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1901-05-21

Senate.

The President took the chair at 4 p.m.

PETITION

Senator Walker

presented a petition from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales in favour of the sittings of the Senate being opened by prayer.

The petition was received and read.

QUESTIONS

PARLIAMENT HOUSE

Senator MILLEN

- I should like to ask a question without notice, the urgency of the matter being my excuse for doing so. Is it correct that the Government is on the eve of completing an agreement with the State Government of Victoria as to the renting if I may use the word - of these premises, and if so, whether, before completing that agreement, they will make the House familiar with its contents?

Vice-President of the Executive Council

Senator O'CONNOR

- I must ask the honorable member to give notice of that question. .

Senator Neild

- I have given notice already.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS

Senator DAWSON

- Without notice, is it the intention of the representative of the Government to do his best to provide honorable members with Parliamentary papers on the morning after a sitting has taken place? We have so far been very much embarrassed.

Senator O'CONNOR

- Instructions have been given to have the minutes of proceedings of the previous day and notices of motion delivered to honorable members every morning by ten o'clock.

Senator DAWSON

- We have not got our Hansard yet.

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH

The PRESIDENT reported that he had received a commission from His Excellency the Governor-General empowering him to administer the oath to members who might present themselves to be sworn.

Commission read by the Clerk.

ROLL OF SENATORS

Senator MILLEN

- It is intended that the members of the Senate shall be asked to sign a roll, as I believe is customary in most Houses of Parliament. We have signed, it is true, the oath taken at the swearing-in ceremony, but honorable members have not signed a roll; and I suggest that, for the convenience of the House and for other reasons, it is desirable that they should do so.

The PRESIDENT

- I understand that that will be provided for by the standing orders. It is in the draft standing orders which have been laid upon the table, but, inasmuch as no standing orders have yet been adopted, there is no procedure for the Senate. I presume that the Senate will provide that a roll shall be signed by each member.

POSTPONEMENT OF BUSINESS

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Vice-President of the Executive Council

Senator O'CONNOR

. - I beg to move -

That Notices of Motion Nos. 1, 2,. 3, and 4 be read and discharged, and made orders of the day for to-morrow.

I make this motion in order that the Address in Reply should take precedence of all other business, and should be the only business taken.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON

- I only rise for the purpose of suggesting to Senator O'Connor that, until notice of motion No. 4 is dealt with in some way or 'other, the Senate will be in the exceedingly anomalous position of proceeding with its business without any standing orders. Mr. President has just pointed out, in answer to Senator Millen, that we cannot even sign a roll until some regulations are adopted establishing a rule governing our procedure. In my humble view, we are rather reversing the order. It would be almost better to postpone the consideration of the Address in Reply until we have adopted standing orders governing the procedure of the Senate than to postpone a motion of that kind until the Address in Reply is adopted. "We do not really know what may take place in the interval ; the Senate is without rule or guidance of any kind or description, and the hands of the President are to a certain extent tied so far as regards the carrying out of any possible procedure that may be adopted for governing the order of the Senate. I would ask whether it would not be better to deal with Notice of Motion No. 4 finally now, before ' the Address in Reply is proceeded with.

Senator NEILD

- I submit that the motion before the Chamber is entirely in accordance with parliamentary practice, particularly the practice of the Imperial Parliament. It is not usual for the Government to attempt to transact any business until the Address in Reply has been disposed of.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

- But we must establish our own government.

Senator DAWSON

- They have already done business.

Senator NEILD

- The business that has been done has been business absolutely necessary, such as the fixing of the next time of meeting. It is customary for such motions to be carried, but it is not customary for what are practically sessional orders to be dealt with until the Address in Reply has been disposed of.

Senator GOULD

(New South Wales). It appears to me also that the course proposed by

Senator O'Connor

is the better course under the circumstances. The consideration of the standing orders will give rise to a considerable amount of debate. There is a number of standing orders which I am perfectly sure many honorable members will feel it incumbent upon them to vote against, at any rate to debate, and debate at considerable length. So I do not think that we would be saving time or helping ourselves at all by taking this business, and, as

Senator Neild

points out, it is an unusual thing for a Government to do more business than is absolutely formal and necessary before the Address in Reply is adopted. In this case, supposing any difficulty does arise it has been laid down by the Privy Council that you, sir, have the same powers as the chairman of a public meeting would have, and those powers would enable you, if honorable members were to misbehave so badly as to necessitate "their removal, to have them removed from the chamber. So I think, with such drastic power in your hands at the present time, it is hardly conceivable that there will be any difficulty arising in connexion with the carrying on of the business so far as dealing with the Address in Reply is concerned.- Of course, the ordinary rules of debate and the ordinary rules that guide public meetings in regard to amendments will be taken cognizance of here, so that I cannot conceive that there is any necessity to consider these standing orders at the present time. What necessity is there to pass a standing order, for instance, to the effect that a senator who has spoken to the main question shall not be allowed to speak to an amendment on the main question? That, I believe, is in the standing orders submitted last week. Whether they have been revised since then, I do not know. There are other standing orders in regard to moving the adjournment of the Senate which are not likely to come up at all while we have this debate pending, and this debate no doubt will be given precedence to day after day, if it is going to last more than a day, until it is absolutely concluded, when we shall take up this ordinary business, which, I submit, will legitimately come forward at that particular time.

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Senator Sir JOHN DOWNER

- It appears to me that this is a question of not only convenience, but also constitutional usage. So far as convenience is concerned, I am disposed ;to agree with the senator who made the suggestion just now ; but, so far as constitutional usage is concerned, I have always understood that practically we ought to do no business at all until the Address in Reply has been agreed to. We are really not properly constituted for the purpose of doing other business until we have got a message from the Throne and sent a message in reply. From the point of view of convenience it does seem a little anomalous that we should do anything without settling some standing orders under which we may proceed. But the constitutional usage, I think, must take precedence of questions of convenience. After all, the standing orders are matters for ourselves, and we shall make such standing orders in the interim as are necessary to procure the proper, and, I think, the decorous, discharge of the business attendant on the Address in Reply.

Senator O'CONNOR

(New South Wales -Vice-President of Executive Council) in reply. - In taking the course I have done, I have followed what I think is admitted to be the unvarying constitutional usage. I quite assent to a good deal that has been said by

Senator Sir Josiah

Symon as to the inconvenience of proceeding without standing orders, but, having regard to the nature of the debate which will take place, I think the inconvenience is likely to be more imaginary than real. I hope, and I see no reason to believe that the hope will not be realized, that there will be no practical inconvenience resulting from not having standing orders constituted in the ordinary way. But there is another reason why I have postponed this motion. On looking into these standing orders more critically than it had been possible for me to do before, I found that there are many of them which the Senate ought not to be asked to take for granted without debate, many of them giving very stringent powers. There are others of them which I think are new to honorable members, and there are some of them which seem to be a little contradictory in themselves. It appeared to me that it would be unwise and unfair to the Senate to ask them to adopt, under a general motion of this kind,- standing orders which are open to so much objection. I have gone through these standing orders very carefully, and I intend to strike out a number of them, to amend some of them, and to lay the amended draft on the table. That will be done to-morrow; and, when it is done, I propose to alter Notice of Motion No. 4, so as to make the adoption of the amended standing orders the subject of that notice. I think then there will be a code of standing orders which, while they will provide everything that is necessary, will not make any undue call upon the consideration or patience of the Senate. The standing orders will be laid on the table tomorrow, and will be distributed as soon as possible, so that by the time the motion is made which I intend to submit honorable members will be in possession of the standing orders, and they will know what alterations have been made. I hope to avoid discussion as much as possible in dealing with these provisional standing orders, because they will be referred to a standing orders committee, who will go into the matter very fully ; and there must be another discussion when the standing orders are brought up for final adoption. I am framing these standing orders, and including such standing orders only as will, I think, pass without discussion. Perhaps it is as well that the matter was raised now, because it has enabled me to make this explanation, which, I think, will satisfy the Senate that not only is there constitutional ground for the course which has been taken, but that it is a course which is really in the interests of the House itself.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S SPEECH

Address in Reply

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Senator FRASER

- I have to inform the Senate that, after the appointment of the committee to prepare the Address in Reply to His Excellency the Governor-General's speech, we received a letter from Senator Gould, withdrawing his name from the committee. I have the honour now to present the Address in Reply.

The Address in Reply was then read by the Clerk as follows : -

To His Excellency the Eight Honorable the Earl of Hopetoun, a Member of His Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council, Knight of the Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle, Knight Grand Cross of the

Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Victorian Order, Governor-General and Commander in Chief of the Commonwealth of Australia.

May it please Your Excellency :

We, the Senate of the Commonwealth of Australia, in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to Our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the speech which you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

Senator FRASER

- I move -

That the Address in Reply to His Excellency's speech, as read by the Clerk, be now adopted.

I, am sure we all heartily concur in that portion of His Excellency's speech referring to the Duke of Cornwall and York, His Majesty's High Commissioner, and to the great honour conferred on us, and also with the touching allusion to Her Gracious Majesty the late Queen. Now, I will not deal with the speech in a long or tedious way, because I consider the proper time at which to debate the matters therein referred to is when the Bills are before the Senate. In the first place, the subject of defence is alluded to. I will only say that when the supreme commander of the forces is appointed I hope he will be a man up to date in every possible way. We spend a great deal of money on defence in the States, and the money would be spent to much greater advantage if we had in control a man who has won his spurs either here or elsewhere. In setting forth my views during the election campaign I always referred to the citizen soldiery, to the rifle clubs, the cadets, and such like forces, and I say now that it is by means of such bodies that we can best defend ourselves. Any assistance the Federal Government can give in that direction will be right and proper. We are isolated on this continent, we are surrounded by water, we have no military frontier like they have in the Cape, or Canada, or India, and elsewhere, and therefore a citizen soldiery is, in my opinion, ample. Moreover, the people of this country can not afford a very extravagant military system - that goes without saying - and I have come to the conclusion that the first question for the Commonwealth Government, supported by the Commonwealth Parliament, to seriously consider is what form of defence we shall adopt ultimately ? I have no hesitation in saying that our right arm of defence will be a sea or naval defence, supported by forts and mines and such like. I am not in the least disparaging the forces to which I have referred ; they should be encouraged and supported in every way ; but for a Commonwealth such as we are, surrounded by water, without any military frontier, I have come to the conclusion, after reading the matter up as a layman, that our right aim of defence must be a sea or naval defence. A fact that goes a long way to support that is found in what occurred not long ago in Cuba. Cuba had 150,000 to 200,000 soldiers; the United States had 25,000 to 30,000 soldiers. Cuba had a very inefficient navy ; the United States had a very efficient navy. The United States navy smashed up - if I may use that common expression - the Spanish navy, and blockaded Cuba. Then the United States navy sought for a weak spot, and found it in Santiago, which fell. The result was that Cuba fell also. So that an army of from 150,000 to 200,000 soldiers, instead of being an advantage, was a disadvantage, because it was consuming rations that could not be spared. We are situated in a somewhat similar position. We must look to these matters now we are a Commonwealth, and I commend the view I have put to the Government. We know that the nations of the world are making strenuous efforts to get command of the sea. Fortunately for us, the British Empire has had command of the sea for a very long time, and I hope that will long continue, but there are facts staring us in the face that have to be considered. British shipping carries about half the produce of the world, and I suppose about 75 per cent, of the shipping of the world was built in England up to the year 1898; but, notwithstanding that, the most powerful shipping company in the world to-day is the North German Lloyd Steamship Company - a company owning 108 steamers, with a total tonnage of 500,000 and odd tons. All their steamers were built in England up to 1894. Since that, all their ships have been built in Germany, and now the fleet of that company is infinitely stronger and greater, and more powerful, than any other fleet on the face of the waters of the world. They have doubled their fleet during the last ten years.

Senator Major Gould

- To what extent have they been subsidized by the Government?

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Senator FRASER

- Every ship in Germany is more or less subsidized by the Government, and the same system prevails in

France and Japan, and other countries. The next most powerful company to be compared with the North German Lloyd Steamship Company is the British India Steamship Company, well known to the Queensland representatives. They own 122 steamers, representing 328,000 tons. All these German, French, and American ships go to British ports, and pay the same dues that a British ship pays, while, if a British ship goes to a foreign port, she pays double dues. I say, as a British subject, without the slightest intention of offending a foreign subject or nation, that that is not fair in my opinion.

Senator Glassey

- The remedy is in our own hands.

Senator FRASER

- Yes, the remedy is in our own hands ; but I say that that does not appear to me to be fair. The very ship that trades between Yokohama and Vancouver is, as I am informed, subsidized to the extent of the hands on board and the coal she consumes. Even that little nation Japan started a company in 1885, the Nippon Ushen Kiasha, which owns 68 steamers, with a total tonnage of 220,000 tons ; and in this morning's paper you will see telegraphic references to the strenuous efforts that Germany is making in regard to her shipping.

Senator DAWSON

- Do you believe in the press?

Senator FRASER

- I believe in the press as much as I believe in mankind generally. I find there are some extravagant statements made in the press, but there are extravagant statements made in many other places. Well, I say that this matter requires careful consideration. The United States, with its far-seeing Government, has very stringent Inter-State laws. The Moana, a magnificent ship belonging to the New Zealand Shipping Company, a very strong well-conducted company, has been obliged to come off the line from San Francisco to Honolulu and New Zealand, and now trades between Vancouver and New Zealand. The maritime laws of the United States, I believe, provide that all ships must be built, owned, and manned by American citizens. Therefore, I say that in regard to matters such as this, the Commonwealth Government has something to do. The other day a foreign subject who took his passage from Honolulu to San Francisco in a foreign ship was fined 120 dollars for so doing. All these matters go to show that although up to the present British shipping has been supreme on the waters of the world, still a desperate effort is being made by other nations to get greater control of the waters. I commend this view to the consideration of the Government when they are dealing with matters relating to our shipping.

Senator CHARLESTON

- What is the honorable member's suggestion ?

Senator FRASER

- My suggestion is that foreign ships should be charged higher dues.

Senator Playford

- Retaliation.

Senator FRASER

- No, I call it fair play. The man who strikes the first blow is the man who gives the cause of offence.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

- Benevolence.

Senator McGregor

- It is the kind of charity that begins at home.

Senator FRASER

- Exactly; it is not the kind of charity that turneth the other cheek. Now, another matter referred to in the Governor-General's speech is that very difficult and disputable one of the Customs and Excise Bill. That is a measure that will create a great deal of heartburning, I have no doubt; but we have got to face it. We must have a revenue of at least ?8,500,000. The new expenditure of the Commonwealth is estimated at from ?350,000 to ?500,000. There are intercolonial duties yielding about a million of money that will be lost to the State Treasurers ; that in itself is a very large sum, and provision has also to be made for the surplus which New South Wales will have over and above what she has been accustomed to get. Under a Commonwealth Tariff, New South Wales undoubtedly will have a surplus revenue of from half to three-quarters of a million. The last statistics to which I have been able to refer give the revenue from

Customs and Excise as ?1,600,000, and we in this State have ?2,200,000 or ?2,300,000.

A Senator. - Notwithstanding protection.

Senator FRASER

- Protection has given us that amount. The high duties have given it to us. I say when the Tariff is passed New South Wales will have a surplus revenue of at least ?600,000 or more.

Senator McGregor

- She will not have a deficit every year.

Senator FRASER

- I do not say that much.

Senator Dobson

- She has a deficit now.

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Senator FRASER

- We all have deficits, and we cannot throw stones in that respect. At any rate, we mean to be fair to each other. New South Wales will have a surplus revenue from the Federal tariff of from ?500,000 to ?750,000. The new expenditure of close on ?500,000 and the surplus revenue of New South Wales will run into a large sum of money, probably about ?2,000,000, which will have to be derived from oversea goods, and it will therefore be compulsory that the Tariff should be a stiff one in order to raise that amount, considering that there is to be a free list. There must be a free list, and the probability is that it will be enlarged instead of being curtailed.

Senator Smith

- "Why not have direct taxation 1

Senator FRASER

- I was not one of the candidates who spoke of direct taxation during the election campaign. Our direct taxation is heavy enough already, and we must raise our revenue from Customs and Excise, and other sources. At any rate, I say that there is a vast sum of money, amounting to about ?2,000,000, which has to be provided for, and it will compel the Federal Government to put on high duties. No other duties will raise the revenue, and let me remind the senators here present that if there is not sufficient revenue receivable by the Federal Treasurer to pay back to the State Treasurers the money to which they have been accustomed to look for, for the payment of interest on debentures and other loans, then there will be no possible means by which the State Treasurers can raise money, except by direct taxation.

Senator DAWSON

- Hear, hear.

Senator FRASER

- You will And that those "Hear, hears" are not very acceptable to the community generally.

Senator DAWSON

- In Victoria.

Senator FRASER

- Nor in the other States. I am speaking more particularly of this State, of which I am a representative. Therefore we must have ?8,500,000 to enable the Federal Treasurer to pay back to the State Treasurers an amount sufficient to pay interest upon their loans. That is a matter which cannot be ignored. As I have said, Victoria's contribution in 1898-9 was ?2,225,222 from Customs and Excise; New South Wales' ?1,660,333, Queensland's ?1,569,015, South Australia's ?641,081, Western Australia's ?859,915, and Tasmania's ?447,036 ; making a total of ?7,402,602. Apart from that, the people of this State, as I have often said before, and the people of Australia generally, excepting perhaps in some parts of New South Wales, voted unanimously for the Commonwealth Bill. They did so in the full belief and confidence that the Federal Government would not create difficulties. Let me be either free-trader or protectionist, I say it would not be fair or honest for the Federal Government to break faith with a people who, in good faith, accepted the Commonwealth Bill believing they would be honorably treated. Therefore, I say that industries which have been encouraged by the various State Parliaments ought not to be injured. We ought not to destroy what Parliament has in its wisdom created.

Senator McGregor

- What Parliament 1

Senator FRASER

- The Parliaments of the States. We are representing the people of the Commonwealth and they are the people of the -States. Another matter which is associated with our industries, is the question of bounties. I was hoping that the Government would have made some little reference to this subject. In this State bounties have been of much use. The butter business owes its origin to them. In my opinion, and in the opinion of the people of most of the States, the butter business but for bounties would not have been what it is to-day. It might have been years and years before it attained to its present position but for the bounties.

Senator DAWSON

- And the Victorian consumers have to pay more for their butter.

Senator FRASER

- Victorians are quite satisfied to do so, because they get better butter than ever they could obtain before. The trouble nowadays is to get bad butter. I remember the time when you could not get good butter; now it is a difficulty to find bad samples.

Senator DAWSON

- There is good jam here too.

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Senator FRASER

- And Ave get good jam too. I say that in the matter of the butter industry, bounties have certainly facilitated its growth. During the crisis which we had here and elsewhere, it was acknowledged that the butter business really saved this State, at any rate. It is a huge business, and a growing business. The old country takes ?15,000,000 worth of butter from all parts of the world every year. Up to the present we have only sent ?1,500,000 worth per annum, but there is no reason why we should not be able to send ?4,000,000 or ?5,000,000 worth of butter to London annually. To encourage it would be to spread prosperity throughout the whole land. I invite senators to visit the western district and Wangaratta. As soon as they put their feet on the soil where butter is produced they will at once acknowledge that prosperity follows butter. I assure you that has been so in the western district. Go to Colac or Camperdown, or travel to Wangaratta, and you will find wherever butter is produced land has risen in value and population has also increased. Instead of land being occupied as it was years ago by flocks of sheep, it is now covered by herds of cattle. Another matter to which I must refer while dealing with the question of bounties is that of coal. I remember the time, not many years ago, when it was asserted there was not a ton of coal to be found in Victoria. Through the passing of two short railway lines, one going to Jumbunna the other to Korumburra, we are now receiving 250,000 tons of coal per annum from Gippsland. A third of the coal consumed in Victoria is raised in Gippsland, two-thirds come from New South Wales. For twenty years it was asserted by high authority that coal did not exist here, but high authorities are not always correct.

Senator Glassey

- You give a bounty?

Senator FRASER

- No, we do not give a bounty.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

- The discovery was made without a bounty ?

Senator FRASER

- Yes. Now, in my humble opinion, it would be a good thing for the Federal Government, out of the savings which I hope it will make, to give a bonus of ?5,000 for the first 500 reapers and binders made in Australia. Farmers are paying ?50 and ?55 for machines when they can be made in the old country for a great deal less than half that amount.

Senator Millen

- Why are they not made in Australia?

Senator Playford

- If they were made here the importers would flood the market.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

- All the better for the farmer.

Senator FRASER

- I am using reapers and binders in New South Wales, and can purchase them there much cheaper than in Victoria.

Senator Gould

- -Yes, in free-trade New South Wales.

Senator Best

- But there is no duty on them here.

Senator FRASER

- There is no duty on them here, so Senator Gould is barking up the wrong tree. They are admitted free here just as they are in New South Wales, and there are many more reapers and binders used in Victoria than in the mother State. I say that the importers here put their heads together.

Senator Barrett

- There is a ring.

Senator FRASER

- I will not use the word "ring." That might offend the importers. I assert that they put their heads together, and agree to charge a higher price.

Senator Charleston

- Then the importers in New South Wales are more generous ?

Senator FRASER

- No; the importers who have put their heads together will find their way across the Murray by and by. It would be a good thing for the Federal Government to offer a bonus of ?5,000 for the first 500 machines made here at ?30 each and equal to the best imported machines.

Senator DAWSON

- Why not let the Government make them?

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Senator FRASER

- If the Government made them they would cost a lot more. In regard to this matter, I may say the day will come when the iron mines of New South Wales will astonish the world by their output, and while we are giving a bonus for one tiling in one State we might give a bonus in another, and so treat all fairly. The next item I wish to refer to is that of Posts and Telegraphs. I have read the statement drawn up by the Deputy Postmasters - General, and would commend it to those senators who wish to have some light reading. Their conclusions are, in my opinion, very absurd. I would recommend the Government to follow the example of Canada, by dividing the Commonwealth into ten or twelve or thirteen districts, and appointing an inspector for each - when there would be a spirit of emulation created amongst the officers of the department - instead of adopting the cut-and-dried ideas of officials, no matter how well intentioned they may be. No doubt it is a very difficult thing for the official mind to get out of the usual groove. In Canada the Post and Telegraph system is working very well. Large savings can be effected by-and-by in these departments by wise and good Government, and the public will be better served under the Commonwealth than it has been in the past. Our Postal department has often been condemned as badly managed, and frequent complaints are made by the public in letters to the press. I am afraid there has been some justification for them. The Telegraph department, instead of charging as at present, will no doubt charge according to mileage, dividing the continent into distances of 300, 400, or 500 miles. I come now to money matters. I remember that in the Convention it was frequently asserted large savings could be effected on our loans, which would more than pay the whole expenses of the Commonwealth. I am afraid that cannot be done now, because money is cheaper in Australia than it is at home, and it has been so for some years.

Senator Charleston

- There is a greater demand for money in free-trade England than in protectionist Victoria.

Senator FRASER

- There has been a greater consumption of money in England than usual. Whatever the reason, money is cheaper in New South Wales, which presumes to be a free-trade State, than it is in London. I see no hope, therefore, of making savings at present, but that condition of affairs cannot last long. We are paying large sums to the London and Westminster Bank for collecting our coupons ; -we are paying ?250 per

£1,000,000 for that work. Money has been borrowed recently in Australia - I refer to the Treasury Bills of Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria - some £500,000 in each State, and it has been borrowed cheaper than it could have been obtained at home. I hope the day is not far distant when all the borrowing required for the Commonwealth will be done in Australia, and done cheaper and better than it could be at home. The Treasurer could do the agency business instead of paying large sums for that work. If money happens to be cheaper in London, it will be invested through agents here instead of us going to London to borrow, so that it would be much better for the Commonwealth to obtain its loan moneys locally. A saving of half per cent, in the money borrowed for the whole Commonwealth (the total indebtedness is about £190,000,000) would mean close on £1,000,000 a year all told. When money becomes cheaper at home, that is the direction in which the Government ought to travel. . It should be possible for the renewals and conversions, at any rate, to be obtained at a much lower price. We have four and a half and five per cent, loans, while in some few cases a still higher price is paid, and if we can save half per cent, it will mean close on £1,000,000 a year. There are some £10,000,000 of our State loans maturing in London during the next seven years.

Senator Gould

- All of which must be paid in London. We do not want to pay exchange from here to London.

Senator FRASER

- I grant you that; but the Government can make arrangements with the banks on very favorable terms to remit. The Victorian Government gets its exchange done for one-eighth per cent. less than any private customer. If the rate of exchange is half per cent., the Government will only pay three-eighths per cent. It is in this way that the Commonwealth Government can do an immense amount of "good to the various States. Of course I know, Mr. President, that when these loans mature, they cannot be dealt with except by an arrangement between the Federal Treasurer and the State Government. That, however, is a matter of small detail which could be arranged with equal advantage to both parties. Another subject touched on in the Governor-General's speech is that of the High Court of Australia. I have long held the opinion that the wisest course for a Government to pursue would be to select three Judges - three of the most suitable men from the State bench - who could be spared. I am told they have not much work to do ; and I think the Federal Government will be acting wisely if they encourage three of the State Judges to accept positions in the High Court of Appeal.

Senator Higgs

- Has the honorable member got any one in his eye 1

Senator FRASER

- No; I have no favorites at all. I would leave the matter entirely in the hands of the Government of the day. By so doing, a saving of at least £10,000 or £12,000 a year could be effected without injury to anybody, and we cannot afford to be throwing away £10,000 a year here and £10,000 a year there.

Senator Millen

- Does the honorable member mean to double work the Judges 1

Senator FRASER

- A less number of Judges than we have at present could perform all the duties devolving upon them in this State.

Senator Gould

- You ought to get one or two transferred to New South Wales We have more than enough work for the Judges there.

Senator FRASER

- Are you shorthanded there?

Senator Gould

- We are.

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Senator FRASER

- I thought that you had some to spare. I believe that in most of the States the Judges have not enough work to do, and therefore I would recommend that course to be taken. I have no other object except to recommend the

Government to take economical courses. The next question is a very debatable one, and that is the

restriction of the immigration of Asiatics. I spoke at a great many places during my campaign, and told the people that I was in favour of a white Australia; but-
Honorable Members. - Oh !

Senator FRASER

- I knew that that remark would create a laugh. I believe that we can have a white Australia and the sugar business also. Does the honorable member agree with that ?

Senator DAWSON

- Yes.

Senator Playford

- There is a protective duty on sugar.

Senator FRASER

- The sugar industry is a huge industry ; it is now saving or helping to save Queensland. Queensland is a great State, and, notwithstanding the statement in the concluding paragraph of this speech that the drought has broken up, it is suffering dreadfully from the severest drought that has ever been known to occur in this hemisphere. When the shearing tallies are made up the loss of stock, especially sheep, in Queensland will astonish the people of this continent I speak from knowledge, for unfortunately I am interested in pastoral pursuits there. Senator Higgs. - The honorable member is going to make it up out of the black man.

Senator FRASER

- No, I am not interested in sugar at all ; I never was, and probably never will be. The people of the district of Brisbane voted against the acceptance of the Commonwealth Bill. It was the people of the north who carried the Commonwealth Bill in Queensland.

Senator Walker

- The north and centre.

Senator FRASER

- It was the people of the north who carried the Commonwealth Bill, and therefore they are entitled to our sympathy and kind consideration. They, ' like the protectionists in Victoria, voted in good faith, believing that they ' would be treated fairly and liberally. Difficult subject as it is, I believe in a white Australia; and I hope that some course can be found that will insure a white Australia and still preserve the sugar industry. Senator Higgs. - What would the honorable member ' propose?

Senator FRASER

- The Bill is not before me just now. It is too early to give an expression of opinion. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. I hope it will be provided for, at any rate, because it is an industry that is indigenous to that part of the Commonwealth ; and there are millions of acres yet available for the extension of the business. Queensland is suffering, and make no mistake, its deficit will be a very large one, and the Federal Treasurer possibly will be called upon to help in that direction. It will be the duty of the Federal Treasurer to help any State that is in temporary financial difficulty. So far as Queensland is concerned, undoubtedly the difficulty will pass away, but the effects of the drought there will last for years, because the country is devoid of stock to breed up with. The sugar industry is one of the industries which are now keeping that State going. So far as the kanakas are concerned, I repeat here what I have said on the platforms. I do not think there is much danger of the whites of Queensland and the kanakas mixing together. The blacks of Australia and the whites of Australia never did mix together.

Senator Glassey

- It would be a very great pity if they did.

Senator FRASER

- I quite agree with the honorable member.

Senator Glassey

- That is one thing we wish to avoid.

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Senator FRASER

- I say so, too. I do not think there is very much danger of the blacks and whites mixing together, but if there is a danger of that occurring I would guard against it. I am in favour of industrial disputes being settled on fair lines. A patent law of course is a law which would be of great advantage to the

Commonwealth generally. The question of old-age pensions is to be dealt with in the future. In this State we legislated on the subject in a very great hurry. We have a justification now for saying that the measure was passed too hastily. The Act is not working as was expected. I believe that the senators here and the Commonwealth Parliament will agree to grant old-age pensions when the Bill is brought forward. It is far better for the Federal Parliament to deal with this subject than the State Parliaments. If an applicant for an old-age pension here has spent ten years in one State and ten years in another State, or has spent five years in each of four States as the case may be, he is not eligible because, according to the law of Victoria, a man has to spend twenty years in the State. It is ridiculous to say that because a man here has spent his time in the other States, and has given every guarantee of good citizenship, he is not as eligible for a pension as if he had spent the whole twenty years in this State. It is a question which should be dealt with by the Federal Parliament, and the experience we have gained in this State will be of great value to the Federal Government, because they can avoid many mistakes we have made here. In this State the applications were heard in secret, which was a great mistake, as imposition was carried on without the public knowing anything about it.

Senator Higgs

- The honorable member has not told us what he proposes to do with Asiatics and Hindoos.

Senator FRASER

- I am thankful for the interjection. I am totally opposed to the Asiatics.' I would not consider them, but time, of course, must be given for men to put their houses in order. I quite agree with the statement made in the Governor-General's speech so far as Asiatics and Hindoos are concerned, that when the agreements expire they should not be renewed. From what I can learn, I do not think there is any necessity for it. There is only the matter of the railway from Port Augusta to Kalgoorlie which I have not touched upon. I happen to have been a member of the firm that built a railway from Port Augusta to Government Gums some years ago. I spoke against this proposal during my campaign. This is not the time to speak at length on the question. Of course it is a proposal for a federal expenditure. Before the Federal Government agree to an expenditure of, say, £3,000,000, they ought to have ample evidence that it is justified. I hope that the time for speechifying is gone, and that we are now face to face with hard work. I shall be very glad indeed when we have before us some of the Bills that the Government have promised. I shall give the Government all the support I can in hastening those measures through the Parliament. I thank the Senate for the patient hearing I have received.

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Senator KEATING

- I have the honour to rise for the purpose of seconding the motion which has been proposed by Senator Fraser. I am perfectly in accord with him in his utterance that an occasion like this is one that does not often present an opportunity for discussing at any great length all the details of the measures which it is proposed to submit to the Senate. But I think that, coming as we do now for the first time from our several States into the first Parliament of Australia, we should take this opportunity to make some observations on the initial legislation of the Commonwealth that may, at any rate, have the effect of colouring some of those proposals before they are submitted for our practical consideration. I notice that Ministers intend, according to the order in which the matters are referred to in the speech which has been put into the mouth of His Excellency, to introduce at a very early date some machinery Bills to adapt the transferred departments to their new conditions. They intend also, it seems, at an early date, to introduce a Public Service Bill, and in connexion with that measure it is intimated that due regard has been paid to the provisions of the Public Service Acts in the other States. One cannot but naturally make some reference to his own State on the first time that we have met together as the representatives of the several States with legislative authority. And in connexion with this particular Bill, we, in Tasmania, will have to address ourselves to it without having had the advantage of a measure of the kind for the regulation of our public service. It has been a very unfortunate thing for many of the civil servants in Tasmania that there has not been a Public Service Act in that State, and we do earnestly hope and trust that those officers of the Commonwealth who were previously officers of the State of Tasmania will, under this Bill, receive the proper measure of treatment to which they are entitled in their particular departments. I know that there has been a feeling amongst some of the members of the civil service in Tasmania - a feeling which, of course, they have had to conceal - that by reason of the fact that in the past they have not been placed

on a level with those who occupied similar positions in the larger States, there may possibly be a disposition on the part of this Legislature, at any rate on the part of the Government, ' to leave them in the position in which they have been left by the State Government. I think that honorable members who come from other States will realize that it is the duty of the Legislature to see that the servants in the employment of the Commonwealth in the little State of Tasmania, at any rate, shall be accorded the same fair measure of treatment as is accorded to those who occupy similar positions in the larger States of the Union, and that every opportunity will be afforded to them, provided that they display sufficient merit and capacity, to attain to the highest offices as readily as those from any other part of Australia. I notice, too, that one of the earliest measures it is possible the Ministry will introduce, will be a Bill for the establishment of a High Court of Australia. I cannot quite agree with the remark that has fallen from Senator Eraser, that it would be a desirable thing to avail ourselves of the services of some of the State Judges to constitute that Court. If indications go for anything, New South Wales, at any rate, is not in a position to spare many of her judicial dignitaries. So far as we can notice from the outside States, she seems to be compelled constantly to appoint an acting Judge temporarily, and, at any rate on some occasions, for very considerable periods.

Senator Millen

- That is no reason why New South Wales Judges should be overlooked.

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Senator KEATING

- That would necessarily mean that the New South Wales Judges possibly would be the first to be overlooked if we were to have resort to the method which has been suggested by Senator Eraser, because they, at any rate, seem to have their time fully occupied. The High Court of Australia will have very extensive powers, and it should be constituted in such a way that Australia will be proud of it. I know that when the Commonwealth Bill was going before the Imperial Parliament there was considerable discussion as to how far it should be a court of appellate jurisdiction. But I feel perfectly confident that we have the material in Australia, both on the State benches and off them, out of which to constitute a tribunal of final appeal of such mental and moral calibre as will be worthy of it, and one that may eventually become a great centre of the legal system of the whole of the race. I do not think that there is any necessity to debate the particular suggestion that the previous speaker made. In constituting this court, I think due regard should be had not merely to the judicial experience of any individual who may have sat on a State bench for any particular time, but to the particular capacity of the individual himself to deal with the particular class of questions which must necessarily principally engage the attention of such a tribunal. With regard to the federal territory, and the remarks which have been made by Ministers in connexion with that subject, it is stated that steps have been taken to secure a site, and one which will be ample for all public requirements. That, to me, sounds somewhat vague. It seems to me that if we are to regard public requirements as merely the requirements of the Commonwealth Government itself, in connexion with the duties it will have to discharge and the departments it will have to control, we shall not be going quite far enough. The opportunity that we now have should certainly be availed of to acquire as large a federal territory as we possibly can. It seems that in New South Wales there is a great deal of territory which can well be spared to the Commonwealth Government. Whatever steps are now being taken for the acquisition of federal territory, I do sincerely hope that, apart from the question of extent, a principle will be laid down very early by the Commonwealth Parliament to be adhered to for ever, not merely in connexion with the acquisition of territory on this occasion, but in connexion with the acquisition of any private property or the property of any State in the future for any Commonwealth purpose, and I think that principle should be that before the Commonwealth Government is at any time committed to the acquisition of a particular territory the Legislature should be apprised of what the actual cost is to be. I know that so far as we are concerned in our own State that is a difficulty we have had to confront in connexion with our railway construction. We have followed on the principle of allowing the Legislature to pass Bills for the construction of railways. It has been left then to the Railway department to have the railways constructed, and the primary movement is to acquire the land. In the acquisition of the land we have followed the principle laid down in England in regard to private companies, or promoters of undertakings, and we have had in almost every case to determine the amount to be paid by arbitration. Under the principle of the statute we have in force in Tasmania, and I am not sure that the same principle

does not prevail in some of the other States, it has simply amounted to this, that in many instances when a line has had to be constructed each man has been appointed arbitrator for his neighbour, and the Government has been the milch cow. As far as the acquisition of federal territory is concerned, or the acquisition of territory for railway construction or any other public purpose, the Commonwealth Legislature should, at an early stage in its existence, lay it down as a principle to which it will adhere, that no public works shall be authorized which will involve the acquisition of private property unless the Legislature is acquainted with the actual cost of that property, and that contracts be previously entered into for the purpose of acquiring it. On the matter of alien labour, and the influx of Asiatics and kanakas, I may say at this stage that I am now, as I have always been, entirely in accord with the sentiment of the people of Queensland, as expressed at the recent Commonwealth elections. Queensland has had this question submitted to it. Queensland is the one State in the union which has had a practical experience of the presence of these particular people.

Senator DAWSON

- And she has returned white Australians.

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Senator KEATING

- When Queensland has been asked what its opinion is on the desirableness or undesirableness, the advantage or disadvantage of having these people in the community, it has answered with no uncertain voice. I think, therefore, that that is a mandate to the Commonwealth Legislature that Australia must be a white Australia. With that part of the speech which refers to the introduction of legislation to provide for boards of conciliation and arbitration in connexion with industrial disputes extending beyond the States, I may say that I am entirely in accord, but I think that we should have had an indication from the Government that whatever measure is introduced for that purpose, shall contain a provision that resort to these boards shall be absolutely compulsory, and that it shall not be optional on the part of either party. Unless you have a provision of that character in the statute, you take away practically the best part of the value of such a system. I think that arbitration and conciliation should be made compulsory and that neither party should evade its legitimate responsibilities. I notice with ranch pleasure that the Government intend to introduce legislation to deal with patents and inventions, and to make the legislation and administration uniform. Of course we have a difficulty in connexion with another branch of the subject, a difficulty that is not so great as in connexion with patents and inventions. I allude to copyright, and I think that attention should be paid as early as possible to the necessity for some amendments in our copyright laws which will enable those who are interested in literary work to reap the advantage of it exactly as those do who are interested in the mechanical or other arts or sciences. On the subject of the electoral laws, I may say that, so far as I am concerned, coming as I do from Tasmania, I am in a somewhat different position from other legislators who come from other States. With the exception of South Australia, Tasmania was the only State in the union which was not divided for the purpose of returning the representatives to another place. But in South Australia, it appears to me, there was wisdom in abstaining from dividing the State into the number of electorates necessary to return members to the House of Representatives. In Tasmania there was not the same amount of wisdom displayed in such an abstention, and I should like to see an Electoral Bill introduced as early as possible, and when that Bill is introduced, I hope the members of the Legislature will give effect to what appears to be the, spirit of the Constitution, and see that for the Senate each State shall vote as one electorate, and for the House of Representatives each State shall vote in distinct electorates. A great deal of confusion was caused in Tasmania in connexion with this, and there is no doubt that the failure to divide the State up for the return of representatives was actuated by considerations which were to a great extent personal. We shall have an opportunity of remedying this, I hope, at an early date, and I earnestly trust that other members who have come from other States will see that Tasmania, in this respect, is brought into line with the union, and that the spirit of the Constitution prevails there as it prevails elsewhere. I have noticed that His Excellency refers to the fact that there will be introduced as part of the Ministerial programme, as soon as the necessary data can be obtained, some legislation in connexion with banking. I anticipate that it is proposed to make uniform banking laws which will override the existing State banking laws. If the Legislature is going to take within its control that particular subject, I think it will be a good opportunity to lay down the principle that so far as banking institutions are concerned which are carrying on operations

subject to the statutes of the Commonwealth, all the statements issued to the public, and upon the faith of which the public deal with those institutions, shall be audited by accredited officers in the several States. I think the Commonwealth Government could very well appoint accredited auditors for the different States. The expense would be nothing to the Commonwealth, and the fees should be paid by the different financial institutions employing these particular individuals. The Commonwealth would then be insuring something like responsibility in connexion with the statements of those institutions that have to be submitted in due course half-yearly. On the subject of old-age pensions, of course I am, as I have always been since this subject has been before the people of Australia, one who is prepared to advocate and support such a measure. The Government, it appears, do not intend to introduce any legislation in connexion with this matter at a very early date, but are awaiting the time when their financial position will enable them to establish something like a national system. I know there is a disposition on the part of many who agree with the system of old-age pensions to express their reason for agreement as being that it is desired by the people; but I think that those of us who have had experience beyond the cities of Australia, and have come in contact with the nomadic population - those who are interested in developing the resources of Australia - must know that those particular individuals do take upon themselves burdens that many of us would not be prepared to take, and that, in shouldering those burdens and attending to the duties that devolve upon them, they, in many instances, find themselves, in their closing years, in a position they never anticipated to be in, and could not at all have provided against. I think it is the duty of the Commonwealth, as it was the duty of the States, to provide against indigence on the part of any of its older inhabitants who can comply with the conditions that usually characterize matters of this kind. On the matter of the fiscal policy of the Government, I notice that His Excellency refers to the fact that fiscal considerations are involved with the financial exigencies of the different States. So it has been throughout the recent campaign in Tasmania, and, taking Australia as a whole, I think it may be fairly and safely said that the fiscal issue before Australia is not an absolutely clear-cut issue, stripped of anything else. It is complicated with the financial problem, and, coming from the State I do, I know that the attitude of Tasmania towards the question is one that involves attention first to the financial aspect, and secondly to the fiscal aspect. We have had in our experience, as most senators have had in theirs, gentlemen who have occupied political positions in our State, who are or ought to be well acquainted with the conditions and the possibilities of the State. We have had them announcing their unbounded belief in the principle of free-trade, and offering that as a reason why the electors should send them into the Commonwealth Legislature ; but the singular thing in connexion with these gentlemen is that, notwithstanding their loud asseverations of unbounded belief in the principle of free-trade, whenever they had an opportunity of practising free-trade they neglected it ; they let it go by the board, and told the electors that if more revenue was required they would get it through the Customs. We have found during different periods of our history that it has been necessary to raise more revenue than we had previously raised, and the first resort in such a case was to the Customs house, and yet we have always been assured afterwards by those gentlemen who resorted to the Custom House to increase the revenue that if they could reduce the duties they would get a larger amount of revenue. Yet not one of them ever attempted to raise a larger amount of revenue by lowering the duties. In our State we have been collecting something like 50 per cent, of our total revenue from customs and excise. Senator Eraser referred to our Customs and Excise revenue as being something like £447,000 ; as a matter of fact, it went up in later years to nearly £500,000, and our total general revenue for the first time last year exceeded a million. Of course we recognise that in surrendering the control of our customs and excise we are surrendering absolutely all that proportion of it that comes from the intercolonial imports, which amounts to about one-fifth of the total. We recognise the fact that out of the remainder the Commonwealth Government is entitled to and will in all probability retain one-fourth, and that we will only have three-fourths of the revenue raised from the imports into Tasmania from outside the Commonwealth. Under those circumstances, and guided by the practice and experience of those who have held control of our financial affairs in the past, I cannot say, as one who has followed the history of Tasmania as well as it has been possible for one not actually engaged in politics, that I should be prepared to support a low revenue Tariff on free-trade lines. The policy indicated in the speech is one which I think will meet with a fair measure of support. The financial exigencies of the different States are to have due regard paid to them in the first instance, and the duties are to be imposed so that industries which have come into being by reason of State duties will not be

blotted out of existence. Recognising that it is necessary to raise a certain amount of revenue through the Customs for the needs of the Commonwealth and for the surplus returnable to the States, I have no doubt that a fair amount of discrimination will be used in framing the Tariff. I think the policy indicated will meet with support from a large number of members, inasmuch as it will tend to promote the general employment of the people in a diversity of occupations. There are two or three other matters to which I wish to refer before sitting down, and one of them is the contemplated - I can scarcely call it contemplated - railway to Western Australia. It does not appear from His Excellency's remarks whether Ministers intend to submit that with any great degree of confidence to the Legislature. The speech says -

The question of the construction of a railway connecting with these eastern communities the vast and hitherto isolated State of Western Australia has been under consideration. Examinations of the country intervening between the railway systems of South and Western Australia are now in progress, together with other inquiries. It is hoped that they may result in showing that the undertaking is justifiable. If the undertaking is found to be justifiable, I shall be prepared to offer no opposition to it.

Senator DAWSON

- Who is making the examinations 1

Senator O'Connor

- The States of South Australia and Western Australia are making inquiries.

Senator KEATING

- There is one remark of His Excellency dealing incidentally with this particular matter with which I do not find myself in accord, but upon which senators from Western Australia will be able to speak with greater authority. We are assured that -

Isolation was the chief obstacle to the early adoption of the Constitution by Western Australia, until the hope of closer connexion influenced the people of the West to risk the threatened perils of that political union of the continent which their vote at the referendum did much to complete.

Perhaps some of the senators from Western Australia will be able to say whether that is a fact.

Senator Ewing

- Sir John. Forrest said so.

Senator KEATING

- I do not know, but, perhaps, that is another name for isolation. The question of the construction of a railway to the Northern Territory also appears to be under consideration. Other things being equal, Mr. President, I should be inclined to prefer the construction of that line to the building of a railway to Western Australia, because it would shorten the route to the old country. It would bring us into closer communication with the other nations of the world than we could hope to expect from the construction of a railway along the southern coast to Western Australia.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

- It would complete the work already started.

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Senator KEATING

- So far as Western Australia is concerned, the railway from Melbourne to Adelaide and beyond Adelaide is part of the line to Western Australia, which must eventually come. I was pleased to hear reference made by the honorable senator who preceded me to the question of defence. I certainly do think that we can rely, and rely with confidence, for the defence of Australia, not upon a standing army, but upon our citizen soldiers. The spirit of nationality exists amongst us, and the desire to defend ourselves. I feel perfectly certain that if ever the occasion arose the people of Australia would be prepared to throw themselves into the fray with enthusiasm, and do credit to themselves and justice to the country. Senator Fraser made some reference to the necessity of paying attention to the naval arm of our defences. I think that is really a matter to which the Federal Government might give some consideration. As the honorable member said, we have to defend ourselves from foreign aggression, which must come by the sea. We have, of course, the protection of our fleet ; we have the Imperial squadron here and the Australian auxiliary squadron, in connexion with which an agreement exists between the various States and the mother country, and I think we can hope at some time or another to supplement these arms of defence. What I would really like to see established early, and I think it would not be a very costly experiment, is a number of training ships at convenient ports whereon to train some of the youths who otherwise would

simply be sent to our reformatories, our training schools, our houses of correction, or perhaps our gaols, with the object of reforming them, but with a result very often precisely the opposite. In this way we could start something in the nature of a naval brigade which might be utilized afterwards by the Imperial authorities, and for which in exchange we could get some consideration in the way of increased forces on the naval station. I am pleased also to notice that His Excellency has referred to a possible early assimilation of the postal and telegraph rates throughout Australia. In this matter the people of Tasmania occupy a position very different from that of the people of the rest of the Commonwealth. As senators are aware, Tasmania is connected with the continent, so far as telegraphic communication is concerned, by a little cable of 190 or 200 miles in length, which is owned and controlled by a private company. We are able to send a telegram of ten words from the extreme southern end to the extreme northern end, or to any part of Tasmania, for 1s. ; but if we send it 10 miles the other side of the Victorian end of the cable to Melbourne, although the distance may not be as great as that for which we have to pay 1s. in Tasmania, a charge of 2s. is made for the ten words. Of that amount the Tasmanian Government only gets 6d., although the cost to it is perhaps just as much as for the inland message. The Victorian Government gets another 6d. for receiving and delivering the message, and the cable company takes the remaining 1s. The charge is the same in proportion for a message to New South Wales or elsewhere in Australia. I think the Commonwealth Government should give its early attention to the desirability of purchasing that little bit -of cable, so as to make our telegraph system throughout the union one and undivided. This is a matter to which I shall again direct attention later on. It is not as if the Government would be asked to pay a very large sum, or to enter upon a costly undertaking. The cable is part and parcel of the telegraph system of the Union, and inasmuch as the Commonwealth has sole control of the system, I think it would be a blot upon it if by any failure on the part of the Government or of Parliament itself that wee little bit of connexion between one State and all the rest were to be left in the hands of any private company. I do not know, Mr. President, that there are many other matters in the address to which I need refer. There are certainly very many matters that Ministers have, through the mouth of His Excellency, submitted for our consideration, and I feel certain there are many senators anxious to get at them as early as possible and to discuss them as fully and thoroughly as they can. For that reason I will not take up the time of the Senate further. I am in perfect accord with the statement that there is so much submitted for our consideration that one session will not suffice to enable Ministers to bring in all the measures they propose. I do riot at all take exception to the terms of the Governor-General's speech, because we are meeting under peculiar circumstances. We are here as the first Federal Legislature. We are new as a nation, and it was incumbent upon our Ministers to indicate as fully and as thoroughly as they possibly could all the different measures they intended to submit during the first session, or as soon after as practicable, as matters of primary or national importance. I feel sure I can say, on behalf of myself and all other senators, that when those measures come before us in their concrete form for discussion, Ministers will, in submitting them, receive the fullest and fairest consideration.

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Senator Major GOULD

- I should like, before addressing myself to the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, to clear away some little misapprehension that appears to exist in the minds of some with regard to my having allowed my name to be placed upon the committee appointed to prepare the Address in Reply. As soon as I found there was some feeling about this matter, I wrote to you, sir, withdrawing my name from* the committee, and I wrote to Senator O'Connor in the following words : -

Dear Senator O'Connor, - I have written to the President of the Senate, withdrawing my name from the committee appointed to prepare the Address in Reply to the speech of His Excellency .the Governor-General. I do this as the inclusion of my name - although included, as yon are aware, without reference to me - appears calculated to create a false impression as to my relationship to the policy of your Government, which, as you know, is that of a direct opponent.

Senator McGregor

- It is a wonder the honorable member did not see it at the time.

Senator GOULD

- Yes, perhaps it is. In regard to the position of the committee it was understood that it was to be composed entirely without reference to parties or to the supporters of the Government. It has been the

invariable practice, in some States, at any rate, to have the leader of the Opposition in the House of Assembly placed on the committee, the object being to insure a reply to the Address of a purely formal character.

Senator O'Connor

- It was an act of courtesy to the honorable member as the acting leader of the Opposition.

Senator GOULD

- I am very much indebted to my honorable friend Senator O'Connor for putting it in that way; but as I had no desire that people should misapprehend the position I am taking in regard to the Government as it stands' to-day I thought it my best course to withdraw my name at once and to communicate that fact to the representative of the Government.

Senator McGregor

- I thought the honorable member was independent.

Senator GOULD

- So I am.

Senator O'Connor

- Of what?

Senator GOULD

- Of the honorable member.

Senator DAWSON

- And of any principle.

Senator GOULD

- I certainly have not followed the honorable member's example in regard to that yet. In reference to the speech, there is one thing upon which we can congratulate the Government; it is that they have endeavoured to include within it every subject that is placed in the hands of the Commonwealth Parliament, so that, as some one has remarked to me, when their successors come, who will have to take up these matters, they will be able to say - " These men are only borrowing our clothes and carrying out things which we suggested long ago."

Senator McGregor

- That shows their wisdom.

Senator GOULD

- At any rate, it shows a desire on their part to have a little bit for everybody, and for every branch of thought in our Legislature, so that the pudding may be so full of plums that every one may have an opportunity of pulling out one.

Senator McGregor

- That is the independent style.

Senator GOULD

- Perhaps the honorable member sees one or two plums there, and is not quite certain that they are as good as they ought to be.

Senator O'Connor

- I wonder how Mr. Reid would have drawn it up.

Senator GOULD

- I do not know. Possibly the honorable member is endeavouring to go one better than he would have gone.

Senator O'Connor

- That is impossible.

Senator GOULD

- I should like also to say that we are indebted to, and must all compliment, the senators who moved and seconded the Address in Reply. Senator Eraser is an old veteran and warrior, and we could not expect from him anything else than a speech that would, at any rate, accentuate a good deal of the feeling of the State of which he is one of the representatives. A great deal of his speech was actuated by the consideration of what would be best in the interests of the State of Victoria, rather than in the interests of the whole Commonwealth.

Several Senators. - No, no.

Senator GOULD

- The honorable senator who followed him gave us a very temperate and reasoning speech, that afforded plenty of food for thought. It would be quite impossible for any senator to go through all the subjects mentioned in the address. There are, however, two or three matters which are of primary and paramount importance, so far as the interests of the Commonwealth are concerned. The most important part of the speech at the present time is that which deals with the Tariff; but there are other very important matters embodied in it which will give food for a great deal of thought. Honorable members have expressed themselves in favour of a white Australia. No doubt it will be very hard to find any man in the whole Commonwealth, occupying any prominent position, who would do otherwise than avow his belief in a white Australia.

Senator DAWSON

- He would not be game to do otherwise.

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Senator GOULD

- We want to see our own people remain for all time as the dominant residents of the whole of Australia. I do not think there is very much question with regard to legislation dealing with Asiatics. The matter which seems to be giving the greatest trouble is in relation to the way in which the kanaka question shall be dealt with. Many of us say it is impossible to have a white Australia unless every kanaka is banished from its borders, as well as the Asiatics and other coloured people. Now I say that unless it can be shown clearly and conclusively that the sugar industry cannot be conducted in Australia with white labour, the kanaka ought to go. But we are told - I am not pronouncing any opinions as to its correctness - that the effect of employing kanaka labour is to provide a great deal of additional employment for white men.

Senator DAWSON

- That is not so.

Senator GOULD

- That has to be proved either one way or the other. If it can be shown that the white man can do the work in the field as well as the kanaka, then that is a reply; and the kanaka should go. But if the kanaka is employed for the purposes of increasing the work of the white men, then there will have to be most stringent regulations in order that there may be no difficulty and trouble occurring in the future in regard to our white Australia. It is said the matter may be likened to this : that as it is necessary to employ horses and cattle, and we thereby provide much more labour for men, so it is necessary to employ the kanaka. If that be so, then I dare say you will find that the working men will want to keep him here.

Senator DAWSON

- Make a slave of him ?

Senator GOULD

- No ; but use him to do the work which cannot be done by a white man.

Senator McGregor

- Does the honorable member believe in the kanaka ?

Senator GOULD

- I say this, that if it be determined to have a commission, to inquire into the whole matter I hope that body will be composed of men who will represent, not one, but every phase of thought, upon this great question, because it is of vital interest to Australia. "Whatever may be the result of the commission, always assuming it is a fairly constituted one, it will no doubt be accepted fully by honorable members of this Senate as well as elsewhere.

Senator Dobson

- We have had an exhaustive report on this subject from a commission.

Senator GOULD

- I have not seen it. I wish honorable senators to understand that as far as this question is concerned I have expressed my views in favour of a white Australia, and it would only be in exceptional circumstances and under stringent regulations that I would consent to anything which might possibly be regarded as a danger to a white Australia.

Senator MCGREGOR

- Will the honorable member tell us his views about horses ?

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Senator GOULD

- Perhaps when we are talking about horses and asses I may give you my views upon them. A great deal of the debate will centre around the question of the proposals of the Government in regard to the fiscal policy. While this part of the speech is to a certain extent vague and moderate in its terms, nevertheless if members will take care to regard it carefully, they will find that there is a dominating principle underlying the views of the Government, as expressed by the Governor-General's speech, which is indicative of a strong protective feeling. Of course we know that honorable members composing the Government are at heart protectionists, and I think there is hardly one of them who would care to deny that those are his opinions - that he is a thorough believer in the principles of protection, and it is only by force of circumstances that he is prepared to abandon those principles that he believes would be in the best interests of the country generally. We are told that he abandons those principles because there is a necessity to raise a certain amount of revenue, and that if they impose too heavy a duty they will probably interfere with the amount of revenue which they would otherwise collect. We see in this speech that the object is not only to secure a reasonably sufficient return of surplus revenue to each State, so as fairly to observe the intention of the Constitution, but to avoid the unnecessary destruction of sources of employment. No doubt we all agree that it is not desirable to destroy sources of employment unnecessarily. But the question is whether the adoption of a low - grade Tariff as against a high-grade Tariff will be the means of destroying industries that are already in existence in the country, and which are adaptable to the wants and requirements of the States generally. On this matter I think that honorable members who sit on this side of the chamber and entertain similar opinions to what I do join issue with the Government. We say there is no necessity for any special provision of this character. I know that in Victoria there is a strong and widespread feeling in favour of the system of protection. I believe that men who are advocating this system do so honestly, because they conceive that it will be the best policy in the interests of their own State, and therefore the best policy in the interests of the whole of the Commonwealth. But the public men of

Victoria at the present time are men who have come into public life during the existence of this system. During the time that protection has been absolutely a factor in the history of the State they have come into political life. They have had no experience of free-trade, and they naturally look to this system and say - "Well, our country has prospered; and we have reason to believe that the whole of the Commonwealth will prosper under protection." We can only judge of this matter by comparisons. If we look to the old country, we find that ever since she adopted her free-trade system she has increased by leaps and bounds, and that the large increase in the wealth, population, and power of Great Britain has really dated from the time when she made freedom of trade a dominant factor in her Constitution.

Senator Playford

- She built up her industries before free-trade existed.

Senator GOULD

- What were her industries before free-trade was introduced? That is one of the little bunker arguments you hear occasionally doled out to people from the hustings - that she built up her industries under protection. Do not people who take the trouble to read know that there was enough poverty, destitution, and wretchedness in England before she adopted this system of freedom of trade? When she had a protectionist policy it dragged her people down to the lowest depths of degradation.

A Senator. - There is poverty there now.

Senator GOULD

- There is lots of poverty in England; there is lots of poverty in Victoria, and there is lots of poverty in Germany. All over the world you will find poverty.

Senator Playford

- You will find poverty in England, too.

Senator GOULD

- You will find it in England, too, and you will find it in the highest protective countries in the world in a more accentuated form than you will in Great Britain.

Senator Playford

- You will find it everywhere.

Senator GOULD

- So you will, and it is absurd to say that that is the cause of it. It is attempted to be shown that England's industries are on the decline. I contend that her industries are not on the decline. If honorable members will take the trouble to look at the statistics, and see what her position is to-day, they will find that it is not losing ground at all. I had an extract the other day, from one of the British trade journals, in which it was pointed out that the year 1900 had been one of the best years that England had known so far as the labours of her working men were concerned. We heard to-day about the commerce of Germany and the commerce of France, and we were also told that the whole of it had been built up - how? - by draining money out of the pockets of the taxpayers of the country so as to subsidize a few lines of steam-ships in order that they may fight against the commerce of Great Britain, that stands absolutely on its own bottom. Senator Fraser. - Are they not wise in doing so?

Senator GOULD

- Her commerce has been built up to such a position that to-day Great Britain does the greatest carrying trade of any nation in the world. You may build up a system by your bounties; you may subsidize all your steam-ship companies; but the question is, are you not taking money out of the pockets of the people of your country unjustifiably? Is it for the benefit or the advantage of the people of the country to pay these enormous subsidies to the steam-ship owners simply because they are trading between different parts of the world and attempting to develop commerce?

A Senator. - The German Emperor does so, at any rate.

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Senator GOULD

- They are doing it in Germany, we are told. They are not doing it in Great Britain, and we know that Great Britain is still the carrying power of the world, small a country as she may be, and that her population has increased year by year by large numbers. True, a great many people leave the old country, but they necessarily do so, because of its limited area. They must go to populate other portions of the world. Do we not owe our position to the population that has come away from the old country to settle these States, and to push us along as they have done? But while I take the case of Great Britain, I can come closer home. I can reply to some of the suggestions made in the opening speech about destroying industries, by quoting the example of the State of New South Wales. There is New South Wales, with one of the freest Tariffs in the world - a Tariff which has not been in existence for a few months, but for years.

The President

- I must ask the honorable member not to turn his back on the Chair.

Senator GOULD

- I beg pardon, Sir. When that Tariff was submitted, we were met with all sorts of cries: that it would bring about the ruination of the industries of the colony, that it would do the colony an immense deal of harm, that we should have people thrown out of work, going about begging and starving in the streets, in consequence of the policy of the Government, but what has been the result? The result has been the very reverse. When you have an example like that before you, as wise men, it is only a reasonable thing that you should take these matters into consideration and see whether they will not show you what is the wisest and best policy to pursue. Let me also remind the Senate of another fact, before I come down to statistics in regard to this matter, because I am prepared to prove the case I submit. Did we not find that when there was an appeal to the people of that State the other day the result was an unmistakeable victory for free-trade?

Senator Keating

- In Sydney.

Senator GOULD

- I take the vote of the people of New South Wales when they voted for senators, and I find that it resolved itself into the return of five free-trade men taken, out of the bunch; the sixth free-trade man standing seventh on the list, and it was purely owing to the personality of the honorable gentleman who represents the Government here that he obtained his position on the poll.

Senator Keating

- A third of your votes? was informal.

Senator GOULD

- And no wonder when one had to strike out the names of 44 men out of 50.

Senator Keating

- They simply had to take a newspaper and vote according as they were told. It is no criterion at all.

Senator GOULD

- It is a strange thing that it is no criterion because people cast their votes whether newspapers advocated it or not. We generally find that newspapers are pretty keen to advocate the popular side, and our newspapers have advocated free-trade all along.

Senator Keating

- That shows that they are bad educators.

Senator GOULD

- It shows that we have had free-trade papers all along. An honorable member says we have found that it is a great mistake. But the State of Victoria, I am told, returned all protectionists with one exception.

A Senator. - That was because he was good looking.

Senator GOULD

- He managed to get in although he was not on the Age ticket. If you want to know how the attempt was made to make people vote in one particular way all you have to do is to consult the Age, and recognise the dominant power of that newspaper in the State of Victoria.

Senator Keating

- What about the antibilious DailyTelegraph ?

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Senator GOULD

- I believe it has recovered from its state of anti-biliousness. It is all right again I believe. It is a free-trade newspaper, whatever it may have been on federation. In the State of New South Wales we find that there were five of the men of the free-trade bunch returned, and that there was not a protectionist within 25,000 or 30,000 votes of the lowest number of votes polled by the representative of the freetrade party. There was the protectionist bunch of half-a-dozen with my honorable and learned friend opposite at its head. He obtained his position not because he was a protectionist, but because of his own personality, and the belief of the people, and a well justified belief, that he was a man that the country would be pleased to see in Parliament by virtue of his education and position and his character and conduct generally. We were told a little time ago that all our industries in New South Wales would be destroyed. I have taken the trouble to look up the statistics, and I find that in the year 1895, that is the year before the free-trade Tariff came into operation, New South Wales had 43,000 odd persons employed in her manufacturing industries, and that in 1899 the number had increased to 55,000 persons, that is, by 12,000 souls. We had this advantage in the State of New South Wales, that we had a larger number of males employed in our manufacturing industries than had Victoria, while we admit that Victoria doubled the number of female hands employed in her factories. I have taken the trouble to go a little further. I find, according to the latest statistics, that New South Wales has still further improved her position, that she has now upwards of 60,000 souls employed in her manufacturing establishments, as against 50,000 souls employed in the previous year, and that while we had 2,912 manufacturing industries then, we have 3,075 manufacturing industries now. And remember that these are all taken on the one basis in both Victoria and New South Wales. We find now that they are practically on a level. But we want to go even further. In a country like this ought we not to look to our primary industries in our early stages, and to see what are the natural industries to the country. The industries that are natural to Victoria employ upwards of 21,000 persons, and the industries natural to New South Wales upwards of 29,000 persons. But where they come into competition with imported goods there are 34,000 employed in Victoria as against 22,000 employed in New South Wales. We will say, for the sake of argument, that the employment of these 12,000 additional men is due to the protective policy of Victoria.

A Senator. - Mostly women.

Senator GOULD

- Whether they are men or women, that is due to the protective policy of Victoria. Is that for the benefit of the whole of the people of Victoria 1 Is it for the benefit of the million and a quarter souls that a policy of protection should be imposed on the people of the State in order that 12,000 individuals should obtain employment in these favored trades 1 Is it a reasonable thing that all these other persons should be taxed

to an undue extent in order to find employment for these favored people when there are natural industries in the State that you can develop, when there are industries which can and must grow up 1

Senator O'Connor

- What does the honorable member call natural industries?

Senator GOULD

- Something which appertains to the products of the State.

Senator Ferguson

- Growing wool. Senator GOULD. - Growing wool, producing gold, manufacturing fodder, potting beef, or making butter. You are asking us to consider a policy that will undoubtedly favour certain industries that have already been established in some of the States in consequence, they say, of protective duties. I think I have shown the Senate, so far as New South Wales is concerned, that this is a myth or a fiction. Why should not the people in Victoria be prepared to follow in her footsteps, and show, by their energy, enterprise, and ability, that they are able to stand and grow and maintain themselves 1 We are told by Coghlan that in the manufacturing industries of the whole of the States there are 201,000 persons employed. Then I look to see what the agriculture population amounts to, and I find that there are 475,000 souls engaged in the pursuit. If we go to the gold-mining industry - if we go to any of the industries of the country - I ask what benefits are they going to obtain by these protective duties ? Are they going to obtain any benefits at all ? What about your labourer on the streets ? Is he going to obtain any benefits by a protective policy that will enhance the cost of his living, that will enhance the cost of his clothing ? I ask how it will benefit the miner who produces your gold 1 We are told that the miner is producing coal here, too ; but, -whatever he produces, what benefit does he get by a system of protection 1 If you are going to make his living dearer, will that be a benefit to him ? Are you going to put a tax on the machinery he uses 1 That will not help him if you do. A man gets a fixed price for his product. You may impose whatever protection you like, but you cannot make an ounce of gold worth 6d. more by a protectionist policy. You cannot make a ton of coal worth anT more by reason of a protectionist policy. There are other industries which have to be considered. What about the pastoral industry, the backbone and mainstay of the country 1 Are you benefiting that industry by increasing the cost of whatever may be required in connexion with its development ? Your price is regulated - where - not in Melbourne, not in Australia, but at the other end of the world. You give the wool grower no benefit at all by a policy of this kind.

Senator Playford

- If he gets a big population he gets a local market.

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Senator GOULD

- That is the old cry, but how much wool is used in the country ? The wool is sent away to the old country to be manufactured, and look at the time it takes to be manufactured. There is an industry in which a man gets no benefit at all from this policy. You can go round the whole of the industries in that way. Take the farmer. What benefit does he get? He produces wheat, and he soon overtakes the local supply. Before he can do that, by means of a duty we manage to give him a little money, but at the same time we take that money out of the pockets of the bulk of the people in order that he may get a little benefit. The wheat production has overtaken the wheat consumption, and now the price of wheat here is regulated by the price of wheat in Mark Lane. Take any industry you- like in the country, and you will find that a protectionist policy will not benefit the people of the country at large. I maintain that it is undoubtedly a fiction when you say that by putting duties on different articles that can be produced in the country, by Virtue of the existence of those duties you are making your country more prosperous and better than it was before. If you like to take a plant from the tropics you can grow it at the South Pole so long as you give it plenty of heat ; but the moment you take the heat away it will die. So it is with some of these protected industries. I do not say it is so with all of them, but it is so with any industry which really is dependent on the principle of protection. Take the Tariff away, and your industry fades away and dies just as a plant dies which is taken out of a hot house. Of course I am not going to say I cannot understand how a man can be a protectionist, because I know that honorable members have looked at these questions. Men have given as full consideration to that side, I have no doubt, as they have to the other side, and they have come honestly to a conclusion; but I contend that it is a false conclusion, and it is not one which ought to weigh with the people of the country. I maintain that, so far as the people are

concerned, while we cannot have an ideal free-trade Tariff the bulk of the people of Australia have supported men who are in favour of a revenue Tariff, and not men who are in favour of a high protective Tariff. With the exception of the State of Victoria I believe if a referendum was taken it would be found that the vast majority would be in favour of a purely revenue Tariff.

Senator McGregor

- Why not take, a referendum 1

Senator GOULD

- We had what was practically a referendum of the people in the State of New South Wales.

Senator DAWSON

- That is only one State.

Senator Keating

- You did not speak with a unanimous voice. . Many of your constituencies returned avowed protectionists to another place.

Senator GOULD

- There was a minority that were returned as protectionists. Even to-day in the State of Victoria there are one or two avowed free-traders who managed to get through. I would remind the honorable member that the State was divided into 26 particular districts. They returned several protectionist representatives to the Legislature, but that was no indication of how the State as a whole spoke on the matter. The Senate was elected by the whole of the people of New South Wales, and unquestionably if a referendum could be got the whole State would speak unmistakably in favour of free-trade.

Senator Keating

- Sydney ruled theroost.

Senator GOULD

- Are the Sydney people not to be considered as well as the people of the country ? The country people gradually gravitate towards the city, and they have the opportunity of changing: opinions with the citizens if those opinions are not in accordance with the best interests of the whole country. Taking the State of New South Wales, she has proportionately a larger population than the protective State of Victoria. Victoria has a far greater number of people centred in one or two places than the State of New South Wales.

Senator Keating

- A free-trade policy has been increasing the population of Sydney abnormally.

Senator GOULD

- Yes ; and the farming population has also increased abnormally. As far as the farming population is concerned, it has advanced by leaps and bounds within the last eight or ten years, and we have brought over a large number of your farming population to New South Wales.

Senator Keating

- By special inducements.

Senator GOULD

- One of the great inducements held out was freedom of trade.

Senator Keating

- Giving the land away.

Senator GOULD

- A great many of' our people say that we do not give it away, but that we charge too much for it. I think honorable members can see very clearly on this question of the Tariff that this side of the House will take a very strong stand.

Senator O'Connor

- How will the honorable member raise ?8,500,000 bv a freetrade Tariff?

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Senator GOULD

- I would raise it by a revenue Tariff. I admit you have to put on taxation through the Customs but you have no business to get your revenue in such a way as will give undue preference to> a few individuals. I would like to see a Tariff that would treat all people alike. Let me say here that we have this to bear in- mind, that the Senate is in a very different position from the Legislative Councils of many of

the States. We are here from the different States as representing the people. We are as much responsible to the people for the fiscal policy as the members of the other House, and it will be clearly our duty to watch with a very keen eye what is done in the other Chamber. When it was proposed to make this Chamber possibly a little more amenable to another place by making it liable to a dissolution, I believe at that time this Chamber was strengthened materially. There are men here who will stand up and find support the views which they hold firmly and determinedly. It is well that the public generally should realize that the Senate is in a far different and far stronger position than any second Chamber in the whole of the States in the Commonwealth of Australia. I think after the remarks that I have made upon this Tariff question, it will be pretty clearly seen that, so far as my opinions are concerned, they are in direct opposition to the policy as set out in the speech of the Governor-General, and I think I may fairly claim that the same attitude will be taken by honorable members who are sitting on this side, and that they will deem it their duty to watch most carefully the Tariff proposals. If the Government do not fairly and reasonably treat all parties in the way in which I state, members will be prepared to give battle to them, and carry out the positions they take up, as far as the Constitution will permit. It must be recognised that, as our Constitution stands, the Senate is in a strong position, and is in such a responsible position to the people that it will be our duty to stand by our guns and maintain and defend what we consider to be right in the best interests of the people of the Commonwealth. While I say this, I do not for a moment contend that we must not raise a large amount of revenue by means of Customs taxation. I recognise that, as the Constitution stands, and as we have to guard the financial position of some of the smaller States, it will be our duty to find the necessary money for the purposes of government. It has been estimated that £8,500,000 will be required, and some honorable members ask - How are you going to raise that amount except by means of protective duties? Our contention is that there is no necessity to raise it all by means of protective duties, which are duties which give preference to some particular industries or trades at the expense of other industries and trades. We say that a Tariff should be so framed that it will treat all classes fairly and in an equitable manner, and that we should not continue what we consider to be the baleful policy which has existed in many of the states for years past. We point to the industries of New South Wales to show that they have increased and prospered under a free-trade Tariff, and we say that there is no desire on the part of men who are advocating a revenue Tariff to destroy any existing industries. Whether we believe in free-trade or protection, we are actuated by one desire, and that is to see the progress of the whole of the Commonwealth. Some men think that ought to be accomplished in one way, and some in another. Let us give credit to all for an honest belief in the Tariff they advocate. Senator Keating, in seconding the motion, spoke of the position of Tasmania. He said there were certain avowed free-traders amongst the Tasmanians, who, when they came into power, did not establish a free-trade Tariff, but still stuck to high duties. Does that honorable member not see that in that State those duties are more revenue duties than anything else. He will not point to one, two, or half a dozen industries getting an advantage at the expense of the remaining industries. When we talk of raising our income by means of a revenue Tariff we recognise that we will have to impose high duties, but not for the purpose of giving undue preference to one industry as against another industry. I say the duty of every State is to legislate, not for the benefit of a few favoured individuals or industries, but for the benefit of the whole of the people of the State, because every man, no matter what his occupation, no matter how poor or humble he may be, has his rights to be considered and conserved. The poorer a man is the more dependent he is upon good government. The wealthy man can very well manage to put up with what he regards as not very fair or reasonable government; but when we come down to the poorer classes they are more dependent upon good government, and it is the duty of any Parliament to do all that it can to benefit the masses of the people who are placed under their guidance and control. We could not fail to recognise during the election that the Government really had two voices upon this great question. My honorable and learned friend, Senator O'Connor, talked of this wretched fiscal squabble; he belittled it; he made nothing of it; it might be thrown lightly on one side. What did the members of the Government in the State of Victoria do? What did Sir George Turner and Mr. Deakin do? Did they talk of it as a miserable squabble? They said the protectionist system was of paramount importance, and that it was the duty of the men of Victoria to take good care that they sent nobody but protectionists to the Federal Parliament. There was no talk about selecting the best men on general lines or general principles. Here the question was fought hard and strongly, with the result that we find there was an enormous

preponderance of members returned in favour of protection and a high Tariff. The people here have been born into the system; they have been reared under it; they have lived in its atmosphere; and they have followed their leaders; but go to the State of Western Australia. What has been the reply from there? They have almost unanimously declared in favour of a low Tariff - a revenue Tariff - as against a high Tariff. The other night I heard Sir John Forrest speaking, and he said - "I seem to have come from a State where I am the only man who has supported a protectionist Tariff, but I have managed to bring men over to my party in time past, and I may do so again." I think the West Australians have come here with minds of their own, and it will take a great deal of wheedling, and a great deal of -the butter we heard about early this afternoon, to make them rat on the Tariff they have advocated. The State of New South Wales has spoken with no uncertain voice as to what the policy of the country ought to be. Take again the State of Tasmania, where this question has come up. We do not find that they have sent from that State a majority of protectionists, although it is so close to the protectionist State of Victoria. And what has been the result in South Australia? Have we not seen free-trade advocates returned from that State? In the State of Queensland the fiscal question did not come into so much prominence as the question of a white Australia; but wherever it was made the great question, with one exception, the free-traders scored all along the line. That, they said, must be the policy which must dominate the Government of the country. The speeches of the Prime

Minister at Maitland and elsewhere, and the speech of Senator O'Connor, were in marked contrast to the speeches delivered by the representatives of Victoria and South Australia in the Government, but I am glad to see that they have recognized the necessity of bowing their heads to what has been the popular will. Of course you cannot expect them to come down at once; they are coming down gradually and nicely, and it is a very nice means of climbing down, to put it in the way in which it is wrapped up in this speech. They climb down without getting hurt too much. We know that has been the policy of the Government in regard to other matters. We are told we are to have a Public Service Bill put before us, which is going to regulate admissions to the service. We are not going to Americanize our public service system. It was a bad start, when a principal post under the Government - that of Under-Secretary for Home Affairs - was given by one Minister to a former colleague. I have not a word to say against the qualifications of the gentleman who received the appointment. I know him, and know he is straightforward, and honest, and that you could rely on him doing his best; but I am drawing attention to this because, in the first instance, it would appear to be an attempt to favour a political friend at the expense of the vast public service which we have. Surely some one could have been found in the service qualified to take this particular position.

Senator Stewart

- It was introducing new blood.

Senator GOULD

- If there was no man in the public service fit for the position, then I admit that the Government would be doing the right thing in selecting a gentleman from outside.

Senator Keating

- Why should they be restricted to the existing service?

Senator Millen

- Is it not suspicious that they selected a man from among their friends?

Senator Keating

-. - It may be suspicious to those who are used to being suspicious.

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Senator GOULD

- It shows how amenable the Government are to public opinion that, even in a matter like this they do not stand to their guns. We are told through the press that not only was Sir William Lyne anxious to appoint this gentleman, but that the Prime Minister (Mr. Barton) was consulted beforehand and expressed his concurrence. When the outcry was raised, what became of this gentleman? He was quietly dropped out. I will be told that he was allowed to resign, but he sent in his resignation, accompanied by a letter to the effect that he did not wish to embarrass his friends and play into the hands of their opponents. It was at that time thought there might be an amendment moved on the Address in Reply in regard to an appointment of this character, and no doubt he did the right thing. I point this out to show how unwise it is

to deal with matters in this way, and to show how amenable the Government was to pressure in that particular instance. Perhaps they acted in the best interests of the country, but I think this indicates how very necessary it is to have a vigilant party in both Houses to watch the Government. You want to make sure by vigilant and careful observation that they keep well within the lines you expect them to follow, and I certainly am one of those who are always suspicious when enemies are bringing gifts. While there is a vigilant Opposition, and while the Government are submitting a policy in accordance with the opinions of the Opposition, there is no need to displace them. All that we have to do is to watch carefully what is being done. Again, that applies to the argument of many persons who say it is of little importance what Government is in office, because they have to frame a particular Tariff. I say it is important, because it is important to know whether men's views are in accordance with ours. There are supporters of the Government who, the moment that they attempt to deal with this matter from a stand-point different from that of revenue, will be in opposition. They say - "We are willing to give the Government a fair trial. It is headed by a man who gave great service to the cause of federation. It is headed by a gentleman of that character, with colleagues who have taken a marked interest in federation, and therefore it is only right they should have a fair opportunity of showing what legislation they are prepared to bring forward." But those members who give support of that kind to the Government are members who will be pretty critical of the Government in order that they may justify themselves to the constituents who have returned them, in consequence of their views on the fiscal question. We were told by Senator Fraser that when the State of Victoria entered into this Commonwealth, it did so because it thought that certain interests of her own would receive full consideration. He rather led one to believe that they entered into it because they thought their particular interests would receive the fullest consideration of all other interests. Why should not Queensland have the same treatment? Why should not New South Wales have the same treatment? You will find it is impossible to give them all exactly the same treatment as they have hitherto enjoyed. It will be just as necessary for Victoria to give way on certain of her cherished ideas and beliefs as it will be for New South Wales to give way to a certain extent on certain of her beliefs. We must be reasonable, and we have to bear in mind that no one State any more than one industry should receive undue consideration at the expense of others. The objections to preferential duties are strong, and it will be found that members are prepared to stand to their guns and do what is best, in their opinion, in the interests of the country. I am glad to see the Government think it necessary to deal with this Tariff question at an early date. One of the greatest blessings our people have looked forward to is intercolonial free-trade. We want it as soon as possible, and we say if free-trade is good between the States of Australia, it is good upon a larger scale, and to a larger extent.

Senator GLASSEY

- That is doubtful.

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Senator GOULD

- I am glad to find that so many honorable members have come down to this principle that free-trade between the States is good. A large number will also tell you they are prepared to give a preferential Tariff with regard to British goods. Sixty-five per cent, of the importations into these States consist of British goods. If you give them preferential treatment, how are you going to raise the required revenue? We are glad to recognise that we are going to have intercolonial free-trade, because we know it is a step in the right direction, and I hope honorable members will see to it that they assist in pushing this business forward. We should back up the Government in putting their Tariff proposals before the country as early as possible. Once we have the matter settled, I hope it will remain settled for many years to come, whether it be a high Tariff or a low Tariff, because we know that nothing disturbs trade so much as uncertainty with regard to the fiscal position of the States. This matter is the real foundation upon which we are going to build up the success or the failure of the Commonwealth. We want a good solid foundation, and we do not want by-and-by to have to pull down our superstructure in order to put in a new foundation. When the Tariff is settled I hope it will remain for many years to come. It may take some time to do that, but we on this side of the Senate will do all in our power to bring it to a successful issue as early as possible.

Senator McGregor

-Why not let the people outside settle it?

Senator GOULD

- You cannot put the bald question before the people - " Are you in favour of free-trade or protection?"

You can only deal with it by sending into Parliament men whose principles and opinions are on one side or the other, and trusting them. Then the selection of a site for the Federal capital is a question that must also be dealt with early. I am glad to know that the Government are pushing the matter forward. I believe the Minister in charge of Home Affairs, Sir William Lyne, will do his best to push this business along with all possible despatch, but we should all regard it as our duty to make the selection at the earliest possible date. Are we not here in an anomalous position occupying the State House of the Parliament of Victoria? Would it not be better to get our own House ?

Senator Glassey

- And put it in order.

Senator GOULD

- And allow members of the State Parliament to set their House in order as time goes by. I regard the settlement of this question as one of the vital matters in the interests of the Commonwealth. Once in our own home we will feel that we can legislate upon other matters in a much more satisfactory way than we can while we are in this uncertain position. We may be here for some years, or only a few years. It depends on the attitude of our Parliament itself, whether the time be long or short, and I hope it will be made a strong point by the people to urge their representatives in both Chambers to push the matter forward. Again, the Government have suggested various ways of spending large sums of money in the Governor-General's speech. For instance, the acquisition of the Northern Territory, the railway to Western Australia, and the question of old-age pensions. I do not suppose there is one who would not be glad to see the different States brought together by the iron bands of a railway line, but we have to consider the cost, and how are we going to meet it. Therefore, we have to be particularly careful what we do. I am told that a railway to Western Australia will cost ?5,000,000.

Senator O'Connor

-Who says so?

Senator Playford

Senator GOULD

- Well, say ?2,000,000.

Senator Playford

- It will not pay for the grease on its wheels.

Senator GOULD

- If we are to build a railway at the cost of two or three millions we have not only to pay the expense of running it and maintaining it, but the interest on the money we borrow. Of course, I am told it is a national undertaking. I have always noticed that anything that will not pay, in the way of large public works, is put forward as a national undertaking. At any rate, I have noticed that in New South Wales, and I dare say it is so in the other States. We have to multiply the amount of interest on the loans at least by four, in order that we may return three-fourths to the States. Now we come to the question of old-age pensions. Victoria and New South. Wales both have their systems in force, and they will be able to give us a. great deal of knowledge when we come to deal with the question. According to Coghlan, we should require ?1,800,000 annually to pay old-age pensions to the people of the whole Commonwealth on the same basis as that in operation in New South Wales. The pension in New South Wales is 10s. per week, and that is not a. very extravagant amount. If we are to spend money in this way we shall have to raise an additional ?7,000,000. We are practically precluded from direct taxation. That belongs to the States.

Senator Keating

- Not necessarily.

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Senator GOULD

- I know that we have the power, but what would the States say ? We shall find ourselves in a great difficulty. It may be possible to solve the difficulty by some means of working with the States themselves, seeing that they are agreed upon this question. Victoria expects to spend ?300,000 or ?400,000 annually, and New South Wales will probably expend ?500,000 or ?600,000 a year. It might be possible to have such a system that each

State would contribute its fair quota towards the cost of paying these particular pensions, and we would have the great advantage then of placing the people in all the States upon an equality with regard to their title to old-age pensions. Thus a man instead of being compelled to live 20 years in one particular State before becoming eligible for a pension, might have that term spread over the whole Commonwealth, and would be able to get the allowance if he were a suitable person in other respects. It would simply necessitate an actuarial calculation as to how much should be contributed by each individual State. If the States can run their own systems of old-age pensions they can just as readily pay their fair proportion under a uniform system. I know that some people say it is an undesirable scheme, that the thriftless and worthless who have squandered their money receive under it a greater benefit than the man who has put himself in a position not to require a pension but there are a large number of people in all these States who are in poor circumstances, not through want of thrift but because of misfortune, sickness, or misadventure, and it would not be fair to close the doors to these person!! because some few are less worthy. Under such a system as that it may be possible to deal with a matter of this kind, and I shall be only too happy to give my assistance to any Government that may introduce a policy of the character, because I believe it is better to make some sort of provision, for your old people than to leave them to the chance of the benevolent asylum, or to the chance of starving. A man Or a woman who is entitled to a pension under the law of the land will come for it without feeling any degradation. But if a man or a woman has to beg for admission to a benevolent asylum, or beg for charity which need not be given unless people see fit to grant it, you put that person in a miserable, wretched, and invidious position. There are I admit arguments on both sides; but the balance of argument has always appeared, to my mind, to be in favour of old-age pensions. That is the only way in which a system of the kind can be carried out. For a period of ten years we have to return to the different States three-fourths of whatever revenue we raise under the Customs Tariff; and we have, therefore, to study economy in a marked degree. We may be able to raise £8,500,000 under some Tariff or other, but if we had to raise double that amount we should find ourselves in an absolutely bankrupt condition very speedily. However high your duties are, there is a straining point beyond which you cannot go, and you will find that the more moderate and reasonable your duties are, the better your revenue will be, and the more certain you can be of obtaining a fair and reasonable return. I do not propose to detain honorable members any further with regard to the Address in Reply. I have no doubt that it will evoke a debate that will be of fairly great length, and while some honorable members may say that this is not the time at which to discuss one or two of these particular matters, still I think that coming here as a new Senate, under a new Constitution, it is well that there should be no mistake as to the opinions of honorable members. They have expressed their views to their own constituents, and let them now have an opportunity of expressing their views in the face of the whole of Australia, so that people may know whether they are sticking to what they advocated before. If they have seen fit to change their views, the people of Australia should know the reason why they have changed them. If we recognise that principle throughout the whole of our public affairs, we may depend upon it that we shall go on much more satisfactorily than we shall by any manner of hidden policy. We may have differences, and strong differences, of opinion one with another, but I, for one, would far sooner have a man opposing me straight out, and contending for what he believes is best in public matters, than I would have a man who would give me half a promise and at the same time have some reservation which would enable him to practice what I should regard as a game of deception on me in the end. I hope that honorable members will not look upon any debate, however lengthy it may be, as time wasted or time misplaced, if it gives us an opportunity of putting our views strongly and prominently before the people of the country. Now that we are in what has been regarded as the home of the protectionists and the protectionist belief, let us remember that it is a good opportunity - for us, at any rate - to put ourselves straight, and, so far as our arguments, go, if they can do it, induce people to fall in with the policy we advocate, and honestly advocate, and which we believe has been the means of, in no small degree, placing the

State of New South Wales in the prosperous condition she stands in to-day amongst the other States of Australia.

Senator NEILD

Senator NEILD

(New South Wales).I do not like exactly that this initial debate should conclude without some small

expression of opinion in addition to those which have, already fallen from the lips of the senators who have spoken. I own that my remarks will be brief, and I should have preferred to have made them a little later on rather than follow on the same side as

Senator Gould.

I must own to a feeling of very considerable dissatisfaction with the speech which was delivered by the Governor-General here last week. I must say that the speech is so positively nebulous, so entirely crowded with indication, so utterly composed of promises, that I cannot regard it as a satisfactory speech by which to open the proceedings of this Parliament.

Senator Playford

- You can't please them, hit them high or hit them low.

Senator NEILD

- If I might be guilty of a slight paraphrase of some well-known words, I think I should be justified in saying that in the beginning Barton prepared a speech, and the speech was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the document, because this speech is so utterly unlike the speeches that were made by the Premier himself and his colleagues before the elections.

Senator Dobson

- Oh, no.

Senator Playford

- Just the same.

Senator NEILD

- I think I am equally entitled to my opinion, and, perhaps, when I have uttered a word of explanation, I shall not meet with a negative. It is utterly unlike any of the speeches that were made before the election, in which* positive statements were made, the counterpart of which are absent from the Vice-Regal speech. Senator Gould has referred to the question of old-age pensions. I, unfortunately, did not hear the whole of his remarks on that subject, but I do know, that in the celebrated, the historic Maitland speech, very distinct promises were made in reference to the subject of old-age pensions. We were told positively that they were going to be carried out as a federal matter. It was pointed out by some of the candidates that that was not possible under the operation of the financial sections of the Commonwealth Act, and they were seriously taken to task by the Prime Minister and his friends. What are the words that are to be found in this speech on the subject of old-age pensions? If there is anything to be understood from them, it is a distinct announcement that nothing can be done at present.

Some time must elapse before the financial conditions of the Commonwealth will admit of provision being made for old-age pensions. It is, however, the desire of my Ministers to deal with the subject as soon as practicable. That is no promise; it is an indication of a wish, and a wish may be very meritorious ; but I am amongst the practical people of the world, who prefer achievement to desire.

Senator McGregor

- Well, I hope the honorable member will support it when it comes.

Senator NEILD

- That observation justifies me in reminding the honorable member that if there is a man in Australia who has done solid work on the subject of old-age pensions, and made large personal sacrifice in connexion with its advocacy, it is myself. No man, no matter how enthusiastic he may be on the subject of a proper provision for the aged at the hands of the State, not as a charity, but as a State right - the right to live, the right to eat, and the right to be clothed - no man within the four corners of the Commonwealth of Australia can be more enthusiastic on this subject than I humbly believe myself to be.

Senator McGregor

- I was looking for an indication.

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Senator NEILD

- This is hardly the time, I take it, to deal with the details of such questions. If we live to see the Bill, or the Ministry live to introduce it, we shall then have opportunities of indicating in detail what our views are ; but I would just add to some of the words that were uttered by Senator Gould on the subject; - that the provision for old-age pensions that is given by a system of State pensions is not applicable only to those who have the command of means that enable them to accumulate the result of their exertions, in the form

of what is known as thrift. There is a large number of people in every community who have not the means of exercising that thrift. There is the man who is in partial work, and, as we know, much of the labour of Australia is done by fits and starts at different seasons of the year. Under existing conditions of labour in the Commonwealth, there must ever be a large number of men who, however desirous they may be to practise the virtues of thrift, will frequently be denied the opportunity of continuous effort; but there are others besides the stalwart labourer who are in need of the help of the State. I refer to those who, by reason of physical or mental decrepitude, by reason of sickness and disease, " have no opportunities for practising this grace of thrift, of which some persons, more happily placed, are so very fond of speaking. But, in addition to these, there is another class to whom the opportunity for thrift is practically denied - a class that we all honour, that every man honours, truly believing the individuals who compose it to be amongst the most honoured and virtuous of our people. I refer to the wives of the working men of our community, and the wives of those who might not perhaps be classed as working men in the ordinary acceptation of the term, but who are nevertheless engaged in labour of one kind or another that compels them to expend all their energies in the maintenance of families, and have very little saved for the purpose of old-age provision. The man in work may be able to provide for his old age, but what chance has his wife 1 We know the sacrifices that wives and mothers make for their homes, and the clothing and education of those that God has given them, and they have a smaller chance perhaps than any other section of the community to exercise this grace of thrift ; and for them especially I shall claim at the proper time that the Ministry of the Commonwealth shall take the very earliest opportunity that is afforded of bringing about as a federal matter a proper working, competent scheme, by which we may get rid of the asylums to the largest possible extent, and may allow the old folks of the community to enjoy the privileges that come, and the benefits that follow, from a beneficent system of old-age provision at the cost of the State. I notice from the speech that the Ministry contemplate the introduction of a large number of measures to this Chamber. I would point out to the Vice-President of the Executive Council that there is a considerable element of risk in introducing such important measures here. In regard to Bills introduced here the Senate has the fullest right of amendment, and the fullest right of disagreeing with amendments, that may be made in the measures hereafter in another place. The penal section of the Commonwealth Act - that is, section 57, providing for dead-locks - does not apply, and cannot be applied,' to disputes between the two Chambers that may arise in connexion with measures that have been initiated here. Consequently, in respect of every Bill initiated here, there is no check by the other Chamber upon what this House may please to do. There is no possibility of dissolution, nor does the Commonwealth Act afford any outlet whatsoever in the case of a chronic disagreement between the two Chambers in reference to such measures. Nor is there any limitation to the powers of this Chamber except in regard to Bills initiated in another place referring to the appropriation of revenue or the imposition of taxation. There is no limitation to the powers of the Senate in reducing taxation, though it has no power to initiate measures to the opposite effect. And if it is proposed to utilize this Chamber largely for the purpose of initiating measures, my honorable and learned friend may find that the course of legislation in respect of such Bills will not run as smoothly as he may desire. I notice that one of the Bills that is to be introduced apparently into this Chamber is one to regulate the public service. I saw recently that there have been some Ministerial utterances to the press with reference to a very important clause that a certain measure is to contain. I might remark in passing that we find less of actual information in the speech from the Throne than we find in the paragraphs that appear daily in the press. A paragraph that appeared in the press a little while ago as a Ministerial utterance- it appeared in the Melbourne press, and was telegraphed round the States - contained a statement to this effect, that it was proposed in the Bill to which I refer that provision should be made that no high officer in the public service should be removed from his position except by the votes of both Houses, or by a second vote of the House of Representatives.

Senator O'Connor

- Who made that ridiculous statement ?

Senator NEILD

- It was in the press of all the States, and amongst the numerous statements that appeared and continued to appear with reference to the intention of the Ministry.

Senator O'Connor

- Was it made with any authority t

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Senator NEILD

- It appeared to be so. If the honorable and learned member says that the measure as introduced will not contain such a clause - if he repudiates the authority of the paragraph - I shall not say what I was going to say.

Senator O'Connor

- It is ludicrous on the face of it.

Senator NEILD

- Perhaps I thought the same thing. Of course, if it was an indication that this Chamber could be overridden or ignored while a double vote of the other House could settle the fate of a public servant, I should only regard it, as the honorable and learned gentleman himself says, as a ridiculous statement. It struck me as tending to discredit the power and authority of this Chamber, which, I take it, represents quite as satisfactorily the wishes of the people as the other Chamber.

Senator McGregor

- If it is ridiculous, why pay any attention to it ?

Senator NEILD

- My honorable friend seems to forget that it does happen sometimes that ridiculous things lead to serious consequences. It is not to be supposed that a Ministry exists to-day that is not capable of making a mistake, and if, as a learned senator says - the statement is inaccurate, and he casts it aside as absurd - it is not worth discussing any further, but that does not make it unnecessary or undesirable that it should be mentioned.

Senator DAWSON

- Then the honorable member repudiates the press ?

Senator NEILD

- No, I do not repudiate the press ; but, on the strength of Senator O'Connor's statement, I learn that a paragraph that has been going the rounds of the press as an inspired official paragraph is ridiculous.

Senator McGregor

- They are getting the honorable member mixed between them.

Senator NEILD

- I do not think so, and I hope such a fate will not befall my honorable friend. But if there is less distinctness in reference to old-age pensions in the speech, the same criticism applies with reference to the fiscal policy disclosed or failed to be disclosed. There is only a kind of appeal for consideration to be shown to certain industries. I heard my honorable friend fear the observation that the Ministry was protectionist ; but we do not get in a speech the positive announcement such as was made at Maitland - we only get a kind of plaintive wail on behalf of unspecified industries. There is a marked difference between the assurance with which a protective policy was put forward a couple of months ago and the mild mention of the matter in the Vice-Regal speech, which, I fancy, is due to the 'great change that came over the aspect of affairs after the result of the federal elections was reckoned up. If the change was not due to the result of the general election, perhaps it was due to the belated introduction of a revenue tariffist, in the person of Sir Philip Fysh, into a protectionist Cabinet.

Senator DAWSON

- "What is the difference ?

Senator NEILD

- "Well, I thought that no gentleman would be sent by any constituency either to this House or any other representative Chamber, unless he had sufficient intelligence to at least comprehend the great difference involved in the question that my honorable friend submits. I am sure he cannot be so destitute of knowledge on the subject as to make it necessary for me to give an academic dissertation on the difference that exists.

Senator DAWSON

- I heard the honorable member's leader, and cannot understand it now.

Senator NEILD

- I may reply - "Am I my brother's keeper ?" I cannot be responsible, and do not attempt to be responsible, for any one but myself, and I am sorry for the honorable member who expresses his inability to

understand fairly good English.

Senator DAWSON

- It is tangled English.

Senator Keating

- A revenue tariffist is a man who wants office and has not got it.

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Senator NEILD

- What will follow the speech will, no doubt, be that both Chambers, will pass it in the hope that good results may follow. I trust that what is done will tend to show and prove that the new Parliament that has been called together under the Commonwealth Act will be a Parliament that will serve the people faithfully ; that will achieve great good for the nation which has so recently come into existence, under the auspicious circumstances that surrounded, not only its inauguration in Sydney, but the inauguration of the Parliament in the sister city of Melbourne.

Senator MILLEN

There are so many things in the speech with which I regret to say I am at variance that it is with a sense of relief that I find at least one paragraph which I am able to give entire indorsement to. That paragraph reads -

The legislation which I have outlined may not of course be entirely carried into effect in a single session. I can entirely agree with that paragraph, because I venture to say that if there is one single subject on which this Parliament is competent to legislate which has been omitted from the speech, it has been by accident. Therefore we can safely predict that it is not likely that this proposed legislation has any possible chance of being carried into effect this session. We must suppose that these references have been introduced in order that the Government may take out a copyright in the measures. If any other Government should venture to introduce any of these measures the present Government will be able to accuse them of having stolen the planks of their platform. There are only two important matters to which I propose to direct attention, but there are one or two minor ones to which I propose to make a passing reference. I should like upon the matter of the Public Service Bill to express the hope that the indications which the Government have given as to their methods of appointment to the Federal Public Service will not be carried any further. Senator Keating has said that all things are suspicious to those who are of a suspicious turn of mind ; but I do say that facts which are open to the consideration of us all bear only the one possible construction. When we see two appointments made to high positions from among those who are politically or personally associated with those empowered to make them, and when competent men in the State services are passed over, there is ample room not only for suspicion but denunciation. If it could be pointed out that the public services had no men competent to do the work there might be some justification for the two appointments to which I refer. One of those gentlemen has relieved the Government from a very awkward dilemma by retiring ; the other is in office still.

Senator Playford

- What is his name? Senator MILLEN. -Mr. Atlee Hunt, who is known in New South Wales as a kind of electioneering agent to Mr. Barton. He may be thoroughly competent and qualified for the office which he holds, but I venture to say that in the public service of New South Wales there are men not only as competent, but possessing greater qualifications for the office than Mr. Hunt can lay claim to. Unless it can be shown that the Government have ransacked the public services and failed to find a competent man, then it is an injustice that he should receive that appointment.

Senator DAWSON

- Why not move an amendment?

Senator MILLEN

- I have an amendment which I propose to submit later on, and one amendment at a time is sufficient to handle. I express the hope, and I am sure the common sense of the Chamber and the country will be with me, that in making future appointments the Government will as far as possible draw on the available material from the public services of the States, and that only on extraordinary occasions will they go beyond the public services and take recruits from outside. Now just a word on a subject upon which I addressed a question to the representative of the Government. It is as to an agreement said to have been made between the Federal Government and the Government of the State of Victoria. It is stated that

there is a proposal to allow members of the State Parliament to have the use of certain rooms in this building. I shall say nothing more than that I conceive such an arrangement would not only be inconvenient but would create an amount of friction which would develop to a dangerous extent, and if the Government have any such intention I hope they will reconsider it. It would be far better for us to leave this building altogether and take refuge in the Exhibition building than to be parties to such an agreement. I have just one other minor matter upon which to touch, and that is as to the necessity for a federal electoral law. The speech makes some reference to it, but it does not give it that prominent position to which it is entitled. Probably honorable members coming from States possessing more common-sense electoral laws than those of New South Wales may not have had brought before them the urgent necessity for such a law; but in New South Wales, if it were possible for bungling to develop into a fine art, we can claim to have achieved it. I can hardly imagine that the ingenuity of man could have devised anything entitled to be called a law which contains such a maximum of inconvenience with a minimum of advantage. For that reason I trust the Government will at an early date provide an electoral law, the essential principle of which will be a common-sense method of working - a law under which electors shall have as little inconvenience as possible, and which will secure the largest percentage of votes at the ballot-box.

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Senator Glassey

- What are the main inconveniences to which the honorable member refers ?

Senator MILLEN

- I did not wish to weary members with details. Under our law, if an elector loses his electoral right or goes from one district to another, he can have no right in his new district until he has obtained a substituted right and has made a dozen declarations.

Senator Glassey

- I think we have the most peculiar electoral law on the continent.

Senator MILLEN

- Perhaps it is the honorable member's pride of State which makes him think he can beat us. I want now to come to the fiscal proposals, and later on to the coloured labour question. I want first to make an observation upon an interjection which came from an honorable member from this side, and was approved by the Vice-President of the Executive Council, which was to the effect that the Tariff proposals of the Government were practically the same as those who call themselves revenue tariffists would have put into effect. If that is so, then I would submit that we might have been allowed to bring in a Tariff for approval rather than that a Tariff should have been dictated by a document submitted by a secret Protectionist Association. I object very strongly indeed to the assumption of a paragraph in this speech, and to some of the remarks made by Senator Fraser, that in some way or other those who advocate a low Tariff are prepared to ignore the financial necessities of the different States, and to do something which would deprive those States of their financial stability. Low tariffists or revenue tariffists or free-traders have the same recognition of what is due to the States as members on the other side have ; but the question is this : Honorable members opposite have yet to prove that a high Tariff will be more productive of revenue than a low Tariff. If they can show that a high Tariff is necessary, and that you cannot raise the required amount of revenue by means of a low Tariff, then I admit there is some justification for the imputation I have referred to ; but it is not sufficient for them to merely accuse us of ignoring what is due to the States. They must show that by their proposals they can raise the requisite revenue. I ask attention now to the following two sets of figures : - Great Britain, with a revenue Tariff, raises more per head of the population than the United States with a high Tariff. Great Britain raises 26s. per head of the population, and the United States, with a Tariff very much higher, and distinctly protective, raises 22s. 6d. per head. In other words, the low revenue Tariff; devised solely for revenue purposes, enables the Treasurer of Great Britain to collect 3s. 6d. per head more than is collected under a high protective Tariff in the United States. That is one instance showing that a low revenue Tariff is more productive of revenue than a high Tariff. I will come nearer home and take the position which prevails in the colonies of New South Wales and Victoria. We have in New South Wales, happily as it proved for our industries, a free-trade Tariff, but some years ago we had a protectionist Tariff.

Senator Playford

- It is not all freetrade ; there is protection on sugar and confectionery.

Senator MILLEN

- That interjection does not appear to me to be very pertinent. The duty on sugar was certainly left on, not because we believed in it, but because the party having brought in a policy which provided for a gradual reduction of the sugar duty, had to face the position that federation would be an accomplished fact in a year or two, that the Federal Parliament would be dealing with the sugar duty, and that it would be unfair to our sugar-growers were the duty to be taken away if it had to be imposed again in a short time, the whole of it going to another colony.

Senator Glassey

- Can the sugar industry not carry on without protection ?

Senator MILLEN

- I am not called upon to answer that question. The advocates of the duty said so.

Senator O'Connor

- You left on the 3 duty because you were afraid of destroying the industry.

Senator MILLEN

- No ; but because we knew there would be a reimposition of the duty in a short time.

Senator Playford

- And because of the competition with the bounty-fed beet sugar.

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Senator MILLEN

- So far as the sugar industry of the northern rivers of New South Wales is concerned it is better that it should be wiped out if it cannot exist without a State subsidy. I was pointing out, Mr. President, that under the low Tariff of Great Britain a higher revenue has reached the Treasurer than under the protective Tariff of the United States. I am instituting the comparison for the purpose of showing that under a revenue Tariff we can raise such a revenue as is necessary. I want to point out now that under the revenue Tariff imposed in New South Wales by the Government of which Sir George, then Mr. Dibbs, was the head, we had a distinctly low Tariff of 10 or 15 per cent., while in "Victoria a reasonably high Tariff prevailed at that time. Yet, in New South Wales, we collected a higher revenue per head than was collected in Victoria. I say that a high Tariff does not necessarily mean a big revenue ; on the contrary a low revenue Tariff fixed for the purpose of collecting revenue is most likely to raise what is required.

Senator O'Connor

- It is entirely a question of degree.

Senator MILLEN

- It is more than that. If I were to state in concrete form what is the difference in figures between the two Tariffs I would show this. The honorable gentleman says " revenue first, and as much protection as you can get without destroying the revenue." We say " revenue first, and all duties as low as you can make them to raise that revenue." That would mean that many articles on which there is a duty of 12¹/₂ per cent, would yield the same amount of revenue as those on which there is a duty of 25 per cent. In that case the honorable member is pleading to put on the 25 per cent, duties. We, on Our part, are pledged to vote for the 12¹/₂ per cent. Coming to a further matter in this speech, I regret, as very unfair, the imputation that those who advocate a low Tariff seek to destroy substantial industries. That imputation was contained in the remarks of Senator Eraser, as well as in the speech from the Throne. We can point to the fact that in New South Wales the removal of the duties has not brought about the avalanche of disaster which protectionists tell us would follow the taking off of the protective duties. On the contrary, we can show that since that instalment of protection," to which I have referred, was removed, our industries have obtained a stability that they never exhibited before. I invite honorable members to point out a single industry which, under the measure of protection they had before, was making progress to the same extent which has taken place since we removed those duties. It seems to me to ignore the logic of facts and to be most unfair to assume that, having tested this by' practice as well as by argument, we should be charged with an attempt to destroy industries.

Senator McGregor

- Tell me of your prosperous industries. I have been to Sydney, but have never found them.

Senator MILLEN

- I do not know which part of Sydney you have been in.

Senator McGregor

- I was in Wexfordstreet

Senator MILLEN

- I never met a protectionist who could see any good in a freetrade country. I will take concrete figures.

Senator McGregor

- Tell us of a particular industry.

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Senator MILLEN

- I will tell you of one - the butter industry - but perhaps you will allow me to come to that later on. I would ask, first of all, what are the substantial industries which for 30 years have lived under protection? Surely an industry, before it can be called a substantial one, should be substantial enough, after enjoying 30 years of protection, to stand alone. I should be inclined to become a protectionist myself if, instead of making these pitiable pleas now, the representatives of Victoria were to come forward at this stage and say - " We have for many years enjoyed this measure of assistance, and have been enabled to start industries which it would have been difficult to raise up before. By means of this assistance we have built them up, and we can carry on without it hereafter. Therefore, it is a matter of ' indifference to us whether you remove these duties or not." But that is not so. We have the assurance of Sir George Turner that if these duties are removed these industries must disappear. That being so, they have no claim to the term " substantial." I say at once if these industries cannot stand after 30 years, like good honest tubs on their own bottoms, they are not entitled to much consideration at our hands. I consider there is no value in a protectionist policy at all if it is not going to bring in a reasonable measure of prosperity. Yet we have the assurance of one of the oldest public men of this State that Victoria was saved by butter. Surely after 30 years the industries do not want protecting. Fancy the great iron industry of Victoria, after these years of protection, being saved by butter, and the butter industry being built up by bonuses. Let us see what has been done in another State without bonuses. If I can show you that other States without bonuses have made proportionately even greater progress, then I say the argument in favour of protection or of bonuses falls to the ground. In Victoria the butter exports have increased by 3 per cent. In New South Wales, in spite of the fact that we struck off the duties, the progress has been 60 per cent., without the assistance of bonuses.

Senator McGregor

- What was it when it started %

Senator MILLEN

- Victoria had many years of protection before it gave this bonus. It had protection for the butter industry before the bonus. After developing the industry under protection for a number of years, when it reached the export point, it had to follow the protective duty with bonuses. In New Zealand during the same time the industry has increased by 100 per cent.

Senator O'Connor

- The increase in New South Wales is on account of the cooperative system.

Senator MILLEN

- That is so. It is the gradual spread of the Victorian system which has brought it about. It only shows it is not necessary to give a bonus for any industry which is naturally a profitable one. Now, Mr. President, I want to say, speaking for myself, and I am certain I am speaking for all who share my faith, that in advocating free-trade we are not advocating it in favour of one State alone. We who come from New South Wales have had practical experience of the advantages of this policy, and we say that if the duties were gradually lowered to the disappearing point, it would be better for the Commonwealth as a whole, and not alone for our particular State. I was asked some little while ago to mention one or two prosperous industries in New South Wales.

Senator MCGREGOR

- I want to know some of these industries.

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Senator MILLEN

- I will lend' the honorable senator my copy of Mr. Coghlan's "Wealth and Progress of New South Wales "

in the morning. Take the thing in the bulk. What has Victoria, as the result of the adoption of the protectionist system, ever done in the matter of employment for her people ? We admit at once that you employ more hands in your factories, but whilst you employ about 4,000 more hands than New South Wales, you get at that result by putting in 7,000 more women and 3,000 less men. I say at once that I prefer the policy that does not force the men out of employment and push in the women. I prefer a policy that enables men to obtain work and earn their own living. A great deal has been said here to those of us who come from free-trade States about being fair to the other States. That is a reasonable argument to address to any one in any circumstances. But we want this policy of fairness .to apply all round. If it would be a shame to Victorian industries to remove protection, it would be equally unfair to New South Wales industries to impose upon them a protectionist policy. New South Wales is making a very considerable sacrifice. Its industries are subjected to a very severe strain when we have to submit to the very heavy additional taxes which the financial proposals of .the Commonwealth will necessitate. It has been stated by Senator Eraser that in addition to the revenue we shall have to contribute to the Federal Government, we shall have an additional revenue from customs of from ?500,000 to ?750,000. Many in New South Wales, and I am among the number, say that the return will be over one million. That will be a very fair sacrifice. Whilst representatives of other States may have the right to ask us to consider their peculiar circumstances, and to request us to extend reasonable consideration to them, we have also not only the right which they possess, but the double right which comes from the peculiar circumstances to which I have referred. I want to pass on to the hist matter and that is the question of a white Australia. It is not necessary now to say anything in defence of the main proposal. Public opinion has arrived at that stage that whatever the sacrifice, the people have determined to fully maintain a white Australia. That being the case, I only propose to speak to the practical side of the question and to say how we can get at the objective at which we aim. Although everyone agrees as to its desirability, there is always a " but " in it. The present " but " is the request for further inquiry. I never knew a reform where you did not find some one asking for time. The time was never opportune for reform in the minds of some people. This request is not new in Queensland. For years those who advocate the abolition of kanaka labour have been met with the cry - " Yes, it is all right in principle, but time enough by-and-by. We must not do it now." There was an Act passed there in 1885 which absolutely put a limit to the system, and said that after 1890 there should be no more importation of these labourers, but they are being imported to-day because the plea of time came along. I am totally against the .plea which is put forward to postpone the tune when you shall take an action which every one pretends to believe is necessary. It seems plausible that "men should ask for information before they act. I could quite understand them asking for information, if they had not agreed that the kanaka must go ; but, as they have made up their mind that there is to be a stoppage, what is the use of inquiry? If they were to say there are grave doubts whether the sugar industry can be carried on without the South Sea Islanders, then I could understand the request for information.

Senator Glassey

- Queensland has spoken to the contrary.

Senator MILLEN

- Yes; the people best qualified to speak have done so. The representatives of Queensland in the Federal Parliament are all strong anti-coloured labour men. It is important to know what is the opinion of those who are most affected by it. I believe in the State Parliament of Queensland every representative of the sugar districts is a white labour man.

Senator Glassey

- That is not so.

Senator MILLEN

- Well, I have been misinformed, or, probably, I have misunderstood my informant. At any rate, the members who come here from Queensland to represent the State, and who should know most about it, advocate this proposal. The employment of the kanaka is defended, I think, solely on the ground that the keeping of a few kanakas at work gives employment to a much larger number of white men. ?

Senator Glassey

- That is all nonsense.

Senator MILLEN

- Whether it is nonsense or not, the white men affected have voted for the abolition of the kanaka. If they

are willing to run the risk of having their business and their income struck away, surely those who are not personally affected can go with them. I want, in dealing with the question as to whether or not the kanaka is necessary, to point out this fact that, of late years, according to figures obtained from the Queensland statistical branch, there has been a rapid expansion of the area under sugar cane, without any increase in the number of "kanakas. In the year 1885 there were 59,000 acres under cane, and nearly 11,000 Pacific Islanders employed. In the year 1900, there were 110,000 acres under cane, and 9,000 Pacific Islanders employed. That practically means that the Pacific Islanders have decreased, and that the area under cane has doubled. Honorable members, I suppose, are aware of this fact, that the kanaka is only employed in the field, that he cannot work about the mills. I give the area under cane because that is the scene of his operations. If, in 1885, 11,000 Pacific Islanders were necessary - I do not contend that they were - for the cultivation of 59,000 acres under cane, and we have only the same number of kanakas now, and twice the area under cane, it is quite evident that there are 50,000 acres being cultivated without the use of kanakas. That appears to me to be absolutely unnecessary.

Senator O'Connor

- It does not necessarily follow.

Senator FRASER

- They have brought in any amount of machinery and railways.

Senator MILLEN

- The honorable member interjects that they have brought in any amount of machinery, but what to do? The machinery does not cut the cane or work the fields either to any extent. The kanaka is limited entirely to work in the field. I repeat if the 11,000 kanakas were required for the cultivation of 59,000 acres, of cane in 1885, there has been an area of from 50,000 to 60,000 acres which has been cultivated since that year without the employment of kanakas.

Senator Gould

- Was the kanaka also confined to the field in the earlier days?

Senator MILLEN

- So far as my reading of the Act goes, 'he was'; whether the law was carried out or not I cannot say. I think I am correct in saying that it limited his operations to the field.

Senator Glassey

- Not quite so strictly; as has been done since.

Senator MILLEN

- I presume that there was subsequent legislation, and that perhaps some of its provisions were evaded. But even making allowance for a leakage of that kind, it is quite evident that a very large amount of land in Queensland has been brought under cultivation without the aid of kanaka labour. Senator Fraser spoke of some thousands of acres being suitable for cane cultivation, all of which he said he hoped to see brought under cultivation.

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Senator Glassey

Millions of acres he said.

Senator MILLEN

We all share that hope, I am sure, but as he is willing to banish the kanaka, it is quite evident that he wishes to see white labour cultivate these millions of acres. It is surely possible for the white labour, having already cultivated 50,000 acres, to cultivate the remaining 50,000 acres. I propose to submit a definite proposition to the House, and it is one the moderation of which I think will commend itself to honorable members whether they believe in the necessity of the kanaka or not. The paragraph in the Governor-General's speech says—

Bills for the firm restriction of the immigration of Asiatics and for the diminution and gradual abolition of the introduction of labour from the South Sea Islands will be laid before you.

"The portion to which I invite attention is as follows:—

The gradual abolition of the introduction of labour.

I propose, sir, to place an amendment in your hands which will provide for a gradual abolition of the coloured labour within the Commonwealth and for the immediate stoppage of its importation. That appears to me to be moderate in the extreme. It extends to vested interests a reasonable warning as to

what is to take place, and it gives them, as I shall show in a minute, four and a half years in which to make other arrangements. Existing legislation in Queensland permits of a three years' -agreement between the employer and the kanaka, and the kanaka has the option of renewing his agreement if he likes. As the agreements have a three years' currency, we may assume that the average of them is eighteen months; that is, some of them are nearly completed, and some of them are only just made. Allowing only one term of renewal for the kanakas already there, it will give an average of four and a half years if my proposal is adopted before the kanakas entirely disappear. That, I submit, is a reasonable time and a reasonable warning to give to those who have imported them, and who are employing them.

Senator Dobson

That is practically Mr. Fisher's suggestion in the Age.

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Senator MILLEN

I have to plead ignorance of the suggestion being made there. If I had known that any one else had put it forward first I should have acknowledged it, but I did not. I move—

That the proposed address be amended by the addition of the following words :— " But, while fully concurring in the proposal for the gradual reduction and ultimate relinquishment of the kanaka, we are of opinion that the further importation of such labour should be at once prohibited."

I cannot think, in view of the figures I have, that the kanaka is at all necessary to the continued success of the sugar industry. But I go further than that, and say that if it did jeopardize that industry, there are other interests at stake which far overshadow it, and that it would be far better for us to be without the sugar industry if, in order to maintain it, we had to leave our ports open to the indiscriminate introduction of coloured labour. It is not merely a question as to whether or not these coloured races may intermix with our own. There is an equally serious matter, and it is that the introduction of inferior labour would, in my opinion, tend to degrade labour throughout the Commonwealth. It is for these reasons that I submit this amendment. I had hoped that the Government, in dealing with this matter, would, at least, have felt inclined to go as far as my amendment. I submit it not with any desire—and I do not suppose it would do so—to hamper the honorable and learned member in charge of Government business, but really because I cannot allow the Address in Reply to go without taking this step as giving me a practical means of putting forward the views I held.

Senator EWING

I have no doubt that almost every senator will readily join with the Government and with the wording of the Governor-General's speech in the congratulations we extend, and the hearty welcome we give to the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York, not because they are the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York; alone, but because we feel that we have received so much at the hands of the mother country of which they come here as the representatives. We feel that everything almost that is good that is ours to-day has been the gift of the motherland. When we look at the other countries of the world which enter upon colonizing work, we find that they generally colonize with the object of increasing the advantage to the mother, and seldom do that justice to the -daughter or son that we see done in the Australian colonies. On the other hand, we have received from Great Britain responsible government. We have received from Great Britain the right to make our own laws. We have received from her the right to impose duties even upon her own goods, leaving us absolutely free to develop ourselves in the way we think best in the interests of the people that are settled in Australia. Consequently, we welcome the Duke and Duchess of York as representatives of the community not only from which we have sprung, but from which we have received almost everything that is good, and almost all the political institutions under which we stand to-night.

Senator Dawson

It is not so long since you had responsible government in Western Australia. You were a Crown colony until recently.

Senator EWING

I know that as soon as a colony arrives at a stage when it is practicable and reasonable for it to undertake the responsibility of self-government, Great Britain has always been willing and ready to hand that responsibility over to the colony. I have no the slightest hesitation in saying that Great Britain is the one country that does that which has made us so prosperous, that we have much to thank her for. I believe

the people of Australia do thank her deeply and sincerely for the Constitution under which we now intend to live, and that the loyalty they have shown to the motherland is not only lip-labialty but a loyalty which is the outcome of the affection which is bred and born out of the good actions we have received from the motherland in days gone by. A lesson we have learned from Great Britain, no doubt, is that we should not always endeavour to develop a young community or any portions of our dominion in the interest of a section of the people. We have learned the true spirit of federation. We have learned that the older portions of the Commonwealth can well afford, as Great Britain has done, to allow the smaller portions their just due, and allow them to develop themselves in the way which is desired. If we keep in our minds the object-lesson that has been taught that we should not allow our individual interests to stand in the way of national development, I believe that the future of this Commonwealth will be a great one. But if we allow, in the settlement of the site on which the federal capital is to be built, those provincial instincts which are so strong—I am sorry to say between two of the colonies, in any event—to have effect on our actions, I think it will be a poor day for the Commonwealth. We know, and we have heard that New South Wales and Victoria have not been ready and willing to trust the Commonwealth Parliament to do that which they think is right; not because they thought that the Commonwealth Parliament would not do that which was right in the interests of the community, but because they believed that the interests of the community might be antagonistic to one or other of those colonies. I hope that the senators and the members of the other House who come from States unaffected by these influences will see that the prejudices of New South Wales and Victoria are absolutely swept upon one side, and that we shall have a site when it is settled upon that will not be too remote, and that the city will not be built in the interests of either New South Wales or Victoria, but will be built and established in the interests of the Commonwealth and the people of Australia generally. We note, and I have no doubt with pleasure, that the Government intend to do that which is absolutely necessary. They intend to introduce a Bill to provide for the working of the Court of Appeal. It is my hope that when this Bill is introduced we shall find that it is consistent with the Constitution, and that no action will be taken which has either a direct or an indirect tendency to weaken the power of appeal to the Privy Council.

Senator Stewart

How many Australians will be able to go to the Privy Council ?

Senator Keating

A few big companies.

Senator Dawson

—The honorable member may have cash to go there, but I have not.

Senator Gould

The honorable member will not find it much cheaper to go to a Colonial Court.

Senator EWING

The senator suggests that it is a personal consideration. I have no intention of considering whether he or anybody else has or has not the power to appeal to any court. The question is - is it right that we should have the privilege of appeal to the Privy Council, or is it not? The reason why I think it is right is because it seems to me that it is eminently desirable that there should be a uniformity of law and decision throughout the British-speaking countries.

Senator Keating

To be decided by Judges who know nothing at all about our conditions.

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Senator Gould

And they are not guided by any prejudices.

Senator EWING

I am afraid that the interjections of the senator show that he knows little or nothing about that on which he is interjecting, because a Judge, whether he is a Judge of a court or a member of the Privy Council, has the same principles of law for his guidance ; his training is the same ; his ability to discriminate is the same. It is easy for the Judges at home to form the best possible opinion from a local point of view. After all the Judges on the Privy Council do not decide the facts of a case. The facts of a case are decided by the Judge or the jury who hear it in Australia, and it is only a consideration of legal principles that ever reaches the Privy Council. Is it not manifest to the honorable member whether he understands the

.principles of law or whether he does not, that it is eminently desirable that in communities bound closely together, as the Commonwealth -of Australia is with the motherland, there should be no conflicting decision. The only way to avoid a conflicting decision is to have one final Court of Appeal, because if we have a final Court of Appeal in Australia, a final Court of Appeal in Canada, and a final Court of Appeal in the motherland, we shall probably find in days to come that they come to different decisions* on different legal principles, and although we belong to the one Empire, although we are really one people, the law will have one construction in the old country, and another construction -in Canada, and still another construction in Australia. There are those who are connected with trade and business, leaving the lawyers entirely out of the question, who will see that from a business point of view, audi a condition of affairs will be disastrous, and therefore it is my sincere hope that no action the Government takes will ever tend in the direction of lessening the power of the Privy Council as a final Court of Appeal.

Senator Keating

There are conflicting decisions of the Privy Council.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

.—Does the honorable member go the length of refusing to the High Court the power of finally deciding the interpretation of our own Constitution?

Senator EWING

I will not say that it goes so far as that, although I am not prepared to say to the contrary.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

.—Where is the uniformity, when our Constitution does not apply to anywhere else but Australia ?

Senator EWING

Our Constitution and its construction would affect the whole of Australia.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

And that alone.

Senator EWING

Will the honorable member allow me to proceed ? The construction of legal principles applicable, say, to contracts, applicable to the general laws of the community, affect not only the Commonwealth of Australia, but the Dominion of Canada, and the motherland.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

But that power of appeal is preserved.

Senator EWING

And a man making a contract in Australia will have this absurd position face to face with him—thatt although the same contract exists, and although we are supposed to be the same people, the legal consequences in Australia will be different from the legal consequences in the motherland.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

—Thatt power of appeal is preserved.

Senator EWING

I am merely suggesting. I said I hoped there would be no effort on the part of the Federal Government to curtail the right of appeal. Those words were drawn from me by reason of certain discussions which have taken place, and which suggested that the rights as they exist should be to a much greater degree curtailed, and that the right of appeal to the Privy Council should be practically abolished.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

I hope it will be.

Senator EWING

The object of my remarks is to endeavour to demonstrate that the result of absolute prohibition of appeal would be fraught with danger to the commercial community, and with danger to the Commonwealth.

Senator Keating

What about the conflict of decisions between the House of Lords and the Privy Council ?

Senator EWING

The honorable member is, I believe, a lawyer, and surely he knows that there is no practical difficulty in that direction.

Senator Keating

The honorable member is telling us that is going to be the difficulty if there are two tribunals.

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Senator EWING

I am sorry if I have not been clear in my remarks, and I think the honorable gentleman should have been able to follow me when I said that the danger I anticipated was not a conflict of the laws between two of our own courts or two English courts, but a conflict which would be the outcome of making the Federal Court the final court of appeal without any appeal to the Privy Council.

Senator O'Connor

Under the Constitution we cannot do any such thing.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

The honorable member does not propose to sweep away what is left under the Constitution ?

Senator EWING

Suggestions have been made and debated and written upon by lawyers in this and other Houses, and I think now is the fitting time for one who is a lawyer to express the opinion he holds on the question. In a debate of this kind we are discussing the general issue. "We deal with everything that is of interest to us. A motion may be introduced to-morrow into the House of Representatives, having as its object the amendment of the Constitution, and X say I hope nothing of that kind will be done, but that the conditions as they exist at present will be strenuously maintained by the existing or any successive Government. I take the responsibility of seconding the amendment moved by Senator Milieu, and I do so because it is my firm conviction that an industry that is incapable of being developed except by means of influences and elements which must ultimately tend to national degradation is not an industry which we should desire to see in the Commonwealth of Australia. It is our desire that the population of Australia in the days to come shall be second to none in the civilized world, and how can that be if we continue to import people whose presence must degrade the community? They degrade not only from a national point of view, but also from a commercial point of view, because every one who has seen the result of black labour must know that the amount of money set in circulation through the medium of the industry is practically nothing. The benefit the community as a whole reaps from an industry is almost proportionate with the amount of labour employed and the remuneration paid, and if you introduce a class of labour which works on a pauper basis, a class of labour which creates no commercial prosperity, you produce a condition which will not bring about the state of things you desire. The value of an industry to this or any other country is the amount of money it sets in circulation in the community; and if we are going to have black labour in the Commonwealth, and Chinese cooks

Senator Dawson

Barmaids

Senator EWING

The honorable member may know something about barmaids; I know something about kanakas and Chinamen. I know the effect they have on the community, and I feel confident that, from a national point of view, their presence is not desirable. Therefore, the object that a politician should have in view is to see that our industries are developed in the interests of the community, that they employ the class of labour that produces prosperity, and not the class of labour which tends towards pauperism. I feel confident that the presence of these people cannot but have a disastrous effect upon the community in which we live. It will be bad from a national point of view and from a commercial point of view, and I therefore feel certain that we should be wise in closely restricting the introduction of Asiatics into the Commonwealth of Australia.

A SENATOR.—Under contract ?

Senator EWING

With or without contract. I would go so far as to say that we should adopt a method which, though theoretically it might not, yet practically would, prohibit the introduction of these persons altogether. If it is desirable to restrict upon national grounds the importation of Chinamen and blackfellows, surely it is desirable to exclude them altogether. If we do not want many, because they do harm to the country, is it not desirable that we should keep out absolutely the elements that we believe to be a national degradation? Consequently, I say that, as far as power will allow us, the Commonwealth Parliament should prohibit the importation of black and yellow labour, and also put a stop to the conditions that exist, not only in the State of Queensland, but also in the State of Western Australia, where persons are

imported for the express purpose of working the industries cheaper than they can be worked by white labour. I have no faith in the protestations of the sugar-grower, who tells us that he employs black men because the climate is too hot for white men. I have seen white men working under the same conditions, and I believe, from my experience and observation, that the reason the black man is employed in the north of Western Australia and in Queensland is that his labour is cheaper, and he gives more profit to the sugar-grower.

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Senator Charleston

Is it work that white man desires ?

Senator EWING

I do not know that the white man particularly desires any work if he can do without it, but still it is work that I have seen the white man do willingly and readily. I have seen them on the Tweed and in the southern parts of Queensland doing this work which they tell us is unfit for the white man to do. I am prepared to go the full length in this matter, and I hope the amendment will be carried, because I feel confident it is consistent with the welfare of the Commonwealth, and will not inflict any great hardship upon the sugar industry of Queensland. It will do some harm to the sugar-grower, because it will take some of his profit. It will put some of the profits into the pockets of the working people. The sugar industry is not maintained to enable the Sugar Refining Company or the sugar-grower to make large profits. The object of the industry is to create national prosperity, and the way to do that is to see that it is carried on under reasonable and healthy conditions. I was going to say a few words about the transcontinental railway, but another opportunity will offer. I believe the States of Western Australia and South Australia are both going into the matter, and both of them will have the facts to place before the Federal Parliament. Therefore, I will say nothing more than that I believe the transcontinental railway will be found to be justifiable. I believe it will be a great benefit to the Commonwealth of Australia. I believe if there was any trouble in the shape of war, it would be the duty of the Commonwealth to protect Western Australia, and without the transcontinental railway that could not be done. Is the Commonwealth going to ignore the national duty which it has to perform in this direction ? Are we not going to spend hundreds of thousands of pounds for the purpose of protecting certain localities. Are we not going to maintain numerous forts in different places ? Then why should Western Australia be refused effective protection simply because it will cost a certain sum of money ? If we can show when the proper time comes that the transcontinental railway from the eastern States to Western Australia will come within a reasonable degree of paying expenses, I think it will be the duty of Parliament to carry out the implied promise that was given to Western Australia by many of its politicians. I heard representatives of South Australia interject, when this matter was being discussed, apparently in disapproval of the construction of the railway, but I would point out to them that South Australia, when urging the west to enter into this confederation and complete the union of Australia, held out the construction of this railway as an inducement. It was held out by the leaders of the federal movement throughout Australia.

Senator Sir Josiah Symon

—Who were they?

Senator EWING

I think Mr. Kingston was one, and Mr. Holder the other.

Senator FRASER

They did a very wrong thing.

Senator EWING

I do not know whether they did what was wrong or not, but I know there was the implied promise that the railway would be constructed.

Senator O'Connor

There never was such a promise implied; the matter was never discussed.

Senator EWING

The leading federalists of the east went so far as to say that the railway would be constructed. If it was merely a play upon words, if it was merely an inducement and a bait to bring that colony into the confederation, I say it does not very much redound to the credit of the politicians of the eastern colonies.

Senator Keating, in discussing the question of the Tariff, spoke rather disparagingly of free-traders who

were now assenting to the imposition of duties, and he was apparently unable to see any distinction between a protectionist who imposed duties and a free-trader. Is the protectionist not also kneeling down before the exigencies of the case; is he not in this very speech telling us that though this Government is a protectionist Government, yet we must first consider the finances of the Commonwealth ?

Senator Keating

I only object to men calling themselves free-traders who consistently practise protection.

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Senator EWING

I call myself a freetrader, and yet I say that the financial conditions of the Commonwealth are such that I must consent to the imposition of duties. The difference between the two is that a free-trader will only impose such duties as are rendered absolutely necessary, and the protectionist, on the other hand, imposes duties to prevent the collapse of existing industries. "Victoria, we have been told, has built up industries which, if subjected to the competition of the world, could not stand under a revenue Tariff. I say that that is a monument to the fallacy of protection. When a child arrives at the age of manhood and commercial strength it should be able to stand up and face the world. Surely the stage of childhood, has passed in "Victoria; surely the days have gone by when Victoria should consider herself commercially a child. She should be able now to compete on fair terms with the nations of the world ? What is it that has brought about the conditions that we have seen aggravated in this State" beyond any other State? Surely it is that it has created the existing inflated conditions. "Victoria went in for borrowing, it created a condition which was not on a sound foundation, and which would not stand the pressure of commercial troubles. All the States suffered, but which State, may I put it, almost totally collapsed ? The State of Victoria.

Senator Keating

Victoria ceased borrowing when New South Wales went on.

Senator Millen

Because she could not borrow any more.

Senator EWING

She did not cease bolstering up industries instead of allowing the people to go into healthy avenues of labour. She did not cease to give bounties to industries which were going on in her sister colonies without them. She made it impossible for her to go into the markets of the world. She cried out for more territory in which to sell her goods, and therefore she seized on the straw of federation that saved her. What is the meaning of all this ? It means that protection in Victoria did what it does everywhere else. It built up a condition which would not enable her industries to face the markets of the world. She could only sell in Victoria because she was not producing on a sound, healthy basis. New South Wales is producing on a basis that would enable her to face any market in the world within reasonable distance.

Senator McGregor

Tell us what New South Wales is producing; I have not heard of it yet.

Senator Keating

She is producing dry dogs.

Senator EWING

I know New South Wales is producing a very great deal. I know that New South Wales is supporting a large population and supporting it under reasonable conditions. I know that New South Wales did not collapse, and therefore it has suggested itself to me that the condition which has enabled that country to advance further than Victoria, and has enabled the community to stand the pressure of bad times better than Victoria, is the best one.

Senator Best

Who told the honorable member that?

Senator EWING

The honorable member must know, after living in Victoria for all these years, that she was in a deplorable condition a few years ago, and that her plight was worse than that of any of the other States of Australia. She had thousands of people who were taken off her hands by Western Australia, and they earned money there and sent it over to keep their families from starvation in Victoria.

Senator Keating

Were there no New South Welshmen there ?

Senator EWING

f that is the condition that is going to give so much work where does the argument of protection come in ?

Senator Best

Study Victoria's industrial exports, and it will be an eye-opener for the honorable member.

Senator EWING

— I am aware that Victoria has created industries by a system of protection. The argument of the protectionism always is— " Go on creating these industries, because they create other avenues of labour, and the one set of persons gives employment for the other, and consequently prosperity spreads throughout the land."

Senator Best

Hear , hear.

Senator EWING

— I would ask those who say " Hear, hear," why did it not do that in Victoria ? How is it that Victorians came to AA7estern Australia in thousands ? How is it that Western Australia has been keeping the protectionist people of Victoria for years ; keeping many of them from starvation, and taking the surplus labour that this protection was going to provide for ?

Senator McGregor

—Tel I us of New South Wales industries. I have not heard of them.

Senator Millen

Of course, they have no industries, they live on nothing.

Senator EWING

— I am sure that other senators will explain how it is that New South Wales people are able to live; how they can earn good wages ; how it is that New South Wales is commercially more prosperous than any of the other States.

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Senator Best

Vh o told the honorable member that ?

Senator Millen

Our industries absorbed the surplus workers of Victoria, when they went over in boatloads a few years ago.

Senator Best

That is a bit of a provincial stand.

Senator EWING

—Le t me state the position of Western Australia. Admitting, for the sake of argument, that protection is necessary for Victoria, is it necessary for Western Australia 1 Now, some people will say—"I t is provincial to take this view of the question ; you should consider Australia's necessity as a whole." But the way to get at the aggregate political opinions of the community is for every senator to voice the views of the people he represents, and say what is best for the State from which he comes. Then we get to know something like what is best for the community as a whole. Western Australian industries are— first coal, then minerals generally, timber, farming and pastoral pursuits, and gold. Can any honorable members suggest to me that any one of these industries would receive the slightest advantage from a policy of protection. We have the coal industry, and we will in future have intercolonial free-trade.

Coal is protected.

Senator EWING

By differential rates.

Yes , and a lot of other things.

Senator EWING

That condition can only continue for a very limited time. We will shortly be faced with intercolonial freetrade, and abolish all other duties of protection, such as differential rates carried on in Western Australia and in other places.

Senator Keating

—An d in New South Wales.

Senator EWING

I am not urging that because it is done in New South Wales it is right. Some seem to think my suggestion is that that which comes from New South Wales, or is suggested by it, is everything that it ought to be. I make no such proposition. I say, rather, that our coal industry is thrown into competition with the eastern States, our only competitors. Our minerals require no protection. Our timber is an export trade almost entirely; our farming and pastoral industries are thrown into competition with our only competitors, the eastern States, and our gold industry requires no protection. Therefore, I ask, is there any industry in Western Australia which could possibly be benefited by the imposition of duties which would tend, some people say, to create a more prosperous condition in the eastern States.

Senator McGregor

Why are apples 2s. 6d. per lb. in Western Australia?

Senator EWING

Because they have been subjected to a severe system of protection, the system you like so much—a system which compels the consumer to pay three times the worth of goods in order to benefit a few. If the working men here like that sort of thing, they are kicking against it in Western Australia.

Senator McGregor

The honorable member said a few minutes ago that Western Australia was free-trade.

Senator EWING

I am afraid you do not follow me. I think these industries cannot be assisted by a system of protection, and in a few years we shall be face to face with intercolonial free-trade and protection against the outer world. Therefore, I say it becomes my duty, even though I thought protection necessary for Victoria, to vote for free-trade, because it is not necessary and not consistent with the interests of the State from which I come. That is not provincial, because if I were to fight for what is good for Victoria and ignore Western Australian interests, we could not possibly get the result of national opinion in that way. I think, therefore, it is, not as it appears at first sight provincial, for me to say, because it is inconsistent that we should have a system of protection for Western Australia that would be sufficient to justify me in my contention that for the Commonwealth of Australia I should fight for that which, as nearly as possible, approaches a free-trade Tariff. The suggestions made by Senator Fraser were answered by Senator Millen. I was going to point out that the butter industry, by which Victoria has been saved

Senator Fraser

Has been helped.

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Senator EWING

—That industry was practically brought into existence by the imposition of duties and the giving of bounties. New South Wales developed her butter industry without any such fictitious condition. Will a few thousand pounds ever make an industry. Will it ever create an industry which will be of lasting good to the community. The only industry of lasting benefit to the community is that which will live in normal conditions, employ a healthy class of labour, and pay a reasonable price without any fictitious assistance.

Senator Dawson

Will not paregoric help a baby?

Senator EWING

I would not be justified in taking up further time, but I would suggest there are various lessons we might learn from the past, and even the oldest legislator is not above taking a lesson from the past. I, as one of the youngest, am quite prepared to do so. If we fight the errors of the past we will fight the system which has brought about the condition in Victoria to which I have referred and the collapse from which Western Australia and the other colonies saved her to a large extent. Another lesson we can learn from the past is, that the soundness of the community depends absolutely upon its people and upon the intellectual, physical, and moral calibre of its citizens. If that is so, surely it is manifest that we ought strenuously to oppose all those elements which will tend to the introduction in the Commonwealth of any class of individual or persons whose presence here will have a disastrous effect upon the nation. We should also, I think, develop our resources and industries in the interests of the people, and we should, as far as possible, see that no pauper labour is introduced into this country. If it merely means that we give a few individuals larger profits and pauperize the community in proportion.

Senator McGregor

—How are you going to compensate the planters when you take away their cheap labour?

Senator EWING

I do not think the planters require any compensation, and I do not think Senator McGregor seriously considers they will. I feel confident that the sugar industry will exist long after the black man has disappeared from the canefield. I feel confident it will exist under conditions which, although they will give less to the individuals who are manufacturing sugar, will give the community more. Though I thought it would mean ruin to the sugar industry, still I should vote for the abolition of the Asiatic and South Sea labour, and as I am of opinion that an industry can live and prosper under reasonable and fair conditions, I feel that there is absolutely no danger at all in supporting and voting for the amendment that has been moved by Senator Millen.

Debate (on motion of Senator O'Connor) adjourned.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

Resolved (on motion by Senator O'Connor)—

That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until half-past two o'clock to-morrow.

SUPPLY OF HANSARD PROOFS

Motion (by Senator O'CONNOR) proposed—

That the House do now adjourn.

Senator DAWSON

On the motion for the adjournment, I would like to ask the leader of the Senate if he can make arrangements for members to obtain proof sheets of the debate at an early hour each morning. The custom has been followed in Queensland, and has been found very convenient.

Senator O'Connor

I am afraid it will be impossible to have proof sheets of our debates ready for us in the morning in the conditions under which Hansard works. As a general rule, Hansard appears at the end of the week; when that is done, it is thought that things are going on very well. In order to bring out a proof every morning, it would require an immensely increased staff and increased expense. Under existing conditions, I am afraid I cannot promise the honorable member what he asks.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

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22:00:00

Senate adjourned at 10 p.m.