

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL. Wednesday, 11th September, 1901. Third Reading - Imported Railway - carriages - President McKinley : Attempted Assassination- Cigarette-smoking by Youths Prohibition Bill.

The Hon. the SPEAKER took the chair at half- past two o'clock. PRAYERS. ## THIRD READING.

Presbyterian Church of New Zealand Bill. IMPORTED RAILWAY-CARRIAGES. The Hon. Mr. BOWEN asked the Minister of Education, Whether it is a fact that the railway-carriages recently imported from America have not been built according to specifications sent from New Zealand, and whether faulty construction has occasioned considerable expense to the department ? In asking this question he was very far from wishing to make any objection to orders being sent to America or England, or elsewhere, for the purpose of expediting the increased means of traffic in this country, which were becoming more and more necessary. But so many alarming rumours had got about as to the state in which some of these carriages came from America that he thought it was just as well there should be some answer given by the Government as to the state in which they were delivered. It had been currently reported that the carriages were found not to be in accordance with the specifications that were sent to America ; and, although a supervisor was sent to see the work properly done, the bodies of the carriages were out bolted together, without being properly mortised and tenoned as specified. It was also stated that the wheels of these carriages have worn loose on their axles in a very short time, involving serious danger to the travelling public. This might or might not be true, but at any rate he would like to ask for a specific answer. as it was currently reported that, in consequence of the defective construction, considerable cost

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parent body, and they have carried into America had been incurred by the department in necessary repairs. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER trusted the Americans, since they have been established as a separate nation, have allowed the population answer he would give would satisfy the honour- of Europe free access, and have given them all able gentleman and allay any anxiety that he the privileges of citizenship in that country. It felt. The carriages recently imported were ab- seems an extraordinary thing, therefore, that solely constructed according to specifications where the greatest freedom prevails there and instructions forwarded from New Zealand. should be found persons determined to destroy Some expense had been incurred by the department the head of the Government. It seems to me ment in testing the wheels on the axles; but a silly thing that any individual, no matter this

cost, however, would be borne by the what his views may be with regard to the builder. The builder was quite satisfied that system of government, should attack the head this should be attended to. An Hon. MEMBER asked, Would the builder of the Constitutional Government with the view of getting rid of such a Government, be- have to pay the cost of this ? The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER said the cause in all civilised nations, wherever constitu- tional government exists, there must be a extra testing expense as to fitting the axles nominal head for the time being, but the de- would be borne by the builder. struction of the head does not in the slightest PRESIDENT MCKINLEY : ATTEMPTED way do away with the constitution as provided by law. It seems to point to the fact that ASSASSINATION. people of this class wish to destroy all govern- The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .- Before we ments, however framed. I entirely sympathize proceed to the orders of the day I desire to with the motion brought forward by the move a resolution which I feel quite certain honourable gentleman. will recommend itself to the sympathy and good feeling of every member of this Council. ficult to find words to express one's abhorrence It is with reference to the horrible attempt on the life of the President of the United States. of such a crime as this-such an attempt upon It is hardly necessary to speak at length, or to the life of the head of the States Government. I am very glad that, in addition to the tele- enlarge on this subject, because it is a crime grams which have already been sent by His which revolts every right-minded man in any Excellency the Governor, the Ministry and the country. How much more, then, must our sympathies be evoked when a cowardly blow is Parliament of New Zealand intend to express struck at the elected head of a kindred people, their feelings of sympathy with the American who represent to us a very large and important people on this occasion. I most heartily sup- republic, mainly of British blood ! Our feelings port the resolution proposed by the Hon. the must always be with them, and we trust no Minister of Education. The people of America, time will ever come, and nothing will ever as has been said, are a nation akin to ourselves ; and we cannot but sympathize with them and occur, when our feelings will not always be of with the family of the President in connection the most fraternal and kindly nature. So that we are bound in all natural relation- with the affliction which has fallen upon them. ship to extend to them, even more than this resolution, Sir, because I believe it to be we would to any other nation, our sincere sympathy when their head is attacked in one which this Council should pass. In my this horrible way. I desire to move, That opinion, we ought all the more readily to pass this Council desires to express its detesta. it because there is a tendency in all communi- tum and horror at the diabolical, wicked, and ties to make attempts to destroy constitutional government ; and, as one who believes that the unprovoked attempt made to take the life of the people have the right to rule, I would as strenu- worthy and revered President of the United ously endeavour to put down this crime of sedi- States of America, William McKinley, and de- tion as I would autocracy or anything else that sires to extend to Mrs. Mckinley, the relatives of the President, and the American people, its would be calculated to ruin the best interests of the people at large. Those who desire that go- warm and sincere sympathy, and further shares vernment should be by the people, of the people, with al good people sorrow and grief that a and for the people must endeavour to attain man could be found who, without cause or pro- vocation, should attempt to take the life of a good and great man ; that members rejoice and those which are being employed by these mur- are delighted to hear that the assassin has derous persons who are endeavouring to upset failed in his attempt, and that the wounds in- all law and order in society. But, Sir, I am sorry I cannot compliment the honourable flicted are not likely to prove fatal, and hope that the sufferer may recover speedily and be gentleman on the drafting of this resolu- restored to health, and that he may for many years to come be of service to his count y and put. I do not know why the Council should the world at large. The Hon. Mr. T. KELLY .- I am very grati- resolution of this sort submitted to a Committee fied, Sir, to find that the Government have thought fit to move such a resolution. Of course, of this Council in order that it might be im- the Americans are bone of our bone and flesh of proved if possible. I am one of those who believe that everything we do should be

done to our flesh. The people are an offshoot from the The Hon. Mr. McLEAN .- Sir, it is very dif- The Hon. Mr. JONES. - Of course, I support their object by entirely different means than tion. I think it wordy, and not delicately be compelled either to accept such a resolution as it stands or reject it. I should like to see a

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not have to accept a resolution, or anything else, if we do not quite approve of the manner in which it has been drafted. An Hon. MEMBER .- Move an amendment. The Hon. Mr. JONES .- One cannot do that at a moment's notice. This is one of those things that require to be very judiciously dealt with. It requires a great deal of deftness of construction, and I do not pretend to be able to amend it as I should like to see it amended at a moment's notice ; but I am able to say this : that it is not what I desire to see emanate from this Council. The Hon. Mr. SCOTLAND. - Perhaps after what has been said it might be better that I should keep my seat, and not say anything at all ; but I am an old man, and for the last sixty years I may say I have watched and taken account of the tone of the British Press towards America, and I can say that I feel the highest satisfaction at the great change that has been gradually taking place in the tone of the British Press towards the great American Republic. I can remember the time, Sir-and notably on the Maine boundary and the Oregon ques- tions - when it was almost impossible to take up a leading English paper without meeting with some offensive remarks on America, her institutions, and her ways. Sir, all that is now happily changed. We recognise in the Americans a great people, and it affords me great satisfaction to think that this would-be murderer has found nothing in the British Press at the present day to en- courage him in his wicked attempt. Sir, I heartily support the motion. Motion agreed to. On the motion of the Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER, it was also resolved, That the above resolution be transmitted to His Excellency the Governor with a request that it be forwarded to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

CIGARETTE - SMOKING BY YOUTHS PROHIBITION BILL. The Hon. Colonel PITT .- I beg to move the second reading of this Bill, and in doing so I would say that the principle involved in it is a very important one as regards the well-being and the future physical condition of the young people of this colony. That principle is, whether or not youths under a prescribed age mentioned in the Bill, or such other age as may be agreed upon by the Council if the Bill is con- sented to, are to be allowed to indulge in the habit of cigarette-smoking. Now, cigarette- smoking of late years has extended very much indeed, and, whilst I have nothing whatever to say as regards cigarette-smoking by adults, or those who are of sufficient age to be able to judge for themselves whether it is beneficial to them or not, I think that there is a duty in- cumbent upon those in authority to see that young persons of comparatively tender years- at all events at an age when their physical con- dition is being developed-shall not indulge in a habit which interferes with their proper physical growth. This question of restricting Hon. Mr. Jones attention of the Governments in various parts of the world from time to time, and in America. in Germany, in Norway, and in, I believe, some of the States of the Australian Colonies- The Hon. Mr. JONES .- Tasmania. The Hon. Colonel PITT .- - and Tasmania- I was not aware of it ; but certainly in the State of Victoria the question not only of cigarettes, but of allowing tobacco to be supplied to youths under the age of sixteen or eighteen years has been made a statutory offence; and not only that, Sir, but in America, at all events, so much objection has been taken to the evils arising, or said to arise, from cigarette-smoking, that it has been made a test in the employment of operatives, not only of boys but also of adults, in certain factories there. When a person applies for employment in many of those factories he is asked the question, "Do you smoke cigarettes ? " because it is considered that in the case of those who smoke cigarettes to excess not only are the vital parts of their constitution in danger of being injuriously af- fected, but apparently their whole nervous sys- tem is affected by it, and many of the employers in America will not employ a person who is a habitual smoker of cigarettes. Besides that, in various parts of the world there are societies for the suppression of cigarette - smoking, and in looking at some of the publications issued

by those societies, whilst I am bound to say that in some instances, in the advocacy of the principles which they maintain, they may perhaps indulge in great extravagance of language, and make statements which possibly cannot be borne out by facts, still, I have not the slightest doubt that it would not take much to satisfy any one who has considered the subject that the smoking of cigarettes by youths under the age mentioned in this Bill is, and must be, prejudicial to their physical condition. Ask any medical man what his opinion is as to a boy under seventeen years of age smoking cigarettes. He will tell you that if that is indulged in to any considerable extent the boys' eyesight is likely to become pre-judicially affected, or in other cases that the lungs or the heart are likely to become pre-judicially affected. Now, I am not prepared to discuss the composition of cigarettes, though I know it is asserted by those who object to cigarette-smoking that they are made of very deleterious compounds. Some people go so far as to say they contain various poisonous substances. I do not intend to discuss that, because I am not prepared to prove that it is so; and I believe that many of those who have contended that such is the case have perhaps indulged in extravagance of language which is not justified by facts. But, Sir, I think it is only fair that I should refer the Council to a statement which was made in the Lancet newspaper, a medical journal, on the 9th December, 1899, Volume 2, page 1607, where there is set forth in full a report of the Lance Analytical Sanitary Commission on American cigarettes. I believe a large number of different brands of cigarettes were examined by this Com-

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Basin Reserve, it was his lot to get into a Lancet, and this was the report as to the result of the examination: "There is not a single smoking-compartment of a railway-carriage factor in these numerous results upon which can be based any allegation of the presence of a substance injurious to health." That is to more than fourteen years of age, most of say, that in the whole number of cigarettes of whom were engaged in manipulating and making different manufactures-I think the whole of ing cigarettes. And he adds this: "I would them were of American manufacture-that suggest to the Premier that it would be as were examined on behalf of the Lancet there well to insure that when the present generation was not a substance in them which could fairly tion of young New Zealand arrive at man's be said to be injurious to health. Then, the estate they should have some stamina to maintain." There, Sir, is the argument to Lancet goes on to say, - "No one deprecates more than we do our-be drawn from that, and it appears to me that one way in which the stamina of the youth of selves the appalling increase of the practice of this colony can be assisted to be maintained is smoking amongst juveniles, and if any of those by the Legislature preventing their contracting who are so emphatically solicitous about the the habit of cigarette-smoking. I trust the health of the young community would turn honourable gentlemen of the Council will not their attention to this aspect of the question, with a view to the restriction of this objection-shy at the word "prohibition" in this Bill, able habit, undoubted good would be done." because it appears to me, if we are going That is what I am asking the Council to do to do anything with this matter, there is no half-way house; you must go the whole upon the present occasion. But, Sir, whilst I length and prohibit boys under the age of think it is only right and fair that I should state seventeen, or whatever age this Council may what I have stated in reference to the inquiry decide upon, from smoking cigarettes at all. I made by the Lancet as to the manufacture of am not a smoker myself, but I do not admit cigarettes, I wish to add that, in the course of for a single instant that, in a free country like my researches through that journal, I came this, we ought to interfere, as I have said, with across the following in the second volume for the judgment of those of mature years who the year 1897, page 1263, dated 13th November, 1897 :- choose to smoke; and, therefore, in considering this question, and the reasons which I have "At Felling, near Gateshead, yesterday, at an adduced to the Council in favour of reading inquest on the body of James Francis Duffy, this Bill a second time, I hope that honourable aged sixteen years, the jury found that the lad members

will not, because I am not a smoker died from syncope, due to nicotine poison- myself, think that I am one of those who ing caused by excessive smoking of cigarettes. Mr. Graham, the Coroner, said there seemed to be quite an epidemic of such cases. It was time the attention of parents was called to the If any man chooses to smoke, by all means let him. I do not think we have a right for a danger of their children smoking at so early an age." single instant to legislate against that ; but I Then, the Lancet says, " We quite agree with do think the State has an interest in the mat- the remarks of the Coroner." Now, notwith- ter dealt with in this Bill. I think it has an standing what the Lancet has said as to the interest in seeing that the youth of this colony shall be maintained in a healthy condition. We manufacture of cigarettes, there can be no doubt that, even supposing they are made from have heard from time to time references made pure tobacco, tobacco is known to contain nico- as to the falling-off in the birth-rate in this tine, and the effect of nicotine on growing chil- colony, and we have seen in another place that dren must be injurious. I should say, Sir, and steps are being taken to endeavour to deal with I believe it is the general opinion held, that if that difficulty. But, Sir, what is the use of the there is any harm in smoking, the most per- birth-rate being increased unless we are going nicious of all forms of smoking is certainly the also to take steps to insure that the constitu- cigarette form of smoking. My attention has tions of the young people of the colony shall be also been called to a letter which was published preserved, and unless we do all we can to insure their proper physical development ? No doubt in the Evening Post of the 14th October, 1899, and the occasion which gave rise to that was in this colony you will see among the young this : The Right Hon. the Premier of this colony, men probably some of the finest physical speci- a few days before, had been addressing a public mens to be seen in any part of the world, but it cannot be denied that you will also see in meeting on the Basin Reserve, in Wellington, and the Premier was contending at a labour our streets many under-sized lads, many under- demonstration there that it was necessary to sized young men ; and, though I do not say it can be affirmatively proved that that is the restrict the hours of labour, and he also said result of smoking, still I do not think there something about the wages. He said it was would be any difficulty in getting the opinion only by regulating the hours of labour that the physique and stamina of the people of medical men to the effect that smoking by of the country could be maintained. Now, young persons under the age of seventeen would the writer of this letter, who signs himself certainly contribute to bringing such conditions "J.M.R.," drew rather a peculiar picture in about. Therefore I say the State has an in- terest in the matter. I trust, however, that eference to this. He said that while the Compound for sins they are inclined to By damning those they have no mind to.

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the Council, in considering this matter, will simply discuss the principle of the Bill, not its provisions. The principle of the Bill is that boys under seventeen, or whatever age the Council may choose to fix-I have taken that as between the two extremes of other countries, sixteen and eighteen- shall be pro- hibited from smoking cigarettes. That is the principle I desire to see affirmed. The pro- visions of the Bill are merely suggestions - be- cause this is a new subject. I have merely suggested that it should be an offence for any person to give, or to sell, or to supply cigarettes to any youth under seventeen years of age ; and if any one is convicted of doing that he shall be liable upon conviction to a penalty not exceed- ing £10; and also that any youth under the age of seventeen convicted of smoking a cigar- ette shall be liable for a first offence to a fine of 5s. ; for a second offence, 10s. ; for a third offence, #1, and for a third offence he shall be liable-in lieu of a penalty, at the discretion of the Court-to whipping. An Hon. MEMBER .- That will not do. The Hon. Colonel PITT .- My honourable friend says it will not do. I ask the Council not to discuss these matters here-let us discuss them when we get into Committee; but I will explain to the Council now my reason for putting that in. If a lad under seventeen were convicted I do not suppose he would be able to pay the penalty himself, and we know that if he did not it would fall upon the parents ;

and perhaps it is right that it should, because they would probably then take very good care to see that the boy did not smoke again. But the reason why I put whipping in is this : If a lad is 'euto enough to evade the vigilance of his parents and the police for more than two occasions, so as to be convicted of a third offence, then I think he has very well earned the right to supply the material upon which the sentence of the Court should be carried out, and I think that is the only way in which he could be deterred. However, I would ask the Council not to consider very much the actual provisions of the Bill now, which can be fully considered when we get the Bill into Committee; but I ask them to discuss and consider the principle which is laid down here, that boys under seven-teen years of age should not be allowed to smoke cigarettes. I move the second reading of the Bill. The Hon. Mr. McLEAN .- I beg to second that. We have got a Bill, Sir, before us now to which I can cordially give my support, though I do not know that I can give my support altogether to some of the details of the Bill, because I should like to see some of them altered ; but that is a question for Committee. Sir, this cigarette-smoking has assumed such dimensions that really something ought to be done in the interests of the young people of New Zealand. I had on many occasions at Dunedin to pass a suburban district school in the evening when that school was being dismissed for the day, and I say, Sir, that it was a disgrace to the parents of the children, and also to the schoolmaster, to see so many of those children Hon. Colonel Pitt with cigarettes in their mouths-children smog- ing who were probably only five or six years old. Well, something should be done to stop that. It occurs to me also. Sir, that it would be a good thing if a provision was put into the Bill to stop the making-up of threepenny cigarette-packets. I think it is wrong for people to make up such packages, as they are made up in order to induce children to buy threepenny worth of cigarettes to smoke. It shows that these people are catering for the children ; and surely it would be an easy matter to provide against that. In addition to the places that have been mentioned by Colonel Pitt, I may say that Japan not long ago passed a law that no one could smoke under the age of twenty. one years. An Hon. MEMBER .-- When was that ? The Hon. Mr. McLEAN .- About three or four years ago. Sir, I will go further, and say this: Smoking has become very offensive to those who do not themselves smoke-and espe- Why should cially smoking in the streets. people be allowed to go down the streets in the morning, when the atmosphere is fresh, and pri- lute it with tobacco-smoke ? If you go behind people smoking at this time of the day you are apt to be upset for the whole day. Why should they be allowed to make themselves a nuisance to other people? And why should people in offices be allowed to smoke? In well-regulated offices people are not allowed to smoke there. I say that in no well-disciplined office should the people be allowed to smoke. In steamers. also, a very comfortable place is provided for people to smoke in. I do not envy the feeling of those who sit in that atmosphere, but the who smoke apparently do not mind it. But you find people walking along among the passengers. smoking away, smoking even amongst the ladies, and making themselves a nuisance. Why should they not keep their pipe and their smoking to places where they would not be any inconvenience to other people" I would sooner put up with a man takie: whisky than I would put up with a man smoking. A man cannot annoy you much by taking a glass or two of grog, but he can annoy you very much with his pipe. In rail- way-stations you see notices up, " Smoking ne: allowed," but how many stop smoking on that account ? At all events, the regulations should be carried out on the Government railway.sta tions, so that people would not be allowed to de this sort of thing. Sir, I could go on mentict- ing a great many other places where eviis of this kind should be stopped. I think that the Corporations, if they took the matter in hand. could, at all events, prevent smoking in the streets ; and that ought to be done, esperta now when we know that consumption is caught from the expectoration that goes on in the streets-and this, of course, is a practice that smokers are most addicted to. When the expectoration dries up in the streets, it is sur- posed to blow about and give people consump tion. Well, why should people be allowed :: spit all along the streets, making themselves objectionable ?

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The Hon. Mr. TWOMEY .- That is not in way, when you do not know what may be the effect of what you are doing." In cigarette- the Bill. The Hon. Mr. McLEAN .- Oh, but we have smoking the young constitution does not feel the evil in such a way that nature can revolt, got the Bill to make it perfect, and I fail to see why that should not be put in the Bill. I hope and resent the outrage. Of course, we know that it is not natural that tobacco should be we will make improvements in it before it presented to the youthful constitution ; but gets through this Council, and, at all events, whether we are able to do that or not, I hail when presented in the form of the cigarette, the outrage becomes so minimised that this Bill with satisfaction, as an instalment of what we want. And I wish the Prohibitionists nature does not revolt ; and therefore I quite would give up their fad of prohibition, and sympathize with the object and the inten- allow moderate people to deal with the whisky, tion of this Bill. I am not quite certain and that they would turn their attention to that I agree with all the details. For in- the prohibition of smoking by youths : there stance, whipping is prescribed for the youth who is brought up for a third offence. If would be some good ground to go on then. I am quite certain they will never control the whipping is to be inflicted, I am not at all liquor traffic as they ought to do, and if they certain that that punishment should not rather left this to the moderates they would get laws be attached to the person three times convicted so to conduct the traffic that those people who of selling cigarettes to youths. But I depre- are in the business would be looked upon as cate whipping being introduced into this Bill. respectable people. There is also, Sir, a further Then, fear presents itself to my own mind that danger from this habit of smoking. If you look by making the law too drastic we may be adding additional pleasures to the forbidden up the returns of vital statistics you will find fruits. I believe, myself, my first attempt at that cigarette-smoking has a tendency to cause smoking was made at considerable personal cancer in the lips of a great many, and also sacrifice, simply because it was forbidden ; and in the tongue, and many people have died from I am not at all certain we may not be therefore cancer in the tongue and in the lips contracted giving a further degree of pleasure to juvenile from cigarette-smoking. There are many cases in which that has taken place ; and cancer is smokers. I am perfectly content to assist the very largely on the increase in New Zealand. honourable gentleman in making his Bill a Now, Sir, I hope the honourable gentleman's practicable measure. I sympathize with him Bill will receive that consideration that such an most heartily. I think it is one of the horrors of the present day that these cigarettes are in important matter deserves. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .- I am the mouth of every little urchin, whose parents pleased to find, of course, the fact that a ought to interfere ; and if we can do anything movement has been made in this direction. I to stop it I feel quite certain we shall be doing quite think it is time, because-without having good work. the awful abhorrence which our honourable and measure I can speak with some disinterested- worthy friend Mr. McLean shares, apparently, with James the Sixth of sacred memory-I ness, because I am not a smoker, and I never think, myself, that cigarette-smoking is the intend to be one. I derive no pleasure from it. most pernicious form of tobacco-smoking; in Now, there is no doubt tobacco-smoking has fact, it is a degradation of a worthy virtue. I been for a great number of years very prevalent do not think any man can be a judge of any- among men, and also women, in certain body else in the matter of tobacco. What suits countries. one man in the matter of tobacco may not suit when indulged in to excess, as it is a strong another; but this we may predicate without narcotic. Its effects are something similar to any fear of contradiction : that the insidious that of opium, as when a person gets into the distillation of tobacco prematurely, through habit of smoking he can never feel happy with- out it. But, Sir, I think it is a great mistake cigarettes, to young and growing constitutions to suppose that you can prevent boys from is a very vicious and abominable habit, because smoking cigarettes so long as men smoke. If it does not present itself naturally to the young constitution as to whether it is baneful or not. you want to prevent boys from smoking, you I have known cases in my own experience of must also compel men and women

to cease young half-grown fellows of seventeen who smoking, because, if, as a narcotic, it is injurious smoked a great deal stronger tobacco than to boys, it is also injurious to men of certain I smoke to-day, and, apparently, it suited constitutions. There is no doubt that some persons can smoke indefinitely without any evil them. They assimilated it. But, on the effects, just as some men can drink alcohol with- other hand, how many a boy has been saved out suffering any evil consequences ; but, depend from premature abuse of tobacco - smoking because he tried a good old cutty pipe, and the upon it, there are certain constitutions, not cutty pipe was too much for him ! Now, I al- only in boys, but in men and women, which are ways say to boys-mind you, I do not think such that, if they persist in smoking, or using tobacco to any extent, they will certainly boys ought to smoke at all ; but we speak of suffer in their general health. This Bill, boys when they are getting on to seventeen, and to my mind, will be simply inoperative. leave school-and I have acted with my own It is impracticable. I disagree with the prin- boys in this way-I say, "Smoke if you like, but smoke tobacco. Try it honestly. Do not ciple, just as I disagree with the principle of prohibition in regard to alcoholic liquors. The sneak about with a cigarette in this miserable The Hon. Mr. T. KELLY .- Sir, upon this I believe it to be very injurious

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people that it is injurious, and to ask men to set them an example by refraining from the use of tobacco. Now, some of these boys of the age of seventeen are big enough and strong enough to "lick " their fathers, and fancy a man trying to punish a vigorous youth of seventeen ! My honourable friend tells us he is to be whipped on the third offence. I should like to see him try to whip some boys of seventeen. He would get whipped himself. The thing, to my mind, is simply ridiculous ; it carries one back to the days of Elizabeth and Henry VIII. The regulations then were much on the same lines as are now proposed by my honourable friend. I say you cannot teach children a proper course of conduct in life except by set- ting an example of right conduct. That is the way to teach them. I believe, so long as men smoke, boys will smoke also, as they consider it a manly accomplishment. With regard to smoking generally, I personally feel it to be very offensive. As my honourable friend Mr. McLean has said, people go smoking about the streets, and puff tobacco-smoke in your face, and there is no doubt it is very dis- agreeable. Then, again, although there is ac- commodation in the railway-carriages for people to smoke, they do not confine themselves to the smoking-cars ; they must go into the general carriages ; and they say, " I suppose you don't object to smoking ? " They puff tobacco in your face in the most detestable way ; and unless some person rises and says, "I object to smok- ing," they will persist in doing it. Only the other day, coming down from New Plymouth by train, I had to speak to two or three persons who would insist on smoking in a first-class carriage ; and it seems to me simply abomi- With regard to the opinions of nable. doctors, well, if you wish it you can get an opinion that tobacco-smoking is very injurious, and, on the other hand, you can get an opinion that it is the reverse. Tobacco, no doubt, is a very strong narcotic, and to certain constitu- The whole effect of it tions is very injurious. depends entirely upon the constitution of those who use tobacco. I think, therefore, that a Bill that endeavours to restrict tobacco-smoking by boys under seventeen years of age will be quite inoperative if it is carried, and I strongly object to placing on the statute-book any more inoperative measures. The Hon. Mr. SCOTLAND .- I agree, Sir, with the honourable gentleman who moved the second reading of this Bill, to a certain extent, but I must say it is a very small extent. Had he fixed the age at twelve, we will say, I cer- tainly would go with him unreservedly, but to make the age seventeen seems to me to be out- rageous. Why, youths of between sixteen and seventeen are practically men. They earn their own living, and are doing the work of the strongest men. To say that these big fellows are not to smoke a cigarette without rendering themselves liable on the third conviction to be whipped is preposterous. Public opinion would not allow such a thing, and I am only surprised at an honourable gentleman with the extensive Hon. Mr. T. Kelly his knowledge, as a lawyer, of the world, for one moment proposing to place such a measure upon our statute-book. The honourable

gentle- man is certainly modest in one thing : he does not go to the extent of James I., who launched his counterblast against tobacco in general. He limits it to smoking of cigarettes by boys- very big boys some of them certainly - of from sixteen to seventeen. Now, if you stop these big fellows from smoking cigarettes, what would be the result? Why, they would be driven to cigars and pipes. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .- Very much better. The Hon. Mr. SCOTLAND. - Cigars better ! Why, we were just now told that the smoking of cigars had produced cancer of the mouth-ard that is perfectly true. What carried of General Grant, one of the most remarkable men of the age, twice President of the United States ?- Cigar-smoking. He was seldom seen from morn- ing to night without a cigar in his mouth, and he, in consequence, fell a victim to cancer. Sir, I have been very much disgusted at seeing mete children in the streets of Wellington and Auck- land smoking cigarettes. I have often felt tempted to go up to a little fellow and knock the thing out of his mouth ; but I suppose if I had done that I should have got myself into trouble. No, Sir, I am sure this is a well-mesut Bill, but even if it passes this Parliament it will turn out to be a failure. You cannot- and I am quite sure the Hon. Colonel Pitt will agree with me-you cannot make men, or even boys, virtuous by Act of Parliament. I think we shall be reduced to this position : to have to admit that it would have been better to have left things as they are. I trust that these little fellows, when they arrive at years of discretion- I do not suppose they are going to be cut of altogether by smoking cigarettes- will see the error of their ways, and either leave off the habit altogether, or take it in moderation. It is astonishing how early some boys, even in my young days, began to smoke. I remember when I began smoking in a public school. I smoked a piece of cane. This was reported to one of the masters, and he called me up. He said. "I understand you have a taste for the cane. Of course I was speechless. He added, " Hold out your hand, and I'll give you a taste of the cane." And he did so to some purpose. This Bill no doubt will go into Committee, and it is, perhaps, for us to do the best we can with it under the circumstances ; but I do not expect very much from it. The Hon. Mr. JONES. - Of course I shall support this Bill. I will support any measure which has for its object the improvement of the race, and I believe in beginning early. There is one clause, however, that I entirely disagree with, and that is the one which desh with whipping-whipping when the offence has been committed a certain number of times. If the whipping were left to the discretion of the parents it might be a different matter. but I understand the honourable gentleman means that the whipping is to be done by the

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authorities, or under the jurisdiction of the | masters testify to the clogging effect of cigarette- Magistrate. It would have been quite a dif- smoking of boys engaged in study. At the ferent thing if the offenders were young child- annual conference this year of the Lancashire ren ; but when you come to whip a youth of and Cheshire branch of the British Medical sixteen or seventeen years of age, what is the Association, Dr. J. Hilton Thompson demon- effect ? Why, you destroy his self-love and strated the presence of carbonic-oxide gas in his self-respect. The Government should have tobacco smoke, and declared that when inhaled introduced this Bill. I do not know why the from cigarettes it had the same injurious effect Government did not introduce it. We under- on the system as choke-damp in collieries. The stand that a Bill to prohibit opium is to be fatal result to mice is as popularly known as introduced into Parliament this session - the the leech experiment. In June last, at a public pledge of the Government has been given to meeting at Sheffield, medical reports laid stress that effect : and I think cigarette-smoking, or on the prevalency of juvenile smoking, and an the smoking of tobacco in any form, by our appeal was made to young men, as they valued young people, is quite as injurious, quite as health of body, clearness of intellect, and serious a matter as opium-smoking: it is strength of moral purpose, to abstain from the more serious because the evil is more wide- cigarette." spread. It is quite unnecessary for me to say to any assembly of intelligent gentlemen stated there. Although the statements appear that smoking in early life is injurious, and to be extravagant, they must be accepted as weakens both body and mind; that it dimi-

true. Sir, the late Sir Frederick Whitaker on, nishes respect for one's-self and also respect for I believe, several occasions, but certainly on one others ; that it unfits its victims to perform occasion, introduced a Bill into this Parliament their duties as citizens; and that it threatens for the purpose of doing away with smoking by to weaken the race and to reduce the birth- juveniles, and ever since then the question has rate. This is not, I know, recognised by some been more or less before the public ; but such honourable gentlemen. If this had been a measures as the Young Persons Protection Bill measure to put a shilling or two into people's and this Cigarette-smoking Prohibition Bill, as pockets, or to give them a glass of whisky or a rule, elicit such ridicule that honourable beer extra, there would have been something gentlemen do not care about introducing them heroic about it ; but when it comes to the pro- into Parliament. I would like to see more tection of children, so that they may grow up seriousness shown towards these measures. If to be strong and good men, then it is quite a honourable members cannot understand them, different matter. I do not like the levity with or if they have no sympathy with them, I which all these questions dealing with our social think they might at least show some con- sideration to those who act honestly and life are treated by some honourable gentlemen. up to their convictions on such subjects. An Hon. MEMBER .- Hear, hear. In the report of the South Australian State The Hon. Mr. JONES .- I am glad I have Children's Council it is stated that tobacco- convinced them of their error. As to the phy- sical evils produced by smoking tobacco in any smoking is an incentive to stealing. The Coun- form, I cannot point to anything better than cil says :- an excerpt which I have preserved in order that I might read it to the Council. This appeared of parents, the temptations of street life, illegal betting, and tobacco, numbers of children are in one of the local newspapers a year or two ago, and I thought that perhaps it might be being led into criminal practices." They add that "almost every boy who had been brought useful some day : - "Dr. L. Forbes Winslow, lecturer on in- before the authorities (even those of nine years of age) confessed to spending stolen money in sanity at Charing Cross Hospital, has written a the purchase of cigarettes and cigars." book entitled 'Mad Humanity,' in which he stigmatizes ' the cigarette as one of the curses of the age.' He refers to the well-known ex- the subject of tobacco-smoking, said that it was periment of a leech dropping dead upon the sip a great nuisance. He would do away with tobacco-smoking, not only by juveniles but also of a cigarette-smoker's blood, and draws a dis- by adults. That is probably due to the fact that tasteful picture of enervation, hypochondriasis, he does not smoke himself, and because, when dwarfish development, tendency to consump- tion, 'suffering lives and early deaths.' One he tried to smoke Nature revolted to such an extent that he had to desist, and is now making death immediately due to the cigarette was that of a boy aged eleven years, who had smoked a a virtue of necessity. But whilst I-having dozen or more cigarettes daily for ten months. myself given up smoking recently-would like It is well attested that early smoking often to see others abandon the habit, yet I cannot see that the two questions, the question of juvenile leads to a craving for alcoholic stimulant. Dr. smoking and the question of adult smoking can be Ross, M.L.A., who has introduced the Juvenile deemed to be parallel. They are totally different Smoking Bill into the New South Wales Parlia- questions. The question of juvenile smoking ment, writes, 'Juvenile smoking, particularly is one which is fraught with great danger. As cigarettes, affects the stomach, liver, brain, we all know, it stops growth, it prevents the heart, kidneys, and nervous system, leading development of mind and body, it demoralises, often to congestion of the lungs; it interferes and so forth. The honourable gentleman, in with the growth and with the development of a dilating on this subject, mentioned that he was sound mind and healthy constitution.' School- I do not think anybody can gainsay what is "It appears evident that, owing to the neglect Sir, the Hon. Mr. McLean, in dealing with

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smoking, puffing out their smoke so that he got whiffs of it which made him bilious for the rest of the day. But, Sir, he forgets that, if he stopped these men from smoking in the streets, he would be interfering with

the liberty of the subject, which is so dear to the honourable gentleman, and upon which he has dilated so often and so eloquently in this Council. And I would point out that this liberty of the subject affects not only those who smoke, but also those who drink. I have myself on many occasions been annoyed by people who drink. Far greater annoyance has been given to me by people who drink than by those who smoke, because those who drink are not only redolent of the horrid stuff that they have taken into their internal organism, but they lose their intellect for the time being, and with it their self-respect. Though they may have been gentlemen before they took the drink, they are no longer gentlemen when they are under its influence. They obtrude themselves and their conversation upon one, and their conduct is most disgusting. Now, I say this: that honourable gentlemen who speak as the Hon. Mr. McLean has done about the prevention of smoking should certainly advocate that the nuisance caused by excessive drinking should be abolished. The honourable gentleman said he wished that Prohibitionists would give up their fads and go in for preventing smoking by adults. Why does not the honourable gentleman himself give up his fad against smoking, and go in for preventing people drinking, to the annoyance of others ? An Hon. MEMBER .- He does not smoke. The Hon. Mr. JONES .- I say, why does he not give up his advocacy against smoking as he wants others to give up their advocacy against drinking ? The Hon. Mr. TWOMEY .- Let drinking alone. The Hon. Mr. JONES .- Let drinking alone ! I can quite understand the honourable gentleman saying, "Let drinking alone." Then, Sir, the Hon. the Minister told us that he quite agreed with the remarks made by the honourable gentleman who introduced the Bill, and, indeed, with the Bill itself ; but while he was doing so I can quite understand that the honourable gentleman had his hand lovingly and longingly on his pipe in his pocket. Now, that is not consistent. If we want to prevent people from smoking, more especially young people, we must do what we want them to do - we must not smoke ourselves. I came to that conclusion recently myself. I do not say I gave up smoking entirely because I wanted to set an example, but that is what guided me as seriously as any other consideration in abandoning the smoking of a pipe. Then, the honourable gentleman representing the Government in this Council mentioned to us that he had known boys to be cured from smoking throughout all their lives by sucking a good old cutty pipe; and he went on to say, after having dealt with the injuriousness of Hon. Mr Jones let them smoke a pipe." That is most inconsistent. I think that honourable gentlemen who want to prevent smoking among the youth of the colony should first set the example themselves, and I am quite sure that example would be much stronger in the case of the youth than their precept. The Hon. Mr. REEVES. - Sir, on hearing the honourable gentleman's extraordinary flow of language, I was very much tempted to move that the galleries be cleared, so that we should not have all this -- I can scarcely find words to characterize it in Hansard. I almost began to think that instead of being here in the Legislative Council we had got into the Mount View Asylum. Now, we talk about the abolition of smoking, and of cigarette-smoking in particular. There is no doubt I have every sympathy with the honourable and gallant Colonel Pitt in respect to this Bill. There is no doubt that cigarette-smoking among the youth is a great curse to the country; but I believe we could get over this simply by prohibiting the importation of manufactured cigarettes into the colony ; and you cannot get over it in any other way. The more you try to prevent these cigarettes from being smoked the more the practice will be carried on. As to the injurious effect of smoking, I do not think there is anything injurious about it. I commenced smoking when I was twelve years of age, and it has not stopped my growth ; in fact, if I had not started smoking I might have been smaller. I know that when I was about twelve or thirteen I smoked my cigar and my pipe, and I have never smoked a cigarette in my life. I have every sympathy with the object of this Bill. I say this cigarette-smoking by our youths is the most pernicious practice they have. I do not think there can be anything worse to the rising generation than having these most obnoxious mixtures of tobacco made up into cigarettes. I have myself seen boys of seven or eight years of age going about smoking cigarettes. I have even seen girls smoking cigarettes. I do not wish to take up the time of the Council any further, but I

do not think this Bill will come into operation. I should very much like to see it so, but I do not think it will. I only wish my honourable friend the Minister of Education, who has spoken so strongly against this evil, would, as the mouthpiece of the Government, bring in a Bill prohibiting the manufacture or importation of cigarettes in the colonies. The Hon. Mr. FELDWICK .- Sir, with regard to the speech of the Hon. Mr. Jones, I could not help thinking, when I heard him read that extract, supposed to have come from Dr. Forbes Winslow, that it must have been taken from one of those advertisements we see so frequently, of Mother Seigel's Syrup, Carter's Liver Pills, or something of that kind. I am rather afraid the honourable gentleman must have been taken in by one of those advertisements. I doubted the genuineness of the whole thing, because I cannot think that Dr. Forts Winslow would have committed himself to

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ettes, my growth was never impeded from smoking them, nor, so far as I know, was my health ever affected from it. I believe a cigarette of good tobacco is better than a cabbage-leaf cigar at any time. A cigarette is a clean smoke every time. Why, there are honourable gentlemen in this Council who smoke pipes that would kill you ; you can know them a couple of yards off. All the time they are smoking they are absorbing the poisons of nicotine. They sometimes suck in a quarter of a teaspoonful at a time, and get upset for the whole day. The fact is, that there are already remedies against this evil, and I say it is a public scandal that those remedies are not applied. We have Adulteration Acts in this colony, and can you tell me where they are enforced either in regard to milk or anything else ? I say there is not the slightest effort made to enforce them. I am told that in some places cigarettes are sold to boys at 3d. a packet of ten cigarettes. What are those cigarettes made of? If the boys did as I do-made their own cigarettes out of genuine tobacco-I will guarantee very little harm will be done. But the boys' funds are usually limited, and the consequence is they buy all kinds of cheap trash. I say if the Adulteration Acts were enforced it would tend to an improvement in the health of the public generally. I consider it a disgrace to the Government that these Acts which are on the statute-book are never enforced. There are no responsible officers to enforce them, and private individuals scarcely dare take action, even if, in the case of milk, they know it comes from a dirty dairy. They cannot go on playing the spy and take samples, and go through all that kind of performance. Then, to go further- and it is quite apropos of this Bill-there is the question of the liquor sold in the country. The honourable gentleman dragged in the liquor-trade. The Hon. Mr. JONES .- No. The Hon. Mr. FELDWICK .- Well, you assisted to drag it in. I say the inspection of the liquor sold in this country ought to be taken in hand by a responsible officer. Every hotel-keeper should be liable at any moment to have his whisky or his beer taken and inspected. The Hon. Mr. JONES .- There is only water put in it. The Hon. Mr. FELDWICK .- You would not say that if you were speaking. You would say that all sorts of things were put in. The fact of the matter is that the evil arises from the sale of cigarettes made of noxious materials, and it lies entirely with the Government to prevent the sale of such things. As regards the Bill itself, I think the honourable gentleman has introduced it under an erroneous idea altogether. He has, no doubt, been prompted by some committee of benevolent ladies or something of that kind. We owe all Bills of this nature to those ladies. This Bill is going to be, not a public nuisance, but a Council nuisance for some time to come, I suspect. The stringency of it perfectly satisfies me that the honourable gentleman is really acting under the idea that one could imagine as proceeding from ladies. Section 4 says, " The Court before whom any boy is convicted of a third offence under section three of this Act may, instead of inflicting a penalty as provided by that section, sentence such boy to a whipping." Why, the suggestion is horrible, and it warrants my straight-out opposition to the Bill. I shall conclude my remarks by moving, That this Bill be read a second time this day three months. Debate adjourned. The Council adjourned at ten minutes to five o'clock p.m. # HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. Wednesday, 11th September, 1901. Breach of Privilege. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER took the chair at half-past two o'clock. PRAYERS. # BREACH OF PRIVILEGE. INTERRUPTED DEBATE. Interrupted debate

on the question, " That in the matter of the breach of privilege that has arisen through the publicity of the evidence given before the Goldfields and Mines Committee in respect to the promotion and flotation of certain dredging claims by Mr. Cook, by the Dunedin Evening Star, the House accepts as satisfactory the expression of regret of the representative of that journal, and this House resolves to proceed no further in the matter; and the amendment proposed thereto To omit the words ' as satisfactory,' in line 5."

Amendment, to strike out words " as satisfactory " agreed to. Mr. HALL - JONES (Minister for Public Works) .-- I move, That after the words "accepts the expression of regret of the representative of that journal, and " the words "on payment of the sum of #15" be inserted. It will then read, "The House accepts the expression of regret of the representative of that journal, and, on payment of the sum of #15, this House resolves to proceed no further with the matter." I think this will meet the wishes of nearly all honourable members who have spoken in the course of the debate. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) .- I do not think the amendment is quite clear. I do not quite understand whether it is proposed to inflict the penalty on the proprietors of the newspaper or the parliamentary correspondent. Mr. SEDDON .- I do not care who pays it. Mr. MASSEY .- But it is not for the Premier to say ; it is for the House to say, and I think the Minister who moved the amendment should give some explanation of what is really intended. The House is being placed in a very unfair position. I shall be happy to give way if the Minister will explain what is proposed ;

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goes on the lines which I have suggested. Mr. HALL-JONES .- The motion explains itself : but I will read it, so that it may be perfectly clear :- "That in the matter of the breach of privilege that has arisen through the publicity of the evidence given before the Goldfields and Mines Committee, in respect to the promotion and flotation of certain dredging claims by Mr. Cook, by the Dunedin Evening Star, the House accepts the expression of regret of the representative of that journal, and, upon payment of the sum of #15, this House resolves to proceed no further in the matter." Hon. MEMBERS. - By whom ? Mr. HALL-JONES .- This House accepts the expression of regret of the "representative of the journal." Hon. MEMBERS .- By whom is the fine to be paid ? Mr. MASSEY .-- I should like to add to what I have said that I do not think the Minister has made the position any clearer. We are not informed by whom the £15 is to be paid. We ought to be so informed, and the resolution ought to be amended in that direction ; if it is not so amended, I, for one, shall vote against it. I do not wish to occupy the time of the House longer ; I think members will agree with me that sufficient time has been wasted over the matter already. Mr. SYMES (Egmont) .- I could not support a motion of this sort, because, to my mind, the letter does not express any regret for the offence. It expresses regret that the House should be so foolish as to uphold its Standing Orders ; there is not one word of regret by the person who has committed the offence. Mr. SEDDON .- Oh, yes, there is. Mr. SYMES .- I hear some one say there is. Well, I think my understanding of the English language is as good as his, and, although I have read the letter over carefully, there is nothing of the sort in it, to my mind. I do not think the time of the House has been wasted, because there is now a chance of getting the Standing Orders amended. We heard yesterday the statement over and over again that to bring any man to the bar of the House for committing a breach of privilege was worse than a farce. Now, this farce was enacted in 1895. Has the Government taken any step to prevent a recurrence of that farce ? We have a Committee set up for the purpose of revising the Standing Orders, and this has never been before that Committee. But there is a chance of having them amended now, because the gentleman representing the Star says the House must amend its Standing Orders, and no doubt the House will now take the necessary steps on that gentleman's advice to amend them. I think it would be a good thing to abolish some of the red-tape, but not at the dictation of the reporter of the Dunedin Star. I do not think any member of the House hates red-tape more than I do. But, I say, so long as we have Standing Orders they should be obeyed. If not, it would be better to gather them Mr. Massey

going to play the farce we have been playing, allowing a man to commit a breach of privilege and then to flout the House with his opinions on the subject, the sooner the Standing Orders are burnt the better. It is said "It is done every day." Well, it may be ; but there is no crime until it is found out, and in this particular case it was found out. And when people are found out they must be made examples of. It is a marvellous thing that we should be told, as we were yesterday by Ministers, that they hate this farce of bringing a culprit to the bar of the House, and yet for five or six years they have knowingly allowed this matter to remain in abeyance, so that this farce may be re-enacted time and again. It is time we brought it to an end. I consider the fine of £15 is a farce more than a farce, considering the impudent letter ; for it is nothing short of impudent, and any man who says it is not does not or will not understand the King's English. It is a most impudent letter for any man to send to the House, and I, for one, will never accept it as a letter of regret. Another thing: if we are to open our Committees to the Press, well and good ; but if we are to accept this letter and let this man off scot-free I will never attend another Committee, because every member of Committee is open to suspicion. Here is the evidence, and we must take every member's statement as equal to being on oath. Each member says he has not given the evidence to the representative of the Star. Every member says so, and we must, under our Standing Orders, accept their word. The witnesses say- they have not given it, the Clerk and the reporter say they have not given it, yet the representative of the Star says he got it in an honourable way. And yet, according to the evidence, he must have stolen it. Is that an honourable way? He could not have got it in an honourable way, no matter how he got it. The representative of the Star, by allowing any member to be branded for his crime, is not much of a man to allow it. The Committee are looked upon with more than suspicion, and if he has a spark of manliness he will come forward and say, " I did not get it from any of those members." He talks about his own honour, but does he not think the honour of the members of the Committee is as much or more to them ? He talks about the honour of the Press, and says he got it in an honourable way. I say it is a most dishonourable transaction from beginning to end. No matter what he may say, he will never, in my opinion, be regarded as an honourable man until he comes forward and exonerates the members of the Committee. Mr. Cohen says he committed this breach of privilege in the public interest in order to hush the Committee. Well, he must have a very great opinion of himself and the Dunedin Star to imagine that the public of this colony are represented by those who subscribe to that journal. At any rate, I, for one, do not believe it. To my mind, of the cases we had cited yesterday ad nauseam there was not a single one

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bearing upon this case. It was simply beating blundered. Now, the part of these proceedings the air, citing cases to try and make them fit in that has pleased me least of all is this alleged with this case in order to get Mr. Cohen out of expression of regret. One member after another the scrape. I hope to Goodness that the House other has declared that this letter contained I will not accept that letter as one of regret.

expressions of regret. I have read it myself certainly shall not do so, and I shall go into the and I have heard it read, and I have failed to lobby against it, if I do so alone. The only word find one single expression of regret, except re- of regret in the whole letter is to be found where regret for the necessity that compelled him to do he regrets that the necessities of his paper should it. I am going to inflict this letter on the have been so great and of such vital importance House again, and I will ask honourable members to the public that the end justified the means. bers to stop me when I come to any expression Therefore our Standing Orders were of no consequence of regret, so that we may argue the particular sequence. If we have our Standing Orders clause containing it. A cooler and a more wisely amended the time spent yesterday shall not have full piece of "cheek" than this letter is it would be difficult to imagine. The writer lectures been wasted. If that is done, we shall not have a repetition of this howling farce. I will oppose the House, and he dictates to the House, and he patronises the House. I will now read his the motion in its present form.

Mr. BOLLARD (Eden) .- I have taken no letter, which is addressed to the Speaker :- part in this debate because I considered it a waste of time, which I believe the Premier to House through you in respect to a matter be responsible for. If he had brought down which is to engage its attention to-day. yesterday morning a sensible resolution, fining the proprietor of the Evening Star, say, \$25, publication of certain evidence given before its the matter would then have ended, and we Mines Committee prior to the report of the should now have been getting on with more latter is a breach of its privileges; and the important business. With regard to the amend- Privileges Committee, to whom the subject was ment now before the Chair, I would point out referred, have reported that, with regard to that it does not say who is to pay the £15. certain questions put to me as a witness, I Supposing the proprietor of the journal refuses declined to answer the same. to pay, and supposing the reporter also refuses, who, then, can be made to pay ? I consider that state that matters of the greatest interest to the resolution ought to be amended so that the the people of New Zealand generally, and of proprietor of the Evening Star shall pay the Dunedin (where the publication took place) in amount, and not the reporter, who, I think, is particular, are involved in the question of the not to blame at all in the matter. Therefore I promotion and flotation of companies concerned think the amendment ought to be made more in the dredging industry. explicit, and unless this is done I shall be com- make the fullest inquiry into alleged grievances, pelled to vote against it. Mr. HOGG (Masterton) .- I trust the House and I believe the Select Committee were en- deavoured, in the public interest, to sift the will come to a conclusion over this matter. I think every honourable member will admit whole matter thoroughly. Nothing, in my judg- that sufficient time has now been expended over ment, could aid them so completely in prose- it. Life is too short for discussions of this kind, cutting their investigations as the publishing of and not only that, but the country expects im- the evidence, for thereby the public knew what portant business at our hands. I believe the were the subjects being inquired into and what were being omitted, and what evidence House will consult its own dignity by now com- therefore remained to be supplied to the ing to an immediate decision. Mr. HUTCHESON (Wellington City) .- Sir, Committee in order that they might have the whole facts before them before making it gives me unfeigned pleasure to find myself in their report to your honourable House. From complete agreement with my colleague for the city, Mr. Fisher. He is a gentleman who information received, I can state that the report in the Dunedin Star will have the de- desires no greasy compliments, nor am I going sired effect, and the Committee have tendered to give them, but I ask honourable members to say whether his logic is not unanswerable. I to them evidence which will enable them to make a far more searching inquiry than would submit that he put the case in its most cogent and lucid form, and his logic was absolutely otherwise have been the case. It was simply unanswerable. If since the earlier stages of with the desire of enlarging the scope of the Committee's investigations, and thereby of this wretched pettifogging incident it has been assisting your House and one of its Commit- magnified into undue importance, it is entirely tees, that I published the evidence. It was not owing to the bungling of the Premier. with any view of transgression against the An Hon. MEMBER .- It is worse than bung- wishes of the House or the Committee that ling. the report was made. Proceedings of the Com- Mr. HUTCHESON .- Yes; it is worse than mittees on the Counties and Factories Bills bungling. I am not going to impute motives, but the resolution has been worse than bungled. have been published by most of the papers of the colony, and with beneficial results. From A leader of men in this Parliament, as a leader the views enunciated in the House on these of men in warfare, would be considered to have committed an act worse than a crime if he two measures, it is the desire of the present Parliament to make these Bills suitable to the blundered as manifestly as the Premier has VOL. CXVIII .- 27. "SIR,-I wish to address your honourable "The House has already decided that the " With respect to the first point, I wish to " Your honourable House was petitioned to

by the publication, before the Committees have concluded their labours, opportunities have been afforded of obtaining the consensus of opinion of the people directly concerned in the passage of both measures. "For the above reason I would suggest that the meetings of Select Committees be thrown open to the Press, except in the cases of secret Committees, when members are deliberating, or at such times as it is deemed inadvisable by the Committee concerned for their proceedings to be reported. This is the rule in vogue for very many years in the Mother of Parliaments. A reference to the London papers will show that the Imperial Parliament allows the evidence and proceedings of its Grand Committees to be made day by day, and I hope an outcome of the present proceedings will be that the New Zealand Legislature will recognise the reasonableness of falling into line with the English rule. What transpires before our Select Committees is frequently of great public import. At the present time members of the Press gallery are placed in a difficulty by having to accept information in a manner not altogether to their liking, and which technically constitutes a breach of the privileges of your honourable House. I venture, therefore, to suggest that the present restriction be amended by the Standing Order in question being repealed to the extent of admitting the Press to the proceedings of Committees, or, if the Committee should decide that reporters be excluded, the Chairman or some other person be authorised to supply to the Press an official report of what transpires. "That a technical breach of privilege was committed by a premature publication of the evidence I frankly recognised before the Privileges Committee, and that admission is repeated to your House. The rule, however, is almost daily disregarded, and the question naturally suggests itself whether the better course to pursue under the circumstances would not be to adapt our practice to that of the Imperial Parliament rather than to enforce a penalty for disregard of a Standing Order which has been more honoured in the breach than in the observance, and previous offences concerning which have never before incurred the displeasure of your honourable House. In regard to the published evidence, it has been admitted that the report was impartial and accurate. One witness, Mr. Holsted, was accused of certain irregularities by Mr. Easton, and immediate publication of his answer to these charges was deemed by my editor an act of common justice to that witness. This evidence, it should be borne in mind, was published by my paper before the House had been asked to consider whether its privileges had been invaded. There was absolutely no subsequent publication of evidence. "As to my attitude before the Privileges Committee, I contend that there was no contumely nor disrespect to that body. Though practically on my trial - the House having already affirmed that the Dunedin Star had Mr. Hutcheson - from declining to answer questions which I might have done on the plea that it was un-British to ask a witness to give evidence which might tend to criminate himself. On the contrary, I made a frank and honest declaration as to the publication of the evidence, and accepted personal responsibility of an act performed in what I believe to be the public interests. It was only when pressed to state the source of my information that I declined to answer the question, holding that as a matter of honour, and following one of the first tenets of my profession that the source of information given me in good faith must be kept absolutely sacred. I should like members to carefully peruse my evidence on this point, so as to satisfy themselves as to any absence of intent to set at defiance an order of your honourable House. "I regret that my bona fide endeavour, through the medium of my paper, to assist in the prosecution of a searching inquiry into a matter of the greatest concern to the mining industry of Otago has led me to commit a breach of privilege." He regrets the exigencies of this business has led him to commit a breach of privilege : but has he expressed regret for that breach of privilege ? Not a single word as yet :- "I regret that my bona fide endeavour, through the medium of my paper, to assist in the prosecution of a searching inquiry into a matter of the greatest concern to the mining industry of Otago has led me to commit a breach of privilege, and I trust that the explanation given will be accepted by your honourable House. Reiterating that it has not been my wish to set Parliament at defiance. -- Believe me, &c., Only one thing more is wanted - and I say it honestly and in good faith -

that is to accept the suggestion of my friend the member for Wellington City (Mr. Atkinson and pass a resolution conveying a vote of thanks to Mr. Cohen, and then perhaps spontaneous the House will rise to its feet and sing. .. For he's a jolly good fellow." Now let us lo at the thing, stripped of all its gear. It is a very commonplace business after all ; there need have been no fuss about it at all. I bare no feeling as to the act itself, because it is commonplace and easily understood. But it is in respect to what has happened since vester. day morning that the difficulty of understand. ing comes in, and the influences at work. The Chairman of the Goldfields and Mines Com- mittee reported to the House some day's ago that a breach of privilege had been com- mitted in the publication of certain evidence. which was reported in a certain newspaper in the colony verbatim. Now, the House of that information declared that a breach of privilege had been committed. It was clearly proved to the satisfaction of the House that a breach of privilege had been committed in the publication of that evidence, and the Hon- affirmed that by resolution. It also, at the original suggestion, I believe, of the honouratie

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of the then leader of the House, the Postmaster- General, decided to set up a Committee to dis- cover, if possible, the means by which this evidence passed to the hands of the gentleman who caused its publication. That Committee sat, and considered, and reported to the House that, after having made investigation and ques- tioned all likely persons, and having received a denial of all knowledge of the circumstances from every one, they arrived at a certain indi- vidual - to wit, Albert Elias Cohen-who ac- knowledged that he was the medium through which it was published. It came into his possession, by what means he declined to state, and the Committee of inquiry reported these matters to the House. Now, what is more easy to understand than that a newspaper man will get hold of information and will publish it. It is his business. There is no romance about it ; there is no sentiment about it; but a news- paper man with the experience of Mr. Cohen knows that, if from any member of the House or by any other process he gets this informa- tion and publishes it, he commits a breach of privilege. And he also knows, judging from his long experience in the past, that generally nothing has come of breaches of privilege, and he took whatever risk there was and anticipated any penalty that might ensue in the publication of the information. Now, so far from hoping or anticipating that if called to the bar of the House he might reveal the identity of his accomplice, I consider that had he done so he would have been a contemptible skunk. And what was the price that he was prepared to pay for that special information ? He knew, Sir, that he ran the risk of having to pay any penalty this House chose to inflict : and there it is stripped at a glance. There is no question of personal feeling on my part ; there is no question of personal feeling or party feeling on the part of the most of those who wanted the Premier to do the right and dignified thing. They simply say this- An Hon. MEMBER .- What do you want ? Mr. HUTCHESON .- If the Hon. the Minis- ter of Mines will possess his soul in peace he will probably hear what my views are. I am not after " Blood ! blood ! " which yesterday the Premier declared in tragic tones we were howling for. I think the flaming red carpet on the floor must be getting on his nerves. I was unable to see anything à propos when he stopped short in his speech and in stentorian tones roared " Blood ! blood !" An Hon. MEMBER .-- Who said that ? Mr. HUTCHESON. - It was the Premier who said that. It seemed to me the glaring red of the drapery and carpet of this chamber was affecting him in the proverbial way - he said " Blood," I presume, because at present he sees everything red. Now, if I were a Press- man I would endeavour to get information for my paper by all fair means, but I would not ". let on " that I did not know that I was com- mitting any wrong and taking no chances. When the Premier submitted his resolution yesterday he assured the House that the reso- Cabinet. Mr. SEDDON .- Hear, hear. Mr. HUTCHESON. - Another instance of "scientific adjustment." But there is the danger of an adverse vote of this House, and that part of the matter was of more importance to the honourable gentleman than anything else. That is the paramount question. It was the honourable gentleman who first imported that personal aspect, and who subsequently im- ported the

party aspect into the debate. Any Press representative who had done what Mr. Cohen has done would expect to run the risk of being fined or being otherwise dealt with, knowing full well that he was committing a breach of privilege. Now, this particular Standing Order may be foolish and obsolete and useless -- I am not going to argue for a moment that aspect of the question - but the only personal feeling that I hold, and which I share in common with my brother members who have any sense of proportion at all, lies in the unsolicited affront contained in this presumptuous and cheeky letter. As to the other matter, I have an absolutely impersonal feeling upon it; but I do admit to have a personal feeling of affront to the intelligence of this House that we should be asked to accept this communication as an apology. Sir, I charge the Premier with being cognisant of the I say that he must terms of this letter. have perused it before it came here, because that would be in keeping with his ordinary practice. I am not prepared to say that the Premier actually drafted the letter, but I know that he is wary enough to make himself personally acquainted with its contents before it came to the House. I further venture to assert that this letter was inspired by the Premier with the view of letting-off the gentleman who has transgressed, and his paper also, as lightly as possible. I have not the least doubt of that. When my colleague (Mr. Fisher) put the inexorable logic of facts before the House, such as would have enabled him to have carried his amendment by two to one, what did the Premier do ? He held a caucus. He made this a strictly party question when members expressed their opposition to his resolution ; and the Premier then said, What is the price of your compromise ? He imagined at first that it was a question of blood that they were after; but there was not a single member who cared much as to the penalty at all. It was only a question of the means by which this House might express its sense of displeasure, first of all at a deliberate breach of the Standing Orders- perhaps not a serious crime in this particular case, but to which was added the further affront of this letter. What is the ultimate result ? One of his colleagues as the member for Palmerston predicted at the beginning of this debate-said an amendment would be moved by a member of that side to the Premier's own motion, which was so carefully considered by the Cabinet, and that amendment has been attempted to be moved by the Minister of Mines. The honourable gentle-

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forms of the House, innocently attempted to move that amendment, but was informed that he could not do so as it would be contrary to the Standing Orders, he having already moved one amendment to the resolution before the House. So he called to his aid yet another Minister of the Crown, and we had the humiliating spectacle of the Minister for Public Works moving that amendment, which contravenes the whole spirit of the resolution which had been originally submitted to the House by the Premier, and which, he assured us, was the result of the most careful consideration of the Cabinet. It may be asked what would I have done if I had been connected with this matter, and had to take action in reference to it ? should have said, " You have committed an offence against the Standing Orders of this House - it may be considered a technical breach, but we want to mark our sense of displeasure at the offence you have wittingly committed. The Standing Orders are not there without reason, and therefore we inflict a monetary penalty for your having contravened the Standing Orders." There is no feeling in this matter at all. The correspondent got his information cheap at the money. It is not a question of making anything out of it : it is in order to mark our sense of the importance of maintaining the Standing Orders. If the House, after the lecturing it has received from this gentleman, proceeds in the direction suggested by some members, it will place itself in a very foolish position in the eyes of the people of the colony. Now, honourable members-and more especially do I address the honourable members following the Government : do they approve of the claptrap, the burlesque, that unseemly belittling of all the privileges of this House -for the honourable gentleman burlesqued the proceedings of this House, and drew a clumsy picture-he is not a word-painter-of the offender standing at the bar of the House. Mr. SEDDON .- I leave that to you. Mr. HUTCHESON .- That is not my forte, and I have "savee " enough to know it, and

to let it alone. But the honourable gentleman pictured the offender appearing at the bar of the House and cutting a caper, and I say in doing that the honourable gentleman did what was really an affront to the intelligence of the House : he talked downright claptrap through- out the whole of his arguments. His followers knew that he was endeavouring to rouse up a feeling of party rancour. There was not a single dignified argument in the whole of his voluminous speech yesterday, and the cold, logical statement of fact of my colleague, Mr. Fisher, is still unassailable. He put the posi- tion like a problem of Euclid - unassailable from start to finish-and the sense of the House was with him. If the House had been wisely led yesterday we should not have had this position now. I would go thus far with the newspaper man : if he chose to pay the penalty rather than reveal the source of his information-which undoubtedly he had a right to do-then let him pay the penalty. But I do Mr. Hutcheson Premier to depart from his usual sound judg- ment. He knows how many beans make five better almost than any man in this House. He knows that he has made a mistake ; and he knows that, in order to try and shield the trans- gressor in this case, he has dragged his followers in particular, and the House generally, through the mire. He is sorry now that he did not take the advice of one of his ablest and best in- formed supporters, my colleague, the member for Wellington City, Mr. Fisher. If he had done so he would have saved not only his face. but the face of Parliament. There are others as well as the honourable gentleman who have some regard for the face of Parliament, and the I honourable gentleman would have saved Par- liament from the undignified course it took yesterday if, instead of submitting a resolution that was, as he told us, the outcome of a Cabinet meeting, he had submitted a resolution more in uniformity with that moved by the member for Wellington City, Mr. Fisher. Instead of that, however, there has been submitted to the House another resolution that differs from that of my colleague mainly in degree. Sir, what did it matter to this House whether the fine was £5 or \$500? Not a single iota. The principle is there : it is proposed to inflict a fine for breach of privilege. Now, so far from the House having shown itself vindictive in the past, I ask was not the member for Palmerston punished ; and was there one of the honourable gentleman's (Mr. Pirani's) friends who voted against his proper punishment by the House? Was there any party there ? I ask honourable gentlemen to take their minds back to last session when the member for Wairarapa trans- gressed the Standing Orders, and nothing was done, because the honourable member gave satisfaction to the House. Was any spirit of vindictiveness ever shown to any member who showed the slightest degree of penitence when he had made an error of judgment in having unfortunately given evidence away? Never. Sir; and I say that it was not as a means of extorting anything from the representative of the Evening Star that I would have liked to sce him brought to the bar of the House. but solely in order to go through the form our Standing Orders set out, and in order to maintain the privileges of Parliament. = 0 long as Parliament chooses to retain those privileges, and that is until it sees fit to amend the Standing Orders or to remove them altogether. I think, Sir, it would be better for this Parliament, and for the public of New Zea- land as well as for the Press, that the reports of the Select Committees should be made by the deliberate will of that Committee through its Chairman to the House, and consequently to the papers of the colony. I am not one who desires to work in the dark. I do not believe in hole-and-corner work, but in the fullest publicis being given to our actions. But I say it ■35 consistent with the dignity of the House to do what it did do-to declare that a breach of privilege had been committed, and that as a consequence some penalty had to be paid ; and

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all the tribulation, all the heart-burning, and the Premier for trying not only to degrade the all the rancour of party feeling we have seen House, but to degrade me ; but I will not be lately, is attributable entirely to the bungling of dragged down with him or the Government. the Premier. Mr. MCLACHLAN (Ashburton) .- Sir, when that the proposal now is to insert after the I look at the Premier I regret to think that word "and," in the 6th line, these words : the people's idol should hold such an un- " upon payment of the sum of £15."

I do not dignified position as he holds in the House want to speak at any length on the question, to-day-a position he has brought on himself I want to see it settled ; but I would ask the by a piece of bungling greater than I have ever Premier whether he is satisfied with the amend- heard of in any Parliament before. His whole ment moved by his colleague? It is proposed speech was laboured, futile, apologetic, and an to impose a fine of £15-on whom ? No one is insult to the House. That was my own opinion mentioned. without conversing with any other honourable member. I have never read the Evening Star Standing Orders. in my life, and I do not care a button whether it was to the advantage of the people of Otago or not that the evidence should be published ; tion any one. nor do I care whether Mr. Cohen stole the papers, or whether he obtained them by some may pass it over in that slipshod way if he other means-it is sufficient to say they were pleases, but I contend that as the motion now obtained by him; and he knew they were stands it means nothing. illegally obtained and illegally made use of, and for what he has done he ought to be punished. the Court. I have no desire to persecute any one, but I am positive on this point: that I will not be the Court ? There are two or three of them. dragged in the dust by the Premier. There is The Premier himself says there are three offences - firstly, the offence of committing a a quotation I might give from Burns-it is breach of the privileges of the House, as the addressed to a young man,- House itself has decided ; secondly, the offence Where you feel your honour grip, of refusing to give evidence before a Committee ; Let that aye be your border. and thirdly, the offence of communicating the The Premier led us yesterday to understand evidence to the Evening Star by somebody that this resolution was the outcome of the unknown. We do not know who it was. Now, wisdom of a Cabinet meeting. They had con- I ask the House to consider whether we are sidered it in every phase, and, in the interests of doing what is in accordance with our dignity in the country and of Parliament, they were of passing a resolution such as this? I am afraid opinion that the culprit should be allowed to I cannot move an amendment myself : Can I, go. and that no further action should be taken. Sir ? At the time the honourable gentleman made that statement to the House I held a different able member cannot ; he has already spoken. view from him. The culprit, I say, has pleaded guilty, and why not inflict a fine, however an amendment I would have suggested, in the small, on him, and bring him to the bar of the first instance, this : that, having carried the House? I heard the speech the honourable motion down to "accepts," we should add gentleman gave. Well, there was nothing in these words: "the letter forwarded by the the first part of it, and the rest of it was merely representative of that paper; but, before com- padding. Then, at one o'clock, I was invited ing to any conclusion, will hear the said repre- to go to the caucus, and I went, but did not sentative and the publisher of the paper at the stay there long. I saw very plainly that my bar of the House." Now, that is undoubtedly views were not going to obtain. Afterwards, I was told what it was intended to do at the meeting, and the opinion was expressed that the bar of the House, we could come to the Mr. Cohen should be brought to the bar of the conclusion as to what punishment we should House, and a fine inflicted on him. What inflict. Sir, I do not even suggest this course, was the result ? Members on this side of the however, because, although I know it is the House told me afterwards that they were right course, the power of the Premier is so almost prompted to follow my example, and great that it would not be carried. And I walk out of the caucus room. But they did admit there is some reason why this reporter not do it. The Premier's influence prevailed should not be summoned to the bar of the over them, and they agreed to this loose, lame, House. He has admitted both offences, and and impotent motion which has been moved he has said, I presume, in his letter all And who is to be by the Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones. he has to say upon the matter, and one fined ? Not the culprit who has committed a may take that as what would happen if breach of the privileges of the House. It may Mr. Cohen was summoned to the bar; and be the printer's devil who will be fined. Sir, I therefore one may dispense with calling Mr. would have liked to see the culprit brought to Cohen or the publisher to the bar and follow the bar of the House and fined, and imprisoned another course. This course I do suggest, and

till the fine was paid. That is the course that hope that some one will move it. I suggest should have been taken, and I find fault with Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) .- Sir, I understand Mr. SEDDON .- The party who infringes the Mr. J. ALLEN .- It does not say so. Mr. SEDDON .- You do not require to men- Mr. J. ALLEN .- The honourable gentleman An Hon. MEMBER .- There are parties before Mr. J. ALLEN .- Who are the parties before Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER .- No, the honour- Mr. J. ALLEN .- If I had been able to move the proper course to pursue. Then, 3.30. having heard what he had to say at

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regret of the representative of that journal," for there are some words expressive of regret in the letter sent by Mr. Cohen. It is true I do not, myself, think they are satisfactory to the House ; but, Sir, in order to show that I have no feeling in the matter, I would accept these words as an expression of regret-" the expres- sion of regret of the representative of that journal, and," and after the word "and," cut out the rest of the sentence and insert these words-and I do ask the House to really con- sider whether it is not the more dignified course to adopt-to put in, after the word "and," "resolves to impose a fine of £10 on the publisher of the Evening Star for committing a breach of the privileges of the House of Representatives, and a fine of £5 on Mr. A. E. Cohen for refusing to give evidence before the Privilege Committee." Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- He did not refuse to give evidence. Mr. J. ALLEN .- He refused to answer ques- tions. I will alter that to "refusing to answer questions," but it is the same thing. It is ad- mitted that there were two offences-one, com- mitting a breach of privilege, and another, that questions put to the witness were not answered. The penalty that I suggest is not increasing the penalty suggested by the Premier. It is the same sum of \$15, but it is at least covering the two particular offences that are plain and patent to every member of the House. I ask the Premier to accept that in good faith. I do not move it as a slap in the face at all, but I move it as I believe the matter is one in which the honour of the House is concerned, and if some- thing of the kind is not done we are stultifying our position as members of the House, and stultifying our position as representatives of the people. I hope, Sir, that the Premier will accept that in good faith. If he does not, I will ask some one to move it as an amendment, in order that we may vote upon it. Mr. McGOWAN (Minister of Justice) .- I have listened to this discussion which occupied the whole of yesterday's sitting, and which has con- tinued on almost the same lines to-day. The honourable gentleman who has just sat down says he has no feeling in this matter, and the honourable member for Wellington City (Mr. Hutcheson) used the same expression. Now, I believe these expressions are genuine. They have no feeling in the matter, so far as the so-called breach of privilege is concerned. But, Sir, let me ask any one who has listened to the speeches of these honourable gentlemen, is their no feeling there ? I have never yet, while I have been a member of this House; listened to a more blatant piece of invective than that delivered by the honourable member for Wel- lington City (Mr. Hutcheson) with regard to the Premier. The breach of privilege is brushed aside. I can understand, and believe to be per- fectly honest, the position taken up by the honourable member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher). His position is clear and distinct, but I say that the position taken up by other honour- able gentlemen in this House is not in the same Mr. J. Allen speakers has been to endeavour to put the Premier in a difficult position. Hon. MEMBERS .- No, no. Mr. McGOWAN .- It is no use honourable members telling me that story, because the honourable member for Bruce in his first speech yesterday referred most strongly to that posi- tion, and made it distinctly a party question. There is no getting away from it. Mr. J. ALLEN .- How ? Mr. McGOWAN .- The honourable gentleman has as good a memory in that respect as I have, but, in the meantime, I will go on with the remarks I have to make. Take the honourable member for the Bay of Plenty, Mr. Herries, What is the position he has taken up in regard to this ? He took up this position -- namely, that a great stigma rests upon the members of the Mines Committees with regard to this breach of privilege. Who feels the stigma ? Mr. HERRIES .- I do. Mr. McGOWAN .- Well, for any man to feel the stigma is enough to throw suspicion upon that honourable gentleman. A man whose con- science is clear

fears no stigma. "Let the galled jade wince." I say there is no stigma on any member of that Committee. They went before the Privileges Committee and gave their evidence. Mr. Fisher, at any rate, put the question to myself in regard to how this evidence may have got out. He said : " Do you think it possible that any person could have possessed himself of one of those copies ?" and my reply was, "I think it is possible." I will refer to the looseness with which copies of this evidence were placed in the hands of witness's for correction, and also of its lying on the table. Question and answer are given here, and it will prove that there was ample opportunity for any smart fellow-and every honourable member in this House has commended the reporter of the Dunedin Star for being a smart journalist - to get the evidence from that room. An Hon. MEMBER. - How ? Mr. McGOWAN .- Because that room was occupied by other members outside those on the Goldfields Committee, and there was no place for keeping the papers, and that Committee often sat until after one o'clock, and the whole of the papers were bundled up. And on several occasions there were gentlemen there who were not in any way connected with the Committee. but, owing to the great interest in this matter, they attended, and it is easy to see that by some indirect means this evidence got out. There was ample opportunity for this evidence to have been used by any reporter smart enough to obtain it. But we have got beyond that. We have all admitted that it is the duty-I am not saying whether it is right or wrong-but there is a general admission that it is the duty of > reporter to obtain information for his newspaper in the best way he possibly can. Mr. FISHER .- The best way, not the worst way. Mr. McGOWAN .- The honourable gentleman says, "In the best way." I have no doubt that when the honourable gentleman

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who has interrupted me was on the staff of a newspaper-I need not say much about that- pay it in any case, no matter whose name is I am sure he endeavoured to carry as much inserted. It is only playing with words and information in his memory as he could, and splitting straws to attempt to amend this motion if he wanted to give that information to the in the direction desired by some honourable public he gave it. members. We have had a most amusing speech An Hon. MEMBER .- It is not professional to from the honourable member for Dunedin City obtain it in a backstair method. Mr. McGOWAN .- The honourable gentleman have thought would have some knowledge of man says something about backstairs. I do not know anything about backstair methods ; two-penny - halfpenny matter on exactly the gentlemen who use those expressions must have some acquaintance with that method of obtaining information. I understand the position the honourable gentleman takes up-I am the members of the Opposition collectively and not saying whether it is honourable or not, but I recognise the position he takes up in regard to newspapers, and that he is endeavouring to get as large a fine inflicted as possible on the newspaper or the reporter. Mr. FISHER .- You have not explained about the coldness of the room. Mr. McGOWAN .- I am not talking about that just now. With all his cleverness the honourable gentleman has been made the tool of party on this occasion. It has been the object of the honourable gentlemen opposite to lington City (Mr. Fisher) and those on this get the honourable gentleman to go in that side. To meet the case the amendment is direction. Mr. FISHER .- Leave all that to me. Mr. McGOWAN .- This surely must annoy you when you require to interrupt me so much. I am coming pretty near the truth, which is not always palatable. The reporter has obtained for his paper certain information ; that information appearing in the paper before it has been reported to the House is a breach of privilege. The position taken up by the Premier in the first instance was that this had been done repeatedly, and nothing had resulted from it. I do not know that we have not a breach of privilege in the paper this morning. However, I want to bring the matter down to a fair issue. As to the amount of the fine, the honourable member for Wellington City wanted to make the fine severe : and the amendment proposed by the Minister for Public Works makes it somewhat less severe. The honourable member for Bruce takes up the position that the fine should be divided, and a certain amount placed on the individual, and a

certain amount on the paper. What does this mean ? It does not matter on whom the fine is imposed ; it will be paid by the proprietors of the paper. Here is the proposal :- "The House accepts the expression of regret by the representative of that journal, and, on payment of the sum of #15, this House resolves to proceed no further in the matter." Hon. MEMBERS .- By whom ? Mr. McGOWAN .- By the representative of the journal. An Hon. MEMBER .- Then, why not say so in the resolution ? Mr. McGOWAN .- It is in. An Hon. MEMBER .- It is not. An Hon. MEMBER .- Why should the reporter pay a fine ? Mr. McGOWAN .- Because the journal will (Mr. Barclay), a gentleman whom one would the privileges of the House, and he puts this same footing as the rights of the people in relation to the Sovereign. I never heard anything more absurd. I think, after the opportunity severally have had of having a tilt at the Premier, the whole matter could be easily settled by accepting the amendment now moved. It is a reasonable one. It meets the whole difficulty, it maintains our privileges, and condemns the method of obtaining news. It is hardly necessary for the House to go further. The only difference between the members of the Opposition and those supporting the Government is the difference of amount between that proposed by the honourable member for Welbroughtdown as a reasonable position to take up, and it is, I think, a proper amendment for the House to adopt. Mr. COLLINS (Christchurch City) .- I have refrained from speaking at all on this subject, because I regarded the whole matter very largely as a waste of time. It ought to have been settled in a few minutes, and I believe had matters been dealt with in the right way from the outset it would have been settled in a very short time. When the matter first came before the House I thought the proper course, immediately the House had decided that a breach of privilege had been committed, would have been to at once demand that the person who committed the breach of privilege should be called to the bar of the House. I am sustained in my belief by a reference to the " Rulings of the Speakers," on page 158, No. 17, which says,- " In the case of a newspaper article, if members call attention to it, it is read by the Clerk ; a motion should be made that it is a breach of the privileges of the House. If affirmed, the person responsible for the article is summoned to the bar of the House to give an explanation ; after the explanation the House determines what course should be pursued." Now, it appears to me that this is perfectly clear, and when once the House has decided that a breach of privilege has been committed, then the person accused should be brought to the bar and dealt with there and then. This course was not adopted, and we have now an almost interminable discussion. My particular reason for rising at this stage is to express my intense surprise at the speech we have just heard from the Minister, from whom we might have expected a judicial utterance- the Minister of Justice. I am quite sure he entirely misstates the attitude of honourable

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been to place the Premier in a difficult position. I do not believe any member of the House has had for his object the placing the Premier in a difficult position. But if the Premier feels himself-I do not believe he does-but if the Minister of Justice feels that the Premier is in a difficult position, he must recognise the fact that it is very largely the Premier's own fault ; for I believe that yesterday morning the Premier had every opportunity of giving a lead to the House which would have extricated the House from the difficulty it has found itself in since that time, and would have obviated the necessity for amendment after amendment, which has been the result of the want of proper guidance from the Premier at an earlier stage of the debate. What I fail to understand is how the Minister of Justice can reply to the member for the Bay of Plenty in the way he has. He says that when the honourable member for Bay of Plenty pointed out that he, as a member of the Committee, felt himself resting under a stigma, the very fact of his doing so causes himself to be suspected. It is quite possible for a gentleman to feel that he is resting under suspicion, and yet he may be the only one that knows how unjust that suspicion is. I say, Sir, that every member of a Committee from which evidence has been obtained must necessarily lie under a stigma, and know that this is so until the source of that information has been brought to light. Now, Sir, the Minister of

Justice has also said that the House during the course of this debate has generally admitted that it is the duty of a reporter to obtain evidence in the best way he could. As the honourable member for Wellington City, Mr. Fisher, interrupted, " Yes, in the very best way, and not in the worst way." Let it be done openly, and not done by a back- stairs method. I am astonished that the Hon. the Minister of Justice, above all persons, should apparently attempt to justify the obtaining of evidence in any way possible, so long as it can be obtained. In effect he says, " Obtain evidence, my son, honestly if you can, but obtain evidence." That is surprising, coming as it does from the Minister of Justice. Then, in reply to the statement that the fine will not fall upon the right persons, the Minister of Justice further says that it does not matter whom you fine in this case, because whoever is fined the proprietors will have to pay. I would ask the Hon. the Minister again if he would allow a matter of this kind to influence him if he were presiding over a Court of justice, and at the present time we are a Court of justice ? know that it is an extreme stretch of the imagination to speak of this place as being a Court of justice, because had this been an ordinary Magistrate's Court, and had an ordinary person been on trial before Justices of the Peace, a fine of £10 would have been imposed before now, and the whole matter would have been settled, and the prisoner told to stand down. I am surprised that the Hon. the Minister of Justice should have said that it does not matter who pays the fine, and should have Mr. Collins to point out that nearly every Minister who has spoken has referred to the frequent references made to precedents, and to the Standing Orders affecting questions of privilege, and have almost invariably made this their cry : " Why those musty-fusty precedents ; why this continuous and continual reference to those musty and fusty Standing Orders ?" I would point out that our Standing Orders are not so musty and fusty, after all. It is only some six years ago since the whole of our Standing Orders were amended and brought up to date by a Committee appointed for the purpose. These are the Standing Orders upon which we are acting now, and which, under the leadership of the Premier, were passed by the House only six years ago. It is all very well to speak of the rules which have been set up for the guidance of this House as "musty and fusty precedents," but I would again point out that they were enacted only some six years ago, under the guidance of the Right Hon. the Premier himself. Now, Sir, I think it was in 1894 that these Standing Orders were amended. Then again, Sir, there has been a continued series of surprises during the progress of this debate. The honourable gentlemen on the Ministerial benches have continuously, in the course of this debate, accused honourable members opposite of acting inconsistently in this matter, because some of them have not taken up the same attitude as they took in 1895 when the Hutchison case was before the House. But I would ask. cannot the Ministers see that honourable Ministers themselves can as justly be accused of being inconsistent by their not taking up the same attitude as they did in the Hutchison case ! They must be quite inconsistent, inasmuch as they have altered their attitude. If this attitude the Hutchison case be parallel, then it must be true that honourable members who are acting differently now from what they did then are inconsistent, and if they be parallel cases, why do Ministers give us a different lead from what they did then ? Mr. SEDDON,-Did we fine Mr. Hutchison ? Mr. COLLINS .- Do not misunderstand me. I am not asking now that any one shall be fined. I am simply asking that we should take exactly the same course as was taken in 1895. Up to the present time-I do not say now-that Premier has refused to take the course then taken. It is quite true he is coming round to the proper course, but that is because his hands have been forced. I regret to see this kind of thing ; it is humiliating to members on this side of the House to feel that the leader's hands can be and are being forced, because the right action was not taken from the first. I regret that our own leaders should have placed themselves in this unfortunate position. It appears to me to be humiliating for our leaders to have to recede from the position formerly taken up. They have been forced, step by step. to alter their attitude owing to the action of honourable members on both sides of the House. A much greater amount of time has been given to this

subject than should have been given. Surely we have more important work to do, and I am sure that when the country comes to learn the amount of time Parliament has consumed in discussing a matter which ought to have been decided in fifteen minutes, it will know how to value the services of its members. Mr. McGOWAN (Minister of Justice) .- I desire to make a personal explanation. The honourable gentleman said that I approved of improper means being taken to obtain information. I desire to say that in no part of my speech did I say so, and the honourable gentleman was wrong in saying that I approved of the reporters receiving information in an improper manner. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) .- At the commencement of our proceedings this afternoon I thought the House had made up its mind to come to a conclusion upon this question, and to settle it once and for all. Although considerably provoked, I refrained from saying anything severe, and I should have refrained from speaking now had it not been for the remarks of the honourable member for Christchurch City (Mr. Collins). He accused the Government of inconsistency in respect to the case of the late member for Patea. I say, Sir, that I am consistent to a degree in the course I am now taking. In that case there was a flagrant violation of the Standing Orders. That member deliberately took down what occurred at a meeting of a Committee of which he was a member, and also took an extract from the proceedings of the Committee. He then deliberately put the information he had got on an Order Paper. By so doing he committed a breach of privilege and a breach of the Standing Orders. Mr. Speaker ruled this 4.0. to be wrong. He not only would not refrain from doing it, but Mr. Hutchison virtually told the House he would do it again. Now, when he was brought up what was the resolution of the House? That he had committed a breach of privilege, and the House expressed its regret that he had done so. All I required to do to be consistent with what I did in the case of the member for Patea was simply to move that this House regrets that the reporter and the publisher of the Dunedin Evening Star had committed a breach of the Standing Orders of this House. I should have been consistent if I had done that; and what is the use of the honourable member for Christchurch City, without thought and without recollecting what was really done, stating that the Government is inconsistent? I cannot, of course, be responsible for the honourable gentleman's memory; but when the honourable gentleman stands up and commences to hector and lecture the Government, and lecture the House, he should first of all make himself acquainted with the facts of the case. An Hon. MEMBER .- Keep cool. Mr. SEDDON .- I am not losing my temper. What I am saying is said more in sorrow than in anger; but I may say I am very sorry indeed that the honourable member for Christchurch City should have placed himself in such an undignified and unfortunate position. I say that a member who makes a statement in this House which is incorrect loses dignity and self-respect in the estimation of his fellow members. It seems to me, Sir, that I get more interruptions than any member in the House, and I would say to the member for Christchurch City, "Keep your temper." Now, Sir, had I proposed that a fine should be inflicted on the member for Patea, such as I am doing now, then that would have been consistent with what we are doing now in the case of the reporter and publisher of the Dunedin Evening Star. That is what the House is doing now, and that is where the inconsistency comes in. I have been consistent right through. This House has never gone to this length before; and for the future-I say this here and now, and without any beating about the bush-if I see things going on in this House that have been permitted to go on in the past, I care not who the offender is, I will do my duty, and then we will see how far a good many of those honourable gentlemen who have been talking about dignity and upholding the dignity of the House will uphold it. If I did that, I believe the honourable gentlemen opposite would gather a mantle around the honourable gentleman with a view to bringing the offender into their fold. Then, Sir, what does Standing Order No. 10 say? "Words withdrawn cease to exist, and cannot be -----" Mr. MASSEY .- That is not a Standing Order. Mr. SEDDON .- I am giving the rulings of Mr. Speaker on page 113. Mr. MASSEY .- You said the Standing Orders. Mr. SEDDON .- Well, of course, the rulings of Mr. Speaker are practically Standing Orders. An Hon. MEMBER .- Not always. Mr. SEDDON .- Well, you

have to submit to it, anyhow. Words withdrawn cease to exist, and cannot be commented on ; but it is not always sufficient that the words taken exception to be withdrawn. It is open to the House to demand an apology from the member having used them. Now, in accordance with the ruling of Mr. Speaker, there having been an offence, there was a necessity for a withdrawal, and the letter which we received was an expression of regret. Perhaps it is not couched in language to please all members. I do not know whether members wanted Mr. Cohen to go down upon his knees, whether he is to cover himself with sackcloth and ashes, whether he is to come into the House with a halter around his neck. Of course, if that is what they want to do with the offending reporter, then, Sir, all I can say is that it would be inconsistent with all our traditions. An Hon. MEMBER .- Read the next ruling. Mr. SEDDON .- I am going to read you a rule laid down by Mr. Speaker, and it is this -- and I noticed it on the floor of this House with the present Acting-Speaker: that where a member has offended, and where he has been asked to withdraw and expresses his regret, the slightest indication, oftentimes words which were

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Speaker and construed as being an expression of regret, so as to relieve the situation and give an opportunity to the offending member to get out of the difficulty. That has been the general spirit in which these expressions of regret have been used. Mr. HERRIES .- I rise to a point of order. Is the Premier not going rather beyond the question ? Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER .- The Premier is discussing the question as to whether the expression of regret by Mr. Cohen is similar to expressions of regret which the Speaker usually accepts as sufficient. I think the Right Hon. the Premier is in order. Mr. SEDDON .- I have time after time to complain of interruptions that are made by the honourable gentleman and members opposite. When I am giving cogent reasons for the course which I am asking the House to accept an attempt is made to gag me by a motion that I am out of order. Well, I say my reasoning is consistent with the actions of Mr. Speaker, and with the actions of yourself, Sir, as Acting-Speaker under similar circumstances-namely, that the House has never insisted, nor has the Speaker insisted, that the person or member offending should, in abject language, prostrate himself and apologize. An Hon. MEMBER .- Who wants it ? Mr. SEDDON .- Then, if you do not want it, accept this letter in the spirit in which I believe it was sent. The writer says in his concluding lines, I do not wish to put myself in defiance of the House or its Standing Orders. Yesterday I called attention to these words, and what more do members want consistent with dignity and respect ? The writer, in my opinion, not only intended in his explanation to the House to put the House in a position not to inflict a penalty, or, if it did, of the most nominal character, but to simply accept his explanation and let him go. And, when I said this was done by the Government after careful consideration, I did so because on Friday, when the matter came up, I was of opinion-I had not read the evidence taken by the Privileges Committee- that a fine should be imposed, and I mentioned that to one or two members. However, when I got the evidence and went through it I came to the conclusion that, if a letter was sent to Mr. Speaker expressing regret, and explaining that there was no wilful defiance of the Standing Orders of the House, that would be sufficient. That was my conviction, and I moved in that direction. I came to the conviction conscientiously ; and what am I to understand from the proceedings of to-day, and the last two days ? It is not at all the reporter or the publisher of the Dunedin Evening Star upon whom an attack has been made. There has been an attack made upon the Premier in speech after speech. It is bad enough for me to have these attacks and speeches from the other side of the House, but I do say I have every reason to complain of those on my own side of the House who put these misconstructions upon my actions and words. They Mr. Seddon been leader of the House there has never been a case before the House, even when it affected one of my own strongest supporters, in which I have not insisted upon the Standing Orders being upheld, and that order should prevail. And in this case I considered,-and I still consider-that my resolution of yesterday would have met the case. You have now a consensus of the opinion of the House, and if in my resolution I had proposed a nominal penalty it

would have been carried by two-thirds of the members. An Hon. MEMBER .- Hear, hear. Mr. SEDDON .- Because I did not propose a nominal penalty of \$5 we have had the business of the country stopped for two days- the Premier is to be hectored and lectured because he did not put in his resolution that there should be a nominal penalty of £5. Can absurdity go any further ? If payment of a five-pound note means upholding the dignity of the House, and if honourable members are satisfied with that, then all I can say is I am sorry for those members, and I further sympathize with the people who sent them here. There are times when one must speak plainly. I know that the member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher) has always upheld the Standing Orders on every occasion, so he is not inconsistent in his action on this occasion ; but immediately after the recess what appeared in the Manawatu Standard ? Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER .- I must ask the honourable member to confine himself to the question under discussion. Mr. FISHER .- I wish you would have allowed the honourable gentleman to go on. Mr. SEDDON .- I am only showing how inconsistent members are in these cases. In this case there must be something underlying it that I know not of. I have no reason to befriend either the Star reporter or the Dunedin Evening Star. Members must ask themselves the question, what could actuate me in this matter ? I was only actuated by one desire. -- namely, to accept the explanation. The resolution was written out here on my desk. I thought members would insist on a nominal fine of £5 or \$10, and that that was the general wish of members-although I myself did not think it was at all necessary-and as leader of the House it would have been my duty to give expression to the wishes of members. But I say that there must be something underlying this matter. I do not know that there has ever been a debate which has been so bitter against myself and the Government. But I can stand it all. I can stand another three days or three weeks, and I can hold my own ... I am not one that you can put down ; and we will not improve your position and yourselves with the country by the course you are taking. I say, keep to the question of privilege, and do not make this a medium of attack for party purposes on the Premier. The member for Wellington City (Mr. Atkinson) said that the bungling of the Premier in this matter is worse than a crime.

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An Hon. MEMBER .- It was repeated by one of your side. Mr. SEDDON .- I do not care who repeated it : there has been no bungling. There may be differences of opinion, but my resolution was practically carried by forty-two to eighteen. Hon. MEMBERS .- NO. Mr. SEDDON .- I say that my resolution was carried. and the principle was affirmed when members carried the word "accepts." Mr. W. FRASER .- I did not. Mr. SEDDON .- The honourable member for Franklin and the honourable member for Bruce did, and therefore they cannot say there has been bungling, because if they do they were parties to it and are very inconsistent. Then, we have the member for Wellington City (Mr. Hutcheson) telling me that I am not a word-painter, and he told us that he was not finished in that respect himself. There is a class of language in the use of which he shines pre-eminent. It is a language that you hear in the neighbourhood of Billingsgate, and which is generally spoken by drunken sailors. Mr. J. ALLEN .- I rise to a point of order. The honourable member has referred to another honourable member as using Billingsgate. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER .- I think that language is unparliamentary. Mr. SEDDON .- Very well, I will withdraw that expression. But I am not prepared to have any member of the Press gallery who is a friend of mine termed a "skunk," as the honourable member inferred by the term used to-day. Hon. MEMBERS .- NO. An Hon. MEMBER .- He said " he would have been." Mr. SEDDON .- I will be told presently that he never used the term at all. He said he was not a word-painter; and when he uses such language as that he proves that for a certain class of words he is a past master. I would ask honourable members to use more fitting language when they are addressing this Chamber. The honourable member for Wellington City (Mr. Hutcheson) uses certain nautical phrases, and he strings them together in such a way that no nautical man can understand them, and any self-respecting nautical man would feel ashamed of any one who claims to have been a member of the profession for using such language. I have said before that

there are some members of this House who would insist upon the offending reporter being hanged, drawn, and quartered. The attack, however, has now been diverted to an attack upon myself. I am rather pleased that that is so, because I can meet it. What has caused this ? Some members have been foiled in an attempt to bring home the offence to a member of this House-for they have had to accept his denial- and what do they attempt to do? It was said in the debate this afternoon that it was no member of the Committee who gave the evidence out, and that there were three persons who might have done so. Well, very properly, the reporter said it was not an official who did so. I am glad he did so, for the official could not speak for himself. In cases where there is a doubt about a wrongdoing, the doubt generally goes back on the weakest one-on the one who has the least number of friends. I say that after having seen a good deal of the world. Then, because there are three persons left, they want this admission from the reporter : that it was not a member of the Committee. Then, they say, they would be able to say where the reporter got the information, or, at any rate, who enabled him to get it. That is what they are driving at; and, because the reporter will not be guilty of dishonour, and will not help them in their effort, then they attack me. But I have done my duty, and shall continue to do it. As for the upholding of the Standing Orders by the House, I say that £45 was sufficient to meet the offence in accordance with the views of forty-two members of the House. Eighteen wished for a fine of £15 for each offence, or \$50. That will not be denied. If, then, it was such a glaring offence, and if it was to be rigidly punished and the offenders were to be made examples of, where is the £25? Anyhow, there is only a difference of £10 between the motion which was supported by the majority of the House and that which was supported by eighteen members of the House. There you have it reduced to the irreducible minimum. The difference between us now is only £10-the difference between £25 and \$15. Mr. MASSEY .- There were two \$25 fines. Mr. SEDDON .- Two offences; but as regards the fine on the Star reporter there is only a difference of £10. Sir, I believe if some other member had moved the motion there would have been hardly a word said about it. And if I had moved that a fine of £50 be inflicted, the gentlemen opposite, and a number of my candid friends on this side, would certainly have voted against it, and then a motion would have been moved that the explanation was satisfactory. That is my honest opinion. The gentlemen opposite are so determined to snatch at every opportunity that that is I still say what they would have done. that I did my duty, and did it fearlessly. Now, I wish to say this : Although I have to take a responsibility in this matter I know where the initial mistake was. The . Government was called on yesterday to rectify that mistake. The member for Christchurch City has pointed out where the mistake arose. The moment the House, a fortnight ago, decided that a breach of privilege had been committed, the House ought to have immediately passed a resolution calling the offenders before the bar of the House. That is the course that is in accordance with precedent. Now, who is responsible for that not being done? The member for Franklin ; and I do like his action, because, even though wrong, he had the courage to stand up and admit it. He admits he did make the suggestion to refer it to a Committee, and my colleague accepted the suggestion. It seems to me there was a general wish to get out of an unpleasant situation, and all cases in which that course is taken end in trouble. If the course had been taken which.

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mons, and the publisher had been brought to the bar of the House, the suspicion which now attaches to members of the Goldfields and Mines Committee - according to the member for the Bay of Plenty -- would never have laid against them. The matter would have been dealt with on the broad ground that there had been an offending, and that the person offending had been brought before the bar of the House and had given his explanation, and the House would then have been left to deal with it. An Hon. MEMBER .-- Why was it not done ? Mr. SEDDON .- A Committee was appointed, as the House desired. And where now is the member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher), and the member for Palmerston, and the member for

Waitaki? And where are the other members of that Privileges Committee which was set up to inquire into the breach of privilege? Why did they not give the House a lead? Did they say they found the House had been right in saying there was a breach of privilege? Did they say that, in their opinion, a certain course ought to have been taken? Let honourable members look through the reports of Privileges Committees in the past, and in all cases it will be found the Committee gave the House a lead. Mr. PIRANI .- Mention one case. Mr. SEDDON .- The Privileges Committee set up by the House in 1877 gave the House a lead. I could give any amount of instances of the same kind. Mr. PIRANI .- You are quite wrong. Mr. SEDDON .- I am not wrong, and I say it was consistent and within the reference that in this instance the Committee should have given the House the lead. Mr. McNAB .- That is what they were appointed for. Mr. SEDDON .- The member for Mataura bears me out. He says that is what they were appointed for: and I say the Committee failed in its duty. Then, as leader of the House, I moved a motion; and I say again that there was feeling imported into the question. If there had been simply the desire to uphold the Standing Orders, I believe that two-thirds of the members of the House would have voted for the original resolution, and that the offender would have been dealt with in the same manner as the Speaker would deal with a member of the House who committed a breach of privilege, and who expressed his regret for having done so. The long debate we have had would not then have come on, and we would have been free to attend in a proper manner to public business. No one, Sir, regrets more than I do the time that has been spent and the amount of money that has been wasted on this occasion, but I repeat that when I am attacked I am bound to reply as I have, to maintain the dignity of the House. Mr. HUTCHESON (Wellington City). - Sir, I wish to make a personal explanation. I will pass over without comment the Premier's tirade of abuse, in which he said I had used vulgar language-language used by the frequenters of Billingsgate, and drunken sailors. Mr. Seddon has been withdrawn, so that it must be taken by the honourable member as not having been said. Mr. HUTCHESON .- I was not aware of it. However, what I rose to make a personal explanation about is this - it would not injure me if I did not make the explanation, but, following the precedent so frequently set by the Premier, I think it is right I should have my statement side by side with that of the honourable He said, largely, that gentleman.

4.30. he stood up in defence of the men of the Press against my personal abuse. He said I had stigmatized the representatives as "skunks." It is not only a misrepresentation, but is an attempt to excite the hostility of the Press towards me. I am personally regardless of what the Press may think about me, and always have been; but this I do say: that in my speech I merely said that had this particular representative of the Press given the name of the person who afforded him the information I would have thought him a low-down skunk, and I repeat it. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) .-- Then, Sir, following also as a personal explanation, I say that if a member of the House had acted in compliance with our Standing Orders he would not have been a skunk. That is exactly what I said. Mr. HARDY (Selwyn) .- Sir, I did not intend to enter into this discussion, but I think it is only due to myself to say that the most extraordinary speech I have ever heard in my life I have heard this afternoon, and that was when the Premier lost his temper in, I might fairly term, a most scandalous manner. Mr. SEDDON .- I would ask, Sir, that the honourable member's words be taken down, and also ask for an apology. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER .- I must ask the honourable gentleman if he withdraws the expression: the word "scandalous" must be withdrawn. Mr. HARDY .-- I withdraw it, Mr. Speaker; and if the right honourable the leader of the House asks that it be with regret, I will do that also. I am quite prepared to please him on this occasion. I wish to say, Sir, that I consider the dignity of this Chamber has been well, I really do not know how to put it in parliamentary language-but I would like to say that the dignity of the Chamber has not been upheld by the right honourable gentleman who considers himself the leader of this House. He told us, Sir, that as leader he would look after Parliament, and he would look after the way in which members of this House conducted themselves. But, Sir, if we are to take our example from him, I can assure you, Sir, that his

looking after us would not add to the dignity of Parliament. He told us, Sir, that he could not understand why our constituents sent us here. Well, Sir, I myself wonder why his constituents sent him to Parliament. In deed, I have no reason to wonder, for one has only to look over the estimates to see the money they of Westland get, and that-

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Mr. SEDDON. - Has this anything to do | shrieking like a whipped child this after- with the matter before the House ? Mr. HARDY .- I certainly have no right, Sir, to detain the House on this question, but later on I will have an opportunity of talking to the Premier about it. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccanton) .- I think it is matter for regret that in discussing this question the Right Hon. the Premier has shown so much heat. He has not only proceeded to attack the members of the House generally, but also cast a gross reflection upon his own colleague the Minister for Railways, who was leading the House in his absence. The Premier, in the course of his speech, said that the House, having passed a resolution that a breach of privilege had been committed, should at once have ordered the guilty person to appear before the bar of the House. That, Sir, is the very course that was suggested to the leader of the House-Sir J. G. Ward-at the time by the honourable member for Bruce. If the Premier would refer to Hansard, page 658, he will see there that the member for Bruce stated the whole procedure, quoted the rulings of the Speakers, and said it would be most unfair that the person who had been declared to have committed a breach of privilege should not at once be given an opportunity of appearing before the House to justify his action. I can only suppose that the Premier must have a disordered liver when he proceeds to lecture the members of the House, and to cast so grave a reflection on his own colleague, who was temporarily in charge of the business of the country while the honourable gentleman was bar-bound at Greymouth. But, Sir, the honourable gentleman has certainly got into his old form when he dresses down the member for Christchurch City. Up to the present period of the session the Premier has regarded the honourable member for Christchurch City as having returned to the fold ; but now things have changed. And yet I think, when it comes to any question of loss of dignity, the character of Mr. Collins will not lose by comparison with the Premier. All that honourable gentleman did was simply to humorously point out to the Minister of Justice that he was wrong in his law. The Hon. the Minister of Justice had said that the resolution as proposed by the Premier yesterday included a fine, and the honourable member for Christchurch City (Mr. Collins) pointed out-perfectly correctly, in my opinion -that the resolution as proposed compels no fine, because it does not impose the penalty of £15 on any particular person. But what I want to refer to briefly is the position of the honourable member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher). He has from time to time taxed a number of members on this side of the House who have been independent, and I wish to warn him of the position in which he stands. I warn the honourable member that if he continues in his present independent attitude he is going to bring trouble upon himself. Now, Sir, I wish to deal with the position in which the Premier finds himself to-day. He has been noon because of the position in which he finds himself ; but who was responsible for that position ? Why, the Premier. The House had declared that a breach of privilege had been committed, and on the motion of the Minister for Railways it set up a Committee to ascertain what had led to that breach. Before the Committee the principal person involved refused to give evidence on the point essential to the whole inquiry. What happened then ? Why, the Premier, having returned to lead the House, proposed yesterday that the letter that has been sent by the Dunedin Evening Star reporter is to be accepted "as satisfactory." There is the gravamen of the whole position. He proposed to impose no fine with regard to the two offences that have been committed in connection with this matter. For I say there are two offences-first, the publication ; and, second, the absolute refusal of the reporter to give the evidence asked for. I am not dealing as to how far he was justified or not justified in not giving that evidence. The Premier has quoted from a letter in which a reporter of a newspaper proceeds to lecture this House as to what it ought to do. Is that letter to be ac-

cepted as satisfactory? Is that recognising the dignity of the House? First of all we learn this motion was sent down by the Cabinet, which resolved that the action of the Dunedin Star reporter is to be accepted as satisfactory, and then the honourable gentleman's colleague (Mr. McGowan) proceeds to move that the words "as satisfactory" be struck out of the Premier's motion. Thus the Minister of Mines proposes to negative the Cabinet's resolution that the letter is satisfactory; and after this has been done there comes another colleague of the Premier's, Mr. Hall-Jones, and moves that a fine of \$15 be inserted. Therefore, you have first the united sense of the Cabinet saying that the letter of the reporter of the Star shall be accepted "as satisfactory"; following that comes the Minister of Mines to move that it is not satisfactory; and then, following him, the Minister for Public Works moving that a fine of \$15 be inflicted. And this is the strong Cabinet. This is the operation of the giant intellect that can rule the whole country and boss the House and boss New Zealand, and show everybody what is the proper way to maintain our privileges! They do not know their own minds for twenty-four hours. And then they call a caucus to settle what the amount of the fine is to be. Mr. FISHER .- No, no. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- Perhaps the honourable gentleman knows more about it than I do; That is the position. I was not at the caucus. Now, when the Premier moved the motion that the reporter's letter be accepted as satisfactory, he was paying the Dunedin Star for something. And what was it? The Dunedin Star reporter possesses the reputation of being the best informed newspaper correspondent in New Zealand. And I believe he is; I believe he gets many of his tips straight from the Premier. At any rate, a large number of them come out

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do not come out correctly that constitute the highest claim the Star has on the Premier. What was the Dunedin Star's tip a few months ago? It was that the Premier was likely to be appointed the Governor of some constitutionally-governed colony. I hear the honourable member for Dunedin City (Mr. Barclay) say "It may come out right yet." Perhaps it may, but it has not come off so far. But, once this item appears in the Dunedin paper, in due course it is of course telegraphed to the Premier's paper in Wellington, and probably passed on in one of Reuter's cables sent to London at the cost of the colony, saying that the idea is afloat in New Zealand. And this comes in due course under the notice of Mr. Chamberlain, who takes up his paper, sees the item, and, of course, it is supposed to strike him as a good idea! But it has not come off. Then, later, there was another Dunedin Star tip -- namely, that the Premier is likely to be appointed High Commissioner of the Pacific. That appeared in the Star also, and it emanated from this same well-informed correspondent who has written this audacious letter which the Premier says is "satisfactory." From time to time these splendid ideas are being published in the Star, and as they have appeared we are now paying the price for them. Had the Premier done his duty yesterday when he moved the resolution, he would have moved that the honour of Parliament required a penalty to be imposed--first, on the publisher for publishing the evidence; and secondly, on the correspondent of the Star for defying the Committee--if the fine had been only \$5 in each case--and the matter would have been settled in a quarter of an hour, and this waste of time and money would have been saved. It is the Premier who is responsible for it. Now, in connection with this letter that has come before the House, I venture to say a more defiant letter was never sent to any Parliament; and in the remarks the Premier made in defending the letter this afternoon, he has reduced the dignity of this Parliament to less than the dignity of a School Committee or a Road Board. I say, without hesitation, if we are to maintain the honour of Parliament and its dignity, the only form in which this can be done is by insisting on our Standing Orders being complied with. If the Standing Orders are wrong, alter them; but while they exist maintain them. I do not wish to see any severe penalty imposed upon any man, but I say Parliament must vindicate its honour and position, and justify its Standing Orders--aye, and its existence as the highest Court of the country--by a judicial decision in this case. The Premier says that when the House yesterday passed the resolution down to the word "accepts" it accepted his position. I deny that statement, because

it would be quite possible after the word "accepts " to insert these words, "the letter of the correspondent of the Star as a defiance of its Standing Orders, and determines to fine the publisher \$50 and the reporter #25." The word "accepts," therefore by no means binds the House to any Mr. G. W. Russell Now, without professing to give a legal interpretation, I venture to say, if the House passes the resolution before it, it will be utterly impossible to say who is to pay the money. You cannot say, unless it is amended somewhat in the direction suggested by the honourable member for Bruce, that either the reporter or the publisher is liable for the sum of £15; because two offences have been committed-first, the offence by the publication of the evidence, and next the offence in connection with the refusal to give evidence -and I ask which of these two offences is dealt with in the resolution ? The answer is plainly the publication. If that is the case, only the publisher can be regarded as liable under the resolution. The reporter, who has shown contumacy, goes scot-free. I agree largely with what has been said by the honourable member for Wellington City (Mr. Hutcheson), that, after such a letter has been sent to this House by the reporter of the Dunedin Star, it is difficult to see how the House can, with any dignity or sense of proportion, propose to amend the Standing Orders in the direction he suggests. He does not in his letter express regret for his action ; all he expresses regret for is that, in exercising his functions as a journalist, he has come into contact with the privileges of the House-in other words, what he says amounts to this, "I place my journalism and my duty to my journal before your laws " ; and if he had been a man of courage he would have added, "I am prepared to stand by what I have done, and take the penalty." But. no: as is the case with all wealthy journals like the Dunedin Star, they do these impudent and defiant acts to rake in the coppers ; but when it comes to paying a penalty they squeal. In my opinion there is only one thing for the House to do-to insist on a penalty. If no more can be put in than \$15 I am prepared to accept that ; I should be prepared to vote for more. But I do say, unless this amount is levied upon some person or persons specifically named, the resolution will be blank cartridge, and the first man to turn round and laugh at the House for the mistake it has made will be the Hon. the Premier. I believe, if we are to stem what I believe to be one of the unfortunate tendencies of the period in which we live-the demoralisation of public life-one of the safeguards we have to support is the dignity and honour of Parliament. If we hand over that dignity and honour to the ipse dixit of the Premier, good-bye to representative institutions. We shall come under the lash, and, instead of Parliament being the highest Court of the land, it will become simply a tool to carry out the wishes of the man who is paramount at the time a tool for the purpose of paying for favours received by him in his public or private capacity, and not for the purpose of maintaining those things that are for the benefit and well-being of the colony. While I was listening to this debate, I could not help asking myself, if the newspaper published by the honourable member for Palmerston had committed a breach of privilege in

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connection with this matter, what would have happened ? An Hon. MEMBER-It did a good deal worse. Mr. RUSSELL .- No, it did not, and I defy the honourable member to find anything in the Manawatu Standard that could be taken as a breach of privilege. Mr. HORNSBY .- I will accept the challenge. Mr. RUSSELL .- Very well, let it be done. Sir, it is a fact that for some months past the Dunedin Evening Star has been the medium by which Ministerial wishes and aspirations have been communicated to the world, and the fact that that paper has of late shown a friendly feeling towards the Government was the cause of this scandalous resolution, now modified by the Premier's colleagues as the result of a caucus. The present proposal of a fine of \$15 has come about through the pressure of the House. The Premier's proposal was that the Dunedin Star reporter's letter was satisfactory. As I see that the Minister for Railways is going to have a word or two to say, I will presently speak for his benefit. First of all, I say that In the Cabinet settled yesterday's resolution. due course, that was amended by the resolution of the Minister of Mines, and then we got the amendment of the Minister for Public Works. I now desire to say

before the Minister for Railways what I said in his absence just now : that the Premier was ungenerous to his colleague, when in the course of his speech, he said that when the breach of privilege was before the House on a former occasion a certain course ought to have been taken. Now, Sir, that very course was suggested by the honour- able member for Bruce, Mr. Allen, and the Premier now inferentially blames his colleague for not taking it. The Dunedin Star reporter has affirmed time after time in his letter and in his evidence, that he obtained this infor- mation honourably. I do not know what the term means, so far as a newspaper is concerned ; but I do say this : that, whether he obtained that evidence honourably or not, he knew when he was sending it for publication that he was breaking the laws of Parliament; and that is emphasized still further by the remark in his letter to the effect that, with regard to the statement of one witness's evidence, his Editor invited, as an act of fairness to the witness, that his evidence should be published at once. Words to that effect occur in the letter. As to the action of the reporter in refusing to answer the questions that were put to him, I say that, as a reporter, he took the only course he could take in refusing to disclose the source of his information. Every- body admits that. The strong term that the member for Wellington City (Mr. Hutcheson) stated would be applicable to him for having obtained this information would have been perfectly justifiable had he given the source of his information. But is it not the case in the Supreme Court that men are placed upon their oath, and that the Court asks certain questions of them, which, if upon matters of honour, they refuse to answer? They understand that if they persist in their refusal a penalty will be involved, and they accept the decision of the Court in connection with the matter. I say, Sir, it is exactly the same in this House. The House, in fixing a monetary penalty, is acting in accordance with precedent and modern opinion. An Hon. MEMBER .- NO. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL. - The honourable gentleman said "No." Well, I listened to his speech, and did not hear him prove anything to the contrary. The time spent in connection with this matter will not have been wasted, for I believe it would have been a shocking scandal on the part of Parliament if the Premier's reso- lution of yesterday had been carried. The dis- cussion that has taken place has brought the Premier and the Cabinet down to the necessity of maintaining, even by monetary penalty, the honour and the dignity of Parliament; and, therefore, that much has been wrung from the Government, although the Premier has de- claimed against those whose pressure has com- pelled him to do so. Sir J. G. WARD (Minister for Railways) .- The honourable member who has just preceded me has been away from the House for the last few days, and it seems to me that he is anxious to put on record the fact that he has again returned to life, and is taking part in the pro- ceedings of Parliament. Had he not been absent, he would have known that it was declared in the first instance by the honourable member opposite, and later on by the honour- able member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher), that this was to be a no-party question. I repeat, Sir, that when the matter was first brought up the suggestion to set up a Committee came from the opposite side of the House, and, to avoid the idiotic farce of bringing the reporter and publisher to the bar of the House, a Com- mittee was set up to deal with it. The honour- able member for Riccarton, like other honour- able members, is now trying to turn the whole thing into a personal attack upon the Premier. He talks of maintaining the dignity of the House ; but I would ask, is it maintaining the dignity of the House to deliver such a speech as he has done to-day? The honourable mem- ber lamented the fact that the decadence of the Cabinet is such that the whole combined wisdom of the Government was only able to propose a resolution such as was submitted yesterday. I would like to know what is wrong with the honourable member. It seems to me that it is not so much a question of privilege that he is concerned with, as the opportunity of trying to discredit the Premier-of trying to discredit the Administration. He desires to create the impression that there are men more capable than the Premier, and more capable than any other member of the Administration, of conducting the business of the House, and that person is the honourable member himself. There can be no doubt, Sir, that the whole thing has been turned into an attack upon the Government. This afternoon I had the plea- sure of being in surroundings infinitely more

pleasant than these, and I am exceedingly sorry that, with the exception of two honourable
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change, no other members were there. All I can say is, if they had been at the Petone Flower Show, they would have been all the better for it. To return here, and to have to listen to cold-blooded speeches such as that delivered by the honourable member for Riccarton on a matter that has already been threshed to death, is such a contrast to that scene that it almost makes one feel disposed to go back again to the flower show. Now, Sir, after all this talk about this 5.0. question of privilege, I hold here in my hand a report of a question of privilege that was raised in the House of Commons only last July in connection with the publication of certain matter in the Daily Mail : and what was done on that occasion by the Conservative Administration, and by the Right Hon. Mr. Balfour? Did he attempt to parade the fact, as some members in this House are doing, that after the House has declared this is a breach of privilege it will be a loss of dignity, a loss of prestige, a loss of the privileges of Parliament, if we do not impose a fine, and if we do not bring the people concerned before the bar of the House in order to go through the farce that has characterized similar proceedings on all former occasions ? No, Sir, he did nothing of the kind. As soon as the resolution was passed by the House of Commons that a breach of privilege had been committed, he decided, in a common-sense way, not to bring the reporter or the publishers to the bar of the House of Commons and not to fine them, and no further action was taken. Mr. PIRANI .- What was the breach of privilege ? Sir J. G. WARD .- It was in July last, this year, and it was in connection with the Daily Mail. I have here a column-and-a-half account of the proceedings, and honourable members might like me to read it, but I do not think they do. They know perfectly well what is at the bottom of all this question here. An Hon. MEMBER .- Read it. Sir J. G. WARD .- I think I will leave it to some other member to read, but I say the fact remains- Mr. FISHER .- What did Mr. Balfour do ? Sir J. G. WARD. He took no action at all, beyond asking the House to declare it was a breach of privilege. Mr. FISHER .- What do you propose ? Sir J. G. WARD .- We propose some action ; but it does not matter what we propose in this House, every suggestion that has been made causes dissatisfaction to some honourable members. In the first instance, it was proposed by myself - not upon the floor of the House, but in conversation with some honourable members opposite and upon our side of the House-not to set up a Committee, but to bring the reporter and publisher of the Dunedin Evening Star to the bar of the House, and honourable members, excepting the honourable member for Brnoe, felt that was not the best course to adopt under the circumstances, and they urged that it should go to a Committee. Sir J. G. Ward Sir J. G. WARD .- Well, the honourable member did not give utterance to his views on that occasion, or, at all events, he did not say he disagreed with me. But we came to that course after consultation with honourable members opposite, and the medium through which the suggestion came was the honourable member for Franklin. Very well ; as soon as the report is brought down and a resolution is submitted to the House we find that not only some members opposite, but that some members of our own party, hold strong views on the matter, and they believed that a fine should be imposed. They did not think that the reporter and the publisher of the Dunedin Evening Star should be called before the bar of the House, because their common-sense told them that this proceeding has always been a ludicrous farce in the past. Now the honourable member for Riccarton tries to convert the fact that the Government decided to confer with those members of our own party who have decided views on the question that a penalty ought to be imposed in addition to the resolution submitted to the House into a Government crisis. Does the honourable member mean to tell me that. in order to have that fair and common understanding between members of a party and the Administration when a difficulty arises, such as arose in this case owing to a large number of men entertaining similar views to those of the member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher) that a fine should be imposed. it is not the duty of the Government to confer with those members and ascertain what their views are? Many members of our party held pronounced views on this question that a

fine should be imposed, and a fine has been suggested to the House, after consultation with members of the party. Mr. FISHER .- This is my motion, not yours. Sir J. G. WARD. - I am quite sure my honourable friend, who is a sensible man, will recognise that in a matter such as this is. where there has not only been a question of privilege and diversity of opinion as to the penalty, but where an attack has been made by some honourable members, particularly on the head of the Government- Mr. FISHER .-- He says his motion has been carried by forty-two to eighteen ; that is my motion, not his. Sir J. G. WARD .- The honourable member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher) found he had deserters in his camp. As soon as the honourable member took charge temporarily of the ship over there without a rudder-unless it be that the general manager, the member for Franklin, is the rudder for the whole party- what occurred ? Mr. FISHER .- I was nearly sent for. Sir J. G. WARD .- The honourable member says he was very nearly sent for; but the honourable member will recognise that, just as he was about to be sent for, the first mate of the rudderless ship on the opposite side, the

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member for Bruce, jumped overboard and gave I should be accepted, and in doing this we are him a clear indication that he could not sup- placing the matter upon all-fours with every port his resolution ; and so did the honourable former case. However, Sir, some of our own member for Franklin. Mr. J. ALLEN .- And yet you say we made cover, as has been stated by some honourable member, the cost incurred in connection with it a party question. Sir J. G. WARD .- Well, the honourable come down and suggest that this should be member saw the folly and the consequences ; he saw what was going to occur, and he sud- done, what occurs ? Why, immediately some denly realised the fact that he was going to honourable member opposite and the honour- have a new leader in the honourable member able member for Riccarton try to make a for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher), and he took mountain out of a molehill, and commence to fright, and was afraid to vote for the resolution. discuss not the question of privilege, but they Then the honourable member for Wellington make an attack on the head of the Government. City (Mr. Fisher), when he was very nearly being sent for, found himself in a hopeless minority of eighteen to forty-two, instead of The having forty-two to eighteen votes. honourable member for Wellington City paled House of Commons, the leader of the House, immediately, and we all noticed on this side of the House that he looked sad and dejected as soon as he was deserted by the two lieu- tenants of his new party. Very well ; in the first instance I came down to the House and suggested that the publisher and reporter of the Dunedin Evening Star should be brought before the bar of the House, but that was looked upon as an undesirable thing. Mr. J. ALLEN .- No. Sir J. G. WARD .- Not by the honourable member ; I have said so already. But, in con- sequence of the farcical ending of all previous efforts in the direction of bringing the reporter or publisher to the bar of the House, what did we do? The course which most commended in connection with his department, came for- itself to members of this House was to set up a ward to deal with it he was greeted with a Committee, and we did so. The Committee reported. and as soon as the report comes down honourable members opposite want the reporter and publisher of the paper brought before the House ; and so does the honourable member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher). Although we set up the Committee really on the suggestion of of the House. That was the way they hastened honourable members opposite, to prevent the Press people being brought to the bar of the land. But what has been imputed to the House, we were not able to please them in that head of the Government by the last speaker ? respect. Very well ; then the Government bring down a resolution on lines similar to that in publishing balloons concerning himself and adopted in this House on every previous oc- casion-except the case of Sir Julius Vogel, very many years ago-exactly on lines carried out in every former privilege case, and immediately is absolutely without foundation. honourable members opposite say that this is that the honourable member has done the Pre- not going far enough for them; and we find mier a gross injustice. Some months ago an members opposite, and also amongst our own party, who want to impose

a fine. And the a rumour about a Governorship that appeared honourable member for Wellington City (Mr. in this journal, but there was not a tittle of Fisher) is the medium through which the effort truth in that statement. I am now referring is made, because they want to have a slap at to a statement made outside the House. the Government, and do not care how they able member say there is not a tittle of truth do it. An Hon. MEMBER .- Be charitable. in what I stated ? Sir J. G. WARD .- I am always charitable ; but, Sir, honourable members know perfectly of truth in the statement about the Fiji Governorship. well what has occurred. In consequence of a difficulty in connection with this comparatively say whether there is any truth in the honour- able member's statement or not, but I should infinitesimal matter the House declares its privileges have been infringed, and then de- be exceedingly sorry to accuse him of untruth- fulness. But I say an attempt has been made clares by resolution that the expression of regret VOL. CXVIII .- 28. party want to go further and inflict a fine, to this matter. Then, when the Government And yet we have this instance in the House of Commons on the 21st July last, where a breach of privilege was committed by the Daily Mail, and, after that was dealt with by the Mr. Balfour, declined to call the proprietor or the publisher of the paper before the bar of the House, and declined to go through the farce of inflicting a penalty upon them. An Hon. MEMBER .- What was the breach of privilege ? Sir J. G. WARD .- The breach of privilege is reported in the Daily Mail, and members will find it under the heading, "Challenge to Mr. Brodrick." I have got it here, to the extent of a column and a half, and any honourable mem- ber can see it ; and the difference there and here is that when Mr. Brodrick, who was the man against whom the breach of privilege had been committed by the publication of matters tremendous burst of cheering. That was the way honourable members in the House of Commons helped him when his leader had made up his mind not to impose a fine on the newspaper proprietor or reporter, and not to call the reporter or the publisher before the bar to uphold the dignity of Parliament in Eng- He said the reporter of the Dunedin Evening Star had been the mouthpiece of the Premier the policy of the Government. And he said that this was his price. I say that statement In saying attempt was made to connect the Premier with Mr. G. W. RUSSELL. - Does the honour- Sir J. G. WARD .- I say there is not a tittle I am not in a position to

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in the way I have stated, and I say it is very unfair, because it is incorrect. At the bottom of this matter an insidious attack has been made against the Premier. It was at first thought by some members opposite that they would be able to fasten the offence on a member of the House; but when the report of the Committee came down, and it was shown that that could not be done, then immediately those members turned round and made an attack on the Administration. And we have the member for Riccarton accusing the Government-of what ? Of not knowing their mind for twenty- four hours at a time. The honourable member ought to be the last member in this House to make such an accusation. If the honourable member, with his ability, would only be con- sistent, and use the great abilities he possesses to the best purpose, he would attain to a much more prominent, position in this country. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- I can wait my time for that. Sir J. G. WARD .- Yes; but the trouble is that the honourable member does not maintain any position he takes long enough ; he is always running away, and he does not give those who would support him any opportunity of doing so. It is the honourable member who does not know his own mind for twenty-four hours at a time. Those members opposite desired that a Committee should be set up, and then after it has reported still they are not satisfied. They are like the boy with a plaything. The honour- able member has not heard the whole of this debate, and yet he gets up and accuses the Ad- ministration- Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- I took part in the first portion of the debate. Sir J. G. WARD .- I said the honourable gentleman did not hear the whole of the de- bate. It is quite correct that he took part in the first part of the debate. The Government, after the report came down, framed a resolution which they believed to be on just lines, and I believe so still. Honourable members know perfectly well what has taken place since. To talk about a ten-pound or a five-pound note pro- tecting our privileges and

upholding the dignity of the House is absurd. It is only a question of degree, and that degree is represented by \$15, which is the extra amount represented by this resolution. I fail to see, myself, where the dignity comes in, and I think the sooner honourable members clearly see the position the better. This is an attack made on the Govern- ment by some honourable members, and the attack could not be much worse if it was a motion of want of confidence. This question has been discussed on the floor of the House for two or three days. An Hon. MEMBER. - You have taken up some time. Sir J. G. WARD. - I have had to, as I thought it necessary to throw some common- sense into the proceedings. I should not have risen now if it had not been for the statements made by the honourable member for Riccarton. I thought it necessary to give him a castigation. Sir J. G. Ward I do think the sooner honourable members real- ise that this is an attack on the Government the better, because that is what it is. And if we had followed the common-sense procedure adopted by the Imperial Government and the House of Commons last July this matter would have ended when the first resolution was brought on the floor of this House. But when I heard statements made against the Government such as those made by the member for Riccarton it was impossible for a cool, calculating individual like myself to sit still and not say anything in reply. I would like to ask the honourable member, has the Spectator, a journal published in Christchurch, never committed a breach of Why, that journal commits a privilege ? breach of privilege almost every week. I be- lieve that the honourable member, in the posi- tion he has taken up, really wants to have that journal brought into prominence. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- Will you limit the fine to £15 ? Sir J. G. WARD .- I believe I would make it £500 in that case, in order to mark our sense of displeasure at the extent of the breaches of privilege it commits. I think honourable members are making a great deal too much of this matter, and I feel sure it would have been better if they had adopted the course suggested in the first instance; but if members of this House think an Administration which has self- respect, and which intends to maintain it. is going to be kicked about in a manner just as they like, I am afraid they are altogether mis- taken, and it is about time we realised the posi- tion. Mr. ELL .- Lay the party Whip on. Sir J. G. WARD .- There is no party Whip about it. The honourable member ought not If he was sitting on these to be too sensitive. benches would he allow an attack to be made on members of his Administration without re- plying to it ? Mr. ELL .- The Administration was not at- tacked. Sir J. G. WARD .- The honourable member knows that that is not the case, and he knows. too, that the Government would not be doing their duty unless they clearly indicated their position and gave the House to understand that they were not prepared to allow a matter of this sort to be converted into an attack upon them. Why have such questions been raised as that an attempt has been made by the Pre- mier of this colony to bring himself under the notice of the Home Secretary-Mr. Chamber- lain-in connection with the Governorship of Fiji? Is that not an attack upon the adminis- tration of the Government ? Mr. ELL .- That was said only five minutes ago. Sir J. G. WARD .- The honourable member is wrong. At any rate, if the statement has been made, is that not a good reason in itsaf why I should take the earliest opportunity of replying to it ? However, I have been speaking myself for twenty-five minutes, so that it must be more than five minutes ago since the attack

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was made ; and if I had not replied to it I am | first brought up, and the member for Franklin sure the honourable member, with his well- known impartiality, would have got up in his place and replied to the honourable member for Riccarton, who made the assertion, in a better way than I have done. Sir, I was never more surprised than I was this afternoon when I was told, after my return from Petone, by the honourable member for Christchurch City that this question of privilege was still going on. I thought the financial debate would have been proceeding. It really appears to me now that honourable members are carrying on this discussion merely to show the falla- ciousness of their reasoning and the crude- ness of their arguments in the debate on the Financial Statement. The honourable member for Riccarton has himself taken this course, apparently, to disprove the figures he produced in his speech on the finances of

the colony. Sir, I regret I have had to speak on this matter again. I hope it will be the last time ; but if the occasion arises and the circumstances warrant it, if it is necessary to speak in justification of a course the Government have attempted to follow, and if we have motives attributed to us quite outside this question of privilege, I say it is the duty of members of the Ministry to protect themselves or their colleagues or their party from attacks of the kind. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) .- Sir, so much new matter has been introduced into this debate by Ministers since the last amendment was moved that it is impossible to allow it to go without answer. The Postmaster-General quoted the instance of a breach of privilege at Home, published there on the 31st July, and yet, in reply to repeated invitations from me to specify what that breach of privilege was. he refused to give the House any details, and wanted the House to think that that breach of privilege might be compared in some way with the one at present before the House. Why, there is no comparison at all. The breach of privilege the Postmaster-General alluded to followed the publication of a series of cables sent Home by the correspondent of the Daily Mail in South Africa. In the House the Minister of War had said that the Daily Mail had obtained from the War Office, in a surreptitious manner, information they had no right to, and, in the reply to that statement from the Minister in the House, the Daily Mail challenged the Minister to prosecute it and justify his accusation. The Minister thought discretion the better part of valour, and instead of doing it he got the House, like the present Ministry did on one occasion when Sir Walter Buller had challenged a Minister, to declare the newspaper comments a breach of privilege. The House of Commons naturally went no further. Then the Postmaster-General said that the member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher) found the Opposition like a ship without a rudder, and he took charge of the ship. Why, it was the Postmaster-General who was like a ship without a rudder when this breach of privilege was taken charge of the ship, and it was in consequence of the member for Franklin's utilisation of the rudder that the Postmaster-General did what the Premier thinks he ought not to have done, by setting up the Privileges Committee. But we have the facts from the Postmaster-General about this resolution. He told us that the member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher) was "outpaced by the Government in the matter of tactics." Yes, that is the fact. The amendment we have before us may well be described as "outpacing the member for Wellington City in the matter of tactics," because nobody takes the amendment seriously as the opinion of the Government. Mr. FISHER .- They did not consider the position ; they felt the position. Mr. PIRANI .- Yes ; the member for Wellington City points out that the Government did not consider the position, but that they felt the position, and acted accordingly. Now, there is a remarkable thing in the letter to the House of the Dunedin correspondent of the Evening Star that to a great extent confirms the idea of those members who think the Premier had something to do with it. Any member who studies the words used by the Premier in this House will know that one word he misuses very frequently is the word "contumely." Instead of using the word "contumacy," the Premier invariably uses the word "contumely," and this letter of the correspondent of the Dunedin Evening Star has the same misuse of the word "contumely." He says in his letter, "I contend that there was no contumely or disrespect to the House." Of course, he meant "contumacy." It is a most remarkable thing that the Premier and the representative of the Dunedin Evening Star should make the same misuse of that word. Of course, I would not like to say that the Premier wrote this letter, but it seems to me that the person who did write it must be almost a cousin german to the Premier. Now, the Premier, in the course of his speech this afternoon, quoted from the rulings of the Speaker, which he called the Standing Orders, on page 113, No. 10, to prove that this case was on parallel lines with the offence committed by a member of this House when an order was made to purge the offence by withdrawing the words and apologizing. I asked the Premier to quote Ruling No. 11, which is more à propos, but with his usual discretion he refrained. Now, anybody who has read this letter from 7.30. the representative of the Dunedin Evening Star will see that there is nothing but a qualified withdrawal in that letter -- a qualified withdrawal that would not be accepted by any Speaker of this House from any member who had

transgressed the rules of the House. In regard to the letter, there is also another point that I want to emphasize, as supporting my disbelief that it was drawn up by a journalist. The following sentence occurs in it : "It is not with any view of transgression against the wishes of the House or the Committee that the report was

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gression ": what does that mean? The idea of any journalist writing such a sentence in a weighty matter like this, and with the view of submitting it to the House! I suppose he meant it was not with any idea of transgressing. I fear that the gentleman in question has been consulting somebody who knows probably more about parliamentary rules than he does about literary composition, and in doing that the person he consulted has dug a pit for him, and he has fallen in. But I do think that what the House ought to demand is not what is in the motion of the Premier at all. In the first place, I think the House ought to demand what Mr. Speaker always does demand from an offending member, a full apology without qualification for the offence that has been committed. Then, if the person refuses to give a full apology he must be punished - like I was last year. I refused to give a full apology, and the House very properly, from their point of view, awarded to me the punishment of having to enjoy myself outside instead of inside this Chamber for one night. An Hon. MEMBER .- With the phonograph. Mr. PIRANI .- With the graphophone; and I believe, as an honourable member says, I had a larger audience than Mr. Speaker had in here. I say that in this case the option ought to be given to the Press representative who has offended of giving a complete apology to the House, and if he does that, then probably the House would take a more lenient view of the case than if he refuses to give that complete apology. Now, the Minister of Mines this afternoon introduced a fresh topic into this discussion. The Minister of Mines gave us some particulars about the way the papers were "bundled up." as he said, in the Committee-room, and he pointed out that one drawback in connection with that Committee-room was that the room was used by other Committees, and that because there were no proper conveniences for the storage of papers it was possible for members of other Committees, or for other persons going into the Committee-room, to get at the evidence. Now, I took the trouble, with an expert, to measure the cabinet in which the papers are kept belonging to this Committee. The cabinet is 3 ft. 3 in. by 2 ft. 10 in. by 15 in., and we are asked to believe that the paper, 9 in. by 4 in., could not be kept in a cabinet of those dimensions ! Was ever such nonsense submitted before to any House? As a matter of fact, this was the excuse urged before the Committee by at least two witnesses : that there was not a proper place for the storage of the papers there; and the member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher) went pretty fully into this matter in his cross-examination. In cross-examining one witness the Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Fisher, asked the following questions :- " Mr. Fisher.] I understood you to say that you had a large number of books in the Committee-room ?- Yes; two cases of books were brought up from Dunedin by Mr. Holsted, one of the witnesses, and a very large tin case, full | Mr. Pirani the Express Company. "Do you require the cases to hold your minute-book ?- The books that I refer to are those produced by witnesses. "But the minute-book ? - No, we do not require cases to hold that. "Could not the clerk take possession of the minute-book and the documents after the proceedings of the Committee had terminated ?- He had possession of that book, and also the letter-book. " Did you not say that those books were left about in the room ?- No ; the clerk had charge of them. I referred to the books, exhibits in the evidence. " You say that copies of the minutes of evidence were left lying about ?- Yes ; I have seen them. " When the Committee was not sitting ?- Immediately after the rising of the Committee. " You say that minutes of evidence, if not the minute-book, were left lying loosely about after the Committee had finished its sittings? -Sometimes we finish our sittings after 1 o'clock, and the members hurry off to lunch. We do not care to stay and see about the books then. "I understood you to say that, after the business of the Committee was over, you have seen the evidence lying about on the table ?- Yes." Now, the Clerk in

giving evidence also went into this question, and he to a great extent confirmed what the Chairman said. The Ciers also pointed out that he received the evidence on Friday, the 16th August, and that it did not come before the Committee until the 22nd August; therefore there was no opportunity for this evidence to be found lying about the Committee-room until practically after the publication of the evidence in the Evening Star. Under these circumstances. I do not think there is very much in the contention about papers lying about the Committee-room, especially in view of the fact that there is a cabinet of the dimensions I have stated, and with keys to lock it up, in which the evidence had been put. Now, the Premier, in the course of his speech, broke fresh ground. and in particular he laid very great stress upon what he considered improper language used by the member. for Wellington City (Mr. Hutcheson) in the course of his speech. I am not at liberty to refer to the words the Premier was compelled to withdraw. but I can say he passed a general reflection upon the language used in this House by the member for Wellington City (Mr. Hutcheson). Well, if ever I have heard Satan reproving sin we have certainly got it in this case. "Political sneak," is the sort of language that the Premier uses in his tirades. "Political ferret." "political wasp," "political vipers," and so on : those are the choice specimens of language that the Premier has used towards members, and they are used by the very member of the House who wants to set an example to other members as to what language we should use in debate.

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Why, by going through the Premier's speech you would cull as extensive a collection of abusive terms as applied to members as you could get in any slang dictionary. And for the Premier to set himself up as a judge to say what sort of language ought to be used in this House, and to condemn another member, is one of the most extraordinary things that could be imagined. Now, the Premier told us, in the course of his speech, that the reason the representative of the Dunedin Star exonerated the officials of the Committee was that they were not in a position to speak in this House in their own defence. Well, if that was the reason-and I accept it as the reason-why did not the representative of the Dunedin Star treat the witnesses who went before that Committee in the same way? They are not able to come to this House and speak in their own defence. Why should he not also have included them in his denial of the persons from whom he got the evidence ? It has practically been asserted by the Premier in this House that one of the witnesses. if he did not give the evidence, at any rate was in a position to give it, and that he had the evidence long enough to have given it to the representative of the Dunedin Star. That proves the necessity for the representative of the Star to have gone further in regard to naming those from whom he did not get the evidence, and to have included in the list-that is, if he did not get the evidence from any of those witnesses-to have included in the list the witnesses who have been before the Committee, and those who were assisting the witnesses- that is, their clerical assistants. If that had been done, his exculpation would have been much more complete than under the circumstances in which he made it ; and, probably, faced with that we would be in a much better position to judge than we are at present. Then, the Premier also condemned the Privileges Committee for not giving the House a lead in Why, the House had already the this matter. lead. The House had already decided that this question was a breach of privilege. I will ask the Premier, who was a member of the Banking Committee, what sort of a lead did that Committee give to the House when the witness, Mr. Watson, was called before the House for refusing to give evidence ? Mr. SEDDON .- That was not a Privileges Committee. Mr. PIRANI .- No ; but it was a Committee which reported a witness to the House, and the House did the proper thing. The House expected, and we expect, that he as leader of the House would give the House a lead, and in that lead he would naturally state what course he would take. Now, I think the proper course that we ought to have taken was this: We ought in the first place, as we did not get an expression of proper withdrawal --- a proper expression of regret-from the representative of the Dunedin Star in his letter, to have called him to the bar of the House to answer for his refusal to give evidence before the Committee. If he then gave

us a complete expression of regret it would have been for the House, I think, to have considered what course they ought to have taken in regard to that; and I have no doubt that the House, in its wisdom, after having received that complete apology, would have allowed the matter to rest there. Then, so far as the publication of the evidence is concerned, I do not see anything very grave about that, except that it is a breach of our Standing Orders, and until our Standing Orders are amended it is an improper thing for anybody to get a shorthand report taken for the Committee and utilise that for publication. That, I think, is the proper position to take up. Now, I have been asked by an honourable member, who is going to move an amendment if the amendment of the Minister for Public Works is rejected, to state to the House what his amendment will be. His proposal will be, that after the word "and" where the Minister for Public Works proposes to put in his amendment, to put in these words: "resolves to impose a fine of £10 upon the publisher of the Dunedin Evening Star for committing a breach of the privileges of the House of Representatives, and a fine of £5 on Mr. A. E. Cohen for refusing to answer a question put to him by the Privileges Committee." Mr. WITHEFORD (Auckland City) .- I think I share the feelings of a majority of members in this House in saying that I think we have had quite enough discussion on this subject. What we want now is to take a vote. Of course, although I seconded the resolution of the Premier I did so with the honest conviction that it was better in the interests of the country to get this matter settled and proceed with the business of New Zealand than to go on arguing this question on the floor of the House, and I am still of that opinion, although amendments are being proposed. The difficulty seems to be what form the punishment shall take. Some want one thing and some another, so we have three forms of punishment demanded by the House. But we should consider that we are fining the country heavily every hour we spend in discussing the question. We are retarding the progress of the country, and I am afraid the worst blame lies with my friends of the Opposition. The whole subject has been brought to finality by one of the members of the Opposition, who said that if Mr. Cohen honours the House and gives the evidence he is required to he is a skunk, and that if he does not he ought to be fined. In this way it is proposed to place him between the devil and the deep blue sea. It is evident that we must have somebody's blood or head before the House is going to be satisfied. But suppose we adopt the Chinese method and cut off Mr. Cohen's head, or the heads of all those distinguished members of the Press who adorn that gallery, what good would it do the country? The representatives of the Press in the colony have I know good heads-especially Mr. Cohen. him personally, and have seen him advocating the interests of New Zealand in Australia, and there is not a more honourable, more intelligent, or more able worker for New Zealand.

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Yet we sit here hour after hour trying to punish him in this extraordinary way for something he has done-as was done in the House of Commons, as was pointed out by Sir Joseph Ward, where it was thought better to pass it silently by than bring the offender before the bar of the House. An Hon. MEMBER .- It was a different thing to this. Mr. WITHEFORD .- It was a worse thing than this. It was a portion of the new plan of campaign laid down by Lord Kitchener to settle the difficulty in South Africa that was published; and it was proposed that the publisher should be brought before the bar of the House, and the leader of the House protested against that, and pointed out that no good would accrue by such a course being followed, nor would it add to the dignity and prestige of the House; and I am satisfied that in our case no good will be gained by bringing the printer and the publisher of the Dunedin Evening Star before the bar of this House. Considering the importance of industrial matters to the people of this colony, I would rather see my friend Mr. Vaile, of Auckland, brought before the bar of the House to give such information as he can to the Hon. Sir Joseph Ward on railway matters. At the same time, I do not think it is possible for any man to teach that honourable gentleman anything about the management of railways, for I think that he is the best man we could possibly have to hold the position of Minister for Railways. In

regard to the question of the punishment to be inflicted, when we come to consider that all that it is proposed to fine the offender is \$15 or \$25, and when we divide that amongst the different members of this House, we find that the dignity of honourable members will be represented by so many shillings per head. I always refrain as much as possible from taking up the time of the House by speaking, because I enjoy listening to honourable members' speeches. Therefore I never make any member jealous by speaking myself, because he knows he can speak better himself. In this case I have ventured to speak a second time, because I do not think we ought to waste the time of the House and put the country to the expense of \$30 an hour threshing out a question that ought to be settled in five minutes. So far as the honourable member for Palmerston is concerned, no one regretted more than I did that he was punished at all. What did that punishment amount to ? My honourable friend should think of this in connection with the question before us, and in dealing with the representative of the Dunedin Star. Honourable gentlemen opposite would have been perfectly satisfied if in the first instance a fine of \$5 had been imposed. Now that £15 is proposed, surely that will satisfy them. That is three times the amount that was proposed by one of my respected friends on the other side. There can be only one thing that they want. They cannot get heads; but, perhaps it is money they want, and if it would meet their wishes I should be quite willing, in order to put an end to this Mr. Witheford senseless talk, that we fine the Premier £50, and this \$50 is to be expended in 8.0. if coffee and tea - not champagne this House is kept sitting after twelve o'clock at night. In that way we may come to something practical. But, Sir, I say, let us vote on both sides according to our convictions. and not carry on this ridiculous waste of the country's time. If our constituents sat around here now and saw what was going on we should all be hooted out of the House.

Mr. W. FRASER (Wakatipu) .- After the speech of the last speaker, who has summed up the whole thing so logically and so eloquently. there is now no more to be said on either side of the House. However, before we come to a vote I wish to put on record in two or three words my reason for voting against this amendment. I have not, Sir, from the beginning of this debate deviated one hair-breadth from the subject before us. I have refused to be drawn to one side or the other. I objected to that letter, and so long as the acceptance of that letter as an expression of regret is contained in this motion, then I say I cannot and will not vote for it-the House may do as it pleases. Had the whole of the words in the motion in reference to the letter been eliminated I would have voted for it, but so long as they remain there I cannot, and will not. do it. The Premier said this afternoon. did we expect Mr. Cohen to go down on his knees. clothed in sackcloth and ashes, and make an abject apology? Certainly we do not, and we have never asked him to do anything of the kind. But we do expect that, when a letter is sent purporting to be an apology for a breach of the Standing Orders of the House, that that letter shall not contain what this letter does. Why, Sir, are we to sit here and be told how we conduct our business? Is it the function of any person who has transgressed the Standing Orders to presume to dictate to us what we are to do with these Standing Orders ? Well. other honourable members may swallow that leek if they like, but I am not prepared to do it. I have risen on this occasion merely to reiterate the views I hold in regard to this subject. and to explain why I shall record my vote against this motion.

Mr. ELL (Christchurch City) .- Sir, I rise now to take the opportunity of expressing my strong disapproval of the temptation which has been held out by certain members of this House to induce the continuance of this debate ; and I say that, with regard to this strong feeling in debate, the question of party is at the bottom of it. There is no doubt about that whatever, in my mind. We had it stated this afternoon by the Minister for Railways that this is not a party question. Well, I may say this: I am not going to give the name of the honourable member, but after the division which took place on the motion of the member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher) I was asked in the lobby why I had voted against the Government ? Now, Sir, I do not know Opposition and I do not know Government in this House, but I know the question which

is under consideration. If I voted according to party interests either one way or the other I should be guilty of a distinct breach of faith with the six thousand people who sent me to this House. I told them that on every question that came up I would vote according to my judgment in the matter, and according to my conviction. I do not set myself up as being the only member who is actuated by such motives; but I do say there are members in this House who do consider, and that they have told their constituents, that their first duty is to vote according to party interests, but my conviction lies in the opposite direction. My first conviction is to vote according to what I told my constituents I would do irrespective of party, and that is why I voted in this lobby, although the Government party voted in that lobby the other evening. I did not know party in the matter; I did not vote against the Government. I voted on the motion according to my own views. The heated tone of the debate was first set on foot by the flippancy chiefly of the Hon. the Minister of Mines; and all round the House there was no doubt about this: that there was a general protest—a murmur of protest—by a great majority of the members of the House against the light tone in which the offence was treated. It was felt that, so long as our Standing Orders are there, some greater respect should be paid to those Standing Orders. If the Standing Orders are wrong, let them be altered. They are there, and it is our duty to see that respect is paid to them. When the member for Wellington City moved his motion, then the party question came up. It then became practically a question of Government versus Opposition, and from that time till the division took place the talk was about the tactics of the Opposition—that they wanted to have a slap at the Government. That was distinctly disclaimed by the member for Bruce—he disclaimed that there was any party feeling whatever. The member for Wellington City is a man who believes in a member giving a pledge, either to one party or the other, yet he said and I think he was perfectly right—that this should not be treated as a party question, but that we should vote on it according to its merits, without any feeling either in the direction of the Government or towards the Opposition. I think the member for Wellington City was perfectly right in the attitude he adopted. It may be said that in stating that I consider the member for Bruce to be in earnest I am very innocent. Well, I do believe, Sir, that the member for Bruce was in earnest. Now, what I want to come to is this: Is the dignity of responsible government to be assailed because the House wants to take its own way as to how it shall deal with a question of privilege? Then, Sir, I say that the sooner we sweep away responsible government the better. That is what it is coming to. It has given rise to a senseless and stupid debate for the last two days—a struggle between the Opposition and the Government—on this question. An Hon. MEMBER.—The elective Executive. Mr. ELL.—Yes; and I venture to say this to the Premier: If we could bring the whole of the electors of the colony into the gallery to see the present pitiful exhibition of our lovely system of constitutional government they would insist on having the elective Executive in operation after the next election. But the fact is that the rottenness of the present system cannot be brought home to the electors of the colony, but I am positive we will get rid of the present system, and the sooner the better. Simply because it has obtained in the Old Country for a little over a century, and because it is in operation in other British colonies, we are to have it in operation here for all time. Because it is good, it is good, is the only argument in support of it. Then, Sir, the amendment moved by the member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher) would not do, because a number of members of the Opposition might have supported him, and, with the members on the Ministerial side who chose to vote according to their own convictions, it might have brought about a defeat of the Government. Therefore the whipping up was done—a caucus was held, the party machine was put into operation in full force, and a proposition was brought in by the Hon. the Minister of Mines. We had a pretty spectacle of the dignity of the Executive of the country. The usual course adopted when certain words are struck out is that the member who moves to strike out those words states other words which he intends to substitute for them, and these words are, of course, intimated to the House at the time the proposition is made, so that members may know what the member intends to do. But when the Minister of Mines sat

down he refused to give the House the words it was intended to add, and giggled at those he considered his opponents, while the Minister for Railways rubbed his hands with glee. What was the result ? It gave rise to a further discussion. "Would you not like to know what we are going to do ? but you will not hear"-that was the tone adopted, and as the result another lengthy debate ensued. Members do not want to be played with in that manner, especially by a member of the Executive ; and I regretted to see a member of the Executive lower his dignity and refuse to take the usual course, but instead should keep the proposed amendment up his sleeve, and chaff the Opposition and all those who consider they should have been told and have been enlightened as to what should have been put in the place of the words that were to be rejected. Sir, I have no more to say. I simply rose with the object of putting on record my protest against the tactics which have been adopted during this debate, and I hope that we will not have a similar unseemly scene such as we have had here during the last two days. Mr. MONK (Waitemata) .- I am not going to delay the House by attempting to make a speech, but I feel I must say a word or two to explain the action I am going to take. I feel that I cannot vote on this occasion at all ; I cannot vote for the amendment, because it is

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simply flaunting the House. It states that a fine of £15 is to be inflicted as a penalty, but it does not say upon whom it is to be inflicted, and anybody with common-sense knows that a debt stated in that form is irrecoverable. It must be specific, stating who owes it. Then, I cannot vote against the motion of the Premier, because that would appear as if I was indifferent to the privileges of this House and did not care about them. The Premier has placed me in the position that I cannot exercise my right and do my duty in conserving the privileges of the House by voting for a motion which carries conviction and common-sense with it. Mr. ATKINSON (Wellington City) .- I do not intend to delay the House at this late stage of the discussion, and I will not for a moment endeavour to reopen any consideration of the merits of the question as to which I have had my say already. I may be, perhaps, allowed to express my own view, and the view, I believe, that is very generally shared by members of the House-that is, that if the original motion put before us yesterday morning had been a straight-out motion to fine this journalist £15 for breach of the privileges of this House I believe the whole matter would have gone through without discussion in the course of half an hour. That is my opinion. I am not in a position at present to vote for the amendment that has been moved by the Minister for Public Works. The offences of which this journalist has been guilty towards the House are now three in number. First of all, then, there is the publication of matter which was not authorised to be published ; secondly, his contumacy in refusing to answer certain questions that were put to him by the Committee appointed to investigate ; and, thirdly, that so-called letter of regret, which appears to me to be simply in the nature of further contumely-an aggravation of the prior offences. Now, the original motion that was before us was that we should accept what, in my opinion, and, I think, in the opinion of the majority of this House, is an aggravation of the offence as purging the offence ; as purging, in fact, both offences of which he had previously been guilty. The amendment, however, is not quite so absurd as that. The amendment still says we shall accept his expression of regret, but it proposes we shall accept the sum of \$15 as well. If it had been £15 and costs it would have been probably a fancy figure that the journalist would have had to pay by this time, seeing that it has cost a day and a half of the time of this House to adjudicate upon the matter. Now, I wish to explain how it is I cannot accept the amendment as it stands. The motion as amended would run, "That this House accepts the expression of regret of the representative of that journal (the Star), and on payment of the sum of \$15 this House resolves to proceed no further in the matter." Now, there are no less than five necessary elements with regard to that payment which are absent from the form of amendment that the Minister for Public Works has moved. And the points are these : It does not say by whom Mr. Monk whom the payment is to be made ; it does not say for what the payment is to be made ; it

does not say when the payment is to be made : and it does not say what will be the nature of the payment if it is made. Now, I will ask any member who has an eye to business as to whether these are not all essential elements in the resolution which is supposed to assert the dignity and privileges of this House in a substantial and sensible fashion. Mr. FISHER .- Is the payment a condition precedent ? Mr.

ATKINSON .- That is a point I am coming to presently. I would like to reserve my argument upon it in the meantime. As I see the Minister is now in his place, and he has often extricated us from a difficulty in Committee by his suggestions as to the form of an amendment that is to be made when the House has agreed upon its substance. I would suggest to him that the draftsmanship of this amendment which we are now discussing might be pardoned if it had been moved extempore and impromptu, say, at a meeting of a football club, but I fail to understand how anything so loose, and therefore so futile, could be put before us for due consideration by a responsible authority. Now, what will be the nature of this payment that we ask for ?- for we do not insist upon it. We do not say that any person is liable to pay it ; we simply say that if it is paid we will not ask any more for " blood money." But what will be the nature of the payment? Now, in the case of the most recent "fusty, musty precedent " that has been referred to, the case of Mr. William Watson. which was before this House on the 17th July. 1896, there was there a straight-out resolution carried, which was : - "This House adjudges the said William Watson guilty of a breach of the privileges of this House, and orders that he be fined in the sum of \$500 sterling." Now, why do we not agree to a resolution on those lines, simply resolving that the publisher of this paper be fined in the sum of £15 sterling ? If that is not so, what will be the value-we have had a number of precedents quoted in this debate-what will be the value of this action as a precedent for the future? Nobody will be able to say for what the payment is to be made. As I have said, the original offence was doubled, and now it is trebled, and there is no specification of what part of the offence this \$15 is supposed to cover. It is quite open for anybody to say, after all, it is only hush-money, of compensation, or liquidated damages in full settlement of any damage the dignity of this House has sustained. Is it desirable that the House should so lower its dignity as to take up that position ? Is it desirable that the House in endeavouring to assert its dignity should put it down so low as that ? Now, the point which the honourable member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher) raised just now was as to whether or not the payment would not be a condition precedent-a condition precedent to our abandoning further proceedings in the matter.

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Well, what would be the position supposing we | of inserting the words "the letter." It will pass this resolution and the £15 is not paid ? As I say, we are absolutely powerless. We shall have no remedy. In the first place, what can the remedy be? Nobody is named. In the second place, to whom is the payment to be and flotation of certain dredging claims by Mr. made ? And, in the next place, was the payment to be a fine? No, it was not. Well, suppose it be in the nature of a fine. Goodness knows journal, and." what we shall call it, but I do not think any honourable member on consideration would say that if that £15 were not paid, say, within a week, or within a month, or six months, or effect : "resolves to impose a fine of £10 on the twelve months, we, as a House, would have any hold whatsoever upon any person for that £15. The thing is absolutely futile if we pass it in its present condition. Then, according to this motion, it may be said that the House would still have some remedy. Sir, the House, by the amendment, would be led into a compact with the representative of this journal that on the payment of this sum the House would not proceed further in the matter; and, assuming the sum was not paid within a week or a month, or whatever this House might consider a reasonable time, the House would be released from its compact, and it would be competent for the House to proceed further in the matter, and it could proceed to take whatever it deemed to be the proper course. In other words, the House would have to reassert itself, and a further motion would have to be moved, and we should spend two more days in discussing what form the resolution should take, and all the other details that have engaged us to-day and yesterday. I do not

think any honourable member who considers the matter will deny this part of remark that when a few minutes ago I said I my argument : that the motion in itself is absolutely futile, and that another motion would be necessary in the event of the £15 not being paid by the person whom we have not adjudged to be liable to pay it. Mr. FISHER. - The whole thing is pure humbug now. Mr. ATKINSON .- I agree with my colleague Mr. Fisher that it is pure humbug now: but even at this stage I should like to see it rescued from that position. There does not appear to be any desire on the part of the House to be vindictive against the journalist or against the Minister who made such a bungle of the original motion ; but we do think the dignity of the House is a matter above party, and we do think the House should pass some resolution of a nature that will be effective. There should be a resolution such as was moved in the case of William Watson. It should be ordered that the publisher of this paper be fined a sum of \$15. The House would thus assert its dignity without vindictiveness. As it stands, it is no exaggeration to repeat the words of my colleague Mr. Fisher that it is simply reducing the thing to the level of pure humbug. Mr. LANG (Waikato) .- I should like to ask your ruling, Sir, on this point : I wish to move an amendment which I take to be a prior amendment to that moved by the Minister for Public Works. My amendment is to strike out the words "expression of regret," with a view then read,- 8.30. "That, in the matter of the breach of privilege that has arisen through the publicity of the evidence given before the Goldfields and Mines Committee in respect to the promotion Cook, by the Dunedin Evening Star, the House accepts the letter of the representative of that Then, Sir, if that is carried, and the Minister's amendment is lost, I would move an amendment, after the word "and," to this publisher of the Evening Star for committing a breach of the privileges of the House of Representatives, and a fine of \$5 on Mr. A. E. Cohen for refusing to answer a question put to him by the Privileges Committee." I would ask you, Sir, to say whether I am in order in moving this amendment. Mr. DEPUTY - SPEAKER. - Yes, quite in order. Mr. LANG .- Then, I move the amendment which I have just read, and will point out that in the letter addressed to you there was no expression of real regret by the writer. I have not taken up any time during this debate, and I think honourable members will admit that it has been drawn out longer than is necessary. I shall move this amendment now, because I think every member who has spoken has admitted that there is no expression of regret as should be expressed by the writer under the circumstances. Mr. MONK (Waitemata) .- I simply wish to could not vote for the Premier's motion or the amendment I was not aware that a prior amendment of the character now before the House could have been introduced; but I feel perfectly satisfied that that amendment is in the form that I would have liked to have seen the motion placed before the House by the Premier yesterday morning. It insists upon the expression of regret, and it definitely expresses the amount of the fine that is to be paid by the delinquents, and I am perfectly satisfied that I can vote for this amendment as something that commands my respect and appeals to my reason. Mr. A. L. D. FRASER (Napier) .- We now have a clear indication from the other side of the House that their statements that this is not a party question are as truthful as many What does this other of their statements. amendment propose now? Why, to give you all another chance of speaking, and carrying this so-called debate on. An Hon. MEMBER .- Oh ! Mr. A. L. D. FRASER .- The member for Wakatipu says "Oh !" but there is not much significance in that. Possibly it is a national characteristic of the honourable gentleman. I say this is how I take it now : that the whole statement made by those honourable members -that they have not made this a party question - has been wiped aside by this amendment.

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Mr. PIRANI .- Why ? Mr. A. L. D. FRASER. - The honourable member for Palmerston, as usual, is commencing his interruptions. I cannot help saying that he reminds me of a Turkish proverb. This proverb was that there are three characteristics of a human being and a donkey-they eat, they drink, and they bray at other asses. I take my share of eating and drinking, but I do not want to take my share of braying with the honourable member for Palmerston. An Hon. MEMBER .- Well, sit down. Mr. A. L. D.

FRASER. - The honourable member for Bruce has his little coterie behind him, who applaud him in any assinine remark of that kind. But to proceed : We have had the honourable member for Wellington City (Mr. Atkinson), who has just given us a dissertation, not upon the offence supposed to have been committed by the Dunedin Evening Star, but in his mind-the legal, technical mind-a far more serious offence is the phraseology of the amendment. I venture to suggest to honour able members that when you go to a member of the legal profession, and he gives you an opinion gratis, you can take that opinion with a very large pinch of salt. The honourable gentleman has been speaking for twenty minutes giving the House an interpretation not of the offence committed, but an interpretation of the amend- ment. What have we drifted into ? An Hon. MEMBER .- A farce. Mr A. L. D. FRASER .- I quite agree with the honourable member ; we have drifted into We commence with it being held by a farce. the House that an offence has been committed ; and the House is asked to agree to that ; but that does not suit some members, who say that a fine should be imposed, because they consider that the dignity and honour of the House can be assessed by "filthy lucre." I do not take that view. I ask honourable members who have been parading and pretending to defend the dignity and honour of the House-I am pleased to say I had not the pleasure (I say "pleasure " sarcastically) of listening to the debate yesterday-but I ask the honourable member who introduced the trouble. Mr. Fisher, Is it not patent to the House and the country that his grievance is not that the dig- nity of the House has been offended, but that he has a sworn vendetta against every news- paper that exists in the colony? It is known as well as that the sun will rise to-morrow that it is that which has caused him to take the action he has. Then, Sir, we find that the member for Ashburton, Mr. McLachlan, stood up this afternoon and, with dramatic voice, asked what had become of the honour and dignity of Parliament ? Has that honour- able gentleman always guarded the honour and dignity of himself and Parliament with such gracious care ? Does he always do so ? wonder what the honourable gentleman would have said supposing a newspaper published these lines : " We regard the result of the session of Parliament just concluded with loathing and disgust." What would the honourable gentle- man think of such an expression being used towards members of Parliament, whose dignity and honour he is so anxious to take into his loving care and protect, from all slander? What would he say if this was published of honour- able members : "A depth of degradation has been sounded which is unrivalled in the annals of New Zealand, and both Chambers are equally blameworthy, although the most flagrant in- stances were exhibited in the lower Chamber. Drunkenness- Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER .- I think I must stop the honourable member. A member who reads words that are in themselves unparlia- mentary is in the same position as if he had used them himself. Mr. A. L. D. FRASER .- I was quoting a supposititious case. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER. - I thought the honourable gentleman was reading an extract from some newspaper. Mr. A. L. D. FRASER. - Perhaps I have been misunderstood. I was saying that. as honourable gentlemen were so anxious, so keen. to defend the honour and dignity of this House. I wished to put a supposititious case, and ask what they would have thought and done if they had seen it. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) .- I rise to a point of order. I understood you, Sir, to rule that members, in speaking to the amendment before the House, must confine their remarks to that amendment. The point of order is that the honourable member who is speaking is replying to arguments raised at an earlier stage of the debate - hours before this amendment was moved. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) .- Speaking to the point of order, this is a continuous debate ; it is simply another portion of it. We are discussing the insertion of certain words which are to be in- serted, as I understand, with a view to the in- sersion of further words, which will mean either a diminution of the fine, or detailing how the fine is to be levied and paid. Consequently. that being the case, there is a connection, and I would say that what the honourable memiter has just quoted was on a former occasion per- mitted by the Speaker to be read. It has already been used in one of the debates this session, and is to be found in Hausa'd. Mr. J. ALLEN .- You, Mr. Deputy-Speaker. yourself ruled that the debate ought to be cue hned to the subject-matter of the

amendment. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER. - That is so : but the amendment involves the main question further. On this point I do not think the honourable member is out of order in referring to the substance of the original motion ; but if the honourable member commences to detwist the question of the insertion of the words moved by the Minister for Public Works, then I shall certainly stop him. Mr. A. L. D. FRASER. - I regret that what I was saying is not palatable to some honourable members. I will not repeat my supposititious case, though these charges have been made against honourable members of this House, and have been written and circulated broadcast ; and I ask, where were those honour-

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able members who are now so proud of the , That is my authority, and I am quoting from honour and dignity of this House? What the book was reading has already been read in this Chamber, and it has also been published in give the honourable member for Palmerston the newspapers all over the colony. Notwithstanding this, in a trifling matter like the an instance of it. one under discussion, honourable members are rising in their places and saying that Parliament is being degraded, and that its privileges we agree to differ; I join issue with my are being ignored. Now, let us inquire as to honourable friend there, and I sincerely hope how those privileges have been abused. I for his sake that it is so. Again, there is intend to come back to the other question in always a question when the House rises on a few moments. We find that, through an Sunday the 20th, and an article is published on oversight, certain evidence was published, which Monday the 21st, whether the House has pro- technically was a breach of privilege; but we argued or whether it is not technically sitting. We are dealing with technicalities all through are now told that the apology is not one that this matter, but I think I have said quite sufficiently we should accept, and that we should not cumber about this now. The honourable member fail to punish the reporter or the publisher, -not for the breach, but for the wording for the Bay of Plenty said to-day that there of his letter to the House, - because he was a stigma lying on every member of the Mines Committee. Well, if there is a stigma. has not given a suitable apology. I do upon them because there is some doubt in not say that my knowledge of the English the minds of honourable members and the language is extensive. My power of refined diction has not such an extensive minds of the country as to who gave that horizon as that of the honourable member for evidence wrongfully, what stigma must not Wellington City (Mr. Hutcheson) ; but I do say the honourable gentleman be sitting under when these words which I read were published this, that no letter could have been more about him, and about myself, and every member courteously written to this House than the letter of this House ? letter from Mr. Cohen. He has regretted everything he has done. At any rate, I read it this way. I may not read it as a university " That we have reached a depth- scholar, but I read it as a colonial who has only had the benefit of a colonial education. I say that this is my reading. Mr. Cohen has ruled these words are not parliamentary, and written as a gentleman should have done; and cannot therefore be used. let me say that we know that this is characteristic of him, whether we meet him as a Press- stood your ruling. I regret I cannot further man or as a private gentleman. He is one illustrate to the honourable member for the that is respected by all the members of this Bay of Plenty and other honourable members that they have sat under a wilful and deliberate House ; his letter is graceful, it is apologetic ; but it is not sycophantic in its apology, and if libel, and yet over an insignificant matter like this they have wasted our time for three days, it had been so we would have looked with contempt upon it and him. It is simply the because, as they say, there is a stain upon letter of an educated gentleman, notwithstanding their escutcheon. Well, only when it suits the pedantic criticism and comments of them, it is a sensitive escutcheon. I felt myself with regard to the punishment that ought to be the honourable member for Palmerston. To imposed in this case that it was this: that be perfectly fair with Mr. Cohen, I think when the House had expressed its opinion that he made a mistake, but only a technical mistake, in criticizing our Standing Orders a breach of privilege had been committed, to any respectable journal that was quite a sufficient and suggesting an

amendment of them. Well, Sir, when honourable members' speeches are punishment. It had done wrong, and broken the law of our House, and when the House had analysed it is found that this is the only fault he has made. They would fine him for unanimously expressed its regret that such an not writing such a courteous letter as would be offence had been committed, that was sufficient acceptable to some of the fastidious members punishment for this House to pass. When this on that side of the House; and yet those House passes a resolution that a member of the honourable members sat in their places and heard charges made against them collectively -- regretted, that is looked upon as a sufficient charges that were published, which honourable punishment. If it is looked upon as a sufficient members should not have allowed to go un- punishment for an honourable member, it should be looked upon as a sufficient punishment for a challenged. Mr. MASSEY .- They were not published journal holding a high position in this colony. That is my opinion. Then, we had the member during the session. Mr. A. L. D. FRASER. - If the honourable for Palmerston saying the paper has treated this member will refer to his May he will find there House with contumacy. authorities for action being taken, in the case of offences that were not committed during the sitting of the House. Notwithstanding this, trio. I beg the honourable gentleman's pardon. It is quite easily understood how I made the they were considered to be breacues of privilege. Mr. PIRANI .- Give us an instance. Mr. A. L. D. FRASER .- I regret I cannot Mr. PIRANI .- Because there is not one. Mr. A. L. D. FRASER .- Well, of course, An Hon. MEMBER .- What were they ? Mr. A. L. D. FRASER .- The words are : Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER .- I have already Mr. A. L. D. FRASER .- I quite misunder- House has been guilty of something the House Mr. PIRANI .- I did not say so. Mr. A. L. D. FRASER. - It was one of the

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mistake, because generally they are phono- graphs of each other's speeches. Mr. PIRANI .- Because you were not in the House, that is why. Mr. A. L. D. FRASER .- I think I was in the House at the time. Well, we find that the honourable member for Palmerston has been holding Mr. Cohen up to every charge imaginable in the category of crime. And what is Mr. Cohen's offence ? That he prefers punishment to ignoring the ethics of journalistic honour, and will not divulge the name of the person who gave him that evidence. Now, what was the offence that the honourable member for Palmerston was guilty of last session ? He absolutely ignored the ruling of this House, and the ruling of the Speaker, and yet he is now to sit as judge upon a trivial offence of this kind. An Hon. MEMBER .- He took his punishment. Mr. A. L. D. FRASER .- Yes; but does that wipe out the offence? I say I am surprised at the honourable member, and I say it is a far graver offence on the part of a member of this House than on the part of a member of the Press. But there was no question of honour connected with the member for Palmerston. It is a matter of honour with Mr. Cohen. The member for Palmerston's offence was contumacy-resistance to lawful authority. I ask honourable members to judge between those two cases. Now, we will come to the member for Wellington City (Mr. Hutcheson), the word- painter. He endeavoured to impress upon us that this was not a party question. Did he make any suggestion as to how we were to get out of the difficulty ? Did he say, " Let the Premier accept an amendment or eliminate certain words from his amendment?" From his opening words to his hysterical peroration it was one tirade of abuse against the fortunately broad shoulders of the Premier. The honourable member laughs; but I would ask honourable members who have heard his speech if they can pick out one point where there was any originality or any special dealing with the question occupying the attention of honourable members ? Did he try to elucidate the difficulty or help us out of the mire that we have drifted into-the mire of abuse of the Premier? No. We are becoming used to such language from the honourable member. The member for Ashburton is no doubt a little aggrieved, because I have shown that, however jealously he watches the honour of this House, he has neglected it in the past. One final word as to the offence-if I may use that term-of Mr. Cohen and the Dunedin Evening Star which they are credited with committing : I say in my own mind if the amendment

proposed by the member for Waikato had been to eliminate any fine at all, and leave the remainder of the amendment in its original form, I would give him my vote, because I cannot see how you are going to assess the dignity of this House at \$5. If it is only worth \$5 it is worth nothing. Mr. LANG .- It is the same as Ministers propose. Mr. A. L. D. FRASER .- I do not care Mr. A. L. D. Fraser whether it is the same as Ministers propose or not, I disagree with it entirely. I want to put this on record, that I disapprove of the fine of £15. I approve of the major part of the motion. The analysis of the member for Bruce puts the dignity of Parliament and of his own honour at what? £10! When Mr. Lang's motion is put to the House, where will the member for Bruce be? He assesses our honour and dignity at £10. He was smiling a moment ago because I would vote for the £15, but the important feature in that amend. ment is that the House accepts the regret expressed by the newspaper and by the corre- spondent, and the House passes upon the offender a motion that says distinctly, " You have committed an offence," and, as I said a few moments ago, no newspaper of standing cares to have that on record against it. For that reason I say that if the member for Wai- kato will alter his amendment I will vote for it. because I think that is the proper punishment that should be meted out to this very much exaggerated offence. Mr. MCLACHLAN (Ashburton). - Sir, I should not have spoken on this amendment had it not been for what I call the exceedingly gentlemanly attack the member for Napier has made upon me. I would not give the slightest denial to anything the honourable member may say in this House against me if his remarks did not appear in Hansard. If it were left to members of the House to judge between that honourable gentleman and myself I would leave the issue in the hands of members, either as concerns my personal honour or my probity. But when those remarks are read by others who do not know the honourable member as he is known in Napier, and as I am known in Canterbury, and especially in Ashburton, it is necessary that I should reply to the charge that has been imputed to me. After he had done with his Greek and Turkish proverbs he spoke about his own kindred -- the ass. Mr. DEPUTY - SPEAKER. - I must call upon the honourable member to withdraw that expression. Mr. MCLACHLAN .- Yes ; I will withdraw it. Sir, when the honourable gentleman rose in his place I was about to leave the Chamber. thinking he would only give a repetition of what we have already heard ad nauseam to day. The Premier was absent from the House at the time, and no doubt he had set a number of his secretaries at work to get this paper ready with which to try to traduce me by giving publicity to a statement that is abso- lutely untrue as regards me. Mr. A. L. D. FRASER .- Sir, may I make a personal explanation ? I had no idea --- Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER .- The honourable member may make an explanation later on. Mr. MCLACHLAN .- The honourable member said, "What would the member for Ashburton say "-he was reading from a paper that probably came from the archives of the Premier's office-" if drunkenness were attributed to an honourable member at the end of last session, and if that charge were scattered broad-

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cast over the length and breadth of the coun- try ? " Sir, I never heard of such an imputation able member hear him assure Mr. Speaker that as that. I am better known than the honour- it was an imaginary case, and immediately able member, and his character would not com- afterwards that it was a real case ? The honour- pare with mine. able gentleman shows most to advantage when Mr. A. L. D. FRASER .- Sir, I desire to make he gets a strong band, such as the "Frivolity a personal explanation. I wish to say that I Minstrels," playing his accompaniment. He had no intention of making reference to the requires them as part of the show. And, to member for Ashburton, or to any other member give you an instance of the looseness of his of the House. I said, " What would the honour- statements, this is what he told his con- able member for Ashburton, Mr. McLachlan, stituents at Napier in apologizing for not say if this was attributed to him?" If it was having properly prepared his speech during attributed to me, what would I say ? I would last recess. say it was false, and this House should have risen as one man and claimed that a breach of a point of order. I understand that members privilege had been committed. I also used the have

to speak to the amendment that is before names of the member for Bruce, the member the House. for Wakatipu, and the member for the Bay of what occurred last recess. Plenty. I said a stigma was laid on the House, and in saying so I did not refer specially to the the paper if it is not in order. honourable member for Ashburton, or to any individual member of the House. If that it out of order. I want to see what bearing it honourable member or any member has on the question. 9.0. thinks that I referred to them personally, I withdraw it at once, and offer my of the honourable member to make word-pic- sincerest apologies. What I said was : Was it tures : " In apologizing for not having properly their duty, if such a statement were made as I prepared his speech he said he had had to do a quoted, to safeguard the honour and dignity of great deal of the Native Minister's work." the House by immediate action. I reiterate that I had no intention of making any reference was in respect of the visit of their Royal High- to the honourable member for Ashburton. nesses. Mr. MCLACHLAN .- I accept the honourable able gentleman would not agitate and unnerve gentleman's apology. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) .- I hope the honour- me by his interruptions I might have time able gentleman will also express his regret to enough to read the whole thing: "He had to me. He has made a statement that some undertake a great deal of the Native Minister's paper or other was obtained from the archives work in connection with arranging for the of the Minister's room. I assure the honour- reception of the Duke and Duchess of York at. able member no paper in respect to this matter Rotorua, and had been kept busy night and ever came from my room. I have never been day." Some honourable members find ample consulted, nor do I know anything of the scope for the discharge of their duties in at- matter. All I know in reference to the ques- tending in their place here in Parliament. tion is that the honourable member for Wel- Now, the honourable gentleman, in what he said in the beginning of his speech- lington City (Mr. Fisher) has quoted a passage from the Manawatu Standard. That is all I know. I think the honourable member has order, and ask for your ruling, Sir. no right whatever to attempt to connect me with the matter, and he should, I think, with- there is anything in what the honourable mem- ber said which is out of order. He is replying draw his remarks. Mr. MCLACHLAN .- I withdraw the remarks. to comments made on himself, and in doing so I am very glad that the Premier is innocent in he is using this quotation in support of his argument. the matter. Mr. HUTCHESON .- I have only a few words the few words which I wish to say, and which to say. I feel the House must certainly agree with me that the predominant feature of the are neither of a contentious nor vexatious speech made by the honourable member for nature. I wish simply to clear up some of the Napier (Mr. Fraser) was its manifest insin- misrepresentations that have been made. The cerity. I say it advisedly, because the honour- honourable gentleman, in the earlier part of his able gentleman began by reading an extract remarks, reiterated the statement, so often re- from a paper, about which he prevaricated. It peated, that the letter sent by Mr. Cohen to was a piece of tergiversation from beginning to this House was a full and ample apology, and end. He first of all assured the House that it he further said that he sat there with pain and suffering listening to me this afternoon. Does was an extract from a paper. On his honour, he recollect that I read the whole of this letter then, he said that it was not a real case, but a supposititious case ; he said "supposititious case," from beginning to end, and challenged any and immediately afterwards he said it had member of the House to say "Stop" to me actually happened -- that it was a real case. when I came to that particular paragraph or word that implied regret for the action that Mr. A. L. D. FRASER .- That is quite in- Mr. Cohen had taken ? The honourable gentle- correct. Mr. HUTCHESON .- Did not every honour- Mr. R. MCKENZIE (Motueka) .- I rise to This has something to do with Mr. HUTCHESON .- I do not wish to read Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER .- I have not ruled Mr. HUTCHESON .- It bears on the capacity Mr. SEDDON .- Why not continue it ? It Mr. HUTCHESON .- If the right honour- Mr. R. MCKENZIE .- I rise to the point of Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER .- I do not think Mr. HUTCHESON. -- It is only prolonging

I came to the words in the last paragraph, "I regret," some one said-I think it was the Right Hon. the Premier -- "he says he regrets it"; but was it not that he regretted the necessity of having to do it? It was not regret for having committed the action, but only that he regretted the necessity to do it. Now I come to deal with what the honourable member for Napier said regarding the motion know that the Minister for Public Works has moved an amendment to the original motion striking out the words "as satisfactory"? Yet he harks back- An Hon. MEMBER. - That is already done. Mr. HUTCHESON. Exactly so. Yet the honourable member for Napier will maintain that the receipt of that letter was to be received by this House "as satisfactory." These words one of the leaders of his own party has moved to strike out, and they are out. Mr. A. L. D FRASER. We often disagree. Mr. HUTCHESON. --- Yes, I know you do. And he asked, did I offer any suggestion to take him out of the mud. I had not my tongs with me, for one thing; that was one reason. And another reason why was that it was quite futile; but if I have not done it, many members on this side of the House, and the right honourable gentleman's own side, have done in all earnestness what they could to show the honourable gentleman a clear and simple and dignified way out of this very ugly position. Stage after stage the right honourable gentleman has blundered and blundered, until he got us into the present mess; all the while they pointed out quite clearly and lucidly the simple way out. And even now, at this late stage, it has been left to a member of this forlorn hope, to these few who still want to see Parliament conducted on constitutional lines, to point out to him a way out of the difficulty. Now I come right down to the question before the House, and that is the amending of this resolution so that it will not reflect ridicule upon this House. In the loose way, and without any relevancy to the motion, in which the words have been moved by the Minister for Public Works the motion is ridiculous. might be that the editor and proprietor of the Dunedin Evening Star should pay Mr. Albert Elias Cohen the sum of \$15 and it would be money well spent and money well earned -- and no doubt that would full the conditions of the amendment moved by the Hon. the Minister for Public Works. Now comes the amendment of my friend the member for Waikato. He says that if the House wishes to give effect to what it manifestly is agreed upon it would say this: - "That, in the matter of the breach of privilege that has arisen through the publicity of the evidence given before the Goldfields and Mines Committee, in respect to the promotion and flotation of certain dredging claims by Mr. Cook, by the Dunedin Evening Star, the House accepts the letter of the representative of that journal, and resolves to impose a fine of £10 upon the publisher of the Evening Star for ! Mr. Hutcheson. House of Representatives, and a fine of 5 upon A. E. Cohen for refusing to answer a question put to him by the Privileges Committee." That, Sir, accomplishes scientifically what the House is practically agreed upon. There is no new condition imported into the matter: it only fixes the question raised by my friend Mr. Atkinson, as to whom the fine is to be paid. by whom it is to be paid, and under what conditions. Now, that is really what the honourable member wants to do, and the member for Napier has little cause to reflect upon members on this side of the House for not having attempted at least to direct a way out of the difficulty. This amendment is clear, concise, and in accord with the expressed will of the majority of members of this House; but, of course, the Premier will not accept it, and I hope we shall have an opportunity of clearly recording our views on this issue, and I ask for nothing better, as there can be only one way in which I can vote. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) .- Sir, I cannot refrain from saying that I regard the amendment of the Minister for Public Works as a pitiful climb-down on the part of the (ii-vernment. It is a lame and impotent conclusion, which stands in remarkable contrast to the inflated and grandiose language used by the Premier in moving the original motion. It is futile for persons inside this House, or outside the House, to say that the time and the money of the country have been wasted in continuing this prolonged debate, for who is responsible for the debate and its prolongation? Mr. SEDDON .- You. Mr. FISHER .- Then I will proceed at once to answer the Premier. Now, Sir, the settlement of this question would have been easy and expeditious had the honourable gentleman assumed the

position which he, as leader of the House, ought to have assumed. I take a strong position in this matter, as I always do up a any question in which the privileges of this House are assailed ; so, I think, ought the leader of the House, whoever the leader of the House may be. It I do not regret that this debate has been prolonged, because it has given time to convince many honourable members -at all events, " has given time to convince me-that the authors of the motion proposed by the Premier are the joint authors of the letter addressed to the Speaker by Mr. Albert Elias Cohen. From what I understand of the matter now, it appears that Mr. Albert Elias Cohen is a mere myth in the matter. In this way we explain it account for the attitude of the Premier and of the Ministry. They are not, I take leave to assume, defending Mr Cohen and the publication of the evidence of the Mines Committee in his newspaper. They are defending themselves against a position voluntarily assumed by themselves. If the honourable gentleman had taken up the position that, a breach of privilege having been committed, and that the rights and responsibilities of this Parliament.

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ing way, and adopted the suggestion contained in that declaration of principle in the in my amendment. only way in which it ought to be followed, this question would have been settled in one afternoon. But, instead, as an aggravation of the original offence, we have read to us a decline to be trifled with by the honourable member by the Speaker, which, as I said yesterday, is nothing short of an insult to the House gentleman in that way. That is not the way to and an act of impudence. I take up this attitude to govern the proceedings of this House; that is not the way to govern a party ; that is not the attitude upon this question regardless of who I way to retain the allegiance of members who please or displease. I am not responsible to be loyal to a political principle. I will not be those gentlemen who sit on those benches for driven into a false position. Who says that we my opinions. I am responsible to my constituents - should accept the letter sent to the Speaker to the House, and to my constituents only ; and I say, as a settlement of this question ? First of all, as I have said in this House before, I will not silently stand by and see the rights of this the honourable gentleman, in his original motion, asks us to agree that the letter handed House assailed as they have been assailed in to the Speaker by Mr. Cohen is satisfactory. this particular case and in this particular way. Then the words "is satisfactory" are taken Who defends the gentleman who impudently out, and we are asked to say by inference that flaunts this House as this House has been the explanation is "not satisfactory," and a flaunted on this occasion ? The Ministry. We fine of £15 is to be imposed. I need not have had examples of the action taken by the manner in which the fine is to be imposed in the past, and I claim to have a imposed or how it is to be collected. It is to longer and more intimate knowledge of the matter of the most perfect indifference. history of this Parliament than any member sitting in it, perhaps excepting the honourable My strong objection is mainly to the manner in which the motion was brought before member for Hawke's Bay, Captain Russell, and I never saw an assault upon the House and the House, and up to the present point the trifling manner in which it has been dealt with as this attack has been answered by the with. Sir, what object have we in discussing gentlemen who sit on those benches. Let it not sing the iniquities connected with dredging be supposed, because I speak thus strongly, that works of Otago or anywhere else? Why my statement of opinion affects my position in deluge this House with testimonials as to the politics in the least degree, for I always, when the rights and privileges of this House have been assailed by Mr. Cohen as a newspaper reporter ? assailed in this manner, assume the position We do not want to know whether he is an able which I have assumed to day. I asked the House reporter or not, because it has nothing whatever to do with the question before the House. If in the beginning not to treat this question as a Mr. Cohen values the testimonials, let him take party question, and I undertake to say that the House did not treat it as a party question until all that have been given him from those the honourable gentleman was guilty of what I benches, and, if he would consent to receive it, I will give him one as to his journalistic take to be an

improper act. When the situation became critical, regarded from his point of view, ability, but I would give him another as to his he summoned a meeting of his party. Had he defiant flouting of this House. Sir, I say, if this House adopts the resolution which it is not summoned that meeting of his party the question would have been discussed and con- asked to adopt by the Government, it will be- sidered by this House in a dispassionate and come a laughing stock throughout the country. impartial manner. It would have been dis- Then, I am reminded that I have been outpaced cussed, I make bold to say, in a manner in tactics. Let me disclaim any desire to excel that would have reflected credit upon this in any tactics whatever in connection with this Parliament in all time to come, and it subject. I merely expressed, as best I could, an honest, upright, outspoken opinion in regard to would have been settled, as I have already said, in a very much shorter space of time. the question before the House-to me the most Then, the honourable gentleman says that serious question that could be brought before because of this change that came o'er the spirit the notice of the House. I say this is not a of the dream, in consequence of the holding of way to deal with such a matter. The Hon. the caucus, he is entitled to say that his motion the Minister for Railways told us this after- was carried. Sir, that is not an accurate noon that the Government were not men to be statement of the circumstances of the case. booted about. I have nothing to say as to that. After the diffusive and conglomerate motion They may conceive themselves to be men of of the honourable gentleman was moved, I put boldness of character-anything they please. I have not one word to say against that ; but I as best I could, at short notice, an amendment before the House which met the position, to certainly do say that, in consequence of the my mind, with great point-" Rem acu tetigisti." strong development of opinion on this subject No member could have gone closer to the throughout the House, they have at every stage been driven from pillar to post. How comes question than I did in the amendment I that? Had there been originally one clearly proposed. Then, after the Government changed their attitude from one position to another in defined, one clean-cut resolution put before the order to meet the strongly expressed opinion of House, the course of Parliament would have members on all sides of the House, they came i been easy. There could have been no two Mr. SEDDON. - Then, why do you not sup- Mr. FISHER. - I will not support it. I

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but the subject has been so cut about, so mixed up, that it is impossible to know where we stand. As to myself, I will cut the Gordian knot by abstaining from voting upon the resolution in its present form, which I hold to be nothing short of humbug. Because I asked the House to adopt the only reasonable, logical, and digni- fied course possible under the circumstances, they now accuse me of making this trouble. They were not so valiant when the resolution came before us in its original form, but when the party assembled in caucus, and decided upon a totally different course to that origin- ally proposed by the Ministry, they defeated my amendment by forty - two to eighteen. I say the House ought to have been left to assert its deliberate judgment, and then I say, as all honourable members who have spoken around me have said, that if this had been done my amendment would have been carried by forty-two to eighteen. But, then, the honour- able gentleman said that he would regard that as a slap in the face. He did not intend to allow Mr. Fisher's amendment to be carried ; he would rather concede something to the mal- contents in his own party by remodelling the motion and carrying it as his own. Sir, I have no feeling whatever in this matter. I only ask that the House shall retain and maintain the position which it ought to have maintained, so as to prevent occurrences such as this happening in the future. I object to being dictated to. I object to being insulted by any journalist sending to this House, through its Speaker, an impudent letter such as was sent to the Speaker the other day. The letter ad- dressed to the Speaker by Mr. Cohen has been read to the House several times, and I ask any impartial man, any man with a dispassionate mind, to say whether in its tenor and its pur- port it is an apology, or whether it is not a letter of defiance? It is throughout a letter of de- fiance, and I say the House has only 9.30. one duty to perform in the matter. But when we come to

place the blame for the waste of time and the cost to the country in discussing this subject, I want that blame to be placed in the right quarter, and therefore I repudiate the statement of the honourable member for Napier that I am responsible for the trouble-that I am the instigator of the trouble. Mr. SEDDON .- Hear, hear. Mr. FISHER .- Very well, the honourable gentleman may have his view; he is quite entitled to it ; but formerly-and not so long ago-the honourable gentleman was so strong in number that he could afford to disregard the views of members of his own party. Well, the honourable gentleman has begun to take heed. I have no right to warn the honourable gentleman, excepting that I have the right to warn him as he warned us in the Financial Statement; and I ask him in his own interest to carefully read the signs of the times. I understand perfectly well the whole purport of what I am saying. I understand perfectly well the consequence of the attitude I have assumed Mr. Fisher the House as a whole-not to any particular section of it-that I would rather surrender my seat in this House than surrender my opinions upon this question. It will be of no avail to misrepresent me in any way or in any quarter. I am here to speak for myself, and I speak on this question with the utmost unreserve. I have no one to fear ; I have no one with whom to curry favour : I have a right to express a perfectly independent opinion. Sir, if that be displeasing to Ministers, that matters not one straw to me. I have no desire to discuss the various phases of the question beyond saying that the Government have, in consequence of the strongly expressed opinion of members, both publicly in the House and privately in other places, changed their attitude three times since the original motion was proposed to the House. Well, that might fairly and properly be called graceful yielding to the members of the Government party ; but when the honourable gentleman tells us that there was no pressure or compulsion on the part of the Government party, and that the resolution and suggested alteration were his own, the honourable gentleman, I say, is quite wrong in making that statement. Sir, I rose to express my dissent to what has been said in the course of the discussion this afternoon, and to explain, in connection with the amendment proposed by the Minister for Public Works, that I shall distinctly decline to vote upon that amendment. I shall walk out of the House rather than be trifled with in that way. I proposed that the reporter of the Dunedin Evening Star should be fined ; I proposed that the man who stole our property should be found, if he could be found. Then we come to that constitutional stage where the honourable gentleman says we cannot find him. An Hon. MEMBER-Get a detective. Mr. FISHER .- No; we do not want a detective. You cannot hit these people harder than by touching them in the pocket, because, as some honourable member speaking to-day said, although these papers are so wealthy ; particularly the Dunedin Star, they squeal mightily when you touch them in the pocket. I hope I have expressed myself with sufficient clearness. My opinions are opinions which I will not abate one jot under any pressure from any person. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) .- I think the House will admit that we have listened to the speech of a disappointed man. There is disappointment in every word that the honourable gentleman has uttered respecting the present situation, and my motion as amended. The honourable member thought he could carry his amendment, and now disclaims having moved it at the suggestion of any member of this House. Let me remind him that his memory is defective, because the very motion he has proposed was suggested by the member for Bruce. Mr. J. ALLEN .- No. Mr. SEDDON .- The member for Bruce, who spoke before the member for Wellington City

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(Mr. Fisher), said that what the House ought to do in the direction moved by the member for to do was to agree that a penalty be inflicted. Wellington City. He may have had it in his mind. Mr. J. ALLEN .- The Premier is misrepresenting me; I did not say that. Mr. SEDDON .- That is not a point of order. Mr. J. ALLEN .- Yes, it is a point of order. before the member for Bruce spoke ; it may be that the honourable member is misrepresenting what has been written after, but my recollection is that it was written afterwards, because when Mr. SEDDON .- That is not a point of order. his motion was submitted to the Chair it

was Mr. J. ALLEN .- The Premier is putting absolutely unintelligible words in my mouth which I did not say. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER. - If the Premier is misrepresenting the honourable member, he himself said so, and I do not want any other may state so at the conclusion of his speech. authority than the honourable member. The Mr. SEDDON .- We on this side sit here and honourable gentleman must now admit that listen to honourable members opposite. We he wrote it after the speech of the member for have just listened to a speech by the member Bruce. for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher), which was heated in the extreme-and we do not interrupt. We listened to the honourable member with able member's denial. patience. The member for Bruce did make the suggestion that some one should move accept it. Sir, as I have said, the honourable an amendment-I may not have used exactly the words of the honourable gentleman-I member spoke with heat ; and he must see now have no desire to misrepresent him-but I do that he is doing something worse than that say that he suggested that there should be an because he seems to be losing his temper, and whoever loses his temper in a debate must go amendment proposed to my resolution as then submitted to the House; and the honourable to the wall. I say, in reply to the honourable member, almost in language akin to that used member's statement that there was a climbing-by the member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher) down on the part of the Government, that the stated that the House could not uphold its resolution first proposed by me was in the direc- tion of showing that the House had asserted its dignity unless we altered the terms of my resolution. And then I said to the member for position, because it had previously said that a Bruce, "Why do you not move it ? " And his breach of privilege had been committed ; and, as memorable words were, "You do not catch the House had so asserted its position by that declaration, I say that the fact of that resolu- me." He was not to be caught, but from what has transpired the member caught is the mem- tion having been passed was a punishment in ber for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher), and then itself on any newspaper that claimed respect- the member for Wellington City stands up- ability. The mere fact of having a breach of Mr. FISHER .- Nothing of the kind. privilege recorded against it is in itself a Mr. SEDDON .- I did not interrupt the punishment to any journal. That is well re- honourable member, and I trust he will not cognised, and some of the leading journals at Home will do anything almost rather than interrupt me. Mr. FISHER .-- The honourable member has place themselves in such a position ; and I dare to say that in this colony there are but got the wrong man to deal with if he thinks he few journals, not even the offending journal, can deal with me in that way. that will wilfully place themselves in that Mr. SEDDON .-- There is not a man in this position. My own opinion is that the of- House, in this colony, or in the world-and fence was committed in an unguarded mo- that is a big word to use-who can stop me ment, and that the zeal to obtain information from expressing my thoughts, and no man can for the public outran the discretion of those prevent me from giving my convictions. If who managed that journal. I chose to take a honourable members cannot sit and listen to more favourable view of the position than the one another's opinions in fair debate- if the honourable gentleman, in the resolution I honourable member for Wellington City can- moved ; and now, in the resolution proposed by not do this, then he has no right to attack the Minister for Public Works, there is no other honourable members. He attacked the climbing down on the part of the Government. Government. He said it was a " climb down " Where there is a generally expressed wish on on the part of the Government; but the honour- the part of members of the House, and where able member knows very well that I am not the resolution of the Government in a case made of the material that "climbs down." does not seem to give pleasure or to carry with Honourable members who think that on an it the general support of members, the leader occasion of this kind, where the honour and of the House is not climbing down if he endea- dignity of Parliament is involved, the Govern- vours to give effect to the will of the large ma- ment, or myself as leader of the House, will do jority of the members of the House. Sir, I anything inconsistent with the honour and dig- repeat that the motion now before the Chair, nity of the House are making a grave mistake. as proposed by the Minister for Public Works, I say, Sir,

whether the honourable member is, in effect, giving that which the majority of thinks so or not, that the suggestion came first the members of the House desire, and no one from the Opposition benches to move an amend- VOL. CXVIII .- 29. Mr. FISHER .- It was written. Mr. SEDDON. - It may have been written Mr. FISHER .- Ask the Speaker if that is so. Mr. SEDDON. - The honourable member Mr. FISHER .- No. Mr. SEDDON .- Well, I accept the honour- Mr. FISHER .- I do not ask you to. Mr. SEDDON .- Whether you do or not, I

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This afternoon, when we commenced our proceedings-and that is what pains me in respect to the attitude taken up by the member for Wellington City-the member for Bruce, in a few words, said they were prepared to get the matter through, and to go on with other business. Who is responsible, then, for the debate still going on at this hour? Is the Government responsible? I say, No. The amendment was proposed yesterday. Members have slept over it, and yet we are here debating the question; and what is the difference? According to the honourable member's proposal the penalty was to be \$50-two fines of #25 each; and what is now proposed, and what would probably have the support of the honourable gentlemen, is that a fine of £10 should be inflicted upon the publisher of this document, and that the other gentleman, the reporter, who, according to the honourable member, has flouted this House, who has written an impertinent letter and obtained dishonestly this information, the proposal now is that you should fine him £5. That, forsooth, is to uphold the dignity of the Parliament of New Zealand, and, the honour of members of this House! They value their dignity and the privileges of this House at £5! I say it would have been more to our credit to have said, "We regret the occurrence." monetary penalty, in the face of the letter of the Star reporter, is unnecessary. An Hon. MEMBER .- You proposed £15. Mr. SEDDON .- Sir, I did nothing of the kind; my opinion has never changed, my opinion was from the commencement what it is now; and I still believe that the course proposed was the best course to have followed. There is an obsolete course that has been followed of calling publishers and offenders to the bar of the House. It is a mistake, but it seems to be the only thing you can do, as laid down by precedent. We ought to amend our Standing Orders so as to meet a case of this kind, and bring them up to date and place them on modern lines. We ought probably, in a case of this kind, to simply say there has been a breach of privilege and then send it to some tribunal - not let it interrupt our business-but send it to some impartial tribunal where there is no chance of "getting at" the Government, no chance of one member bandying words with another - send it to an impartial tribunal who shall deal with the offence. These are the views I hold upon the question. Then, Sir, I will go a little further. I take this letter and I say, although it is not couched in language that I myself would approve, that there is not anything intentionally offensive in it. I say again that an unfair interpretation has been placed upon it by the honourable member for Wellington City (Mr. Hutcheson), and by other adverse critics, who make more out of the words than the words will fairly bear. I read it in its broadest sense, as I say it should in fairness be read, and I will tell the House how I interpret it. The writer says: - "I regret that my bona fide endeavour, through the medium of my paper, to assist in Mr. Seddon matter of the greatest concern to the mining industry of Otago, has led me to commit a breach of privilege." An Hon. MEMBER-"We." Mr. SEDDON .- No, the honourable gentleman is wrong. It says, "I"-"I express my regret," and "in extenuation I ask you to deal lightly with the case, because it was owing to that fact alone that I did it." I say, Sir, that that is a reasonable construction to put upon this letter. An Hon. MEMBER .- He says that we have erred. Mr. SEDDON .- He does not say it is we who have erred. Then, Sir, he goes further, and says, "I trust that the explanation given will be accepted by your honourable House." Sir, the person who wanted to flout the House, would not ask in gentlemanly and courteous language, such as this, that his explanation may be accepted. If that is not sufficient to meet honourable members' views, what does he say as his concluding remark? "Reiterating that it has not been my wish to set Parliament at defiance." I say, Sir, that whatever- Mr.

ATKINSON .- You skipped two pages. Mr. SEDDON .- I skipped nothing. I told the House that I was reading the concluding paragraphs of the letter, and I say you may A efface all the rest of it. The question we have to consider is whether the writer who sends us this letter has couched in courteous language his regret and his explanation. I say he has done so. Mr. ATKINSON .- Two pages are skipped. Mr. SEDDON .- I do wish the member for Wellington City (Mr. Atkinson) would cease his interruptions. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER .- I hope I shall not have to continue directing members not to interrupt the Premier. It is not right to resort to this practice, seeing that it also interferes with the member's right to occupy a part of his time in addressing the House. Mr. SEDDON .- I say I want members, Sir, to consider what they are asked now to vote for. With regard to the question before the Chair, the amendments proposed are not for the purpose of bringing this to a conclusion. They are being proposed with no other object than to place members on this side of the House in a false position. Even to those members who say they are not satisfied with the letter, the proposal has no other meaning. The proposal of the honourable gentleman is to strike out the words expressing regret, and to say the House accepts the letter. That is the proposal now before the House ; yet we are told it is a letter that flouts the House, that it is impudent, and should never be received at all. Very well ; the honourable member him- self in all probability will be voting to insert these words. An Hon. MEMBER. - Oh no. Mr. SEDDON .- Well, then, what is the reason for the amendment for the insertion of these words ? If they are not to be inserted, why move the amendment at all ? There is the

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honourable member for Wellington, who says, | lington City should question the right of the " I cannot accept that letter." There are other members, as, for instance, the honourable member for Egmont, Mr. Symes, who says, " I cannot accept that letter." The honourable member for Waikato is flouting the House and those members, by putting them in a posi- tion in which they must say " Yes " or "No" to accepting that letter. I only rose to point out to members the false position in which they are placed-or, rather, the attempt to place them in a false position-by the insertion of these words. If the member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher), or any other member, wishes a further explanation with respect to who shall pay the #15, then it is for them to move an addition to that, and not to insert the words here : " the House accepts this letter." I ask members, under these circumstances, what is behind this ? This debate has concluded. The member for Bruce has asked, and rightly so, that we should go on with the business of the colony ; and yet this is done to further delay the decision of the House upon this question. If the majority of members in this House are to rule, if the business of the country is to progress, are we, I ask, to be flouted ? Are we to be prevented from going on with the business, and from doing our duty, by such by this means. amendments as this? If there was anything to find fault with in the amendment moved by the Minister for Public Works, then, if the member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher) desired to be fair in his criticism, why has he not criticised the present amendment, which gave him an opportunity of making the speech we have just listened to. Mr. FISHER .- I do exactly as I please. Mr. SEDDON .- The honourable gentleman may do as he pleases, but, at the same time, I say it is his duty to me and every member of this House to be fair in his criticism, and to be have had this debate. That would have been fair to those from whom he differs. And if I ask him to be fair to me, surely the honourable member will not tell me, "I do as I like." I think his gentlemanly instincts and his generous nature would cause him to say that he would be fair to me. But I say that he was not fair in his criticism ; otherwise he is not aware of you. the amendment now before the Chair. Mr. FISHER .- I am aware of it, and will not support it. Mr. SEDDON .- Thank you. Mr. FISHER .- You need not thank me; I do not want thanks. upon the Evening Star- the question of the Mr. SEDDON .- Then, Sir, the honourable member said I had been guilty of an improper action in calling a meeting of the party. disagreeing with the action of the reporter; and Mr. FISHER .- I did not say it was im- I say, by placing it as it is placed before the proper. Mr. SEDDON .- Well, I accept the honour- able

gentleman's denial. At all events, the clusion. In any Court of law, where the Court honourable gentleman did adversely criticize the action of myself and the Government in its decision by reciting that you, John Smith, calling together the party. Am I correct in that ? Mr. FISHER .- Yes. ever heard of such a decision as that. I say you Mr. SEDDON .- Very well, if I am right in never heard or read of anything of the sort. that I want to know why the member for Wel- leader of the party to take to his counsel those gentlemen in this House who are, like himself, members of that party. Mr. FISHER .- You are charging me with making a mistake in my tactics. Mr. SEDDON .- If that is what has hurt your feelings I am sorry for it. But it was not me that told the honourable gentleman he had made a mistake in his tactics. There is no feeling in it whatever; and if it happens, as it sometimes does happen, that we use words across the floor of the House- whilst admitting that the honourable gentleman had reason to be disappointed- still he has no right, again, to question the right of the leader of a party to call members together. Mr. FISHER .- I do not question your right. Mr. SEDDON .- Then the responsibility rests with me. On all occasions - whoever says to the contrary I care not- members of the Liberal party ever since I have been the leader of that party have always had a free hand, and I challenge any member of the House to stand in his place in the House and say I ever asked him to give a vote against his own convictions. Mr. FISHER .- You defeated my amendment Mr. SEDDON .- I took the counsel of mem- bers of my party so as to place the House in position to give effect to what is really the wish of the House ; and I say there are not two mem- bers in this House who want to fine the pub- lisher and who want to fine the reporter £25 each. The penalties you desire to impose were not what the members of the House desired, in my opinion ; and I tell you now, that if I had proposed at first, as an addition to my motion, to impose a fine of \$5, to mark the sense of the House upon this question, that would have been imposed, and we would not carried, in my opinion, almost without debate. I say so now, and the silence of members of the House shows that they fairly well approve that that is correct. An Hon. MEMBER. - We cannot interrupt Mr. SEDDON .- Well, at all events, I say there was no desire on the part of any mem- ber of the House to inflict a heavy penalty. All that they are objecting to was that there should be some penalty, and a nominal penalty. I say that what is before the House calls Star having published this evidence is men- tioned here- and it also marks its sense in House, any one who can read or understand the English language must come to this con- is decreeing a penalty, it does not finish up must pay \$2, you. John Brown, must pay \$5, and you, John Williams, shall pay \$6. Who-

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the Court ? Is the House of Representatives a Court? I say it is the High Court of Parlia- ment, and the parties before this High Court are, firstly; the publisher, and secondly, the reporter. Now, these two parties are before the Court, and the Court says, We accept your explanation, and on payment of the sum of \$15 we will not take any further action. Then, Sir, I have been told in this debate that we shall not receive the money. Ah, that will be flouting the House ; but I think you will find that the leader of the House, if that attitude was taken up, would do his duty, hoping to be supported by the whole of the members. There is nothing of that kind yet. I say, Sir, the attitude I have always taken up in respect to these matters has been a somewhat merci- ful one. I could name instances where mem- bers opposite were prepared to go to the fullest extreme; and in one case, in which the member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher) himself was wrongfully before the House, I took up the same attitude with him as I am taking with the reporter at the present moment. That being the case, I would ask now, Why delay the business of the country ? I am forced to the conclusion that this is an attempt, for the second time, to prevent my reply on the financial debate. I believe that there is behind this a determined attempt to stop the business of the country proceeding. should, Sir, have had an opportunity to reply on that debate to-night ; and in fairness to the finances of this country, in fairness to the colony itself, and in fairness to myself, that debate should be ended. That reply should be given, and the country should know how we stand. That is preventing it, and

those who are doing it should take the responsibility. Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) .- I do not intend to address the House at any length, having already given my views on the question. The Premier has expressed regret at the debate being continued so long. The right honourable gentleman is the chief offender. Every time he gets up and he has spoken five times-he has taken his full half-hour on each occasion. If the right honourable gentleman and his colleague the Minister for Railways had sat tight the debate would have closed at about twelve yesterday. I am quite satisfied of that. But every time he has got up or his colleague has got up they simply induced others to speak. There are many things I should like to answer in the right honourable gentleman's speech, but I shall not do so, considering the lateness of the hour ; and to prove that we do not want to prolong the debate I shall only ask members to consider the amendment. It is to strike out the words "expression of regret." Well, we hold that in Mr. Cohen's letter there has been no expression of regret. There has been an expression of regret that he has not been able to publish the evidence owing to the forms of the House, but there has not been an expression of regret at his having offended; and before this House agrees to any motion such a definite expression should be obtained. I would ask the Mr. Seddon Mr. Cohen's letter is not an expression of regret, and that it is a letter that should not have been sent to this House, to- Mr. SEDDON .- Yet you are going to vote to accept it. Mr. HERRIES .- Unfortunately, the House has already decided to put in the word " accepts." You put the question down " including the word accepts" when we were taking the division on the member for Wellington City's amendment. and, unfortunately, we have to accept something. But I am sorry to say that we cannot accept an expression of regret, because I do not consider it is there. We ought to accept the letter just as a letter is received by any ordinary local body. The words "letter received " means that nothing more is to be done with it, or that you receive it simply because you do not return it, or throw it into the waste-paper basket. The word "accepts" is in the motion, and therefore we cannot help accepting something ; but I say we ought not to accept the expression of regret, which. I am sorry to say, is not in the letter. Therefore that is the reason for this amendment ; and all those who disapprove of Mr. Cohen's letter, all those who think he has been flouting the House, should vote for the amendment, and thus preserve the honour of the House. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccarton) .--! should not have spoken again on this matter but for the strong remarks made by the Premier when he was dealing with the member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher). It appears to me now that whenever a member of the House speaks in opposition to the wishes of the Government the strongest retort that can be urged against that member is that he is a "disappointed man." We hear that not only from the Premier, but from other members of the Ministry. The same remark was made a few evenings ago by another member of the Government. I do not know what the Government hope to gain by hurling at honourable members when they speak on principle, as the honourable member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher) has done, that their speeches are the result of pique and disappointment. The Premier probably knows better what his own motives are than any of us who are able to interpret the operations of his mind. However, Mr. Fisher will now understand something of the meaning of those words he used himself the other night- Give me the avow'd, the erect, the manly foe. Mr. SEDDON .- The honourable gentleman is quoting from Hansard of this session. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .-- I am quoting from Canning, but I will give the honourable gentleman the quotation without looking at it, - Give me the avow'd, the erect, the manly foe. Bold I can meet perhaps may turn his (dos. But of all plagues, good Heaven, thy wrath can send, Save, save, oh ! save me from the candid friend It is purely a coincidence, Sir, that my friend the member for Wellington City began his speech on the Financial Statement a few evenings ago with these words, but the quotation was so apt that I

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could not resist the temptation of referring to the paucity of these scintillations of intellect which so please members and delight the gentleman Canning's well-known lines, which are surely suitable to the Premier,

as applied to Mr. Fisher. Last year there were a good many causes early in the session, but then we had Fisher himself. But what I wanted to say was much more important matters than this one this : the Right Hon. the Premier said he never climbs down. Sir, he has climbed down already under discussion, such, for example, as raising Ministers' salaries. Now, when the Government in connection with this very matter. Yesterday members are brought face to face with a position the honourable gentleman moved a resolution that is the result of their own incompetence in in this House to the effect that the House not understanding the temper of the House, accepts as satisfactory the expression of regret a caucus is called together, and members are of the representative of the Dunedin Star. whipped into line. Ministers had not the tact To-day the Minister of Mines moves that the to get the amendments to the motion of the words " as satisfactory " shall be eliminated from the resolution. Therefore the explanation Premier moved by private members. They tion of the Dunedin Star man is not satisfied were moved by his colleagues. And so when the Minister for Railways to-day told the factory ; and does the Right Hon. the Premier deny that that amendment of his member for Wellington City that his tactics had been out-generalled by the Right Hon. the colleague's has been moved with his consent Premier the honourable gentleman spoke what sent ? Why, Sir, the honourable gentleman again speaks of the amendment now before was quite correct. the House as " the amendment of the Minister for Public Works." Can anybody suppose who Premier. knows the right honourable gentleman and his colleague the Minister for Public Works, that Minister for Railways said that in tactics the the Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones would move an amendment member for Wellington City had been out-generalled to the motion of the Right Hon the Premier. That was correct. mter unless he had the Premier's full consent ? The member for Wellington City must know, as I venture to say that within twenty-four hours an old parliamentary hand, that whenever the in regard to two very important points in this Premier gets into trouble he first of all climbs matter the Premier has climbed down. His down, and then he calls a caucus of the party so position is that of the coon up the tree, as to let him fall easily. So far as the letter who says, " Don't shoot ; I'll come down." Now, is concerned which has been referred to to-day, the Premier referred to the amendment of I have read it carefully, and beyond the explanation the honourable member for Wellington City presson quoted by the Premier in the closing (Mr. Fisher). The chief point of difference between paragraph, I cannot see the slightest indication between the amendment of Mr. Fisher and that of any regret. It is not a regret for a breach of now before the House was this : that, in the first the privileges of the House. It is a regret that place Mr. Fisher fixed exactly the persons who in the reporter's bona fide endeavour to do were to pay the fine. His amendment stated something for his paper he has infringed the that £50 was to be paid by one person, and £25 privileges of this House, and there is a great by another ; two persons were mentioned, and deal of distinction to be drawn between the the responsibility, therefore, of collecting the two. He also says that it has not been his wish money by his amendment if it had been passed to set Parliament at defiance, and yet, while he would have been placed upon the Executive says that, in another part he says, - officers of this House. From whom is the fine of #15, now to be levied according to this amendment certain irregularities by Mr. Easton, and im- ment, to be collected ? mediate publication of these charges was deemed Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER .- The honourable by my editor an act of common justice to that member is now speaking on an amendment witness." which is not before the Chair. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- I have no wish to traverse your ruling, and I shall respect your before his editor a statement of the position, ruling in the matter, but really the discussion and presumably the editor understood that the as initiated by the Premier's last speech is so publication would be a breach of privilege, and very wide that I trust I may be excused if I ordered that the matter was to be forwarded for have fallen into the mistake of referring to publication. But the tone of the letter right some question not included in his speech. through is, as already described, an insult Now, a good deal has been said about this and a defiance to the House. He says he caucus held by the party. I should like to admits that a breach of privilege was committed by the premature publication of the point

out this is the first caucus held this evidence, and suggests an alteration in "our year. Mr. T. MACKENZIE .- That has been practice." pointed out already. practice," the practice of the newspapers or the Mr. G. W. RUSSELL. - It is necessary to practice of the High Court of Parliament ? I have never heard of a more impudent letter point it out again, because my friend the member for Waihemo does not always point out being sent to a Parliament, and I take leave to doubt, if the usual Speaker had been in the things for the first time. If the honourable chair, whether he would have allowed this letter gentleman had to confine his speeches to matters strictly original there would be a consider. to have been laid before the House. Mr. SEDDON .- He never mentioned the Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- Oh, yes, he did. The "One witness, J. Holsted, was accused of It is quite evident that the reporter placed Does he mean by that phrase, " our <page:462>

Mr. SEDDON .- I rise to a point of order. I submit that the honourable member must withdraw that expression. It is out of order for a member of the House to say that he believes that if the Speaker had been in the chair he would not have permitted this letter to be laid on the table. That shows great disrespect to you, Sir, and I think it is a flagrant insult to the Chair itself. I move that the honourable member's words be taken down. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER .- I did not like to take any exception myself to the expression, but, as the Premier has called attention to it, I think it my duty to say that the expression, " that if the Speaker himself had been in the chair he would not have allowed that letter to be laid on the table," certainly reflects upon myself, and I think the honourable member will see that it is a reflection which should be withdrawn. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- Sir, if the expression I have used is disrespectful to you, the temporary occupant of the chair, I unhesitatingly withdraw it. However, I suppose one can, in one's own mind, still hold one's own opinion regarding that or any other matter. Mr. SEDDON .- Sir, I ask you if it is proper for the honourable gentleman to make the last remark. Mr. DEPUTY - SPEAKER .- A withdrawal must be made unreservedly, without any expression of opinion as to the views a member might hold. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL. - Sir, as I have no wish to gratify the Premier I unreservedly withdraw the expression. I have been too long in the House not to know what the Premier means and what power he has. The honourable gentleman would probably like to see me in conflict with the Chair, but he will not have that satisfaction. Now, with regard to the further purport of the letter which I am reviewing, I should like to say that the person writing this letter speaks of the House "enforcing a penalty for disregard of a Standing Order which has been more honoured in the breach than in the observance." I would like to ask, is that a proper expression thus condemning this House for not enforcing its laws, without any proof being given regarding the circumstances upon which the allegation is based. An Hon. MEMBER .- It is quite true. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- Then, if it is quite true, all I can say is that I am prepared to support any member who brings forward a case to prove that the Standing Orders of the House are being disobeyed and slighted either by persons within the House or out of it. Sir, I have no wish to delay the proceedings of the House any further. I only wished to point out this specific instance in which the Premier has climbed down. Mr. WITHEFORD (Auckland City). - Sir, I wish to say that, being a new member, I naturally take notice of what is said by the old members of the House -- particularly by the old members on the opposite side-and when the member for Bruce stated that the present difficulty has arisen entirely through breaches of privilege of the past being overlooked, it occurred to me that there was a certain amount of excuse for the offence in the present case. With regard to the question before us, there are one or two points which I wish to mention. When I spoke early in the debate I meant to compliment the members of the Committee, and to express the high respect we have for them-the member for the Bay of Plenty and others. I feel that the Committee have the respect of the entire House. An Hon. MEMBER. - Which Committee ? Mr. WITHEFORD -The Privileges Committee, which has been dealing with this question. Now, we have been discussing this matter for two days, and no one, unless he is interested either sympathetically or financially with the Dunedin Evening Star, would have put Parlia-

ment to the expense to which it has been put in connection with the matter. I therefore wish to ask the member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher), who is the great champion in this instance, and who is the man who has been the means of prolonging the discussion, if it is true, as has been rumoured, that he is one of the part-proprietors of the Dunedin Ereung Star? It has been pointed out, Sir, that no one would have exalted the representative of the Dunedin Erening Star to the position of a martyr, as the member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher) has done, or would have caused that paper and its representative and the doings of Parliament to be advertised and telegraphed all over the world if he did not possess some interest in the paper. Sir, the junior member for Wellington City 11.0. is a man whom I respect for his great ability. I always listen to him with pleasure, and it has been a grief to me that the papers have not reported him as he deserves : but when you consider that this House sits at an expense of some \$30 an hour, I wish to know why the junior member for Wellington City dares to take upon himself the responsibility of incurring such an enormous expense upon the country in connection with this question of breach of privilege. An Hon. MEMBER. - To advertise his paper. Mr. WITHEFORD .- No, I do not believe that ; I do not believe he is influenced by personal considerations. I believe, Sir, he acts as "the people's George," and that what he does he does honestly and straightforwardly. The honourable member said he would rather surrender his seat than his principles. That was an excellent sentiment for any man, and with such principles he ought to succeed. It is said the representative of the Dunedin Frentano Star ought to be fined ; but I want to draw the attention of the House to the fact that it is not the representative of the Evening Star, of the Evening Star, that we are fining : we are fining the taxpayers of New Zealand - ne are punishing the people of this colony every hour we stay discussing this subject. And what we are doing for the paper is this : we are exalting the representative of the paper, we are putting him in the position of a martyr, and

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we are causing the Dunedin Star to be tele- to occupy any more time, and I have only one graphed about all over the world. Of course, there is not the slightest doubt that the noble we propose to inflict, or the fine that the mem- action of the Premier and his high Imperial sentiments have caused New Zealand to be kept in the fore-front of the British colonies. I do not care who denies that ; that is certainly a fact. Mr. FISHER .- What would Lord Salisbury say of this ? Mr. WITHEFORD .- If Lord Salisbury knew that for two days the New Zealand Parliament was occupied discussing a small matter like this, he would cable to his friend, Mr. George Fisher, and say he believed the Parliament ought to attend to the business of the country, to establish its industries, to carry on its rail- ways, to look after its finance, and in every way to look after the interests of the people : because Mr. Balfour, who leads the House of Commons in England, said exactly the same thing on the 31st July, when a breach of privilege of a more onerous and serious character than this was before the House of Commons. Rather than stop the business of the Parliament of the British Empire, it was decided that the publisher and printer of the Daily Mail should not be brought before the bar of the House at all. Mr. FISHER .- Mr. Chamberlain disowned what Mr. Balfour said. Mr. WITHEFORD .- I have seen the paper containing Mr. Balfour's statement; and in this House Sir Joseph Ward has stated something about the case, and you can always rely on what Sir Joseph Ward says. Now, I stand up 32106019788253 for my friend Captain Russell and the members of the Opposition, and I intended to gratify Captain Russell when he came from Hawke's Bay to-day by moving that the Premier be fined £50. An Hon. MEMBER .- What for ? Mr. WITHEFORD .- In connection with this . case, and just to please you people on the Opposition side. You want to shed somebody's blood or to cut off somebody's head in connection with this matter. I heard one honourable gentleman say, " We want a scapegoat, and I don't care who it is." Well, suppose we make the Premier the scapegoat ? That is why I proposed to initiate this resolution. But I hear from Mr. Deputy-Speaker that, as I seconded the resolution proposed by the Premier, I shall not be able to propose one myself. Mr.

PIRANI. - Offer yourself up as a sacrifice. Mr. WITHEFORD. - I was going to propose that the member for Palmerston should propose this in my place as I am not able to do it : that is, to impose a fine of \$50 on the Premier, and then you will all be satisfied. I do not know why the time of the House has been wasted in this manner. I have been listening to you members on the other side of the House, and every speech bears the impress of the highest intelligence. But what puzzles me is, why you are keeping up this debate when you know perfectly well you are keeping back the business of the country. Now, I am not going more word to say. Considering that the member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher) proposes to inflict, only amounts to 30s. a head if cut up amongst the members of this House, it is not much per man considering that the cost to the country of this debate must mean £10 or £20 per hour. That is to say, we are putting the country to an expense of £10 or £20 an hour in order to fine the proprietor of this paper at the rate of 30s. a head. Let us vote on this question, and get it done with. The House divided on the question, "That the words proposed to be omitted-namely, 'expression of regret,' stand part of the question." AYES, 35. Allen, E. G. Hornsby O'Meara Houston Arnold Palmer Kaihau Parata Bennet Buddo Seddon Laurenson Carroll Steward Lawry Ward Colvin McGowan Field Mackenzie, T. Wilford Fowlds Willis McKenzie, R. Witheford. Fraser, A. L. D. McNab Hall Millar Tellers. Hall-Jones Carncross Mills Hogg Napier :.... Stevens. NOES, 21. Smith, G. J. Atkinson Massey Bollard McLachlan Symes Meredith Collins Tanner Thomson, J. W. Monk Ell Pirani Hardy Tellers. Haselden. Russell, G. W. Lang Russell, W. R. Rhodes. Hutcheson Lethbridge PAIRS. For. Against. Herries Duncan Morrison Allen, J. Smith, E. M. McGuire. Majority for, 14. Amendment negatived, and words retained. The House divided on the question, "That the words 'upon payment of the sum of £15' be inserted after the word 'that' and before 'this House.' " AYES, 34. Russell, G. W. Allen, E. G. Hogg Seddon Arnold Hornsby Smith, G. J. Bennet Houston Buddo Laurenson Steward Tanner Carroll McGowan Mackenzie, T. Wilford Collins Willis Colvin McKenzie, R. Witheford. Ell McNab Field Millar Tellers. Fowlds Mills Carncross Napier Hall Hall-Jones Parata Stevens. NOES, 19. Lawry Hardy Atkinson Lethbridge Fraser, A. L. D. Hutcheson Massey Fraser, W. Lang

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Tellers. Russell, W. R. Meredith Haselden O'Meara Thomson, J. W. Pirani. Ward. Palmer PAIRS. For. Against. Herries Duncan Allen, J. Morrison Smith, E. M. McGuire. Majority for, 15. Words inserted. On the question, That the resolution as amended be agreed to, Mr. G. J. SMITH (Christchurch City), said, The motion is incomplete in its present form. I have not taken any part in the debate so far, and I think the matter has been threshed out very fully. I do not, therefore, propose to detain the House at any length ; but if we pass the motion in its present form we should be putting on record a motion that is not complete in itself, and will not do credit to the House as a whole. I propose to add these words " by John George Moody, the publisher of the Evening Star, within seven days." I do not think Mr. Cohen should be called upon to pay the fine. Mr. Cohen has defied the Committee by refusing to answer a question, but this resolution refers to the publication of the evidence, and we are dealing now with a breach of privilege committed by the publisher. That being so, we ought to specify that we are penalising the publisher, and order him to pay the fine. If the House decides that Mr. Cohen was guilty of contempt-as I think he has been - we ought to have another amendment dealing with him, and ordering him to pay a fine. I certainly think the House would do well to specify who is to be fined, who is to pay the fine, and order that it is to be paid within a certain time. I therefore move the addition, after " £15," of the words, " by John George Moody, the publisher of the Evening Star, within seven days." An Hon. MEMBER. - Who is he to pay it to ? Mr. G. J. SMITH. - Provision is made for that in the Standing Orders. As this matter has already been dealt with at considerable length, I do not wish to discuss it further ; but to complete our work, and to make the motion somewhat readable, I think we ought to specify whom we are fining, and order the fine to be paid by a certain date. Mr. SEDDON (Premier). - Sir, I may say- Mr. PIRANI. - Oh, do not say any

more. Mr. SEDDON .- I have to come in at the finish. Mr. PIRANI. - But we follow you. Mr. SEDDON .- Honourable members will now see how hollow have been the professions of those members who have all this time insisted on a penalty being imposed in connection with this matter. They have now had a warning which I hope will be a lesson to them. Notwithstanding the fact that those honourable gentlemen voted for two penalties of \$25 each, or a total of \$50, on the I will not be a party to it. When a party (Mr. Fisher), yet when the question of imposing a penalty of £15 was put they voted against it. I felt almost inclined to say to our people, " Come into the 'Noes' lobby now, for that will practically mean carrying the Premier's motion as originally brought down." Those gentlemen who have been responsible for delaying the business of the country for two days have in the end practically voted for my resolution unaltered. Sir, I know what underlies their action : they want to pose now as the party opposed to a penalty. What do we find by reference to the division-list ? We find that it stands to their condemnation, because there is not one of those members who has really committed himself to and insisted upon a monetary payment being made. The only member who has not gone contrary to his own action is the member for Waitemata, and he walked out of the House. As I have already said, for two days the business of the country has been stopped. All that was contended for was that there ought to be a monetary penalty to uphold the dignity of the House ; but, when those honourable gentlemen were called upon to vote for such a penalty, what did they do ? I hope that this will be a warning to the honourable member, Mr. Fisher, and other honourable members, to believe that those gentlemen opposite were sincere in their desire to have a monetary penalty imposed. What they are now really aiming at is to be in the position of saying, "We upheld the Press ; we believe in the Press flouting the House and breaking the Standing Orders. We proved our belief, because when it came to inflicting a penalty we voted against doing so." Where now, Sir, is the force of the 11.30. remarks made by the member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher), who said that if that resolution was carried he would consider himself absolved from observing the Standing Orders ? Where are now the honourable gentlemen opposite ? I ask, what explanation can they give? There is the position in its hideous nakedness, because I do not know that I have heard the opinion of members so definitely expressed ; and when they themselves compare their votes with what they have said during this debate, then members on our own side of the House who may have had some doubts will have those doubts removed. Mr. FISHER .- I will pose in future as an injured innocent. Mr. SEDDON. - The honourable member has in this instance been consistent. He said if we did not vote for the \$50 he would walk out. But, Sir, I object now to this proposal. We have deliberately placed in the motion the words \$15, without mentioning who is to pay it. It has been done deliberately, and with an object in view, and it will be paid, I have no doubt. . But it will not cast a personal reflection that is intended by this amendment, by singling out the publisher and singling out the reporter. and embalming their names in Hansard as having been penalised. That is what is intended, and

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is convicted of an offence in the Courts, that conviction usually carries something in costs, and if members look now at the printed paper of the Privileges Committee they will find that it cost £15. The penalty of the House now is that the Star shall pay the cost of that printed paper; and now members can understand how the Government considered this case should be met. That is how we intended it, and that is how it has been carried. If honourable members had been sincere and actually prepared to vote they would have supported this proposal. They supported the amendment moved by Mr. Lang, which imposed a fine of £10 on one offender and £5 on another, but when it comes to the proposal to impose a fine of £15 they vote against it. Sir, the whole thing has been a hollow sham. From the start to the finish of the debate an attempt has been made to flout the Government, and to flout myself, and tell the country that I am not able to lead the House. Sir, I do not want the support of those honourable gentlemen. I would rather they went into the lobby against me, and let our own men who are conscientious in this

respect, and some of whom have voted on that side, see where the reciprocity comes in. Where are the conscientious members opposite ? They say they are going to do one thing and they vote opposite, and I have no hesitation in saying they, by the last vote given, are shallow enough to think they will curry favour with the Dunedin Evening Star, and with the Press generally, but they will find themselves mistaken. Mr. MONK (Waitemata) .- I have never listened to a speech of which, if I had uttered it, I should be so heartily ashamed as the statements made by the Premier. They are absolutely incorrect. The hollow sham has not been on this side of the House. The Premier's own #cc-zero supporters have acted precisely as some on this side have acted. The Premier cannot accuse me of having wasted time ; he cannot accuse me of having in any way supported a hollow sham. But, if that is the proper language to use, I say the hollow sham commenced in the position and on the seat occupied by the Right Hon. the Premier. There is where the hollow sham first appeared. He is its author. The Premier commenced yesterday morning with a motion which, when he found it was distasteful to some members of his own party-I detest the word "party "-he withdrew after wasting a whole day, and came down this morning with a resolution that is an evasion in language, though not in spirit, of what we have been asking for. Its spirit is in harmony with the amendment made yesterday by the honourable member for Wellington City. I hope the Premier will not accuse me of wasting time by speaking : I am impelled to speak for a few minutes because of the strong language and utterly incorrect accusations hurled over at us by the Premier. I say I have a right to utter a few sentences in vindication of our action, and in refutation of the assertions made by the Premier. I conscientiously regret the waste of time that has taken place. I have been thoroughly pained and grieved at the broil that the Premier has thrown the House into, when this matter ought to have been decided after an hour and a half's discussion without heat or abuse. Who has delayed the House and wasted the time of the country ? The Premier, who has made five half-hour speeches, and, in addition, the speech which he has just made-speeches of an explosive character, and which have been deeply irritating. The Premier boasts of our leading the van of civilisation, and I trust he will begin with practising well-civilised deportment, and that he will not continue a practice which is not gentlemanly, and which is not courteous. Mr. DEPUTY.SPEAKER .-- The words " not gentlemanly " must be withdrawn. Mr. MONK .- I withdraw any expression that I may have used improperly. The Premier knows that I am not speaking with any intention to be rude. I only want-as the honourable member has said so much that is derogatory and utterly incorrect regarding members as a whole on this side-I only desire to assert my denial of the accuracy of those assertions, and I hope the Premier will be more polite and respectful to members who hold that he is wrong in the manner he has driven this House over this matter. Mr. WITHEFORD (Auckland City) .- I think the gentleman who has been the cause of a great deal of delay is the member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher), a gentleman whom I admire for many qualities ; but, from his statement this afternoon I feel inclined to wonder if he is one of the proprietors of the Dunedin Evening Star, and I think if he does not vote on this question it may be asked if he is pecuniarily interested in that paper. Standing Order No. 187 says, " No member is entitled to vote on any question in which he has a direct pecuniary interest " ; and when the honourable member walks out when the division takes place it may show that he comes under that Standing Order. I trust there will be no further delay, and that we will now get on with the business. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin). - I cannot allow the statement of the Premier to go unchallenged- that the members on this side of the House are responsible for the delay that has taken place. Who has wasted the time this evening? How many members on this side of the House have spoken ? How much time have they occupied ? Sir, if there is one member more than another who is responsible for the waste of time that has taken place that member is the Premier. But the whole business in connection with this breach of privilege has been bungled from first to last. The matter was referred to a Committee, and an attempt has been made to show that I was responsible to a certain extent in suggesting that it should be referred to a Committee. Sir, I did suggest it, and in doing so I

followed the precedent that had been set up in 1874, as recorded in the Journals and Hansard, and with good results. But in this instance the Committee set up failed in their duty. They came down with a report ; but what did they say? They reported that

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that one witness had refused to give evidence. If the Committee had done their duty they would have recommended that the persons concerned-the publisher of the Dunedin Evening Star and the correspondent in Wellington for that journal -should be called to the bar of the House to explain and apologize, or to be further dealt with as the House might think fit. They did not do so. What, then, was the duty of the leader of the House? It was his duty to move a motion in the direction I have suggested-namely, that the persons concerned should be called to the bar of the House, and should show cause why they should not be fined or otherwise punished for the offence they had committed. But the leader of the House did not do so. He moved a motion that showed to every member that he was careless of the rights and privileges of the members of this House, and that he wanted to shield the paper concerned. The result was a long and acrimonious debate, during which much unnecessary heat was introduced. Things were said that would have been better unsaid, and statements were made which would have been better if they had been left unmade, and which will rankle in the breasts of members for a long time to come. Mr. SEDDON . - Let them rankle. Mr. MASSEY. - " Let them rankle," says the honourable gentleman ; but the Premier will hear of them later on. I am not referring particularly to the Premier, because, so far as acrimony and the saying of severe things are concerned, the Premier was not as much to blame as many other members. As to the vote, I wish to say this : The honourable gentleman found fault with us just now for voting against the amendment that was dealt with. Sir, for myself, I voted for the amendment moved by the member for Waikato because I thought it was the right thing to do; and I voted against the amendment proposed by the Minister for Public Works because I thought it went in the wrong direction. It accepted as an apology a letter from Mr. Cohen, the representative of the Dunedin Evening Star, which is no apology at all, and which I cannot think was meant as an apology ; and in so doing I believe that I did the right thing. At all events, I take the whole responsibility of my own action, and I would do it again. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City). - Sir, before this debate closes it is demanded of me to repudiate the suggestion of the Premier that I received suggestions from the member for Bruce in the action I took in the matter. The House knows very well what my action has been throughout for many years past in connection with matters affecting the privileges of this House. On this occasion I felt that the privileges of Parliament could only be safeguarded in the way in which I moved that they should be safeguarded, and I therefore gave a lead to the House which the Premier should have given. I was glad to find, from assurances given to me by members of the House on all hands, that my action had met with very J'r. Massey proved my standing in the House by the action I have taken. If the honourable gentleman feels that I in any way attempted to usurp his position, I assure him that I had no desire to do anything of the kind. I felt that the House wanted some direction, and I endeavoured to supply that want. If I have touched the honourable gentleman's vanity in doing that, I regret it, because I had no wish or intention of the kind. However, I felt it my duty to express my feelings on the subject very strongly, as I have in connection with all similar motions for very many years past. I had no personal feeling in the matter. I had no feeling of antipathy to members on either side of the House. I also wish to say I was not influenced by any member on the Opposition side of the House, nor did I receive or act upon any suggestions from that side. Sir, I am quite satisfied with my action in the matter. I have confined myself throughout the debate to the question, and the question only, of the invasion of the privileges of this House. I have taken no part in the recriminations and accusations which have been indulged in by members on both sides of the House, and principally by members on the Government side of the House. I have held aloof from all such recriminations; and the part I have taken has been merely an

effort to maintain without blemish the responsibility of Parliament, and of all members of Parliament. I hold that I have done nothing but right, and, under the same circumstances, I would do exactly the same again. Major STEWARD (Waitaki). - With reference to what the honourable member for Franklin has said, as to the Committee having failed in its duty in not coming down to this House with a recommendation of what ought to be done, in its opinion, with the persons who had offended against the Standing Orders. I have to say that the matter was not lost sight of by the Committee; but on looking at the order of reference it was held by the Committee that we were not empowered to make any recommendation of the kind. If the honourable gentleman will turn to the order of reference he will observe that our duties were defined as follows : " That a Committee of Privilege be appointed to inquire into and report on the matter of the publication in the Dunedin Evening Star of the 23rd August concerning the evidence," and so on ; and there is nothing added in the nature of an instruction to recommend as to what course should be taken by the House. It therefore appeared to us, as I think it will appear to the honourable member if he looks into the matter again, that our duty was merely to endeavour to ascertain for the House how it came that the evidence got into the possession of the Evening Star. It must be remembered that the House had already had the question before it, and had already found that a breach of its privileges had been committed, and the whole duty that was thrown upon us as a Committee was to assist the House, if possible, in finding

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out who were the persons responsible therefor. We came down with such information as we were able to obtain. We had the admission of one person, Mr. Albert Cohen, and we had also the admission of the publisher ; but we were unable to find the other party. We then left the House to say what it would be proper in the circumstances to do. I may say for myself that my own opinion was, in the first instance, that we should make some recommendation, but when we referred to the order of reference it was found that that was beyond the scope of our powers. At any rate, that was the opinion of the Committee. There was therefore no failure of duty, so far as I am aware, on our part. Mr. W. FRASER (Wakatipu). - Members on this side of the House are charged with having gone into the "Noes" lobby with the view of currying favour with the Press. Sir, I, at any rate, showed yesterday, and so also did other members around me here, what our feelings were in this matter. We went then into the lobby and voted for the amendment moved by the honourable member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher). I went into the lobby just now and voted against the amendment because I disapprove, not so much of the amendment itself as of the whole of this motion. I will vote against it at every stage, I care not what amendments are put into it. The motion is simply a sham-nay, worse than a sham. It does not meet the case before us at all. I will have no part or parcel in it, and will record my vote with the "Noes " as often as amendments are moved, whether I believe in the amendments or not. It is the motion that I wish to vote against, and I will vote against that, however it may be amended now, as the really objectionable part cannot now be excluded. Mr. R. MCKENZIE (Motueka) .- I do not intend to add to the flood of foolish talk we have had over this breach of privilege. Personally, I do not think it a very important matter. However, I think it was a breach of privilege. But I got up to enter my protest against the waste of time, the useless, senseless waste of time, and the unwarrantable, reckless public expenditure there has been in connection with it. When these Standing Orders were being passed, the closure was very nearly inserted in Standing Order No. 94 in the original copies, and if anything at all persuaded me that the closure ought to be inserted, and would be valuable in our Standing Orders, it was the flood of parliamentary verbiage forced on us in the debate on this very question. At that time, -it was the first month I was in this House,-the members of the Opposition used to appeal to the young members of this side of the House to protect the rights of the minority. I voted with them in almost every division to amend the Standing Orders in 1894. And what is the result ? They are using these very Standing Orders now to waste the time that should be given

carefully and intelligently to the business of the country. I accuse the members of the Opposition distinctly and emphatically of being entirely responsible for this useless discussion. The position remains, that at the time I refer to, when I and other young members assisted the Opposition, and the leader of the Opposition appealed to us on every occasion-the member for Franklin, Mr. Massey, was here then, and the member for Wakatipu, and several other honourable gentlemen who are on that side still-we believed what they urged then; but I maintain now that if the closure was in our Standing Orders this discussion would not have lasted two hours, instead of two days. It would have maintained the privileges and respectability of the House if it had lasted more than ten minutes, and the dignity of Parliament would certainly have been conserved. I am not here like the honourable member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher), who says he speaks for himself and nobody else. I am here to speak for my constituents and for the taxpayers of the country, to whom I owe a duty and responsibility, and on behalf of my constituents and the general taxpayer I protest against the whole proceedings as a scandalous waste of their hard-earned savings. Now, I have a word to say to the Government. On the last division we saw that the members of the Government were divided amongst themselves, and I tell them when they are divided amongst themselves they are bound to very soon fall. In order to protest against their action in this matter I intend to vote for this amendment, because I agree with the honourable member for Christchurch City that the proposal should be put straightforwardly, and that there should be some name mentioned in the motion as amended. However, my principal reason for voting for it is the attitude taken up by the Government in the last division. If they are not consistent amongst themselves, how can they expect their faithful followers to be consistent? They have some of the best followers they ever had in this House, but they trespass on their good intentions and compel them to rebel. I am not surprised at the rebellion of the member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher). I think it was quite warranted under such extraordinary circumstances, and I say distinctly and fearlessly that I consider he deserves credit for his attitude. I hope when we are amending the Standing Orders next session-or, rather, in the new Parliament, because no Government will attempt to amend them except in a new Parliament, the old members know too much about them to agree to what any Government would consider flexible or pliable Standing Orders-we shall see that the closure is provided for. Sir J. G. WARD (Minister for Railways) .- I am very much obliged to the last speaker for the suggestion he has made, and which he intended, of course, to refer to me. But I think the honourable member might just as well have said it in plain English, and I should have thought more of him if he had. I say there is no division of opinion amongst the Government in this matter. Mr. R. MCKENZIE .- You voted in opposite lobbies.

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now refers to the division-list; that does not in the least imply that there is a division of opinion with the Government, because there is not. I am responsible for my own actions, and I intend to be responsible for my own actions. What is the position in this matter? The Opposition have for days been finding fault with the Government because our resolution did not impose a fine. As the result of a combination between the Opposition and some of our party we finally did propose a fine. Now, when they have got our men to agree, they turn round in a body and say at the last moment they will vote against it. They declared the dignity of the House could not be upheld unless there was a penalty imposed. And we come here and find-what? That, after all the protestations, after all the speeches, after all the maligning of members on this side of the House, the member who moved the resolution originally to impose a fine now absents himself from the House altogether; and the whole of the Opposition say they are going to vote against a fine too. And I, for one, in sheer disgust, and to put on record my dissent from the course they have taken, and to show my utter contempt for such tactics, voted against a fine being imposed too. As soon as I heard the declaration that they were going to reverse their attitude I held the view-though I may have been wrong in it-that we ought to have gone over in a body and voted against the amendment. That

is the course I myself believe we should have taken. No honourable member can say that I have upon any occasion done anything which as a member of this House I ought not to do, and I say, as a matter of tactics, while at the same time upholding the dignity of this House, when it came to the crucial test as to inflicting a fine it would have been the best course to do as I have now suggested ; and had there been time, and our party could have been apprised, I feel sure they would have recognised that the course taken both by the mover of the fine and the Opposition completely absolved them from any previously arranged action. As for myself, I have not asked any section of the Press at any time to support me. I care no more about the adverse criticism of the Press than any other member of the House, and probably a great deal less. I believe in fair-play, and that I am always ready to contend for. I have never done or suggested to be done anything in the Press for personal promotion or preferment in the political world of New Zealand ; and I do say that if honourable members' perceptions had been keen, after the abstention of the honour- able member who moved for a fine from voting, and that the Opposition supported the same course, they would have seen that --- Mr. F SHER .- I refused to be dragged at your heels. Sir J. G. WARD .-- I have not asked the honourable member to be dragged at my heels, and I am certainly not going to be dragged at his. He has every right to do as he thinks proper, and I have no doubt that he will con- honourable member for Motueka attempts to cast any reflection upon me, because on the spur of the moment I took a course that I think our whole party should have taken-though I do not complain in any way because only a few of them did so-I say it is my business to at once defend myself. If honourable members with whom I am associated think I have done any- thing that is not right or proper, let them say so at a proper time and place and I am quite ready to take the consequences. I do not ob- ject to criticism or difference of opinion, but I am not going to accept innuendoes from any honourable member as to my course of action without expressing my opinion. I put on record my belief that we could, without having done anything discreditable in any way what- ever, have gone in the direction which I did, and which I believe to have been the right one, and that we should have gone over in a body, and by so doing have hoist the Opposition with their own petard. By so doing we would have placed them in a position altogether inconsis- tent with their utterances and professed sin- cerity, and we would have given effect to our original proposal. That was the only object I had, and I have made this statement in con- sequence of the remarks made by the 12.0. honcurable member for Motueka. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) .- By way of explanation, I wish to say that I announced when I last spoke to the House that I would not vote on the amendment to impose a fine of £15. I gave at the time' my reason, which was this : that I myself proposed an amend- ment imposing a fine upon the offending per- son. That amendment was negatived by the Government and their supporters. Having negatived my proposal to impose a fine on the offending party, I decline to vote a second time on the proposal at their dictation. That is my position, and I take it as perfectly intelligible to any one who wishes to understand it. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston). - There would have been no occasion to continue this debate had it not been for the Premier's attempt to misrepresent the actions of those members who voted against the last amendment. The Premier says that the last amendment was the same as Mr. Fisher's amendment, except for the amount. Why, what nonsense! The amend- ment of Mr. Fisher's was to strike out the whole of the words of the motion, including the ac- ceptance of the expression of regret contained in the letter of the representative of the Dun- edin Evening Star. That was the whole point from the very commencement of this debate -- the letter of the representative of the Dunedin Star being accepted as an expression of regret. There is no genuine expression of regret in it from top to stern, except regret that he was caught ; but, as for regret for the publication. there is nothing of the kind in the letter. And that was - from the commencement of the speech of the member for Bruce-the opposi- tion to the Premier's motion from this side of the House. We never for one moment supported a fine without qualification, and I stated before

Fisher's amendment was put, as to whether we could not strike out the latter words of his amendment. I know, of course, that we could, but I wanted it expressed in the House openly, and the Speaker gave his ruling on that point. I think it is unfair of the Premier-and the Premier knows it . is unfair-to say that the members of the Opposition right through were supporting a penalty. I would like to point out before I sit down how the Premier has "boxed the compass " on this question from start to finish. What was the Premier's attitude when he proposed the original motion ? He said the object of the Opposition was to "get at " the Dunedin Star, and that all the Opposition wanted was to punish the Dunedin Star by a monetary fine. That was attitude No. 1. Attitude No. 2, after the caucus, was that the object of the Opposition was to " get at " the Chairman of the Mines Committee. Attitude No. 3 was that the object of the Opposition was to "get at" the Premier himself, and that the whole of our intention was directed at giving the Premier a "slap in the face." Attitude No. 4 is what he tells us now-that we want to curry favour with the Evening Star. Who has made a farce of the thing from start to finish but the Premier, who is in such a hole that he does not know what to say of the Opposition. Mr. FISHER .- I wonder if the Star is reporting my speeches. Mr. PIRANI .- I think the Star is, because the member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher) has said if the Premier's motion is carried he will get every information in regard to the proceedings of Select Committees he can get. The attitude of the Premier reminds me of a quotation I came across the other day ; it is very short, and I will ask members' patience while I read it :- "I impress upon you to be good. Those who are good and who obey the laws of our Creator prosper ; their health is good, and comforts come to them. If, on the other hand, you disobey those laws you are punished; suffering and anguish overtake you." R. J. Seddon at Aitutaki, in the South Sea Islands. Now, what could be a better replica of this attitude to the savages of the South Sea Islands than the address the right honourable gentleman has just delivered to his own supporters in regard to the wicked Opposition : "If you are bad, anguish will overtake you- or, if you combine with the Opposition anguish will overtake you ; if you vote with me, and go into the ' Aye' lobby when I say ' Aye,' and into the 'No' lobby when I say 'No,' you are good, and you will prosper." Sir, the Hon. the Premier told us just now that he had a good mind to take his party over to the " No" lobby and negative the amendment. Yet the honourable gentleman told us he never asked a single member of his party to vote except in the way his conscience dictates. Yet we are told that all he has to do is to tell his party to jump from the "Aye " to the " No " is it a figure of speech? I cannot believe he meant it any more than he meant what he said just now about the attitude of the Opposition. And the Premier followed up that declaration by telling us that many of his party are conscientious ; "many of his party," not all of I do not quite know how he is them. going to divide the many from the few in this instance in the party, although a remark of the Postmaster-General struck me as a dividing-line. He, referring to the proceedings in the caucus, said, owing to a combination of the Opposition with a section of his party, the caucus decided to make the fine £15. So it must be the section of the party which combined with the Opposition. I did not know there was any combination ; but, if there was a combination, I suppose it would be on the part of the members of the Government party who are conscientious. I should think a member who votes against his party under our present system of party government is as conscientious as the one who votes with them, and I know-and I think that many members of the party know-that one of the most painful things they can do is to vote against their own party. There is no pleasure in it ; they can get no help from the Opposition for doing that sort of thing, and they will get no approbation from the Government. When they place themselves in that position they are not doing so with any pleasure, or with any desire to please themselves. Were it not for the fact that they would have to waste the time of the House in doing so, I feel sure that every honourable member on this side of the House would state that their opposition is not to the penalty itself, but to the terms of the motion as it stands at the present time. As far as I am concerned, on every opportunity I get I will vote against any motion which expresses the opinion that the letter in exculpation of the offence that has been

committed is an expression of regret, or is in any way satisfactory to the House. The House divided on the question, " That the words proposed to be added be so added." AYES, 18. Rhodes Laurensen Atkinson Russell, W. R. Lethbridge Ell Thomson, J. W. Massey Hardy Haselden Mckenzie, R. Tellers. Smith, G. J. Hogg Meredith Hutcheson Pirani Tanner. Lang NOES, 31. Seddon Allen, E. G. Hornsby Stevens Arnold Houston Steward Lawry Bennet Thompson, R. McGowan Buddo Ward McNab Carncross Willis Millar Carroll Witheford. Mills Colvin Fraser, A. L. D. Napier Tellers. O'Meara Graham Field Palmer Hall Wilford. Hall-Jones Parata

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For. Against. Morrison Allen, J. Duncan Herries Smith, E. M. McGuire. Majority against, 13. Amendment negated. The House divided on the question, " That the motion, as amended, be agreed to." AYES, 35. Allen, E. G. Hornsby Seddon Smith, G. J. Arnold Houston Steward Bennet Laurensen Buddo Lawry Tanner Carroll McGowan Thompson, R. Colvin McNab Ward Millar Wilford Ell Field Willis Mills Fowlds Napier Witheford. Hall O'Meara Tellers. Hall-Jones Palmer Carncross Parata Hogg Stevens. NOES, 16. Lethbridge Atkinson Symes Fraser, W. Thomson, J. W. Massey Mckenzie, R. Graham Meredith Hardy Tellers. Haselden Hutcheson Rhodes Lang Russell, W. R. Pirani. PAIRS. For. Against. Duncan Herries Morrison Allen, J. Smith, E. M. McGuire. Majority for, 19. Motion, as amended, agreed to. The House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past twelve o'clock a.m. #