. The matter may very well be left for the Commissioner to deal with. As I stated when introducing the railway, I do not think the selfishness of the Allora people should be allowed to stand in the way of the people who require the railway getting the necessary communication. I hope the hon. member will not press the amendment.

Mr. LENNON: I am rather astonished at the remarks of the Minister for Railways, when he says that this amendment is unnecessary, and that the matter might very well be left to the Commissioner for Railways. I shall quote the words of the Commissioner—

I have made inquiries with the view of taking the line along Warwick street (which is just beyond Allora Station) or moving the passenger station to Darling street, so as to avoid shunting trains into and out of Allora Station, but met with strong opposition on the part of the townspeople to either scheme. There is no alternative but to leave the

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station in its present position, which will involve inconvenience to the department and delay to passengers to and from places beyond Allora.

The opinion of the Commissioner is that he has no alternative but to leave the station where it is, and in view of that fact the remarks of the Minister are perfectly absurd. What is the good of leaving it to a man who already confesses his inability to do anything, and says there is no alternative but to comply with the wishes of the people of Allora? This Committee should teach the people of Allora, and other people besides, that the Committee will have some say in a matter of this kind if the people do not act reasonably when getting a railway which will be a very great boon to them, while other districts are languishing and clamouring for railways and cannot get them. They ought to consider themselves very lucky, and their real good luck and good fortune should induce them to take up a more reasonable attitude. They ought to be willing to fall in with the wish of the Commissioner, and accede to his reasonable request. If they do not, and the Commissioner confesses himself unequal to the task of dealing with the matter, then this Committee should rise to the occasion, and tell the people of Allora what they ought to do.

Mr. MURPHY: I intend to vote for the amendment.

The PREMIER: Of course. (Laughter.)

Mr. MURPHY: Members on that side of the House seem to be surprised whenever I rise and say I intend to support an amendment, and to think that I am not serious, and that there is a possibility that when the amendment goes to a division I shall vote with the Government. The deputy leader of the Labour party has pointed out very clearly that the Commissioner is not going to take this matter in hand. If the Commissioner had power to deal with this matter, and was prepared to exercise that power, why did he put that paragraph in his report, and tell the Committee that the people of Allora would not agree to certain things, and that consequently he could not carry them out? We know that there has been a good deal of influence brought to bear on the Government in connection with this railway. A few days ago a meeting was held at Warwick—

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! The question is that the motion be amended by the insertion of certain words.

Mr. MURPHY: Well, I will deal later on with the meeting at Warwick in connection with this railway. We ought to lay down the whole thing clearly, and tell the people of Allora what must be done. Hon. members opposite have spoken in favour of the proposal contained in the amendment, and pointed out how necessary it is that the shunting of trains at Allora Station should be avoided. The hon. member for Drayton and Toowoomba, Mr. Tolmie, spoke of it as a crayfish policy of railway construction, and other members on that side have condemned it. I think the Committee should give instructions to the Commissioner that he is to do the right thing in connection with this particular matter. Of course, the Premier may instruct the Commissioner to do what is necessary, but I am not going to leave it in the Premier's hands, if I can help it. The Secretary for Railways, having instructions from the House to give certain instructions to the Commissioner, may be able to brace himself up to inform Mr. Thallon in his office that the Committee requires a certain thing in connection with this railway, and Mr. Thallon will probably take more notice of that than if the Minister simply expressed his own desire in the matter.

The PREMIER: Although Mr. Thallon has been very generous with the Allora people on this occasion, I think he will find another alternative.

Mr. LENNON: He says there is no alternative.

The PREMIER: I think he will find there is.

Mr. MURPHY: Will you give an assurance to the Committee that he will have to do it?

The PREMIER: No; that is not at all necessary. This railway is not to be built for the benefit of the people of Allora; [10.30 p.m.] it is to be built for the sake of the people in the country, and I believe the Allora people will come to reason in the matter.

Mr. WIENHOLT: I just want to make my position clear. The hon. member for Cairns has moved this amendment so that the railway must go down Darling street.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: The amendment reads: "Provided the railway station is shifted to Darling street."

Mr. WIENHOLT: If the hon. member for Cairns had read the Commissioner's report, he would have seen there is another alternative. The Commissioner says that either the line should go along Warwick street, or else the station should be shifted to Darling street. I would suggest that the Commissioner should be given a free hand, so that he may do either of these two things. He may even have a third alternative.

Mr. D. HUNTER: If the amendment is not carried, the Commissioner will then be able to say that the Committee passed the plan as it was presented to it, and I believe hon. members on both sides think it would be a great mistake to construct the line according to that plan. The plan shows the line going along Darling street, and I believe that before long it will be necessary to shift the station; but, if the amendment is defeated, the Commissioner will have received instructions from this Chamber that he is to carry the line out according to the plan.

Mr. LENNON: You yourself suggested the amendment.

Mr. D. HUNTER: Yes; and I am going to vote for it.

Mr. WIENHOLT: I do not know whether I am in order, but I want to make a personal explanation in reply to some remarks that fell from the hon. member for Burke. The hon. member said that certain blocks of land are shown on the plan as belonging to A. Wienholt. The A. Wienholt referred to is not myself. An uncle of mine settled in those parts many years before separation. Neither I nor any member of our family has an interest in a single acre of land in that district.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MANN: To meet the wishes of the hon. member for Fassifern, I beg leave to withdraw the amendment with a view to moving it in this form—

provided the line is taken along Warwick street or the railway station is shifted to Darling street.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. MANN then moved his amendment in the amended form.

Mr. LENNON: Will the Premier accept it?

The PREMIER: I do not think it will make a penny's worth of difference.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I would like to ask your ruling, Mr. Grant. I was engaged when the first amendment was moved. We are asked now to approve of the plan, section, and book of reference—we are not

asked to approve of the Commissioner's report. The Commissioner's report is presented to the House for the information of hon. members. I ask whether the amendment is in order?

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: The amendment is quite in order.

Mr. HARDACRE: I intend to vote for the amendment for one reason which should be sufficient for every hon. member—that is, that in voting for the amendment we shall simply be supporting the Commissioner's recommendation. He says in his report that if the line is not taken along Warwick street or the railway station shifted to Darling street, "it will involve inconvenience to the Department and delay to passengers to and from places beyond Allora."

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

## AYES, 26.

Mr. Allan	Mr. Mann
" Barber	" Mangt an
" Breslin	" May
" Collins	" Mullan
" Coyne	" Murphy
" Crawford	" McLachlan
" Ferricks	" Nevitt
" Foley	" O'Sullivan
" Hamilton	" Payne
" Hardacre	" Philp
" Hunter, D.	" Ryan
" Land	" Wienholt
" Lennon	" Winstanley

Tellers: Mr. Ryan and Mr. Wienholt.

## NOES, 23.

Mr. Appel	Mr. Gurn
" Barnes, G. P.	" Hawthorn
" Barnes, W. H.	" Hodge
" Booker	" Keogh
" Bonchard	" Kidston
" Brennan	" Macartney
" Bridges	" Mulcahy
" Corser	" Paget
" Cottell	" Petrie
" Cribb	" Roberts
" Denham	" Stodart
" Forrest	" Swayne
" Forsyth	" Tolmie
" Grayson	" Walker

Tellers: Mr. Booker and Mr. Walker.

## PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Blair, Mr. Douglas, and Mr. Lesina.

Noes—Mr. Somerset, Mr. Rankin, and Mr. Fox.

Resolved in the negative.

Original question put.

Mr. MURPHY: I want to enter my formal protest against this railway to let the Committee know that I am going to vote against the Loan Bill at the end of the week. The Commissioner's report says that it is a fertile district, and that the railway will do a great deal of good to those settled on the land there. I do not take exception to this railway, except that I think the money would be better spent in districts where they have no railway communication at all. (Hear, hear!) I know several places in North Queensland where £20,000 spent on railway construction would open up some very good country and tend to promote settlement. This is a railway which I have been expecting this session, because I notice that there has been a good deal of agitation in the Cunningham district for some railway, and of course these gentlemen have been pestering the Government for railway construction, and the Government have come down and given them this railway. In this report I notice that this railway was built under the Railways Guarantee Act of 1895, and that the people in that district have

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been paying something like 50 per cent. more in freights than has been paid on the other railways in Queensland. Here is a line constructed by the State, owned by the State, and run by the State, and the people have to pay 50 per cent. more than is paid on other lines. Since I have been in this House, I have never heard any exception taken to that, but on the Northern line, where the expenditure has been heavy and the wages paid higher than in Southern Queensland, when the increase of 50 per cent. was charged a good deal of objection was taken by members of this House. Being against the big "borrow, boom and burst" policy of the Government, I must enter my protest against this railway. I have no objection at all to agricultural districts getting railways. I believe that that is a good way of spending money—to open up agricultural districts where the people can be settled on the soil, but I do not think that Queensland at the present time should go in for anything like a £10,000,000 loan.

Original question put and passed.

The House resumed. The ACTING CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to certain resolutions, and they were agreed to.

### GAYNDAH TO MUNDUBBERA RAILWAY.

#### PROPOSAL TO GO INTO COMMITTEE.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I beg to move—

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 extension from Gayndah to Mundubbera, in length 23 miles 21 chains.

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. CRAWFORD: Before you leave the chair, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and without wishing to detain the House too long, I move that after the words "23 miles 21 chains" that the words "and that the railway be constructed by day labour" be inserted. After the very elaborate speeches which have been delivered in favour of this project from time to time during the session, I think it is unnecessary for me to go over the ground again. (Hear, hear!) The subject is so well known that I believe all members of the House would vote for it if they were free to do so. I know it is looked for by those who are now employed in railway construction and by the many thousands who will be employed in railway construction in the future. Knowing how important it is for the welfare of the country that the people so employed should have sufficient wherewith to live comfortable lives and bring up their families comfortably, I have every confidence in proposing this amendment.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted be so inserted—put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 21.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Mann
" Breslin	" May
" Collins	" Mulcahy
" Coyne	" Mullan
" Crawford	" Murphy
" Ferricks	" McLachlan
" Foley	" O'Sullivan
" Hamilton	" Payne
" Hardacre	" Ryland
" Land	" Wiinstanley
" Lennon	

Tellers: Mr. Mann and Mr. O'Sullivan.

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NOES, 29.

Mr. Allan	Mr. Grayson
" Appel	" Gunn
" Barnes, G. P.	" Hawthorn
" Barnes, W. H.	" Hodge
" Booker	" Hunter, D.
" Bouchard	" Kidston
" Brennan	" Paget
" Bridges	" Petrie
" Corser	" Philp
" Cottell	" Roberts
" Cribb	" Stodart
" Denham	" Swayne
" Forrest	" Walker
" Forsyth	" Wienholt
" Grant	

Tellers: Mr. Bouchard and Mr. Hodge.

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Blair, Mr. Douglas, and Mr. Lesina.  
Noes—Mr. Somerset, Mr. Rankin, and Mr. Fox.

Resolved in the negative.

Original question stated.

Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*): I desire to move the omission of all the words after "the," with the view of inserting the following words—"consideration of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed extension from Gayndah to Mundubbera, in length 23 miles 21 chains, be postponed until an exhaustive inquiry has been made and report obtained from the Commissioner for Railways as to the best and most equitable route for opening up the Upper and Northern Burnett country." I desire to give some reasons why I wish this railway to be postponed. We have heard a great deal, especially during the discussion of the Great Western Railway and other railways, about the trade that geographically belongs to a port going to that port.

The PREMIER: That the producers should be furnished with the shortest route to the port.

Mr. LENNON: Which he does not get in this case.

Mr. BARBER: Exactly. Which he does not get in this case by any means.

The PREMIER: I think you make a mistake there. Look at the map.

Mr. BARBER: That statement is borne out by the report submitted to the Minister for Railways by the Commissioners who recently visited that district.

The PREMIER: What would you say was the natural port of Mundubbera?

Mr. BARBER: I should say Maryborough was.

The PREMIER: Why do you object then?

Mr. BARBER: Because if the line is pushed out to Mundubbera, that implies that it will be extended towards Dalgangal, when it will take away from Bundaberg trade that legitimately belongs to that port.

The PREMIER: I think it would have been better to have heard the Minister for Railways first.

Mr. BARBER: If I had allowed this matter to have gone into Committee I should have been told that the House had decided upon these plans and specifications, and hence I should have been blocked. It will have this effect: That the further extension which must be carried on from Mundubbera will have the effect of blocking any expansion of Bundaberg in the future. We shall simply be cut off within less than 100 miles from the coast by the fact of that line being carried on there, and at the present time, according to the reports of Mr. Phillips and other gentlemen, 90 per cent. of the trade of that district is practically now done through Mount Perry; and that means, at any rate, that a very large proportion of that 90 per cent. of trade goes through Bun-

[11 p.m.]

daberg. I contend that if the House carries this proposal you will do a distinct injustice to Bundaberg. As I said just now, it practically circumscribes Bundaberg's sphere of influence to within less than 100 miles of the coast; and, further than that, it means that this line will practically go right round to the back door of Bundaberg, and that a further extension will practically go right round to the back door of Gladstone.

Mr. HAMILTON: To which port it belongs.

Mr. BARBER: That may be so, but let Gladstone look after itself. I am fighting for Bundaberg. If the House agrees to this railway it will do an absolute unjust action towards the interests of Bundaberg. What will be the effect? You will give to the one port practically command of the whole of the Upper and Northern Burnett district; you simply compel the whole of that trade to gravitate towards one port. Is that a fair thing? I contend that it will be distinctly unfair. There has been for some time an agitation both in Maryborough and Bundaberg to have an extension of the railway into the Burnett, and some years ago the then Secretary for Lands, the Hon. J. T. Bell, went through that district. Last June twelve months, the present Minister for Railways and the present Minister for Lands also paid a visit to that district, and the impressions those hon. members gathered, which were afterwards printed in the Press, were that one line alone would not be sufficient to do justice to the Burnett district, but that it would require two lines.

Mr. CORSER: They had not seen the other route then.

Mr. BARBER: I have no objection to the other route, providing you give us our fair share of the trade of the Burnett. The Minister for Railways, when he came back from that district, stated that there would be room for two railways there.

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is so.

Mr. BARBER: One an extension of the line from the Mount Perry line to Dalgangal, and the other towards the south-west, which would still give a distance of 40 miles between the two railways, and I remember the hon. member making this statement at the time "that even then it would be too far for any producer to cart his produce a distance of 20 miles to a market." Anyone who cares to take the map and follow up the proposed line when it is extended to Mundubbera will see that it practically goes round in a half circle and comes at the back part of Bundaberg, and that would be a distinct injustice to Bundaberg. The senior member for Maryborough last year, when we were passing the Cordalba-Dalarnil line, endeavoured to get the line extended with the one object, and that was to concentrate and centralise the whole of the trade of that district into Maryborough.

Mr. CORSER: That was not my suggestion at all.

Mr. BARBER: There was absolutely no other reason for it, and the effect would have been that the farmers in that district would have been compelled to send the whole of their stuff to one market, but the result of building the line in the way it was passed by this House gave the producers of that district three different markets. If this railway is passed, it will bring the whole of the trade of that district to Mar borough. And it will not apply only to new trade created. It would be bad enough even then in robbing another port of what I consider its just dues, but you are taking away a very large proportion of the trade that now comes to Bundaberg. I know the idea of the hon. member is to get the whole of that trade, as it will help them

to get their deep-water port. We also have a proposed deep-water port, possibly far better situated than the port the hon. member has dilated upon in this Chamber, and in this respect—that the steamers coming to that supposed deep water port would have first of all to go right round the northern end of Fraser Island and then double down south no less a distance than 60 miles, and after picking up cargo there they would have to go back on their tracks for another 60 miles. Those distances are absolutely correct. While with the deep water port at Bundaberg, they would simply have to go round the end of the island, and instead of having to take a dip southward of no less than sixteen points of the compass, they would have to go only eight points; or a distance of 25 miles there and 25 miles back, instead of a total distance of 120 miles to the supposed deep water port at Urangan. And I would like to say that the spot which Bundaberg advocates as a deep water port, no less a person than Admiral Fanshawe reported as the best place for a naval basis anywhere on the Queensland coast. There, for a quarter of a mile from the beach, you have at low water spring tides from  $3\frac{1}{2}$  to 5 fathoms of water.

Mr. CORSER: It would take £250,000 to make a port there.

Mr. BARBER: No, it would not. There are millions of tons of granite boulders lying on our beach. You have everything for making your concrete, in the shape of sand and rubble and shingle. Anyone who has been used to visiting ports in the old country—say Cherbourg, on the French coast, and Portsmouth and Plymouth, on the English coast—knows very well that by the construction of the breakwaters they have included a vast area of deep water there, sufficient to carry any of the fleets of the world.

Mr. CORSER: And what did they spend?

Mr. BARBER: We do not want such a big concern as that. There was another question which the hon. member asked in regard to heavy seas. If he knows anything at all, he knows that at Cherbourg, on the coast of France, and on the English coast we get very heavy seas there. Anybody knows that the seas are much heavier than those of our coast. Bundaberg holds out to the future settlers of the Burnett district better facilities for getting away their produce to the old country than what Maryborough does.

Mr. CORSER: Nonsense!

Mr. BARBER: And that by going out of the track only 50 miles as against 120 miles to the deep-water port of Urangan. Anyone going down to the Marine Department and studying the charts there will see that between the ship channel and the proposed port it is nothing more nor less than a corrugation of sand banks, mud banks and holes.

Mr. CORSER: The charts are here, and disprove every word you say.

Mr. BARBER: The hon. member is not game to produce them. In 1904 the then Government sent Mr. George Phillips to report on the possibilities of opening up the Upper and Northern Burnett. After some four or five months' work in that district, he submitted a report, which summed up very materially in favour of the line being constructed from Wolca to Dalgangal.

Mr. CORSER: The line was then open as far as Degilbo only.

Mr. BARBER: I am coming to that directly, and I will just give you the comparative distances between the respective places. The distance from Dalgangal to Mundubbera, *via* Eidsvold, Gayndah, and Degilbo, was 103 miles, while

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from Wolca to Dalgangal it was only 40 miles, showing a difference in favour of Wolca of no less than 63 miles. As the hon. member for Maryborough interjected, the line was only as far as Degilbo.

Mr. CORSER: At present it is 48 miles.

Mr. BARBER: That is right. It gives that distance still in favour of Bundaberg. The experts who visited the district the other day had only a fortnight to spend in that district, under instructions to go and report and be back in Brisbane and have their reports ready to submit to the Government in three weeks. On the other hand, Mr. Phillips spent several months in that district, and his estimate of the average cost of the line from Wolca to Dalgangal worked out at £3,500 per mile.

Mr. CORSER: That is proved to be all wrong now.

Mr. BARBER: When you consider the disparity between £3,500 and £8,000 per mile, the whole thing is absurd. As I said before, that gave a difference of 48 odd miles in favour of Bundaberg, with the line built recently between Degilbo and Gayndah. The experts have pointed out that by building the line from Wolca to Dalgangal it would mean an additional cost to the land there of 2d. per acre, as against one and one-eighth of a penny by building it the other way, but the seven-eighths of a penny will be more than counterbalanced by the extra charges that these people will have to pay owing to the extra mileage. Take the report submitted to the House the other day. I want to appeal to every representative of a farming district here. At the present railway rates, it works out as follows:—From Dalgangal to Bundaberg, it would cost for wheat, maize, hay, and potatoes 9s. per ton. If the line is constructed *via* Gayndah, it will cost from Dalgangal to Maryborough no less than 12s. 1d. per ton, an increase on the Bundaberg rate of 75 per cent. Take the carriage of butter: From Dalgangal to Bundaberg it is 14s. 1d. per ton; from Dalgangal to Maryborough it is 18s. 2d. a ton, which is a 25 per cent. increase over that of Bundaberg.

Mr. CORSER: And that butter would have to go through Bundaberg to Brisbane.

Mr. BARBER: Not necessarily. Then take the loading back from Bundaberg to Dalgangal. Flour is £1 4s. a ton, as against £1 12s. 3d. from Maryborough to Dalgangal, or again an increase of 25 per cent. The rate for sugar from Bundaberg to Dalgangal is £1 19s. 4d. per ton, while from Maryborough to Dalgangal it is £2 11s. 7d. per ton, an increase of at least 25 per cent. For clothing and high-class groceries the rate from Bundaberg to Dalgangal is £3 17s. 4d. per ton, and from Maryborough to Dalgangal £5 5s. 11d. per ton. From those figures it is evident that if the House carries this proposal it will simply penalise the settlers in that district by the tremendous rates they will have to pay for all time for freight as compared with the rates on a line from Wolca. If the railway was built from Gayndah to Dalgangal, *via* Mundubbera and Eidsvold, the distance would be 70 miles; from Wolca to Dalgangal, *via* Roslin, 40 miles, a difference of 30 miles in favour of Wolca. I contend that we have never had a proper survey made of the route. Mr. Amos was there on different occasions, and expressed himself as averse to the Wolca route. That is one reason why I strongly objected to Mr. Amos having anything to do with the commission which was appointed. Mr. White, the hon. member for Musgrave, also objected, but I notice that he is not present to-night to help me

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to fight this battle. I do not know why he is not here; I do not know whether the Government have manacled or shackled or lassoed or coralled him, but he assured me that he was going to put up a strong fight against this route, and I say he should have been here. When the Minister informed us the other day that this commission was going out to inspect the country we objected to men going who were opposed to the Wolca route.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: You must admit that I met you all fairly.

Mr. BARBER: I quite agree with that, and do not wish to condemn the hon. gentleman. We objected on that occasion to Mr. Amos being on the commission.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He was not on the commission.

Mr. BARBER: Well, he was with the commission. It is all very well to say he was not on the commission, but the very fact of his being there was not fair to Bundaberg. The commission consisted of Messrs. Lethem, Sexton, and Chambers, and they were accompanied by Mr. Amos. We know very well that even if a man is not on a commission he can do as much with a shrug of his shoulders or a shake of the head as if he discussed the matter with the commissioners.

Mr. CORSER: He had practical experience.

Mr. BARBER: That man had been asked to look at routes which were considered to be easier, but he declined to do so. I have that statement in print. The other man who accompanied the commission was Mr. Charlton, of the Lands Department, and he could do nothing else but express himself distinctly in favour of the proposed Maryborough route. In 1907 he stood as a Kidstonian candidate for Maryborough, and he then pledged himself to support the proposed route to Maryborough. I say it was not a fair thing to place a man who had so expressed himself on that commission, and it was not a fair thing to Mr. Charlton.

Mr. CORSER: He was not on the commission.

Mr. BARBER: Never mind, he was there. It was not necessary for him to be on the commission to use his influence against a fair deal being given to Bundaberg. Mr. Phillips, in his report, admits, and I admit myself, that there are some rough places to get over about the range. Quoting Mr. North, he says—

The country along this route from the start (at Wolca) to Roslin Station is extremely broken and mountainous, and the engineering difficulties enormous. From Roslin to the crossing of Bilboolan Creek the country improves slightly, and from Bilboolan Creek to Eidsvold it is easy for railway construction.

Commenting on that, Mr. Phillips says—

No doubt Mr. North experienced the same difficulty that I did when I first commenced to examine the country westward from Mount Perry—namely, that between the terminus of the Bundaberg Railway and the Burnett River, on the road to Eidsvold, there are two distinct ranges to cross—the Normanby Range and the Possum Range—with the deep valley of Reid's Creek lying between, which, at the Eidsvold road crossing, is actually 50 feet lower than the rails at Mount Perry. Reid's Creek is the lion in the path of a direct extension of the railway from Mount Perry, for, after ascending 470 feet from Mount Perry to the summit of the Normanby Range by the most favourable gap available on the direct route, the surveyor is confronted by the deep valley of Reid's Creek, which involves either a great northerly detour, with corresponding southern return, over broken and difficult ground, or else a fall of 520 feet or more, only to be again confronted by a rise of 300 feet to the summit of Possum Range, at the head of Black Gully. From

thence there is a gradual fall of 400 feet to the crossing of the Burnett River, near Dalgangal House.

He goes on to say—

Much the same difficulty would be experienced on the route from Wolca, if Reid's Creek were crossed, as no doubt appeared necessary to Mr. North; but I have satisfied myself by a careful inspection of the ground that the line can be taken round the head of Reid's Creek by making a comparatively slight northerly detour *via* the Normanby Range, to about 8 miles from Wolca, and thence for about 5 miles *via* the divide between Reid's Creek and Eastern Creek. By this means the extent of broken and seriously difficult country to be traversed can be materially reduced. Once on top, at a point about 3 miles from Wolca, the range presents no serious difficulty, as it is fairly good going on or near the top. By this route no bridge work will be required for the first 16 miles.

What do we find in connection with this proposed extension from Gayndah to Mundubbera? The Commissioner says—

The works will be heavy and expensive owing to the large number of watercourses, gullies, and the ridgy nature of the country. The principal work will be the bridge over Reid's Creek, where four 62-foot steel spans on concrete piers will be used. Steel and concrete bridges will be required over deep gullies at 90, 91, 91½, and 94½ miles, and at Philpott's Creek, whilst a considerable amount of timber bridging will be necessary.

By this proposed route they will actually have to cross the river four times within 4½ miles.

Mr. CORSER: What river?

Mr. BARBER: Reid's Creek, which is a pretty big creek. I regret that the time at my disposal will not permit me to go fully into this matter, and I appeal to the House [11.30 p.m.] to postpone the construction of this branch line until a proper and exhaustive inquiry into the question of routes has been made, and a report of the result made to the House, so that Bundaberg may not be robbed of its trade with the back country, and the whole trade of the Burnett district handed over to one port. It is simply infamous. The Commissioner talks about the broken country in one place on the proposed Wolca route, but anyone knows that there is some of the rottenest country imaginable for miles on the Mundubbera route.

Mr. CORSER: No; splendid country.

Mr. BARBER: Before you get to Mundubbera there is a lot of rotten country.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member has occupied the full time allowed under the Sessional Order. The connection between the amendment and the original question is so close, that I wish to take the sense of the House as to whether members shall be confined strictly to the amendment, or whether I shall allow the discussion to take place on the main question. Is it the pleasure of the House that the discussion should take place on the main question?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: While I have a very great deal of sympathy with the hon. member for Bundaberg, I cannot accept the amendment.

Mr. BRESLIN: What about carrying on the Many Peaks line, and settling the whole thing?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Perhaps it is advisable that I should tell hon. members what has been done by the Government in connection with their efforts to open up the Upper Burnett lands economically. I need hardly point out to hon. members that there is a very large area of exceedingly rich country in the Upper Burnett. We have had quite a number

of reports as to the fertility of this country, and we also have reports which show that, in order to give the country access to its natural port or ports, there are great difficulties in the road. In April last year, the Secretary for Lands and I received an invitation from the Bundaberg Railway League to visit the district west of Bundaberg. We spent a week in that district. I travelled over perhaps a greater extent of country than the Secretary for Lands, because after visiting Cominglah in the northern part of the district with him, I travelled over the tableland down to Mulgildie and Coomoran Creek, and from there to Old Cannindah, and thence southerly down Splinter Creek, and thence back to Possum Creek, and thence to Mount Perry. After I had spent a week in the Upper Burnett, I accepted an invitation from a public body at Eidsvold to visit what I may call the more southern part of the Upper Burnett, and I spent another week there, so that I may fairly claim to have travelled over a considerable portion of the Upper Burnett country, although I did not attempt to go into every highway and byway. This has been an exceptionally difficult question for the Railway Department and for myself to try to solve—that is, the question of opening up this very large district, and opening it up economically for settlers. That is the point of view from which I have always regarded the question. I have always made it perfectly plain that neither the interests of Maryborough as Maryborough nor the interests of Bundaberg as Bundaberg were the interests with which I was particularly concerned, but that the only way in which their interests came in was that each port should receive, as far as possible, the trade that belonged to that port.

Mr. CORSER: Hear, hear!

Mr. BARBER: That is what we are asking for—a fair thing.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: This is rather a difficult subject to handle, and it has been a very difficult subject to handle for the last eighteen months.

Mr. HODGE: Not from the Burnett point of view, but from the outside influences that were brought to bear.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I have had no outside influence brought to bear on me.

Mr. HODGE: You can feel it with a stick in this Chamber to-night.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Let me also say, in reply to an interjection that was made by the senior member for Maryborough whilst the hon. member for Bundaberg was speaking, that both the Secretary for Lands and I had stated that we thought two railways were necessary to open up the Upper Burnett. I shall now read a minute that I prepared on my return from my trip to both places. After I had been with the Bundaberg League, and after I had been over the southern part of the Burnett, at the invitation of the Eidsvold Shire Council, I wrote the following—this is my minute to the department:—

#### RAILWAY IN THE NORTH BURNETT.

The Minister for Railways (Hon. W. T. Paget) left Brisbane, accompanied by the Minister for Lands (Hon. D. F. Denham), on Tuesday night, 26th April, 1909, to visit the Dalgangal district, reaching Brisbane on the return journey on Tuesday, 27th April. Mr. Paget, who was joined by Messrs. John White and George Barber, M.M.L.A., travelled from Mount Perry *via* Possum Creek, Old Dalgangal, Coomoran Creek, Old Rawbelle, Rawbelle, Coominglah, Mugildie, Old Cannindah, down Splinter's Creek to near Old Dalgangal Head

*Hon. W. T. Paget.]*

Station, and thence to Mount Perry on the same route as traversed on the outward journey.

Mr. Paget also visited the district north and west of Gayndah, leaving Brisbane on Wednesday, 13th May, and returning to Brisbane on Tuesday morning, 18th May. He was accompanied from Maryborough by Mr. Adamson, M.L.A., and Mr. E. B. C. Corser. The route taken from Gayndah was *via* Mundubbera, Coonambula, St. John's, Eidsvold Head Station; thence north as far as Burnett River and back to Eidsvold township; thence easterly to Reid's Creek, which was followed down to Gayndah.

Before coming to any conclusion as to the railway policy most beneficial to the close settlement of this important district of the State, the Minister had a further report made by Mr. Surveyor Amos, with the view of seeing whether it would be possible to keep further north than the route from Wolca to Dalgangal, which has already been surveyed; it was found, however (*see* 15th May, 1909), that there is no practical route westward of Moolboolaman.

After fully considering the matter, Mr. Paget arrived at the following conclusions:—

1. That a line should be built from Wolca to Dalgangal, thence westerly to the vicinity of the Nogo River, and thence north-westerly in the direction of Grevillia.
2. The large agricultural areas on Three-Moon and Splinter Creeks, and thence easterly to the Burnett and westerly to the Bell Tableland, can be well served by a branch railway for a distance of say 20 miles northward up Three-Moon Creek.
3. It may be found after further examination and report that the Cania, New Cannindah, and Clonmell country may be served by an extension of the Boyne Valley Railway, which it may eventually be found advisable to connect with the suggested branch running up Three-Moon Creek.

If this country be opened up in the manner described in the foregoing three paragraphs, the whole of it would be within easy distance of railway communication.

4. The extension from Gayndah should be carried *via* Mundubbera in a westerly and south-westerly direction to Hawkwood and towards Auburn.
5. Before advising any particular route or routes from the existing railway, or from the projected extension west of Gayndah, for the purpose of giving access to the Philpott Creek, Binjour Plateau, and Reid's Creek lands, it would be advisable to have an exhaustive examination of the country, but such a line or lines should undoubtedly be built in the very near future.

For the better understanding of the recommendations, a map showing the proposed routes is attached.

I signed that minute on the 24th June, 1909. That was after I had visited not only the northern part of the Upper Burnett, but after I had practically travelled over the whole of the southern part of the Upper Burnett. I took the Ministers into my confidence as to what I thought should be done after returning, and I had been two—I will not say arduous trips, as they were pleasant trips—but I was away two weeks and we put in some very good work. (Hear, hear!) I was distinctly under the impression—and I still agree with it—that it was necessary to develop that splendid tract of country by two railways running due west—(hear, hear!)—one from Wo'ca or thereabouts, and one from Gayndah. Now, what happened? I told you that we took those trips and what my opinion was, and I may say that the Minister for Lands shared in that opinion in the interests of the Lands Department, and in opening up new country. I, as Secretary for Railways, am endeavouring to work with that department as much as it is possible to do. I then had the very fullest possible information obtained that it was possible, I think, for a man occupying the

position I did to obtain, and recognising it was a very difficult problem to solve and that I am always ready to take the responsibility of any recommendations to the Government before any proposals can be brought forward to this House—

Mr. MAY: We all believe you.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I thought I had all the information we could get with respect to this country. A survey was made from Wolca to Dalgangal. I sent Mr. Amos afterwards from Mundubbera to survey up into that district, and for sending Mr. Amos away I was very much blamed by a certain section of the Press, saying that I had taken him away to try to serve other ends, which remark, I may say, I did not care two straws about. I sent Mr. Amos into the northern part of that district to try to find a better and easier route than the Wolca-Dalgangal route, in the hope of carrying out what I thought was the best thing for the people who are to settle in that country. They are the interests I wish to serve. Mr. Amos reported that it was practically impossible—of course, nothing is impossible—but it was practically impossible to carry a line from Moolboolaman—which is further north than Wolca—into that country. If I remember rightly, I sent him again there to inquire into the Mount Perry route, and that was also found to be practically impossible. I knew that the Wolca to Dalgangal route would be an expensive one, and I also knew, through having travelled over the Dalgangal range and Opossum Creek Range with Mr. Denham, that portion of this route would not be adaptable for closer settlement, and we could not term it too good country. This country can carry cattle, but it is not country that we would care to settle people on with the object of, as I may term it, close settlement. Of course, if a railway were built to it, we would find it used as dairying country. The first 20 miles of that country is very rough and very inferior.

Mr. BARBER: There is a lot of inferior country on this route.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes; I have been over it. I was still of the impression that we would be able to construct two lines of railway into that district. That was the Government's intention until we found the estimated cost, as against Mr. Phillips's estimate of three or four years ago of £140,000, amounted to £345,000. You see that these are figures which make one pause before he goes in for a difficult problem.

Mr. BARBER: You never gave Mr. Phillips a chance to justify his report.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: After talking the matter over I had a suggestion made to me by the junior member for Maryborough, who owns Mungy, a station to the south, between Possum Range and Gayndah. He has been intimately acquainted with the country for many years, and must know it better than it is possible for Mr. Denham or myself, or any of our officers, to know it, because he is continually riding over it. He made the suggestion that perhaps it would be advisable to make some further inquiry, and I took up that suggestion. I appointed as a board three of our most trusted officers in the Railway Department, one from the Survey Branch, one from the Construction Branch, and one from the Traffic Branch, and I thought the two best men to accompany that board were the railway surveyor, who had done a great deal of survey work in the district, and the land surveyor, who had done a great deal of work there.

[Hon. W. T. Paget.]

I called together the members of this House who were interested in this matter, and told them what I proposed to do.

Mr. BARBER: And Mr. White and I protested.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Those hon. members protested against those two officers travelling with the board; but I was pledged to get an officer of the Railway Department and an officer of the Lands Department who knew the country best to accompany the board.

Mr. BARBER: Why did you not send Mr. Phillips?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Mr. Phillips was examined after they came back. The board furnished me with a report stating that they considered it was feasible for this district to be opened up by a railway from Gayndah *via* Mundubbera and Eidsvold to Dalgangal, and then up Splinter Creek. With respect to the objection of the hon. member to my tabling the plans of this particular 20 odd miles from Gayndah to Mundubbera, I think he is looking too far ahead. Under any circumstances these plans would have been tabled this session, for the reason that the Lands Department has 300,000 acres in that particular district either surveyed or designed for closer settlement, and that land has been surveyed and designed because the Lands Department knew that I was having the plans prepared for presentation to Parliament this session. This plan would have been tabled this session even if I had tabled the Wolca to Dalgangal plans at the same time. Since the board presented their report I received reliable information that a very much easier route could be got from a certain distance out from Wolca on to the Burnett River, a route that is very much easier than the route down Eastern Creek; and this plan from Gayndah to Mundubbera is tabled because I must keep faith with the Lands Department—I must keep faith with the people who have been trying to prepare land for closer settlement, because they understood that the Railway Department was going to give them means of access.

Mr. COYNE: Then the surveyor's report was not worth much.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I have received what I believe to be reliable information that a very much easier route can be found from a certain number of miles westward of Wolca to the Burnett River than by running down Eastern Creek.

Mr. MAY: Don't talk too long. Let somebody else have a chance.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: As far as the opening up of the northern part of the Upper Burnett is concerned, nothing more will be done until another thorough examination of the country is made, and the line from Gayndah to Mundubbera is not at the present time a portion of the scheme for opening up that portion of the Upper Burnett. When I was under the impression that two lines were necessary to serve this country, those two lines would have been about 30 miles apart, so that they would practically have covered 60 miles of country, and no settler would have been more than 15 miles from a railway.

[12 p.m.] But I do not desire to keep hon. members much longer in connection with this amendment. At present the routes for opening up the northern part of the Upper Burnett are in abeyance. I am given to understand that in Bundaberg the hon. member for Musgrave has been attacked, or it has been said that he made a statement under Ministerial assurance. That statement could have been made

by anybody, as I have never omitted to state, publicly or privately, what I have said here this evening, and I hope the hon. member, after my explanation as to why this plan has been tabled, will not press his amendment, for the reason that I hold myself bound, and the Government holds itself bound, to give the Lands Department every opportunity of settling this question in connection with what I may term the Gayndah to Mundubbera lands.

Mr. HODGE said as member for the Burnett that railway concerned him considerably more than it did either the member for Maryborough or the member for Bundaberg. (Hear, hear!) From the arguments that had been adduced on both sides it seemed to him that the Burnett was to be made a shuttlecock in the interests of one port or the other. From the geographical position of the Burnett there was plenty of room for trade to be done with both ports, but personally the proposition before the House would have his full support, and he certainly would not support the amendment. The Government had made themselves responsible to give railway communication to the settlers on the lands in that district, and he wished to point out that the lands were thickly settled, and the railways would be the means of promoting further settlement if the lands at present held by private people were taken over by the Government. He would also point out that by making that extension the Government were doing one of the best things possible to cope with the prickly pear in the district. The proposition covered by the Commissioner's report would commend itself to the public of Queensland on the matter of cost, but there was another big factor to be taken into consideration, and that was, that it would facilitate settlement on those magnificent lands. The country the line would tap north of Mundubbera was some of the best country in Queensland, and there was a good deal in the contention of the hon. member for Bundaberg, as the extension of the line due north of Mundubbera would tap the hinterland of Bundaberg, and Bundaberg was fully entitled to the trade of that part. They found from the report that the line was practically in the interests of Maryborough, but he did not want it to be understood for one moment that he was favouring either the interests of Bundaberg or Maryborough in the matter. He would take a fair and square stand on the matter, but each of those ports should get its just dues, and Bundaberg was not getting its dues, and the member for Bundaberg was perfectly right in moving the amendment. One argument against the line was on account of its exorbitant cost, and that had been used for all it was worth by those who wished to block the line. He need only go back a few years, and refer to the line which was extended out from Cairns. That line proved so costly that an arbitration case gave the contractors something like £1,500,000 of money. His contention was that the whole of the three lines, as proposed, could be constructed for half that amount. There was some of the most magnificent country in the Burnett district that it was possible to find in Australia. There was a fine belt of country in the Kingaroy district, but there was a very much larger area in the northern Burnett than in the Kingaroy district, and it was well watered, and similar country to Northern New South Wales, where the water had been so useful in opening up the country. No better scheme could be devised to open up this country than by two lines running from the two ports of Bundaberg and Maryborough. He was going to vote for this extension from Gayndah to Mundubbera, realising that it would open up magnificent

*Mr. Hodge.]*

country, but with the reservation that, if he was a member of the Chamber when a proposition was brought forward for opening up the Burnett district, he would be faithful to his constituents at Mount Perry, and unless there was an extension to Wolea, he would vote against any further extension from Mundubbera.

Mr. CORSER had had forty years' experience of the district under discussion. In the north-western Burnett, there were 2,500,000 acres of land which any part of the world might be proud of. It was the duty of Parliament to see that that immense country was promptly opened to the best advantage of the people who wanted to settle there. The existing line from Bundaberg to Wolea was one that could not be continued as a trunk line. The Wolea scheme would cost £606,000, and a line from Many Peaks would cost £536,000. The Commissioners said that they considered the best method of opening up the Upper Burnett was by the extension of the Gayndah branch from Gayndah to Mundubbera, and Eidsvold to Dalgangal, and then from Spinter Creek for about 25 miles to the vicinity of New Cannindah, which was estimated to cost £378,000, on which interest at 3 per cent. would amount to £11,340. The commission stated that the line throughout its course would traverse land suitable for close settlement, and would be revenue-earning for the whole distance, whereas the country traversed by the Wolea extension for the first 30 miles was quite unfit for close settlement, and would not be revenue-producing to any extent. They also pointed out that the cheaper working and maintenance of the Gayndah route as compared with the Wolea route would result in greater profit to the Commissioner, and tend to further reduce the liability to the settler. There were about 2,500,000 acres of Crown lands in the Burnett district, well watered and suitable for close settlement, which would be made available by the construction of this railway and extensions, and there were some 70,000 acres of first-class land on the B'njour Plateau. About Mundubbera there was a tremendous quantity of first-class land, and right up the valley of the Burnett there was a considerable area of splendid country. Moreover the construction of the line by this route would mean a saving of over £8,000 per mile in the cost as against the Wolea proposition, and as for the ports, there was no comparison between Maryborough and Bundaberg. The port of Maryborough could be so improved by an expenditure of £45,000 that British-India steamers would be able to berth at a pier at Urangan Point, while it would cost at least £250,000 to make a port at Bundaberg. He would point out that the commission estimated the cost from Wolea at £8,160 per mile, against £5,119 per mile from Gayndah; that the working expenses of Bundaberg-Wolea line were 10 per cent. higher than the Maryborough-Gayndah line; that the maintenance was also £30 less per mile on the Gayndah line; that after careful review of the whole question they considered the Gayndah line the best method of opening up the Upper Burnett; that any greater freight charges arising from the connection through Gayndah would be fully counterbalanced by the benefits derived from that line, the Bundaberg-Wolea line being unsuitable for a trunk line, and that the carriage of fat stock and butter to Brisbane would be much less by the Gayndah line.

Mr. BRESLIN said he was against both the hon. member for Maryborough and the hon. member for Bundaberg. There was only one way to drain the Upper Burnett to a natural port, and that was to extend the Many Peaks line towards Cannindah, and take all the trade to Gladstone.

[Mr. Hodge.

Mr. CORSER: How are you going to get the railway over the range?

Mr. BRESLIN: There had been bigger ranges than that crossed by railways. The hon. member for Maryborough said that it would cost at least £250,000 to create a deep-water port at Bundaberg, and that it would cost between £40,000 and £50,000 to make a deep-water port for Maryborough at Urangan; but the Almighty had made a natural port at Gladstone. The whole trouble in connection with the railway was political influence. The Many Peaks extension would not be open to the objection that there was any prickly pear along the route. It would open up a very fine pine forest, it would also open up the Cannindah Copper Mine and the Monal and Cania Goldfields, as well as one of the finest agricultural districts in Central Queensland. The Secretary for Lands had refused to go to the expense of opening up a road from Many Peaks towards Cannindah on the ground that the country the road would traverse was held as grazing farms, and yet the Government were proposing to make the same country accessible by spending a very large sum of money in making a railway.

Mr. BOOKER: This was one of the most important railway proposals the State had had to deal with, as it was the beginning of an extension that would open up absolutely the finest area of rich agricultural land in Queensland that was within easy distance of the seaboard and of markets. Consequently it was to be regretted such an important proposition should have to be discussed at this late hour of the night. However, hon. members had, no doubt, perused the Commissioner's report, and found therein ample evidence to convince them that the proposal to practically open up the great western and north-western Burnett lay in the recommendation before the Committee, which was endorsed by the Railway Commissioner. He was disappointed with the speech of the Secretary for Railways, as the hon. gentleman had not shown that he was submitting the first section of a great proposal to deal with the Burnett district. The delay in settling the Burnett lands had been due to the lack of decision as to which route the railway was to take to open up the Upper and Western Burnett lands. The speech of the Secretary for Railways was apologetic, and it was a special-pleading speech for Bundaberg.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is not so.

Mr. BOOKER: It was clearly so. He would have had no objection to the Burnett district being opened up *via* Wolea if it was practically and financially possible. However, the rough, rugged country intervening made it impossible to construct a trunk line in that direction. When he first entered the House he felt that the Government would do the right thing in opening the Burnett lands, and he felt confident that the people of the Burnett would be dealt with justly. Five weeks ago he attended a meeting of the Shire Council at Mount Perry, and he saw a communication there which surprised him. He came to Brisbane and spoke to the Minister, and suggested the appointment of a commission of the best experts of the Railways and Lands Departments to report on the opening up of the Burnett district, as he felt that a grave injustice was about to be done to the settlers who went into the Burnett district. The three gentlemen appointed were impartial and un-biased, and had only one interest to serve, and that was the State. They had the assistance of Mr. Charlton, Mr. Amos, and Mr. Phillips, and the result was the report which members now had before them. He appreciated the fight put up by the hon. member for Bundaberg

or the opening of the Burnett lands *viâ* Wolca with the port at Bundaberg, but the hon. member had no right to cast reflections on the gentlemen composing that commission, because they had no opportunity of defending themselves. These gentlemen were held in high esteem, and there were no more able or honourable men in the service of Queensland to-day. He was prepared to stand or fall by the report which these gentlemen made, and he regretted that the hon. member for Bundaberg was not prepared to do likewise. It appeared from the argument of the Minister that the proposition was going to be hung up for a term of years, but he hoped that was not the case, as, if so, a grave injustice would be done to the Burnett district. He hoped members would take the report of the three members of the commission into consideration, and if they did, they would see that the proposition put before them should be accepted without delay.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted (*Mr. Barber's amendment*) stand part of of the question—put; and the House divided:—

## AYES, 30.

Mr. Allan	Mr. Grant
„ Appel	„ Grayson
„ Barnes, G. P.	„ Gunn
„ Barnes, W. H.	„ Hawthorn
„ Booker	„ Hodge
„ Bouchard	„ Hunter, D.
„ Brennan	„ Kidston
„ Bridges	„ Paget
„ Corser	„ Petrie
„ Cottell	„ Philp
„ Cribb	„ Roberts
„ Denham	„ Stodart
„ Ferricks	„ Swayne
„ Forrest	„ Walker
„ Forsyth	„ Wienholt
Tellers: Mr. Grayson and Mr. Gunn.	

## NOES, 17.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Mulay
„ Breslin	„ Mulcahy
„ Collins	„ Murphy
„ Coyne	„ McLachlan
„ Foley	„ O'Sullivan
„ Hamilton	„ Payne
„ Hardacre	„ Ryan
„ Land	„ Winstanley
„ Lennon	
Tellers: Mr. Foley and Mr. O'Sullivan.	

## PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Somerset, Mr. Rankin, and Mr. Fox.  
Noes—Mr. Blair, Mr. Douglas, and Mr. Lesina.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Original question put and passed.

## COMMITTEE.

(*Mr. K. M. Grant, Rockhampton, in the chair.*)

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS, in moving—

1. That the House approves of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed extension from Gayndah to Mundubbera, in length 23 miles 21 chains.

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 he would draw the attention of hon. members to the fact that the benefited area described in the Commissioner's report contained approximately 550,000 acres, made up as follows:—Available for selection, 130,000 acres; holdings, 100,000 acres; grazing selections, 180,000 acres; alienated or in process of alienation, 90,000 acres.

Mr. LENNON: Are you giving the right to demand a poll?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS:

Yes. The Commissioner estimated that there would be £1,470 available towards

[1 a.m.] interest, which would leave a deficit of £2,240. That represented 1d. per acre to be paid by the benefited area of 550,000 acres.

Mr. LENNON: Some hon. members were not satisfied with the measure in its present form and would like an opportunity of criticising it in detail, and he therefore suggested that the House adjourn. Having passed three important railways and gone a long way in the fourth, he would appeal to the Premier to adjourn and not weary the House out.

The PREMIER: I think it would be best to finish these resolutions first.

Mr. BARBER asked whether Maryborough would be included in the benefited area in connection with the railway?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Maryborough has not offered to accept a share in the responsibility.

Mr. BARBER wished to point out that Bundaberg, by a majority of the ratepayers, had offered to pay one-fourth of the loss on the working of the line if it had been constructed by the route suggested by him, and that should have been taken into consideration before the arrangement was decided on. Of course Maryborough was too poor or too mean to make any such offer. There was one thing, that if the extension were carried out it would help to make the Gayndah line pay. According to the Commissioner's report the most that line had ever paid was £1 5s. 2d. per cent., while the Mount Perry line had paid as much as £3 16s. 1d. per cent. He hoped the Government would place Maryborough within the benefited area, as most of the benefits accruing from the construction of the line would go to Maryborough, and if there was any loss on the line Maryborough should be called upon to make up some of the deficiency.

Mr. HAMILTON asked why should not Maryborough be made to guarantee some of the loss on that line? The line was only a sop to Maryborough, and was being built in order to catch votes for the hon. member for Maryborough. He had been through the country beyond Gayndah out to Eidsvold, and he had never travelled through more rotten country in his life. He had been informed by persons who knew the country well that the proper port for that country was Gladstone. Even in this report, it said that the extension from Many Peaks to tap the Burnett district would travel through good country nearly all the way. There was good timber, and far more good country to be tapped by building a line in that direction than by the present proposal, under which they were trying to divert the trade from its natural port in order to give it to Maryborough.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: One would think to hear the hon. member for Maryborough, that this extension would pay from the jump, but the report of the Commissioner showed that the present line only earned something like 13s. 7d. per cent. They could only conclude that this was a political railway, and one which was not going to pay for a considerable time, but, of course, the argument was that it would pay indirectly.

Mr. MULCAHY was not much against this extension, but he hoped when they went in for further extension they would not twist and go away North, but keep to the West.

Mr. LENNON: One of the statements made by the Minister was that he wished to conserve the interests of the primary producer, and therefore a line to Maryborough had the advantage over other routes. The commissioners in their report pointed out that on the carriage of flour, sugar, clothing, and high-class groceries to Dalgangal, there was a difference of 50 per cent. in favour of Bundaberg as against Maryborough. Those figures utterly discounted the statement of the Minister that he was trying to conserve the

*Mr. Lennon.]*

interests of the producer. Mr. Phillips stated that the proposed line would add 48 miles to the railgale from Dalgangal to port, and would draw freight away from Bundaberg. He was of opinion that the railway should go to Many Peaks and tap all the country on Splinter Creek, as such a line would be one of the best paying lines in the State, and would connect that country with one of the best ports in Australia.

Mr. MURPHY objected to the proposed railway because he had come to the conclusion that the Burnett district should be opened by a railway from the port of Gladstone. It seemed to him that the Government were going back upon the policy enunciated when they introduced their first railway proposal this session, namely, that the trade of a district should go to its natural port. This railway was not in the interests of the producer or in the interests of Queensland generally, but was submitted in order to placate the members for Maryborough, who had had some difference with the Government in connection with railway construction. A railway from Gladstone would give the people who were going to settle in that district a better chance of progressing and prospering than this line, and it would also open up an extensive mineral belt, and thus give employment to thousands of people. As he was against the big loan policy of the Government, he was going to vote against all railway proposals submitted by them.

Mr. FOLEY: The speeches delivered that day proved that members on the other side who were not going to benefit from the construction of the Great Western Railway had to receive some return for their support of that project, and the four railways introduced were brought forward with that object in view. For that reason, he would oppose any loan for those railways.

Mr. WIENHOLT said that even if a line were eventually built from Wolca to the Upper Burnett, the line now under consideration was necessary, as it would have to be extended to the south-west, because that country was becoming infested with prickly pear, and unless it was soon opened to settlement it would not be worth anything.

Question—That the resolutions be agreed to—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 30.

Mr. Allan	Mr. Grayson
„ Appel	„ Gunn
„ Barnes, G. P.	„ Hawthorn
„ Barnes, W. H.	„ Hodge
„ Rooker	„ Hunter, D.
„ Bouchard	„ Kidston
„ Brennan	„ Mulcahy
„ Bridges	„ Paget
„ Cosser	„ Petrie
„ Cottell	„ Philp
„ Cribb	„ Roberts
„ Denham	„ Stodart
„ Ferricks	„ Swayne
„ Forrest	„ Walker
„ Forsyth	„ Wienholt
<i>Tellers: Mr. D. Hunter and Mr. Wienholt.</i>	

NOES, 16.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Lennon
„ Breslin	„ McLachan
„ Collins	„ May
„ Coyne	„ Murphy
„ Foley	„ O'Sullivan
„ Hamilton	„ Payne
„ Hardacre	„ Ryan
„ Land	„ Winstanley
<i>Tellers: Mr. Breslin and Mr. Ryan.</i>	

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Somerset, Mr. Rankin, and Mr. Fox.  
Noes—Mr. Blair, Mr. Douglas, and Mr. Lesina.

Resolved in the affirmative.

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

[*Mr. Lennon*

## SUPPLY.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN brought up the resolutions passed in Committee of Supply, covering the Department of Justice and the votes in the Department of the Treasury up to and including the vote for the Marine Department.

The TREASURER moved that the resolutions be now received.

Mr. LENNON thought the resolutions should not be received until the next sitting of the House. The House should now adjourn.

The PREMIER disagreed with the hon. member. The House should adjourn when it had done its little formal business, and they could do it all in three minutes.

Question put and passed.

The resolutions were then read by the CLERK and, on the motion of the TREASURER, were agreed to.

The House adjourned at thirteen minutes to 2 o'clock a.m.