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HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 20th March, 1901.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

DORKING GAS BILL.

LONG EATON GAS BILL.

IDLAND RAILWAY BILL.

TORRINGTON AND OAKHAMPTON RAILWAY BILL.

TOTTENHAM AND HAMPSTEAD JUNCTION RAILWAY BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

WOLVERHAMPTON AND CANNOCK CHASE RAILWAY BILL.

Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee on the Wolverhampton and Essington Mineral Railway Bill of Session 1898, the London and North Western (New Railways) Bill of Session 1899, and the Wolverhampton, Essington, and Cannock Chase Junction Railway Bill of Session 1900, be referred to the Committee on Group No. 2. in respect of the Wolverhampton and Cannock Chase Railway Bill.;(Mr. Hargreaves Brown.)

PETITIONS.

AGRICULTURAL RATES ACT 1890.

Petitions against re-enactment, from Cardiff; and Burnley; to lie upon the Table.

BEER BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Leicester; and Halvergate; to lie upon the Table.

BURIAL PLACES (EXEMPTION FROM RATES) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Renfrew, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

Petition from Attleborough, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

COAL MINES (EMPLOYMENT) BILL.

Petition from Buckley, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (HIGHER GRADE AND EVENING CONTINUATION SCHOOLS).

Petitions for alteration of Law, from Burnley; Barry; Northampton;

Wolverhampton; and Bacup; to lie upon the Table.

INHABITED HOUSE DUTY AND INCOME TAX.

Petition from Blackheath and other places, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

INMAN, JAMES.

Petition of James Inman, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING (SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS.)

Petition from Lindfield, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Renfrew, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petition from Buckley, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

OFFICERS OF THE INDIAN STAFF CORPS.

Petition of Captain F. H. Domenichetti, for redress of grievances; to lie upon

the Table.

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE.

Petition from Halifax, for extension to women; to lie upon the Table.

POLICE SUPERANNUATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Rothesay, against; to lie upon the Table.

POOR LAW OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION ACT, 189G.

Petitions for alteration of Law, from Nottingham; Stafford; Pontypool; Ledbury; and Esher; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from Esher, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petition from Banff, against; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LTQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Sheffield (ninety-seven); Airdrie; Hamilton (two); Sussex; Pontardulais; Gorseinon (two); Manchester (twenty-three); Llanidloes (five); Lower Broughton; Lincoln (five); Altrincham (two); Hoole; Chester (thirty-five); Bridport (two); North Salford (eight); Saltney (two); Fulham (two); Cullompton; Hither Green (two); Lockwood; Teignmouth; Forest Hill; Huddersfield (four); St. Leonards (nine); Woking; Crayford; Bury (two); Wilmington; Dartford; Edinburgh (eleven); Rochester; Okehampton; West Devon; Rawtenstall (two); Oldham (three); Llanrwst; Everton (seven); Ilford; Crosland Moor; Bonnybridge; Strathcarron; Liverpool (thirty-one); Stonehouse; Croston; Chorley (six); Newton Heath; Cardiff (twelve); Mid Glamorgan; Cadoxton; Grangetown (two); Barry; Gargrave; Bacup; Nelson; Stockport (five); Leeds (thirty-five); New Wortley (three); Bramley (two); Kingston-on-Thames; Armley (five); Lewisham (two); Truro; Deptford (ten); Maryport; Holbeck (two); Hull (six); Walthamstow; Birmingham (eight); Nottingham (five); Preston (two); Worthing (three); Heaton; Hastings (eight); Hammersmith (two); Meopham (two); Rhyl (four); Ancoats; Milton; Cavendish; Ruabon; Ponkey; Fowey; Chisworth; Bradwell; Buxton; Bath (two); Cheltenham; Hayfield; Seaford; Silverdale; Tunstall; Eccles (two); Stockbridge; Barnsbury; Eastbourne; Leigh (four); Lowton; Hailsham; Gorton; Longsight; Hulme; Leeswood; Beighton; Bamsford; Tyldesley; West Bromwich (nine); Settle; Walmer; Whitstable; Ringmer; Wortley; Herne Bay; Atherton; Deal (two); Uphall; Springbourn; Glasgow (twenty); Stratford; Forest Gate; Hurgate; Ilfracombe; York (eight); Swinton (three); Walkden; Pendlebury; Hunslet (eleven); Plymouth (nine); Worsley (two); Weston; Farnley (four); Bristol (seventeen); Hungerford; Wynchcomb; Caistor; Ecclesfield (three); Lancaster; Appleby; Easingwold; Leadhills; Downfield; Mains; Aberdeen (two); Kennington (four); Risca; Bletchley; Newcastle-under-Lyme; Tarbrax; Onslow Square; Saffron Walden (two); West Newington; South Kensington; Tilehurst; Hindley Green; Weston; Lamberhead Green (two); Belgrave Hall; Leicester (eleven); Dumfries; Tonyrefail; South Lambeth; Rock Ferry (eight); Salford (seven); Dinas (two); Tonypandy (two); Llwynpia; Trealar; Chiswick; Port Sunlight (two); Ealing (seven); Haven Green (three); Clydach; Gowerton; Llansamlet; West Glamorgan (two); Bromley; Birkenhead (nineteen); Berwickshire; Sevenoaks (two); Leatherhead; Skipton;

Petersham; Mortlake; Llanfairfechan; Winchmore Hill; Powerstock; Abercarn (two); South Monmouth; Wadesley Bridge (two); Stocksbridge (three); Gleadless; Grenoside (three); Wyllye; Falkirk; Metropolitan Tabernacle; Hawridge; High Wycombe; Bourne End; Lambeth (three); Wareham; Leek (two); Halifax (three); Lavender Hill (two); Chesterton; Kilmarnock; Govan (two); Leith (four); Walkley (two); Owlerton; Musselburgh; North Leith (two); Rotherham (four); Clapham (four); Swallownest; Hartlepool (three); Croston; New Brighton (two); Cheadle; Hoyle; Oxton (two); Keadby; Epworth; Walworth (two); Upper Tooting; Great Meols; Cloughton;

Wallasey; Grangemouth (two); South Ayrshire; Dunipace; Camelon; Kilsyth; Balfron; Lennoxton; Stenhousemuir; Ashbourne; Beeston; Melbourne (two); Millburn; Lugen; Girvan; Sunderland (three); Paisley; Ruabon; Stockton; Uppermill; Thornley; Darlington; Copthorne; Springburn; Broompark; Warrington (five); Stockport (three); Hoots-with-Warsash; Woodhouse; Street (two); Winsford; Kings Heath; Wavertree; Burntisland (two); Kirkcaldy; Wandsworth (five); Putney (four); Balham; Tulse Hill; Earlsfield; Portsmouth; Brercliffe (two); Sarisbury Green; Tooting; Kirkstall; Headingley; Macclesfield; Woodhouse Carr (three); Lumb; Higher Tranmere; Seacombe (two); Tranmere (four); Widnes (two); New Ferry; Hoyle; Wigan; Bridge-of-Weir (three); Burley; Moortown; Marsden; Durham; Jarrow-on-Tyne; South London (three); Friern Barnet (four); Rochdale (nine); Rishton; Oswaldtwistle (two); Bowes Park; Long Clawson; Brighton; Newbold; Newton Abbot; Westbury-on-Trym; Bovey Tracey; Waterloo; Bedminster; Tow Law; Buddug; Higher Openshaw; Stepney (two); Barnsley (four); St. Neots (two); Chagford; Heywood; Ness Bank; Inverness; Bangor; London; Rusholme (two); Barrhead; Saltcoats; Darvel; Newmilns; Kenley; Smitham Bottom; Droylsden (two); Brockley (two); Hill Cliffe; Hebburn; Alnwick; Woodford; Southport; Chailey; Ancoats; Accrington; Great Harwood; Salford Dock; Kilbarchan; East Greenwich; Sleaford (three); Wimbledon; Mynyddislwyn; Risca; Machen; Sandwich; Ramsgate; Ludlow; Burnage (two); Garston; Kendal; Hampstead; Kingston-upon-Hull (two); Clones; Old Trafford; West Becchar; Festiniog; Bala; Glyndyfrdwy; Levenshulme; Totterdown; Hollington; Stonegate; Stourbridge; Corris; Dolgelly; Kerridge; Bollington (two); Rainow; Langley; Macclesfield (five); Sutton; Hindsfield; Middlesbrough (nine); Burnley; Ulverstone; Slaugham; Bolney (two); Askam-in-Furness (two); Dalton-in-Furness; Wem; Corwen (four); Festiniog; Llandarwg (three); L'andrillo; Trawsfynydd; Harlech (two); Carrog (two); Blaenau (two);

Tan-y-Grisian (three); Llanbedr and Pensarn; Dundee (twenty-eight); Walton; Small Heath (two); Gloucester (two); Knaresborough; North Camberwell; Sherburn Hill (five); Malden; Brighouse; Harrogate; Alva (two); Port Dundas (two); Holywell; Govanhill; Summerseat; Perth; Loches (two) Brislington; Taunton (four); Driffild (two); Bingley (two); Guiseley; Colsterworth (two); Renfrew; Hyde; Egremont; Southport (four); North Meols; Battersea (twelve); Mottram-in-Longdendale; Torquay; Bolton (eight); Camberwell (seven); Farnborough; Cheltenham; Wandsworth Common (two); United Kingdom Alliance; Seaton Burn; Throckley; Elswick; Malvern (two); Brixton (three); Margate (two); Westgate-on-Sea; West Norwood; Newcastle-on-Tyne (eight); Dartmouth (six); Caerswys (two);

Brechin (two); Arbroath; Penwith; North Ormesby (two); Llandinam; Montrose; Upper Norwood; Streatham (three); Cottingley; Marple; Hetton-le-Hole; Midgley and Warley; Hay (six); Kennington; Hayle; Luton; Great Driffield; Arthington; Ambleside; Highbridge (two); Northumberland; Cupar; Sutton; North Malvern; Romsey; Richard Rutter and others; Plaistow; Newbury; Cambois; Crosby; Carlisle; Holywell; Chryston; Mile End (two); Whitechapel; Cheetham; Meanwood; Shadwell; Winsford; Heywood; Runcorn; Northwich; Southampton (three); Scholes; Brecknock; Sunnybridge; Smallbridge; Rhawl; Fareham; Ashton-in-Makerfield (three); Coupar Angus; New Mills (two); Elgin (two); Earlestown; Wolverhampton (three); Farnworth; Southsea; Irwell Bank; North Devon; Loughborough; Pease's West (three); Walsingham; Tow Law (three); West Auckland; Middleton-in-Teesdale (two); Billy Row; Frosterley; St. Helens; Rawmarsh (six); Airdrie; Hayfield; Chapel-en-le-Frith; National British Women's Temperance Association; Emsworth; Portsmouth (two); Deerness; Waterbeck; Hatcham Park; Whitehaven; Hayfield; St. Johns; Slaithwaite; Rowarth; Shaldon; Westboro'; Batley Carr (three); Dewsbury (ten); Ravensthorpe (two); Dewsbury Moor; Thornhill Lees; Hanging Heaton; Lee (four); Moss Side; Colne (eighteen); Trawden (two); Morley (two); Mirfield (two); Winewace; Ton bridge; Portobello; Slateford; Dalkeith; Brighouse (two); Warrington; Partick; Blackburn (four); Prestwich (two); Higham; Barugh Green; Lower Broughton; High Flatts; Linton; Hooley Hill (two); Ashton-under-Lyne; Ryecroft; Southwark (two); Broughton Park; Netherton; Penryn (two); Stamford Hill; Harwood; Ruthin (five); King's Cross; Savile Town; Colwyn Bay (two); Hurst; Surrey Gardens; Withiel; St. Blazey; Blackfrars; Venjan Green; Newquay; Llanrwst; Nailsworth; Sittingbourne; Varteg (two); Whitehaven; Scone; Limehouse Fields; Dunston-on-Tyne Hockley; Britleg; Cheetham Hill; North Kensington; Stockwell; Greenlaw; Ashfield; Newtown; Falmouth; Fraserburgh; Duns; Llanrhaidr; Ardsley; Gavinton; Woolwich; Blaenavon; Llanarmon Duffryn; Talywain; Plumstead (two); Middlewich; Marlow; Perm; Flackwell Heath; Slough; Woodhouse (two); Woolston; Branston; Aberaman; Merthyr Vale; Penarth (four); Moreton-in-Marsh; Astley Bridge; Prescot; Stonehouse; Tenby; Blaenconin; Pembroke Dock; St. Davids (seven); Leonard Stanley; Swanage; Park; West Marylebone (two); Shenley (two); Little Heath; Partick (two); Maenclochog; Reigate; Tarbolton; Dumbarton; Renfrew; Redhill; Altrincham; Sale; Thornton Heath (two); Purley; Croydon (seven); Brow; Bretherton; Polmont; Aberdare (two); Knighton; Norton Canes; South Leeds; Newport; Ilkeston (two); Merthyr Tydfil (two); Kilsyth; Durham; Stockton-on-Tees; Teddington; Dregghorn; Clun; Frenchay; Tibshelf; South Normanton; Cambridge; Compton; Pinxton; Alfreton; Swanwick; Chesterfield (seven); Stanhope; Ulverstone; Lindal; Ayrshire; Clay Cross; Bradford (three); Auchinleck (two); Old Cumnock; Galston; Kenley; Whiteleaf; Hampton Hill; Eastwood (two); Catford; Mansfield; Aspley Guise; Wellington; Brompton Ralph; Furnace; Reading (five); Stockdaleworth; North Shields; Oban; Kidderminster; Aspatria (two); Watchet (three); Lewisham (four); Blackheath (two); Earlsfield; Longtown (two); Mowbray; Abbey Town; Wrexham; Tottenham; Matlock; Clifton; Hathersage; Winswall; Burn Cross; Morton; Grantham; Humberstone; Wincobank; Hoyland Common (two);

Tetney; Clydach Vale; Trealaw; Twyford; Wokingham; Paddington; Ascot; South Molton; King's Nympton; Dolton; Boston; Melton Mowbray; Peckham (two); Trowbridge (three); Bedford; St. George in the East; Bognor; East Dulwich (four); Chadwell Heath; East Ham (two); Kentish Town; South Lambeth; Ynyscynhaiarn (two); Portmadoc; Exeter (nine); Chelsea; Newington Green (two); Stoke Newington (three); South Saint Pancras; Chester (three); Redditch; Acocks Green; Kingsbridge (three); Romford; Upton Park; Sherborne; Glanadda (two); Pwllheli; Totnes; Somerset; Shirebrook; Somerton; Wincanton; Henstridge; Newark; Hornsea; Buckfastleigh (three); Castle Cary; North West Surrey; Bucklow; Willingdon; Ore; Furness Vale; Richmond (Surrey) (two); Amberley; Redditch; Chippenham; Guisborough; and Caersws; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions against, from Scottish License Trade Defence Association; Kirriemuir; and Border Counties Wine. Spirit, and Beer Trade Defence Association; to lie upon the Table.

Petitions in favour, from Dunkeld; Dalbeattie; Shettleston (two); Coatdyke (two); Coatbridge (two); Auldearn; Macduff; Dundee (nine); Edinburgh (four); Pitlochry; Glasgow (eleven); Vale of Leven; Stromness; Locharbriggs; Waterbeck; Penpont; Dufftown; Brechin (four); Rothesay; Kirkintilloch; Ayr (two); Greenock; Paisley (six); Carnoustie; Alva; Lochee; Perth; Mortlach; Pontgordon; Portessie; Aberdour; Thornton; Pollokshields (two); Gamrie; Inverbervie; Stenhousemuir; Montrose; Thornbridge; Laurieston; Tranent; Buckie; St. Cyrus; Dumfries (six); Peterculter; Ayton; Bonnyrigg; Govanhill; Govan (four); Newhaven; Ceres; Musselburgh (two); Troon; Muirkirk; Kirk Wynd; Dunipace; Moybole; Duns (two); Bridge of Allan; Bannockburn; Cupar; Colmsnell; Laurieston; Denny; New Kilpatrick; Kirkcaldy (two); Darvel; Anderston; Inverness (two); Nikhill; Barrhead; Saltcoats; Stewarton; Kilmarnock; Golspie; Kilmalcolm; Bellshill; Elie; Carlisle; Scottish Temperance Federation; Nairn; Strathpeffer; Riccarton; Kirkmaiden; Kirkcowan; Coylton; Galston (three); Newmilns; Parton; Peebles (three); Alyth; Granton; Leith (three); Kirriemuir; Broughty Ferry; Coldstream; and Bonhill; to lie upon the Table.

Petition from Edinburgh, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NATIONAL DEBT ANNUITIES.

Account presented of the gross Amount of all Batik Annuities and any Annuities for terms of years transferred, and of all Sums of Money paid to the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt, and the Gross Amount of Annuities for Lives and for terms of years, etc., granted within the year ended 5th January, 1901 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 88.]

WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL V. LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD.

Return presented relative thereto [ordered 19th March; Sir Thomas Esmonde;] to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: (Kent, Thanet): Upon a point of order I wish to call

attention to the order of leave which provides "for a Bill to prevent the sale of intoxicating liquors to children." Upon a reference to the standard work of Sir Erskine May upon the practice of Parliament in regard to the withdrawal of Bills I find it laid down that in preparing Bills care must be taken that they do not contain provisions which are not authorised by the order of leave. Sir Erskine May also draws attention in a footnote to cases where breaches of this fundamental rule have been brought to the notice of the House, and the decisions have been based upon the special circumstances of each individual case. A reference to Clause 2 of this Bill will show that it goes far beyond the order of leave. The Bill provides for certain penalties upon;

"Every holder of a licence who sells or delivers or allows any person to sell or deliver any description of intoxicating liquor to any person apparently under the age of sixteen years."

The House having granted leave for the introduction of this Bill I think we are justified in asking how far compliance has been made with that order of leave.

The order of leave confines the operation of the Bill to the sale of intoxicating liquors to "children," and this is not a mere verbal quibble.

Petitions have just been read and presented to the House showing signatories in large numbers who were no doubt guided by those terms. We find that whereas the Bill as sanctioned on its introduction goes merely to the length of prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors to children, the present Bill;altogether apart from the question whether it is right or wrong;would prevent a boy messenger under sixteen years of age from fetching articles bought by any subscriber to a co-operative store, and would make it a penal offence for the manager of the store to deliver the goods to a messenger boy. I know that this is not the proper occasion to discuss that point, but I merely point to it as an illustration, of the very great length to which the Bill has gone beyond the order of leave. To restrain the delivery of goods to a person by a manager on behalf of a person whose credit is pledged would be a proceeding wholly different to that sanctioned by the order of leave. Sir Erskine May gives several illustrations where Bills were withdrawn because they did not comply with the order of leave. This was the case with Bills relating to the qualifications of Members and election expenses. I venture to say that, whatever your decision may be, Mr. Speaker, it will be in the public interest that the House should watch the strict observation of this rule.

*MR. SPEAKER: It is quite true that the title of this Bill might have been made somewhat fuller and clearer. The words of the title are "Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children," and, no doubt, in strict legal phraseology these words imply contract of sale between the publican and the child itself. It would have been clearer if the words had been "Sale or Delivery" or "Sale or Supply," or some words of that kind. But, at the same time, it must be borne in mind that in sales of the kind which are dealt with by this Bill delivery almost invariably accompanies the sale, and in common parlance people often speak of the sale of liquor to children as meaning the handing of goods over the counter to children in the course of sale. I do not think the House has been misled at all by the

title of this Bill. The words "Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children" may be viewed in their popular sense, and not necessarily in their strict legal sense. Under the circumstances, therefore, I see no reason why the hon. Member should not proceed.

*MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): In rising to move the Second Reading of this Bill, I may say that I do so entirely owing to the good fortune of the ballot. I drew a high place, and being fancy free and pledged to no Bill, I resolved to bring forward a Bill with these three qualifications; in the first place a Bill which was not a party measure; secondly, a Bill dealing with a subject for which the country was clearly ripe for legislation upon; and thirdly, a Bill which was quite within the limits of private Members' Bills. In the Bill I have brought forward I find all these qualities, for it has warm supporters both on this and the opposite side of the House, and has been recommended by both sections of a Royal Commission. This is a moderate temperance reform, and what hon. Gentleman in any part of this House does not affect to be a moderate temperance reformer? Nothing is more significant than the change of spirit that has come over the advocacy of temperance in recent years. There was a time when temperance measures seemed to fall between two extremes. On the one side it was felt there was no way of reforming the liquor traffic except by reforming it out of existence altogether; while, on the other side, it was held that the slightest reform was an undue interference with the liquor trade. A new spirit has arisen, and a new party has arisen, and that party is the great majority of the people of the country at large. The country finds that the question of temperance is no longer a question of argument, but one for action. They have realised the evil that drink is producing on the nation.

The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary the other day gave us an eloquent picture of the connection between drink and crime. The question is not only one of morals only, but one which involves our very national existence. Nothing is more certain than that in the future we shall have a keen struggle with the other nations of the world for the supremacy of our commerce. That struggle will be of an internecine character, and we shall always be seriously handicapped in the struggle as long as the stain of drink is upon us. The future still lies before us, and we can still save the children of this country. It is they who will have to carry on this struggle when it has passed from our hands, and it is to save them from this danger that I ask the House to pass the Second Reading of this Bill. It would be easy for me to give painful cases which have arisen of this danger which have been brought before the special Commission in evidence. Remember that those cases are given in evidence not by hysterical philanthropists but by hardened officials. I wish to save the time of the House, and I will only give a short abstract of what the evidence brought before the Commission shows. That evidence overwhelmingly proves that the public-house is no place for a young child. I wish to make no accusation against the publicans. I believe that they do their best to prevent drunkenness, and there are many perfectly respectable public-houses. But I do not believe that even in the case of the most respectable public-house any respectable working man would like his child to be familiarised with what goes on there. If this is

true of the most respectable public-house, how much more must it be of those in a low gin-drinking locality of a great town. They are simply focuses of all the vice, the impurity, and the drunkenness of the district, and it has been shown that of those who enter such public-houses quite 14 per cent. of them are children who are sent as messengers.

That is the first point which the evidence proves, but there is a second and more important point. The sending of children to the public-house in this manner teaches them to drink. There is no doubt whatever of this. Anybody who knows children and their imitative ways will not be surprised that they readily try to taste that which they see is relished by their elders. We have overwhelming evidence that this actually happens. We have evidence which proves not only that these children are taught to drink in this way, but it often happens that they buy drink for themselves in the public-house and consume it outside. At the present time the law forbids the publican to supply children with intoxicating liquors on the premises, but that provision is futile so long as you allow the children to buy drink on the premises and consume it off the premises. We have some terrible proofs of the prevalence of drink among young children. It is true that the number of arrests among children is not very great; believe it reached forty in one year; but that is by no means the limit of drunkenness among young children. It must be remembered that these are only the arrests for disorder, and according to the evidence of many police officers the prevalence of drunkenness amongst young children is very great. This reform which we advocate is really at the bottom of all temperance reform. You can hardly carry any moderate temperance reform unless you carry out this proposal first. The Government are going to bring in a Bill to deal with the very important question of selling drink to intoxicated persons. The Government intend to increase the penalties for this offence against the publican, and they are going to post up the names of inebriates in the public-houses. That reform will be useless unless this Bill is passed. I say, penalise the publican as much as you like, and post up the

names of the drunkards; but so long as you allow the drunkard's child to go and fetch him drink while he lies hopelessly and helplessly drunk at home, surely your efforts in this direction will be futile and ridiculous. This is what the evidence before the Commission has proved.

How does the Royal Commission propose to deal with this question? As all hon. Members know, there are two reports; one issued by the minority, which contains the views of the most advanced temperance reformers, and there is also the Majority Report. The Minority Report is entirely in favour of this Bill. But what does the Report of the majority say? It says: "If, as we are inclined from the evidence before us to believe, the weight of public opinion now supports the proposal, we are of opinion that serving children under the age of sixteen for consumption either 'on' or 'off' should be forbidden, and that the present penalties should also be imposed on those who send children knowing them to be under age." We have adopted this recommendation with one exception, and that is that we do not propose to penalise the sender. We are even more moderate than the moderate section of the members of the Commission. The majority tell us that

we should not attempt to legislate beyond public opinion upon this matter, and I think that is a very wise precaution. But it is fair to say that there were four dissentients, though they were all immediately connected with the liquor trade. The main reason for the reservation of these gentlemen was that they did not think public opinion was advanced enough in favour of this Bill. They say that in the year 1886 a Bill was passed prohibiting the sale of drink to children on the premises, and at that time an attempt was made to include off the premises as well, but Parliament did not pass it, and what has happened since then? Why. everything has happened since. The Commission has happened, a Bill on the subject has been unanimously passed through the House, and two Home Secretaries have expressed themselves in favour of this principle. If anything is certain I think it is that the country is in favour of this Bill. Hon. Members are aware of the amount of letters and petitions which have been coming in, and these petitions have come

not only from temperance associations, but from school boards; including the School Board of London; county councils, town councils, parish councils, and from many if not all of the borough councils of London: from boards of guardians, from benches of magistrates, and from every kind of public body. Meetings have been held in many parts of the country, attended by as many as 2,000 or 3,000 persons, where resolutions have been passed unanimously in favour of this Bill. I do not believe that in recent years there has been a Bill upon which the country has more clearly expressed its opinion.

I now turn to another point. The majority of the Commission recommend that the sender should also be penalised. The question is whether we should or should not include that recommendation in this Bill. I believe that recommendation was suggested by Mr. Charles Walker, who was one of the four gentlemen who entered these reservations. He says::

"The proposal to impose penalties upon those who send children, knowing them to be under age, would be nugatory, as the proof necessary to conviction would be practically impossible. How could young children be called as witnesses against their parents?"

That is the opinion of Mr. Walker, who is not friendly to the Bill, and I think great stress should be placed upon that opinion. I do not wish to express an opinion upon its justice or injustice, but it is one which is well worthy the consideration of the Committee. A proposal has been placed on the Notice Paper by the hon. Member for West Bradford not to penalise the sender, but the parent or guardian, of the child. I would like to show that would work out unjustly.

Take the case of a man who is perfectly respectable, and let us suppose that he is a teetotaller. Suppose he has a child, and that child is bribed by a drunkard to go and fetch him drink. Who is to be punished? Not the sender, but the innocent father, who may regard it as an outrage that his child was sent at all, would be penalised. I do not think that the Bill, if passed in that form, would be practical. I believe that there is no one who has more the welfare of the masses at heart than the hon. Member opposite, and I am perfectly certain that he can have no desire whatever to do anything that would wreck so useful a Bill as this.

Those of us who promote this Bill do not throw it at the House as a cast-iron Bill. Since introducing this measure many points have been brought before me by hon. Gentlemen opposite and other gentlemen who come to the lobby representing publicans and others, and I think that many of the suggestions made would greatly improve the Bill. This is not a Bill to penalise the publican, and it is not a Bill to prevent the legitimate sale of drink. It is a Bill to save the children from contamination so far as is practicable, and so long as that one purpose is effected I do not care what Amendments are inserted. What I do say is, that the Committee is the place to discuss those. I do not know what arguments are going to be used against this Bill. I have heard only two. I have heard it said that this measure will be very inconvenient to working men. Well, I think working men can speak for themselves, and they are largely in favour of this Bill. I think, as a rule, that the British publican is quite as enterprising as any other tradesman. He possesses a good and lucrative trade, and if this Bill is passed into law I think he will find some means of supplying the British workman with his dinner beer. There is only one other objection raised, and it is this. We are told that this Bill will be mischievous, because if we prohibit young children being sent to the public-house, men will have to send their daughters of eighteen years. I welcome that argument, because it admits up to the hilt the principle on which this Bill is based. Those who use this argument admit that the public-house is so contaminating a place that no respectable man, would send his daughter there. If hon. Gentlemen hold that view, what is their logical course? Their only logical course is to come and ask us to extend the age limit in this Bill, so as to include persons at the age of eighteen. I will not stand further in the way of the discussion. We private Members have done everything in our power upon this question, and we have joined hands across the floor of this House. We have given to this Bill every advantage that a private Member or the most powerful combination, of private Members can give to a private Bill. But our rights are circumscribed, and unless the Government give this measure their countenance it will, no doubt, be impossible to pass it. I call upon the Government, therefore, to help us to pass a Bill which is recommended by their own Commission, which is desired by the House of Commons and the country, and which will confer on the masses of the people not only moral but material benefits.

*SIR WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.): My hon. friend on the opposite side of the House has stated the case for the Bill so forcibly and fairly that I should not have thought it necessary to intervene at this stage if it had not been for one reason, and that is, that I desire to emphasise what he has alluded to; that this is in no sense whatever a party measure. It is a Bill which is supported as heartily on this side of the House as on the other side, and although some of my hon. friends have some doubts and some criticisms to make on the details of the Bill, I trust the House will remember that we are at present engaged upon, the Second Reading, and we are debating the principle of the measure, which is, that the time has come when there should be an Amendment of the laws regulating the sale of intoxicating liquors to children.

This is not a new matter, as hon. Members are aware. We have Acts on the Statute-book which protect the children to a certain extent, and certainly it cannot be said that this is reckless or rash legislation, because we have taken very nearly the whole century to reach the point at which we have now only just arrived. It may be interesting to know that the first Act passed in reference to this question was a Metropolitan Act solely. It was passed in the year 1830, and related only to the serving of spirits. It was not until 1872 that that was made a general Act applying to the whole country, but it only related to spirits and to consumption on the premises. It was not until the year 1886 that the sale of intoxicating liquors was prohibited to any person under thirteen years of age for consumption

on the premises. The hon. Gentleman has already referred to a state of things which is most deplorable. It is very often assumed that there are Acts which prevent the serving and supplying of intoxicating liquors to children of a certain age. That is not the case. At the present moment the law permits any child of any age to be served and supplied with liquor if only the child does not consume it on the premises. So that it is a fact that at the present time there is no protection whatever against the serving of children of any age, even though they be only six, seven, or eight years of age, and these children are perfectly free to consume intoxicating liquor so long as they do not consume it on the premises. It appears to me that the Commission thought there was a justification for an alteration in the law consonant with common-sense, and certainly with public opinion. This is a dangerous trade, and we have repeatedly in Parliament, especially of late years, been legislating for the protection of women and children, and even of men, from dangerous trades. Therefore, I say that this Bill is in perfect harmony with legislation, that has been passed over and over again.

I know that the great difficulty we have to contend against in urging this Bill is the question, of messengers, and at first sight it does seem a hardship for a respectable man, who wishes to have his dinner or supper beer, that he should not be able to send his child to the public-house for it. I would like to say that my experience in the north of England leads me to believe that there are not a great many artisans who want their dinner or supper beer fetched. Their habit is generally to take their meals without any intoxicating liquor, and if they do indulge in it, it is taken quite separate from their meals. Therefore,, I do not think that the inconvenience to the ordinary artisan throughout the country would be very great. The real fact is that the great majority of these messengers are practically distributors of liquor on behalf of the publican, and they are sent by good-for-nothing men and women who are very often too drunk to go to the public-house themselves, and so these children of tender age are utilised. The publicans ought to be ashamed of employing the young children of this country as their distributors, and if they want to distribute their liquor they ought to employ distributors of their own. If hon. Members who feel a difficulty about this messenger question were to examine the evidence given before the Commission, they would come to the conclusion that, whatever may be said in its favour, there was an overwhelming

case in favour of putting it down, owing to the serious evils which resulted from this messenger system. I admit that it is impossible to pass legislation of this kind without causing inconvenience to somebody. What they had to consider and take into account was the balance of advantages and whether there were sufficient advantages to justify legislation even though there were some inconvenience caused on the other hand. My hon. friend referred to two cases, and I will give two short extracts from the evidence on this point with regard to the consumption of liquor which was procured by the children for consumption by themselves. If it was proposed that in no ease did they consume it themselves, it might be a stronger argument, but the evidence is overwhelming that not only do they do this but they actually commence to drink at a very early age, and thus get a taste for liquor, and you are creating through these messengers what becomes habitual drunkenness, because it is well known that if the taste is acquired strongly in early age it will be very difficult to stop the practice afterwards. One of the witnesses was Miss Johnson, visitor of the District Provident Society, and I should just like to read two or three questions and answers which occurred in her evidence. She was asked;

Q. It is not for their own consumption?

A. They are mostly acting as messengers, but they think it on the way.

Q. They do not drink it in the public-house?

A. Sometimes they do.

Q. Have you known any families in which evil has resulted from this drinking?

A. Yes. where they have had boys and girls spending their coppers in drink, as soon as they earn them themselves they have got into the way of being, one might say, habitual drunkards at a very early age.

Q. Have those cases occurred in families you have been personally acquainted with?

A. Yes.

Lady Henry Somerset's evidence is very striking indeed. She gave a case in Manchester of a girl of thirteen being brought before the magistrate charged with being drunk. She was asked how she got drunk, and she replied;

"I was cold, and as I had sixpence I went into a public-house and bought six penny worth of whisky and drank it on the doorstep."

There is no law at the present time which prevents young children from getting drink, not as messengers but absolutely for their own consumption. Lady Henry Somerset was asked;

Q. At how early an age have you seen children coming out of public-houses?

A. At five, six, seven, and eight, and at any time at which they could possibly hold a jug and walk."

I think this evidence will be accepted as authoritative, as far as it goes. We know that these witnesses are interested in the temperance question, not because they are faddists, but because they take a deep interest in the welfare of the children. Many people who are not temperance men, who have seen the good results produced by the work of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children also feel that some alteration of the law is required. The same kind of evidence is given by constables, police, and other authorities, and the petitions which

have been presented on this subject show that public opinion is thoroughly aroused. I have tried to get the number of petitions which have been presented on this occasion, but, owing to the fact that they have been coming in in large quantities both yesterday and to-day, and probably will continue to do so for a few days longer, I am unable to get the number and make the analysis which I should like to make. I wish, however, to mention that last year there were 5,627 petitions presented in favour of this Bill, and of this number no less than 3,423 were from official authorities throughout the country. That shows that those who come in contact with the great mass of the people are in favour of this measure. Upon this occasion a petition has been presented by the City Council of Manchester, the School Board of Manchester, and the Board of Guardians, and I believe if we had the Return we should find that there is not a city in England, and scarcely a local board, which has not petitioned in favour of this measure. Under these circumstances, I think that it is without doubt that public opinion in favour of this measure is overwhelming.

I should like to mention another matter. In Liverpool this question is being solved, although, unfortunately, I do not think it is being done quite in accordance with the law. At any rate the Liverpool magistrates have taken a step which, whether legal or not, shows that there is no real opposition to a movement in this direction. The magistrates there have simply by a resolution ordered the chief constable to report to them all cases of public-houses where children are served under thirteen years of age. The effect of that resolution has been that not only has there been no outcry against this, but the publicans themselves have accepted the situation, and gone so far as to put notices in their windows to the effect that they will not serve children under thirteen.

Therefore, I am entitled to believe that if a moderate measure extending the age were passed we should have not only the working classes supporting it, but also the best of the publicans. I cannot understand why any hon. Member on this or the other side of the House should hesitate for one moment in giving his support to the Second Reading of this Bill. My hon. friend opposite has referred to the Reports of the Commission, and therefore I do not think I need say anything more on that point, except that it will be understood that this recommendation is unanimous among all sections in England, Scotland, and Ireland. Scotland is at the present in advance of us, to some extent, although not so far in advance as the great mass of people of Scotland would like. The age there is fourteen. I submit to the House accordingly that the time has arrived when we ought to agree, at any rate, to send this Bill to the Committee upstairs. The question is now ripe for legislation, and if any Amendment is suggested which is not intended to wreck the Bill we shall be very glad indeed to accept it in order to make the Bill more workable. All we have to avoid is not to take a retrograde step. We have arrived at a certain position, and if the Bill is passed as it stands we shall have no difficulty whatever in carrying it into effect. I beg to second the motion for the Second Reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."
MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.): I rise to move that this Bill be read a second time this day six months. I should like to say to the mover and seconder of the Bill

that I will not give way to them or anyone else in my earnest desire to ensure the sobriety of those children who are dear to us all. I may add that I have no interest in any licensed house in England, Ireland, Scotland, or Wales. I will endeavour to show to the House that this Bill in the form in which it is presented to us will absolutely defeat the objects it is meant to bring about. The Bill is based on false sentiment. It would absolutely fail in securing children of a certain age from being able to obtain intoxicating liquors, and it would more than ever tend to increase drinking in private houses and so-called clubs. In my opinion it fails signally, first of all, in making license holders responsible for selling strong drink to children, instead of making the parents or guardians of those children responsible for their conduct and responsible for guarding the interests and health of those children who depend upon them. Sentiment does not always take a fair view of these social questions, and, as the promoters of this Bill have endeavoured to show that they are following out the recommendation of the Royal Commission, I will endeavour to prove that they have not done so. In the second clause of this Bill it is stated that;

"Every holder of a licence who sells or delivers, or allows any person to sell or deliver any description of intoxicating-liquor to any person apparently under the age of sixteen years, for consumption either on or off the premises shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding forty shillings for the first offence and in the case of a second or any subsequent offence to a penalty not exceeding five pounds."

The Bill sets forth the penalties against the license holder, but what does the Report of the Royal Commission state?;

"Under the existing law no boy or girl under fourteen may be served or supplied with any kind of intoxicating liquor for his own or her own consumption. But it is not unlawful to supply liquor to any child, however young, who obtains it as a messenger for an adult. As in the case of England, we recommend that no child under the age of sixteen should be served or supplied with liquor in any circumstances, and that the sender of a juvenile under that age, as a messenger to obtain liquor, should be liable to the same penalties as the licensee who supplied the liquor. It should not, however, be forgotten;"

and here is one of many great points;

"that this might prove a serious interference with parental discretion and the convenience of working men. Legislation in this direction should only be undertaken after the fullest discussion with those best qualified to speak for them, otherwise strong reaction of opinion might follow. In Scotland it is an offence to supply children under fourteen for their own consumption, whether on or off the premises."

Now here you have a direct finding by the Royal Commission, that the parent or guardian or sender of a juvenile under the age of sixteen should be liable to the same penalties as the licensee who supplies the liquor, and it also adds that this might prove a serious interference with the convenience of the working man, and legislation in this direction should only be undertaken after the fullest discussion with the working classes themselves. I am sure of one thing, that there is not one single petition signed by artisans and working men only

who have ever agreed to allow their liberties to be taken away by such a Bill as this. There is also a very curious omission; I presume it was a fault in drawing Clause 2 in this Bill. It prevents the license holder from selling any description of intoxicating liquor to any person apparently under the age of sixteen for consumption either on or off the premises, but in this penal clause it does not say that a messenger under that age may not be sent. I suppose the backers of this Bill are so much alive to the folly of it that in the penal clause it makes no such statement, and it is not until Clause 4 that any mention is made of a messenger, and that for Scotland only. In this penal clause (Clause 2) it altogether omits the recommendation of the Royal Commission to provide the only safeguard possible; namely, that similar penalties should also be imposed upon those who send the children knowing them to be under age.

In speaking of the Act of 1886 the Royal Commission stated;

'It should, however, be remembered that the above-named Act (49 and 50 Vict. c. 56) was passed after a considerable debate in 1886. In the original Bill, Parliament was then invited to prohibit the 'off' sale to children under thirteen years of age, but deliberately refused the words 'for consumption on the premises by any person under such age as aforesaid' being inserted. It, therefore, appears that as recently as 1886 Parliament considered the proposal to forbid the serving of child messengers a serious interference with the parental discretion and the convenience of working men. Legislation in this direction, therefore, should only be undertaken after the fullest discussion with those best qualified to speak for the class affected, otherwise a strong reaction of opinion might follow.'

Now, even if there has been an increase in drunkenness amongst children, I say that if you interfere with the parental discretion and convenience of the working men you must put a similar penalty upon them as you do on the holders of licences. I defy any hon. Member to go down to his constituency and obtain 90 per cent. of the working men to agree to this House placing such a restriction on their liberty.

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I will be very happy to do it at any time.

MAJOR JAMESON: I would like to point out to the House the practical effects which this Bill would have if passed into law. In the first place no boy under sixteen could be employed by any licensee. On this point the Commissioners say; "Such a veto upon their employment in the licensed trade would be a serious loss to the parents and guardians of children, for such apprentices and messengers receive generally higher wages than in other trades and occupations. And to the boys themselves it would seriously affect their prospects in life, and considerably extend their apprenticeship."

Now, it may be interesting to the House to know what the boys are, at present employed as messengers, who would be turned out of employment. In the first place it would abolish hotel page-boys. In public-houses and restaurants it would prevent boys (it may be the publicans' own children) from being employed as servants or messengers, or from handling or delivering refreshments to customers, and so invidiously restrict the age of boys being employed. At

railway stations it would prevent boys from carrying refreshments to railway carriages. At golf course and similar places it would prevent boys from acting as messengers for golfers and obtaining luncheon and refreshment for them. I wish very much the First Lord of the Treasury were here; he is a great authority on the golf course, and I am sure the House would not like to prevent him having his whisky and soda after making one of those magnificent strokes of his in a match. Again, grocers and wine merchants, while they would be allowed to employ a boy for delivering groceries, could not employ him for delivering liquor, though corked and sealed, and this would prevent the apprenticeship and training of boys to a trade at a suitable age. It is not suggested that boys or girls should be prevented from acting as messengers in the drug or chemical trade, though spirits form an important item in the preparation of these goods. Wines and spirits sold by wine merchants and licensed grocers and delivered by messengers are in corked and sealed bottles or in barrels; and, a part from the serious inconvenience to the traders, no reason can be alleged for prohibiting shop boys from delivering sealed bottles any more than tinned goods. Such a statutory provision would handicap such merchants by depriving them of the service of youths who constitute a large proportion of their shop assistants and vanmen, and so give unlicensed traders an advantage. And yet while you exclude all these unfortunate boys from sixteen downwards and turn them out of their employment, a page-boy in a club, or in a bogus club, would not be prevented from serving, nor would it prevent these clubs from supplying the children of the members. The present law enables a working man who is a member of a bona fide club to have a share in the distribution of liquor sold therefrom. What is to prevent him from giving an order to the steward or caretaker, or manager, say for half a gallon of beer, which would be fetched by his children, even of very tender age, at some time during the day? Another serious evil would arise if children are not allowed to be used as messengers by hard-working parents. The mothers will not themselves go to the public-house; several of them will undoubtedly club together, buy these gallon jars of beer, and in this way drunkenness amongst females, which is at present the bane of the country, will be increased to a most alarming extent, so that the remedy would in this case be far worse than any of the evils alleged to be caused by the serving to children under the present system. And now as regards the existing law. In the greater majority of licensed houses, both in England and Ireland, there is a bottle and jug department where no drinking goes on, and where the children cannot mix with those who are drinking at the bar. There is nothing in this Bill about licensed grocers. There is nothing to prevent, and rightly so, their supplying intoxicants in quart bottles to children, while your licensed victualler is absolutely excluded from doing so. You are in reality making your license holder usurp the place of a parent or guardian, and making him responsible, and not even dividing the responsibility with the parent and the guardian in question. I presume the introducers of this Bill dare not ask the working men and artisans who are their constituents to deliberately penalise themselves, and so, in an underhand way, by placing the penalty on the license holder they have placed a restriction which their

constituents would not endure on the working man and on the artisan. I defy the honourable Members who support this Bill to show me a single petition wholly signed by artisans and working men in favour of this restriction of their liberties.

And now let us turn to how penalties have been placed on parents as regards the employment of their children in shops, factories, and workshops, and also on those whose children sell newspapers. The following are a few examples;

"(I) 41 Vic., cap. 16, secs. 83–84 (the Factory and Workshop Act, 1878) makes it an offence for the parent of a young person under age to allow, contrary to the Act, the youth to be employed in a factory or workshop; and it is also an offence if the occupier of a factory or workshop employs such young person; but it is a good defence to both the parent and the occupier if they prove that the offence was committed without their knowledge, consent, or connivance. Section 87 provides that the occupier, on being charged with that offence, may charge the actual offender, and have him taken before the Court. The same section empowers the Inspector to proceed against the person whom he believes to be the actual offender. (II.) Public performances.;42 and 43 Vic, cap. 34, sec. 3, makes it an offence for any person to cause any child under 14 to to take part in any public performance. It is also an offence for the parent or guardian of such child to aid or abet the person causing such child to perform. (III.) Singing, selling, performing, begging.;55 and 56 Vic, cap. 41, sec. 2 makes it offence for (a) any person causing or procuring, and (b) any person having the custody or care of the child, allowing the child;being a boy under 14 or a girl under 14;to be in any public place or premises for begging, under the pretence of singing or offering anything for sale, etc. It is also an offence for a person to cause or procure, or, having the custody or care of the child, to allow it (under aforesaid age) to be on any licensed premises for the sale of liquor for the purpose of performing for profit, or offering anything for sale between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m. It is, further, an offence to cause or procure a child under the age of 16, or on one having' the custody or care of it, to allow the child to be in any place for being trained as an acrobat, contortionist, or performer, or in any exhibition which in its nature is dangerous. (IV.) Selling Newspapers.;55 and 56 Vic., cap. 55, sec. 276 prohibits any child under 12 from selling newspapers who has not obtained a license and a badge from the magistrates. Nor can such child sell after nine o'clock at night. The parents or guardians of the child who knowingly suffer such child to vend newspapers are liable to a penalty. And any person supplying such child with newspapers, knowing it to be under 12, that has no licence, is liable to a penalty. (V.) Shop hours.;58 Vic, cap. 5, sec. 10. (The Shop Hours Acts, 1895) provides that the young persons under that Act (i.e., under the age of 18) does not include such young persons who are members of the family dwelling on the premises or any house attached. That provision should be applied to this Bill, so as to exclude from it children who are messengers of the family of the licensee."

In Ireland in our trade, which is well conducted, in the greater part of the shops in which liquor is dispensed, groceries are also sold, and surely it is a

monstrous law that would prevent a boy or girl of fifteen years of age buying wines or spirits for their parents at the same time that they buy tea and bread. I do not believe that you can show a single instance where young persons under the

age of sixteen, acting as messengers, have been found under the influence of drink while they were being used as-messengers by their parents. My hon. friend says that they are in Scotland ahead of England and Ireland. They are ahead of us in drunkenness, for I find that the liquor bill per head in Scotland is £;4 10s., and only £;2 14s. in Ireland; and yet the Licensing (Scotch) Act of 1897 made the age fourteen, whereas in Ireland and in England the age is thirteen, so up to the present it has had no effect in Scotland on sobriety. That shows how use less these restrictions are, and how every restriction increases drunkenness in every possible way. I cannot believe that the Government will lend themselves to piecemeal legislation, or that any Government worthy of the name will allow a few private Members to decide what are the results of the Royal Commission, and to snatch the passing of an Act, which is contrary to the finding even of that Commission, by a Bill founded upon false sentiment and upon sham.

Let the Government consider for a moment the enormous number of extra police they would require to what they have at present in order to really carry out this law. You would want pretty nearly one policeman to every public-house, in fact, the question of the number of police reminds me rather of a riddle which I will give to the House, as it explains what would happen under this Licensing Bill. It is this. If you took up one of the square paving stones opposite to the Members' entrance of the House of Commons from Westminster Square and sowed it with barley, what would come up? The answer is, A policeman; and that is precisely what would have to come up opposite the door of every public-house in the United Kingdom. I will ask this House and Government not to consent to pass this Bill, which cannot be fully, freely, and fairly discussed on a Wednesday afternoon. It is a question entirely for the Government when they should bring in a Licensing Bill, and say what restrictions should be placed upon the trade and upon the working classes of this country. They are responsible for restrictions being passed on the working classes. They are responsible that no undue restriction

should be placed on the habits and customs of our people; and it would be most unfair to legislate in this matter, without the fullest inquiry, and without considering the wishes of the people, and the facts and circumstances of the case, by allowing a meddlesome and bungling Bill like this that is before us to-day to be passed into law.

I see on the back of this Bill several Members whose names always appear on such measures. Of course the Member for South Belfast, and all those temperance Members who are associated with him are ever ready to make remarks hurtful and galling to those who do not entirely agree with them on this subject of temperance and of religion. The hon. Gentleman will not allow any good to be in the thoughts of those who differ with him. My friends and colleagues who sit with me on these benches have good reason to know that and the slights that he

always places on their religion; and those connected with the trade have similar reasons for disliking any measure of the kind being placed upon us at his bidding. I entreat the House not to be carried away by this sham and false sentiment, not to allow piecemeal legislation of this sort to be imposed upon us. I adhere to the fact that the licensed trade, as a whole, is conducted in an honest and honourable manner. I myself have no interest in any licensed house in the three kingdoms, and, although some of those whose names are on the Bill may not allow it, I have as much interest in the future and the welfare of the children of this country as they or anybody else; but I have no hesitation in saying that this Bill will be of no use to them. See that the children are properly housed, fed, and educated, do not make a mystery of drink and even of the terrible results to them of excess, and, believe me, without this arbitrary interference of the liberty of the subject, our youths will grow up as they ought; sober, honest, and industrious; without laws being made for them by faddists and by people of extreme notions.

*MR. TULLY (Leitrim, S.): I beg to second the motion of my hon. friend for the rejection of this Bill. I think a sufficient case has not been made out for the Bill by the hon. Members who have moved and seconded the Second Reading. They ask us to accept the Bill after a very short explanation as to its nature. On the face of it, the Bill appears to be a very small affair, but when closely examined it is found to be very wide-reaching in its consequences. The Bill is headed "Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill." I, for one, am as strong as any man for preventing the sale of intoxicating liquors to children but I say that the machinery provided in this Bill will not accomplish this object. As my hon. friend has pointed out, this Bill conflicts to a large extent with the report of the Peel Commission, which did not propose that the penalties should be confined to the publican, but which said that the parent or guardian responsible for having sent the child for drink should be punished as well as the publican, Under the licensing law at present, in questions relating to the bona fide traveller or to persons found on premises after hours, the person who gets the drink is just as liable to punishment as the person who supplies the drink. If a child is found to go to a public-house it is easy to trace the parent or guardian who sent it. and to punish that parent or guardian. It appears to me that one of the objects of the Bill is to treat the licensed trader as if he were a public outcast, as if he were some person outside the law, who is to get no consideration or mercy, and, no matter what happens, is always supposed to be a sinner. I do not think that is a fair or prudent thing to do. If children have been led into drinking habits or into vice by being sent into public-houses there are other remedies. Why not send them to industrial or reformatory schools? They do it in Ireland, where the children then get a proper chance of starting in life. If a parent allows his child to get into habits of drink, it should be taken from him and sent to an industrial school, and the parent made to contribute to the support of the child. We have been told that the Peel Commission reported in favour of the proposals of this Bill, but because a Royal Commission has reported in favour of the principle of a Bill, it does not follow that this House should accept it

without any further discussion. I ask hon. Gentlemen opposite who are in favour of this Bill; some of them from Ireland; do they treat every Commission with the same respect as the Peel Commission? Do they treat the Financial Relations Commission with the same respect as they wish to treat certain portions of the Report of the Peel Commission? I say they do not, and it is absurd for them to ask us to treat the Peel Commission in a different manner from what they treat the Financial Relations Commission.

I take the special objection to the Bill that it is extended to Ireland. If there is any necessity for it in England or Scotland, let it be confined to these countries, and I would not object. The English and Scotch people should be left to legislate on social questions of this kind for themselves; but the legislation should not be made applicable to Ireland unless there is a strong case made out for it in Ireland. The hon. Member for South Belfast, who seems to claim a monopoly of all the Christian virtues, taunts us as if we were committing the unforgivable sin because we object to this Bill being adopted for Ireland. I object to the Bill being extended to Ireland on the ground that there is not a sufficient demand from the people of Ireland for it, and that no sufficient case has been made out for it. In my capacity as a pressman I have attended courts covering nearly a fourth of the counties of Ireland, and I have never seen a case coming up in any court of Summary Jurisdiction, or any other court, which in any way required legislation such as is brought forward by this Bill. In any case where a child has been led into depravity it is dealt with under the Industrial Schools Act or the Reformatories Act. What will be the effect of penal and coercive legislation of this kind. It will lead to hypocrisy on the part of the people affected, and to corruption on the part of the police into whose hands the administration of the Act will be placed. I know that Acts of this kind are applied in Ireland according to the politics and religion of certain people. I believe you might search through six or seven counties in Ireland, and you would not get in twelve months six cases to which this Bill would apply. Why, then, for the sake of six cases in a twelvemonth should you hamper hundreds of respectable people? Why should we pass a law which might be used as an engine of tyranny and oppression against Nationalists? Why are Nationalist publicans to be worried by the police who have a spite against them? I know something of how the licensing laws are administered in Ireland. I know that certain publicans can break these laws as they like. They understand how by indirect methods to affect the people who are charged with the administration of the law. The result is that one class of men can break the law and another class of men who do not come up to the police requirements are hampered in their work. I maintain that if this Bill is applied to Ireland it will enable the Royal Irish Constabulary to worry and harass publicans who are Nationalists, and in some districts publicans who are Catholics. No justification has been offered for introducing this Bill or for making it apply to Ireland. Then, I contend that the heading of the Bill, "Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children," is an attempt to intimidate this House. That is an old trick. I remember some sessions ago the "Verminous Persons Bill." Several members

objected to it because of its repulsive title, and successfully blocked it. The title in this case is meant to frighten opposition away, and that if you object to its machinery or its details you can be taunted, "Oh, you are for making little children drunkards"; I think that if this Bill were carried it would have a very serious effect on the rural districts of Ireland. There is not sufficient population there to enable a man to run a public-house, as in England, and accordingly the publican combines many other avocations. He sometimes sells drapery, and often groceries. In the summer time, in the harvest time of the year, when people are engaged in their work in the fields, and it is of vital importance to the farmers to watch for every hour of sunshine, and to be on the land in order that they may harvest their crops, they cannot go themselves away from their work, and they have to send into the small towns for their supplies of provisions and groceries, and so forth, and they have to send their children. If this Bill is passed and applied to Ireland the effect will be that a farmer who is unable to leave his land will not be able to send his child, as he does at present, for his provisions and groceries if the man with whom he deals has a licensed house. That would be a most intolerable state of things; because a man has a licence to sell drink, although the greater part of his business may be the sale of provisions and groceries, a child under sixteen cannot be served, and as a consequence a farmer cannot send his child to fetch his supplies.

MR. JORDAN (Fermanagh, S.) dissented.

*MR. TULLY: My hon. friend suggests that the case I have endeavoured to illustrate would not occur. I am afraid he has not read the Bill, and gone into all the details; if he had he would have seen that the case I illustrate is just the case that would be likely to occur, and the police in Ireland, if they had a grudge against a man holding a licence, because he happened to be a member of the United Irish League, or because he was a supporter of it, would have another opportunity given them to wrong him. We know how they apply every technicality of the law, and twist them in order to persecute, injure, and often ruin men against whom they have a grudge. If this Bill passes and is applied to Ireland in its present form, we shall put a new weapon into the hands of the constabulary to persecute the people. By Clause 1 it is an offence for children to be seen near a public-house.

MR. JORDAN: No, no.

*MR. TULLY: Hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House seem to me to be as intolerant as hon. Gentlemen opposite I object to this Bill because, it is in my opinion, an interference with the personal liberty of the people. [Loud laughter.] Hon. Gentlemen who scoff at my proposition have not done me the honour to listen fully to the arguments I have tried to adduce in support of it. I was arguing that a farmer could not send his child to the village.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order; I must warn the hon. Member against tedious repetition of his arguments.

*MR. TULLY: One of the effects of this Bill will be that a publican will not be able to employ about his house a child under sixteen years of age. He may not employ him as a messenger lest he should deliver drink. There never was such a

dearth of servants in Ireland as at the present time, and if you make it penal for a man who has a public-house, and who combines with that other trades, to employ a boy of under sixteen years of age;

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order; There is nothing in the Bill about a publican not employing a boy.

*MR. TULLY: Very well, Mr. Speaker, I will not further occupy the time of the House except to say I support the motion of my hon. friend below me who has moved the rejection of the Bill. The Bill, in my opinion, is brought forward by the well paid officials of the temperance leagues from which it emanates. The public opinion of which we have heard is not true public opinion but a machine made opinion. The Bill, in my opinion, is a direct interference with the rights of the people, and so far as Ireland is concerned it is not necessary, and I shall vote against the Second Reading.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."; (Major Jameson.)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): This measure, I imagine, is one which at first sight everybody would be disposed to support; nobody would deliberately oppose a measure aiming at the suppression of intemperance; especially one which deals as this does

with the case of children, and therefore I feel a little unwilling to appear as a critic of a measure having so much good in it. I do not associate myself with the sweeping condemnations which have fallen from hon. Members on the other side of the House, but it seems to me that in this measure that which is practical is overshadowed by that which is sentimental. The Bill goes too far. It is founded on two fallacies: one, that all children are presumptive or at all events potential drunkards, and the other that all public-houses are dens of vice. First of all I may say that all working men; the class for the protection of whom this Bill is brought forward; are entitled to have and will have their beer to drink with their dinner. With all due deference to the hon. Baronet the Member for North-West Manchester, I say it is the universal practice of the working men of this country to drink beer with their dinner, and my point is this, that there is not essentially any more harm in a child going to fetch the parents' beer than going to fetch the parents' food;

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): Would you send your own child? That is the test.

*MR. REGINALD LUCAS: Hon. Members who have not forgotten their Dickens will remember; particularly in the Christmas Carol; the reference made to the familiar practice of people sending to the bakehouse to have their dinners cooked; how through bye-streets and lanes and numerous turnings the people came carrying their dinners to the bakers' shops, and my point is that it is not worse to fetch the beer than the dinner with which it is to be drunk. I know that there is one objection, but I should say that the parents in these classes were the first to take the greatest care to protect their children. In the second place I am at a loss to know where there is anything dreadful in a child taking malt liquor. I have always understood that stout is a perfectly wholesome drink, and

I see no harm in the children having their share of what is admittedly a wholesome article. We all know that in the schools where we were educated we were allowed to drink beer before we reached the age of sixteen, and I am not aware that any of us ever suffered in consequence.

Another solution of this difficulty is this. I am told it is the practice of many publicans to send round to their customers at dinner time. That may or may not be so, but I do not see why operatives should be put to the inconvenience of waiting the punctuality of the messenger, and if their children did not go to fetch their beer the parents must go themselves, I do not see why they should be interfered with and interrupted in their duties by having to go round and fetch their own beer. We are told, and, told repeatedly, that one of the greatest evils was the increase of intemperance among women, and it seems to me that if the mother of the family has continually to go to the public-house there is a great danger of staying there to gossip and taking drink. I think, it is much better and safer for the child to go than the mother.

As to the question of age, I imagine that is a matter to be more properly dealt with in Committee, but for my part I should say that a girl of fifteen going into a public-house is much less likely to come to harm than a young woman of nineteen or twenty. Of course I know that a child going into a public-house may run the risk of hearing conversation detrimental to her moral well-being, but of this I am persuaded, that one of the great characteristics of the class of people of whom we are speaking is their tenderness towards children, and I am sure that people finding children coming into a public-house to get their parents' dinner beer would refrain from saying or doing anything that could bring any harm upon them. The only other observation I would make is this, that if young-people are forbidden to go into public-houses the public-houses will take upon themselves a sort of charm which they would not otherwise possess. Coming to the question of the habitual soaker, this Bill, in my opinion, has nothing but good in it. I will refrain from quoting individual cases which have come under my notice. I may

say that a friend of mine, a clergyman, for whom I have a great regard, told me that he followed a child into three public-houses, followed that child home, and found three women in a disgusting state of intoxication. That is a state of things which requires an immediate and certain remedy, and it is well worth our while to try and do something to remedy it, but I do not know that it is necessary in dealing with that to go so far or draft such a drastic measure as this which is under discussion. One thing which I do advocate is that the parents should be allowed to send for their dinner and supper beer. Those are the points which I desire to bring before the House, and on which I am bound to say I think we can allow some license. There is one part of the Bill which seems to me to be unpracticable, and that is the liability so far as the publican is concerned. I do not see how we are going to safeguard ourselves in a matter of this kind by the word "apparent," as it is obviously impossible for publicans in the busy time of the day to make the necessary inquiries and investigations; it would be extremely difficult for him to see if he was dealing with a person of fifteen or seventeen. Mr. Childers, in 1886, contended that children might be

allowed to do certain things without any fear of corruption, and going into a public-house would not necessarily mean going into a den of wickedness, and in my opinion we should do more good by dealing reasonably with the proposals before the House than by attempting to pass an heroic measure.

*MR. TOMKINSON (Cheshire, Crewe): I desire to trespass on the indulgence of the House for the first time, and for a short time only, in order to give the results of my experience with regard to the action first taken by the licensing authority of the city of Liverpool, which has already been alluded to by my hon. friend the Member for North-West Manchester and, following immediately upon that example, by the Standing Joint Committee of the county of Chester, of which I am a member. They issued an instruction

to the licence holders of the county not to serve children under fourteen years of age with intoxicating drink. In the county the proposal was met with the usual objections, many of which we have heard in this House to-day; the difficulties as to the age of the children, the hardship upon the parents, and the injustice to the licence holders were all freely aired and discussed. The instruction has been in force for some years, and at every potty sessional annual meeting the superintendent of the division reports to the magistrates the result of the working of that instruction and the number of cases in which the licence holders have disregarded it. Speaking from my own experience as chairman of one division, I may say that the cases have been almost nil. The licence holders have one and all freely and fully accepted the situation. They have behaved extremely well, and I am glad to say that the gloomy predictions of the results which would ensue have been proved to be nugatory, nothing but the best results having followed. I maintain that in this one piece of practical experience we have an argument in favour of the present Bill which is better than any amount of theoretical difficulties or special pleading in the opposite direction. In supporting this Bill I will only say that we ask that the action which the Liverpool magistrates and the authority of the county of Chester have taken ought to be made compulsory, and that the age should be raised from fourteen to sixteen. I firmly believe that if this Bill passes into law it will be of the greatest benefit not only to the children, but to the country generally and its future.

I think the House will unanimously congratulate itself upon the hands into which, by the chances of the Ballot, the moving of the second reading of this Bill has fallen. We have all listened with the greatest interest and delight to the admirable speech of the hon. Member. I have in regard to that speech only one regret, and that is, that on account, I understand, of important duties in another place it was absolutely impossible for the Home Secretary to be in his place to hear it. I believe, however, that we have, on his part, something more than a mere

benevolent neutrality, and I trust that with his kindly help this Bill may be passed into law in the present session.

MR. FLOWER (Bradford, W.): I wish to add to the tribute paid to the hon. Gentleman who introduced this Bill. He did so in a speech, if I may say so, the earnestness and eloquence of which charmed the House, and most rightly evoked

the sympathy of all who heard it. The speech had also, I think, another valuable quality. It was couched in moderate language, and whilst in the observations I have to offer to the House I cannot attempt to rival the eloquence of the hon. Gentleman, I shall at least endeavour to follow the precedent of moderation he set in the matter. There is not in any quarter of the House, so far as I am aware, any reluctance to recognise, or any fear to grapple with, the gigantic evil of intemperance. We all recognise that among the many great topics which have woven together into a tangled skein and constitute the programme of social reform there is none more important, none more intricate, and none more difficult to deal with than this problem of drink. The hon. Gentleman who moved the Bill spoke of the evil effects which are involved in the sale of drink under present conditions, and he spoke of those effects as tending to increase the amount of juvenile intoxication. No figures one can quote on the question of juvenile intoxication can be held to be satisfactory, because it is a terrible thing, take it even at its smallest figure; but there has been presented to this House from time to time a statement of the extent to which juvenile intoxication prevails in England and Wales. I endeavoured, as some Members may remember, by a question which I put yesterday to elicit the corresponding figures for Scotland and Ireland. The figures for the whole of England and Wales in the year 1893 were 50; in 1894, 41; in 1895, 24; in 1896, 31; in 1897, 26; in 1898, 44; and in 1899, the last year for which Returns have been compiled, I am glad to say the number has fallen to 17. With regard to Ireland we were told yesterday by the Chief Secretary that the figures last year were only 8. Whilst we may admit that even

these figures are extremely unpleasant, yet the evil, so far as juvenile intoxication is concerned, is not one so gigantic as to call for the extreme and drastic measure now before the House.

The Bill is, as the hon. Gentleman who introduced it observed, no stranger to the House. I dare say he was present, as I was myself, on that memorable evening last year when, by the almost unanimous consent of the House, the Bill was read a second time.* It will be remembered that on that occasion one or two suggestions were made. I am sorry that the promoters of this Bill did not avail themselves in the interval which has elapsed since last June to carry out some of those suggestions and incorporate them in their Bill, for had they done so I think their Bill would have met with a very favourable reception on the whole, and I do not anticipate that there would have been any fear or risk but that the main portion would have become law. But they have not done so. The Bill as it stands to-day before us is substantially and practically the same Bill as that which was introduced last March, and which passed the Second Reading in June. Therefore, I think it is very desirable to press upon the promoters of the Bill once again some suggestions and alterations for its improvement. I do so in no hostile spirit to the principle of the measure. No one who has taken, as I have done for some years, an interest in the welfare of the children of London can fail to wish to do all that is practicable to remove from them every sort of temptation and every risk of contamination, as far as it is possible to do so. The hon. Gentleman, in introducing the Bill, made one statement which I was very

glad to hear. He said he did not wish to penalise the publican, and by that statement I think he meant that he wanted the Bill to work fairly towards the publican who would honestly try to carry out the law if this change should be placed on the Statute-book. But if that is so; and I do not doubt that the statement of the hon. Gentleman is correct; why have not the promoters of this Bill taken the precaution which

* For the debate on this occasion see The Parliamentary Debates [Fourth Series], Vol. lxxx., page 517.

was taken in the Bill of 1886? In the discussion of the Bill it was pointed out that it was exceedingly difficult for a publican, the holder of a licence, to arrive at anything like an accurate estimate of the age of a person applying to him to be supplied with liquor, and we know that it is very difficult. We read every day in the newspapers of boys under age who enlist in the Army; and if a recruiting sergeant, with all the leisure and opportunity necessary for arriving at a sound conclusion, so frequently makes a mistake, is it to be a matter of wonder if a publican who is serving liquor should find a difficulty in arriving at an accurate estimate of the age of the person applying to him? That was brought before the House very strongly, and it was pressed from both sides in the debate on the Bill in 1886, and as a result the Attorney General of that day, the late Lord Russell of Killowen, introduced the words, "knowingly serves." It was a very valuable safeguard to prevent harsh and inequitable use being made of the law, and it was a safeguard which the Royal Commission in dealing with the Bill expressly laid down. In the Report of the majority they expressly use the word "knowingly"; and the minority in their Report, I believe, also use that word. I sincerely hope that the hon. Gentleman, who tells us he does not wish to penalise the publican, will take good care at some later stage of the Bill to see that the word "knowingly" is inserted. I should have hoped for that with stronger confidence had it not been for the speech of the hon. Baronet the Member for North-West Manchester. He said this Bill was not a piece of hasty legislation. Well, I quite agree with him that it is not hasty in the sense that it has been here before, but, like the Bourbons, the promoters seem to have forgotten nothing and learned nothing.

There are many points in connection with this Bill which will call for closer examination at the hands of this House when the Bill passes the Second Reading. There is, in the first place, the question of the extent to which this evil can be really remedied by legislation. When the Bill had passed the Second Reading last year, I went down to the East End of London, to a district which I was representing on the London School Board, in order to see for myself the working of this child messenger business. I went down to a very poor part of London called Bow Common Lane, and I asked a publican there to give me leave to stand near the bar during the dinner hour in order to observe what took place. Well, nothing very dreadful happened. There was a separate department called the "Jug and Bottle Entrance," and from ten minutes past twelve to, roughly speaking, half-past twelve, I suppose, some fifty or sixty-people entered that bar and were served with beer. One person took the twopences and pitched them into the till and another person served the beer. People of all ages came. I recognised

some of the brightest and most promising boys in the school of which I was in charge. They came in and paid twopence and went out again. Boys and girls of all ages; of school age, at all events; a few women, and still fewer men came in. There was nothing to contaminate a child in doing that, and I cannot but think that the promoters of this Bill would have done wisely to have, at all events, introduced some scheme for limiting the hours during which their measure was to apply, because, after all, what the House of Commons wants to do, and what I think the country expects us to do, is that we should save the children as far as possible from contamination, while inflicting a minimum of inconvenience on the publican, and dealing justly and equitably with all the parties concerned. I do not think it will be contended that the sale of beer over the counter from twelve to two o'clock in a compartment specially reserved and set apart for such sales is an operation that tends to contaminate children. It has been stated also that children are in the habit of sipping the beer while conveying it to their homes. I am inclined to doubt that statement. I have made some inquiry and obtained some testimony on the point. I should have thought myself that the average British working man coming home to his dinner and sending his boy to fetch a pint of ale and having to pour out that ale would see if there was an insufficient quantity, and if there was he would apply such a rough and ready method of dealing with the boy as would prevent the repetition of the offence. I very much doubt whether the offence referred to by the hon. Member for West Clare is one which could be indulged in to a large extent by the juvenile class without personal consequences to themselves. I think the promoters of the Bill would have done well to consider the convenience of that section of parents who do send their children to the public-house for dinner beer. We are legislating for a class to which we do not belong, and is there not a risk that in this legislation, however good and sympathetic and kind, we may be acting on imperfect and inaccurate information? In the next place I think the promoters of this Bill should have considered this question of the hours. The hon. baronet the Member for North-West Manchester spoke in terms of reprobation and indignation of the action of those drunken parents who send their children to fetch drink from the public-house in order to minister to their own vice. The hon. Baronet would, I am sure, be the last man to say that the majority of parents who send their children into licensed premises to obtain liquor are drunken or dissolute. They are ordinary, everyday, average people. I would venture to say that in the average the person who sends his child to the public-house to fetch liquor is just as fond of that child, and just as eager for the welfare of that child, as any one of us sitting on these benches. Humanity is neither wholly good nor wholly bad. You must take it in the average. We cannot safely deal with abnormal cases by a Bill of this kind. This a Bill for dealing with the normal parent, and it is the normal case we have to consider. A terrible catalogue recorded in a newspaper; I think it was the Daily News; has been circulated amongst Members of Parliament, and those cases are terrible enough. If it be possible by legislation to deal with those cases, in God's name let us do it, but this Bill will not help those cases. If the House passes the Second Reading of this Bill; and I am inclined to hope that it will; is

it prepared to say that, subject to a certain age, it is unwise to send young people to the public-houses? That is the principle. It is a broad principle, and it is intended to be applicable not merely to the abnormal circumstance of the intemperate and vicious home, but applicable to the average everyday life of the working classes. That being so, let us unite to make this Bill effective. Let us remove from it those sources of, I think, needless inconvenience to the community, and see how far it is possible to make the Bill useful and practical as an everyday working measure in social life.

I have touched on the question of hours. Let me touch next on what seems to me of almost equal importance, and that is the circumstances and the conditions under which drink is retailed. Many speeches which have been made not only here but in the country on this question seem to lump in one category all classes of licensed premises. They select the flaring gin-palace in our great city, with its sources of temptation, and they speak of other places as if they were open to the same criticism and the same charges to which, I fear, some of the flaring haunts of evil are open. But we know it is not so. We know that there are many quiet and respectable houses, and that the great majority of the license holders use their licenses wisely and well. Remember that they hold their licences on very frail tenure indeed, endeavouring to conduct their business in such a way as to merit the respect of the community. There is a great danger, I think, when we come to legislate on these matters, of looking upon the flaring gin palace and forgetting the other places of popular resort and refreshment which hold licenses under similar conditions, and which would be affected alike by the operation of the Bill. I fully agree that there can be nothing more unhappy to witness than to see a little child pushing through a crowd of people round a bar late at night to obtain liquor for his parents or those who have sent him. I should be inclined to say that we can do nothing better than to limit the sale of liquor to children strictly and solely to those premises which are provided with a separate exit and entrance for the sale of such liquor. That is a definite and clear proposition. If a licence holder was willing to provide such accommodation I would be inclined to allow him to supply liquor.

The Report of the Royal Commission touches upon another matter which I think goes to the root of this evil. I am referring to the Report of the majority which is to be found on page 19. The Report states that similar penalties to those imposed on the publicans who serve children under age should also be imposed on those who send children knowing them to be under age. I have dealt with the word "knowingly" as it affects the publican. Now we come to the question of the parent who, knowing the child to be under age; I suppose the parent is perhaps of all people best qualified to judge; sends him for liquor. On this point the Minority Report does not express any opinion, Opinions have been expressed that it would be exceedingly difficult to obtain their conviction, and that it would naturally be a painful process the putting of children into the witness-box to give evidence against their parents or guardians. That would be a very painful state of things, but it is a condition of things that prevails from day to day in cases affecting cruelty committed on children. But would it be

necessary? The production of a birth certificate would be evidence of the guilt or innocence of the parent of the child, and is it right for us to make a law imposing a penalty upon the publican, who cannot know the age accurately, and who at the best has to judge and guess; and the penalties on him must in their cumulative results inevitably entail the loss of his licence; while we let the parent off scot free? If a parent made up his mind to defy the House of Commons and the law, he could send his boy to a public-house one day and to another next day, and the holders of the licences would in turn be fined, and the parent would go scot free all the while. I do not think that is in accordance with the sense of equity and justice which ought to govern our decisions when a law of that kind is made. Punish the publican if he breaks the law, but punish the parent also, who is more responsible than the publican for the breach of the law. I press that point most strongly upon the promoters of the Bill. At all events, the same measure of punishment should be awarded to each.

I now come to another matter, and that is with regard to the age. I want to ask the promoters of this Bill to consider whether the age of fourteen or fifteen would not be a safer age than that proposed in the Bill. [Cries of "Committee." My hon. friends opposite say "Committee." I quite agree that these are Committee points, but they are points which have been again and again brought before the notice of the promoters of the Bill. This is not a hastily drawn measure, but it is the calm and deliberate conclusion of those interested in the Bill, and it is their fault and not mine if I have to reiterate once more arguments and suggestions with which they are already familiar. I would respectfully suggest that the age here fixed is too high. It is dangerously near the limit at which the children can obtain liquor for themselves. It is a very undesirable meeting of two periods, and the promoters would do well to reduce the age to fourteen or fifteen years.

We have heard a good deal about the Committee stage of the Bill. Hon. Members opposite have cried "Committee, Committee" when points of objection have been taken. May I appeal to them to let the Committee be a Committee of the whole House? The Bill applies to England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, and I think the House has no more profitable or useful way of employing its Wednesday afternoons after Whitsuntide than in its collective capacity, sitting as a Committee and making this Bill, which contains in it a principle of much good, a useful and practical measure which should inflict small hardship upon the community and no injustice upon any class, and which should at the same time do something to safeguard the children of the poor from the evils of a too early contamination from association with drink.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): In rising to address this House for the first time, and to support this most important Bill, I ask for its indulgence for a few moments to enable me to give expression to my views, as I feel very strongly upon the matter. The object of the Bill is indeed a noble one, namely, to check and prevent the evil of intemperance, which, sad to say, plays havoc in many a comfortable home. The object is to rear and educate a race of men into the knowledge that to be sober is to be free; to recognise the fact that sobriety is a very great element in the making of their material happiness and

prosperity; and, acting on that conviction, to endeavour to attain a high moral standard of which a nation may feel proud. I speak from an Irish point of view and on behalf of every right-minded and hopeful person in my constituency who loves his country and desires to see her lifted up again into the proud position she once held, when she was recognised throughout the world as a great and glorious nation. The Bill is not the product of temperance fanatics. It is backed up by thousands and thousands of men, who, like myself, desire to see moderate reform in the licensing laws, and who will feel greatly disappointed and aggrieved if the Bill does not become law. The Royal Commission were almost unanimously in favour of legislation in this matter. They even went beyond the provisions of the Bill, as they were of opinion that a penalty should be imposed not only on the seller of intoxicating liquors to children under age, but also on those who send the children, knowing them to be under age. I also am of that opinion, but that, I understand, is a matter for Committee. What did the Royal Commission say with regard to Ireland? It said;

"In our opinion it is desirable that children under the age of sixteen should not be served with intoxicating liquors for consumption by themselves or other persons either on or off the premises, and that the law should thus be assimilated to that which we recommend for England. The same remark which we have already made with regard to England applies here, namely, that great caution should be used in not hastily legislating in advance of what public opinion would sanction."

What is the general feeling in Ireland with regard to the Bill? I am glad to say the hon. Members for South Leitrim and West Clare do not speak the sentiments of the great majority of the Irish party. The Chairman and the majority of that party are entirely in favour of the measure, and, as expressing the opinion of the

people of Ireland, I will read two resolutions which were unanimously adopted at most representative conventions. In February last a meeting of the National Temperance Conference was held in Dublin, at which the following resolution was unanimously adopted;

"That this representative Conference begs most earnestly to urge upon the Government and upon Irish Members of Parliament the pressing necessity and importance of giving legislative effect to the following recommendations;" amongst them being the prevention of the sale of intoxicating liquor to children under sixteen years of age. On the same evening, at a meeting of the Irish Association for the Prevention of Intemperance, the following resolution, on the motion of the Protestant Bishop of Killaloe, was also unanimously adopted;

"That this meeting, realising the grave evils, both physical and moral, arising from the employment of children as messengers to public-houses, and being convinced that public opinion in Ireland is unanimous in desiring that children should be safeguarded for this practice, calls upon the Government to promote such legislation as will carry into effect the unanimous recommendations of the Royal Commission by prohibiting all sale of intoxicating drink to any child under sixteen years of age for any purpose whatever."

In addition to that, a great number of representative bodies in Ireland have

passed resolutions in favour of the Bill, amongst them being the Corporation of the City of Dublin. It may be argued that if the parents are deprived of the right of sending children under sixteen years of age to the public-houses they will send others who are beyond that age, or perhaps go themselves. Even though that be so, which is the greater evil? Is it not that where the young plant is exposed to the storm the chances are that it will perish in the tempest, whereas the full-grown tree will stand a great deal of weather, and though it may bend for the moment it will right itself if sown in good soil? At all events, the fault lies with the grown-up people themselves if they do not shelter themselves behind the ramparts of their own modesty, common-sense, and virtue. I unhesitatingly affirm that the greatest evil exists where young-people, whose eyes and ears are open to everything, whose impressions are lasting, and who have not a mind of their own, are exposed to the temptation. Let us, then, in the name of God, adopt this remedy at once. Let us not lag behind Canada, New Zealand, and parts of Australia, where a similar provision is already in force. Let us east aside all political differences of opinion for the moment in solving this great social problem, and act immediately for the good of our respective countries, as we can do in a humble way, by voting in favour of the Bill now before the House.

MR. MIDDLEMORE (Birmingham, N.): I suppose there are very few Members of the House who do not feel that it is an extremely undesirable thing for young children to frequent public-houses or in any way to associate themselves with the drinking habits of the country. I certainly hold that opinion very strongly, but yet I am of opinion that I cannot give any hearty support to this Bill, I listened with much respect to the speeches of the mover and seconder, and I must confess I was almost anxious to be convinced, but my opinion remains the same. The Bill, in the first place, limits the parents' rights, and what is more, it limits their ability to discharge a duty in regard to selecting which child they think best to discharge a duty special to themselves and special to their own children. The State is rather to select the child, or at any rate it is to suggest the selection. Strangely enough, the State selects just the very worst possible age. It enters the house of a working man, and, laying its insensitive hand on a boy of fifteen, says, "You are not to go," and then laying its hand on the girl of sixteen it says, "You may go." Unless the parent is doing what is really wrong, the State has no right to do that. The parent is not doing what is wrong, he is doing what is relatively right in sending the child under sixteen; but the law will be doing what is relatively wrong in insisting that a child over sixteen should be sent. The age of sixteen is the most capricious, difficult, and unreliable age of all. It is the age at which boys and girls begin to sow their wild oats. In boarding houses in Canada it is considered most unwise to send children between the ages of fourteen and eighteen to the public-house, and that sixteen is of all ages the worst conceivable. I admit the evil, but my fear and belief is that you are going to abolish one evil by the creation of another of a greater and more serious character. You are attaching a special disability to the parents of the working classes, but I do not lay very great stress upon that. You are

modifying the relations they have with their own children, but I do not lay very great stress upon that. I simply say that hon. Members here would not like to be placed in a similar position. The law will very frequently be broken. The parent and the child will be accomplices in breaking the law, and, worse still, if there is a prosecution the child will have to appear as a witness, not, it is true, against the parent, but against the man who supplied the beer. You will embitter the relations with the parent; you will create ill-will, and that, it seems to me, is an undoubted objection to this Bill. If the law is actually obeyed, the parent will often have to fetch his own dinner and Sunday beer. Is that wise? If he has to fetch his beer will he not stay in the public-house to drink it? and will he not drink more than he otherwise would? Are you not substituting drinking on the premises for drinking off the premises? Up to a certain point I am a friend of this Bill, and I have spoken to friends of the Bill about it. They say that this Bill is to save the children, and if the parent will have to go for his beer he must. That is a very superficial view. A man cannot suffer alone. Supposing his wife and children suffer with him? I would that I only could be punished for the wrong I have done, but that cannot be. My life is not isolated; others are involved; you cannot do the children greater harm than by putting temptation in the way of the parents. What moral right have we in this of all countries to say, "You may send that girl of sixteen, but you may not send that boy of fifteen"? I contend that if this Bill passes, not only will the law be broken, but the law of God also will be broken. The parents ought to use their right of selection. It may be quite fair to consider whether local option is good or whether public-houses should be closed at certain hours; but it is not fair to enter a working man's house and prevent that working man doing his bounden duty in making a selection as to the child he should send to the public-house. That is the parents' special business, it is nobody else's business, and they only should discharge that duty.

MR. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire): The speech of the hon. Member for West Limerick afforded the last proof that was wanting that this Bill is the Bill of no section or party. It has been advocated from every section of the House in a fashion which shows that to-day the House of Commons is discharging one of its most important duties. Whatever outside critics may say, upon this occasion we are giving or trying to give effect to what is obviously the drift of matured public opinion. In that condition of things I rise not for the purpose of addressing to the House any detailed arguments in support of the principle of the Bill, because upon the principle, I think, there has been general agreement even on the part of those who have criticised the Bill, but for the purpose of suggesting that the right hon. Gentleman who represents the Government should as soon as possible put us in possession of the views of the Government on the matter. I cannot doubt that those views will be friendly, and that they will show a disposition on the part of the Government to assist private Members to put upon the Statute-book what, after all, has been under consideration for a very long time, and what we all, or nearly all, desire to have embodied among our laws. It is the more necessary that we should have that expression of views soon, because I noticed from the speech of the hon. Member for West Bradford

that there may be a question as to the form the subsequent proceedings with regard to this Bill should take. The hon. Member threw out a rather ominous suggestion about a Committee of the whole House. To send the Bill to a Committee of the whole House instead of to its obvious place; a Grand Committee; would be to stultify the professions of those who profess to be favourable to the measure. I therefore hope we may soon be able to vote on the principle of the Bill, and then settle what form the subsequent stages should take.

The hon. Member for North Birmingham argued mainly upon the fact that the Bill proposed to take out of the hands of parents the right, I think he said, to select the child who should discharge what might be a family duty. The hon. Member comes from a city which took a very leading part in formulating the great Education Act of 1870, and if the State has decided one thing more definitely than anything else in that Act with regard to children it is that it has the right to limit the powers of parents over their children in directing their duties whenever it thinks the individual direction of their duties might conflict with their well-being. The hon. Member for West Bradford made a very interesting speech, but I must confess it was a speech which puzzled me very much. He expressed himself very decidedly in favour of the principle of the Bill. That did not surprise anyone who knows with what real zeal the hon. Member has worked in educational matters in London, and in such matters as prison reform touching child life. But when the hon. Member puts upon the Notice Paper a motion inviting the House to decline to proceed with legislation excepting upon the basis of imposing a punishment upon the parent as distinguished from the publican, and then further talks of a Committee of the Whole House, I confess I feel a little puzzled, and I think the hon. Member himself must feel a little puzzled, as to what the tendency of his speech really was. If the House is in favour of putting a penalty on the parent as well as on the seller of the liquor, I, for my part, do not see why it should not be done. It is all a question of what is thought best. I look upon this Bill as one meant not to harass either parents or publicans, but to develop and form public opinion by laying down a standard to which the public may be expected to conform. I look upon it as endeavouring to raise the standard of public opinion upon this matter, and to introduce a new practice which will preclude the evils with which we are only too familiar. Therefore any mere question of what should be the form of penalty, or where there should be this or that clause germane to the carrying out of an object upon which we are all agreed, seems to me to be beside the point in a Second Reading discussion on a Wednesday afternoon. The hon. Gentleman also referred to the absence of the word "knowingly." If he had read the Bill he would have noticed that the promoters have provided for that very point, because the penalty is imposed upon anybody who sells to a person apparently under the age of sixteen. There must be such an appearance as brings home to the mind of the person selling the liquor a guilty knowledge. The very object of the word "apparently" is to prevent an innocent man who has made a mistake being punished. If the thing can be made better in Grand Committee it should be done.

I, for my part, have never wished in these matters to pass legislation which might make it impossible for people to carry on a business which the State has authorised. In dealing with this question to-day, I think it is one of the best signs that we have had for a long time that, as the mover of the Second Beading said, the House has approached the temperance problem from a new point of view; from the point of view neither of attacking the liquor interest nor of refusing moderate measures of reform because larger measures are not forthcoming. The House seems to me to be treating this matter in an eminently practical spirit. It has taken up a great social question, but not in a party sense. The general principle has been supported from all sides, and I think this would be a convenient time to hear from the Government a statement of the attitude they are going to assume.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. JESSE COLLINGS, Birmingham, Bordesley): I will first of all refer to the earnest and moderate

manner in which this discussion has been carried on, and I am not surprised that the House would be glad to know the view of the Government with regard to the measure. That I can give in a very few words. The Government regard this as in no sense a party measure, and they propose to adopt the same course as on a previous occasion, and to leave the question absolutely in the hands of the House. I regret that the Home Secretary cannot be present, and still more regret the cause of his absence. He is confined to bed by illness, and very much regrets not being able to be present. I have very carefully ascertained his views on this question, and those views he wishes me to place as well as I can before the House. In giving those views he speaks, of course, for himself, and not for the Government. He wishes that this Bill might be read a second time, as he has already expressed himself in favour of a similar measure, but he thinks the House should consider very carefully certain points, which, although details, might be regarded as almost equally important as principles. He lays great stress on the age, which, he thinks, should be fourteen instead of sixteen. He goes further, and lays stress on what he considers to be a vital part of the Bill; the penalising of a publican for serving children under sixteen years of age. It is quite true that the word "apparently" is in the Bill, but there are one or two things in the minds of those who placed it there. Either "apparently" is more vague than "knowingly," in which case I presume it was put in for that purpose, or it is the same thing as "knowingly," in which case why cannot "knowingly" be put in?; especially as the word "knowingly" is recommended by the Royal Commission Reports, both majority and minority. It would therefore be interesting to learn from subsequent speakers whether the promoters are willing to accept this less vague word, which provides a greater safeguard than the word "apparently" against unjustly penalising the publican.

There is also another matter upon which the Home Secretary lays great stress, It is alleged that both the Majority Report and the Minority Report are unanimous in recommending the principle of the measure so far as serving children under sixteen years of age is concerned. That is not quite an accurate statement of the case. The Report of the majority lays great stress on the necessity of there being public opinion behind the proposal. It states;

"Legislation in this direction, therefore, should not be undertaken except after the fullest discussion with those best qualified to speak for the class affected, otherwise a strong reaction might follow."

On this point my right hon. friend makes a very important suggestion, which I am inclined to think will recommend itself to those who wish to see a measure of a practical kind. He has come to the conclusion that a measure of this kind should be of an adoptive character. I think myself that that is a statesmanlike suggestion, and one which will overcome very many difficulties, because, as the right hon. Gentleman states, there are many districts which are naturally very apprehensive as to the working of a measure of this kind. If it were put into force in districts where it was adopted by the local authorities, it is very likely that all those apprehensions would be found to be groundless, and that the result of this legislation, strong as it is, would be unaccompanied by the evil and inconveniences which too many appear to attach to it. It would therefore seem to my right hon. friend that the best way to obtain the general adoption of a measure such as this would be by securing the consent of the local authorities, which undoubtedly is a greater guarantee that public opinion is behind the change than any other form of expression which could be obtained. The promoters will signify whether or not they accept such a suggestion as that. I confess, as far as I am concerned; and I have no doubt there are others in the House in the same position; the course they adopt would influence my vote to a very large degree. The point is whether or not a local authority would consent, and, perhaps, on the pressure of its constituents, should be allowed to put the Bill in force, or whether it should be applied in all districts whether they want it or not. My right hon. friend is also of opinion that public opinion is greatly growing in favour of this Bill. That is another argument, I think, in favour of the suggestion he makes. He is in all cases most heartily in favour of any measure that can save the children from any evil which may attach to their being sent to public-houses.

I have, as accurately as possible, given the House the views of my right hon. friend which he would have given had he been able to be in his place to-day. If I may say a word or two, not as a member of the Government, but from my own point of view, I should be very thankful if the House will allow me to state them, because

I am, and have been all my life, in favour of temperance and all temperance movements. It seems to me we are considering two classes of questions, or rather two positions for separate treatment, and this different treatment can only be secured by making any measure that might be passed one of an adoptive character. There are two sets of opinion; London and provincial. I am afraid of London I have a very small opinion. I do not know much about its social aspect. I seriously mean what I say when I remember the influence which appertains to the capital of any other country in Europe and the influence which appertains to the great provincial life of our nation. Provincial life and opinion are more worthy of being followed than any opinion that emanates from London.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): What about Camberwell?

AN HON. MEMBER: What about Battersea?

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: No wonder London is Tory.

* MR. JESSE COLLINGS: Any Bill for the treatment of the supply of drink to children is applicable to London, where there are gin-palaces, bars, and all the appurtenances of great drinking establishments.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Are there none in Birmingham?

*MR. JESSE COLLINGS: Yes, no doubt there are, and in Liverpool, Manchester, and other large towns. What I say is that a measure which is applicable and beneficial to these large places may be altogether mischievous and unacceptable, and cause inconvenience to other smaller places in the United Kingdom. With regard to sending one's own children to fetch beer; and that is the best test; it seems to me that I would rather send a child of tender years to these gin palaces where drunken men may congregate and where drunken women may be found, than a young person, especially a girl, of sixteen years of age.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): Then make it eighteen.

*MR. JESSE COLLINGS: In the one case the harm would be but passing; in the other it might be permanent. But what about the thousands of parishes in this country where the working classes are not drunken, where they are as careful of their own children as any other people, where they go home to dinner; I speak from some experience of the conditions of the village life and the small towns; and where the mother with only one pair of hands, having no servant and no cellar, and where the only unoccupied member of the family available is under sixteen years of age I There are thousands, I might say millions, in the position so well described by the hon. Member for Portsmouth. Is that man to be prevented from sending that child to the public-house of a small town, where there is no more danger than in sending it to a grocer's shop? I want hon. Members to consider whether they are going to try to impose on the working-class families who exist under the conditions I name. It is all very well for those who have servants, or who do not consider beer necessary, to suggest these restrictions; but beer is considered by the great bulk of the respectable working people of this country to be necessary. Setting aside the large towns where these dangers are supposed to exist, are you to prevent the working-class women from sending the only unoccupied child to fetch that which they consider necessary for the legitimate consumption of the family? Such action would, I think, be regarded as an interference with domestic life and with the liberty of the subject. It would be resented as such, and it would defeat the object of the Bill. I am advancing these views in order to ask the promoters of the Bill whether the acceptance of the adoptive principle is not the nearest way to securing the universal approval of their measure. I admit that there is a large amount of public opinion in favour of this Bill. Thousands of petitions have been presented in its favour. But too much importance must not be attached to those petitions. The temperance party, which has the finest organisation in the country, can turn out petitions by the thousand. They can turn out such petitions at the word of command, and he hoped the House would not, therefore, attach undue importance to them.

MR. TRITTON (Lambeth, Norwood): What about the London School Board?

*MR. JESSE COLLINGS: I know nothing about the London School Board. I do not want the petitions ignored, but I do not want you to attach too much importance to

them. But there is another kind of public opinion. I have noted organised public opinion, but there is the unorganised public opinion, which consists of the masses of individuals not organised, and who do not express their opinion, but who, if a law of this sort were passed, which interfered with their daily convenience and affect them in a manner they would consider unfair, would show their opinion in some quarters by almost rebellion. My hon. friend the Member for Portsmouth referred to a pamphlet which has been issued by a committee presided over by the Bishop of Hereford. This pamphlet represents children as spending all their money in drink, as swilling glasses of raw whisky and being summoned for drunkenness before the police courts. I do not doubt the truth of those statements, but they are put in such a form that if any stranger to the facts were to read them he would think that it represented the type of the children of the working classes of this country. The great masses of the working class of this country ought not to be subjected to any such inference as may be drawn from that statement. As a class they are as careful of their own children as any other class. They look after them as well as circumstances will allow, and except as regards an infinitesimal percentage that state of things does not represent them at all. They are more thrifty, more temperate, more respectable, and better educated, and in a better condition generally than at any previous period of the history of this country. Therefore, I protest against putting it in a form to indicate that there is such a prevalence of these shocking cases as to render universal legislation necessary. With regard to the provision for penalising the publican, I may say I was not at all satisfied with the reasons given for that action by the mover and seconder of the Bill. Are they afraid to put the penalty on the parents who alone can know whether they are breaking the law? They do not propose to penalise the parent, but the publican, who they think can pay the penalty. By making the measure adoptive, although altering the character of the measure, they would be able to determine the amount of support which it will receive, not only in the House, but in many parts of the country where the Bill is not accepted at the present time. I thank the House for listening to me, and I hope we shall hear something from the promoters of the Bill as to whether the suggestion of the Home Secretary is received with favour or not.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): The right hon. Gentleman need not have apologised for speaking on this subject. We were glad to hear him. His speech was divided into two parts, one of which was devoted to expressing the views of the Government;

*MR. JESSE COLLINGS: Of the Home Secretary.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Well, when I was Home Secretary and spoke in this House, I expressed the sentiments of the Government, especially on this question. The Home Secretary we heard a few weeks ago, in speaking to a deputation on the temperance question in language not encouraging. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bordesley has now confided to us his personal sentiments upon this subject. He protested against language likely to give foreign nations a bad opinion of this country. And yet the right hon. Gentleman has declared that he himself has the meanest opinion of London. The right hon. Gentleman,

though he said he knew nothing about the social aspect of London, knew something about London elections. I do not know what he calls the social aspect of London, and whether his judgment is founded on his experience of Society in the West or in the East End of London. What has caused him to come to his present opinion? Was it the most recent election, or was it the election which took place in the autumn?

*MR. JESSE COLLINGS: I never said a word about elections at all.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: If the adoptive principle is to be introduced it must be introduced somewhere; and perhaps by the very Metropolis of which he has such a mean opinion. When I first entered Parliament the voice of Birmingham was very different from what it is now. In those days I acted with Mr. Dixon as a supporter of the Birmingham Educational League; and there was not the same objection to the compulsion of parents at that time.

I am bound to say that that movement advanced education in the greatest degree and ultimately secured for us compulsory education. Is it not an invasion of the rights of parents to say that a child shall not be kept at home, but must be sent to school? When did the right hon. Gentleman acquire this horror of interfering with the rights of parents? As to the part of the speech in which the right hon. Gentleman expressed his personal opinion, I confess I can hardly make out what that opinion is. During the latter part of the Under Secretary's speech the right hon. Member for East Fife, a former Home Secretary, came into the House and said, "Is he speaking for or against the Bill?" The answer which I was obliged to give to my right hon. friend was, "Honestly, I cannot tell you." The right hon. Gentleman has said he is in favour of the Second Reading of the Bill, but in expressing his own opinion he has set up in his speech every possible objection that can be imagined against it, and the latter part was as adverse to the Bill as it was possible to conceive.

He has spoken of the rural districts. I am happy to say I live more of my life in the country than in the town, and if there is any part of this country in which the evil of drunkenness requires to be dealt with more it is in the rural districts. [Ministerial cries of "No."] That is my observation, made from my own knowledge, and if I may be allowed to give my reason it is because the police themselves are not encouraged to put it down. [Cries of "Question" and a laugh.] I do not know whether the hon. Gentleman who laughs in that way is a magistrate of quarter sessions or not.

Now I pass from the personal views of the right hon. Gentleman to those of the Home Secretary, which he translated to us. The Home Secretary has stated that his experience in his present office has impressed upon him the tremendous evil produced by drunkenness. The present Bill is intended to prevent children from being exposed at an age when their judgment gives them no defence to the incitements and habits of drink. While I am in doubt as to the real spirit of the right hon. Gentleman in regard to this Bill, I am still more puzzled by the right hon. Gentleman's interpretation of the views of the Home Secretary. But it is clear at least that the Home Secretary desires the Bill to be read a second time. For the purposes of this afternoon we all ought to be satisfied with that. Let us read this Bill a second time, and then let us consider the objections

that have been made to it. One objection to it is the use of the word "apparent," as though it implies some covert meaning, and it is proposed that there should be an explanation of the introduction of that word in the Bill in justice to the public. It is a remarkable fact that this word is employed in the Act of 1872. It has also been used in the Act prohibiting the sale of explosives to children and in the Pawnbrokers' Act. In fact, whenever Parliament deals with the age of children, and where they are prohibited from certain acts in these matters, the word "apparent" has been used.

MR. FLOWER: Not in the Act of 1886.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I did not say it was. I was pointing out a proviso which I think is worthy of the consideration of the House. In the Criminal Law Amendments Act there was a proviso which fixed the age at which outrages should be punishable, and which laid it down that it should be a sufficient defence to any charge under this section if brought before a court and jury, providing that the person so charged showed reasonable cause of belief that the girl was over the age of sixteen. I am speaking with the authority of the gentleman promoting this Bill when I say that they are perfectly willing to deal with this word "apparently" by the substitution of any other phrase that may be regarded as satisfactory. I confess I think the proviso to which I have referred is a very reasonable one.

The right hon. Gentleman has cited the opinion of the Home Secretary in favour of this Bill with the adoptive principle, but he has not told us what is to be the machinery for adopting it. Is it local option? I should like to know that, because it is a very incomplete revelation that we are not to be told who are the persons to adopt these measures, and when the right hon. Gentleman offers us his support he does not tell us what the method of adoption is to be. Has the Home Office already got its amendments to this Bill, with a complete scheme of adoptive measures? Let us be thankful for such mercies and let us read this Bill a second time. Let there be an opportunity for all to understand the proposal of the Government. There are said to be objections which, if not properly dealt with, would destroy the main objects of the Bill, which is to keep young children out of the public-houses. Let us, then, see whether we can carry this Bill with such modifications and such mitigations as would carry it to a successful issue. My hon. friend who introduced this Bill, in a speech as distinguished for lucidity as any I have ever heard, stated that the success or the failure of this Bill depended upon the treatment it received at the hands of the Government. I hope the Government will give it every facility and a cordial reception. I hope hon. Members on both sides of the House will work together, and I trust it will be dealt with in a proper spirit before it is sent to the other House. We have heard the views of young Ireland on this matter. We have had a speech from the hon. Member for West Limerick, distinguished by eloquence and earnestness, and I am sure hon. Members on both sides of the House will hear that voice with pleasure on future occasions. With that unanimity of feeling on this Bill, why should we divide upon the Bill? I hope we shall send it to a place where alone it will be dealt with with advantage. It has been proposed to deal with it in Committee of the whole House, but that is a proposal

which would destroy it. I will not detain the House any longer, but I trust there will be a concordance of sentiment and unanimity of opinion that will lead us to read this Bill a second time.

MR. BARTLEY said he would like to add his views to the debate, because he had always taken a great interest in social questions. The reason why he objected to this measure was that he regarded it not as a measure tending to promote temperance nor one which would alleviate and improve the social position of the families of the working classes. The real issue they were to consider was whether the working man was to be allowed to drink beer or not. Was it to be made a crime for him to have a glass of beer at his midday meal? Personally, he was almost a teetotaller, but it seemed to him odd that the men who employed servants in their houses and clubs and rang the bell for wines and spirits should have the audacity to say that a man should not be allowed to send his child to the public-house. Why could not hon. Members have the courage of their opinions, and bring in a Bill to prohibit the sale of alcohol absolutely? That would be a reasonable and a straightforward action. But they were not prepared to do that. They knew very well that the legitimate use of beer was not a crime, and ought not to be considered a crime. It was a reasonable, natural, and proper beverage for a man to drink in moderation.

Were they to say that a working man who could not keep a cellar for his beer was to be deprived of this privilege of getting it? But if he were to be deprived of this means he would say that it was more dangerous for a girl of sixteen years of age and upwards to be sent to a public-house than it was for a younger child. If the law prohibited girls under sixteen years being sent they would still have the evil of sending girls of seventeen and eighteen years. He had a higher opinion of the people of London than the representative of the Government, and he believed that the whole of the metropolis would hold its own with those great provincial centres that the right hon. Gentleman had referred to. But he would say this, that if the measure were voted simply upon its merits they would never dream of carrying it. The House had given way to a sort of momentary sentimentality. Everyone agreed that alcohol should not be sold to children for them to consume, but surely if he chose to take his boy out for a bicycle run, and they entered an inn for refreshment, no one would say that it was a crime that that boy should have a glass of beer? When he was at school they used to have beer and they called it "swipes." It was unreasonable thus to interfere with the habits of the people. If the Government interfered with this and similar privileges, they would have the whole mass of the working classes against them. There would be a great reaction which would be very serious to the country itself. Nobody could say that he had not done his utmost to promote temperance. Yet he believed it would be a great mistake to carry this measure, as its effect would be to retard the progress of temperance.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.): My hon. friend who has just sat down does not appear to have read the Bill, because if he were going down with his son into the country on a bicycle, there is no reason why he should not have a glass of beer if he wanted it. His difficulty seems to be that if this Bill is passed his son will not be able to "stand" the liquor for him. Now, on this Bill I should

like to say three words upon the mistaken views taken by the opponents of the Bill as to what we want to do. We want to prevent these children going into public-houses and acquiring in that atmosphere what we believe to be pernicious habits, and we believe that if this Bill is passed into law, and it becomes the law of this country that children under sixteen years of age should not be sent, we should find in years to come that children never would be sent. If the hon. Gentleman who moved the Bill and the hon. Gentleman who seconded it had devised a means for carrying this Bill through the House, they could not have devised a better one than by getting the two speeches made which were made in support of the rejection of it. The hon. Member who moved the rejection said it would interfere with golf players. I never remember seeing a golf player send for liquor, even when he was in a bunker. The hon. Member for South Leitrim opposed the Bill because it would interfere with Ireland; that it was another injustice to Ireland. Now, I agree with the Bill, not only because I think it is a good measure, but because I know that people of all creeds and all classes in Ireland are in its favour. The working men representatives in this House are almost unanimous in its favour, and no one can doubt that if the working classes of this country were opposed to a Bill of this kind they would make their voices heard against it. I am entirely in favour of this Bill, and I think most of the objections we have heard are objections which ought to be made in Committee. As for the right hon. Gentleman on the Treasury Bench, I am unable from his remarks to gather whether he is for or against the Bill. I have not the slightest idea what position he takes up, but in a matter of this kind, which so deeply touches our hearts, I think a responsible Minister of the Government ought to have given us some intimation of what the consensus of opinion of the Government is upon this subject. I regret that so few Members of the Government are present, but I can assure the right hon. Gentlemen who are present that they make a very great mistake if they think that this measure can be set aside or burked in Committee. The country will hold the Government responsible for seeing that this measure, if it passes its Second Reading, is carried into law this session, and, knowing as I do that no Bill has ever been brought into this House which is so backed by public opinion as this measure, I say the Government will make a great mistake if they do not offer to this Bill every facility to pass it into law. My principal object in rising was to make this appeal to the Government in order to get some Member of the Government to tell us if it is their intention to allow the Bill to become law.

*MR. MARSHALL HALL (Lancashire, Southport) said he cordially supported the Bill, his justification in so doing being that it was impossible to over-estimate the interest taken in this subject in his constituency. He regretted that the Government had not thought fit to make it a Government measure, and if the Government took any notice of the Bill at all he hoped it would not be for the purpose of attempting to shelve it. After the Janus like speech from the Front Bench it was difficult to know whether the Government supported the Bill or not. The real object of the Bill was to safeguard the moral health of the children and to prevent them from being contaminated by the evils of drink. It was not to

deal with the adult population at all. But if the age at which a child could be served with drink was fixed at sixteen the real object of the Bill might be defeated, because if the age limit was fixed too high the people to whom this measure would apply would have no person to send. Beer could not be stored in the same way as spirits, and therefore if a working man wanted beer with his dinner, either he must go and get it or his wife must go and get it, or he would have to send somebody over the age of sixteen. It was very improbable that he would have anybody at home at that age, because that was the age when a workingman's children had to go out and begin to earn their own living, and if the age was fixed at sixteen the effect would be that children of a more tender age would be sent, and told on reaching the public-house to ask the first bystander to go in and buy the beer, in return, probably, for the "long pull." No man would be hard-hearted enough to refuse, and the result would be the very mischief at which the Bill was aimed. He believed that if the age was fixed at sixteen the object of the Bill would be defeated, and he suggested that the age of fourteen should be substituted. The question had been asked why beer should be put on a different footing to milk; he thought it should not, but that it should be allowed to be taken round in the same way as milk. He took no notice of the ridicule of the House upon that point, because if between the hours of 12 and 1.30 in the day facilities were given to respectable publicans to supply their customers in this way with beer the difficulty of the child messenger would at once be got rid of. The working man would have an opportunity of getting his beer as he wanted it, both as to quantity and condition. He put forward that suggestion because he thought it was worthy of consideration. He did not think that the word "apparently" was a word that should remain in the Bill, because the publican would be liable if he supplied a person who was over the age of sixteen, but ap-

AYES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N. E.)

Boland, John

Colville, John

Abraham, Wm. (Rhondda)

Bolton, Thomas Dolling

Compton, Lord Alwyne

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex.F.

Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-

Condon, Thomas Joseph

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel

Bousfield, William Robert

Cook, Frederick Lucas

Aird, Sir John

Bowles, Capt. H.F. (Middlesex)

Corbett, A. Cameron(Glasgow)

Allan, William (Gateshead)

Brand, Hon. Arthur G.

Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)

Allen, Chas. P. (Grlouc.,Stroud
Brigg, John
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Ambrose, Robert
Broadhurst, Henry
Craig, Robert Hunter
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Brown, Alexander H. (Shropsh.
Cremer, William Randal
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Brown, George M.(Edinburgh)
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Bull, William James
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert H.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Cullinan, J.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Burns, John
Cust, Henry John C.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Thomas
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Butcher, John George
Daly, James
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Dalziel, James Henry
Baird, John George Alexander
Caine, William Sproston
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Balcarres, Lord
Cameron, Robert
Davies, Sir Horatio D (Chatham
Barlow, John Emmott
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Dewar, T.R. (Tr' H'mlets,SGeo.
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)

Carew, James Laurence
Dickson, Charles Scott
Bartley, George C. T.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Bayley, Thos. (Derbyshire)
Carvil, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Digby, John K.D. Wingfield-
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Causton, Richard Knight
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Beckett, Ernest William
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Dimsdale, Sir Joseph Cockfield
Bell, Richard
Cavendish, V.C.W (Derbyshire)
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Cawley, Frederick
Donelan, Captain A.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Doogan, P. C.
Bignold, Arthur
Chapman, Edward
Douglas, Charles M.(Lanark)
Bigwood, James
Clancy, John Joseph
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Bill, Charles
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H.A.E.
Duffy, William J.
Black, Alexander William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Duncan, James H.
Blake, Edward
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Dunn, Sir William
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin

parently under that age, and he thought the word "knowingly" ought to be substituted for it when the Bill became an Act, or a clause similar to that in the Criminal Law Amendment Act inserted. It also might be possible to make a distinction between the gin palace and the off-licensed house. What was wanted to secure the passing of such a Bill was a consensus of moderate opinion. Such a

Bill was required, and they must support the best measure for the purpose before the House. The principle of the Bill was sound, however imperfect the details, and he hoped the Bill would become law at the earliest possible moment. MR. CROMBIE rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided: Ayes, 407; Noes, 31. (Division List No. 80.)

Elibank, Master of

Hutton, John (Yorks, N.R.)

Myers, William Henry

Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas

Jacoby, James Alfred

Nannetti, Joseph P.

Ellis, John Edward

Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick

Newnes, Sir George

Emmott, Alfred

Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton

Nicholson, William Graham

Esmonde, Sir Thomas

Johnston, William (Belfast)

Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)

Faber, George Denison

Joicey, Sir James

Norton, Capt. Cecil William

Fardell, Sir T. George

Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.)

O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)

Farquharson, Dr. Robert

Jordan, Jeremiah

O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)

Fenwick, Charles

Joyce, Michael

O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)

Ffrench, Peter

Kearley, Hudson E.

O'Connor, James (Wicklow)

Field, William

Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.

O'Doherty, William

Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst

Kennedy, Patrick James

O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)

Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne

Kenyon, Hon. G. T. (Denbigh)

O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)

Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Kenyon, James (Lancs., Bury)
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
Fisher, William Hayes
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop.
O'Malley, William
FitzGerald, Sir R. Penrose-
Kinloch, Sir John Geo. Smyth
O'Mara, James
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Kitson, Sir James
O'Neill, Hon. Robt. Torrens
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward A.
Labouchere, Henry
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Lambert, George
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Flynn, James Christopher
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
O'Shee, James John
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.
Langley, Batty
Palmer, George W. (Reading)
Fowler, Rt. Hn. Sir Henry
Law, Andrew Bonar
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Fuller, J. M. F.
Lawrence, William F.
Parker, Gilbert
Furness, Sir Christopher
Lawson, John Grant
Parkes, Ebenezer
Garfit, William
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Partington, Oswald
Gilhooly, James
Leamy, Edmund
Paulton, James Mellor
Gladstone, Rt. Hon. Herbert J.
Lecky, Rt. Hn. Wm. Edw. H.
Pease, Sir Joseph W. (Durham)
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robt. Wellesley
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin&Nairn

Leigh, Sir Joseph
Pemberton, John S. G.
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Leng, Sir John
Percy, Earl
Graham, Henry Robert
Leveson-Gower, Fred. N. S.
Perks, Robert William
Grant, Corrie
Levy, Maurice
Philipps, John Wynford
Greene, Sir E.W. (Bury St. Ed.)
Lewis, John Herbert
Pilkington, Richard
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Lloyd-George, David
Pirie, Duncan V.
Grenfell, William Henry
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Gretton, John
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Plummer, Walter R.
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Lough, Thomas
Power, Patrick Joseph
Groves, James Grimble
Lowe, Francis William
Price, Robert John
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Priestley, Arthur
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Pryce-Jones, Lt. Col. Edward
Hain, Edward
Lundon, W.
Randles, John S.
Haldane, Richard Burdon
MacDonnell Dr. Mark A.
Rankin, Sir James
Hall, Edward Marshall
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Ratcliffe, R. F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Maconochie, A. W.

Rea, Russell
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nderry
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Reckitt, Harold James
Hammond, John
M'Cann, James
Reddy, M.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robt. Wm.
M'Crae, George
Redmond J. E. (Waterford)
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm.
M'Kenna, Reginald
Redmond, William (Clare)
Hardie, J. K. (M'thyr Tydvil)
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Reid, Sir R. T. (Dumfries)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Malcolm, Ian
Rentoul, James Alexander
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Manners, Lord Cecil
Renwick, George
Harwood, George
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Rickett, J. Compton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Mappin, Sir Fredk. Thorpe
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Markham, Arthur Basil
Ridley, S. F. (Bethnal Green)
Hayden, John Patrick
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Rigg, Richard
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Mather, William
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Heath, Arthur H. (Hanley)
Maxwell, RtHnSirHE (Wigton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Helder, Augustus
Maxwell, W.J.H. (Dumfriessh.
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)

Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Mildmay, Francis Bigham
Robson, William Snowdon
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Milward, Col. Victor
Roche, John
Hobhouse, Hy. (Somerset, E.)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Roe, Sir Thomas
Hogg, Lindsay
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Holland, William Henry
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Ropner, Col. Robert
Hope, John D. (Fife, West)
Mooney, John J.
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel W.
Horniman, Frederick John
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Round, James
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Houston, Robert Paterson
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Howard, Capt. J. (K'nt, Faversham)
Morley, Rt. Hon. J. (Montrose)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Morrell, George Herbert
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Morrison, James Archibald
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Morton, E. J. C. (Devonport)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Hughes, Col. Edwin
Mount, William Arthur
Saunderson, Rt. Hon. Col. Edw. J.
Humphrys Owen, Arthur C.
Murphy, J.
Schwann, Charles E.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)

Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Scott, Chas. Prestwich (Leigh)
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Taylor, Theodore Cooke
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Tennant, Harold John
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Shaw, Charles E. (Stafford)
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Thomas, F. Freeman- (Hastings)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Sinclair, Capt. John (Forfarsh.)
Thomas, J. A. (Glam'rg'n, Gow'r)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Thompson, E. C. (Monaghan, N.)
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset)
Smith, HC (North'mb. Tyn's'de)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Tollemache, Henry James
Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Tomkinson, James
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Soares, Ernest J.
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Spear, John Ward
Valentia, Viscount
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C R (Northants)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Stanley, Hon. A. (Ormskirk)
Wallace, Robert

Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.
Stevenson, Francis S.
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir WilliamH
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Stewart, Sir. M. J. M'Taggart
Walton, John Lawson(Leeds,S.
Wodehouse, Hn. Armine(Essex
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir J. M.
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Stock, James Henry
Warde, Lieut.-Col. C. E.
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hudrsfld.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Stroyan, John
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Young, Commander (Berks, E.)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Wason, John C. (Orkney)
Yoxall, James Henry
Sullivan, Donal
Weir, James Galloway
TELLERS FOR THE AYES;Mr. Crombie and Mr. Tritton.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Welby, Lt.-Col. A.C.E (Taunt'n
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf.Univ.
Welby, Sir Charles G. E (Notts.)
NOES.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Allsopp, Hon. George
Gibbs, Hn A.G.H. (City of Lond.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
O'Dowd, John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
O'Kelly, J. (Roscommon, N.)
Banbury, Frederick George

Heath, James (Staffords, N. W.
Pierpoint, Robert
Bathurst, Hn. Allen Benjamin
Heaton, John Henniker
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Boyle, James
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Lowther, Rt. Hn. James (Kent)
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsm'uth
TELLERS FOR THE NOES; Major Jameson and Mr. Tully.

Crean, Eugene

M'Fadden, Edward

Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart

M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)

Farrell, James Patrick

Majendie, James A. H.

Question put accordingly, "That the I word 'now' stand part of the Question."

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.

Bigwood, James

Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)

Black, Alexander William

Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel

Blake, Edward

Causton, Richard Knight

Aird, Sir John

Blundell, Colonel Henry

Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)

Allan, William (Gateshead)

Boland, John

Cavendish, V.C. W. (Derbysh.

Allen, Charles P (Glouc., Stroud

Bolton, Thomas Dolling

Cawley, Frederick

Ambrose, Robert

Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-

Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)

Archdale, Edward Mervyn

Bousfield, William Robert

Chapman, Edward

Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.

Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlex
Clancy, John Joseph
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H.A.E.
Asquith, Rt Hn. Herbert Henry
Brigg, John
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Atherley-Jones, L.
Broadhurst, Henry
Colville, John
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Brown, Alexander H. (Shropsh.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Bain, Col. James Robert
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Baird, John George Alexander
Burke, E. Haviland-
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Balcarres, Lord
Burns, John
Cox, Irwin Edw. Bainbridge
Barlow, John Emmott
Burt, Thomas
Craig, Robert Hunter
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Butcher, John George
Cremer, William Randal
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Caine, William Sproston
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Beckett, Ernest William
Cameron, Robert
Cross, H. Shepherd (Bolton)
Bell, Richard
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Cullinan, J.
Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.

Cust, Henry John C.
Bignold, Arthur
Carew, James Laurence
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
The House divided: Ayes, 372; Noes, 54. (Division List No. 81.)
Daly, James
Heaton, John Henniker
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
Dalziel, James Henry
Helder, Augustus
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Mooney, John J.
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow
Dickson, Charles Scott
Hobhouse, Hy. (Somerset, E.)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Hogg, Lindsay
Morley, Rt. Hn. John (Montrose
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Holland, William Henry
Morton, E. J. C. (Devonport)
Dimsdale, Sir J. Cockfield
Hope, J. Deans (Fife, West)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Horniman, Frederick John
Mount, William Arthur
Donelan, Captain A.
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Murphy, J.
Doogan, P. C.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Myers, William Henry
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Howard, J. (Midd.,Tottenham
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Newnes, Sir George
Duffy, William J.
Hughes, Colonel Edwin

Nolan, Col. John P.(Galway,N.
Duke, Henry Edward
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Duncan, James H.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
Dunn, Sir William
Hutton, John (Yorks., N.R.)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid)
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Jacoby, James Alfred
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W
Elibank, Master of
Johnston, William (Belfast)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Joicey, Sir James
O'Doherty, William
Ellis, John Edward
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
Emmott, Alfred
Jordan, Jeremiah
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Joyce, Michael
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
Evans, Sir Francis H (Maidstone
Kearley, Hudson E.
O'Malley, William
Faber, George Denison
Kennaway, Rt.Hn. Sir John H.
O'Mara, James
Fardell, Sir T. George
Kennedy, Patrick James
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Kenyon, Hn. G. T. (Denbigh)
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Fenwick, Charles
Kenyon, James (Lancs., Bury)
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.

Ffrench, Peter
King, Sir Henry Seymour
O'Shee, James John
Field, William
Kinloch, Sir John Geo. Smyth
Palmer, George Wm. (Reading)
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Kitson, Sir James
Parkes, Ebenezer
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Labouchere, Henry
Partington, Oswald
Fisher, William Hayes
Lambert, George
Paulton, James Mellor
FitzGerald, Sir R. Penrose-
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Pease, Sir Joseph W.(Durham)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Langley, Batty
Peel, Hn. Wm. Rbt. Wellesley
Fitzroy, Hon. Edw. Algernon
Law, Andrew Bonar
Pemberton, John S. G.
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Lawrence, William F.
Percy, Earl
Flower, Ernest
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Perks, Robert William
Flynn, James Christopher
Leamy, Edmund
Philipps, John Wynford
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.
Lecky, Rt. Hn. Wm. Edw. H.
Pilkington, Richard
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Pirie, Duncan V.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Furness, Sir Christopher
Leng, Sir John
Plummer, Walter R.
Garfit, William

Leveson-Gower, Fredk. N. S.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Gilhooly, James
Levy, Maurice
Price, Robert John
Gladstone, Rt. Hn Herbert John
Lewis, John Herbert
Priestley, Arthur
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Lloyd-George, David
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin&Nairn
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Randles, John S.
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, South
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Rankin, Sir James
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Lough, Thomas
Ratcliffe, R. F.
Graham, Henry Robert
Lowe, Francis William
Rea, Russell
Grant, Corrie
Lowther, C. (Cumb.,Eskdale)
Reckitt, Harold James
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
London, W.
Reddy, M.
Gretton, John
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Redmond, John E.(Waterford)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Redmond, William (Clare)
Groves, James Grimble
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Maconochie, A. W.
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Hain, Edward
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Rentoul, James Alexander
Haldane, Richard Burdon
M'Cann, James

Renwick, George
Hall, Edward Marshall
M'Crae, George
Rickett, J. Compton
Hambro, Charles Eric
M'Kenna, Reginald
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'd'nderry
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire
Ridley, S. Forde (BethnalGreen
Hammond, John
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Rigg, Richard
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Malcolm, Ian
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Manners, Lord Cecil
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Robson, William Snowdon
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Markham, Arthur Basil
Roche, John
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Roe, Sir Thomas
Harwood, George
Mather, William
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Maxwell, W.J.H. (Dumfriessh.)
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Hayden, John Patrick
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Round, James
Heath, Arthur H. (Hanley)
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Royds, Clement Molyneux

Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Welby, Sir Charles G.E (Notts.)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alex.
Sullivan, Donal
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
White, Luke (York. E. R.)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos Myles
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'dUniv
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Taylor, Theodore Cooke
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Saunderson, Rt Hn. Col. Edw. J.
Tennant, Harold John
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Schwann, Charles E.
Thomas, Alfred(Glamorgan,E.
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Scott, Chas. Prestwick (Leigh)
Thomas, DavidAlfred(Merthyr
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Shaw, Chas. Edw. (Stafford)
Thomas, F. Freeman-(Hastings
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Shaw-Stewart, M.H.(Renfrew)
Thomas, JA(Glamorgan,Gow'r
Wilson, A. Stanley(York,E.R.
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Thompson, E. C. (Monaghan,N.
Wilson, Fred.W(Norfolk,Mid.
Sinclair, Capt. John (Forfarsh.)
Thomson, F. W.(York, W.R.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.
Smith, HC (N'rth'mb,Tynes'de
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.)
Tollemache, Henry James
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Tomkinson, James
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley

Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wilson, J. W (Worcestersh. N.)
Soares, Ernest J.
Wallace, Robert
Wodehouse, Hn. Armine (Essex
Spear, John Ward
Walrond, Rt Hn. Sir William H.
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Stanley, Hn Arthur (Ormskirk)
Walton, John Lawson (Leeds, S.
Woodhouse, Sir J T (Huddersf'd
Stevenson, Francis S.
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Yoxall, James Henry
Stock, James Henry
Wason, Eugene(Clackmannan
TELLERS FOR THE AYES;Mr. Crombie and Mr. Tritton.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney
Stroyan, John
Weir, James Galloway
NOES.
Acland-Hood, Capt Sir Alex. F.
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Majendie, James A. H.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Morrison, James Archibald
Allsopp, Hon. George
Farrell, James Patrick
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
O'Dowd, John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Gibbs, Hn A.G.H. (CityofLond.
O'Kelly, J. (Roscommon, N.)
Banbury, Frederick George
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)

Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor
Greene, Sir EW (B'ry SEdm'nds
Pierpoint, Robert
Bartley, George C. T.
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Howard, Capt. J. (K'nt,Faversh
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Boyle, James
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Valentia, Viscount
Bull, William James
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Warde, Lieut.-Col. C. E.
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Lowther, Rt. Hon. J. (Kent)
Wilson-Todd, W. H. (Yorks.)
Colston, Charles E. H. Athole
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Lucas, R. J. (Portsmouth)
Young, Commander (Berks, E.)
Crean, Eugene
Macartney, Rt. Hn. W. G. E.
TELLERS FOR THE NOES;Major Jameson and Mr. Tully.
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
M'Fadden, Edward
Dewar, T. R (T'rH'mlets,S.Geo
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Main Question put and agreed to.
Bill read a second time, and committed for to-morrow.
NEW BILLS.
WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.
Bill to amend the Law relating to Weights and Measures, ordered to be brought in
by Mr. Bousfield, Mr. Parkes, Mr. Kearley, and Sir Fortescue Flannery.
WEIGHTS AND MEASURES BILL.
"To amend the Law relating to Weights and Measures," presented, and read the
first time; to be read a second

time upon Wednesday, 17th April, and to be printed. [Bill 109.]

OLD AGE PENSIONS (No. 5).

Bill to make provision for Old Age Pensions, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bousfield, Mr. Strutt, Mr. J. W. Wilson, and Mr. Laurence Hardy.

OLD AGE PENSIONS (No. 5) BILL.

"To make provision for Old Age Pensions," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 17th April, and to be printed. [Bill 110.]

Adjourned at a quarter before Six of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 21st March, 1901.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

WALLASEY IMPROVEMENT BILL. [BY ORDER.]

MR. STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.) said he had to move an Instruction to the Committee to which the Wallasey Urban District Council Bill had been referred. It would be within the memory of hon. Members that during the year 1898 there was a great agitation throughout the length and breadth of the land on the part of members of friendly societies, in regard to the matter raised by his Instruction. The agitation was due to the action of the East India Docks Company in instituting a shop club, and making it a condition of employment that their men should belong to it. They also sought to lay down a provision that such of their men as were already members of friendly societies should cease such membership. The feeling raised by that proposal was so strong that the Government appointed a Shop Clubs Committee, which reported to the House in March, 1899. It was quite clear that the general feeling of the country was entirely against the proposal of the East India Docks Company, and that compulsory shop clubs were deemed to be opposed to the interests, not only of working men, but of the great friendly societies. The Shop Clubs Committee, which was presided over by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham, and which included in its members Mr. (now Justice) Cozens-Hardy, and the Registrar General of Friendly Societies, suggested that shop clubs should in future be registered under the Friendly Societies Acts. Now that was all that was proposed by the Instruction he was moving. What would be the effect of such registration? It would be to secure that no member of the club should be deprived of any pecuniary benefit by reason of his leaving his employment. This was of the utmost importance to working men, because, in the absence of such registration, a man who had joined a shop thrift or provident club, and had been in his employment for some years and contributed to the funds of the club, might be deprived of all benefit therefrom by reason of leaving his situation, and his contributions would be lost to him. The registration would also secure that the men should have a voice in the appointment of the committee of management of the club, and that, he suggested, was only reasonable. There were further provisions to secure the proper investment of the funds of the club, and to ensure that the organisation was on a solvent basis. The Report of the Committee to which he had referred recommended that the Registrar of Friendly Societies should, before registration, satisfy himself that the scheme of the club was satisfactory, not only to the employer but also to the workmen.

In the Bill now under consideration power was taken to form a Compulsory Superannuation Fund. The Shop Clubs Committee had recommended that it should not be lawful for any employer to make it a condition of employment that his workmen should join such a fund, and he certainly thought that, in any case where membership of a shop club was made compulsory, as under this Bill, the House would agree that it would only be fair and indeed necessary, in the interests of the employees, that registration, as he suggested, should be insisted upon. He was authorised by the National Conference of Friendly Societies to say that they unreservedly adopted the Report of the Shop Clubs Committee. He would like to remind the House that during the last Parliament the very clause he was now proposing was inserted in seven different private Bills, and even in the present session the Great Eastern Railway Company had accepted a similar provision, without any objection being raised on the part of the directors. That fact surely was sufficient proof that there could be no serious objection to the clause. They had been told in a circular issued by the Urban District Council of Wallasey that this proposal would render the scheme inoperative so far as the superior officers of the council were concerned, inasmuch as it would admit the benefits to be granted under it in the form of superannuation and other allowances. But he would point out that the Wallasey Bill was not confined merely to a proposal affecting their more highly-paid officials. Their scheme was to apply to every man in their employ. He would have made no objection to the Bill had it merely provided for the superannuation of employees receiving salaries of £2 or £3 a week and upwards. There was another difficulty in dealing with questions of this nature in private Bills, and it arose from the fact that in these private Acts the scheme itself was not set out so that the House or the Committee upstairs might judge whether or not it was fair. Instead of that the promoters of the Bill took power to set up a scheme after it had passed through the House. Was it right that anything of that kind should be allowed to be done? The promoters, in their circular, complained that if the Instruction were carried it would prevent them giving their higher-paid officials more than £200 in case of death, or a pension exceeding £50 a year on retirement. That was really not the case, and the suggestion was merely a red herring drawn across their path. The promoters said that the Bill already provided for the registration of their scheme by the Registrar of Friendly Societies. But that provision was a sham, for all that was provided was that the Registrar should register any scheme the Urban District Council chose to put forward, whether it was good or bad. He wanted the House to say that no scheme should be registered unless it was good, and met with the approval of the Registrar of Friendly Societies. Then, again, the Wallasey Urban District Council complained that the clause was vague and indefinite. Surely if that were the case the Manchester Ship Canal Company would never have accepted such a clause, nor would other companies have done so. What was more, the very Instruction he was now moving went before a Committee in the last Parliament, and that Committee called before it the Registrar of Friendly Societies and asked him if it were a fact that the clause was vague and indefinite. His reply was that it was not, and

that he himself personally approved of it. A clause in almost identically the same words was sent to him by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture while he held the position of Secretary to the Treasury, and he therefore could not understand what objection there could be to it now. As he said at the beginning of his remarks, his reasons for asking the House to approve this clause were, first, that the National Conference of Friendly Societies, which met last week in Birmingham, had unanimously decided that its adoption would be in the interests of friendly societies. He would remind the House that that conference represented a membership of over three and a half millions, with a capital of over twenty-five and a half millions. It was therefore a body which had some right to be considered representative, and which certainly by its action in the past had shown itself anxious to promote the interests of the working men of this country. His second reason for asking the House to carry the Instruction was that it was in the interests of working men, whether they were members of friendly societies or not. It was not desirable that any corporation or company should have power to set up compulsory thrift, provident, superannuation, or shop clubs, unless they were registered in the way he had suggested, the object of such registration being, of course, to ensure that the men got fair play and substantial benefits. If men were compelled, as a condition of employment, to join such clubs, it was only fair and just that they should be protected in the way he proposed. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Wallasey Improvement Bill to insert the following Clause;

No scheme for the establishment of a superannuation or provident fund under this Act shall come into operation until it has been registered by the Registrar of Friendly Societies under the Friendly Societies Act."; (Mr. Strachey.)

MR. CHARLES M'ARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange), in opposing the Instruction on behalf of the promoters of the Bill, first explained that the Member for Mid Cheshire, who was to have undertaken the duty, was unfortunately prevented by illness from being present that afternoon, and had asked him to state the objections which were entertained to the proposal. This Bill contained a proposal to establish a fund for the purpose of providing the servants of the Council with an allowance in case of death, or with superannuation on retirement, and the principles on which the scheme was based were duly set forth in the Bill, the employees of the Council having to contribute one half of the funds required for the purpose, while the Council provided the other moiety. The promoters of the Bill, in opposing the Instruction, disclaimed altogether any hostility to the Friendly Societies Acts. They recognised, on the contrary, that those Acts were extremely useful within their proper sphere. But they suggested that the Instruction would not be at all appropriate to this Bill, inasmuch as it comprehended not only persons belonging to the working classes, but also a large number of superior officers under the Council; gentlemen who were receiving salaries of considerable amount, and for whom, therefore, the provisions contemplated by the Friendly Societies Acts would be entirely inadequate. There were no fewer than 107 of the em-

ployees of the Council who were paid by cheque and whose salaries amounted in the aggregate to £;1,400 per annum. If the Bill were brought entirely under the provisions of the Friendly Societies Acts the result would be that no gross sum could be drawn by any servant of the Council exceeding £;200, and no annuity exceeding £;50 could be granted. The House would see, therefore, that the effect of adopting the Instruction would be to make the Bill altogether inoperative so far as the higher class officials were concerned. The hon. Member for South Somerset himself seemed to be in doubt whether or not that would be the effect of his own clause. He held in his hand the opinion of a Counsel of great eminence, to the effect that the result of the clause would be to entirely subordinate the Bill to the Friendly Societies Acts. The hon. Member had referred to the fact that he had succeeded in securing the insertion of the clause in other Bills, and he had alluded especially to the Great Eastern Railway Company's Bill. He ventured to point out that there was no analogy whatever between railway companies or kindred industrial organisations and a public authority such as was promoting this Bill. The hon. Member might have succeeded in introducing the Instruction in other Bills, but he was informed that the concession had been obtained in such cases under great pressure, and was only made because the Bills had reached a stage at which, unless the concession was granted, there was a danger of the Bill being lost for a year. Those cases therefore ought not to be accepted as a precedent. The promoters of the Bill had gone as far as they could to meet the hon. Member, who had suggested that his desire was to secure that no scheme should be registered which was not a good scheme and approved by the Registrar of Friendly Societies. The promoters were quite willing to agree to that, and in Clause 52 they had inserted words providing that no scheme under the Act should come into operation unless it was registered by the Registrar of Friendly Societies.

MR. STRACHEY: It gives no discretion to the Registrar. He is bound to register any scheme presented by the Corporation.

MR. CHARLES M'ARTHUR said it was open to the Registrar of Friendly Societies to point out any features which he thought undesirable or inequitable, and he was quite sure that it was the intention of the promoters of the Bill that he should do so. The House was asked to give, a mandatory instruction to the Committee to insert this clause. He ventured to think that it should not do so, but that it should leave the matter to be threshed out before the Committee, which was the proper tribunal to settle matters in which local questions were involved. If the House would agree to send the Bill to the Committee without the proposed Instruction he promised, on behalf of the promoters, that every opportunity should be given for the discussion of the points raised by the hon. Member for South Somerset.

MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.) said it appeared to him that the arguments of the hon. Member for the Exchange Division of Liverpool were vague and required elucidation. Clause 52, to which he had referred, certainly did not to his mind convey the same meaning as the instruction of the hon. Member for South Somerset. The clause distinctly stated that the Registrar must register if he were satisfied that the scheme was in accordance with the provisions of the

Bill. He, therefore, would have no choice but to register so long as the terms of the Bill were complied with. But the Instruction meant something different. It meant that the Registrar must be satisfied that in certain respects the scheme was satisfactory. One of those respects was that the fund should be largely under the management of those who paid into it, and secondly that the men should be granted fair terms on leaving their employment. Those conditions would be secured by insisting on registration as provided for by the Instruction. If they were going to allow local authorities to set up these schemes, it was only right that they should take every possible precaution to secure that the terms were fair to the men concerned. The Instruction would secure the safeguard that the Registrar himself would have to be satisfied that the men were justly dealt with under the scheme. He did not think there was any absolute need for limiting the benefits under the scheme. There was no objection to making an exception in the cases of highly-paid servants, and he therefore hoped that the promoters of the Bill would fall into line with the practice of the House.

MR. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) also hoped that the hon. Member for the Exchange Division of Liverpool would not press his opposition to the Instruction. A question of far-reaching principle was involved in this matter. The point was, whether in cases in which superannuation or provident funds were established under the authority of Parliament they should, or should not, be under the supervision of the Registrar of Friendly Societies. And he was bound to say that in his opinion such supervision was very desirable, seeing that the Registrar had at his command the most skilled actuarial experience that could be obtained, and was able to apply general principles to the various conditions which might arise in connection with great companies and corporations. He thought there must be some mistake in the interpretation which the hon. Member told them had been placed upon the legal bearing of the Instruction. So far as he gathered, the effect of the Instruction would be to secure registration by the Registrar of Friendly Societies merely, and it would not involve registration under the Friendly Societies Act. The clause had become common in the Bills of great railway companies, and he saw no reason why it should not find a place also in the Bills of corporations. The Wallasey Urban District Council might not be a very great corporation, but there was a great principle involved, and it was desirable that it should be applied to all corporations, whether great or small.

COLONEL PILKINGTON (Lancashire, Newton), who was almost inaudible from the Press gallery, was understood to advocate giving the Committee a free hand in the matter, and to point out that the Local Government Board was always represented before Committees dealing with these Bills. He hoped the Instruction would be rejected.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil supported the Instruction, although he regretted the proposals contained in the Bill, fearing that the result of their adoption would be to postpone indefinitely that general scheme of old age pensions of which they had heard so much outside the House and seen so little inside it. The whole Bill seemed to have been loosely drawn, and his inclination would be to move its rejection altogether, in order to give the promoters time to reframe it in a more satisfactory manner, it seemed to him that if a scheme

of this kind we; established at all, it should be open to every class of workmen under the Council, and that it should not be in the power of anyone to say that certain well-paid employees should benefit under it, while the less we paid might be excluded from it. Then, again, the scheme proposed to deprive of all benefit from the fund any employee of the Council who resigned his position in order to escape being dismissed for fraud, dishonesty, or misconduct, He respectfully submitted that that was too wide a power to give to any council. If a man were dismissed for misconduct, surely the dismissal was the punishment, and he ought not to be still further penalised by losing any benefit from a fund to which he had contributed during his service. The hon. Member for South Somerset had suggested that one of his objects was to safeguard the interests of the men by ensuring that the fund was actuarially sound. That, no doubt, was very important. He trusted that the House would agree to the Instruction, and when the Bill came back from the Committee, if it were still defective, they could refuse to pass it into law, and thus give the promoters time to put it in more acceptable form.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, Cumberland, Penrith) thought the House would be disposed to agree with his hon. friend that the Instruction was vague and indefinite. Even the hon. Member for the Eye Division of Suffolk disagreed with the hon. Member for South Somerset as to what would be its effect. The hon. Member who moved the Instruction said his point was to have the scheme registered under the Friendly Societies Acts, and that was the real matter in dispute between him and the promoters of the Bill. There was a clause in the Bill which left it open to the Registrar of Friendly Societies to register the scheme, but the promoters were afraid that, if the Friendly Societies Acts were incorporated in the Bill, certain results would be produced which were wholly unsuitable to the state of affairs in Wallasey. That would be wholly inapplicable to the case of officials who were drawing high salaries, and who served the borough in important positions. The argument of the promoters of the Bill was that if the Instruction of the hon. Member for South Somerset was accepted it would shut out from the scheme certain benefits 'which the promoters of the Bill intended to confer upon their servants. He did not believe that that was an object which the hon. Member himself would desire to see. He was opposed to the Instruction for the reason that the whole question would be and must be raised before the Committee to which the Bill had already been referred. The Registrar of Friendly Societies had reported against one of the clauses of the Bill; Clause 50; and that Report would be laid before the Committee. The Committee would have an opportunity of summoning Mr. Braybrooke and hearing his evidence; an opportunity which they had not got in the House; and the Committee would thus be able to insert a clause which would go as far as possible to meet the views of the hon. Member for South Somerset. He might say that the Friendly Societies Act was to be incorporated in certain respects and not in others. That could not be done at the present stage, where they must either incorporate the whole Act or not at all. There is a via media which was the solution of the difficulty, but it could not be taken that afternoon. For that reason he would move, the rejection of the Instruction, and leave it to the Committee, after

hearing the evidence of Mr. Braybrooke, to say whether all the sections of the Friendly Societies Act were or were not applicable to the particular circumstances, of this case.

*MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe) said there was no doubt considerable dissatisfaction had been raised throughout the country in regard to these superannuation schemes by local bodies, railway companies, and others. He thought the House was indebted to those who had brought them before the House before being sent to Committee upstairs, and that this should be a lesson to the local bodies to frame their schemes more carefully. In this Bill there were eleven clauses under the head "Superannuation," and he could see that some of the phraseology was extremely crude and would have to be carefully considered in Committee. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that the Registrar of Friendly Societies had already objected to one of the clauses; Clause 50; but all of them would have to be carefully looked at. He thought that the debate should be adjourned so as to give an opportunity to the promoters of the Bill and hon. Members who objected to some of its provisions for consultation.

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR said he was authorised by the promoters of the Bill to state that they were willing that the Bill should be so amended that the Registrar of Friendly Societies should have the discretion of saying whether the conditions under the Bill were fairly reasonable.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) did not propose to go over the ground already covered by hon. Members who had spoken, but he represented a certain proportion of working men in Ireland, and he agreed with the mover of the motion. All those questions regarding superannuation ought to be carefully discussed. There were often very curious

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)

Causton, Richard Knight

Hayden, John Patrick

Allan, William (Gateshead)

Clancy, John Joseph

Hayne, Rt. Hon. C. Seale-

Ambrose, Robert

Colville, John

Hemphill, Rt. Hon. C. H.

Ashton, Thomas Gair

Condon, Thomas Joseph

Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)

Austin, Sir John

Crean, Eugene

Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)

Barry, E. (Cork, S.)

Cullinan, J.

Joyce, Michael

Bell, Richard

Daly, James
Kennedy, Patrick James
Bignold, Arthur
Dillon, John
Kinloch, Sir John Geo. Smyth
Black, Alexander William
Doogan, P. C.
Kitson, Sir James
Blake, Edward
Duffy, William, J.
Lambert, George
Boland, John
Duncan, James. H.
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Boyle, James
Ellis, John Edward
Leamy, Edmund
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Farrell, James Patrick
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Burt, Thomas
Ffrench, Peter
Lewis, John Herbert
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Gilhooly, James
Lundon, W.
Cameron, Robert
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Grant, Corrie
M'Cann, James
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir: H.
Hammond, John
M'Crae, George
Carew, James Laurence
Hardie, J K. (Merthyr Tydvil
M'Fadden, Edward

clauses in some of these "omnibus" or so-called Improvement Bills which superseded the ordinary law of the land. As the Gentleman in charge of the Bill was absent, that was a reason why the debate should be adjourned and an opportunity be given for conference. But there were certain penal clauses in regard to dairies and tuberculosis to which he wished to refer.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order; The hon. Member must confine his remarks to the Instruction moved.

MR. FIELD said that the other day, in connection with a Great Eastern Railway

Bill, an Instruction proposed to be moved had been withdrawn and the promoters had agreed to have a conference in order that the clause objected to should be amended. He moved the adjournment of the debate to permit of a conference between the promoters and those who took a different view from them in regard to this exceedingly important matter.

MR. DALY (Monaghan, S.) seconded the Amendment.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."; (Mr. Field.)

But Mr. SPEAKER being of opinion that the motion was an abuse of the rules of the House, put the Question thereon forthwith to the House.

The House divided:;Ayes, 102; Noes, 175. (Division List No. 82.)

M' Killop, W. (Sligo, North)

O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N

Stevenson, Francis S.

Mansfield, Horace Kendall

O'Malley, William

Sullivan, Donal

Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe

O'Mara, James

Taylor, Theodore Cooke

Morley, Charles (Breconshire)

O'Shaughnessy, P. J.

Thomas, A. (Glamorgan, E.)

Murphy, J.

O'Shee, James John

Thomas, J. A. (Gl'm'rg'n.Govvr

Nannetti, Joseph P.

Partington, Oswald

Thompson, E. C.(Monaghan, N.

Norton, Capt. Cecil William

Pemberton, John S. G.

Thomson, F. W. (York, W.K.)

O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)

Power, Patrick Joseph

Trevelyan, Charles Philips

O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)

Priestley, Arthur

Weir, James Galloway

O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)

Reddy, M.

Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)

O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.

Redmond, John E.(Waterford)

Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

O'Doherty, William

Redmond, William (Clare)

Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Yoxall, James Henry
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
Roche, John
O'Dowd, John
Shipman, Dr. John G.
TELLERS FOR THE AYES.;Mr.Field and Captain Donclan.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
Soares, Ernest J.
NOES.
Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Flower Ernest
Parkes, Ebenezer
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Gladstone, RtHn. Herbert John
Paulton, James Mellor
Allsopp, Hon. George
Graham, Henry Robert
Percy, Earl
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Perk's, Robert William
Arrol, Sir William
Groves, James Grimble
Philipps, John Wynford
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Pierpoint, Robert
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Gurdon, Sir William Brampton
Pilkington, Richard
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Hain, Edward
Pirie, Duncan V.
Baldwin, Alfred
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Balfour, RtHn. Gerald W (Leeds
Banbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Plummer, Walter R.
Banbury, Frederick George
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Price, Robert John
Barlow, John Emmott

Haslett, Sir James Horner
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Henderson. Alexander
Randles, John S.
Hartley, George C. T.
Hoare, Ed. Brodie (Hampstead
Ratcliffe, R. F.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Hogg, Lindsay
Reid, James (Greenock)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightsd.
Rickett, J. Compton
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Horner, Frederic William
Kidley, Hon. M. W. (Stalybridge
Boulnois, Edmund
Howard, Capt. J. (Kent, Favers.
Ridley, S. F. (Bethnal Green)
Brigg, John
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Rigg, Richard
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Hozier, Hon. James Henry C.
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Brown, Alex. H. (Shropshire
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Round, James
Caine, William Sproston
Hutton, John (Yorks, N. R.)
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Caldwell, James
Jacoby, James Alfred
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lines.)
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbysl.)
Joicey, Sir James
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Cawley, Frederick
Kearley, Hudson E.
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Kimber, Henry

Sassoon, Sir Edward Albeit
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Knowles, Lees
Schwann, Charles E.
Chapman, Edward
Law, Andrew Bonar
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone,W.)
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Lawson, John Grant
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Ceilings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Leveson-Cower, Fredk. N. S.
Smith, H.C.(North'mb. Tynes
Crombie, John William
Lock wood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Bong, Rt. Hn. W. (Bristol, S.)
Spear, John Ward
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Lonsdale John Brownlee
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Dickson, Charles Scott
Lowther, Rt Hn JW (Cum. Penr.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Dimsdale, Sir Joseph Cockfield
Macartney, Rt. Hn. W G Ellison
Tennant, Harold John
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Maconochie, A. W.
Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
M'Kenna, Reginald
Thomas, F. Freeman-(Hast'gs
Elibank, Master of
M'Killop, Jas. (Stirlingshire)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Elliot Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Majendie, James A. H.
Thornton, Percy M.

Emmott, Alfred
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Tomkinson, Jame
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Valentia, Viscount
Fardell, Sir T. George
Morris, Hon. Martin Henry F.
Vincent, Col. Sir C.F.H. (Shef'd
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Dept ford
Walker, Col. William Hail
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edw.
Mount, William Arthur
Wallace, Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Walrond, Rt. Hn Sir Wm. H.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J (Manc'r
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Finch, George H.
Murray, Col Wyndham (Bath)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Myers, William Henry
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Fisher, William Hayes
Nicholson, William Graham
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward A
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Welby, Lt-Col. A.C.E (Taunt'n,
Flanuery, Sir Fortescue
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.)
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson-Todd. Wm. H. (Yorks.)
TELLERS FOR THE NOES; Mr. Strachey and Mr. Chas. M'Arthur.
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Wodehouse, Hn. Armine (Essex
Williams, Rt Hn J. Powell-(Bir.
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart.

Willox, Sir John Archibald
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Young, Commander (Berks, E.)
Original Question put.
AYES.
Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N. E.)
Groves, James Grimble
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
O'Shee, James John
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Hammond, John
Partington, Oswald
Ambrose, Robert
Hardie, J. K. (Merthyr Tydvil
Pemberton, John S. G.
Austin, Sir John
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Perks, Robert William
Baldwin, Alfred
Hayden, John Patrick
Philipps, John Wynford
Barlow, John Emmott
Haydne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Pirie, Duncan V.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Plummer, Walter R.
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Hoare, E. Brodie (Hampstead)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Hogg, Lindsay
Priestley, Arthur
Bell, Richard
Holland, William Henry
Randles, John S.
Black, Alexander William
Hope, J. F (Sheffield, Brightside
Ratcliffe, R. F.
Blake, Edward
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Rea, Russell
Boland, John

Hozier, Hon. Jas. Henry Cecil
Reddy, M.
Boyle, James
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Brigg, John
Jacoby, James Alfred
Redmond, William (Clare)
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Joicey, Sir James
Rickett, J. Compton
Brown, Geo. M. (Edinburgh)
Joyce, Michael
Rigg, Richard
Bryee, Rt. Hon. James
Kearley, Hudson E.
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Burke, E. Haviland-
Kennedy, Patrick James
Roche, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Kinloch, Sir John Geo. Smyth
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Caine, William Sproston
Kitson, Sir James
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alex.
Caldwell, James
Lambert, George
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Cameron, Robert
Layland- Barratt, Francis
Schwann, Charles E.
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Leamy, Edmund
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Carew, James Laurence
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Cawley, Frederick
Leng, Sir John
Soares, Ernest J.
Clancy, John Joseph
Leveson-Gower, Fred. N. S.

Spear, John Ward
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Lewis, John Herbert
Stevenson, Francis S.
Colville, John
Lloyd-George, David
Sullivan, Donal
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Taylor, Theodore Cooke
Crean, Eugene
Lundon, W.
Tennant, Harold John
Crombie, John William
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Daly, James
M'Cann, James
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
M'Crae, George
Thomas, F. Freeman-(Hastings
Dilke, Rt. Hn. Sir Charles
M'Fadden, Edward
Thomas, J. A (Glamorgan Gower
Dillon, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
Thompson, E. C. (Monaghan, N.
Donelan, Captain A.
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Doogan, P. C.
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Tomkinson, James
Douglas, Chas. M. (Lanark)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Duffy, William J.
Mappin, Sir Fredk. Thorpe
Vincent, Col. Sir C E H (Sheffield
Duncan, James H.
Markham, Arthur Basil
Wallace, Robert
Elibank, Master of
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriessh.
Walrond, Rt. Hn Sir William H.

Emmott, Alfred
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Warde, Lieut.-Col. C. E.
Evans, Sir Francis H. (Maidst.)
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Murphy, J.
Wason, John C. (Orkney)
Farrell, James Patrick
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Weir, James Galloway
Fellowes, Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton)
Fenwick, Charles
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Whiteley, Geo. (York, W.R.)
Ffrench, Peter
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Field, William
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Finch, George H.
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Flower, Ernest
O'Doherty, William
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Flynn, James Christopher
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Furness, Sir Christopher
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
Wodehouse, Hn. Arimine (Essex)
Garfit, William
O'Dowd, John
Young, Commander (Berks, E.)
Gilhooly, James
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb. John

O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
Yoxall, James Henry
Goudard, Daniel Ford
O'Malley, William
TELLERS FOR THE AYES; Mr. Strachey and Mr. Harry Samuel.
Grant, Corrie
O'Mara, James
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
The House divided:: Ayes, 18G; Noes, 114. (Division List No. 83.)
NOES.
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond.
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipper'ry Mid
Allsopp, Hon. George
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
Paulton, James Mellor
Arrol, Sir William
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Percy, Earl
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Hain, Edward
Pierpoint, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Pryce-Jones, Lt.- Col. Edward
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Ridley, S. Forde (Bethnal Green
Banbury, Frederick George
Henderson, Alexander
Round, James
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Bartley, George C. T.
Horner, Frederick William

Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Howard, Capt J. (Kent, Faversh.
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thomas Myles
Bignold, A.
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Bill, Charles
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Boulnois, Edmund
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Smith, H. C. (Northmb, Tyneside
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex
Jebb, Sir Richard Claver house
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks)
Brown, Alexander H. (Shropsh.
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Burt, Thomas
Kimber, Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Knowles, Lees
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Law, Andrew Bonar
Thorburn Sir Walter
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
Lawrence, William F.
Thornton, Percy M.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Lawson, John Grant
Tufnell, Lieut.- Col. Edward
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Valentia, Viscount
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Walker, Col. William Hall
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Lowther, Rt. Hn. J. W. (Cum. Penr
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Cullinan, J.
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-u.-Lyne

Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Dickson, Charles Scott
Macartney, Rt. Hn. W.G. Ellison
Williams, Rt Hn. J Powell-(B'rm
Dimsdale, Sir Jos. Cock field
Maconochie, A. W.
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Fardell, Sir T. George
Morris, Hon. Martin Henry F.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Fergusson, Rt Hn Sir J. (Manc'r)
Mount, William Arthur
Fielden, Edw. Brocklehurst
Mowbray, Sir Robert G. C.
TELLERS FOR THE NOES;Mr. Charles M'Arthur and Colonel Pilkington.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
Fisher, William Hayes
Myers, William Henry
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Nicholson, William Graham
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian

MR. HORNER (Lambeth): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask whether it is allowable for a teller to stand at the door and say, "Those who are in favour of friendly societies come to the Aye Lobby."

*MR. SPEAKER: That is not a point of order, nor do I suppose that such a statement could mislead any hon. Member.

MR. HORNER: I am quite sure it did.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Wallasey Improvement Bill to insert the following clause;

No scheme for the establishment of a superannuation or provident fund under this Act shall come into operation until it has been registered by the Registrar of Friendly Societies under the Friendly Societies Act.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. G2 has been complied with, viz:

;

Glasgow and South Western Railway Bill.

Hull, Barnsley, and West Riding Junction Railway and Dock Bill.

Metropolitan Railway Bill.

North-Eastern Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof. Standing Order No.63 has been complied with, viz.:

Notting Hill Electric Lighting Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILL PETITION [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the Worcester Tramways Bill, reported by the Chairman of Ways and Means as intended to originate in the House of Lords, the Standing Orders have been complied with.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (TRAMWAYS AND STREET WIDENINGS) BILL.

"To enable the London County Council to construct new tramways and to reconstruct and alter tramways in the county of London; to work tramways by electric traction; and to make new streets and street improvements; and for other purposes," read the first time; to be read a second time.

METROPOLITAN POLICE PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL (BY ORDER).

Read a second time, and committed.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP I).

Mr. Jeffreys reported from the Committee on Group I of Railway Bills, That the parties opposing the London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Bill had stated that the evidence of A. Horsburgh Campbell, Surveyor to the Urban District Council of East Ham, was essential to their case; and it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said A. Horsburgh Campbell do attend the said Committee To-morrow, at half past Eleven of the clock.

Ordered, That A. Horsburgh Campbell do attend the Committee on Group 1 of Railway Bills To-morrow, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

PETITIONS.

BEER BILL.

Petition from Bowes, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (HIGHER GRADE AND EVENING CONTINUATION SCHOOLS).

Petition from Finchley, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE.

Petition from West Woodburn, for extension to women; to lie upon the Table.

POOR LAW OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1896.

Petitions for alteration of Law from Atcham and Milton next Sitting bourn; to

lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Blaenavon; Spennymoor; Bowden Close; Hirwain (two); Byers Green; Bishop Auckland (eight); Luton (two); Whittington Moor; Liverpool (five); Salford (seven); Copford; Halifax (two); Bedfordshire; Leighton Buzzard; Durham; Pendleton (three); South Norwood (two); East Ham; Berwick-on-Tweed; Goole; Newcastle-on-Tyne (six); Nottingham (two); Wishaw; Benwell; Camper-down; Willington Quay; Cambusnethan; Overtown; Cardiff' (ten); Chelmsford; St. Marylebone; Galashiels; Rhondda Valley; Ferndale; Hollinwood; Henley-on-Thames; Wolverhampton; Hawk-hurst: Regent's Park; Edinburgh (two); Port Glasgow; Ticehurst; Stockport (two); Burwash Weald; Kirkintilloch (two); Sheffield (six); Jamestown; Birmingham (eight); Croydon; Birkenhead (two); Wigton; Newmilns; Clifton; Oswestry; Norwich, (five); St. Budeaux; Wombwell (three); Oldham; Kingsteignton; Bury (three); West Salford; Hayfield; Woolfold; Clydebank; Kirkwall (two); Crosth-waite; Great Salkeld; Penrith; Weaste; Aston; Pontefract; Keswick: Loft-house: Mirfield (three); Pudsey (three); Stanningley (two); Dewsbury; Llwyny-pia; Leeds (two); Churwell; Horsforth; Barnsley; Blodeuyny Duffryn; Aldingbourne; Ilfracombe; Wrock wardine Wood; Hornsey Rise; Islington; Ex-mouth (six); Caledonian Road; Dept-ford Park; Patricroft; Walton Park; Greenock (four); Clevedon; Annan; Bradford; Ealing; Kilmarnock; Skegness; Sidmouth; Southend; Lymin-ster; Bristol (three); Hexham; Holly park; Hunwick; Willington; Brecon; Aylestone; Woolwich; Bagalate: Rochdale (three); Heywood; Fording bridge (two); Wakefield (two); Elgin (three); Crowborough; Chelsea; Withington (two); Lancaster (three); Glasgow (eight); Morison; Warmby; Dundee (two); St. Albans; East Dulwich; Corsham (two); Balsall Heath; Sted-ham; West Norwood; Forest Hill (two); Catford; Hastings; Ffynnon Croew; Mold Junction: Rossett; Peterhead; Easebourne; Loughborough Park; Old-land Common; Devizes; Stockbridge; Wandsworth; and Fishbourne; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL AND SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Perth, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Dundee; Lochee; Newmilns (two); Kinneil; Borrows to unness; Uphall; Whitburn (two); Kirkintilloch; Galashiels (two); Langton; Hawick; Glasgow (three); Kirkwall; Peebles; Erzie; Bowling; Greenock (six); Aberdeen (two); Rattray; Sandwick (five); and Charlestown; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL v. LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD.

Return [presented 20th March] to be printed. [No. 89.]

ARMY (ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY, WOOLWICH).

Copy presented, of Report of the Board of Visitors for 1900 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE, SANDHURST).

Copy presented, of Report of the Board of Visitors for 1900 [by Command]; to lie

upon the Table.

ARMY.

Copy presented, of Finding of a Court of Inquiry, held at Barberton on the 25th September. 1900, to investigate the circumstances under which Lieutenant-Colonel B. E. Spragge, D.S.O., 13th Battalion Imperial Yeomanry, and others, became prisoners of war [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE (ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 19th March; Mr. Lough]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 90.]

IMPERIAL REVENUE (COLLECTION AND EXPENDITURE) (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 19th March, Mr. Lough]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 91.]

CHARITY COMMISSION (ENGLAND AND WALES)

Copy presented, of Forty-eighth Report of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES)

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports. Annual Series, Nos. 2,562 to 2,564 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS (MAIDSTONE).

Ordered, That the Copy of the Judges' Report and Minutes of Evidence in the Maidstone Election Trial be printed. [No. 92.];(Mr. Attorney General.)

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR;PEACE NEGOTIATIONS WITH GENERAL BOTHA.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I wish to ask the Colonial Secretary whether he can say when the Papers relating to the recent negotiations in South Africa will be distributed to Members. He will understand our desire to see them.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I quite understand the desire of the right hon. Gentleman, which, I think, is perfectly reasonable. There has been a little delay owing to the necessity for us to telegraph to Lord Kitchener for the full text of his communication to General Botha. That only reached us this morning. The Papers are now in the hands of the printers, and I am told they will be delivered to-morrow, by the time the House meets, I hope.

TRANSVAAL CIVIL ADMINISTRATION; MR. DOUGLAS FORSTER.

*SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk. N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Mr. Douglas Forster has been appointed to a legal post in the Transvaal by or with the knowledge of Sir Alfred Milner; and, if so, what are his duties and his salary; whether he is the same person who, under the name of Adolphus Ellis, was manager of a theatrical company in the Transvaal; and what are his qualifications for the office which he holds.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have no information on this matter. If the hon. Gentleman wishes me to do so, I am prepared to make inquiries of Sir Alfred Milner; but I would ask him to consider whether, in view of the enormous work now imposed on Sir Alfred, he would wish me to inquire in this case unless he has some evidence

to show that Sir Alfred is in any way whatever connected with it.

*SIR BRAMPTON GURDON: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire whether the appointment has been made by any subordinate officer? The right hon. Gentleman will remember that during the last session he spoke to me about this very man.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: My present information is confined to an answer given by my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War, which was to the effect, I

think, that this gentle-

man had been employed by Lord Roberts. As far as I understand the matter, the gentleman has no connection whatever with Sir Alfred Milner.

BOER PRISONERS;MRS. HERTZOG.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire. E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it has been brought to his knowledge that Albert Hertzog, a child of two years of age, has lately been released from imprisonment in the camp at Port Elizabeth, but that his mother is still a prisoner in the same camp; whether Mrs. Hertzog is the wife of Judge Hertzog, lately a member of the High Court at Bloemfontein; and whether there is any good reason of State why she should not be permitted to join her child.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have no information, but will inquire.

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY'S ACCOUNTS.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has received from the British South Africa Company, as required by its charter, accounts for the financial years ending 31st March, 1899, and 1900, and Estimates of revenue and expenditure for the year ending 31st March, 1901; and when they will be laid upon the Table.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The accounts for the financial years ended the 31st March, 1899 and 1900, have not yet been received, but will be asked for at once. I have received the Estimates of revenue and expenditure for the year ending 31st March, 1901, and they will be laid on the Table.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONCENTRATION OF STORES AT LADYSMITH.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state the name of the officer in South Africa who ordered military stores to be concentrated at Ladysmith; whether he was acting on instructions from home or on his own responsibility, and at what date was the concentration of such stores commenced.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guild-ford): No, Sir, I cannot, within the limits of a reply to a question, adjust the responsibility as to the concentration of stores at Ladysmith between officers at home and on the spot.

MR. LAMBERT: Will this question come within the purview of the inquiry on the war?

MR. BRODRICK: No terms of reference have yet been suggested, but if an inquiry takes place this point, among many others, might come within it.

MR. M'KENNA (Monmouthshire, N.): Did the right hon. Gentleman say "if" or "when" the inquiry takes place?

MR. BRODRICK: Any inquiry on that subject should be addressed to my right hon. friend the First Lord of the Treasury.

SOLDIERS' WIDOWS' PENSIONS.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Government scheme of pensions to widows and orphans of those who lose their lives in South Africa will include the widows of those who married off the strength; whether the Government allowances will be granted irrespective of life annuities already given by outside funds, and from what date will the pensions be payable and through what channel will they be remitted.

MR. BRODRICK: The pensions will only be given to women on the married establishment, including the wives of men of the Reserve, Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers married before mobilisation. The pensions will be given irrespective of annuities already given by outside funds. The pensions will be given from the 1st July. The channel of payment has not yet been settled.

ALLEGED BOER ATROCITY AT TAAIBOSCH.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he has any information showing that, on 19th February, the Boers, after capturing a train at Taai-bosch, fired upon the passengers, black and white, killing hundreds as they lay maimed and wounded in the wreckage.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): I have no official information of the matter alluded to.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: As this statement has been widely circulated, will the noble Lord take steps to ascertain whether there is any truth in it?

*LORD STANLEY: If there is any truth in it we shall have official information.

COMFORTS FOR THE TROOPS.

MR. MANSFIELD (Lincolnshire, Spalding): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the telegram from Lord Kitchener asking for comforts for the troops in South Africa, he will arrange that all such comforts shall be sent out free of cost to the sender; and, if so, whether small parcels can also be sent post free.

*LORD STANLEY: Boxes and parcels, if sent carriage paid to the Embarking Staff Officer, Empress Dock, Southampton, will be forwarded without further charge to the corps or individual to whom they are addressed.

MR. LAMBERT: May I ask how long these parcels will take to get to the troops, and whether there is any chance of their being blocked at Durban or Cape Town?

*LORD STANLEY: There are reasons for which I am not responsible which occasionally prevent trains from going up north.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Is it not the fact that many of the parcels sent in this way have been five months on the road, whereas those sent through the Post Office have gone through without any delay at all?

[No answer was given.]

MR. MANSFIELD: Can small parcels be sent post free?

*LORD STANLEY: That is a question which would have to be referred to South Africa, as the Colonial Government would be responsible for part of the payment. We should have to get their consent.

MR. MANSFIELD: Will you endeavour to do so?

[No answer was given.]

MR. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether, in view of the approach of winter in South Africa, care will be taken to provide the troops with a sufficient supply of flannel underclothing.

*LORD STANLEY: Yes, Sir. Large supplies of flannel shirts, woollen drawers, and jerseys have been sent out.

REJECTED MARK IV. BULLETS.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, in view of the fact that fifty millions Mark IV. bullets have been manufactured, and that four and a half millions have been broken up because they were useless, will he state what has been done with the remaining forty-five and a half millions.

*LORD STANLEY: In, the first place I am not sure that the hon. Member's figures are correct.

MR. WEIR: I know they are.

*LORD STANLEY: These bullets have been made up into cartridges, which are being used for practice purposes.

MR. WEIR: Are they dum-dum or soft-nosed bullets?

MR. KEIR HARDIE: Have all these bullets that were sent out to South Africa been brought back again?

*LORD STANLEY: No, Sir.

MR. WEIR: I again ask the noble Lord whether these bullets were soft-nosed or dum-dum bullets.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): Where were they made?

*LORD STANLEY: That does not arise out of the question.

SOLDIERS' KITS.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been directed to the fact that infantry soldiers are only allowed two shirts in their kit, and whether, in view of the complaints made as to the inadequacy of this supply, he purposes making any additions thereto.

LORD STANLEY: This matter has been very carefully considered, and it has not been held necessary to make any change.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: Have any complaints been received from the men or from medical officers?

LORD STANLEY: Not that I know of.

YEOMANRY TRAINING.

MR. STOCK (Liverpool, Walton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, seeing that the majority of Yeomanry regiments come out for their annual training in May, whether he can now state when the Army Order will be published giving the requirements of the War Office this year with respect to the period of training, camping out, uniform, and amount of recruiting, in order to allow the necessary arrangements to be made in reasonable time by Colonels and Adjutants of Yeomanry.

LORD STANLEY: The Army Order is being drafted with all possible speed, but I must ask for a few days law.

BOY RECRUIT

COLONEL BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye): I beg to ask the Secretary for War whether his attention has been called to the case of George Harold Over, recently charged before the Lambeth magistrate with being an absentee from the East Surrey Militia, when it was elicited that Over was only fourteen years old, though serving as a full-grown private soldier; and whether the conduct of the medical officer responsible for having passed him will receive any official notice from the military authorities.

LORD STANLEY: I have inquired into this case. Over gave his age as seventeen years four months. His height was 5 feet 3½ inches, chest measurement thirty-two inches, and weight 108 pounds. The medical officer considered his appearance and physical equivalent as being that of a youth of seventeen years and three months. The boy has been ordered to be discharged.

EBRINGTON BARRACKS, LONDONDERRY.

THE MARQUESS OF HAMILTON (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office if he will state the cause of the delay in bringing to a completion the enlargement of the Ebrington Barracks in Londonderry, with a view to having that place established as a military headquarters, and if he can say, at the present rate of progress, when the extension will be completed and the headquarters duly established, as so repeatedly promised.

LORD STANLEY: This is one of the numerous cases of delay caused by the difficulties which meet the War Department in the purchase of land for military purposes. Contracts for all the principal buildings are now in hand, and it is hoped to complete the extension by June, 1902.

ALDERSHOT ARMY SCHOOL.

MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the suicide of an Army schoolmaster at Aldershot on 6th March, stated at the inquest to be due to overwork in an understaffed school for excessively long hours, 8.30 a.m. to 8.30 p.m., steps may be taken by the War Office to improve the conditions of service in Army schools, so as to attract to Army schools an adequate supply of teachers, and ensure that they shall not be required to work in school for unreasonably long hours.

LORD STANLEY: An Inter-Departmental Committee has recently been appointed to consider questions dealing with Army schoolmasters, and amongst them the adequacy of the staff.

DINGWALL BARRACK ACCOMMODATION.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that although the regimental depot for the 3rd Battalion Seaforth Highlanders, Ross-shire Militia, is at Dingwall, barrack accommodation is not adequate, part only of the staff being quartered at Dingwall and the rest of the staff and men at Fort George; and will he consider the expediency of erecting barracks on one or other of the sites in the immediate vicinity of the town, so that the whole of the staff and men may be accommodated in the county town.

LORD STANLEY: I have nothing to add to the replies given to similar questions put by the hon. Member on several previous occasions.

SCOTTISH VOLUNTEER ARTILLERY.

MR. NICOL (Argyllshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is the intention of the Government to re-arm the Scotch Volunteer Artillery with the 4½ guns; and, if so, can he state when this is likely to be carried out.

LORD STANLEY: Some Scotch Volunteer batteries will be included amongst the Volunteer batteries to be re-armed with the 4½ guns. I cannot say at present when this will be carried out.

WRECK OF H.M.S. "SYBILLE."

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what officers, besides the captain, and what number of bluejackets and marines respectively belonging to H.M.S. "Sybille" were on duty on shore when that ship was wrecked; and whether the Admiralty have information to the effect that the captain of the ship has since specially complimented the engineer and stokers for saving all the heavy guns under very difficult circumstances when the ship was ashore.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): The information received at the Admiralty is to the effect that the captain, two lieutenants, and fifty men were landed. Captain Williams, in his evidence before the Court-Martial, remarked that the work in connection with saving the guns reflected great credit on Mr. Dawson, assistant engineer, and his party of stokers. The Court added the following rider to the sentence;

"The Court are of opinion that every possible effort was made to save the ship after she first struck, and that good order and discipline were maintained under trying and difficult circumstances, and that the salvage operations were conducted in a manner creditable to all the officers and men taking part therein."

NAVAL CONSTRUCTION.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what was the amount spent upon new construction in the nine months ending respectively on the 31st December, 1899, and the 31st December, 1900.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The amount spent upon new construction in the nine months ending the 31st December, 1899, was £4,256,43 and in the nine months ending the 31st December, 1900, £5,182,883.

CHINA: ANGLO-RUSSIAN DISPUTE AT TIENTSIN.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether General Barrow ordered the Russians to be opposed by force of arms in regard to the dispute over the railway at Tientsin; and, if so, why such order was not executed.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): So far as I know, all orders issued by General Barrow have been executed; but his action in this instance, as I before said, was strictly limited to the protection of British rights on ground he believed to be property of the railway.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon): I beg to ask the Leader of the House whether he has any announcement to make as to the negotiations between Russia and this

country.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR. Manchester, E.): No, Sir; I have no statement to make.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I understand a statement has been made in another place.

AN IRISH MEMBER: Oh, we shall hear it next week.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: May I ask the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether it is not the case that a statement has been made by the Secretary of State in another place? I think we ought to know it.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Viscount CRANBORNE, Rochester): I have not the least doubt that my noble friend had notice given him, and if the hon.

Member will give me notice of a question I shall be happy to answer it.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Surely, Mr Speaker, the House of Commons is entitled to hear some hours afterwards;

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not entitled to comment on the answer of the noble Lord. This is not the time for comment.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I understand that no notice could be given because this: question relates to negotiations which were conducted to-day.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs a question, of which I have given private notice, whether His Majesty's Government has any information as to the despatch or the bringing up of reinforcements of the British troops at Tientsin, and whether additional British troops have reached Tientsin yesterday or to-day, or are expected to arrive there; and whether the Russian general has; issued a statement that no settlement is possible except on the condition of the withdrawal of the British troops.

LORD G. HAMILTON: If the hon. Member will allow me I shall answer the question. [Opposition cries of "Why?"] The hon. Member put a question as to the British troops in China, and those troops are under my orders. The answer to the first question is in the negative. The reply to the second question is that a certain number of white troops have been substituted for certain of the native Indian troops stationed at Tientsin. In reply to the third question, such a statement is reported to have been made, but I am not aware that it is authentic.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Though the noble Lord the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs is, of course, entitled to ask for notice of any question put to him, still I would ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether some Member of the Government could not make a statement as to what is going on in China, seeing that a statement on that subject has been made in another place.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman and the House appear to be under the impression that we are deliberately concealing something from the House which we know to have been given to the other House, I have not the smallest idea of what the communication was that was made to the other House.

*VISCOUNT CRANBORNE: Nor have I.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether in future he can make arrangements that when important communications on foreign affairs are made in the other House they shall also be made in this House?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: We are always anxious that this House should have the earliest information on all points, but it would be practically impossible to lay down a rule that a question should never be answered in the House of Lords without previous notice to us here.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: May I ask whether an arrangement has been arrived at whereby both Russian and British troops are to retire from the disputed territory, that matters are to be referred to Count von Waldersee, and that an apology is to be offered by the party found to be in the wrong?

*MR. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby): Was not a full statement made by the Foreign Secretary in the other House at half-past four o'clock in answer to Earl Spencer?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: This is the first intimation I have received of it. I have no doubt that if the hon. Gentleman says it is so it is true, but I am not aware of it.

MR. O'SHEE: Arising out of the answer of the noble Lord, I should like to ask whether the substitution of British white troops for the native troops who were at Tientsin is due to the fact that friction exists between the French and British troops there?

[No answer was returned.]

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Cannot the First Lord of the Treasury get the House out of its difficulty by deputing the noble Lord the Under Secretary to go down to the other House and see his chief?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order; Hon. Members are proceeding to debate the whole question. Some other opportunity must be taken for that.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Cannot I have an answer to the specific question I put?

[No reply was given.]

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Ministers ought to be in this House, and not in the other House.

RUSSO-CHINESE AGREEMENT ON MANCHURIA.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the assurances given by Count Lamsdorff, on 6th February, 1901, to the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, regarding the Russo-Chinese Agreement as to Manchuria, referred to an agreement made at Port Arthur between the Russian and Chinese local representatives on 22nd November, 1900, and not the principal agreement made at Peking and received at St. Petersburg after 6th February.

*VISCOUNT CRANBORNE: In the opinion of His Majesty's Government the statement made by Count Lamsdorff on the 6th of February, and confirmed by him on the 27th. is applicable to any agreement with regard to Manchuria between the Russian and Chinese Governments.

THE YANG-TSZE VICEROYS.

MR. YERBURGH (Chester): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the services rendered by the Viceroy Liu Kun-yi and Chang Chih-tung during the Boxer outbreak, in protecting foreigners and preserving order, and of the fact that the said Viceroy has memorialised the Throne for the introduction of reforms, the Government will press the Court to authorise them to introduce

at once reforms within their own provinces, and to guarantee that they shall under no pretext be disturbed for a definite term of years in the carrying out of such reforms.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: His Majesty's Government recognise the importance of the services rendered by the Viceroy Liu Kun-yi and Chang Chih-tung, and would gladly support them in promoting measures for the development of China and its opening to foreign trade. His Majesty's Government authorised His Majesty's Minister at Peking in October last to make a strong protest against the removal of the Viceroy, and His Majesty's Minister replied that he was satisfied that there was no danger of their removal.

TREATIES BETWEEN THIS COUNTRY AND CONTINENTAL POWERS.

MR. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether those portions of the Anglo-Belgian Treaties of 1831, 1839, and 1870, and of the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1878, as have not been expressly repealed by subsequent international instruments, are still held to be binding upon this country.

*VISCOUNT CRANBORNE: The treaty of 15th November, 1831, between Great Britain with other Powers and Belgium was superseded by the Treaty of 19th April, 1839, between the same parties, which is still in force. The treaties between Great Britain and Prussia, of 9th August, 1870, and between Great Britain with France of 11th August, 1870, were of a temporary character only, and ceased to operate twelve months after the ratification of the Treaty of Peace between France and the North German Confederation. The Anglo-Turkish Convention of 4th January, 1878, is still in force; but the obligations of this country under it were made contingent upon certain reforms in that country.

EXTRADITION TREATY WITH THE UNITED STATES.

MR. TAYLOR (Lancashire, Radcliffe): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in view of the fact that under our extradition treaty with the United States a bankrupt debtor may defy his British creditors upon his arrival in the United States, whether the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs will endeavour to get an amended extradition treaty under which absconding bankrupts may be made amenable to our bankruptcy laws.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg, at the same time, to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that when the extradition treaty or treaties which govern the relations of this country and the United States of America were concluded no provisions were made for offences under the bankruptcy laws; and whether negotiations have been proceeding with the Government of the United States to remedy this alleged want; if so, whether the matter will be dealt with without any unnecessary delay in the interests of the commercial community, as cases of loss to the business world in both countries are not infrequent.

*VISCOUNT CRANBORNE: His Majesty's Government have endeavoured on more than one occasion of late years to make provision for the mutual surrender in extradition of persons charged with offences against the bankruptcy laws in this country and in the United States. In 1884 the offence was inserted in the draft of a treaty then under negotiation, but it was not accepted by the United States Government.

The proposal was again put forward in 1889 by Her Majesty's Government, but Her Majesty's Ambassador at Washington reported that offences against bankruptcy laws were excluded from all American extradition treaties because no national bankruptcy law existed, and the law varied in each State of the Union. The matter was accordingly not further pressed by His Majesty's Government.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Senate of the United States has recently ratified an extension of the crimes for which the extradition of criminals can be accorded to Great Britain: and, if so, what crimes may now be added to the list, and, having regard to the policy of the American people to keep their country free from immigration of criminals as evidenced by their legislation, His Majesty's Government will endeavour to make the list of extradition crimes between this country and the United States as complete as between other civilised countries.

*VISCOUNT CRANBORNE: His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington reported on the 13th instant that the Senate of the United States had approved a Supplementary Extradition Treaty signed on the 13th of December last. This Treaty adds to the offences mentioned in the Treaties of 1842 and 1889 the following offences:; Obtaining money, valuable securities, or other property by false pretences; wilful and unlawful destruction or obstruction of railroads which endangers human life; procuring abortion. Steps are being taken for the early ratification of this Supplementary Treaty. The list of extradition offences is practically as complete as that contained in the Treaties of other countries with the United States. Further additions will be considered if necessity should arise, and so far as the laws of both countries may permit.

HIGHLAND RAILWAYS: MIXED TRAINS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the passenger trains running on the Highland Railway between Muir of Ord and Avoch, Ross-shire, are frequently mixed, and are not provided throughout with the continuous brake; and will he take steps to require the Highland Railway Company to conform with the Board of Trade regulations.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The Order made by the Board upon the Highland Railway Company under the Regulation of Railways Act, 1889, authorised the running of a limited number of mixed trains for the conveyance of goods and passengers, subject to specified conditions, of which one is "that the engine tender and passenger vehicles of such mixed trains shall be provided with continuous brakes worked from the engine." In fixing the number of such mixed trains from time to time the Board of Trade, as directed by the Act, have regard to the nature and extent of the traffic on the railway concerned. All the engines and passenger vehicles of such trains are stated to be duly fitted with an automatic-brake, and the Board's Order appears, therefore, to be fully complied with.

MR. WEIR: Will the right hon. Gentleman make inquiry into the matter? Or will he allow me to give him my own experience of the line?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have already placed myself in communication with the

company, with the result stated in my answer. If the hon. Member assures me that the Order is not complied with I will further inquire.

MR. WEIR: I do.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I should like it in writing.

MR. WEIR: Certainly.

LIGHT RAILWAYS IN HIGHLAND CROFTING COUNTIES.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that only two light railways have so far been constructed in the six Highland crofting counties under the terms of the Light Railways Act, 1896, and that many of the proposed light railways, for which the Secretary for Scotland long since granted certificates on the ground that they are necessary means of communication between fishery harbours and the interior of the country, and cannot be constructed without special assistance from the State, have been abandoned by the promoters owing to the terms of the Act; and, in view of the difficulty experienced in obtaining local aid for the construction of such railways in the Highlands, will the Government consider the expediency of so amending the Act as to admit of effect being given to the recommendations of the Secretary for Scotland.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The first paragraph of the hon. Member's question does not correctly state the facts. No light railway has been constructed in the crofting counties under the Act of 1896. Under that Act, however, four light railways have been authorised, while two have been constructed under special Acts. I am not aware what difficulties the hon. Member refers to as having been experienced by promoters in consequence of the terms of the Act, nor am I at present satisfied that there is any necessity for an amendment of the law prescribing the conditions upon which grants are made.

ARMAGH TO KINGSCOURT RAILWAY.

MR. DALY (Monaghan, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the promoters of the railway from Armagh to Kingscourt have sold their rights, acquired under an Act passed last year, for making this line to the Great Northern Railway Company; whether he can say how much these rights were sold for; and whether he will take steps to prevent an arrangement between these promoters and the Great Northern Railway which, if carried out, would give a monopoly to the Great Northern Railway Company in the north-east portion of Ireland.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Board have been informed on behalf of the promoters of the Kingscourt, Keady, and Armagh Bill of this session that the working agreement which it is proposed to authorise by the Bill; between the Kingscourt, Keady and Armagh Company and the Great Northern Railway Company; will be scheduled to the Bill. I have not seen the proposed agreement, but it will no doubt be laid before the Parliamentary Committee to which the Bill is referred, and the questions raised by the hon. Member are for the consideration of that Committee rather than for the Board of Trade.

REMOVAL OF BRITISH FACTORIES TO THE UNITED STATES.

MR. HERBERT LEWIS: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he

will furnish a Return showing the number of manufacturing works removed from this country to the United States, specifying the nature of the manufacture and the causes for the removal.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It would not be practicable to obtain accurate information with regard to the subject referred to in the question, and I could not, therefore, undertake to furnish the Return which he desires.

SHEFFIELD FILE TRADE WITH RUSSIA.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he is aware that some firms in Sheffield have been compelled by the Russian duties to erect factories in Russia to sell files and other goods in that empire, and if the Government proposes to take steps to check the migration of factories, capital, machinery, and skilled manufacturers from this country to the United States, Russia, France, Spain, Italy, Germany, and other countries.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am aware that it is stated that certain firms at Sheffield are about to erect branch factories or branch establishments in Russia, but I am not prepared to propose any steps in the direction indicated by the hon. Member.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): May I ask whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer will not take some steps in his Budget?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: That question had better be addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

EVENING CONTINUATION SCHOOLS.

MR. HENRY HOBHOUSE (Somersetshire, East): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education if he is aware that the Returns of evening continuation schools, granted for several years past, fail to show the total amounts spent on evening schools by the various authorities aiding those schools; if he can grant a more complete Return of particulars with regard to evening schools, including those inspected from Whitehall and those inspected from South Kensington; and if, now that the Science and Art Department is merged in the Board of Education, there is any longer any reason for a dual administration of grants to evening schools.

*THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir J. GORST, Cambridge University): I am aware that the present Returns are imperfect. They embrace only those schools and parts of schools which are working under the Evening Continuation Schools Code, and omit the schools and parts of schools working under the Directory of the Board of Education. If the hon. Member will confer with rue, I will do my best to add such particulars to the Return as he desires. I am not aware of any reason for the continuance of the dual administration.

WINNINGTON PARK SCHOOLCOUNTY COUNCIL SCHOLARSHIPS.

SIR JOHN BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether, in view of the fact that certain children who have obtained county council scholarships at Winnington Park School, in Cheshire, and are now attending higher grade schools in Manchester, will under the Minute of 6th April, 1900, be obliged to leave these schools at the end of the current term, having reached the age of fifteen without having worked out their scholarships, and, in view of the fact that these are not isolated cases, His Majesty's Government will consider

the desirability of modifying the Code by extending the limit of age in the case of children holding county council and other similar scholarships to 6, 17, or, as in the case of Scotland, to 18 years.

*SIR J. GORST: I am not aware of any school in Manchester which is under the higher elementary schools Minute, and I doubt the existence of any such case of hardship as is referred to in the Question; but if the hon. Member will give me particulars of any such case I will inquire into it.

EDUCATION OF DEAF AND DUMB CATHOLIC CHILDREN.

LORD EDMUND TALBOT (Sussex, Chichester): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education if the school authority of any district supplies a public elementary school suitable for the elementary education of blind or deaf children for such district under Section 2 of the Elementary Education (Blind and Deaf Children) 'Act, 1893; has the Roman Catholic parent of such a child the right under that Act to refuse to have his child educated at such a school, and to require the school authority to send it to a certified Roman Catholic institution, and contribute to its maintenance while there.

*SIR J. GORST: I am reluctant to express any opinion on a general question; but I have been advised that the fact that a school authority has itself supplied a school for the education of deaf and blind children does not of itself entitle the school authority to insist on the child being sent to that school if the parent of the child selects some other place of instruction. But the selection must be a reasonable one (see Section 10 (2) of the Act); and the question whether the selection was or was not reasonable would have to be decided on the merits of each particular case.

JUSTICES' OATH OF ALLEGIANCE.

MR. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in view of the inconvenience caused by existing requirements, he has taken His Majesty's pleasure as to issuing an order under Section 2 of the Promissory Oaths Act, 1871, enabling justices to take the oath of allegiance and the judicial oath before any two justices in petty sessions assembled.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Jesse COLLINGS, Birmingham, Bordesley): The King's pleasure has been taken on this matter, and His Majesty has been pleased to appoint that any oaths required to be taken by county justices who were appointed to their offices by virtue of commissions issued in the reign of Her late Majesty may be taken before the justice acting as chairman at the sitting of any petty sessional court of the county for which such commissions were issued respectively.

DEATH SENTENCES FOR INFANTICIDE.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in cases of infanticide, the judge has no option but to pass the sentence of death upon the guilty person; and, if this be so, whether he contemplates any change in the law.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (for Mr. RITCHIE): There is no alternative sentence in cases of child murder. The Secretary of State does not contemplate any alteration of the law.

TITHE AVERAGES.

COLONEL MILWARD (Warwickshire, Stratford-upon-Avon): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he is aware that dissatisfaction exists amongst tithe owners as to the system by which the tithe averages are ascertained; and whether he will cause inquiry to be made upon this subject.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): I am aware that some tithe owners complain that under the Act the average price is too low, on the ground that a good deal of the best grain is not sold in the specified markets and therefore does not enter into the Returns. The tithepayers, on the other hand, say that a good deal of inferior corn is similarly not sold in these markets and the average price is thus unduly raised. The whole system of commutation was, however, from the first based on the principle of taking into account only the corn actually sold to specified classes of purchasers in particular markets. If my hon. friend can show that the existing markets are not fairly representative, inquiry shall be made; but a revision was only made as recently as 1st January last. If my hon. friend can give specific instances of neglect to make returns of all the corn sold in accordance with the Act, or of failure in any respect to carry out the provisions of the law by any of the returning markets, I shall be glad to have inquiry made.

IMPORTS OF INFERIOR TEA.

MR. HENRY HOBHOUSE: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if his attention has been drawn to the quantities of inferior and unwholesome teas imported into this country which are alleged to contain microbial products dangerous to health; whether the inspectors of the Board have power to seize, analyse, and condemn such teas, and to what extent such powers are exercised; and if, in the interests of: public health, he is willing to institute an inquiry into the best methods of checking the sale of such unwholesome teas by determining some minimum standard of purity, and by securing a proper analysis of such teas before they are blended with other teas.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER-LONG, Bristol, S.): The Local Government Board have no definite information as regards the matters referred to in the first paragraph of the question. Under the Sale of Food and Drugs Act, 1899, the Board may in certain circumstances direct an officer to procure samples of tea for analysis. The result of the analysis is to be communicated to the local authority, and thereupon it becomes the duty of the authority to cause proceedings to be taken just as if they had caused the analysis to be made. The Public Health Acts contain provisions under which articles of food which appear to be unwholesome or unfit for the food of man can be dealt with by officers of local authorities. I am not at present aware of sufficient reason for any such inquiry as that suggested.

VACCINATION OF PAUPER CHILDREN.

MR GODDARD (Ipswich): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether officials appointed by a board of guardians are or are not under the immediate control of the board of guardians appointing them; and, whether the superintendent of a home under the board of guardians can cause the children in such home to be vaccinated independently of the wishes of the parents or the guardians.

*MR. WALTER LONG: The duties of the more important officers of a board of guardians are prescribed by statute and by regulations made by the Local Government Board or their predecessors. The regulations generally contain a provision to the effect that the officer is to obey the lawful orders and directions of the guardians applicable to his office. The view of the Board is that under ordinary circumstances a child in an institution such as that referred to in the question should not be vaccinated if the parent or, in the case of an orphan or deserted child, the guardians object.

POOR LAW MEDICAL RELIEF AND THE FRANCHISE.

MR. H. J. WILSON (Yorkshire. W. R. Holmfirth): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that electors are disfranchised if they or members of their family dependent upon them are treated as patients in a workhouse hospital, even though the guardians of the poor receive full payment from the elector or his friends for the cost of treatment: and that the same disfranchisement takes place if owing to lack of hospital accommodation, the municipality arranges with the guardians for infectious cases for which the municipality is responsible to be treated at the workhouse hospital, and the municipality pays to the guardians the full cost of such treatment: and whether the Government will take steps to prevent such disfranchisement taking place

*MR. WALTER LONG: I am not aware that the allegation contained in the first paragraph of the question is correct. I have no authority to determine whether an elector is disfranchised under any of the conditions referred to in the question, or to take any steps in the matter; but, so far as I am able to form an opinion, a person would not be disfranchised in the circumstances stated.

THE WORKHOUSE DIETARY ORDER.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the new dietary order which it is intended to put in force in all the workhouses of the country on the 25th of March next is causing dissatisfaction among poor law authorities, both on the ground of the expense which will be involved and of the unpreparedness of the officials: whether he is aware that resolutions have been passed by the majority of boards asking for a suspension of the operation of the Order until the 29th of September next, and that this request has been unanimously endorsed by the Poor Law Unions Association in meeting assembled and by deputation to the Local Government Board; and whether, having regard to these circumstances, his Department can see its way to comply with the wishes of poor law authorities and their officials in the matter.

*MR. WALTER LONG: As a result of the deputation referred to by the hon. Member, a conference has taken place between officers of the Board and representatives of the Poor Law Unions Association, when the points which the Association wished to raise in connection with the Order were discussed. After the discussion there did not appear to be anything to necessitate the postponement of the date on which the Order is to come into operation, and the Board informed the Association on the 13th instant that they had decided not to make any postponement. The explanations which the Board have given with regard to the

Order have, I think, largely removed any dissatisfaction on the subject. I may add that the Order was issued in October last, so that there has been ample time to prepare for its taking effect.

COTTAGE HOMES BILL.

MR. JOHN HUTTON (Yorkshire, N.R.,Richmond): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether it is his intention to bring in a Bill this session to give effect to the recommendations of the Select Committee on the Cottage Homes Bill, 1899.

*MR. WALTER LONG: Boards of guardians can give effect to the majority of the recommendations of the Select Committee without legislation. As regards others, legislation would be required if fresh powers and duties were to be assigned to county councils, and I do not propose to introduce legislation on this subject at the present time. My right hon. friend and predecessor, in a circular of the 4th August last, called the attention of guardians to their powers in relation to the matters referred to by the Committee, and I have since instructed the inspectors of the Board to report the result of the consideration of the circular by guardians. In particular, whenever the opportunity has occurred I have pressed on the guardians the desirability of taking children out of the workhouse.

FOOD PRESERVATIVES;BORAX.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, seeing that Professor Thorpe stated in his evidence before the Royal Commission on Arsenic in Beer and Food that he had found no borax of commerce free from arsenic, the Departmental Committee now engaged in setting up standards of purity under Clause 4 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1900, will take cognisance of this evidence, and prohibit the use of borax as a preservative.

MR. WALTER LONG: I presume that the hon. Member refers to the Departmental Committee appointed by my predecessor to inquire into the use of preservatives. That Committee has not at present reported, and it will be competent for them to take into consideration any evidence they may think fit. If it should appear that mixing borax with any article of food renders it injurious to health, a person so mixing it with intent that the article may be sold in that state would be liable to proceedings under the existing law.

MR. JOYCE: Is Dr. Thorpe the principal chemist in the Government Analytical Department at Somerset House?

MR. WALTER LONG: He is, of course.

MEDICAL OFFICERS OF HEALTH.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether any, and if so what, test of knowledge of the diseases of animals is required from candidates before being appointed medical officers of health.

MR. WALTER LONG: No test of the kind referred to is required by law.

MR. FIELD: Will you suggest that such a test be required in the future?

MR. WALTER LONG: There is no legal enactment under which it can be required.

MR. FIELD: Is it not possible to amend the law?

[No answer was given.]

INSPECTORS OF NUISANCES.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the Local Government Board makes the appointment of a candidate as inspector of nuisances, which officer has among other duties to seize unsound meat, conditional on his possessing satisfactory knowledge of the diseases of animals likely to render the flesh unfit for human food, as well as a satisfactory knowledge of the characters of sound and unsound meat; and, if such a standard of knowledge is obligatory, when it was adopted.

MR. WALTER LONG: The reply to the first paragraph of the question is in the negative. The Royal Commission on Tuberculosis recommended that meat inspectors should possess certain qualifications. The Local Government Board have drawn the attention of councils of boroughs and other urban districts to this subject with a view to their giving effect to the recommendations as far as practicable.

MR. FIELD: How far have the recommendations been carried out?

MR. LONG: I am afraid I cannot answer that question. A great many appointments have been made.

TELEPHONE DISTRICTS.

MR. M'KENNA: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, since the agreement with the National Telephone Company in 1896, any telephone district included in that agreement has been transferred from one telephone exchange area to another.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire E.): In the interval between the execution of the agreement with the National Telephone Company in 1896 and the appointment of the Select Committee on Telephones in 1898 the transfer of a district from one telephone area to another was authorised in several cases, particulars of which will be found in Appendix No. 35 to the Report of the Select Committee. Certain of these alterations were embodied in a formal deed dated the 15th February, 1899, but no other transfer has been authorised since the appointment of the Select Committee.

MR. M'KENNA: Has any transfer been applied for except the one I made?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I do not know.

PROMOTION IN THE MANCHESTER POST OFFICE.

MR. SCHWANN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether his attention has been called to the case of a telegraphist in the Manchester Post Office who, on the 8th September, 1900, was promoted to the position of clerk, filling a vacancy which had occurred in December, 1899, in which case the back pay then given to the telegraphist has had to be refunded, the promotion having since been dated from the 1st September, 1900; whether the Postmaster General will investigate the principle governing promotions, with a view towards filling vacancies immediately they occur, and date the next officer's promotion from that period; and if he will reconsider

the decision as to refunding the back pay referred to.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: In the case referred to, two sorting clerks and telegraphists were promoted to be clerks, and it was intended that the date of promotion should be the 1st September, 1900, that being the date on which the

promotions were approved by the Postmaster General; but through an error the 16th December, 1899, was inserted in the papers. When this error was discovered steps were taken to correct it, the officers who had been overpaid £2 17s. each were called on to refund the overpayment; and the Postmaster General regrets that he cannot relieve them of this payment. If these officers had been allowed to benefit by the error committed. they would have ranked above an officer who was properly their senior. The general rule is that promotions shall take effect from the date on which they receive the Postmaster General's approval. Every effort is made to fill vacancies as soon as possible; but the Postmaster General sees no reason for altering the general rule that a promotion should date from the day on which it is made.

LAND COMMISSION (IRELAND) CLERKS.

MR. YONALL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, in I view of the fact that three senior assistant clerks, abstractor class, employed in the offices of the Land Commission (Ireland), have for the past two years received an annual increment of £5, which they are still receiving. he can say whether there is any reason why the remainder of the class should not be similarly treated in the matter of increment.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The case of the three clerks referred to is not identical with the remainder of the abstractor class, and I do not think that the treatment in their case can be applied to the rest of the class. But in the case of any abstractor recommended by the head of his department for special service, there is power to advance him in his scale, though without alteration of his rate of increment.

CIVIL SERVICE SUPERANNUATION REGULATIONS.

MR. YOXALL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is still the practice of the Treasury, under Section 3 of the Superannuation Act of 1887, to permit, upon promotion to the establishment, the counting of all continuous temporary service rendered prior to establishment, as if the entire service of a similar character had been rendered upon the establishment.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: There has been no change in the practice of the Treasury. By the provisions of Section 3 of the Superannuation Act of 1887 the power of the Treasury to reckon temporary service for pension is expressly limited to cases in which they consider that the special circumstances warrant such a course.

CARLOWAY AND STORNOWAY ROAD, ISLAND OF LEWIS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Congested Districts Board have yet made provision for the construction of the middle section of the road between Carloway and Storno-way, Island of Lewis; and, if not, will he state what steps it is proposed to take to complete this road.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): No provision has been made for the purpose referred to in the question of the hon. Member, and no steps are in contemplation.

NAVIGATION CLASSES IN SCOTTISH EVENING SCHOOLS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state how many scholars in the whole of Scotland attended classes in navigation at evening schools during

the year ending 31st December, 1900: and will he state how many of these scholars attended navigation classes in the six Highland crofting counties.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am unable to give the information desired for the year ended 31st December, 1900. because that date is in the middle of the winter course, and does not represent the natural close of a session of evening school work. The Returns for the evening school session of 1899–1900 show that navigation was taught in seventeen departments in the following Highland crofting counties: Argyll, 7; Inverness, 3; Boss, 1; Shetland, 6. The total number of scholars taught in these seventeen departments was 321.

GREENOCK SCHOOL BOARD PRIZES.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Cork): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that Greenock School Board provides prizes out of the public rate for the children attending the schools under their charge, which are really denominational in the sense that the Presbyterian religion is taught; and, whether, in these circumstances, he is prepared to instruct that a share of the prizes purchased by the Board be given all Government-inspected schools in proportion to the average attendance.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am aware that the School Board of Greenock, like many school boards in Scotland, provide prizes for children in attendance at the public schools out of the school fund. I know of nothing in the Education Acts which would warrant the payment from the school fund of prizes to children in attendance at other than public schools.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN: But is this rule fair to the Catholic children?

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I think so. It would be an entirely new departure to take the rates for the purpose suggested.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN: But is not the Greenock School practically a denominational school?

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: That is a matter of argument.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN: Ought not the rule to be abandoned as unjust to Catholic children, and the prizes provided by Private people?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is now arguing the question.

INVER;DISFRANCHISEMENT OF HOUSEHOLDERS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that between sixty and seventy householders in Inver, Ross-shire, representing almost the entire village, are disfranchised in consequence of the landlord having failed to pay the rates, in accordance with an arrangement which these tenants show he entered into with them some time back; and, in view of the fact that as matters now stand the rates fall more heavily on the rest of the district, will the Secretary for Scotland say what steps he proposes to take in the matter.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I have made inquiry through the Local Government Board, and am informed that that Department has no knowledge of any such arrangement as is alleged in the hon. Member's question. In any view such an arrangement would be a matter of private paction between the landlord and tenant. So far as the rate collector is concerned he is bound to take the valuation roll as it stands and there is no room for any action by the Secretary for Scotland in the matter.

MAIDSTONE ELECTION PETITION.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General when the shorthand writer's notes of evidence respecting the recent election petition at Maidstone will be laid upon the Table and distributed.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs): The notes were laid on the Table some days ago. If there is any general desire that they shall be printed, I will give the necessary instructions.

SNEEM PIER.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Congested Districts Board and the shipping companies interested took steps to procure the erection of a goods store on Sneem Pier, county Kerry, but were prevented from carrying out this work by the action of the landlord; can he say at what date this opposition was offered; and will the Irish Government take the necessary steps to secure the erection of the store, and thus meet a want whereby inconvenience and loss of trade have been occasioned.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The Congested Districts Board was willing to erect an open shed on the quay at Sneem, as an alternative for a goods store on adjoining land, which the owners, so recently as September last, stated it was their intention to build. I cannot say if the shipping companies proposed to erect a store on the pier. I am making further inquiries.

DERRIQUIN CASTLE SHOOTING PARTY.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a shooting party was held at Derriquin Castle, county Kerry, in which some officers of the Royal Irish Constabulary took part, on 20th November, 1900, and that members of the party fired from the public road; and will an investigation into the circumstances of the case be held.

MR. WYNDHAM: The shot was not fired by either of the two police officers present on the occasion, but by a Swiss gentleman who acted in ignorance of the law. No damage was done, and it is not proposed to take any action in the matter.

IRISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSISTANT COUNTY SURVEYORS.

MR. DALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has removed or superseded the officers of the Local Government Board who tried to oblige county councils in Ireland to pay assistant county surveyors in some cases eighty per cent. increased salaries; whether he is aware that the interference of the Local Government Board in the matter prevented the officials transferred to the county councils from being reasonably dealt with, and has caused friction

and expense; and, if he will prevent such action on behalf of the Local Government Board in future, or if he will appoint some other person to look after the affairs of the Department.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Court of Appeal did not question the power of the Board to fix these salaries, but traversed the method adopted in fixing them. I would remind the hon. Member that this question can be discussed on the Appropriation Bill.

IRISH POOR LAW MEDICAL OFFICERS ;HOLIDAYS.

MR. DALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has called for the resignation of those officials connected with the

Local Government Board who have been compelling boards of guardians in Ireland to give compulsorily four weeks holidays to medical officers previous to the decision of the Court of King's Bench in this matter; and, whether, seeing that this order cost the boards of guardians about £10,000, he will direct a refund.

MR. WYNDHAM: The reply to both paragraphs is in the negative.

TRAINED NURSES IN WORKHOUSE HOSPITALS.

MR. DALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, having regard to the difficulty that boards of guardians in Ireland have in obtaining trained nurses according to the standard laid down by the Local Government Board, and seeing that in the county infirmaries there are, throughout Ireland, a number of experienced nurses who have acquired their training in these institutions, he will permit nurses so trained to compete for the position of trained nurse in workhouse hospitals and other hospitals in Ireland.

MR. WYNDHAM: As at present advised, the Local Government Board is not prepared to relax its standard for trained nurses. I am glad to say that in ninety-six workhouses the guardians have already appointed nurses with the qualifications prescribed.

CARRICKMACROSS WORKHOUSE DIETARY.

MR. DALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Local Government Board obliged the Carrickmacross Board of Guardians to increase the cost of the dietary of the inmates of the workhouse by 30 per cent.; and that when the visiting committee interviewed the inmates on the change of dietary the inmates preferred the old to the new dietary, though the latter will cost the ratepayers about £300 per annum of an increase upon the rates; and whether he will permit the medical officer and the guardians to vary the dietary in Carrickmacross workhouse.

MR. WYNDHAM: The fact is not correctly stated in the first part of the question. The Board has not laid down any fixed rule as regards the dietary of workhouse inmates beyond the minimum scale prescribed in 1849. The Board suggested a revision of the existing dietaries on more varied lines, so far as children and the infirm and lunatic classes were concerned. The clerk of the union states that the cost of the dietary of the inmates has increased by 14 per cent., and that the total cost to the ratepayers will be less than one half of the sum stated in the question. It is open to the guardians and the medical officer to vary the dietary of any class of inmates, provided the scale is not below that approved by the Local Government Board.

DROMARD PETTY SESSIONS ; DISTRICT INSPECTOR CLAYTON.

MR. JOHN CAMPBELL (Armagh, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that District Inspector Clayton, of Banbridge, does not attend Dromard petty sessions in accordance with Code Section 1356; and how many times he has attended these petty sessions during the last five years, and how does he account for his neglect of duty to the Inspector General in his quarterly Return No. 8.

MR. WYNDHAM: There has been no neglect of duty on the part of this officer, as suggested. The regulations

require him to attend petty sessions when not otherwise engaged on more urgent duty. He has attended these petty sessions on seventeen occasions in the past five years. His absence from the sessions has been satisfactorily accounted for. MR. JOHN CAMPBELL: Is it the fact that this officer spends the greater part of his time playing hockey, and other games?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

CASTLEBAR DISTRICT LUNATIC ASYLUM.

DR. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Local Government Board auditor has certified that the sum of £;1,359 17s. 1d. is due by the Treasury to the committee of management of the Castle-bar District Lunatic Asylum for the maintenance of patients for the quarter ending 31st March, 1899, being the contribution of the Treasury as the rate-in-aid; and if ho can explain why the Treasury has not paid this amount.

The following question also appeared on the Paper;:

MR. HAMMOND (Carlow): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in view of the fact that it has been certified that the Carlow District Asylum is entitled to payment of £;884 11s. 4d.;namely, Carlow county £;365 9s. 10d, Kildare county £;519 1s. 6d., rate-in-aid for the three months ending 31st March, 1899, and as this debt has not been paid, whether he will arrange to have the liability discharged within the next four weeks.

MR. WYNDHAM: The subject matter of these questions has been already dealt with by me in answer to similar questions concerning other asylums, and I have nothing to add to my replies to these questions. A better opportunity for discussing the matter will arise cither on the Appropriation Bill or the Estimates.

KILMALLOCK DISTRICT COUNCIL; LABOURERS' COTTAGES.

MR. LUYNDON (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the inquiry of the Local Government Board inspector in regard to the present scheme for the erection of labourers' cottages under the Labourers Acts in the Kilmallock District Council, in the county of Limerick, was held as far back as June in 1900, but that the Provisional Order has not yet been placed in the hands of the Kilmallock councillors; can he state the cause of the delay; and, will he give instructions to expedite the proceedings, so that the district councillors may be enabled to provide the cottages and plots early enough for the labourers to cultivate the ground.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Provisional Order was made by the Local Government Board on the 28th ultimo, and copies have been sent to the Rural District Council.

RENTS IN COUNTY LIMERICK.

MR. LUNDON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a resolution from the Kilmallock (county Limerick) District Council, passed at their sitting in Limerick, protesting against the decision of the Chief Land Commissioners in raising the rents, over the heads of the sub-Commissioners, in forty per cent. of the cases tried before them, and expressing their conviction that until a compulsory Land

Purchase Bill is passed there will be neither peace nor contentment in Ireland: and whether he is prepared to introduce any such legislation as will give expression to these views.

MR. WYNDHAM: The answer to the first paragraph is yes, and to the second paragraph no.

SHILLELAGH UNION INQUIRY.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow. W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the guardians of the Shillelagh Union have protested against the appointment of Dr. Edgar Flinn to hold an inquiry into certain charges made against Dr. Bolster, medical officer of the Tinahely dispensary district, and whether he will advise the Local Government Board to have the inquiry conducted by some other inspector.

MR. WYNDHAM: Dr. Flinn is the Medical Inspector of the district in question, and, since he has done nothing to forfeit the confidence of the Local Government Board, I see no reason for relieving him from the duty of holding the inquiry into the charges against Dr. Bolster.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: Is it not the fact that he has lost the confidence of the Irish public?

[No answer was returned.]

ELECTRO-CULTURE OF POTATOES IN IRELAND.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland will he state what was the result of the investigation by Mr. David MacLurg, representative of Processor Thomas Carroll, official of the Agricultural Board, into the experiment of Mr. Martin O Sullivan, of Athea, county Limerick, in electroculture of potatoes, held on the 2nd and 3rd October last; and whether, seeing that Mr David MacLurg on the 4th October last photographed two heaps of potatoes, one four times the weight of the other representing the relative produce in large or table potatoes, of the experimented and non-experimented plots selected by Professor Carroll on the 24th September last, will he state whether, if the experiment has been a success, the Agricultural Board will act on it in the public interest.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Department of Agriculture is not satisfied that the experiment referred to is a success, and is not in a position to act on it in the public interest. The Department, however, proposes to cause a test to be made this season under its own supervision with a view to settle the question.

SALES OF ESTATES IN IRELAND.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is he able to state what is the number of estates coming within the provisions of the Landed Estates Court (Ireland) Act, 1858, and listed for sale in the years; 1899 and 1900, in

which insurance companies are petitioners; also what number of these have been sold under the 40th Section of the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1896, and in how many cases has the sale been frustrated or fallen through, and why.

MR. WYNDHAM replied that he was not prepared to grant a Return.

LOUGH NEAGH DRAINAGE.

MR. JOHN CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of

Ireland whether he is aware that the Upper and Lower Bann and Lough Neagh Drainage Works have entirely failed to preserve the waters of Lough Neagh at their proper summer and winter levels; whether, seeing that the expenses of the Drainage Trustees amounts to £;1,100 per annum, while the revenues therefrom are only £;70 per annum, he will consider the advisability of giving a controlling power in the matter to the councils around Lough Neagh; and whether, seeing that the tenants of the flooded lands have already paid £;155,000 towards these unsuccessful drainage works, he will promptly introduce a measure to provide for the effective drainage of the area round Lough Neagh, the cost of such scheme to be defrayed by Parliament.

MR. WYNDHAM: In answer to the first and third paragraphs. I must refer to my reply to the question of the hon. Member for East Cavan on the 7th inst. The proposal in the second paragraph is one that would require consideration: under Section 20 of the Local Government Act, 1898, the county councils are empowered to take over the business of a drainage board, with its consent. under a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board.

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACTS.

MR. JORDAN (Fermanagh. S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether a labourer living in a cottage not under a Labourers' Cottage Scheme, but which is the property of the farmer on whose land it is built, can claim as a matter of right the usual allowance of land under the Labourers Acts.

*See preceding volume of Debates, page 820.

MR. WYNDHAM: The reply to this question is in the negative.

IRISH WORKHOUSE NURSES.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has yet obtained a Report from the Local Government Board on the subject of making grants to assist boards of guardians to have young girls trained as properly qualified nurses, so as to avoid the expense of complying with the Board's new rule to employ as nurses, assistant or otherwise, only those who have been trained in a recognised hospital.

MR. WYNDHAM: I find that the Local Government Board has no funds for this purpose, and that legislation would be needed. I am looking further into the matter.

MULLINGAR DISTRICT LUNATIC ASYLUM.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a report of the last meeting of the Joint Committee of Mullingar District Lunatic Asylum, at which it was stated that the estimate for maintenance of this asylum had advanced from £;14,362 in 1897 to £;33,076 in 1901; whether complaint was made that no inspector of asylums attends the meetings of the board, although a report has just been made by Sir George P. O' Farrell, lunacy inspector, practically exonerating the officials from the charges made by the committee that the management of the asylum was conducted on extravagant lines, and this without hearing evidence on behalf of the committee; and whether he will direct a departmental inquiry into the increase of expenditure, with a view to giving the committee the right to

press their charges to a definite conclusion.

MR. WYNDHAM: The sum of £33,076, the estimated expenditure for 1901–2, will be reduced by the capitation grant, amounting to about £8,000. Moreover, the number of patients in the asylum has increased in the same period from 712 to 832; there has been an increase in the amount required for repayment for asylum loans, and for the purchase of provisions. The inspectors attend such meetings when requested to do so, but no request was made in this case. Any inquiry of the nature suggested in the third paragraph should properly be held by the committee of management, but if the committee applies for an inquiry by the inspectors the matter will be considered.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the committee of inquiry has already sat, and that its report was upset by the subsequent report of Sir George O'Parrell?

MR. WYNDHAM: The inspectors have nothing to do with the cost of maintenance. They are called on to report on the well-being and treatment of the inmates.

IRISH RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL AUDITS.

MR. KENNEDY (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state by what authority rural district councils are now charged fees for audit by the Local Government Board of accounts which were audited free of charge previous to their transfer by statute from the boards of guardians; and whether the only business in respect of which those councils now receive or pay money is that so transferred.

MR. WYNDHAM: The authority is contained in Article 19, paragraph 2, of the Application of Enactments Order, 1898. The business transferred is that of boards of guardians acting as rural sanitary authorities. Prior to the transfer no charge was made for the audit of the accounts of poor law guardians. The rural sanitary authorities thus escaped, unlike the urban sanitary authorities, who were assessed annually as at present.

MR. KENNEDY: Is this a new tax imposed on Ireland by the Local Government Act, 1898?

MR. WYNDHAM replied in the affirmative.

WESTPORT PETTY SESSIONS-CASE OF WIDOW SALMON.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to certain statements made by Mr. Starkie, R.M., at the Westport petty sessions recently, to the effect that a man named Scahill, who was three times convicted for assaulting Mrs. Salmon, was convicted and sent to prison on evidence concocted for that purpose; and to the statement of Mr. Starkie that, although he was one of the magistrates who convicted him, he afterwards heard from high authority that there was not a word of truth in the whole case, and that he was aware that a witness could be produced that could have sworn that Scahill had not said a word on the occasion; and whether inquiry will be made as to who is the high authority to whom Mr. Starkie referred, and into all the circumstances connected with the dispute between the widow Salmon and the man who got her holding.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): Perhaps I may be allowed to reply to this question. The statement in the first paragraph is substantially accurate, save that Scahill does not appear to have been convicted of assault on Mrs. Salmon, but was sent to prison in default of finding sureties to keep the peace for the alleged use of threatening language towards her, and that Mr. Starkie used the words "good authority," not "high authority." It is to be regretted that Mr. Starkie used this language upon hearsay in reference to a previous decision which, based as it was on the evidence at the time before the court, he considered satisfactory. Under these circumstances it is not proposed to make the inquiry suggested.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: May I ask whether in future resident magistrates cannot find better employment than in trying to whitewash land grabbers?

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): How many times has this widow been sent to gaol for attending to her holding?

PORTADOWN DISTURBANCES.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether on the 19th August last the Roman Catholic Young Men's Association of Portadown communicated with the local police authorities with a view to their affording protection to a body of Roman Catholics who proposed to go on an excursion to Bundoran on the 26th of that month; whether a similar communication was made on the 25th August, 1900, to the Under Secretary, Dublin Castle; whether any special protection was in consequence accorded to the excursionists referred to on the last-mentioned date, when several of them were brutally assaulted and injured; whether on the 22nd September, 1900, the Roman Catholic Association wrote complaining of the failure to give the protection called for, and making certain suggestions for the future preservation of the peace in Portadown; whether any answer, other than a mere acknowledgment of the receipt of the communication of the 22nd September, has ever been given to the association; will he explain why the last two appeals to the Castle from the association, including a letter to the right hon. Gentleman himself, have been left without any answer; and whether he will lay the correspondence upon the Table.

MR. WYNDHAM: The answer to the first and second paragraphs is in the affirmative. Special precautions were taken to afford protection to the excursion on the 26th August; it is much to be regretted, however, that an attack was made on the party when it was leaving in the morning which resulted in injuries to several persons, and also when the party was returning at night. Many persons were prosecuted for participating in the disturbances; seven were imprisoned for terms varying from fourteen days to two months, two were bound to the peace, and thirty-five were fined. The letter of 22nd September was duly acknowledged, and towards the end of January I myself received a similar communication from the association. These communications received my own personal attention, and careful inquiries satisfied me that everything was being done to preserve the peace, and that there was no foundation whatever for the charges of partiality preferred by the association against the resident magistrate and district inspector. I do not

propose to lay the correspondence on the Table.

MR. CLANCY: As a matter of fact, was there any increase of the police force on that occasion?

MR. WYNDHAM: I do not think that that quite arises out of the question. I have admitted that the force was inadequate, and have stated that steps are being taken to secure adequate protection in the future.

MR. CLANCY: But the right hon. Gentleman said special protection. I want to know if a single extra man was put on.

MR. WYNDHAM: The question does not ask how many extra men were put on.

MR. CLANCY: I ask that now.

[No answer was returned.]

MR. CLANCY: Will the right hon. Gentleman say why he took no notice of two letters addressed to him?

MR. WYNDHAM: I have said that their receipt was acknowledged and that I gave my personal attention to the matter.

BELFAST VALUATION.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will grant a Return of the old valuations and the new valuations recently made in Belfast by the Irish Valuation Commission.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: There are 85,000 rateable hereditaments in Belfast, and I do not think that the value of the Return would be sufficient to justify the labour and expense which it would involve.

MR. FIELD: Then the reply is in the negative?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, on the grounds I have stated.

IRISH LIGHTS BOARD.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the Irish Lights Commissioners are allowed £;400 per annum for refreshments; whether such allowance is usual in public boards: and whether it will be continued to the Irish Lights Board.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Yes, Sir, I am aware that an annual sum of £;400 has for many years been allowed by the Board of Trade to meet the housekeeping expenses of the Commissioners of Irish Lights. This amount covers the costs incurred by the Committee on the annual tour of inspection round the coast of Ireland, as well as the weekly luncheon on Board days. Having regard to the fact that the Commissioners receive no personal remuneration or allowance, I see no reason for refusing my sanction to this expenditure.

An HON. MEMBER: Have the Government any intention to give representation on this Board to the various harbour authorities in Ireland who desire it?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order; That does not arise out of the question about refreshments.

MR. FIELD: How long does the annual tour round the coast of Ireland take?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I must ask for notice.

MAIDEN ROCKS, LARNE.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state the reason for the delay in not carrying out the improvements and alterations at the Maiden Rocks, near Larne, by the Irish Lights Commissioners, as arranged

with the Trinity Board, and with the Belfast applications to have the lights and buoys at these rocks completed.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am informed by the Commissioners of Irish Lights that the improvements as to the light and buoys at the Maiden Rocks have been delayed owing to the need of making certain experiments. It is not anticipated that there will be any

further delay as regards the light. As regards the buoys, the Commissioners hope to place a buoy at the Highland Rock as an experiment in June next; while a decision as to the buoy at the Hunters Rock has been deferred pending the consideration of a suggestion made by the Advisory Committee on New Lighthouse Works, that a lighted buoy should be placed there.

LAND PURCHASE IN COUNTY WEXFORD.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can state when the House will be informed as to the intentions of the Government with regard to land purchase in Ireland; and whether he will consider the advisability of making a statement upon the subject at an early date, seeing that land purchase in County Wexford is now stopped.

MR. FERENCH (Wexford, S.): At the same time may I ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, with regard to the sales that are pending in County Wexford under the Land Purchase Acts where agreements have been lodged with the Commissioners, where the security has been or will be approved of by the inspector of the Land Commission, the Government will direct the Treasury to supply whatever money may be necessary to carry out these sales; and, if not, can he say at what time funds are likely to be forthcoming to enable the sale of land in Wexford to proceed.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The position of Wexford in regard to land purchase is undoubtedly a serious one, and is engaging the attention of the Government. I cannot at present make any announcement on the subject, but if the hon. Gentleman will put the question after Easter I may be in a position to give a definite reply.

FINANCIAL RELATIONS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

MR. JOHN CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can state what steps he proposes to take to inquire into the question of the Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no communication to make to the House.

IRISH BOARD OF WORKS; NEW CHAIRMAN.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is yet in a position to say who is the new chairman of the Board of Works, what are his qualifications for the office, and will he state what is the term of his engagement and what is his salary.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The name of the new chairman of the Irish Board of Works is Mr. G. C. Holmes, who, until recently, was secretary to the Institute of Naval Architects and formerly with the London and North-Western Railway Company. Mr. Holmes is an acknowledged authority on the works of engineering. His salary will be £1,500 a year, and his engagement is that of a Civil servant under the ordinary conditions.

MR. CLANCY: Has he ever been in Ireland yet?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know; but he is there now.

MR. CLANCY: Is it not the fact that of the three members of the Board two are Englishmen?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, this will be an exception to the rule.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Do I understand this gentleman is not an Irishman?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: He is an Irishman.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Does he know anything of the policy pursued by this Board for the last five years? Is it intended he shall carry on that policy? Was any effort made to secure a chairman well acquainted with the policy?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, it is proposed to carry on the policy of the Board in connection with public works. In our opinion Mr. Holmes was the best man for the place.

ROYAL DECLARATION AGAINST ROMAN CATHOLICISM.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can now make any definite statement as to the Committee to be appointed on the subject of the Sovereign's Accession Oath.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that a motion is to be made to-day in another place for the appointment of this Joint Committee.

ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE POPE OF THE KING'S ACCESSION.

MR. JOHN CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can state whether His Majesty's Government propose to send a special ambassador to the Pope to make the ceremonial announcement as to His Majesty's accession to the Throne in the same manner as is being done in the case of other European Sovereigns.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is not proposed to send a special ambassador; but the death of Her late Majesty and the King's accession will be notified by letter.

MR. JOHN CAMPBELL: Is it not the case that a special ambassador was sent to the Pope at the beginning of the last three reigns?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot answer that. I have not got the information.

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if at the commencement of the late reign the Pope was not a temporal sovereign, and that since then he has lost the States of the Church?

[No answer was given.]

PRIVATE MEMBERS' RIGHTS.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can hold out any hope that private Members who have secured favourable places in the ballot for motions on Tuesdays will get any opportunity of discussing the subjects of which they have given Notice of Motion.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That must depend on the general course of business.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: What about next Tuesday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That day we take the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill.

SUPPLY PROCEDURE; PROPOSED COMMITTEE.

COLONEL MILWARD: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is his

intention to appoint a Committee to consider, with a wide reference, the subject of the procedure of the House with regard to Supply, and especially the allocation of the days for the discussion of particular Estimates.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have more than once expressed to the House my desire to see a small Committee appointed which should advise the Government and the House as to the distribution of the allotted days between the various heads of Supply. My idea of such a Committee would be that it should consist of seven persons, only two being members of the front benches and five independent Members of the House, with a majority of four to three on the side of the Opposition. If the House consented to the appointment of such a Committee, at any rate as an experiment, we should see how it would work. The Committee will only advise as to the allocation of time as among the twenty-three allotted days. It would not be the same Committee as we should have to appoint were it thought desirable to look into the general question of how Supply should be dealt with in the House.

SIR JOHN BRUNNER: Does the right hon. Gentleman suggest that the Committee should be appointed at the beginning of each session and give advice for that particular session, or that the Committee shall provide the allocation for all the sessions of that Parliament?

MR. BALFOUR: No, Sir. The plan that has always commended itself to my mind is that this Committee should be appointed each session, and should advise, so to speak, week by week as to how the time should be used.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The right hon. Gentleman does not say whether he is going to adopt that plan.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should not like to adopt it without consultation, but if that should be the general view of the House, I should be very glad to put the proposal on the Paper. I shall be glad to consult the right hon. Gentleman before doing so.

MR. LAMBERT: Will the Committee have the power to say whether the number of days devoted to Supply is sufficient or not?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir. That would have to be done by a quite different body, if it were referred to a Committee at all. If the House thought it was incapable of coming to a decision, and wished the advice of a Committee, it would be a different kind of Committee to the one which would carry out the function I have just indicated.

ISOLATION HOSPITALS.

Bill to amend The Isolation Hospitals Act, 1893, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Long, Mr. Attorney General, and Mr. Grant Lawson.

ISOLATION HOSPITALS BILL.

"To amend The Isolation Hospitals Act, 1893." presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed.

[Bill 111.]

SUPPLY (NAVY ESTIMATES).

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHAPLAINS IN HIS MAJESTY'S NAVY.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.) called attention to the position of Roman Catholic

chaplains in the Navy. He said this question involved the question of religious equality. He thought no weight of argument was necessary to convince the House of the justice of the claim they advanced on behalf of the Roman Catholic chaplains in the Navy. Surely this was not a very unreasonable demand, when they came to consider the number of Catholics in the Navy. England was supposed to be the homo of toleration and religious equality. That had been asserted over and over again, but in the face of recent events; in the face of the fact that His Majesty had to take an oath which was an insult to millions of his subjects, he was afraid that assertion was not justified. Some of the pillars of the Conservative party in that House, or in the other House at least, belonged to the Catholic faith. It was the faith to which the great majority of the Irish people belonged, and really it was disgraceful for a great naval Power, such as England was, to have such a large number of Catholics in the Navy without making provision for having their spiritual wants administered to by the clergymen belonging to their own religion. He believed the proportion of Roman Catholics in the Navy was something over 8 per cent. The Roman Catholics numbered more than the Presbyterians and Wesleyans combined, and really their position as regards chaplains was very unsatisfactory. Some reform should be introduced in regard to this crying grievance. It ought to be redressed, and he appealed to the sense of fair play of hon. Gentle men on both sides of the House to have it redressed. If it were only to allay Catholic feeling for the insults recently heaped upon them, some reform should be introduced.

When the hon. Member for East Clare introduced this question last year he got some vague assurance that the grievance would be redressed, but he was not aware that anything had been done. He supposed it would be out of order to refer to the fact that prison chaplains had a grievance also, but he merely mentioned in passing that while a Protestant chaplain received a salary of £;450 a year, a Roman Catholic chaplain, for performing the same duties, and having the same responsibilities, only received £;300 a year. Not only in the Navy, but in other branches of the service, the priest, as compared with the minister of other religions, was severely handicapped. It seemed that altogether there were only twenty-one chaplains in the Navy, and counting annual allowances, they received sums varying from £;25 to £;200. Hon. Gentlemen would see that £;25 was rather a small sum to pay the chaplain of any religion. There were only three out of twenty-one receiving £;200 a year, which was less by £;100 than was received by the Protestant chaplains, who had less duty to perform. No Catholic chaplains were allowed on board ship, so that Roman Catholics might remain for years without seeing a clergyman of their own denomination, and if that was not a matter to be complained of he did not know what was. It was no wonder that Roman Catholic priests warned their flocks against joining the Navy, when these young men were sent away for months, and sometimes years, and had not the comfort of seeing their ministers of religion. A worse aspect of the case was that when the ships were in harbour the sailors were not even allowed to go ashore in order to attend a service in the church. On the occasion of Her late Majesty's funeral a large squadron assembled at Spithead, and on the Sunday none of the Roman Catholic sailors were allowed

ashore in order that they might attend divine service. He did not know who was responsible for that. but somebody must have been, and although protest was made at the time, no notice was taken of it. During three years not one of the Roman Catholic sailors of H.M.S. "Excellent" was sent to church, and that was a state of things that ought to be remedied as soon as possible. Now that the Navy was going to be reorganised, in men armaments, and ships, was the proper time for remedying the crime of which he complained, and no reorganisation would be complete until the status of the Roman Catholics in the Navy was improved.

Amendment proposed;

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words ' in the opinion of this House. Roman Catholic Chaplains in His Majesty's Navy should be placed upon the same footing as regards rank and pay as Chaplains in His Majesty's Army "instead thereof."';(Mr. O'Doud.)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. JOYCE (Limerick City) said he desired to support the motion of the hon. Member, as he knew something of the disability under which the Roman Catholics in the Navy laboured, whether they were blue jackets or Marines. He had known on many occasions ships of the fleet to be lying in harbour, and when Sunday came round the Roman Catholic sailors were unable, owing to bad weather, to go ashore to church, and were thus debarred from the comforts of the ministration of the ministers of their religion. Every large ship of war had a Protestant chaplain on board, and he contended that if the Government wanted Catholic sailors, stokers, and Marines to man the Navy the least they could do was to provide for the ministrations of their religion. There was a very simple remedy for this crying evil. In the Army regiments had been territorialised, and regiments which were entirely, or almost entirely, composed of Catholics had a Catholic chaplain attached to them. As there were 10,000 or 15,000 Catholics in the Navy, why could not the same principle be applied there? Large bodies of Catholics could be drafted to particular ships to which Catholic chaplains should be appointed. Everybody would admit that a real grievance existed, and if the Admiralty were too bigoted to adopt this remedy, the Catholics of the country ought not to fight the battles of England. More important than that the men could not, go to mass on Sundays was the fact that when they were stricken down by grievous sickness, and were at the point of death, it was obligatory upon these men to have the consolations of their religion administered to them, but in the Navy, as at present conducted, it was almost impossible for this to be done. There were a large number of Irish seamen and fishermen in the Royal Naval Reserve who were supposed now and again to go on a six months cruise, but nothing had been done to enable these men to enjoy the benefits arising from the ministration of their religion. For that reason alone many men refused to go on any such cruise, although the money to be thus earned would be very acceptable to them. Was it not time that such a condition of things should be put an end to? We were living in an enlightened age, when such bigoted and fanatical ideas should be exploded, and if Catholic sailors were fit to fight the battles of the country they were surely entitled to the small concession for

which the Irish Members were asking.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.) desired, as this question affected a large number of his constituents who were members of the Royal Naval Reserve, to support the Nationalist Members who had already spoken. It was time the House had some definite statement from the Admiralty as to what they proposed to do in the matter. The question had been agitated for a considerable time; the Admiralty had received deputations of Irish Members who had laid the matter before them, but up to the present all endeavours in this direction had met with very little success. The provisions hitherto made to meet the requirements of Catholic sailors had not given satisfaction, and the object of the present debate was to get the Secretary to the Admiralty to approach the matter in a clear and broad-minded manner, and see if it was not possible to comply with the legitimate wishes of Catholic sailors in this respect. As far as the circumstances of the Admiralty allowed, definite and permanent regulations should be made for that purpose. One would have thought it would have been in the interest of the Admiralty itself to fall in with this desire of Catholic sailors, as there were various depots in Ireland; a number of the Royal Naval Reserve came from Ireland; and with the increased number of men to be obtained it was probable that there would be a yet larger demand for religious accommodation for Catholic sailors. He therefore hoped that before the debate closed the House would be given some assurance that the Admiralty proposed to deal with this question seriously; otherwise the Government would hear a great deal more about the matter from the Irish benches.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said that if the Government would pass a regulation forbidding any Catholic to enter the Navy he would willingly give an undertaking never to quarrel with that rule or to cause any more bother over this question. But all the while Catholic Irishmen were asked to give their services and to risk their lives in defence of the British Empire the Government were bound to treat them as Christians and human beings. The Government had no right to place them alongside their Protestant fellow-countrymen, and then to refuse to recognise their religious convictions, and decline to grant facilities for the exercise of their religious belief. The question was raised before, twenty-five or thirty years ago, in an eloquent speech by Mr. Alexander Sullivan, but upon certain pledges being given by the Government the subject was allowed to slip, and those promises were never fulfilled. In the year 1896 he himself raised the question on the Admiralty Vote, when Mr. Goschen immediately rose and promised that the Admiralty would give the subject their most earnest consideration, with a desire to do full justice to Catholic sailors. That assurance was so satisfactory that the debate came to an end, but still nothing tangible resulted. One of the demands then made was that Catholic chaplains in the Navy should be placed on the same footing as regarded rank, authority, and emoluments as had been won for the Catholic chaplains in the Army. The onus of justifying a refusal of such a request must lie, and rather heavily, with the representative of the Admiralty. In the case of the Army, it was a good many years before the concessions were made, but the agitation went on, until at last the Catholic chaplain in the Army

was placed precisely on an equality as regarded pay, rank, and authority with the Protestant chaplain. After the debate in 1890 long negotiations took place between the Admiralty and the Roman Catholic bishops of this country, as a result of which a statement of the Catholic demands was put forward as a compromise, representing certainly the low-water mark of the reasonable expectations of Catholics. The first point was that Catholic chaplains should have rank, salary, and pension equal to those of Church of England chaplains. Until the concession was made Catholics would not be content, as it was really of vital

importance. The Admiralty had no right whatever to resist such a request, as it could not be pretended that on the question of rank any inconvenience or difficulty could arise. It was a grave and wanton humiliation of His Majesty's Catholic sailors to see their chaplains placed in a different social position or status from that of the chaplains of other religions. The point had been conceded in the Army. What sacred principle was there which prevented it in the Navy? Were the antiquated principles of bigotry which for many years had been banished from the Army to be allowed to prevail in the Navy? As a justification for this attitude, it had been urged that it would not be reasonable to demand that there should be a Catholic chaplain on every ship. That had always been admitted, seeing that the proportion of Roman Catholics was only about 8 per cent. or 9 per cent. But the original proposal was that there should be a chaplain to every squadron, and that he should reside on the flagship, so that when any large division of the -Fleet went into action there would be a Catholic chaplain within reach. It was an act of outrageous cruelty that in such a case there should be ten or fifteen Protestant chaplains, and not a single Catholic chaplain who could give to the mass of wounded and dying Catholics the consolations afforded by ministrations of their religion. To say that accommodation for one chaplain could not be found in a squadron was an absurdity. The second part of the demand to which he had referred was for the appointment of chaplains and acting chaplains at a number of stations, with an increase in the pay. On this point the Admiralty had made considerable concessions. Chaplains;but without rank and not on the Establishment;were appointed at Portsmouth, Devonport, Chatham, and Malta, and acting chaplains at smaller salaries elsewhere. The salary generally was from £;175 to £;200 a year. He had in his hand a list of twenty stations where Roman Catholic chaplains had been appointed, and with the exception of a few of those he had no complaint to make with regard to the allowances, because in certain of those stations the amount of work to be done by the chaplains was neither regular, steady, nor very large, and therefore it was not reasonable to suggest that they should be put upon the Establishment. In the case of Esquimalt, he thought the allowance, in spite of it having been increased to £;75, was still far too small. Speaking on behalf of the 10,000 Roman Catholic sailors in the Navy, nine-tenths of whom were Irish Catholics, he demanded, and would insist upon, proper facilities being given for these men to exercise their religious inclinations, and the ministers who attended to their spiritual welfare being placed upon an equality with the Protestant chaplains.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire) said he approached this question not entirely from a religious point of view. The Navy was recruited principally from the southern districts, but there were very large recruiting grounds both in Ireland and Scotland. On the north-west and the north-east coasts of Scotland there were to be found the finest men in the world for the Navy if the Navy were only open to them.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not speaking to the question before the House, which is the appointment of Roman Catholic chaplains to the Navy.

MR. BLACK said he was coming to that point immediately, not only with regard to Roman Catholics but to ministers of religion generally, if it would be in order.

*MR. SPEAKER: No, that would not be in order.

MR. BLACK: Then, Sir, I will raise that point on the main question.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): I am sure hon. Members opposite would not desire me to approach this question from an academic point of view, but to confine myself to the purely naval aspect of the question raised by the hon. Member for East Mayo. I am bound to say at the outset that the one thing that is made clear by the speech of the hon. Gentleman is that so far from the Admiralty being averse to doing anything in this matter, they have

done everything they could. The views of the hon. Member for East Mayo and of the two hon. Members who opened this discussion are not apparently quite the same. The hon. Member for South Sligo and the gentleman who supported took the view that it was possible to place Roman Catholic chaplains on all the ships.

MR. O'DOWD: No, no. I said if it were not possible to do that there should be at least one appointed to every-squadron.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Perhaps I misapprehended the hon. Gentleman. I did not understand him to express that view, but I do not wish to dwell upon that point. What I wish to say is that hon. Members have given the impression that nothing has been done to provide for the spiritual wants of the Roman Catholics in the Navy. The hon. Member for South Sligo said the sailors of the "Excellent" had not been able to follow their religion for three years; that is so contrary to my information that it is incredible. What has been done, so far as the resources of the Admiralty permitted, is to provide at every port to which His Majesty's ships are in the habit of going and in a great many ports where they are not in the habit of going a Roman Catholic chaplain to provide for the ministrations of the Roman Catholic sailors in the Navy.

MR. O'DOWD: I may say I am in a position to prove my statement.

*MR. ARNOLD-FOESTER: Of course if the hon. Gentleman is able to do that there will be good ground for complaint, which I shall do my best to meet. I have before me a list of no less than 148 stations at which there are Roman Catholic priests, who are either paid for their services or who receive an allowance upon all occasions when they minister to the sailors of the Elect. I think it will be admitted that the contention that has been advanced that nothing has been done is unjust and unreasonable. The analogy of the hon. Member for South Sligo is not sound. He held up the example of the Army, and said there were regiments which were so largely or exclusively composed of Roman Catholics that it had

been found possible to appoint chaplains of that faith to them, and he suggested that we should have ships in the Navy that should be exclusively manned by Roman Catholics. That is a suggestion that would not commend itself to the Admiralty. In the first place it would result in the formation of what I might call "Denominational Squadrons," and in the second the crews which manned those ships would have to be allotted, not according to their ratings, but according to their religion. Reference had been made to a deputation composed of the hon. Member for East Clare and other hon. Members. I think I may say that every one of the recommendations made has either been given effect to, or that some attempt has been made to carry out the views of the deputation with respect to it. One complaint was that no adequate provision was made for the ministration of Roman Catholic sailors on the China station, and steps were at once taken to send out a priest. Another suggestion was that steps should be taken on hospital ships to minister to the sick and dying Roman Catholic sailors. The acquiescence in that proposition which Mr. Goschen made has not been carried out, because we have no hospital ships attached to the Navy; but, if we have in the future, as I believe and hope we shall have, hospital ships attached to our squadrons, I have no doubt that the pledge then given to Mr. Goschen will be carried into effect. I should like to mention here that this question is not quite so clear as hon. Gentlemen would have us believe. I do not think the views expressed here as to the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church are universally entertained elsewhere. I find both in France and Germany, where there are enormous Roman Catholic populations, there is not a single Roman Catholic chaplain appointed. Nor in Russia do I find a Roman Catholic chaplain carried on the ships. Of course even now in the British Navy the number of ships which carry a chaplain at all is exceedingly limited. It is quite a mistake to suppose that chaplains are carried by all the ships. The hon. Member for East Mayo made a suggestion the force of which I do not deny. The hon. Member said that, when squadrons were going on long

cruises or into action, it would be desirable that they should be accompanied by Roman Catholic chaplains. I would, however, point out that the cruises are now exceedingly short. The mere necessity for coaling brings the ships back to port with extraordinary regularity at exceedingly short intervals, and I believe the grievance is not felt in any great degree among the sailors, who do not, in practice, find themselves debarred from these ministrations. But, Sir, I wish to repeat that there is no desire on the part of the Admiralty to do anything but what is just and reasonable, but they cannot do more than they have done.

MR. DILLON: You have not said anything about the rank of the chaplains.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: They have no rank.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): Does the hon. Gentleman say that chaplains in His Majesty's Navy do not rank as officers?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Perhaps I expressed myself inaccurately. Chaplains in His Majesty's Navy have no substantive rank. They rank with the officers when they are at sea, but not on shore.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): What about the Roman Catholic chaplains?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: They do not go to sea in His Majesty's ships, and therefore

the question does not arise. There are three established Roman Catholic chaplains who perform duties on shore, and I can assure hon. Members that if any of those officers do go to sea attached to any squadron, they will have precisely the same privileges of equivalent rank as the chaplains who now go to sea.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND was of opinion that the tone adopted by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty was a friendly one, and it had been a great pleasure to hear such a tone adopted by the hon. Gentleman; but when he, reflected upon the length

of time during which the question had cropped up in the House and the number of friendly speeches which had been delivered by the representatives of the Admiralty, he doubted whether the hon. Gentleman would be able or really try to meet the views of hon. Members on this question. The hon. Gentleman had advanced a curious argument against Roman Catholic chaplains being carried on His Majesty's ships when he said they were not carried in the ships of the French, German, or Russian navies. It was not necessary, he apprehended, for the British Navy to follow the example of the navies of other countries in any question. The fact that other countries made no provision was no reason to advance to the House of Commons against the action which hon. Members thought ought to be taken in common fairness and justice to the Roman Catholic sailors of the Fleet. The hon. Gentleman had said with truth that since the agitation on this question had commenced in the House the Admiralty had done a great deal towards meeting the views of the Roman Catholics in the matter. The matter was raised as long ago as 1878, and undoubtedly since then a good deal had been done. The hon. Gentleman that evening had gone further than any of his predecessors when he undertook that when a squadron went on a long cruise a Roman Catholic chaplain should be carried, but the hon. Gentleman had made no case against the assertion of the hon. Member for East Mayo that there was a grievance as regarded the question of rank. Protestant chaplains occupied the position of commissioned officers, but not a single Roman Catholic held a similar position, and although hon. Members might not consider that a very great matter, it was one which had a great effect on the minds of the Roman Catholic sailors, who were entitled to expect that the ministers of their religion should occupy a similar position to that occupied by chaplains of the Church of England. The answer of the hon. Gentleman was that Roman Catholic chaplains did not sail in the Fleet but performed their duties ashore, and that therefore they ought not to expect to enjoy the rank of the Protestant chaplains of the Fleet. That was a point on which the Admiralty might give way. Why not grant to the Catholic chaplains, whether ashore or afloat, the same rank as was given to the chaplains of the Protestant Church? No adequate reason had ever been put forward on the part of the Admiralty for refusing the requests of the Catholics on this matter. How could it injure the Admiralty or increase to any great extent the cost of maintaining the chaplains in the Fleet? Would it impair the efficiency of the Fleet or give any offence to any section of the people, or cause any inconvenience? It could not be contended that it would; and therefore under these circumstances he maintained it was a legitimate and reasonable ground of complaint on the part of the people who

belonged to the Catholic faith that the chaplains of their Church, who were engaged ashore; it was true they were not afloat, but still engaged in the service of the Navy; were denied the same rank as officers which was held by the chaplains of the Established Church of England. That was a grievance which he thought might, without any violence to precedents or any inconvenience to the Admiralty, be remedied at once. He was very glad that the hon. Gentleman had made so conciliatory a reply. It showed that he was anxious to meet the views of the Irish Members, and that he did not, as some of his predecessors had done in the past, make out that this was a question more or less affecting English Catholics, and that as long as English Ecclesiastical opinion was satisfied in the matter there was no great necessity to satisfy Irish Catholic feeling. He might say that an official of the Admiralty in the House had told him in the course of a private conversation, that really the Irish Members had no business to interfere or trouble the House on this matter in view of the fact that the English Catholics did not raise it. The inference was that the English Catholics were quite satisfied and that Irish Catholics ought to be. The answer to all that was, that while they had the greatest possible respect for English Catholics, they could never forget that for centuries every grievance which the Catholic Church suffered from and which had been removed, had been removed, not by agitation on the part of the English Catholics, but by hard battles fought by the poor Irish people. Indeed, this was more an Irish than an English question. He did not quite agree with the hon. Member for East Mayo when he put the proportion of Irish Catholics in the Navy at such a high figure, but he did maintain that the very great majority of the Catholic sailors in the Navy were Irishmen, and, that being so, it was not surprising that Irish Catholic Members of Parliament and Cardinal Logue should take a deep and abiding interest in this question, and that it should occupy their minds until the grievances had been removed, however complacent English Catholics might be. He did not know whether the hon. Gentleman would go to a division or not, but if he did, he would undoubtedly vote with him, because they had learned from past experience that no matter how friendly the intentions of the officials of the Admiralty might be, they had never had any grievance removed unless they agitated these grievances and brought them forward on the floor of the House on every possible opportunity. He strongly urged on the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Belfast to approach the Admiralty generally and endeavour to secure a satisfactory settlement of these questions once for all, so that Irish Members might be spared bringing their grievances forward year after year and occupying the time of the House.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he wished to prevent any misunderstanding. What he meant to convey was that when large squadrons went on cruises which would take the men away for a long time from all means of enjoying the ministrations of their religion, it might be possible to arrange that a Roman Catholic chaplain should be carried; but as to cruises such as that of the Channel Squadron, when the fleet frequently touched at ports, such an arrangement would be uncalled for. MR. SAMUEL YOUNG (Cavan, E.) said there was great danger of due consideration not being given to the fact of the difference between a Protestant and a

Catholic country. In Ireland they had a positive religion, whereas the Protestant religion was negative. [An HON. MEMBER: No, no.] Yes, yes. Some people seemed to think that the orders of their Church were not considered of much importance, but that was a mistake. Their religion being positive, their ordinances meant something, and therefore it was absolutely necessary that Catholic chaplains should be appointed wherever there were Catholic people, be they more or less numerous. If it was intended to attract Irishmen into the Navy, the Government must be very particular in supplying them with the ordinances of their religion, which in all walks of life was the basis of their action.

SIR J. FERGUSON (Manchester, N.E.) said he did not think that the tone of the discussion, which had been so friendly, should be marred by any remark disrespectful to their respective religious persuasions. He had heard with great pleasure the statement of the Secretary to the Admiralty, conceding the very natural and proper desires of hon. Gentlemen opposite. He himself had had experience of the admirable conduct of Roman Catholic chaplains in the East, and it was well known that the coadjutor Bishop of Westminster had, by his conduct in Egypt and in the Soudan, won the respect of all classes and religions. He would suggest that when the number of Roman Catholic sailors justified the appointment of a priest for his whole time in the service in the Navy, it would be only proper that he should receive official rank in the same way as in the Army. That would go far to meet the desires of our Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen.

MR. POWER (Waterford. E.) quite agreed with the remarks which had fallen from the hon. Member for East Clare to the effect that the statement made by the Secretary to the Admiralty was an advance on those made on former occasions by the hon. Gentleman's predecessors. At the same time he could not help casting his mind back over the many years in which they had made similar propositions, and when they had been almost derided and told of the impossibility of granting their demands. After twenty years it was very comforting to think that the authorities recognised that these demands should be conceded; and he hoped the pledges given would be carried into effect. That hope, however, had been somewhat marred by the second utterance of the hon. Gentleman, which seemed to whittle down very much the concession he had made in his first speech. There was an old saying that "Where there's a will there's a way," and he firmly believed that if the Admiralty were to consider the points which the Irish Members put before them in a sympathetic manner, they would find opportunities of meeting them. These matters had a sentimental as well as a religious side, and the Government, therefore, ought to pay particular attention to the views put forward from the Irish benches. Without in the slightest degree reflecting on any other creed, it was notorious that the feelings of Irishmen were different from those of other people, and that the ministrations of their Church were of far more importance to them than the ministrations of other Churches to their people. Many young fellows; as fine young fellows as were to be found anywhere;—were in his neighbourhood joining the Royal Naval Reserve, and if the Government accepted their services they had a right to provide for their

religious ministrations, and to do nothing to outrage their beliefs. He could not see why the position of Catholic chaplains in point of, emolument should be worse than that of chaplains of other creeds, but it was notorious that they were not placed on an equality. In the minds of many the treatment meted out to Catholic chaplains was regarded as a slur upon them; it placed a badge of inferiority upon them compared with chaplains of other creeds, and also a badge of inferiority on the sailors to whom they ministered. Irish Members had, therefore, the right to resent that the Catholic chaplains were not on a par with the chaplains of other creeds. English Catholics had, to some extent, enjoyed the advantages that had been won for them by their fellow Catholics in Ireland, but he thought that the Admiralty should have communicated with Cardinal Logue on this matter, which concerned Irish more than English Catholics. For his part, he thought that the promise which had been made by the representative of the Admiralty could not be considered satisfactory in the least degree.

*MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.) said there was one point to which he wished to draw the attention of the hon. Member for West Belfast. During the Naval manoeuvres last year and the year before, when the Channel Squadron was in Irish waters, some of the officers refused to allow the Catholic sailors to go ashore and attend church services, although no manoeuvres were going on at the time. He was not then in Parliament, but he had at that time wrote a letter on the subject to the Admiralty, and had merely received the stereotyped official answer. If the statement of the hon. Member for West Belfast had been made for the first time in reference to this question of naval chaplains, his hon. friend, the Member for South Sligo, might be advised to withdraw his motion. But, so far back as 1896 Mr. Goschen, in answer to the hon. Member for East-Mayo, gave an undertaking that the Admiralty would increase the number of Roman Catholic chaplains in the Navy. Two years later, in answer to a question, also put by the hon. Member for East Mayo, why the undertaking had not been carried out, Mr. Goschen said that the proposal for increasing the number of Catholic chaplains in the Navy had been before the Treasury since 1896; and it was only in 1898 that the permission of the Treasury had been given. How did they know that the same procedure would not be gone through again? It might be three or four years before the Treasury authority would be obtained for the changes promised that night. He noticed that seven-eighths of the Vote of £36,000 for Navy chaplains went to chaplains belonging to the Established Church of England. This was not so much a question of religion or nationality as of efficiency. They had been told that England must depend for its safety upon its fleet, and surely every inducement should be offered to young men to join the Navy. He knew in his own constituency of young men who, on account of there being no Catholic chaplains in the Navy, had actually left this country and joined the American Navy, and so the Empire had lost their services.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) said he wished to say one word on the question of issuing commissions to Roman Catholic chaplains in the Navy. Hon. Gentlemen opposite seemed to think that these Roman Catholic chaplains, not being commissioned, were placed in some sort of social inferiority to those who were

commissioned. He would point out that that was not so. The chaplains in the Navy who were commissioned were not put in a position of superiority; they had no relative rank on board ship by reason of their commissions. The issue of commissions to chaplains of the Church of England was a question merely of administrative convenience, in sending them afloat or ashore to any quarter of the world. Their commission entitled them to a cabin on board ship; and, in the event of their death, their widows were entitled to pensions. He wished to point out that Protestant chaplains had on shore no rank on account of their religion above Roman Catholic chaplains: the whole question was one of administrative convenience, and for that reason he was bound to say that, whatever might be the sentiment which lay behind the demand of the hon. Gentleman opposite, in this case there was no actual grievance, and as the Admiralty had no control over Roman Catholic chaplains at ports, and had no authority to move them from one place to another, they were in an entirely different position to Protestant chaplains in the Navy.

DR. THOMPSON (Monaghan, N), speaking as a Protestant and as a surgeon who had served some years in the Navy, said that in his opinion the Roman Catholics in this matter had a very serious ground for complaint. The Secretary to the Admiralty, so far as he could see, had given no reason whatever why Roman Catholic chaplains should not be placed upon the same footing as Protestant chaplains. He thought this difficulty might be got over if that were done. He did not of course believe that unjust concessions or privileges should be made to Catholics or anyone else, but he maintained that there should be no inequality of treatment between Catholics and Protestants, and that any privileges the one possessed should be freely and as a matter of right accorded to the other. The curse of Ireland in the past had been, the maintenance of a system the exact opposite of what he now contended for as regards Catholic naval chaplains. He would respectfully urge upon the Government the necessity of complying with the very reasonable request conveyed to them by every Irish and many English Members who had joined in the debate. So far as the officers in the Navy were concerned, no difficulty would be raised by them. The staff surgeon of the ship upon which he served in the Mediterranean, who was a Roman Catholic, was the most popular man on board, and from his own experience he could say that the officers in His Majesty's Navy did not care two jack straws what a man's religion was so long as he was an agreeable companion and a reliable friend. The whole difficulty would disappear if Roman Catholic chaplains were appointed to each Admiral's ship, with the same status and pay as their Protestant brothers.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.) said he joined in the demand for the redress of this grievance, which was now being debated in the House for the third time. He was present two years previously when the late First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Goschen, made a distinct promise to the hon. Member for East Mayo that he would find some means of redressing this grievance under which the Catholic sailors suffered, but so far as the Irish Members could learn no effort had been made to carry out that promise. When the House considered that there were 10,000 Roman Catholic seamen serving in the Navy it was surely not an unreasonable demand to

make that there should be Roman Catholic chaplains appointed to each ship. If that were done a good deal of the grievance would be removed. It was absolutely absurd for the hon. Member for South Antrim to attempt to argue that, owing to their not holding commission, the Roman Catholic ministers were not branded with the mark of inferiority. The Roman Catholic ministers in this case were quite as much entitled to fair treatment as the Protestants. There were 170 Protestant chaplains in the Navy, most of whom held commission rank in the service. There were no Roman Catholic chaplains who held a like position, and it could not be argued that such a state of things did not place a badge of inferiority on the Roman Catholics. It might be urged that this was a mere matter of sentiment, and that no useful purpose would be served by taking action in the matter, but he would point out that it was a matter of the very deepest interest to the Roman Catholic people of Ireland, from whom the Navy drew 7,000 men a year. Of such deep interest was the question to the parents and to the prelates of Ireland that an embargo had been placed upon the people joining the Service. There was a real and tangible grievance in this matter, for although hon. Gentlemen opposite might call it sentiment, it was one of the most vital questions of the day, affecting as it did the spiritual welfare of many thousands of men in the Navy. There were two complaints with regard to this branch of the Service: one was with regard to the emolument, and second, the question of rank. The Secretary to the Admiralty had in his first speech given great hope that something would be done with regard to these matters, but he had apparently repented of his promise, because in his second reply he had taken away what he had promised on the first occasion; the question therefore would be left in the same position as it was when Lord Goschen left the Admiralty. Lord Goschen, when First Lord of the Admiralty, made most sympathetic promises, and there the matter ended. The hon. Gentleman would, he supposed, do the same as Lord Goschen had done during the last six years. He had heard it stated from the Government Benches in the past that the Government were afraid to appoint Roman Catholic chaplains to ships containing a Protestant chaplain, because of the friction which might arise, but the hon. Member for North Monaghan had made a most valuable statement with regard to that matter, and conclusively proved that there would be no difficulty in that matter. He could not congratulate the hon. Gentleman opposite on the undoubted change which had taken place in his views since he had been elevated to his present position. When in other days the hon. Gentleman from his seat below the gangway criticised with vigour and ability the Navy Estimates the grievances of the Irish Members had some share of his sympathy, and he implored the hon. Gentleman to show that sympathy now by pressing upon the Department which he represented the fact that this was a live grievance, which wanted remedying. He warned the hon. Member that if he approached the matter in a half-hearted way, or attempted to ignore it, there would, upon subsequent occasions, be a full ventilation of the grievance from the Irish benches.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, so far as the Irish Benches were concerned, there was no desire to prolong the debate, and he had hoped a division upon the question might have been avoided, because some of the

statements of the Secretary for the Navy, if not altogether satisfactory, had shown a desire to do something with a good grace. He, however, regretted that the hon. Gentleman in his second speech took away the reality of the concessions which he had given in his first. The hon. Member for South Antrim in the course of his observations had said that with regard to the appointment of Roman Catholic chaplains, the Roman Catholics were in no worse position than the Methodists or any other religious sect of this country, but the hon. Member had overlooked the fact that only one religion was represented in the Navy; that of the Established Church; and from that point of view a monopoly was being created in favour of the members of the Established Church. On the other hand, there was an impassable gulf between all sects of Protestantism and the Roman Catholic Church which did not exist between the divisions of the Church of England, so that Methodists and persons of other denominations had the benefit of the ministrations of the Protestant chaplain. This question had been raised over and over again, and he thought that on this occasion some advance had been made with regard to it. They did not demand that a Roman Catholic chaplain should be appointed to every large ship in the Navy, they only asked that one should be appointed to every squadron. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty, in his speech, had narrowed down his promise with regard to that to promising that if there was a squadron which was going on a long cruise, then, and then only, should a Roman Catholic

chaplain be appointed to one of the vessels in the squadron. Every one thought at first that the hon. Gentleman had promised at first that there should be a Roman Catholic chaplain appointed to every squadron wherever it might have to go, and it was not, after all, an unreasonable thing to ask, that when there was a squadron of ships containing 2,000 or 3,000 Catholics they should have the benefit of their spiritual guide, but the hon. Gentleman restricted that concession to a squadron on a long cruise. What made that restriction the more extraordinary was the fact that, after all the agitation upon this matter, after Lord Goschen had practically accepted the principle of the demand of the hon. Members for East Mayo and East Clare, and after all the promises which had been given by Lord Goschen with regard to the matter, the Secretary to the Admiralty had come down and, with a grand appearance of making a great concession, had given what the Board of Admiralty had given twenty-two years before. The Secretary to the Admiralty said that he could only give an Irish chaplain to a squadron which was ordered on a long cruise. On June 7th, 1878, the Board of Admiralty issued a Minute which said;

"My Lords direct that when a large number of ships forming a squadron are sent on any service which will keep them for any length of time from a port where a Roman Catholic priest is in residence, arrangements are to be made for a Roman Catholic chaplain to accompany the squadron."

Was it fair to come down to the House in 1901, after twenty-two years of agitation and promises made only to be broken, to meet the Irish Members with the repetition of a Minute issued by the Board of Admiralty twenty-two years previously? It was treating the Irish representatives with ignominy and contempt. He hoped that the First Lord of the Treasury, whom he saw in his

place, would give some intimation that the Government intended to act up to some of the promises which had been made; but if he did not, and if they were to be met with a repetition of what had taken place in the past, they could only keep agitating the question. Under the circumstances he should vote for the Amendment.

MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.) said he represented a constituency which sent a great number of young men into the Navy, and therefore he desired to protest against the hard and fast line taken by the Admiralty, who absolutely refused to grant to Irish Roman Catholic chaplains the same treatment as was meted out to their brothers in the Protestant religion. The Government were always ready in his district to recruit for the Navy among the hardy fishermen of the neighbourhood. They were ready enough to take the men, but not to spend a few pounds in order that the men they took, who carried their religion deep in their hearts, might have the comfort of the ministrations

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.

FitzGerald, Sir Robt. Penrose-

Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel

Flannery, Sir Fortescue

Myers, William Henry

Archdale, Edward Mervyn

Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (St. Albans)

Nicholson, William Graham

Arkwright, John Stanhope

Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.

Nicol, Donald Ninian

Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.

Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon

Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)

Arrol, Sir William

Goschen, Hon. George Joachim

Parkes, Ebenezer

Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John

Gray, Ernest (West Ham)

Peel, Hon. Wm. R. Wellesley

Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy

Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry

Penn, John

Bain, Colonel James Robert

Greene, Sir E. W. (B'ry S. Edm'ds

Percy, Earl

Balcarres, Lord

Gretton, John

Pilkington, Richard

Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)

Greville, Hon. Ronald
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Groves, James Grimble
Plummer, Walter R.
Hartley, George C. T.
Hain, Edward
Pretymann, Ernest George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Ld. G. (Mdx.
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Brist'l)
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robt. Wm.
Randles, John S.
Beach, Rt. Hn. W. W. B. (Hants.
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Rankin, Sir James
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Bigwood, James
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Renwick, George
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Brookfield, Colonel Montague
Henderson, Alexander
Ropner, Col. Robert
Bull, William James
Howard, Capt J. (Kent, Faversh.
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Bullard, Sir Harry
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Hutton, John (Yorks, N. R.)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos Myles
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh.
Seton-Karr, Henry
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Keswick, William

Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Knowles, Lees
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Chapman, Edward
Lambton, Hon. Fred. Wm.
Smith, H. C. (Northmb.Tyneside
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Law, Andrew Bonar
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Lawson, John Grant
Spear, John Ward
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham
Stanley, Hon. A. (Ormskirk)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Leighton, Stanley
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Leveson-Gower, Fred N. S.
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Cranborne, Viscount
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Cust, Henry John C.
Macartney, Rt. Hn.W.G. Ellison
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chathm
Macdona, John Cumming
Tufnell, Lt.-Col. Edward
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Maconochie, A. W.
Valentia, Viscount
Dickson, Charles Scott
M'Killop, Jas. (Stirlingshire)
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. H. (Sheffield
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Majendie, James A. H.
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)

Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Malcolm, Ian
Walker, Col. William Hall
Durning-Lawrence, Sir E.
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriessh
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Faber, George Denison
Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Webb, Colonel William George
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Morgan, Hon. F. (Mon.)
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Tauntn
Finch, George H.
Morrell, George Herbert
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts)
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Muntz, Philip A.

Whiteley, H. (Ashton-u.-Lyne
of their own religious minister. Would it not be worth while to consider whether
men did not make better sailors by having their religion at heart? It was a
cruel thing not to provide Catholic chaplains. The concession granted by the
hon. Gentleman was utterly worthless, and therefore he hoped the matter would be
pressed to a division. If the concessions asked for were not granted he hoped
the Government would be able to obtain no more recruits from the west coast of
Ireland.

Question put.

The House divided:;Ayes, 154; Noes, 97. (Division List No. 84.)

Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)

Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm

TELLERS FOR THE AYES; Sir William Walrond and Mr. Hayes Fisher.

Wilson, John (Falkirk)

Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-

Wilson, John (Glasgow)

Wrightson, Sir Thomas

Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks)

Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

Wodehouse, Rt Hn E. R. (Bath)

Young, Commanded (Berks, E.)

NOES,

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)

Flynn, James Christopher

O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)

Allan, William (Gateshead)

Gilhooly, James
O'Dowd, John
Ambrose, Robert
Goddard, Daniel Ford
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
Asher, Alexander
Hammond, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
Austin, Sir John
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
O'Malley, William
Barlow, John Emmott
Hayden, John Patrick
O'Mara, James
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Bell, Richard
Holland, William Henry
O'Shee, James John
Blake, Edward
Hope, John Deans (Fife, W.)
Partington, Oswald
Boland, John
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Pirie, Duncan V.
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Joicey, Sir James
Power, Patrick Joseph
Boyle, James
Joyce, Michael
Reddy, M.
Brigg, John
Kearley, Hudson E.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Burke, E. Haviland-
Kennedy, Patrick James
Redmond, William (Clare)
Burt, Thomas
Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
Rickett, J. Compton
Caldwell, James
Kitson, Sir James
Rigg, Richard
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Leamy, Edmund

Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Lundon, W.
Roche, John
Clancy, John Joseph
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Schwan, Charles E.
Colville, John
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
M'Dermott, Patrick
Sullivan, Donal
Crean, Eugene
M'Fadden, Edward
Taylor, Theodore Cooke
Cremer, William Randal
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merth'r
Cullinan, J.
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Thompson, E. C. (Monaghan, N.
Daly, James
Morton, Edw. J.C. (Devonport)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Murphy, J.
Whiteley, G. (York, W. R.)
Doogan, P. C.
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Duffy, William J.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Duncan, James H.
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)
Farrell, James Patrick
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
Fenwick, Charles
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
TELLERS FOR THE NOES; Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.
Ffrench, Peter
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
Field, William
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)

Flavin, Michael Joseph

O'Doherty, William

Main Question again proposed.

THE GOVERNMENT'S NAVAL PROPOSALS,

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): My principal object in rising now is to place before the House and the country the view which I believe is taken by those who sit on this bench and on this side of the House; certainly, I believe, by those with whom I had the honour to act on a former Board of Admiralty; of the large proposals now made by the Government.

The first point upon which I wish to speak is the controversy with regard to Belleville boilers. That controversy began seven years ago, at the instance of my hon. friend the Member for Gateshead. At that time the then Board of Admiralty extended on a large scale for the first time the adoption of the water-tube boiler, which had already been adopted on a comparatively small scale by the previous Administration.

My hon. friend challenged our action on, that occasion, and it fell upon me to explain the views of the Board. Last session the then First Lord of the Admiralty announced the appointment of an Expert Committee to examine the whole position. That Committee has now reported, and I wish to call the attention of the representatives of the Admiralty to the position in which they find themselves in face of that Report. I do not think the hon. Member for Gateshead has any reason to be dissatisfied with that Report.

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN (Gateshead): No. I have not.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Because, although perhaps not in an unqualified manner, it does find against the Belleville boiler to a large extent. As representing the Admiralty of 1893, I have no reason, to, be dissatisfied with the Report either, because in one paragraph the Committee declare that; "at the time the Belleville boiler was introduced into the Navy in the ' Powerful and ' Terrible ' it was the only large tube type of water-tube boiler which had been tried at sea on a considerable scale under ordinary working conditions. The Committee therefore consider that there was justification for them regarding it as the most suitable type of water-tube boiler for the Navy."

I do not think I could envy the position of an Admiralty face to face with a Report such as this. I do not for one moment begrudge any praise that may be due to the Expert Committee, which gave its time, experience, and talents to the consideration of this serious question, but I cannot at present conceive what line of policy the Admiralty ought now to adopt. The findings of the Committee do not appear to be clear or consistent one with another. In the first place they find in favour of the water-tube boiler in general. They declare that it; "would be more suitable for use in His Majesty's Navy than the cylindrical type of boiler,"

and go on to give reasons for that opinion. They specify the most important requirements from a military point of view, and they declare that;

"these requirements are met by the water-tube boiler in a greater degree than by the cylindrical boiler, and are considered by the Committee of such importance as to outweigh the advantages of the latter type in economy of fuel and cost of

up-keep."

Having said that, the Committee say a number of other things hardly consistent with it.

But I pass from that commendation of the water-tube boiler principle in general to what the Committee say about the Belleville boiler in particular. When we adopted that policy in 1893, in continuation of the policy of our predecessors, we always declared that while the Belleville appeared to us to be the best boiler for the moment of that type, we were in no way committed to it. This Committee speak in a very peculiar way about the Belleville boiler. They; "do not consider that the Belleville boiler has any such advantage over other types of water-tube boilers as leads them to recommend it as the best adapted to the requirements of His Majesty's Navy."

That is their statement. But what is their recommendation? They make a recommendation which it appears to me can only cause embarrassment to the present Board of Admiralty. As regards new ships, and what I may call "infant" ships; that is, ships just begun; they recommend the Admiralty to discard the Belleville boiler altogether. As regards finished ships and ships under construction which are beyond the engine stage, they recommend its retention. These are curious recommendations, and they become all the more curious when the Committee go on, in answer to queries put by the Admiralty as to what they would recommend in place of the Belleville, to specify four kinds of water-tube boilers, of which they suggest that some or all types should be taken. These four types are all, in the first instance, to be experimented upon. As to the first two; the "Babcock and Wilcox" and the "Niclausse"; the Committee recommend that certain sloops and cruisers should be expedited in order that the value of these types of boilers for naval purposes may be ascertained at the earliest possible date. Having already discarded the Belleville type and recommended these as substitutes, they go on to say that the first thing to be done is to ascertain what their value is for naval purposes. So it is with the other two specimens. They are also to be experimented upon with a view to seeing what their real value is. That is a recommendation which I think the Admiralty will have some difficulty in acting upon.

Further, after specifying certain advantages connected with the Belleville boiler, the Committee go on to say;

"The additional evaporating plant required with Belleville boilers, and the greater coal consumption on ordinary service as compared with cylindrical boilers, has hitherto nullified to a great extent the saving of weight effected by their adoption, and in considering the radius of action it is doubtful whether any real advantage has been gained."

That is, I understand, any real advantage over the cylindrical boiler. Having previously stated that military requirements; which, of course, are paramount in this question; condemn the cylindrical boiler, and support the water-tube type, they make that remark about the Belleville. They then say;

"The Committee are not prepared without further experience to say to what extent this may not apply to other types of water-tube boilers."

I confess I hardly know what conclusion to draw from this Report, and my difficulty is not lessened -when I find this remarkable paragraph following the passages to which I have already referred;

"To obtain satisfactory results in the working of the Belleville boilers, in face of the defects named in paragraph (9), more than ordinary experience and skill are required on the part of the engine-room staff. It appears, however, from the evidence placed before the Committee that the engineer officers in charge of Belleville boilers have not been made acquainted with the best method of working the boiler, and that which experience has shown to be the most effectual in preventing pitting and corrosion of tubes."

It would be invidious for me to go any further into the conclusions of this Report. It appears to me to be a most embarrassing document for the Admiralty, and I do not envy the Board which, having appointed this Committee, is now face to face with a Report so inconclusive, and so far from clear, and so inconsistent as this Report is in many respects. And my difficulty in knowing what the Admiralty can possibly do is increased by the statement of the hon. Gentleman himself. In his remarks the other night about the Belleville boiler I understood him to declare that the ships fitted with the type are working satisfactorily now, and have been for years in foreign navies. What is the result to be? I do not know what those who advised the Admiralty to adopt the water-tube boiler in principle and the Belleville boiler by preference have to say to this Report. Our then technical advisers are still the advisers of the Admiralty: one of our colleagues (not mentioned here) on the Board of Admiralty of that day is in office now, namely, the First Sea Lord. He was a party to the adoption of the water-tube principle and the Belleville boiler by the Board of which I had the honour to be a member. I should like to know, before coming to a conclusion, how the opinions of our experts, and those who advised us, and whose advice we were

bound to take, are modified by the conclusions arrived at by this Committee. The alternative placed before us was this;"Foreign navies are adopting the water-tube boiler. You must accept either the water-tube boiler or inferiority in an essential military requirement, and the best type of boiler is the Belleville."

That was our position when we entered upon the large experiment in 1893. The hon. Member for Gateshead will admit that his original criticism against our policy was directed not so much against the particular type of boiler, or perhaps even the water-tube principle itself, as against our taking a large step-in advance without further experiments. That position I defended at the time, and I need only say in defence of it now that we fitted two cruisers with the type best known, and which had been experimented upon under conditions which we were advised offered a guarantee of its suitability. In making that statement I am not in any way casting a reflection upon the action of the succeeding Board of Admiralty, which carried our policy to a point much further than we had done. We should very likely have done exactly as they did, but I wanted to make clear how this controversy originated, and what the share of our Board in it was. Having said that I will pass from this subject with the observation that this Report, able as the members of the Committee may have been, is of such a

character that it does not take away from the Admiralty one single ounce of responsibility. They must go back to the expert skill with which the Admiralty is so admirably endowed. This is an incident only in the history of this very important question, and we shall look to the Admiralty on its own responsibility of skilled advisers to decide now, as if no such Report had been issued, what their policy in the future should be.

The next point in the programme to which I should like to direct attention is the adoption of submarine boats for the first time in this year's programme. I have given a good deal of attention, both while I was in the Admiralty office and since, to this question, and, having supported this experiment in this House and out of it, it may seem somewhat ungracious for me to cast any reflection upon what the Admiralty are going to do. But there are some things that ought to be said, for it appears to be a serious thing. France has fifty-six submarine boats, and the chief-constructor of the American Navy is one of the warmest advocates of submarine boats. As this is only a matter of experiment I do think it might have been introduced upon a somewhat smaller scale. If its value is purely conjectural I should have said that one boat would have been enough to experiment with. Two should have been quite enough, but we generally do things on a large scale, and after having refused to say one word for many years about submarine boats we now find the Admiralty launching out into quite a little fleet of them. I think it was the hon. Gentleman the Civil Lord who was asked a question not long ago about submarine boats. He gave the answer which has been repeated from time immemorial, and he added that a statement would be made in the Estimate, and no policy was announced. We find now that in regard to these five submarine boats some of them were ordered in the year 1000. We have travelled far and fast in this country in some ways, but what has become of the control of the House of Commons? What has become of that control when the Admiralty of the day having refused to tell us their policy come forward shortly afterwards and say they will build five of these boats? Lord Goschen, to whose zeal, firmness of purpose, and devotion to the interests of the Navy I desire to be allowed to pay a tribute, carried things pretty far in the last Parliament. He came down at the end of the session not to propose a Supplementary Estimate, but to mention to us on another Vote that he intended to build a certain number of extra ships which were not provided for in the original Estimate. The Member for West Monmouthshire protested against that course as an abuse of the position of the Government, and said that they had no right to build any ships except upon an Estimate submitted to and approved by the House of Commons. I cannot help protesting against this, for a new departure of this nature ought not to have been made except with the sanction of the House, and at the very least it ought not to have been done without being divulged to the House.

The next point I come to is that mysterious expedition to Gibraltar, which has lately been sanctioned. I do not know what lies behind that adventurous voyage of the hon. Member for King's Lynn and his colleagues. When it was first mentioned we took no exception to an inquiry, and the House has probably now forgotten what a remarkable kind of investigation it was to be. We now know that there is to be a Committee and no Commission, no common reference and no

connected Report, and all we know is that a certain number of gentlemen; of whom the hon. Gentleman the Member for King's Lynn is not more than one; are to be appointed and are to be asked to investigate some questions. Who the colleagues of the hon. Member for King's Lynn are we have not yet perfectly ascertained, but that appears to me to be a very curious sort of inquiry to propose into a matter so tremendously grave as the question of the state and defences of the public docks at Gibraltar. I would repeat in regard to this matter what I said about the boilers, that, whatever letters or Reports these gentlemen severally or collectively may write as to the position of the docks and defences at Gibraltar, nothing can take away the direct responsibility of the Admiralty for the future policy on this question. The Admiralty through its own officers has been working nearly seven years at these docks. They were first sanctioned nearly seven years ago, and a great staff has been engaged upon the work. To suppose for a moment that after such an investigation as that which I have just described such a Committee as I have sketched can add anything to the information of the Board of Admiralty on the subject appears to me to be trifling with the question. I look to the Admiralty and its own officers for the determination of the policy which we are to pursue in reference to the docks at Gibraltar.

I come now to another point. The hon. and gallant Member for Great Yarmouth will, I think, sympathise with this view; I refer to what we have been told about the policy of the Government in regard to coaling stations, which is a problem of most tremendous difficulty, but one of the most important which has engaged the attention of the Admiralty and the War Office for many years, and upon which there is a direct conflict of opinion between naval and military experts. The Secretary of State for War in describing the programme which we have not yet sanctioned, and which is to be submitted for further discussion at a later date, told us that in dealing with the Army he proposed that certain of the coaling stations should be handed over to the Navy. He further hinted that he did not know what the opinion of the Admiralty was on this question, and he indicated that they had not yet consented to the proposal he had made. That was a most astounding thing for any Minister to do. The Secretary to the Admiralty has stated that this was only the personal opinion of the Secretary for War. That explanation appears to me to make matters worse, for what right has a Minister in this House, while defending the policy of the Government, to express his own personal opinion? See the astounding position in which we find ourselves. We find one Minister committing his Department to something without knowing what the opinion of the Admiralty is. I think that is very improper, whether it is his own personal opinion or not. People say that the authority of the House of Commons is diminishing, and that the power of the Cabinet is increasing, but it appears to me that the authority of the House of Commons and the Cabinet are both disappearing. What kind of a Cabinet is it that allows a Minister to express a personal opinion which advocates one policy one night on Imperial defence and a totally different policy the next night? What becomes of that famous Joint Committee of Defence? What becomes of the Joint Committee pressed for by the President of the Council,

when such a declaration is made by the Secretary for War upon a matter which is not the least important among all the questions concerning our Imperial defence? Those who look at the Navy Estimates will notice that Vote 16, which deals with the flotilla in Australian waters, has disappeared altogether from the Estimates. Again and again during recent years I have asked the Government what was going to happen in regard to this question, and I was refused information upon it. The House has now before it Estimates in which the Vote has disappeared altogether, and no information is given.

I hope the hon. Gentleman will tell us what is the present position of this arrangement, and why it is that no provision has been made for it in the Estimates. Perhaps he may also be able to explain a mysterious paragraph in the memorandum about the South Australian ship "Protector," which has been lent to His Majesty's Government. I understand that this comes, under an Act of 1865, which has been adopted by an Order in Council, as a British man-of-war. I should like to know upon what conditions the ship "Protector" has been lent to His Majesty's Government.

We were also told that the scheme of merchant cruisers was to be largely extended this year, but the vote for that has almost disappeared, and only three new companies have been added. No provision is made as to arrangements with the great companies who furnish these merchant vessels. The hon. Gentleman also spoke of the delay in construction in recent years, and spoke of it as being due to the engineers' "strike." That was a lock-out, and I have always held that the weakness of the Admiralty in not enforcing its penal clauses in their contracts has led to their own embarrassment. This has attracted the attention of foreign naval constructors, and they cannot understand why the Government have not the courage to enforce the penal clause in their contracts.

My last point is with regard to the Royal yacht. I do not know when the House of Commons, while considering Naval Estimates, ever had before it a story so distressing as the history of the Royal yacht. I, for one, can take no blame to myself about it, because I was one of the few Members of this House who from the beginning did not like this project for the Royal yacht. We suggested that it should have been built like the new German yacht: that it ought to be serviceable not only as a toy and a pleasure yacht, but that it should be so constructed as to be useful in time of war. If that had been done she might very safely have been entrusted to the Admiralty staff and the dockyard staff. Then the Admiralty would have had a ship which they knew all about. Otherwise, it would have been wiser to send her to a private yacht builder, whose particular business it was to build yachts,

and not give this delicate piece of workmanship to a staff which had never built a yacht before. We have never pressed in this House for much information about it, and I am not sure that my hon. friend the Member for Gateshead has not given us more information than the Admiralty upon it. I think it is high time that the full dockyard history of this unhappy adventure should be laid before the House of Commons. We started out with the proposal to spend something like £300,000 on this yacht, and surely that was enough for what was going to be a private yacht, even for the Sovereign. This year the total Estimate for this yacht

exceeds £;500,000. Surely, in any other country, such an event as this would be regarded financially as disgraceful to the administrative capacity of the Department responsible for it. But we have at least still got the control of the purse, and we should demand to know how it is that the original amount of £;300,000 for a mere pleasure yacht has mounted up in three disastrous years to something like £;521,000. I trust that that information will not be refused us, and that we shall have a full history and all the reasons which have led to this unhappy result. We should also like to know whether she is going to have Belleville boilers or any other kind of water-tube boilers.

In conclusion, I want to call the serious attention of an indifferent House, and, so far as I can, of an indifferent country, to the enormous magnitude of the proposals contained in these Estimates. Some years ago Mr. Goschen apologised for the Estimates of the day, and admitted that they were colossal. Certainly they were colossal as compared with any previous year, but they were pygmies compared with the Estimates which we have before us to-night. Many people do not appear to have the faintest notion of the magnitude of this programme. I want to bring before the House the real magnitude of the programme we are asked to express general approval of. This year the total Navy Estimates amount to nearly £;31,000,000 in round numbers. I add to that amount what will be required this year, and for many years to come, under the Naval Works Acts, the sum of £;2,000,000, and putting these together I call the attention of the House to this fact, that the Govern-

ment this year is asking for £;33,000,000 sterling for naval purposes. I cannot separate the Army from the Navy so easily as the Secretary of State for War, and I must add to this gigantic total the huge figures we were discussing the other day. Roughly speaking, the normal Army Estimates are about £;30,000,000, and I add to that the amount for military loans, which I take it this year will be about £;1,000,000. That gives us a total for the Army of £;31,000,000. This shows that the military expenditure of this country in time of peace amounts to £;64,000,000 sterling for this one year. Surely, these figures are awful amounts to arrest the attention of the House and the country, more especially when I remind the House that these proposals have been laid upon the Table almost without a word of defence or explanation. I know there have been explanations of minor points, but on the whole they have been dumped down upon the Table, and not one word of the First Lord's Memorandum would lead you to suppose that they were in any way extraordinary. Let the House remember that this £;64,000,000 is our war expenditure in time of peace, and takes no account whatever of the Supplementary Estimates or the cost of the war in South Africa. This is simply our own British expenditure to which I am referring. I thought when I was responsible for the biggest Estimate that had been introduced up to that time that the more we spent on our Navy the less we should have to spend on the Army; I should like to arrive at the figure which we can afford to spend on both these Services, and after spending all that is wanted for the Navy leave the rest for the Army. But the reverse has been the case. The more the expenditure on the Navy has gone up the greater has been the demand for expenditure on the Army. The increase of these Estimates began in the year 1893, and up to that

point the Naval Estimates of Great Britain had reached a normal standard of about £14,000,000 per year. Later our attention was called to the fact that the next two great naval Powers of France and Russia between them were spending more upon their navies than we were. France and Russia in 1893 spent jointly on their Navies £11,000,000 as against our £14,240,000. That was a balance which we determined to redress, and that was why our Naval Estimates were increased.

In the year 1900, the last of which I have a record, the estimates of France mounted up from £10,000,000 in 1893 to £12,000,000, and those of Russia rose proportionately from £5,000,000 to £9,000,000. In other words, while we were spending £14,000,000 in 1893, against £16,000,000 spent by France and Russia, in 1900 the joint expenditure of France and Russia amounted to £21,000,000, to which our answer was an expenditure of £33,000,000. Therefore, instead of being £2,000,000 behind, as in 1893, we are now £12,000,000 ahead of them. These enormous Estimates, which arose out of an attempt to keep us upon an equality with France and Russia, have resulted in proposals which have put us £12,000,000 ahead, and that has been done without any explanation on the part of the Admiralty. I am aware that France is no longer in this respect the second nation, but the second nation is now the still greater friend of our own. The expenditure upon the United States Navy has leaped up from £3,000,000 to £15,000,000, but I do not need to discuss a fact like that. I have supported big Navy Estimates before, but these increases are so vast and, to the best of my belief, bound so far beyond the standard aimed at in previous years, that they ought not to be submitted to this House except upon a full declaration of what the object is, and why it is necessary to put such enormous demands before the country. Unless there has been a very great change lately I believe if you take the Estimates of last year of the four largest European navies you will find that the total is equalled by the Naval Estimates of Great Britain. That is a matter which demands some explanation. The men asked for in 1893 included a large addition which had become necessary on account of the additional ships built under the previous Naval Defence Act; and so the figure I am going to quote is not the normal figure, but part of the new increase. Well, in 1893 the number of men asked for was 76,700. This year the Government is asking for an active list of 118,635 men. That is an enormous increase. Here again I do not say that it wants justification, for I

think it is justified. I am giving these figures as a measure of the enormous increase which the British Navy has undergone. I maintain that this increase of the personnel is absolutely necessitated by the increase of the fleet; but it is a significant thing that in these seven years, having already begun to increase, we added 42,000 men to the active list of the Navy. About five or six years ago I obtained from the Admiralty a most interesting Return, which you will not get from Brassey's Naval Annual, but which throws useful light on this question. That was a Return of the men on the active list of all the Navies of Europe. I remember being astounded that, even then, our active list, with a much stronger fleet, was more than equal to those of all the other European nations combined. I hope the Admiralty will not neglect any opportunity they have of finding out

the active list of other navies, so that we may compare the active personnel as well as expenditure and other points.

The biggest Vote on the Navy Estimates is always the Shipbuilding Vote. It has reached portentous dimensions; £14,676,000. This is a net increase over last year of £9,274,500. Of this enormous total we are told in the First Lord's memorandum that provision for new construction alone amounts to £9,000,000. I believe I am right in saying that this is the largest total for new construction ever proposed either in this House or in the country.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Do you say it is too much?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I am not saying it is too much. That is another question altogether. But it is so great that I cannot accept the hon. Member's word for it that it is not more than enough, following, as it does, on the enormous increase of last year. We are entitled to have an explanation of its necessity; nay, more, I venture to say, a defence of the magnitude of these figures. The hon. Member asked me if it is enough or not; and again I refer to the measure of the two Powers. I never committed myself to any limitation of this measure. It was a practical rule of

thumb measure which was adopted by successive Admiralties and by the House of Commons. I never said I was dissatisfied with that measure, or that, in a given case, I should not ask for something larger; but I ask the hon. Member to listen to this: This £9,000,000, which we are asked for for new construction, is to be set against the provision made last year in France and Russia, the two Powers in question. The new construction provided for in France in 1900, but which is not likely to be fulfilled, for I am quite sure they do not build up to their programme as we do, was £4,200,000; and in Russia £2,400,000; or a total of £6,600,000. I dwell upon this Vote of the Estimates, as I have ventured to do on similar occasions before, because I regard it as the master-Vote of all these Navy Estimates; it is the Vote upon which everything else depends. The more you swell this Vote the more you swell all the other Estimates. The serious thing for this country is that our liability is not to be measured by the £31,000,000 in this year's Estimates. I have examined the proportion between the Shipbuilding Vote and the total Navy Estimates for many years, and I find that, as regularly as possible, in normal times the proportion is as one to three.

Suppose you do not increase the Shipbuilding Vote at all, what will be the consequence? You will have the Navy Estimates very soon up to £42,000,000 a year, instead of £32,000,000. When the hon. Member challenges me to say whether these Estimates are too much, my answer is that they are so vast that they ought not to be submitted to the House or accepted by the House until a full explanation of all the reasons making them necessary has been given. I say that no such information has been vouchsafed in the Estimates themselves, in the statement of the First Lord, or in the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty. We have not yet had what we are entitled to have; the House has no right to sanction such expenditure as this without further information. The other day the Army programme was hung up as a consequence of an arrangement made by both sides of the House. I cannot believe that, in the limited time at our

disposal, we can make a complete investigation of the proposals of the Admiralty; and some similar device will have to be resorted to in regard to the Navy Votes.

I put this question to the hon. Gentleman and to others who may sympathise with him. Is there to be no limit to these Estimates of our naval expenditure? Are you to go on increasing your Navy and your Army expenditure; because I refuse to separate them? Is there to be no limit to this vast military expenditure in time of peace, because the present war has nothing to do with it? No doubt the tax-paying powers of the country will some day set a limit; but, even apart from that; and here I appeal to the hon. and gallant Member for Great Yarmouth; even if our resources were illimitable, as they are obviously coming to a limit, at least all the authorities tell us so; I deny that it is the right or the duty of this country to go on, unaided, bearing this tremendous Imperial burden of naval expenditure. Why, in the First Lord's statement there is a paragraph about the gunboat "Protector," which the South Australian colony placed at the disposal of His Majesty's Government for service in China. That has been made an enormous deal of, just as all the other assistance given us by the colonies and individuals has been. But this Government seems to blind itself to the fact, and the country also knows it not, that this noble Navy of ours, which I want to see always the strongest on earth, and always in the hands of a Government which will use it for justice; that this noble Navy is as much the servant of our self-governing colonies; I say nothing of the others; as it is of the people of England, Scotland, or Ireland. The people of Ireland complain, to my mind not quite justly, of being overtaxed. Their complaint. so far as it is well founded, may be made also by all the poorer districts in this country, including the poorer parts of London. But Ireland has a much better ground of complaint than this. Ireland is notoriously poorer than the rest of the Empire; poorer than Canada or Australia, man for man. But Ireland, out of its poverty, is compelled to pay for the naval defence of these great and prosperous colonies of Canada and Australia. And what is an Irish grievance is also a grievance to Scotland. The poorest mill girl who drinks tea in my constituency has to pay for the free naval defence of the millionaire squatters of Australia and the millionaire timber-men of Canada. [HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.] Yes; the Secretary for the Admiralty has admitted it, and it cannot be denied. The hon. and gallant Gentleman; the highest authority in this House, and there are not many equal to him out of it; has shown us the true meaning of naval defence, and I could quote words of his own in support of the proposition I have made. When the hon. Member challenges me to say whether these Estimates are too high, I challenge him to say whether we are going on for ever adding to the expenditure for the Navy without making the faintest suggestion that these great self-governing colonies might contribute from their wealth to the Navy, which now is supported by the farthings of the poor as much as by the pounds of the rich in the United Kingdom.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB: The question raised in the latter part of the hon. Gentleman's speech is one that requires the fullest measure of consideration and discussion. I may frankly say that I feel very strongly, and have done so for more years

than I care to reckon, that in looking to the future and to the responsibilities cast upon us, we have approached a time when we must ask this question; "Can we go on indefinitely paying for the defence of an Empire which covers all parts of the world out of the resources of an island in but a corner of it?" I am a true Imperialist; I have always been that; but I hate the Imperialism which perorates about the Empire and refuses to face the real question of making the arrangements for its common security a matter of practical and united action of all its parts. I am strongly tempted to say more on this point, but I will not. Nor will I dwell on the way in which we work Imperial defence so far as the United Kingdom is concerned, on a system of water-tight departments. It is not only a wasteful but a pernicious system. We have Army Estimates brought forward one night, and we are told to exclude all considerations of the Navy on these War Estimates. Then we have on another night a Vote of £31,000,000 presented to be spent on the Navy, but you must not take that in relation to the expenditure on the Army. All this will not be remedied until we have a Minister responsible for the general principles of defence of the Empire, saying what is necessary to be spent by the Army and the Navy.

Leaving that question aside, a strong sense of duty and of responsibility to all ranks of the naval service compels me to ask the indulgence of the House while I endeavour, as briefly as I can, to refer to a question of paramount importance, and which is rending opinion in the Navy in twain; I allude to the training of the personnel of the Fleet. Within a period of time as short as half the lifetime of a man an absolutely complete transformation has taken place in our ships, and in everything that affects the personnel. Owing to the advance in mechanical science, and the application of electricity and steam to ships and to everything appertaining to them; the science of engineering being cosmopolitan; all nations have been brought to the same level. Therefore, we ought to assume that, all these things being equal on the surface of the sea, and producing the same effect, success or failure, when the conflict comes, will depend upon the adaption by a perfect training of character, and in professional knowledge; the perfect training, in fact, of what my right hon. friend the Member for Forest of Dean has called "the human element."

I do entreat the indulgence of the House if I endeavour to bring before hon. Members the condition to which the personnel of the Navy has come in the opinion of its own officers, under the conditions forced upon it by the transformation to which I have referred. We must remember that the senior naval officers of to-day imbibed their ideas of training and methods of fighting from conditions that no longer exist, but have entirely passed away. That is to a large extent the reason for the extraordinary differences of opinion which exist in all sections of the Navy at the present time in regard to this important question. I wish to explain

that I am not approaching this question as a captious critic. One of the reasons why this question of training has been neglected, is that we have had to alter our naval machinery and keep it running at the same time. I do not wish to hold this Admiralty or this Government, or any other during the last thirty-five

years, responsible for the fact that our naval training is at present exceedingly confused. And for this reason, that both the political officers and the naval lords at the Admiralty are so pressed with the routine work in keeping the machine going that they have not time to think out the great problems, or to do more than keep abreast with current business. Admiral Sir John Hopkins, a very distinguished officer, a late Controller of the Navy, and Lord of the Admiralty, has declared within the last two or three months that;

"Those who administer the Service have quite enough to do without initiating reforms. Nor can their energies be better occupied than in dealing with the multifarious daily duties devolving on them, which, I can assure you, I have found, from some personal experience at the Admiralty, leave little or no time for initiating reforms or improvements in the many subjects dealt with."

Every naval officer who has had the pleasure of a personal acquaintance with Admiralty administrators knows that twenty years ago these were overworked in keeping up the current business; and I wish to draw attention to the fact that they are overworked now, and have not time to give adequate consideration to the problems facing us. Fifteen years ago the Admiralty Board consisted of eight; political officers and naval Lords. Since that time the personnel of the Navy has doubled, the annual expenditure on the Shipbuilding Vote has tripled, you have added vast responsibilities in connection with naval works and the arrangements for carrying them out, and what have you added in the way of help for the transaction of all that accumulated business? What have you done? You have simply added one private secretary to the staff of the First Lord of the Admiralty. What has happened under these circumstances is that your present system of training the Navy can be only described as a patchwork plan rather than any system at all. That is the result.

I daresay that hon. Members are fully aware that in the Press this question of the training of the Navy has been much argued, but it has been entirely confined to one branch, and that is the executive branch, which represents only one-fourth of the whole force. There are four branches; the executive branch, the marine branch, the engineer branch, and the civil branch. The civil branch embraces three sub-divisions; the medical, the chaplains, and the accountants and stores. The conditions of naval construction and the changes which science has rendered necessary do not affect the medical or the chaplains sub-divisions, or the method of keeping accounts and stores. Therefore I will eliminate the civil branch and consider the three remaining branches. The great change of conditions from the old state of things, to new machinery has had the effect of approximating the duties of the seamen to that of the marines. These changes have accentuated and extended the possible scope of marines' work and their responsibilities in a ship of war. The education and training of the Marine Artillery and Infantry officers is costly and elaborate, but specially designed to unfit them to keep watch or do general ships' duties. That was foretold forty years ago to a Commission, not by a naval expert, but by Mr. Lindley, who said that the Admiralty were shutting their eyes to the consequences to the personnel of steam machinery. That advice was not attended to and we have gone on up to the present time without fully recognising that fact. But the supreme question

at the bottom of all this naval training is the relation of the executive and engineer branches to the working of the ship and to each other. That is a question of supreme moment. The old duties of the executive were really to operate through and by manual labour, organised with the highest skill, in order to drive the ship through the water, and to use effectively all the weapons and appliances of the ship. Now the executive officers simply turn a handle or call down a voice tube to the engineer, whose machinery does the work. The real duty now of the executive branch is simply to direct and apply with courage, with promptness, and complete skill the sum of all that is provided by steam, electricity, and the

machinery of the engineer's staff. When you come to consider the tremendous increase in the cost of a ship and the very much greater factor each ship is than it was before in a nation's Navy, the question of the education and training of the men who are to manage that ship is a much more serious one than it ever was before; and this greatly intensifies the importance and the gravity of the selection and training of the executive officers who have to wield this enormous power. The captain who wields that enormous power provided by the engineers and the machinery must be fit to be a captain while he is full of vigour both in mind and body; the probability is that if you cannot produce that man before he is thirty competent to do the work you will never produce him at all. When you remember the limits of age, the short period you have in which to select the raw material in the shape of the boy, and train him up to the finished article, with all the experience and aptitude and knowledge that is necessary for a captain, you can, see at once how enormously important is the question of the sort of training you should give to the executive officer who is to handle your ship in the day of battle. The important thing to bear in mind in regard to the difference between the education problem of the executive officers and of the engineers is that in the case of the executive branch it is a question of the readjustment of the training suited to old conditions to the new conditions. The problem of the training of the engineer is different, and it is now really a question of how to develop and improve the character of the training to conditions which have not changed, but are constantly advancing. The question of executive training has been brought to an issue by the putting out of commission, owing to the exigencies of the South African War, of what was called the Training Squadron in October, 1899. That was a squadron of ships fully rigged, with auxiliary steam power, and it was kept in commission up to October, 1899, as a necessary education for producing in your executive officers qualities which were considered essential to command a ship. That was the object of this Training Squadron which has now been put out of commission.

I want to know if we are going to be left without that Training Squadron? What is the policy of the Admiralty on this question? Is this valuable process of developing the faculties of the executive officer to go by the board or is it to be resuscitated? I should like to show what importance has been attached by many officers to this question, and I will give some very brief extracts upon this subject. Lord Charles Beresford writes;

"Training under masts and yards is valuable for the qualities produced. It makes

men thinking beings instead of well-drilled machines."

Commander Nicholson says;

"I entirely disagree mast and yards are gone. I think we cannot do without them."

Commander Napier, a brilliant officer who has been selected to command a torpedo destroyer flotilla, gives it as his opinion that;

"Seamen who have undergone mast and sail training are undoubtedly superior men to those who have not. Maximum of efficiency should be aimed at. British seamen should be finest form of seamen afloat."

Then we have Admiral Sir Frederick Richards, who retired a short time ago, saying;

"I hope soon to see the companies returning to their proper ships (old Training Squadron). You have got an established system. You impart by sea-going training ship qualities of nerve, steadiness of head, and quickness of eye which you can impart in no other way."

On the other hand, you have Admiral Sir John Hopkins saying that such training is "not one whit necessary." Then you have Admiral Sir Anthony Hoskins, a most able officer, late Lord of the Admiralty, who says;

"I do not see how naval officer is going to exist without it."

Admiral Sir Michael Culme-Seymour gives his opinion as follows;

"Surely the natural way to train men is to train them in the ship in which they are going to serve. All my commands have been in masted ships, but conviction forced upon me that masts and sails are gone for ever."

Admiral Sir Gerard Noel, a very distinguished officer, writes;

"Discipline of masts and sails must not be relinquished until equally effective substitute is found."

On the other hand, Captain Henderson says;

"Firm conviction all mast and sail training must be abolished. Only modern seamanship should be taught; helm, compass, and lead, boat, anchor and cable work, splicing and seizing of hemp and wire, fitting, rigging, and of sheers, derricks, coaling appliances, etc."

Admiral Noel writes;

"In sailing ships younger officers are in really responsible positions."

Admiral Sir Vesey Fitzgerald says that it is not even desirable to have seamen as of old. Sir Anthony Hoskins says;

"The whole thing (question training squadron) ought to be worked out in the most careful way by the strongest Committee that the Admiralty can institute."

I think that gives sufficient evidence to the House from the highest authorities you can get in the Navy as to masts and yards training. The conflict rages, but the Admiralty do not tell us or the service whether they mean to resuscitate the training squadron or not. I think we are entitled, in view of the opinions I have read, to demand a specific answer to this question; is the policy of the Admiralty that the training squadron shall be revived, or is it not? If the Admiralty are unable to make up their mind it would be better to have a Commission upon it to hear both sides. What I say is that the abolition of that squadron has suddenly brought the Admiralty and the service to the parting of

the ways. If this training is necessary to cultivate the qualities in the men who are to command your ships, then you have no business to withhold it. It was in the year 1870 you had your first Committee on the higher education of naval officers, and it resulted in the great extension of the academic and theoretical side of education. It is a strange thing that you never touched the education of the higher officers. The great problems of strategy and tactics have never been touched upon at all until this year. The German and other foreign navies take care to educate their senior officers in the study of naval history and naval strategy, and all their studies are based upon British naval history and strategy. I can hardly congratulate the Admiralty upon the extent of the step they have at last taken by providing £200 a year for this purpose. There was another Committee appointed in 1875 and again in 1886, and only last week a Report was issued on the training of young naval officers. Then follows a new order from the Admiralty which has been long wished for, and agitated for, to secure more sea experience for the young officers. I find that amongst the important changes which have been made the Admiralty have taken out from the seamanship examination for young officers all reference to masts and yards and rigged ships. I presume from that that the policy of the Admiralty is to abolish the training squadron. I also notice that, before an officer will be allowed to act as a lieutenant, he must serve six months as a sub-lieutenant at sea, and receive a certificate from the captain that he is as fit to take charge of a watch at sea as a lieutenant, and to perform the duties of that rank. The gist of the complaints of the Navy is that the training is too academic and theoretical, and not sufficiently practical. I will just give two or three opinions upon this point. Admiral Sir Cyprian Bridge, who is now going to take command in Chinese waters, is strongly against the present system, and he protests against the young men being kept on shore so much learning mathematics. He says;

"Problems of navigation require very moderate amount of mathematical knowledge. Rely on tables. I have never met a naval officer whose mental faculties were strengthened by course of mathematical study. Necessary to put a stop to making proficiency in the 'courses' a passport to promotion."

Lieutenant Carlyon Bellairs, who acted as a correspondent for one of the papers during the Naval Manoeuvres, and no mean authority, writes;

"It is judgment and eyesight wanted, not nursing and academic education. In last manoeuvres we never sighted a torpedo boat, yet in ten days the B. fleet sunk one of its own destroyers, the 'Minerva' fought an action with three phantom torpedo boats, and we were reported by our own signal stations as enemy's cruisers, torpedo boats, and so on."

Admiral Sir Edmund Freemantle says that;

"our naval officers are somewhat deficient in technical scientific knowledge"; and Admiral Sir Vesey Hamilton says;

"Admiral called on to support diplomatist more likely to do so effectually from knowledge of history and foreign languages than mathematics."

Admiral Fitzgerald says;

"Midshipmen instead of spending best hours of day in school room should be on

deck and boats learning to command men, etc."

That shows the question on the academic side. The fact is that there is too much shore work, and not enough sea work, in the education of our naval officers.

Admiral Hopkins declares;

"To make seamen is to make the seaman's home the ocean. He ought to be moving about it."

Admiral Bridge's opinion is that "shore imitations of weapons and equipment is not training men in ships they will have to fight" Admiral Sir N. Bowden Smith thinks "men-of-war's men are, as a rule, the worst boat sailors in the world."

Lieutenant Bosanquet, a promising young officer of great scientific ability, says, in referring to the deterioration of the young officer of the present day;

"He is dry nursed for five years and receives complex education in gunnery and seamanship, but does not have schooling in sailing ships. Only question of time for deterioration now apparent in officer to be apparent in man."

Admiral Vesey Hamilton's opinion is;

"I say the system of harbour time is certainly a scandal and disgrace."

I will sum up with two or three words. The controversy in the service over its own training is the result of the conservative instinct of one service clinging to what is old, and being very suspicious of what is new. The controversy may be put in a nutshell in three questions. (1) What is a seaman now? (2) What is the work he has to do? (3) And how is he to be trained to do it? The traditional seaman we all know. We know what he had to do, and how splendidly he did it. But the training which is declared to be necessary by distinguished naval officers is wholly different from that now in vogue. Admiral Fremantle says;

"Modern seamen must more and more merge in mechanics. This means entire change in training system."

Admiral Fitzgerald says;

"Battling with the elements is done by-engineers and stokers."

Captain Henderson declares;

"Blue jacket should be trained to be rough mechanic."

Admiral Hoskins says;

"You cannot teach all men to be excellent shots, and you cannot get ammunition to do it. The man behind the gun is employed principally in working winches and levers."

These opinions seem really to mean that the executive branch must gravitate towards the engineering branch. It may be true as regards the men, but it cannot possibly be true with regard to the executive officers. The training in the engine-room will be no training to produce those necessary characteristics in the men who are required to command our ships. Keen eyesight in light and darkness, promptness of decision in the presence of the unexpected; these are the qualities essential to the captain of a warship, and they must be cultivated by constant practice and observation on the bridge, and not in the engine-room. In regard to the training of these officers, I trust I have said enough to show that it requires more attention than it seems to receive at the hands of the Admiralty. Admiral Henderson was more than justified when he said;

"I think our training system throughout wants revision."

Admiral Bowden Smith surely takes the true view when he declares;
"I do not see how you can consider the training of seamen apart from the rest of the ship's company."

In any case the perfect adaptation of the "human element" to the present conditions of sea warfare is vital to the existence of our Empire. This is a question of the system of selection and training, and it concerns the whole Navy,. and not merely one particular branch of it. If it is true that the Lords of the Admiralty have no time to look into so momentous and grave a question as this, and if the adaptation of the "human element" to modern conditions is a question which the Admiralty cannot find time to settle, then I think it ought to be referred to a Royal Commission.

*MR. WILLIAM ALLAN: I rise for the purpose of saying a few words upon the Boiler Committee's Report. I felt sorry that such a Committee should have been appointed, and that such a Report should be issued upon the British Navy. Nevertheless, the Report is there, and it contains a most damning story of the condition of the British Navy at this moment. Why was that Committee necessary? When the Admiralty entered into the idea of substituting water-tube boilers in their magnificent ships I said, and I say now, that they were, ruining their ships, and the Report, I am sorry to say, has verified the view. Why did they do that? Why did they enter into this arena of exploded engineering? Water-tube boilers are no new thing. They were a primitive mode of raising steam in bygone years. Does any engineer in this House or in Great Britain think that if the old fathers of engineering; the Napiers, the Scotts, the Dennys, the Elders, and all our great engineering galaxy; had seen any advantages in water-tube boilers they would not have adopted them? They certainly would. The water-tube boiler is a primitive article indeed. If the Admiralty officials ; I am not imputing any blame, I shall leave the responsibility to be brought home to them by the House at some time to come; had exercised a little wisdom and caution, and had inquired into what the water-tube boiler had been for marine purposes, they would have had a story something like what I shall tell you in a few brief words.

I shall mention to the House just a few of the attempts to introduce water-tube boilers into the mercantile marine, and I think it is well that the House should know that when this new-fangled notion ; I call it nothing else, for it is not pure engineering; was adopted by the Admiralty it was not a thing of the present day. About forty or fifty years ago Mr. Rowan, a great engineer of Glasgow, had the idea that water-tube boilers were the boilers. He fitted them into a vessel called the "Propontis," and what was the result? The boilers exploded and killed many men, and many were scalded. [Laughter.] This is not a laughing question at all. This is a national matter. This is not a party matter. This is a matter that should go to the heart of the

British nation, which has to pay millions of money for ships and boilers which you cannot depend upon. What is the use of your ships? Do not let me see any hon. Member laughing. This is a serious matter. I come now to the vessels I saw myself. I come to the "Mark Anthony" and the "Fairy Dell"; vessels which were built thirty-two years ago. They were fitted with what was considered the best water-tube boiler of the day, known as Howard's boiler. There they are again

men scalded, and boiled and injured The owner of the "Mark Anthony" was brought to grief and ruined. I shall give another illustration from the history of water-tube boilers. I come now to the late Guion Company of Liverpool. Their superintending engineer had the idea that water-tube boilers should be introduced, and they were fitted in the "Montana" and the "Dakota." They Were large American passenger-carrying boats. What happened? They were both absolute failures. The boilers were taken out of the vessels with disastrous results to the Guion Company, financially and otherwise. I shall come still further down, and take the "Norman Isles," a boat which was built at Sunderland not-long ago. I believe the builder of the boat is an hon. Member of this House. She was 0,000 or 7,000 tons. She was fitted with Babcock and Wilcox boilers. What happened? She did not complete her first voyage. She had to come home to England. I tendered for the new boilers of the type so much condemned by hon. Gentlemen opposite. The Babcock and Wilcox boilers were taken out. and cylindrical boilers were fitted in, with the result of greater economy, safety, and efficiency being obtained. I come now to the Belleville type. It is a very old-fashioned type of French boiler. There is not much difference in the whole lot of them. That boiler was much lauded in this House in former years by Secretaries and First Lords of the Admiralty. That boiler was fitted into a vessel called the "Ohio." That vessel left Hull for America. What happened? Several tubes burst and some men were scalded. The boilers were taken out of her and others put in and she has been doing her work splendidly since.

I shall now come down to what occurred a few weeks ago. What do we find now? I blush; I think shame; to read the list of the Admiralty vessels that are now lying in our dockyards crippled and useless, and although the hon. Member who represents the Admiralty says the word scrap-iron should not be used, I would ask, What do you call the stuff from the "Hermes"? Is not that scrap-iron? What about the "Europa"? What about all your expense and your vessels lying crippled? If you do not understand 'what scrap-iron is it is time you went into a shipyard to see what it means. Why has this great calamity befallen the British Navy? I call it nothing else than a great calamity. I, as an old engineer, can fully realise the great calamity that has overtaken our fleet by the generators that are therein. I will show you in a minute exactly why it has arisen. I have here the Boiler Committee's Report. The Committee sat in 1892. and the Report was issued in 1893. I want to bring this home to the country from one end to the other, and I want to know the reason why this has taken place. I want the House to note clearly that the Report was issued in 1893, and then you can apportion the responsibility on whom you may. The Committee recommend the fitting of tubulous boilers in vessels for experimental purposes. Then mark this, for it is the crux of the whole question;

"It is considered that only those tubulous boilers that are tilted with straight tubes, arranged so as to be readily cleaned and examined, should be considered as suitable for trial with the view, if found satisfactory, to their being fitted in the larger class of warships."

That is the recommendation of the 1893 Committee. "So as to be readily cleaned and examined!" Where is the water-tube boiler which you can clean and

examine readily? I know of none. You can't do it. You can't do it in the Belleville or the Babcock and Wilcox boiler. I defy any engineer to say how he can examine it. This Committee guarded itself in a very scientific way. My point-is this; Why was that Committee's Report ignored? I believe that at that time the orders were actually given out for Belleville boilers for the "Powerful" and the "Terrible." After the boilers were put into these cruisers they found what they were worth in the results of both ships. The Committee recommended

strongly what was to be done, but what do we find? We find that, instead of Proceeding cautiously, there is a continuous ordering of French boilers. We find not only that, but also that orders came from Admiralty officials that firms tendering for cruisers and battleships and engines had as a sine qua non to fit up machinery to make these water-tube boilers. I never heard the like of it in all my engineering experience, extending over half a century. The firms were put to an expense of £10,000 or £12,000 to provide machinery for the making of these boilers which this Report condemns.

My sole interest in this matter is what I call the national interest. I have always looked upon this question, as both sides-of the House will bear me out, as free entirely from party politics, and as it affects the safety of our Empire, the strength of our first line of defence. But it may be asked, Why did the Admiralty adopt these boilers? Why did they plunge so eagerly in and fit sixty or seventy vessels with these boilers at a cost of hundreds of thousands of pounds? They relied on M. Belleville, in Paris. I do not blame him. He is a smart business man, who came over to this country with his tempting wares, and for want of a little caution and inquiry to get to the bottom of the whole thing on the part of the Admiralty, he has exploited John Bull to the tune of a quarter of a million for royalties, let alone the cost of making the boilers, for they are far dearer than the old ordinary boilers which have given such satisfaction in the mercantile marine all over the world. Ships with the ordinary boilers have run thousands of miles in storm and shine and have never come to grief. You cannot do that with your water-tube boilers. I challenged the Admiralty years ago to run a cruiser over the Atlantic- at full speed, and they would not do it. I shall tell you why. If they had attempted to fire the whole of the water-tube boilers at one time, and to take the maximum power out of the engines, the boilers would have come to grief before the ship had been ten hours at sea. Now, forsooth, we are brought face to face with this sorrowful document. I don't wish to be too technical. I am speaking to gentlemen; some of whom are engineers, but the

majority, I daresay, are not. Some time ago I wrote a little paragraph to enlighten hon. Members that the cause of the failures of these boats I have enumerated in bygone years is exactly the same as now in connection with the warships. I stated in that paragraph that the principle of these boilers is opposed to perfect circulation, and that no fittings, automatic or otherwise, will conquer the natural law of danger inherent in their design. I sincerely hope that I have not been too technical. I say briefly that the water-tube boiler for marine purposes cannot work. You cannot get circulation to ensure

safety. The Report of the 1892 Committee says exactly the same thing. The Committee which recently inquired into the subject brought a great amount of engineering science and practical knowledge to bear upon it, and here is their first objection to these boilers;

"The circulation of water is defective and uncertain, because of the resistance offered by the great length of tube between the feed and steam collectors, the friction of the junction boxes, and the small holes in the nipples between the feed collector and the generator tubes, which also are liable to be obstructed, and may thus become a source of danger."

That is the crux of the whole thing. The Committee also say;

"The water gauges not indicating with certainty the amount of water in the boiler. This has led to serious accidents."

And so they go on to condemn the boilers. I don't want to labour the subject. I come now to this point: What is to be done to get these ships of ours into first-class steaming condition? It is a patent fact, known to all the world, that you cannot steam your ships full speed. You may creep along at 7, 8, 9, or 10 knots or you may even get up a spurt of 15 knots, but what is the use of designing a boat for 22 knots if you cannot take 15 out of her? That is playing with engineering. The Boiler Committee has unequivocally condemned the boilers. I am not going into the question of who is to blame for it, but I am going into this question. It may be said, rightly up to a certain point, "Oh, we cannot take the boilers out of those ships they are in. It would entail such a delay to our ships, and cost such a lot of money;" All these excuses will be brought forward, no doubt. I ask this question, Is the Board of Admiralty justified in using boilers that have been condemned by their own Committee? I am now coming to the practical point of view, and I am going to speak more directly to the hon. Gentleman who represents the Admiralty. If I were in his position I would come down to this House, and I would stand up there like a man. I would take the House into my confidence, I would frankly admit that we had made a huge blunder, and I would tell the whole story from beginning to end. If you want to be successful when you are in difficulties, all you have to do is to grasp the nettle. I have had my difficulties and mishaps, but I did not run away from them. I did not shelter myself behind a piece of paper or anything of that sort. I have great faith in the hon. Member the present Secretary to the Admiralty. I believe he will do good work. I want him to grasp this water-tube boiler question in a practical way for the safety of the country. I want him to take ship after ship and have the boilers taken out. It would not take so much money as you imagine. I say take these boilers out of His Majesty's Royal yacht first. For the sake of King and Queen that boat must not go to sea with condemned boilers. I sincerely hope the Admiralty will rise to the occasion, and frankly admit that they have made a colossal mistake. Come down to the House and ask for the money to repair the blunder. We are always generous to the Navy. We vote you millions. Do you expect us to be satisfied with ships which cannot steam, and which have boilers that burst? No, you want the best for your money, and you have not got it, I am sorry to say. I warn the House, and I warn the hon. Member the Secretary to the Admiralty that if you

experiment more with these water-tube boilers you will come to grief again. You will burn twice the quantity of coal, and you will require 30 or 40 per cent. more firemen, as the Committee found when on board the Cunard s.s. "Saxonia" the other day. That vessel's steaming was an object lesson to the Admiralty. In conclusion, I say to this House; for the sake of our Navy, for the sake of our first line of defence, for the sake of the protection of our great mercantile marine; we must have the best ships that can be obtained, ships which can be depended upon to steam at their full speed, or to go slow as may be wished. But don't let the amour propre of any individual or body of individuals imperil the national safety.

*MR. FITZALAN HOPE (Sheffield, Brightside): I hope I may be excused for touching on a matter which is not purely naval, but I feel that in doing so there are several difficulties in the way. The subject I allude to is the relationship between the Treasury and the Admiralty. I would rather say the bearing upon the Admiralty of the present financial system of the country. The difficulties I feel are these. In the first place, I quite admit that the Admiralty is less subordinate to the financial system of the country than is the War Office, owing to the fact that the great constructing works are largely exempt from the ordinary financial system of the country. In the second place, when we have in power a Government like the present, that knows its duty and does it, the evils of a bad system are minimised; but surely what we should like is not so much a system that is bad bolstered up by the ability of individual Ministers as a system that can support whatever Minister may be in power. I should like to read a few words to the House, although they are familiar already to a large number of Members;

"There is the Treasury, and I say that the exercise of its powers in governing every department of State is not for the public benefit. The Treasury has obtained a position in regard to the rest of the Departments of the Government that the House of Commons obtained in the time of the Stuart Dynasty. It has the power of the purse, and by exercising the power of the purse it claims a voice in all decisions of administrative authority and policy. I think that much delay and many doubtful resolutions have been the result of the peculiar position which through many generations the Treasury has occupied."

I understand that by the rules and customs of the House I may not say who uttered these words, or in what place they were uttered, but they were uttered at a time of great national emergency and peril as an excuse for and an explanation of the deplorable situation in which the country found itself some fifteen months ago.

I do not know that the public in this country at all realise what Treasury control means. I remember having read in a novel of a club started by certain young men with the express object of combining parsimony and profligacy. That exactly represents the present financial system of this country. Take any Department you wish, and in one branch of it you will find everything at a standstill. The work necessary to be done has been too much for the original Estimate, and no Supplementary Estimate can be obtained. In another branch of that Department you will find officials tumbling over one another in order to

get rid of their balance before the 51st March. What is the result? The result is to deaden responsibility and crush out initiative even on the part of the very best officials. No man in charge of a branch of any Department in the State has any incentive to economy, because he knows if he saves, his work and the work of his Department will not benefit, and that the only result will be an infinitesimal reduction of the National Debt. On the other hand, in some other branch you will find another official who knows from sad experience that he can get no more money and he makes no attempt. He spends what he can get, then throws up the sponge and makes no further effort. Individual cases may not be very serious. It does not matter very much, for example, whether the lavatory accommodation at some public office is not based on the most modern system, but when money is asked for an experiment which may decide the result of a very great war, and when it is denied, that is a matter to which the House and the country should not be indifferent. You cannot, of course have Departments submitting uncontrolled or unchecked Estimates. If that were to be done a reaction would set in. The Chancellor of the Exchequer should be able to check the total for each Department, and I would earnestly submit; and my opinion is shared by those who know much more about the subject; that the practical control of the Chancellor of the Exchequer should be confined to the totals only, and that, at any rate, the heads of the great spending Departments should have practically a free hand in spending the money given them by Parliament to the best of their judgment and according to the advice of their experts. Of course, if anything of this kind were to be carried out it would be an enormous change, but in the meantime I venture to submit three suggestions. In the first place I would submit that a department should have the power of meeting a deficit in one branch out of a surplus in another, I know that in the Admiralty and the War Office this may be done, but only by the authority of the Treasury, and I venture to suggest that instead of the authority of the Treasury it should be done by the Order of the King in Council. Secondly, I would venture to suggest that the First Lord of the Admiralty as well as the Secretary of State for War should have some power of meeting an expected expenditure during the recess on their own responsibility. Either you might vote a sum unappropriated which they might on their own responsibility appropriate during the recess, or you might under certain conditions give them the power to raise a certain sum under certain strict conditions. In the third place I would submit that the unexpended balances on all works of construction should be carried over from one financial year to the next. I made this suggestion to a gentleman of great experience, and his answer was. "Young man, you are laying hands on the Ark of the Covenant." Well, Germany has got rid of the Ark of the Covenant altogether and is not a bit the worse. In Germany, in all non-recurrent expenditure as well as in many items for recurrent expenditure, the balances are carried over from one financial year to the next, and in that way those responsible for the management of the department can watch the markets, and buy the right thing in the right way at the right time, and bring to the service of the State the ordinary business methods by which commercial concerns prosper. I know I shall be met with the argument of the constitutional control of

Parliament, but what does that control now amount to? Of course there is the Public Acts Committee, but that represents consideration of money that has been expended, not control over money to be expended. If we take the theory and compare it with the practice, we will find that while the theory is complete in practice, the very last thing that is ordinarily discussed is finance. Attacks are made on the responsible heads of departments on the Estimates, but if any attempt were made to argue the Estimates on financial grounds it would be resented by a large number of hon. Members eager to disburthen themselves of all sorts of ideas which have nothing to do with finance. The German system preserves full and adequate control. The accounts show the amount of the Vote of the previous year, the amount brought forward, the amount required for the year out of the revenue of the year, and every information that may possibly be required, and if it is found that the system is being abused, and that large balances are being improperly accumulated, the remedy is simple, namely, to cut down the Vote for the next year. In offering these remarks to the House I must disclaim any idea of an attack on the permanent officials of the Treasury. We have every reason to be proud of them with all their long traditions, their unsullied probity, and their whole-hearted devotion to the State. It is the fault not of the men, but of the system, although in time of war men rise and overcome the system. It is not what is refused in time of war, but the parings and the clippings in times of peace that make the mischief. Many a hundred pounds denied in 1894 meant thousands spent in 1900. The officials live in an atmosphere of their own. They never get directly into touch with the men and things about which they have to decide, and the Treasury officials are two removes from the men and matters they have to decide. The system they have to administer is permeated with the traditions of the Manchester period, and in the course of continual refusal they have become a kind of embodiment of the universal negative.

I venture to submit these suggestions to the House as palliatives only. In my humble opinion we shall not have adequate security for the administration of the Navy until we trust the First Lord of the Admiralty to spend the money that Parliament gives him as his judgment and conscience think fit, in his own way and in his own time.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): My hon. friend the Member for Dundee stated that the sum of money taken this year for new expenditure is larger than ever, but at all events it is some consolation to us to know that the greater portion of it is going to be spent on the completion of work already in hand. As regards the remainder of the sum which represents what is called the new programme, it only amounts to half a million, and I think we need not pay any serious attention to that programme. There are thirty vessels contemplated in it; but this policy of putting down before the House of Commons a number of vessels to be built that will not be touched; and the Admiralty know it; at the end of the year no longer misleads anyone. We have become thoroughly accustomed to it. It will be time enough to consider the new proposals when the keel plates have been laid down. Two of the ships voted last year were only laid down ten days ago. Now I wish to say a word about these arrears. The hon. Gentleman who is now

responsible for the Admiralty in this House, and of whom we have great expectations, frankly admitted the state of affairs when he told us that of the twenty-three battleships voted since the completion of the "Majestic" class only five had been completed. I believe it is true that four are commissioned, but one certainly is not. If we consider the dates when these various ships were laid down, it is certain that there ought to be five more of these battleships completed before the end of the present year, and there ought to be added to our Navy ten valuable first class battleships, all of which have been delayed. This delay does not only extend to battleships. The hon. Gentleman has told us that since the completion of the "Diadem" class thirty cruisers had been voted, and a great many of them ought to be ready by now. We get the same explanation year by year. Mr. Goschen one year took refuge in the engineers' strike, which was undoubtedly a factor at that time, but it is trotted out again by the hon.

Member as being still a factor. I think the strike ought now to be struck off the effective list, because, whatever effect it may have had in 1897, we are now through other causes going from bad to worse, and the delay which might be considered valid in the cir-

cumstances of 1897 has now become absolutely chronic. This delay applies to all kinds of material and to all ships, whether they are being built in His Majesty's yards or elsewhere. It applies to armour, machinery, guns, and hulls. The other evening the hon. Gentleman informed us that armour was mainly responsible for the delay. We know that in recent years there have been three changes in armour, but it must be I said that the Admiralty themselves are mainly responsible for the existing delays. They do not give their specifications out until months after a ship has been laid down, and consequently the armour manufacturers have no opportunity to complete the armour in such a time as would be necessary to enable the ship to be finished at the earliest possible moment. Therefore the Admiralty are not entitled to say that all these delays are attributable to the contractors. Many of them are due to the methods; or rather the lack of method; of the Admiralty.

The hon. Gentleman endeavoured to console us with the statement that we still hold our lead in expeditious shipbuilding. In 1894 we did pride ourselves that we could build battleships quicker than any other nation. That was then true, but that disadvantage has altogether disappeared, and we are lucky indeed to-day if we can get a battleship completed within four years of its being laid down, whereas in 1894 we turned out two of our finest ships, the "Majestic" and the "Magnificent," in two years. At the present moment Germany is rapidly giving us the go-by, and if we drag along in this way I am confident that in two or three years time we will find that Germany has gone ahead of us. Germany has ample resources and also the determination to put things through in a practical, businesslike manner. Russia, which we do not take to be a nation of enormous energy, has turned out a cruiser, the largest ever launched, in thirty months. We are not able to turn out a cruiser of such magnitude in thirty months. We would want three or four years. We are told that it is the English contractors that bring about all these delays, but it is curious that a British contractor can build for foreign nations ships of almost identical size in

two years. The Japanese have had completed in this country by contract two of the finest battleships afloat, and they were delivered in a little over two years. Why cannot we get similar work from the contractors? It is not that they are not patriotic; it is the Admiralty themselves that are mainly responsible. They will not put orders for machinery in hand until the hull has been building for a long time, and they delay their specifications for armour and so on. However, it is a very simple matter if the contractors are at fault. It is the easiest thing in the world to make the date on which a ship is to be delivered part of the contract. What is the difficulty in the way of doing that? At all events the danger is fully recognised in the country. Supposing we are suddenly plunged into a naval war, would it not be a great reflection on the Admiralty when the country realised that they were short of probably ten battleships which ought to have been in existence? That would jeopardise the whole position. Again, we know very well in these critical times that on our foreign stations we have ships that are obsolete in the sense that they are not the very best ships we are capable of producing, whereas our competitors have the very best ships they have been able to produce. Another danger is that in the Mediterranean we are woefully short of cruisers. The Admiralty may say that they have these cruisers in our yards and can commission them at short notice, but a ship commissioned at short notice is less effective than a ship which is already in commission.

How do the Government propose to deal with these arrears? They are going once more to resort to the expedient of appointing a Committee to advise them as to the cause of the delays and how they can be obviated. They are going to call into a great public Department outside experts to tell them how to manage their business. Sir Thomas Sutherland and other men of great experience are on the Committee. But it is humiliating that the Admiralty, with all its traditions and all its opportunities for obtaining experience, have to invoke outsiders to explain to them what has happened, and to prevent it happening again. I hope we shall not

always be subject to outside experts' information on these matters.

As to the personnel, we are going to vote a greater number of men than ever before, an increase of nearly 4,000. It would be interesting to know how many of the men voted last year are borne at present. I see there was a deficiency of 2,600 at the beginning of the year, and I have no doubt the hon. Gentleman will be able to tell us as to the actual number now borne. There are many of us who hold the opinion, despite the large numbers we have been voting for the last year or two, that we will not have enough men to man the ships which will be finished within the next twelve months. It is estimated that ten ships will be completed, and they alone will exhaust 7,000 men, apart from the cruisers altogether, and it is estimated by some of us that there will be a deficit, in one direction or another, of at least 10,000 men, that there will be no margin to meet a large addition to the Fleet. I will illustrate what I mean by taking the First Lord's own statement. Last year we recruited 2,630 men for the Marines, but at the same time we lost 2,165, so that the net gain was only 465 men. Again, it is notorious that we are unable to secure the number of skilled

ratings we require, the reason being that we are trying to get them at a lower rate than the market justifies. The result is that we not only do not get the quantity, but what we do get is not of a high quality.

The alternative presented by the hon. Gentleman to a large increase of the active list is the strengthening of the Reserve. At the present moment the Royal Naval Reserve is not popular. There has been a serious decrease in that service, and if we want to make it popular and to increase it we will have to make friends with the shipowners. We turn our backs on the shipowners, who are the only men who have it in their power to give us the sort of young men we require. If we can induce the shipowners to help then we will rehabilitate the Reserve and make it as it used to be ;something worth talking about. The whole system brought forward by Mr. Goschen about two years ago has absolutely broken down. He told us that we

had a paper Reserve, but that he was determined, come what might, to give us a trained Reserve. He called on men to go to sea compulsorily for six months in the first year, and when we were anxious in the following year to know how that worked out we were told that it was working very successfully, although some of us did not think so. Now, however, it is admitted that it has broken down. The real reason why it has broken down is that you cannot expect men to give up their shore occupations and go to sea for six months. We are now told that the six months period has been abandoned, that three months has been substituted, and that even that will not be compulsory. The Admiralty have now started a new Reserve altogether, to be called the Fleet Reserve. The Fleet Reserve is a new experiment, but whatever happens to it every man in it will be a trained man. We are told that the Admiralty expects to have 7,000 men in this Reserve. That is very misleading, because you are transferring 5,000 men from the Seamen's Pensioners Reserve, which consists of men who have served their full time. MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I explained that clearly, and stated the number that would be transferred.

MR. KEARLEY: I am not in the least imputing anything to the hon. Gentleman, hut the fact remains that these 7,000 men are not new men. There is no particular feature about the A scheme except that you are admitting Marines for the first time, but that scheme will not be available until 1923, because it will be twenty-two years before boys entering the service now can pass to the Reserve. The inclusion in the Reserve of short service men who have only served their first term will have very far-reaching consequences, because in effect it is the commencement of a short service system in the Navy, and whether it will be beneficial or not, it is impossible to say. Navy men are strong advocates of doing nothing to encourage short service in the Navy, but this provision will undoubtedly encourage men to leave at the expiration of their first term of service instead of serving on for a continuous service pension. I think it will be bound to be attractive because the men are to be paid 3s. 6d. a week, and at fifty-five years of age will have a pension of £12 a year. You may benefit the Reserve, but you certainly will not benefit the long service system in the Navy. The Admiralty have, however, protected themselves to some extent by limiting the number of the B Reserve to

15,000. With regard to the artificers, if they are still to be part of the scheme I would suggest that there would be more needed in the dockyards. However, that is a matter which can only be tested by time.

I have just two questions to ask on matters relating to South Africa. As the hon. Gentleman is aware, the Government have announced that they intend to give pensions to the widows of the soldiers who have fallen in South Africa. Naturally that must be extended to sailors also. What I want to know is whether the Admiralty have considered the question, or whether they have decided to revive the Greenwich pensions, because the amount to be given by the Government is 5s. a week, whereas the Greenwich pension is only 3s. 11d. The other question is with reference to the treatment of the warrant officers who I have distinguished themselves in South Africa. Their conduct has been testified to by commanding officers and generals in the field. I am not quite sure of the exact number of warrant officers concerned, but certainly five, if not more, were mentioned in despatches. All the soldiers and the naval officers who have been mentioned have received recognition, either by promotion or the D.S.O., but none of the warrant officers except one have received any recognition whatever. There is a difficulty in the matter I know, because the regulations governing the H.S.O. limit it to commissioned officers, and with regard to promotion there is a great dislike on the part of the warrant officers themselves to be made senior to those senior to them on the list. Still we are bound to give these men some recognition, and I would ask the hon. Gentleman to tell us what he proposes to do. He informed me the other day that the matter was under consideration. I know what that means in the ordinary way, but I hope that genuine attention is being given to this matter, and that the hon. Gentleman will be able to tell us that the regulations have been amended so that warrant officers may be included in the D.S.O. This is a matter affecting the whole of the lower deck, and I hope the hon. Gentleman will be able to give us some assurance regarding it.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said that he had put on the Paper an Amendment which he proposed to move with reference to colonial contributions to the Navy, but he now understood that he would not be in order in moving it. He would, however, direct the attention of the House to what he considered a most unjustifiable thing in connection with the maintenance of the Navy. As far as he could gather, the contributions of the colonies to the maintenance of the Navy were insignificant and altogether insufficient when the great services which the Fleet performed for the colonies were considered. He knew that Australia contributed a very insignificant amount, though he could not find what the exact sum was, and he would ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he would be good enough to make a statement showing clearly how much was contributed directly or indirectly by any or all of the colonies towards the maintenance of the Navy. Ireland, which was called upon to pay a very large sum, received directly, at all events, very little return, and it was manifestly unjust that an impoverished country like Ireland should be called upon to contribute some millions to the Navy while rich and flourishing colonies were not asked to contribute practically anything at all, he maintained that Australia, Canada,

and other colonies derived directly a great deal more profit and benefit from the existence of the British Navy than Ireland did. Australia had a large number of ships continually in her waters, and yet contributed practically nothing towards the Navy. He had heard the question of Imperial Federation mentioned, but whether Imperial Federation was good or bad, he would certainly say that they ought to have Imperial Federation to the extent that every colony desiring the presence and services of ships of the

British Navy should in common fairness be called upon to subscribe towards the maintenance of the Navy. They were told about the great devotion of the colonies to the Mother Country, and of the great services which colonials had rendered to the Empire in South Africa, but it was certainly extraordinary notwithstanding all that talk that these great self-governing colonies made no contribution to the Fleet on which they depended for the protection of their commerce. With regard to Cape Colony the matter was somewhat different. If he was not mistaken, Cape Colony contributed £30,000 a year, and it was an extraordinary coincidence that directly after Cape Colony, which had a Dutch majority, decided to contribute to the maintenance of the Imperial Navy, war was declared in South Africa. That was a bad return to make for the action of the Cape Parliament, and at a time, too, when a Dutch ministry was in power and there was a Dutch Prime Minister at the Cape. Was it fair that the already overtaxed people of Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales should be called upon to bear the whole cost of the Imperial Navy? He was surprised that the question had not been raised by some English Member of Parliament, as he thought it was a question upon which almost all parties agreed.

There was also another matter which he desired to mention. He had repeatedly asked questions in the House as to whether the Admiralty could not from time to time send a cruiser round the coast of Ireland to protect the fisheries from illegal trawling. He had asked Mr. Goschen; he thought he was Lord Goschen now, but was not quite certain, as the rapidity with which some people became ennobled was bewildering; but he refused to send a single ship to protect Irish fisheries. Last summer, in Wexford, where he was living, fishermen complained to him that steam trawlers were destroying their fishing grounds, and they wished to know whether the Government would do anything for them. He told them that he had asked questions on the subject, but got very little satisfaction. The fishermen said that, although the taxpayers of Ireland were paying a considerable amount towards the maintenance of the Navy, they hardly ever saw a battleship at all. Surely it was not too much to expect that the Admiralty would send some of their small ships to patrol the fishing grounds from time to time. He asked the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he could not undertake that this slight return might in future be given to Irish taxpayers in compensation for their contributions to the Navy. That was a demand which he thought every fair-minded man would support. He had heard hon. Members from Scotland making the same complaint as regarded Scotch fisheries, and he hoped there would be a change in the attitude hitherto adopted by the Admiralty. It was one of the things which made Irishmen dissatisfied with the system of Government in Ireland. They paid millions towards the Navy, but the great

majority of the Irish people, even those living on the seaboard, never saw a ship at all. Of course, the stock argument was that the British Navy was to protect the coast of Ireland from invasion. That was absurd. If Ireland ever needed the protection of the Fleet it was simply because of her connection with England. If Ireland were left to herself no other country would interfere with her.

It being midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.

Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)

Elibank, Master of

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel

Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)

Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn E.

Arkwright, John Stanhope

Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)

Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r

Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.

Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r

Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst

Arrol, Sir William

Chapman, Edward

Finch, George A.

Asher, Alexander

Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.

Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne

Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John

Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse

Fisher, William Hayes

Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy

Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready

FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-

Bain, Colonel James Robert

Colville, John

Fitzroy, Hon. Edward A.

Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r.

Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)

Fletcher, Sir Henry

Balfour, Rt. Hn. Ger. W. (Leeds)

Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)

Fuller, J. M. F.

Banbary, Frederick George

Cranborne, Viscount

Goddard, Daniel Ford

Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin

Cubitt, Hon Henry
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol
Cust, Henry John C.
Gore, Hon. F. S. Ormsby-
Bignold, Arthur
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Bill, Charles
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Black, Alexander William
Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Greene, Sir E. W. (Bury St. Ed.
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Dickson, Charles Scott
Grenfell, William Henry
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Gretton, John
Bull, William James
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Bullard, Sir Harry
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Groves, James Grimble
Butcher, John George
Duke, Henry Edward
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Caldwell, James
Duncan, James H.
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Hambro, Charles Eric
Cawley, Frederick
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord G. (Mid'x
SUPPLY [MARCH 15TH].
Resolutions reported;;
ARMY ESTIMATES, 1901–2.

1. "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 450,000, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at

Home and Abroad, excluding His Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1902."

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £21,657,500, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay, Allowances, and other Charges of His Majesty's Army at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India) (General Staff, Regiments, Reserve, and Departments), which welcome in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1902."

Resolutions read a second time.

First Resolution::

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

The House divided:: Ayes, 208; Noes, 55. (Division List No. 85.)

Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.

Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)

Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)

Hardy, Laurence (K'nt, Ashf'rd

More, Robt. J. (Shropshire)

Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)

Hare, Thomas Leigh

Morgan, David J. (Walthamst.

Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)

Harmsworth, R. Leicester

Morgan, Hon. F. (Monmouthsh.

Shipman, Dr. John G.

Haslam, Sir Alfred S.

Morrell, George Herbert

Simeon, Sir Barrington

Hay, Hon. Claude George

Morris, Hon. Martin Henry F.

Sinclair, Louis (Romford)

Heath, Arthur H. (Hanley)

Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)

Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, E.)

Heath, Jas. (Staffords., N. W.)

Morton, Edw. J. C. (Devonport)

Smith, James P. (Lanarks.)

Henderson, Alexander

Moss, Samuel

Spear, John Ward

Hickman, Sir Alfred

Mount, William Arthur

Stanley, Hon. Arthur (O'msk'rk

Higginbottom, S. W.

Mowbray, Sir Rbt. Gray C.

Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)

Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside

Muntz, Philip A.
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Hutton, John (Yorks, N. R.)
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham(Bute
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Murra'y, Col. Wyndham(Bath)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Joicey, Sir James
Taylor, Theodore Cooke
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Nicholson, William Graham
Thomas, F.Freeman-(Hastings
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Thomas, J. A. (Glam., Gower)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Thornton, Percy M.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop.
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Tomkinson, James
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Parkes, Ebenezer
Tomlinson, W. Edw. Murray
Knowles, Lees
Peel, Hn Wm. Robert Wellesley
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Pemberton, John S. G.
Tufnell, Col. Edward
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Percy, Earl
Law, Andrew Bonar
Pirie, Duncan V.
Ure, Alexander
Lawrence, William F.
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Lawson, John Grant
Plummer, Walter R.
Valentia, Viscount
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Pretymann, Ernest George
Walker, Col. William Hall
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Priestley, Arthur
Warde, Lieut.-Col. C. E.
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie

Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Wason, John C. (Orkney)
Leighton, Stanley
Pym, C. Guy
Weir, James Galloway
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Randies, John S.
Welb'y, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol S.
Rankin. Sir James
Whiteley, Geo. (York, W. R.)
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Ratcliffe, R. F.
Whiteley, H. (Ashton u. Lyne)
Lucas, Col. Francis(Lowestoft)
Reckitt, Harold James
William's, Col. R. (Dorset)
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Remnant, James Farquharson
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Rentoul, James Alexander
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.
Macdona, John Cumming
Renwick, George
Woodhouse, Sir J T (Huddersf'd
Maconochie, A. W.
Ridley, Hn. M. W (Stalybridge)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
M'Crae, George
Ridley, S. Forde (Bethnal Green
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Rigg, Richard
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Majendie, James A. H.
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Malcolm, Ian
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Young, Commander (Berks, E.)
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Roe, Sir Thomas
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriessh.
Royds, Clement Molyneux
TELLERS FOR THE AYES; Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.

Melville, Beresford Valentine
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
NOES.
Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.
Gilhooly, James
O'Dowd, John
Ambrose, Robert
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
Hammond, John
O'Kelly, J. (Roscommon, N.)
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Hayden, John Patrick
O'Malley, William
Bell, Richard
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
O'Mara, James
Boyle, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Brigg, John
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
O'Shee, James John
Burke, E. Haviland-
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Patrick James
Power, Patrick Joseph
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Clancy, John Joseph
Leamy, Edmund
Reddy, M.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Lough, Thomas
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Crean, Eugene
Lundon, W.
Redmond, William (Clare)
Cullinan, J.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
M'Fadden, Edward
Roche, John
Daly, James
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Doogan, P. C.

Murphy, J.
Sullivan, Donal
Duffy, William J.
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Farrell, James Patrick
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Ffrench, Peter
O'Brien, Kendal (TipperaryMd
TELLERS FOR THE NOES; Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.
Field, William
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Flavin, Michael Joseph
O'Doherty, William
Flynn, James Christopher
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
Second Resolution::

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said his reason for interfering on this Vote was because when he called attention to a certain matter the other day for some reason or other his questions were absolutely ignored. He was, therefore, under the necessity of putting his questions again. He wished to call attention to the extraordinary increase in this Vote. If the British people were content to pay these increasing sums year after year they would soon find they would become an annual call, and there would be no ending to the course upon which they had entered. In the last five years the Army Estimates had almost doubled, and would in all probability, if the present policy were continued, be doubled again during the next five years. The Government of this country were animated by a wretched spirit of Imperialism, and the spectacle of Continental Powers draining their resources and starving their people to maintain huge standing armies was being followed in this country. It was impossible for England to imitate with success or rival the immense establishments on the Continent. It was an appalling thing for Irish Members to come there and see such enormous increases in the cost of the military establishments. Under the new arrangements there was to be an army corps in Ireland, but otherwise Ireland would get absolutely no return for the millions she was called upon to contribute towards these Estimates. The vast majority of the Irish people had shown by the attitude of their representatives in Parliament that they took no responsibility for the war in South Africa, which they considered was unnecessary and unjust, and it was their bounden duty to protest against it in every possible way. With regard to the Vote before the House, it would be the worst form of madness until the War Office had been reformed to trust the expenditure of this money to as incompetent a set of men as it was possible to imagine. They had got a new Secretary of War, but until the reforms foreshadowed by him had been carried out and the whole system changed it

was a very foolish thing for the people of this country to send good money after bad. The money voted last year and the year before had been squandered in a most reckless and extravagant way, bringing about defeats and disgraces in the field, and in all human probability the money they were now asked to vote would be spent just as badly and foolishly, and would be muddled away as in the past. In trying to rival Continental Powers they were departing from the best traditions of England and entering upon a course which would probably bring disaster and bankruptcy upon this country. The moral of his appearance this second time was that when he asked a question in a civil way he was entitled to a civil answer.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): I put down the hon. Member's questions upon the last occasion when this Vote was before the Committee to answer, but when I came to reply I found that the hon. Member had gone out of the House and was not in his place at the time, or I should have answered him.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said he acquitted the noble Lord of any act of discourtesy towards himself, but he was mistaken. As a matter of fact, he was in the House and heard the reply. He might have been sitting under the shade of the Gallery. When he asked questions in the future he would take the precaution to make himself as prominently visible as possible. A great many people outside the House and in the ranks of the Army were seriously waiting for an explanation how it came to pass that a certain section of the forces in the field in South Africa were receiving as much as 5s. a day, whereas the ordinary soldiers of His Majesty's Regular Army were receiving something in the neighbourhood of 1s. They had heard a good deal about the valour and bravery of the Dublin Fusiliers, the Welsh Fusiliers, the Connaught Rangers and the Gordon Highlanders, but what the people wanted to know was how it was that the men of those heroic battalions, who suffered most in hardships and losses, had only been receiving the ordinary miserable pay of 1s. a day, whereas the troops from the colonies were receiving 5s. a day? That was a monstrous injustice. They heard a good many dreadful and miserable stories of returned soldiers, of men crippled for life, finding their way into the workhouse both in Ireland and in this country. There were hundreds of people in Ireland, men, women, and children, who were now in the direst distress in consequence of this cruel war. They heard these things in Ireland, and contrasted the misery of their people with the position of the men who came from the colonies, and were receiving what to the poor Irish peasants seemed the prince's pay of 5s. a day.

But his main reason for rising was to expose what he held to be a fraud on the part of those people who endeavoured to prove that because colonial troops had gone to South Africa, therefore the colonies were in sympathy with the war. It proved nothing of the sort. He had lived in Australia and read their papers, and he maintained that the mass of the people there were not in sympathy with the war, and that if a vote were asked in any Australian Parliament in aid of the war it would not be passed. "Oh," it would be said, "how was it, then, that so many thousand sons of the Empire came from every colony in Australia and from New Zealand to take their place in the campaign side by side with the troops of the British Army?" It was the 5s. a day. In Australia there were a great number

of men who were accustomed to an open-air life, who were fond of riding and of wild, frontier-like life, and who, if you gave them a good horse, 5s. a day, and the prospect of some excitement, would go anywhere. If the War Office were to reduce the pay to 1s. a day, the same as that given to the Dublin Fusiliers and the Gordon Highlanders, they would see what the effect would be. Recruits would at once fall off. He wanted to know how many men were receiving 5s. a day, how much it came to, and who were getting it?

MR. DALY (Monaghan, S.) supported his hon. friend in protesting against this very large Vote being passed at that hour of the morning. He did not wonder at the Government being forced into this unjust and unholy war, because there was such an amount of money spent in the dockyards, in the manufacture of arms, and in trade in England generally. The whole of the people of England were making money out of the war, while the people of Ireland did not get a sixpence. It was therefore the duty of the Irish Members to vote against this Vote. He saw that a million was to be paid to the Imperial Yeomanry, but if they all showed as little valour in the future as they had done at Lindley he would not spend a shilling on them. He also saw that £650,000 was down for the colonial contingent. Now, in regard to this matter a great deal had been said as to the number of troops that had come from the colonies. So far as his memory went, this great number only amounted to 600. He thought there would be no difficulty of getting 600 corner boys, gutter boys, or men, probably, discharged from gaol, who would go over to South Africa for 5s. a day; not being able to earn a living in the country where they were; while the unfortunate soldiers from this country were only getting 10d. or 1s. a day. He had heard the hon. Member talking of the patriotism of the men from the colonies, but it was a five-bob-a-day patriotism. If they had only offered one bob a day they would not have had a single man from Australia coming to South Africa to fight their battles. Instead of the war being over, as was said months ago, it was only beginning, because they were asked for four millions more money than last year. He would move the reduction of the Vote by five millions, by way of protest against this extraordinary increase in the money asked for the Army, and if the Government were defeated it would be a very satisfactory result. In fact, it would be a very proud achievement on his part, and very possibly the Government would be glad to get out of the situation. Considering all the bother on their hands they were in a most unenviable position, for the taxpayers of this country as well as in Ireland were up in a small rebellion against them. He begged to move the reduction of the Vote by five millions.

*MR. SPEAKER: No Amendment for the reduction of the Vote on this resolution is in order, as I have already put the question.

MR. J. P. FARRELL thought that of all the forces which had been raised for the war, that which was likely to be of the least utility in the field was the Imperial Yeomanry. It was largely composed of boys of not more than sixteen years of age. He was travelling not long since between London and Holyhead, when an Imperial Yeoman, a mere boy, joined the train. He said, in answer to questions, that he was to sail from Dublin for South Africa the following Wednesday, that his father and brother were engaged in the war, and that it was

on that account that he had been accepted for service. The lad's youthful appearance struck him so forcibly that he asked him his age, to which he replied that he was sixteen years; and he did not look a day older. Then he asked the boy how he had passed the standard, and the lad replied that there was no bar to entering the Imperial Yeomanry. In all sincerity he held that it was really a crime to take these schoolboys and send them to South Africa to be shot. He merely related the incident to show the class of men that were being engaged, and the manner in which money was being spent. It could not possibly be argued that such a young lad could be of any utility on service. He himself knew similar cases, and he therefore thought that the Vote for the Imperial Yeomanry was money absolutely wasted.

With reference to the general question of the administration of the War Office, the hon. Member for East Clare spoke with great force, and with his accustomed ability, on the tremendous indictment laid against the War Office by hon. Members on that side, and also by the service Members. He thought that they should have some definite assurance that the subject was not going to be shelved. Whenever the Government were in a difficulty over any question, a Commission was promised for the purpose of shelving it, and nothing was really done. It was not fair to submit such large Supplementary Estimates without a definite assurance being given that the administration of the Department would in future be conducted on better lines. If the War Office were to be conducted in the future as, according to recent revelations, it had been conducted in the past, the sooner it was abolished altogether the better. The state of things disclosed between the two noble Lords at the head of the Department would lead one to suppose that they were boys squabbling at school rather than Ministers engaged in protecting the State. Under the circumstances they were quite entitled to press that such a state of things should be put an end to. He quite understood why the noble Lord did not reply to the trenchant criticisms of his hon. friend. It was very difficult to reconcile the ordinary rank and file to a shilling a day while other men were getting 5s. who had not borne the heat and burden of the fight. It was, however, absolutely necessary that some explanation should be given, because he knew from reliable information that at Aldershot and other military stations the greatest dissatisfaction was being manifested among the private soldiers. If the differentiation were to be continued he should not be surprised if it became more and more difficult to obtain recruits for the Regular Army. No doubt the Department might increase the inducements to enlist, but it would be a long time before the disagreeable impression created by the special treatment given to the Yeomanry would be removed, or before the ordinary Tommy Atkins would be convinced that his services had been as well recompensed as the emergency men who had been sent to South Africa. The Irish people were opposed to the war. They had in every way open to them denounced it as impolitic and unjust, and yet they were to be compelled to pay an unjust share of its expenses. He trusted his hon. friends would mark their disapproval of the policy of the Government by dividing against the Vote.

*MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) said that in listening to the remarks

of hon. Gentlemen opposite, he found it difficult to know whether to treat them seriously or not. One thing he was perfectly certain of, and that was that, although hon. Members might speak for certain parts of Ireland, they did not speak for the vast majority of Irishmen throughout the Empire.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N) Let the hon. Gentleman try the issue in Ireland.

*MR. CATHCART WASON said he knew more of Irishmen abroad than hon. Gentlemen, who utterly misrepresented their views. He would not have ventured to have interfered in the discussion were it not for the grossly calumnious utterances of hon. Members opposite. Hon. Members talked of 5s. a day, but that was no remuneration for the soldiers of the colonies who went to fight the battles of the motherland; and if the motherland did not desire to pay them at all they would have served for nothing. He had the honour of a seat in the New Zealand Parliament when the question of sending troops came forward, and Irishmen of all shades; Orangemen as well as Catholics; were unanimous in voting sufficient money to send a contingent to South Africa, and after that not only one, but several were sent. Feeling in the colonies was absolutely unanimous in favour of the war, and as far as he knew not a single voice was raised against it. He had heard opinions quoted from newspapers of which he had never heard, although he had lived most of his life in the colonies. It was said there was no feeling in the colonies in favour of the war, but he said there was, because the colonies realised that their whole existence depended on the successful termination of the war. Every class in the community contributed either money or comforts for the men who were to fight in defence of the motherland. Therefore, when hon. Members spoke as they had spoken to-night, he said most emphatically that they did not speak for Irishmen throughout the Empire. With all due respect to hon. Members from Ireland he did not believe in their disloyalty. He believed that if the country were put to the pinch to-morrow they would also support her, and that all

their talk was the merest bluster. He firmly believed that it was not disloyalty. The Irish Members were probably just as loyal as other Members of the House, and they would die in the ditch to-morrow if duty called. He emphatically protested against the accusations which had been made against the colonists that they only came to the help of the mother country for the miserable 5s. a day. The great body of those who volunteered for service in South Africa were people who left good situations. Farmers left their farms, merchants left their business, and lawyers left their briefs. Everyone was anxious to subscribe, to assist and volunteer their services. The colonists had been libelled in two most atrocious speeches. It was enough to make the blood of any person boil within him. [An IRISH MEMBER: They took the five bob all the same.] The answer to that was perfectly simple. The pay was simply temporary pay and for a temporary reason; it did not carry any further liability with it; whereas the men who received 1s. a day were professional persons. The hon. Members from Ireland knew that as well as he did.

MR. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.) said the hon. Member who had just sat down was bubbling over with enthusiasm and loyalty and indignation, but he did not state

what circumstances prevented him from going to South Africa. [An HON. MEMBER: Age.] He said the colonists were boiling over with enthusiasm and loyalty. It was within the knowledge of the House that Canada had within the last few months refused to send more troops to South Africa. Did that prove that the colonies were boiling over with enthusiasm? There could be no doubt that the pay of 5s. a day was an immense inducement to people who had not regular employment to enlist as volunteers in His Majesty's Army. It was a fact that most of the people in the Irish constituencies were opposed to the war in South Africa. It was a fact that the colonies were not so opposed. The difference arose from the fact that the colonies had self-government and Ireland had not. Let them give Ireland self government, and conciliate the people.

and it might be that they would be as loyal as the colonies. The hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland said the Nationalist Members were there to obstruct the business of the House. Apart from the fact that such a phrase was not in order, the Nationalist Members were perfectly within their right in discussing these Votes at great length that night, and they deserved every facility from the House, as they were not interfering with the Government time. Perhaps they were interfering with the convenience of some hon. Members, but surely they were patriotic enough to sit up a few hours in the morning to hear some reasonable discussion. He hoped that Members on both sides of the House would join the Nationalist Members in making the Army what it should be; an efficient army. There was no doubt whatever that this country would be unable to recruit a force of 450,000 men by any other means than conscription. One matter on which the country had made up its mind was that it would not endure conscription at any cost. The Army of this country was a voluntary army, and to keep up the requisite number of men they must pay the ordinary rate of wages at which unskilled labour could be got in the country. Unskilled labour could command more than 1s. a day. The wages of agricultural labourers in the worst paid districts in England was 12s. a week, practically all found. He submitted that they would get none but the worst class of the community at 1s. a day. Of the 450,000 men 400,000 were common soldiers or non-commissioned officers, and they only got in regimental pay £;10,000,000, and the other 50,000 received £;11,000,000. This unequal method of distributing the money voted for the Army would result in the failure to recruit the necessary number of men. To recruit a voluntary army it was necessary not only to pay a wage equivalent to that paid in the labour market, but also to provide special attractions to men who were asked to risk their lives. In their scheme, however, the Government had increased the number of men and decreased the attractions. Under the heading G the gratuities and soldiers' discharges only amounted to £;200,000. as against £;310,000 last year. That was a reduction of 33 per cent., although an immense number of men would be discharged during the present year; and they were to have no reward for risking their lives in the war, and the unfortunate enteric patients who had returned would have nothing to help them on. He could not understand the reduction. Another matter which showed that the Government intended to resort to compulsory recruiting was that the item for recruiting had also been reduced. Of course it was plain that it would cost more

to recruit an army when the jingo fever had passed away, and it was clear to his mind that sooner or later the Government intended to force conscription on the country unless the House of Commons put a stop to their present policy in time. The Secretary of State for War boasted that his scheme would increase the efficiency of the Army, but he could find no trace of increased efficiency in the Estimates he was criticising. The efficiency of the Army could be increased in several ways, the principal one being to give the men better training. They all knew that the artillery practice in the war was wretchedly bad, and it would therefore have been thought that more money would have been devoted to gunnery establishments. Instead, however, the Vote for the School of Gunnery had only been increased by £1,400 which he submitted was a miserable increase for the purpose. If the efficiency of the Army were to be increased it was essential that more guns and better guns should be provided, and the increase under that head was, in his opinion, absolutely insufficient. Then in reference to engineering, the Boer farmers, who were never trained in the art of war, were able to entrench themselves so as to be practically invulnerable, simply because they knew how to use the pick and shovel. The increase under that head was only £1,200, which was also insufficient. The marksmanship of the Army, too, was very bad, but the amount to be devoted to it was only increased by £4,000. Hon. Members from Ireland were entirely opposed to the war, but that was no reason why they should not endeavour to limit the expenditure on the Army, and that expenditure could only be limited by making the Army efficient. The hon. Member for Orkney

and Shetland spoke about loyalty, but he observed that the pay of the South African local forces had been reduced by £350. He wished to know whether that reduction was accompanied by a decrease in the number of men, and, if it were, was that a sign of loyalty?

He wished to call attention to the remonstrances Supplementary Estimates which were brought forward in connection with matters which could very well have been foreseen. The Estimates were presented in this form merely for the purpose of blinding the people of the country to the enormous expenditure being incurred by the Government. Tory Governments had the reputation of always putting money into circulation, and the present Government had worthily upheld the tradition. The reduction of £17,000 with regard to the China Expedition was altogether uncalled for, especially in view of the fact that at the present moment a war with Russia was quite within the bounds of possibility. The messing allowances for officers and the amount of hand expenses were perfectly ridiculous, and if the taxpayers only knew how their money was being wasted they would lose the little remaining confidence they had in the War Office. The matters revealed by these Estimates showed that the Secretary of State for War had fallen a victim to the red tape of the War Office, and drifted in the steps of his predecessors. The hon. Member confidently predicted that, instead of efficient troops, the country would possess a very inefficient Army unless the principle of conscription was applied. There had been a terrible increase in the ordinary military expenditure, the amount now being about £21,000,000, and the country was paying much more for its small voluntary army than France was paying for its

army of 3,000,000 men. or Germany with its 4,000,000. The present proposals of the Government were a first step towards conscription, but although the people of England had forgiven many things in order that the South African war might be carried on, they would never forgive the Government if through it they were forced to adopt the principle of conscription.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Guildford): The hon. Member who has just spoken expresses the hope that the hon. Members around him would not fail to follow him with long speeches in support of the view he was taking, and certainly, to judge by the length of his own speech, he set them a good example in that direction. But I would make an appeal to hon. Gentlemen opposite to remember the position in which we stand with regard to this matter. The Vote has been placed on the Paper, no doubt, at a late hour. on a distinct understanding between the First Lord of the Treasury and the House that there should be a special opportunity of discussing by resolution all the important services which are contained in the Vote, and that resolution will be taken very early after Easter, and I cannot help thinking that both from the point of view of that understanding and from the point of view, in which we all share, of getting an effective discussion, this is rather a worse time than the opportunity which will be given shortly after Easter for going into the whole subject. The hon. Member said he had broken new ground. It is perfectly true that he discussed nearly every item in the Vote, and I am afraid that if I were to follow him I should take even a longer time.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Give us a full explanation.

*MR. BRODRICK: Let me say one word in reply to the hon. Member for East Clare. He spoke of the difference between the pay of the Yeomanry and that of the ordinary common soldier. Of course there is a difference, but perhaps the hon. Member is not aware that the men we get in the Yeomanry are, as a rule, three or four years older than the ordinary recruit. We have got for the short period we require men who are in the very prime of life. That is the reason for the difference in the pay. Everybody knows for a short period of that kind we are obliged to pay a higher sum. I pay my tribute to the value of the colonial contingents during this war, and to the bravery which they have shown. In reply to what has been said I may say that there has been no falling off in the desire to serve the King. One hon. Member stated that Canada has refused to send a contingent, but I may point out to the hon. Member that within the last four months Canada has raised 1,000 men for the South African Constabulary, and all the other colonies have made equally generous responses. The number of colonials drawing the higher rate is about 30,000, and all those men cease to serve when the war is over. Then we shall be relieved of that extra pay which it has been well worth our while to offer them. On all points connected with this Vote I am prepared to give chapter and verse to the House, but I do think the opportunity afforded at two o'clock in the morning is extremely inconvenient, and not only this, but we shall not get any report in the papers. Therefore, I intend to defer my reply on some other points until the exceptional opportunity provided by the First Lord of the Treasury arrives, and then the main debate can be taken upon that occasion.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND asked if it was not a fact that the Colonial Governments in Australia had forbidden recruiting for the Constabulary. The right hon. Gentleman had not answered his question as to the total cost of the colonial contingents.

*MR. BRODRICK: There are about 30,000 colonial troops receiving the higher rate of pay. In order to get at the cost of sending out these contingents we

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex F.

Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John

Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel

Brookfield, Colonel Montagu

Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton

Arkwright, John Stanhope

Bull, William James

Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward

Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.

Cavendish, Y. C. W. (Derby shire

Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst

Arrol, Sir William

Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)

Finch, George H.

Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John

Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)

Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne

Bagot, Capt. Josceline Fitz Roy

Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.

Fisher, William Hayes

Bain, Col. James Robert

Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r

Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon

Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r

Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse

Fletcher, Sir Henry

Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)

Cranborne, Viscount

Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.

Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin

Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chatham

Gore, Hon. F. S. Ormsby-

Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)

Dickson, Charles Scott

Goschen, Hn. George Joachim

Bignold, Arthur

Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-

Goulding, Edward Alfred

Bill, Charles

Duke, Henry Edward

Gray, Ernest (West Ham)

should have to get Returns from South Africa, and also from the colonies, and I think the hon. Gentleman will understand that with the immense amount of labour at the War Office in consequence of what is going on now in South Africa, we are unable at the present moment to supply this information. The hon. Member has now made his rejoinder, and I think that for the general purposes of debate we shall do well to adjourn the whole discussion until the promised opportunity after the holidays.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said the Secretary for War had stated that there was an understanding in regard to the further opportunity to discuss this question after the holidays. As far as the Irish Members were concerned, they desired to discuss this question upon every available opportunity. He wanted some information regarding;

MR. A. J. BALFOUR rose in his place and claimed to move "That the Question be now put."

*MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): I am afraid you will bring about such a scene as that which occurred the other night. It is disgraceful.

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:; Ayes, 140; Noes,; 66. (Division List No. 86.)

Greene, Sir E. W. (B'ryS. Edm'nds

Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire

Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-

Grenfell, William Henry

Melville, Beresford Valentine

Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander

Gretton, John

Mildmay, Francis Bingham

Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.

Greville, Hon. Ronald

Molesworth, Sir Lewis

Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln

Groves, James Grimble

Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)

Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew

Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill

More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)

Simeon, Sir Barrington

Guthrie, Walter Murray

Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow

Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, E.)

Hambro, Charles Eric

Morgan, Hn Fred. (Monm'thsh.

Smith, James Parker (Lanarks)

Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord G. (Mid'l'x

Morrell, George Herbert
Spear, John Ward
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Morris, Hon. Martin Henry F.
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashfd)
Mount, William Arthur
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute
Talbot, Lord F. (Chichester)
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Thornton, Percy M.
Henderson, Alexander
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Higginbottom, S. W.
Nicholson, William Graham
Tufnell, Lt.-Col. Edward
Hope, J F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Valentia, Viscount
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Peel, Hn. Wm Robert Wellesley
Walker, Col. William Hall
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop.
Percy, Earl
Warde, Lieut.-Col. C. E.
Knowles, Lees
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Wason, Jn. Cathcart (Orkney
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Plummer, Walter R.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton)
Law, Andrew Bonar
Pretymann, Ernest George
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts
Lawson, John Grant
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Whiteley, H. Ashton-u.-Lyne
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Pym, C. Guy

Williams, Col. R. (Dorset)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Randles, John S.
Wilcox, Sir John Archibald
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Ratcliffe, R. F.
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Remnant, James Farquharson
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Long, Rt. Hn Walter (Bristol, S.
Rentoul, James Alexander
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale
Renwick, George
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Young, Commander (Berks, E.)
Macdona, John Cumming
Ridley, S. Forde (Bethnal Green
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney
TELLERS FOR THE AYES; Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstuther.
Majendie, James A. H.
Roe, Sir Thomas
Malcolm, Ian
Royds, Clement Molyneux
NOES.
Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
Flavin, Michael Joseph.
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
Ambrose, Robert
Gilhooly, James
O'Malley, William
Asher, Alexander
Hammond, John
O'Mara, James
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Hayden, John Patrick
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Black, Alexander William
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
O'Shee, James John
Boyle, James
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire

Power, Patrick Joseph
Burke, E. Haviland-
Joyce, Michael
Priestley, Arthur
Caldwell, James
Kennedy, Patrick James
Reddy, M.
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Leamy, Edmund
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Cawley, Frederick
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Redmond, William (Clare)
Clancy, John Joseph
Lundon, W.
Rigg, Richard
Colville, John
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Roche, John
Condon, Thomas Joseph
M'Fadden, Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Crean, Eugene
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Thomas, F. Freeman-(Hastings
Crombie, John William
Morton, Edw. J. C. (Devonport)
Thomas, J. A. (Glamorg'n, Gower
Cullinan, J.
Murphy, J.
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Daly, James
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Ure, Alexander
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.)
Doogan, P. C.
O'Brien, Kendal (TipperaryMid
Duffy, William J.
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
TELLERS FOR THE NOES; Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.
Elibank, Master of
O'Doherty, William
Farrell, James Patrick
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)

Ffrench, Peter

O'Dowd, John

Field, William

O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)

Question put accordingly, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt Sir Alex F.

Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.

Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel

Arrol, Sir William

Bagot, Capt. Joceline FitzRoy

Arkwright, John Stanhope

Asher, Alexander

Bain, Col. James Robert

Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)

Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)

Randles, John S.

Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds

Hare, Thomas Leigh

Ratcliffe, R. F.

Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin

Hayne, Rt. Hn. Charles Seale-

Remnant, James Farquharson

Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol

Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley

Rentoul, James Alexander

Bignold, Arthur

Henderson, Alexander

Renwick, George

Bill, Charles

Higginbottom, S. W.

Rilley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge)

Black, Alexander William

Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside

Ridley, S. Forde (Bethnal Green

Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John

Johnston, William (Belfast)

Rigg, Richard

Brookfield, Colonel Montagu

Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)

Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)

Bull, William James

Kenyon Slaney, Col. W. (Salop)

Roe, Sir Thomas

Caldwell, James
Knowles, Lees
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Cavendish, V C W. (Derbyshire)
Lambton, Hon. Frederick W.
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Cawley, Frederick
Law, Andrew Bonar
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alex.
Cecil, Evelyn (Ashton Manor)
Lawson, John Grant
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J.(Birm.)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc.
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Levesen-Gower, Fredk. N. S.
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Colville, John
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Smith, James P. (Lanarks.)
Cranborne, Viscount
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
Spear, John Ward
Crombie, John William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Stanley, Hon. A. (Ormskirk)
Davies, Sir Horatio D (Chatham
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Macdona, John Cumming
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Dickson, Charles Scott
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Douglas, Rt. Hn. A. Akers-
Majendie, James A. H.
Thomas, F. Freeman-(Hastings
Duke, Henry Edward

Malcolm, Ian
Thomas, J. A. (Glam., Gower)
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Durnfriessh.
Thornton, Percy M.
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Tomlinson, W. Edw. Murray
Elibank, Master of
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Fellowes, Hon. A. Edward
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Ure, Alexander
Finch, George H.
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire.
Valentia, Viscount
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Morgan, David J. (Walthamst.
Walker, Col. William Hall
Fisher, William Hayes
Morgan, Hn. Fred. (Monm'thsh.
Warde, Lieut.-Col. C. E.
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Morrell, George Herbert
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Morris, Hon. Martin Henry F.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A.C. E. (Taunton
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Morton, Edw. J. C. (Devonport
Welby, Sir C. G. E. (Notts.)
Gore, Hn. F. S. Ormsby-
Mount, William Arthur
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.)
Goschen, Hn. George Joachim
Mowbray, Sir Robt. Gray C.
Whiteley, H. (Ashton under L.)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)

Willox, Sir John Archibald
Greene, Sir E. W. Bry St. Edm'nds
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Grenfell, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Gretton, John
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robt. Wellesley
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Groves, James Grimble
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Young, Commander (Berks., E.
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Plummer, Walter R.
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Pretymann, Ernest George
TELLERS FOR THE AYES; Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Priestley, Arthur
Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord G. (Mid' x.
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robt. Wm.
Pym, C. Guy
NOES.
Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
Hammond, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
Ambrose, Robert
Hayden, John Patrick
O'Kelly, James (R'ssc'mm'n, N.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
O'Malley, William
Boyle, James
Joyce, Michael
O'Mara, James
Burke, E. Haviland-
Kennedy, Patrick James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Leamy, Edmund
O'Shee, James John

Clancy, John Joseph
Lundon, W.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Reddy, M.
Crean, Eugene
M'Fadden, Edward
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Cullinan, J.
M'Killopp, W. (Sligo, North)
Redmond, William (Care)
Daly, James
Murphy, J.
Roche, John
Doogan P. P.
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Sullivan, Donal
Duffy, William J.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Farrell, James Patrick
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipp'rary Mid
TELLERS FOR THE NOES; Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.
Ffrench, Peter
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Field, William
O'Doherty, William
Flavin, Michael Joseph
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
Gilhooly, James
O'Dowd, John

Adjourned at a Quarter after Two of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 22nd March, 1901.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1).

Bill to confirm two Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to St. Marylebone, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Gerald Balfour and Mr. Attorney General for Ireland.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.

"To confirm two Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to St. Marylebone," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 112.]

HECKMONDWIKE GAS (TRANSFER) BILL.

Reported [Preamble not proved]; Report to lie upon the Table.

PETITIONS.

BEER BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Stalham; Hadleigh; Linton; Billesdon; Gloucestershire; Sudbury; and Sawston; to lie upon the Table.

COAL MINES (EMPLOYMENT) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Shieldhill; Hill of Beath; Oakley; Blairadam; Blairhall; Wemyss; Townhill; Wills-green; Fordell; Buckhaven; East Wemyss; Methil; and Ruth; to lie upon the Table.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (HIGHER GRADE AND EVENING CONTINUATION SCHOOLS).

Petitions for alteration of Law, from Littleborough; and Heworth; to lie upon the Table.

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Shieldhill: Oakley; Methil; Blairadam; Hill of Beath; Condenbeath; East Wemyss; Blairhall; Fordell; Buckhaven; Wells-green; Townhill; and Wemyss; to lie upon the Table.

OFFICERS OF THE INDIAN STAFF CORPS.

Petition of Lieutenant E. G. Sexton and Captain J. M. Tighe, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

POOR LAW OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1896.

Petition from Guildford, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Redditch; Walworth; Stratford: South Woodford (three); Burnage; Edinburgh (three); Reading; Ince-in-Makerfield; Codicote; Ayr; Newcastle-on-Tyne (four); Kippax; Barnstaple; Four Elms; Glasgow (two) Govan; Cambridge: Peekham: Guildford; Leytonstone (six): Walthamstow (two); Leyton; Woodford; Bristol; Middlesbrough (three); Bedminster; Viewforth; Sedbergh; Littleborough: Ledbury (two); Newbury (three); Clitheroe; Sheffield (ten); Birmingham (five); Brixton (two); Kennington (two); Pemberton; Plymouth; Elland; Ripon; Carlisle (four); Allonby; Brynn (two); Longtown; Waverton; Holbeek; Wortley; Armley (three); Bramley; New Wortley; Leeds (twelve): Bradford (Yorks.); Bispham); Leith; Ash-ton-in-Makerfield; Sutton-upon-Hull; Egremont; Hyde (two); North Ormesby (two); Withington; Hereford; Paignton: Longsight; Burnham; Weston-super-Mare; Milton; Beverley; Kendal; Nailsea; Wade bridge: Port Isaac (three) Fulham (two); Aberdeen City; St. Andrews: Jarrow (fourteen): Durham; Norwood; South Norwood; Staly-bridge; Marylebone; Manchester (three) Square; Truro; West Hampstead; Ealing; Alford (two); Deeside; Poynton; Openshaw; Hull (five); Dunfermline; Burnham; Windsor: Spilsby; Horncastle (two); Barradon; Widdring-ton; Seghill; Lanivet; Penzance; Newlyn; Liverpool; Shanklin; Derby; Warrington; Hanworth; and High-bridge; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Methlick; Girvan; Govan; Snizort; Edinburgh (two); Bothwell; Riccarton; Dunnichen (two); Leith; Carnoustie; Lundie; Milngavie; Troon; Dunfermline: Stirling: Halbeath; Kelton; Brechin: Montrose (two); Leslie; and Arbroath; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PATENT ACTS.

Copy presented, of Appendices to the Report of the Committee appointed by the Board of Trade to inquire into the working of the Patent Acts on certified specified suggestions [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

WINES IMPORTED.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 14th March; Mr. T. R. Dewar;] to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 93.]

COLONIAL LOANS ACT, 1899.

Return presented, relative thereto (ordered 11th March; Mr. Austen Chamberlain); to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 94.]

EDUCATION (ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS).

Copy presented, of Accounts of the Elementary School Teachers' Deferred Annuity Funds. England and Scotland, for the year ended 31st March, 1900, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act;] to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 95.]

TRAWL VESSELS (PROSECUTIONS).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 20th February; Mr. Cathcart Wason;] to lie upon the Table.

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN.

Copy presented, of Abstract of Accounts of the University of Aberdeen for the year ending 15th September, 1900 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 96].

EMIGRATION STATISTICS (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Emigration Statistics of Ireland for the year 1900 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (WALES) ACT (1881) AMENDMENT BILL.

Second Reading deferred from Monday next till Wednesday, 1st May.

CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS (COCKERMOUTH).

Ordered, That the copy of the Judges' Report in the Cockermouth Election Trial be printed.; (Mr. Attorney General.) [No. 97.]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR-TRAIN WRECKING AT TAAIBOSCH.

MR. HAVILAND BURKE (King's County, Tullamore): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the three men who were shot on the 19th instant by sentence of a Military Court, confirmed by Lord Kitchener, for alleged treason and murder in connection with the wrecking of a train near Taai-bosch, and the two men who were sentenced by the same Court to five years penal servitude for the same alleged offence, were all or any of them prisoners of war or local farmers. The hon. Member complained that certain portions of the question had been omitted by the Clerk at the Table.

*MR. SPEAKER: Two extracts from a newspaper were omitted. There was no opportunity, I am told, of communicating with the hon. Member.

MR. HAVILAND BURKE: I was in the House continuously after handing in the question.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): I have received the following telegram from Lord Kitchener;

"Pretoria, 20th March, 1901, 11.30 a.m.

"In two cases tried by Court-Martial, Field General Court-Martial, recently, I have confirmed death sentence: both Courts were submitted to Sir A. Milner, who considered confirmation necessary. First case: Three Cape Colony rebels assisted in wrecking train in Cape Colony, causing death of five men, and subsequently murdered a native boy. Second case: A burgher, De Jaegers, near Harrismith, killed three natives; the last in most coldblooded manner. No military extenuating circumstances possible. Sentences have been carried out."

I have no information as to the two men who were sentenced to penal servitude. His Majesty's Government, while regretting the necessity, entirely approve Lord Kitchener's action in this matter.

HOSPITALS;PROPOSED COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS.

DR. THOMPSON (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, with reference to the recommendation of the Royal Commission on South African Hospitals that a committee of experts should be appointed at some early and convenient time to inquire J into and report upon the steps needed to effect the objects indicated in Part IV. of the Royal Commission's Report, whether he will state when he intends to appoint this committee of experts and its composition.

MR. BRODRICK: I am not in a position to make a statement, but no time is being lost in the consideration of this matter.

PEACE NEGOTIATIONS WITH BOER LEADERS.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Boer Leaders have intimated recently to His Majesty's Government terms on which they are prepared to end the war; and, if so, what are these terms.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): No, Sir, except so far as they are to be implied from General Botha's conversation with Lord Kitchener.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies a question of which I have given him private notice, namely, whether he can give any information to the House in regard to what does not appear from the Papers published;namely, the part, or parts, of the terms offered by the British Government which caused their rejection by the Boer negotiators.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir. I have no information whatever beyond what is given in the Papers.

MR. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): Will he try to get this information from the authorities at the Cape?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir. There is no information.

PLAGUE AT CAPE TOWN.

MR. JOHN CAMPBELL (Armagh, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if ho can give any information as to the spread of the plague at Cape Town; and what steps are being taken to check its further progress.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have no further report beyond the bulletin published in yesterday's newspapers. The Cape Government are, I believe, doing everything in their power, under the advice of Professor Simpson, one of the best experts, and

are. I know, having six medical men sent out specially for plague duty.

LAND SETTLEMENT COMMISSION.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has now received the Report of the Commission to inquire into Land Settlement in the Transvaal, and will have it distributed at once.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have now received the Report, and am forwarding it to Sir A. Milner for his observations. On receipt I will consider whether it will be desirable to publish.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: Can we not have this Report before the Report of Supply on the Vote for the expenses of this Commission?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir. I cannot promise it before that.

MARK IV. BULLETS.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office can he say when the fifty million Mark IV. bullets which were broken up were manufactured, and what was the cost.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state in what respect the forty-five and a half millions of Mark IV. bullets were defective, were they made to specification, who were the contractors, and how much was expended in their manufacture.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westthoughton): I am afraid that the hon. Members are under some misapprehension. It was found that the nickel envelopes of the Mark IV. bullets occasionally stuck in the barrels, and that then the lead core was squirted through the envelope; a process known as stripping. It was accordingly decided to discontinue the construction of the Mark IV. cartridges, and four and a half millions of unused bullets were broken up. The cartridges in stock are being gradually used up in practice. The Mark IV. bullets were made to specification by ordnance factories and by various contractors. The exact cost cannot be ascertained.

MR. WEIR: Will the noble Lord answer the latter part of my question, and give the names of the contractors, as well as state how much money was expended in the manufacture of these fifty millions of bullets?

*LORD STANLEY: They were made by various contractors, and the exact cost cannot be ascertained. I am afraid I can add nothing to my answer.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Were they made in Germany?

*LORD STANLEY: No, Sir.

AN HON. MEMBER: In Birmingham?

MR. WEIR: How many of the bullets were made by the Ordnance Department?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order; The noble Lord has said he can add nothing to his answer.

GORDON HIGHLANDERS; MILITIA BATTALION.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire. W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the fact that a number of militiamen now serving in the 3rd Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders is only 170 and that a full staff of regimental officers, many of whom are serving at great personal inconvenience, has to be maintained on full pay, he will consider the advisability of

disembodying the battalion.

MR. BRODRICK: The hon. Member has understated the figures. The Returns of the 1st March show 373 men embodied, of whom 241 were at headquarters and the rest chiefly on furlough. The details, including the recruits, of the 1st Battalion, which is now in South Africa, are incorporated with the 3rd Battalion, thereby bringing up the strength of the combined unit to an effective fighting battalion. The full staff of regimental officers is therefore absolutely necessary.

YEOMANRY; MARCHING ALLOWANCES.

MR. SEELY (Lincoln): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether a member of a Yeomanry regiment residing beyond the borders of the county in which the headquarters of the regiment are situated who attended a camp of exercise last year is entitled under the special order of last year to marching allowance from his place of residence only or only from the borders of the county.

LORD STANLEY: They are entitled to marching allowance from the border of the county or recruiting area of the regiment only.

MILITIA ALLOWANCES.

CAPTAIN JESSEL (St. Pancras, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will consider the desirability of entitling the next-of-kin or widow of a militiaman dying during the embodiment of his unit to receive the full amount of furlough pay, allowances, and gratuity which the militiaman himself would have received if he had been invalided.

LORD STANLEY: The point raised has already been very carefully considered. The furlough gratuity is intended for the man himself to help him to civil employment. The widow of the militiaman should only get the same gratuity as the widow of the regular soldier or reservist.

ARREARS OF SOLDIERS' PAY.

SIR JOSEPH LEIGH (Stockport): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether a soldier or volunteer serving with the colours in South Africa whose pay from any cause is several months in arrear will be allowed interest on the arrears, and, if so, what rate of interest.

LORD STANLEY: No, Sir. Every effort is made both locally and at home to obtain an early settlement, and advances are made where there is any evidence of money being really due.

TURBINE MACHINERY TESTS.

SIR THOMAS WRIGHTSON (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state what course of trials the Admiralty propose to make to test the merits of the Turbine machinery of the "Viper" and the "Cobra," and when such trials and tests are likely to be made.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): Both the vessels named have completed their contract trials at high and low speeds. The "Cobra" has not yet been delivered by the builders. The "Viper" will shortly be commissioned for service and tried in comparison with other destroyers. No definite programme of trials has yet been arranged.

TRAINING SHIP CRUISES.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether arrangements will be made for a training ship to visit Stornoway and Lochbroom this summer.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The second part of the summer cruise will include Stornoway and Ullapool; the latter is the nearest part of the Loch to which the "Northampton" can go. There is not water enough for her to get to Lochbroom.
INDIAN CURRENCY ACT;GOLD RESERVE.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India, whether he would state the total amount of gold reserve accumulated in India and in England under the provisions of the Indian Currency Act; and whether the reserve held here is included in the weekly statements of the Bank of England.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The gold in the Currency Reserve under the provisions of the Indian Currency Act was on the 7th of this month £;6,957,000 in India and none in England. There is also £;800,000 in the Cold Reserve Fund in India, which is not held under that Act. When gold is held in England under the Currency Act it is excluded from the weekly statements of the Bank of England.

CHINA;RUSSIA AND MANCHURIA.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the clause of the Anglo-German Agreement which declares for the maintenance of the integrity of the Chinese Empire, His Majesty's Government propose to ask the German Government to take any action in reference to Russia's action in Manchuria.

THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Viscount CRAN BORNE, Rochester): The Russian Government have repeatedly declared their intention to respect the integrity of China, and His Majesty's Government are not aware that they have infringed it.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: What about Manchuria?

MR. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can inform the House if the Anglo-German Agreement includes Manchuria within its scope.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE: I have nothing to add to the statement which I made on this subject in answer to the hon. Gentleman on Tuesday last.†

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: May I ask if the Government would regard as a breach of the Anglo-German Agreement the continued occupation of Manchuria by;

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That does not arise out of the question.
† See page 405.

PATENT ACTS;COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state what steps will be taken to give effect to the recommendations of the Departmental Committee on the working of the Patent Acts.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I have only just received the Report, and cannot make any statement on the subject at present.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state when the Report and evidence of the Committee on the working of the Patent Acts will be printed and circulated.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Report was circulated yesterday. The evidence will be presented in the course of a few days.

BRUSSELS CONFERENCE ON PATENTS, ETC.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether it is intended to present to Parliament Papers relating to the Conference of the International Union for the Protection of Industrial Property (Patents and Trade Marks), held at Brussels in December. 1900.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Yes, Sir.

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY GOODS RATES.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the rates charged by the Great Eastern Railway Company between Harwich and London are as follows, less sea freight: Cabbages, foreign 5s. 10d., English 7s. 6d.; carrots, foreign 4s. 2d., English 7s. 6d.; potatoes, foreign 4s. 2d., English 7s. 6d.; onions, foreign 2s. 6d., English 7s. 6d.; apples, foreign nil. English 12s. 1d.; and whether he can bring pressure to bear on this company to equalise these preferential and differential charges.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have communicated with the Great Eastern Company, and they inform me that they have carefully looked into the matter, and cannot find that they have any such rates in operation. The appropriate remedy laid down by law in cases of preferential rates for foreign produce will be found on reference to Section 27 (2) of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888.

MAJOR. RASCH: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that I have taken these figures from the Great Eastern Railway Company's own list?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am not aware of that fact, and if there is any cause of complaint it should be made either to the Board of Trade or to the Railway and Canal Commission.

MALLAIG RAILWAY.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state the cause of the delay in opening the new railway to Mallaig; is there a penalty clause for failure to complete the railway within the specified time; and, if so, will he say why no penalty has been imposed; has the railway yet been inspected by the Government inspectors; and can he say when it will be opened.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The time limited by the Special Acts for the completion of the line referred to does not expire until 31st July, 1902. The line has within the past few days been inspected by an officer of the Board of Trade, and I am informed that, subject to the Board's sanction, the company propose to open the line on the 1st April next.

HORTICULTURAL EXPERIMENTS.

SIR JAMES RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he will consider the desirability of establishing promological stations in convenient parts of the country for the purpose of making experiments in the growth of the apple and pear, so as to enable persons employed in the fruit industry to obtain reliable information.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): Stations for agricultural and horticultural experiments have not hitherto been established directly by the State itself, and in the case of apples and

pears, which depend so much upon the climate in which they are grown, no one central station would be of much use, and it is only by local agency that experiment stations could be established in so many varying districts. Both in the North and South of England there are institutions aided either by the local taxation grants or by direct grants from the Board of Agriculture, in which experiments are made in the growth of pears and apples, and this appears to be the proper system to be adopted in those districts such as Herefordshire, where there is a special interest in the growth of these fruits.

SUMMARY JURISDICTION.

SIR JAMES RANKIN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, having in view the trivial nature of some of the charges under the head of indictable offences brought before Courts of petty sessions, but which cannot be tried by such Courts without the consent of the defendant, he will consider the desirability of so amending the law that some limited power be placed in the discretion of the Court of petty sessions as to the cases which should be dealt with summarily by the Court without the consent of the defendant.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. JESSE COLLINGS, Birmingham, Bordesley): The Secretary of State does not see his way to introduce any such legislation, which would necessarily be of a controversial nature, and would involve questions of considerable difficulty.

TUBERCULOSIS.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the regulations issued by the Local Government Board for the guidance of sanitary officers in seizing meat from animals which have suffered from localised tuberculosis are intended as a model for adoption in bye-laws by sanitary authorities: and, if so, whether he will grant a Return of the sanitary authorities which have adopted them as bye-laws.

I beg also to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the portion of the Report of the Royal Commission on Tuberculosis, in which they state that they entertain no doubt that in certain places a great deal of meat is seized which is perfectly safe and wholesome food: whether any compensation was paid to the owners for such unlawful seizures; and what steps have been taken by the Local Government Board to prevent the continuance of such seizures of perfectly sound and wholesome food by officers of sanitary authorities; whether he is also aware that the Royal Commission adopted a number of recommendations for the prevention of such unlawful seizures in the case of meat from animals which had suffered from tuberculosis of a localised character; and whether the Local Government Board have issued regulations for the guidance of medical officers and inspectors of sanitary authorities.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): I am aware of the statements and recommendations of the Royal Commission alluded to by the hon. Member, but I have no information as regards the payment of compensation. The Local Government Board have not prescribed regulations on the subject referred to. The Royal Commission laid down certain principles which, in their opinion, should be observed in the inspection of tuberculous carcasses of

cattle; and the Board in March, 1899, drew the attention of sanitary authorities to this matter, and stated that the authorities should direct those of their officers who were employed as meat inspectors to act in accordance with the principles laid down by the Commission.

TEACHERS' DISABLEMENT ALLOWANCES.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he can state how many teachers in Great Britain have received a disablement allowance during the year 1900 under the Elementary School Teachers (Superannuation) Act, 1898; and what has been the total amount paid by the

Treasury for this purpose during the same period.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir J. GORST, Cambridge University): The answer for England and Wales is: 291 teachers, £4,568 12s. 2d.

IRISH DRIFT SURVEY.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he can say when the Drift Survey, begun many years ago in England, will be finished, and when the survey of Ireland will be commenced.

SIR J. GORST: It is impossible to say when the Drift Survey in England will be finished; about one-third is done. The Drift Survey of Ireland was completed some years ago, but it needs revision in certain particulars, and is, as I stated yesterday, now under the consideration of the Board of Education.

LEGITIMIST JACOBITE LEAGUE.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if he can explain why the wreaths sent as usual, according to instructions, to the Office of Works, by the Legitimist Jacobite League of Great Britain and Ireland, for the decoration of the statue of King-Charles I. in Trafalgar Square, on the 30th January last, were not placed upon the statue; and why the decoration of the King's statue, after having been allowed for eight years, was this year prohibited.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS: (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): I would remind the hon. Member that on the 30th January I last our late revered Sovereign was lying dead, and the special circumstances of this case seemed to require that, for this occasion, on grounds of good taste and feeling, the customary decoration should not take place. I may mention that one of the associations which ordinarily send wreaths voluntarily expressed its intention of omitting the observance this year for that very reason. The usual intimation by the Office of Works, referred to by the hon. Member, was given before the Queen's death.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Then I take it that the exception is made for this year only.

[No answer was returned.]

TELEPHONE CHARGES AT SHIELDS

MR. LEVERTON HARRIS (Tynemouth): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that a charge of threepence is made to subscribers of the National Telephone Company for telegraphing from North to South Shields and vice versa, whereas no charge

whatever is made for telephoning from Newcastle-on-Tyne to Gateshead, and, seeing that the National Telephone Company are prepared to undertake the service between North and South Shields and to make no extra charge for communication, he will recommend that the extra charge be abolished or permission be given to the National Telephone Company to undertake the service between North and South Shields.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): The cases are different. Newcastle-on-Tyne and Gateshead are included in the same Telephone Exchange area, while North Shields and South Shields are in different Exchange areas, which are connected by means of the Post Office trunk wires. The charge of threepence is the minimum charge for communication by trunk wires. The extent of the North Shields and South Shields areas, as well as of the Newcastle-on-Tyne area, was fixed by the Postmaster General, in conjunction with the National Telephone Company, and he is not prepared again to transfer the telephone business between North and South Shields to the Company.

DUCHY OF CORNWALL ROYALTIES.

MR. STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will state how much of the £2,161 5s. 10d., stated in the Duchy of Cornwall Return for the year 1900 to have been received from royalty on coal raised in Somerset, was received from the lessees of the Farrington Gurney Colliery and how much from the lessees of the Clandown Colliery.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I have no information beyond that contained in the Parliamentary Return.

MR. STRACHEY: Does the hon. Gentleman mean he is unwilling or unable to furnish the information?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I have no information, except that contained in the Parliamentary Return, and I do not think it reasonable to call for the detailed information.

ILLEGAL TRAWLING IN SCOTTISH WATERS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state how many convictions were obtained in the year 1900 against persons engaged in illegal trawling in Scottish waters, and in how many instances there was a repetition of the offence by the same master; will he state in how many cases the men elected to go to prison rather than pay the fines imposed; and whether, in all cases, the trawling gear of convicted trawlers was confiscated.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The information asked for in the first paragraph of the hon. Member's question is in course of preparation by the Fishery Board for Scotland, in answer to an Order of the House of Commons moved for by the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland. The information asked for in the second and third paragraphs will be given in the Board's forthcoming Annual Report.

MR. WEIR: And when will that Report be ready?

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: Next week, I hope. It is already in proof form.

MR. WEIR: Will it be in the hands of Members before the Estimate is taken?

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I hope so.

ILLEGAL TRAWLING IN BROAD BAY.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Secretary for Scotland is aware that the Northern Light-house Commissioners have agreed to allow their lightkeepers at Tiumpan Head, Island of Lewis, to report to the fishery officer at Stornoway any trawlers observed illegally trawling in Broad Bay; will the Fishery Board consider the expediency of allowing each of the two light-keepers the remuneration of 30s. per annum for his services as suggested by the Lighthouse Commissioners; and will arrangements be made for placing the lighthouse in telephonic communication with the post office at Portnaguran.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The matter has been fully considered by the Secretary for Scotland, and, as an experiment, it has been arranged with the Northern Light Commissioners that the keepers at Tiumpan Lighthouse shall keep a diary with particulars of any case of illegal trawling which may come under their notice during the day. The remuneration which should be given to the two light keepers for this extra duty is receiving consideration. It is not at present proposed to go to the expense of putting the lighthouse in telephonic communication with the telegraph office.

ILLEGAL TRAWLING OFF THE ISLAND OF FOULA.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether, seeing that information has been given to the Procurator Fiscal, Lerwick, that Messrs. James Isbister, Robert Manson, James Henry, and Andrew Henry, of the Island of Foula, Shetland, saw a trawler. P D 364, working within the limits on 21st October, 1900, he can state when the offender will be prosecuted.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am informed that this case will be brought to trial within a fortnight. I am satisfied that the delay, which appears long, may be attributed to the difficulties of travelling which the Procurator Fiscal had to encounter. In winter the access to the Isle of Foula is always difficult and the means infrequent. The delay may properly be attributed, not to the fault of the Procurator Fiscal, but to the geographical peculiarities of the situation.

POULTRY BREEDING IN THE HIGHLANDS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state whether the Congested Districts Board propose this year to distribute free sittings of eggs in the congested areas in each of the six Highland crofting counties, with a view to encourage and improve the breed of poultry: and will he say whether the experiments of last year have on the whole proved successful.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am informed by the Congested Districts Board that the answer to the first paragraph of the hon. Member's question is yes to people who are really likely to help the Congested Districts Board to improve the breed of poultry. And to the second paragraph yes, on the whole, though the difficulties and delays attendant on transit in the remoter districts are against complete success.

AVOCH HARBOUR.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, in view of the fact that the existing harbour at Avoch, Ross-shire, is in so dilapidated a condition that a number of fishing boats at anchor in the harbour have been destroyed, will he state

whether the Fishery Board for Scotland can take action; and, if not, will he say what steps should be taken to require the proprietor of the harbour to put the harbour in a proper state of repair.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am informed by the Fishery Board that they had taken action and negotiations were proceeding when the hon. Member stopped them by raising technical legal questions as to ownership. The Board have no power to require the proprietor of the harbour to put the harbour in a proper state of repair.

MR. WEIR: I shall draw attention to this matter on the Estimates.

GREENOCK BOARD SCHOOLS.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Cork): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that the prizes purchased out of the local rates for the Greenock Board Schools are given for religious

knowledge according to the Presbyterian denomination, and that Roman Catholic children who are not sent to these schools are consequently deprived of a share in those prizes; and whether, seeing that the Roman Catholics have to contribute to the local rates for the education of the children of Presbyterians, and also have to build and maintain schools for themselves, he will provide a remedy for this grievance, either by allocating prizes to all Government-inspected schools, based on average attendance, or by abolishing the purchase of prizes out of the local rates, according to the course adopted at Paisley.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The Department has no power to interfere with the discretion of school boards in regard to the purchase of prizes out of the School Fund for pupils in public schools; nor has it funds at its disposal for allocating prizes to the pupils of all inspected schools. But the general question which the hon. Member perhaps wishes to raise on a particular case is not one which can be treated by question and answer in this House.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN: I should like to point out that this question has been very severely edited at the Table.

*MR. SPEAKER: The question was shown to me, and I was informed that the hon. Member objected to some alterations that had been made in it. There has since been no opportunity of pointing out to the hon. Member that all that was cut out was irregular and dealt with questions of opinion. The gist of the question has not been altered in the least.

SCOTTISH SHERIFFS' SALARIES.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the question of increasing the salaries of sheriff's in Scotland has yet been considered; and, if so, will he state the character of the decision.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The matter, which is one of much difficulty, is still under consideration.

MR. WEIR: Has not this matter already been under consideration two years?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Report has only been under consideration a few weeks.

LIMERICK LUNATIC ASYLUM.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord

Lieutenant of Ireland whether the sum of £1,596 6s. 7d. due to the Committee of Management of the Limerick Lunatic Asylum for maintenance of patients in that institution from the 1st January to the 31st March, 1899, and certified by the Local Government Board Auditor as the amount due, will be paid out of the Irish Local Taxation Account; and, if so, when will the money be available.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): I have nothing to add to my reply to the question previously addressed to me by the hon. Member on this subject.

MR. LUNDON: As this is a matter which seriously affects my constituents, cannot the right hon. Gentleman give an answer?

MR. WYNDHAM: It is not a question which can be dealt with by means of question and answer across the floor of the House.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether the money is due or not?

MR. WYNDHAM: I am quite sure it is not due.

DONEGAL SUB-LAND COMMISSION.

MR. BOYLE (Donegal, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state when the Sub-Commission will sit at Stranorlar, county Donegal, to hear the sixty-nine land cases which have been listed for hearing since January last.

MR. WYNDHAM: On the 2nd April.

WEXFORD LOCAL GOVERNMENT APPEAL.

MR. DALY (Monaghan, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the documents on which the Irish Court of Appeal based their judgment in the case of the Wexford County Council v. The Local Government Board for Ireland were circulars of the Board, copies of which were sent to every county council in Ireland; and whether, seeing that it was in accordance with those circulars that the salaries of certain local officers were fixed in most of the thirty-three administrative counties of Ireland, and in view of the fact that the Court of Appeal has declared the principles laid down in the documents referred to erroneous and illegal, it is intended to maintain the sealed orders which are based upon them.

MR. WYNDHAM: I am unable to accept the hon. Member's representation of the precise grounds of the decision of the Irish Court of Appeal in the cases mentioned. It is impossible to describe in the form of an answer to a question the exact position in which matters now stand and the proceedings which it may be necessary to take in the future, and I think it would be better to defer all explanation until the whole question can be discussed on the Appropriation Bill.

IRISH WORKHOUSE AMALGAMATION.

MR. DALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many workhouses have been amalgamated in Ireland since 1888, and the rates for the two years preceding the amalgamation as well as the two years succeeding amalgamation, and, if a union has been divided when amalgamation took place, whether he can give the rates on the divided portions for two years before and after amalgamation.

MR. WYNDHAM: Two unions have been dissolved since 1888; namely, Gortin and Glin.

I will communicate the information desired on the incidence of the rates to the hon. Member; it could not be conveniently given in the form of a reply to a question.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): Do the Government intend to put forward any general scheme of amalgamation for the unions of Ireland?

MR. WYNDHAM: I am not aware of any such intention, but perhaps the hon. Member will put the question down.

IRISH BOARD OF AGRICULTURE; HORSE BREEDING.

MR. DALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the dissatisfaction in Ireland amongst the stallion owners, in connection with the refusal and admission of thoroughbred stallions under the new Board of Agriculture, he will state on whom the responsibility rests regarding the decisions of the fitness or rejection of horses in connection with this scheme; and what are the qualifications necessary for the performance of such duties.

MR. WYNDHAM: The responsibility rests in the Department of Agriculture. It was exercised, in respect of the general suitability of stallions, in accordance with certificates furnished by Captain Tuthill, Mr. A. R. Bourne, and Captain C. D. Featherstonhaugh, and, in respect of soundness, upon the certificates of, Messrs. Cleary, Rea, Winter, and Byrne, veterinary surgeons.

TRAINED NURSES IN IRISH WORKHOUSES.

MR. DALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if the sealed Order of the 4th March issued to the boards of guardians in reference to the appointment of trained nurses in workhouses gives the Local Government Board the power to appoint as many officers for the workhouses as they think fit without consulting the guardians; and if so, can he state what the guardians' duties will be if they have no power to refuse to make appointments which they consider unnecessary; and if it will be necessary for every board of guardians in Ireland to take legal steps to upset this sealed order, as the Armagh guardians are about doing.

MR. WYNDHAM: The sealed Order of the 4th February confers no new power on the Board. The Order was made in pursuance of Section 31 of the Poor Relief Act, 1838. The powers of the guardians will be to select a proper person for filling any office deemed necessary for the well-being of the sick poor. The answer to the second paragraph is in the negative. The Board will be guided by the decision of the Lord Lieutenant in Council on the Armagh case, and, as I have already stated, any representations that may be made by local authorities against the Order will be carefully considered by the Board.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Local Government Board have refused to sanction the appointment of persons described as half-qualified, and thereby upset the action of the guardians?

MR. WYNDHAM: The duty of the Local Government Board is to refuse to sanction the appointment of those they hold to be not qualified.

MR. DALY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Local Government Board is in conflict with the boards of guardians because they refuse to sanction the appointment of persons the guardians deem to be qualified?

MR. WYNDHAM: I am not aware of that. I deeply regret it, but I am glad to say that many boards have recognized that the Local Government Board have acted in their interests.

LABOURERS' COTTAGES AT STRANORLAR.

MR. BOYLE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state when the representation was first made and approved of for building fifteen labourers' cottages in the Stranor-lar Rural District, county Donegal; whether he is aware that the Local Government Board inspector only held the inquiry regarding same on the 27th November, 1900; and can he state the cause of the delay of the Local Government Board in issuing the Provisional Order for same.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Board has no information on the subject of the first paragraph. The Improvement Scheme was signed in July last; the documents in complete form were lodged with the Board in November, and the inquiry was held. There has been no delay on the part of the Board; a draft of the Provisional Order will be before the Council at its next meeting.

INNISHOWEN COAST; HARBOUR ACCOMMODATION.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if the attention of the Irish Government has been directed to the request by the Congested Districts Board for Ireland some months ago to take into consideration the provision of adequate harbour accommodation on the north coast of Innishowen, and to the opinion of the Board that deep sea fishing at Malin Head and Glengad cannot be properly developed without such harbour; and, seeing that hundreds of families in these districts depend solely for support upon the deep-sea fishing which during the winter, owing to the, absence of a suitable harbour, could not be carried on with safety, and that some of the piers in these districts, which were built partly out of moneys locally supplied, but according to plans and sites selected by the Board of Works, which piers were designated on the cutting of the first sod of the Carndonagh Line of Railway by his predecessor as dry land piers, whether compensation will be made by the Government for the money thus expended by the Board of Works by a grant being given for the construction of a harbour, as recommended by the Congested Districts Board.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Congested Districts Board has expressed the opinion that the fishing industry cannot be largely developed on coast of Donegal unless a harbour of refuge be constructed. The natural facilities for such a harbour are not great, and its cost would be in excess of any sum which the Board could provide. Under these circumstances, the project is one which can only be considered in connection with similar projects of considerable magnitude.

MR. O'DOHERTY: I asked if representations had been made by the Congested Districts Board to the Irish Government in favour of a grant from imperial funds for the construction of a harbour of refuge.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have said that the Board have expressed an opinion that these fisheries cannot be much developed without such a harbour.

MR. O'DOHERTY: Will the right hon. Gentleman send down an engineer to inspect and report?

MR. WYNDHAM: I see no objection to that, as a work of this magnitude could not be carried out with local means alone.

MR. O'DOHERTY: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the latter part of my question.

MR. WYNDHAM: With all respect, I have answered it as fully as I can.

LIMAVADY WATER SUPPLY.

MR. O'DOHERTY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland will he explain why the Local Government Board have threatened the Limavady Rural District Council to take action under Section 15 of the Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1896, should the district council not proceed with a scheme for providing a water supply near the Ballykelly Railway Station, a rural district, not a town, although the existing water supply is satisfactory in quantity and quality to all parties in the district, including the sanitary officer of the district, who is also the medical officer, who has so certified that the water supply is fit for domestic use; was due inquiry made by the Board into the question whether the district council have been guilty of any default with reference to said water supply; and, if so, was an Order made by the said Board limiting the time for the performance of what the Local Government Board consider the duty of the district council; and will he state who held this inquiry, and upon whose complaint did the Local Government Board move in this matter.

MR. WYNDHAM: A formal complaint under Section 15 of the Act of 1896 was made to the Board by residents of the district, including a rural district councillor, in October last. The rural council decline to take any steps towards improving the water supply, and the Board has intimated that it may be compelled to proceed under the enactment referred to. The Report of the Medical Officer of Health tended to show that the stream from which the water supply is taken is polluted. A public inquiry in pursuance of Section 15 has not yet been held.

ROYAL CANAL HARBOUR, LONGFORD.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any resolution on the subject of the unprotected and dangerous state of the Royal Canal Harbour at Longford has been received from the County Longford Agricultural and Technical Industries Committee, and will he arrange that the section of the Agriculture (Ireland) Act, 1899, therein referred to will be given effect to by the Railway and Canal Commission.

MR. WYNDHAM: At the request of my right hon. friend I will reply to this question. The resolution referred to has been received by the Department of Agriculture, who have been advised that the matter is not one in which action can be taken under Section 17 of the Act of 1899.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether any riders of coroners' juries at inquests held on the bodies of persons drowned in the Canal Harbour, Longford, have recently been received at his office, asking for a rail fence to be put round this harbour so as to protect human life; whether he is aware that within the past ten years seven persons have been drowned in it; and will he consider the advisability of extending the Canals Protection (London) Act to Ireland.

MR. WYNDHAM: Six persons have been drowned in the Canal Harbour within the past ten years. No expressions of opinion on the part of the coroners' juries to the effect mentioned have been recently received by me. I have not had an opportunity of con-

sidering whether it is desirable, or necessary, that the Act referred to should be applied to Ireland. I will look into the matter.

MR. FAERELL: If a Bill is introduced, will the right hon. Gentleman facilitate its passage?

MR. WYNDHAM: I cannot give an undertaking until I have considered the character and necessity of such legislation.

LONGFORD RESIDENT MAGISTRATE.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the date of Mr. Kilkelly's appointment as resident magistrate of Longford, what is his salary, and whether he is allowed any travelling expenses; and is there a rule that resident magistrates who are in charge of a district for seven years shall then be changed to another district.

MR. WYNDHAM: Mr. Kilkelly was appointed resident magistrate for the Longford district on the 1st February, 1892. His salary is £550 a year, and he is allowed his travelling expenses outside a radius of fifteen miles from his station. The answer to the second paragraph is in the negative.

BANSHA GRAVEYARD.

MR. CULLINAN (Tipperary, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with regard to the inquiry which has been ordered to be held in the board room at Tipperary on Wednesday, the 27th instant, into the overcrowded state of the Bansha graveyard, at which many witnesses will necessarily have to be examined, whether, for the convenience of the many parties interested, he would have the inquiry held in Bansha, where the court house would be found most suitable for the purpose.

MR. WYNDHAM: It will be open to the inspector to adjourn the inquiry to Bansha if he finds this course desirable, and I have caused the suggestion of the hon. Member to be communicated to him.

DROMARD PETTY SESSIONS.

MR. JOHN CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many times a year Courts of petty sessions, including sessions held by the Chairman of the Town Commissioners under the operation of the Towns Improvement Act, are held in Dromard, and what are the reasons which District Inspector Clayton, of Banbridge, gives to the Inspector General for not attending these sessions; whether he is aware that this officer spends most of his time in his own recreations instead of discharging his duty, and during the greater part of last September and October was incapacitated through an injury incurred in such recreations; and whether he will lay upon the Table copies of Monthly Return No. 8, as filled up by District Inspector Clayton and forwarded to the Inspector General.

MR. WYNDHAM: The petty sessions are held monthly. I have already stated that this officer's absences from petty sessions have been accounted for to the satisfaction of the Inspector General, and that he is not required to attend the

sessions if he has more urgent duty to discharge elsewhere. I have no information as to the second paragraph. The reply to the third paragraph is in the negative.

LURGAN DISTURBANCES.

MR. JOHN CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that a Nationalist procession was on St. Patrick's Day attacked in Lurgan; can he state how many people were injured and the nature of their wounds; and how many arrests have been made.

MR. WYNDHAM: I am informed that when this procession was passing through Lurgan a few stones were thrown from both the Nationalist and Orange crowds. So far as the police have been able to ascertain, one person, a girl, was injured somewhat severely in the head. One arrest has been made, and the case will be investigated by the magistrates at petty sessions on the 16th April.

NORTH DONEGAL FISHERIES.

MR. O'DOHERTY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a memorial was received some time ago by the Congested Districts Board from the fishermen and inhabitants of the Fannet peninsula of North Donegal requesting the Board to erect a boatslip at Araheera, a port frequented by fishermen, and pointing out that, owing to the absence of a boatslip, the fishermen could not take advantage of the herring fishing when plentiful in the waters about the headland; and, seeing that the said port was inspected some time ago by a member of the Congested Districts Board, whether he can state what his report to the Board was, and whether the Board will carry out the proposed work.

MR. WYNDHAM: The site of the suggested work has been visited by a member of the Congested Districts Board, but I cannot disclose his Report. The matter will be further considered by the Board at an early meeting.

IRISH RAILWAY GUARANTEES.

MR. CONDON (Tipperary, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether ratepayers in Ireland are entitled under the Local Government Act, 1898, to deduct half the amount payable by them in respect of railway guarantees such as the guarantee for the Southern Railway from Clonmel to Thurles.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): This is an abstract question as to the proper construction of certain sections of the Local Government Act, 1898, and other statutes affecting the respective liabilities of landlord and tenant, and not relating to the administration of the Criminal Law or the action of any Department of the Irish Government. I must therefore respectfully decline to answer it.

PROPOSED IRISH DEPARTMENT AT THE BOARD OF TRADE.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether it is intended to establish an Irish Department at the Board of Trade.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No, Sir.

COUNTY DOWN POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS.

MR. DALY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that English and Scotch letters posted in Ballyroney, Katesbridge, and neighbourhood, county Down, are collected about

5 o'clock in the afternoon, brought to Newry, and remain there until the next day before being forwarded, three days from time of collection to delivery being thus required; and if he will take steps to prevent such delay in future.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: English and Scotch letters despatched from Ballyroney at 5.55 p.m. and from Katesbridge at 5 p.m. reach Newry at 9.10 p.m. and are forwarded thence early the following morning in time for despatch by the day mail from Dublin, reaching London and many other places in time for delivery the same evening. If posted at Ballyroney by 7.30 a.m. letters for England and Scotland would be delivered on the following morning. According to the latest returns the existing services to Ballyroney and Kates-bridge are maintained at a considerable loss, and the Postmaster General regrets that he would not be justified in incurring additional expense for the purpose of improving them.

MR. DALY: Am I to understand it does not take three days from the time of posting to that of delivery?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I understand it does not.

MR. DALY: I shall put another question, for I am not satisfied with the reply.

MR. DALY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that English and Scotch letters take almost three days from the time that they are posted until they are delivered in Ballyroney and Katesbridge, county Down; and if he will take steps to have these mails sent on from Newry, which is the head office for the district, to Ballyroney and Katesbridge by either rail, car, or bicycle.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Letters sent from England and Scotland by night mail reach Ballyroney at 5.55 p.m. on the following evening, and can then be obtained on application at the post office. As there is no second post in the day to Katesbridge, such letters do not reach that place until the second day after posting. The question of establishing a second post to Katesbridge and an earlier arrival in the afternoon at Ballyroney was recently considered, but it was found that the circumstances did not warrant the cost.

PORTUMNA POSTMAN.

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that Thomas Madden, Portumna, county Galway, resigned his position as postman after twenty-four years service on a representation made to him by the local postal authorities that he was to receive a pension, and has since been notified that he is not entitled to one: and whether, seeing that this postman received four badges for good conduct during his service and previously during nineteen years service in the Army received five war medals with three clasps, together with four badges for good conduct, his claim for a pension will be reconsidered.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Of the twenty-four years service rendered by Thomas Madden sixteen years were in the employment, not of the Department, but of the sub-postmaster of Portumna, and it was only in 1891 that he was employed by the Postmaster General as an unestablished postman. As he did not hold a Civil Service certificate he was ineligible for pension, but if he had completed fifteen years whole-time service as an unestablished postman he would have been eligible for the grant of a Compassionate Gratuity on retirement under the

Superannuation Act. When his sick absences became such that he was no longer efficient he was given three months notice that it would be necessary to discontinue his employment, and no promise of either a pension or gratuity was made to him; but particulars of his entire service were called for in order that the case might be thoroughly examined. As, however, Madden had nine years service only as an unestablished postman, the Postmaster General was, he very much regrets, unable to obtain a gratuity for him on retirement. Madden is, it may be stated, in receipt of an Army pension.

MR. ROCHE: But is it not the fact that this man served the Post Office for a considerable number of years?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: That may be so, but the Postmaster General has no power to confer pensions for unestablished service in the Post Office.

DUBLIN SORTING OFFICE; DEFALCATIONS.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the present Controller of the Dublin Sorting Office is held responsible for defalcations which occurred under his control, and whether the Department has decided that he shall make good the amount of some £1,600 to the Revenue; whether this official more recently misstated the facts in connection with complaints made by certain employees of the Department; and whether the Postmaster General contemplates allowing this official to permanently occupy the position of control which he at present holds.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Controller of the Dublin Sorting Office has been informed that he is liable to be called upon to make good certain defalcations which have lately occurred, in consequence of frauds committed by one of the officers under his control. There is no ground whatever for suggesting that he has on any occasion been guilty of wilful misstatement; and there is no question of removing him from his present post.

ENNISKILLEN POST OFFICE.

MR. JORDAN (Fermanagh, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether the new post office in Enniskillen has yet been opened for the transaction of public business; and, if not, will he state the date at which it will be opened and whether a sub-office will be opened for the accommodation of the west side of the town on the removal of the principal office to the new premises in the east end.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The new post office at Enniskillen has not yet been opened for the transaction of public business. It is expected that the buildings will be finished in about a month. The question of opening a sub-office for the accommodation of the west end of the town on the removal of the head post office will be taken into consideration when the removal has been carried out.

WEST AUSTRALIA AND IRISH HOME RULE.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to a meeting held last year in Perth, West Australia, at which a resolution was passed to the effect that, in view of the services rendered by Irishmen to the British Empire, the time is opportune for a further attempt to recognise the claims of the Irish nation to self-government,

in a form similar to that enjoyed by the Australian subjects of the Empire; and whether he has received a copy of this resolution at the Colonial Office, and I whether any reply has been sent to it.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I received a copy of the resolution from the Governor of Western Australia last year, and acknowledged its receipt, informing the Governor that it had been laid before the Queen.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS IN THE TWO HOUSES;SUGGESTED TELEPHONIC COMMUNICATION

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he will arrange for telephonic communication between the Government Benches in the Houses of Lords and Commons, to facilitate Ministers in answering questions about which it may be necessary they should in emergencies consult, with the object of having the same information supplied to both Houses of Parliament.

MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: No, Sir.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Cannot the right hon. Gentleman devise some means of communication so that we may have the information this House is entitled to?

[No answer was returned.]

*MR. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, seeing that an important statement was made yesterday at half-past four in the House of Lords, of which nothing was known by Ministers in this House at twenty minutes to six, he can arrange in future to afford this House the same information as is given in another place.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester. E.): The Government are always anxious that this House should be at no disadvantage in comparison with the other House with regard to information. But the hon. Gentleman has put his question under some misconception as to what really took place yesterday. The language of the question almost indicates that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had volunteered a statement in the other House, and that no corresponding statement was volunteered here; in other words, that the Government took the initiative in the House of Lords. I agree that it would be most improper for the Government to volunteer to the House of Lords a more or less elaborate statement on a question of foreign policy while no parallel course was taken in this House. But that is not what happened—What happened was that when Lord Lansdowne reached the House of Lords at half-past four o'clock yesterday, private notice of a question was given by Lord Spencer. That question was answered by Lord Lansdowne at a time when, usually, this House has completed the business of the day as far as questions and answers are concerned. It is to be regretted, no doubt, that such an instance should occur; but so long as you leave to each House the privilege of putting questions without previous notice, some accident of this kind is almost certain to occur. On the whole, I should say that

it is not this House so much as the other House which has suffered most by the system. It has constantly happened that the Secretary of State for War or for the Colonies has been met on coming here with private notice of a question which he was prepared to answer, and which he has answered, without having the opportunity of communicating with his colleagues in the other House. That is what occurred yesterday, and, unless you are never to answer a question without

notice, I do not see how such an accident can be avoided. I can give the House a positive assurance that we shall do our very best to see that all information of public interest which is conveyed to the other House shall at the same time be conveyed to this House.

MR. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): May I ask why, if Lord Lansdowne was prepared with the answer in the other House, the right hon. Gentleman was not prepared with an answer in this House?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Lord Lansdowne was asked when he came down whether he could answer the question. I was never given any notice of the putting of the Question at all.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): Does the right hon. Gentleman say that Lord Spencer had not previously given notice of the question?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No. Sir, it was private notice. I had had no notice at all, or I should have done my best to give the House information.

MR. HERBERT LEWIS: My question was why, if Lord Lansdowne was prepared with an answer in the other House, the noble Lord was not prepared with similar information for this House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That seems to be a most unreasonable question. It is impossible to expect anyone but the head of a Department to have, in the form which can at once be given to the public, the latest information on every matter. No doubt there was present to the mind of the Under Secretary the telegram on which Lord Lansdowne based his answer; but if my noble friend had received notice

of the question he would have had to consult Lord Lansdowne as to the form of the answer.

*MR. CORRIE GRANT: The right hon. Gentleman does not appreciate the point of the complaint. The statement of the Foreign Secretary was made at half-past four in the House of Lords, and what I wanted to suggest was that when a statement of that kind has been made in the House of Lords the Foreign Secretary should see that the information is conveyed to the House of Commons.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, Sir, I think it would be a very good plan if, when any statement has been made in one House, communication of the fact should be made to the other House. But according to all practice and precedent the Foreign Secretary had every reason to think that we in this House had long passed the stage when it is possible to deal with such a matter by way of question and answer.

MR. CREAN (Cork, S.E.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Under Secretary had received private notice of the question from the hon. Member for West Waterford some hours before?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member is mistaken. Private notice of a question was sent to my noble friend. That question was not in my noble friend's Department, but in that of the Secretary of State for India, and he answered it.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman give an assurance that for the future the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs will put his representative in this House at once in possession of the important information which may come to him, so that that information may be conveyed simultaneously

to both Houses?

[No answer was returned.]

PROPOSED QUESTION LIMITATION.

MR. RENWICK (Newcastle-on Tyne): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if, in order to facilitate the business of the House, he will consider the advisability of amending the Standing Orders so that no Member shall be entitled to ask more

than one question in any day, and that no Member be entitled to speak for more than twenty minutes on any Bill, Amendment, Resolution, or Motion unless the House consents to grant an extension of time.

MAJOR RASCH: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers will he kindly consider the resolution moved by me on this subject and carried by a majority of three to one, although we had to except the two Front Benches?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not carry in my memory the exact circumstances attending the debate to which my hon. and gallant friend refers. But he has more than once drawn the attention of the House to this question, and has suggested that there should be a time-limit to speeches. Although the proposal met with considerable sympathy from all parts of the House, it was also felt that it you be a new limitation upon the general flexibility of debate, which certainly the House ought not to adopt without much fuller consideration and without, perhaps, even more painful experiences than those which we have gone through.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE;EASTER HOLIDAYS.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can now state when the House will rise for the Easter Recess and meet again for the despatch of business.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I had better defer any statement on this matter till next week. Perhaps the hon. Member will put down the question for Monday or Tuesday.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES BILL.

Order for Second Reading upon Thursday, 18th April, read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

DECLARATION AGAINST TRANSURSTANTIATION.;That they have come to the following Resolution, namely: "That it is desirable that a Joint Committee of both Houses be appointed to consider the Declaration required of the Sovereign, on His Accession, by the Bill of Rights (1 Will. III., cap. 2. s. 1); and to report whether its language can be modified advantageously, without diminishing its efficacy as a security for the maintenance of the Protestant Succession."

That they have passed a Bill intituled, "An Act to constitute the town of Duns to be the head burgh or county town of Berwickshire." Berwickshire County Town Bill. [Lords.]

BERWICKSHIRE COUNTY TOWN BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS IN THE TWO HOUSES.

[MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.]

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) rose in his place, and asked leave

to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, "the failure yesterday of His Majesty's Government to give to this House information on a critical situation in foreign affairs, while such communication was made to the other House of Parliament"; but the pleasure of the House not having been signified, Mr. SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the motion to rise in their places, and not less than forty Members having accordingly risen;

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The brief conversation which took place a few minutes ago on the subject of question and answer has thrown additional light on this subject. It is hardly necessary for me to recite the actual facts of the case, because they are within the memory of those present. But it is a matter which can cause no surprise either to the House or to the Government that some notice should be taken of what has occurred, in order to vindicate what has always been regarded as the clear right of this House, and to prevent by lapse of attention a precedent from being established on the ground of anything that occurred yesterday. The fact

is that a certain statement was made to the House of Lords on a matter regarding which the public attention was stretched almost to its utmost limit, a matter which was exciting the greatest and most critical alarm throughout the country; and, on a question being addressed to the Government a short space of time afterwards in this House, they professed to have no information whatever to communicate upon a matter of public importance; namely, the events in China. That in itself is a question capable of two separate explanations. I do not know that if I give the Government the choice of these two explanations they will find themselves very well off, whichever of the two they accept. It may have been that they deliberately and of their own knowledge intended, and thought it a proper thing on their part to do, to conceal or refrain from communicating to this House information which a member of the Government was at the same time communicating to the other House. That is one interpretation of what happened. But there is another, and I am not sure that the second interpretation is not the more probable of the two. It may be that the representatives of the Government in this House were unaware of the facts which were being communicated in the other House. I wish to point out to the House that this is almost a more serious breach of the rights and privileges of this House than that which I have spoken of as the former alternative. We have neither the Prime Minister nor the Minister for Foreign Affairs present in this House. We have an Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs who, subject to very strict limitations, answers, and answers extremely well, all the questions addressed to him; but we have also here the Leader of the House, the First Lord of the Treasury; and I maintain that, in the absence of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and of the Prime Minister, we are entitled to look to the Leader of the House as the most important member of the Government in the House, and as the personage fully informed upon all questions of urgency in connection with Foreign Affairs. Here was an urgent matter if ever there was one. It was a matter, not of months, weeks, or days, but apparently of hours and almost of minutes. Two forces were arrayed almost in the face of each other, and at any moment a

foolish act might have precipitated a conflict between two Great Powers. Am I to be told that while that is the condition of things the Leader of the House, to whom we are to look for full information, was not aware of the communications which had passed either from St. Petersburg to London or from London to St Petersburg? Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will be able to tell us, what does not appear, I think, very clearly at present, when the despatch was received from St. Petersburg and when it was answered, because it seems to me that if that was done within a considerable interval of time before the meeting of the House yesterday, it was the bounden duty of those responsible to have informed the First Lord of the Treasury, in order that he might be able to answer any question which might be addressed to him on a matter upon which a question was almost certain to be put in such a state of public opinion as existed. It is on that condition alone that the House of Commons can maintain its hold over and power of influencing the conduct of foreign affairs. We receive from the Under Secretary, as I have already said, information on matters of detail; but when it comes to a question of great urgency and of a critical nature, under such circumstances we look for something more than that, and we do not expect to be put aside with the usual technical excuse about want of notice, when, as we have now found, at the moment the Government were in possession of the full information. If they did not communicate it to the House it was either because in the opinion of the Government it was not necessary to pay the House of Commons the compliment of making that communication, or because the members of the Government who sit here and represent the Government were not themselves aware of what had occurred. I have spoken of this as an alternative, but I cannot wish the right hon. Gentleman joy whichever of the two options he accepts.

I think at least that we are entitled to call upon the right hon. Gentleman to give some fuller explanation than has yet been given of these circumstances, which

throw a strange light on the relations between the executive Government in this House, and which I think deserve the immediate attention which I have asked the House to give. I do not wish to say a word in derogation of the dignity and importance of the other House of Parliament, but this House, after all, has most to do with the conduct of the affairs of this country. It is here that we ought to have the first and fullest information upon all critical matters on which the mind of the country is greatly exercised; and I think the right hon. Gentleman will be glad to take the opportunity which this motion offers him of explaining more fully than he has yet been able to do the reasons why yesterday he appeared to depart from that which seemed to be due to the dignity and interests of the House of Commons.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester. E.): I must say, with all respect to the right hon. Gentleman in his personal capacity and as leader of a great party, that I do not think I ever heard the adjournment of the House moved on a more frivolous pretext than that which he has just stated. After all, in the course of what the right hon. Gentleman called the question

and the answer across the floor of the House the fullest information was given by me of all the circumstances connected with this affair, and the right hon. Gentleman has not remembered what those circumstances were, He seems to think that we were in the position in which Lord Lansdowne was in the other House; that is to say, that we had received, as he had received, private notice of a question on the subject. But we received no notice at all, and when the hon. Member for Carnarvon Boroughs asked whether we were going to make a statement similar to that made by Lord Lansdowne we had not the slightest idea what the statement was, and we could not have the information unless Lord Lansdowne had at once sent it down here, which no doubt would have been a desirable thing, but which, as I have pointed out, it is really absurd to attack Lord Lansdowne for not doing, inasmuch as he had good ground for supposing that question time was over in this House. Lord Spencer, acting in the other House as Leader of the Opposition, asked the question at half-past four o'clock. Why did not Lord Spencer send down here and say that he had asked the question, and that a similar question should be put to me or my noble friend from the bench opposite, in which case it would have been answered here as in another place?

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Then you did know?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the question had been put here it would have been answered.

*MR. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby): When I asked the right hon. Gentleman about this subject yesterday, having just come from the House of Lords, the right hon. Gentleman said in reply that this was the first he had heard of the subject.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It was the first I had heard of the fact that the subject had been raised in the House of Lords itself. There was no specific question put to me on the fact itself yesterday. If there had been a question asked it must have been specific, and, at all events, the Minister who had to answer it must have been given a moderate amount of notice. But there was no notice given, public or private, and no question was put.

*MR. CORRIE GRANT: If the right hon. Gentleman will refer to The Times report which he has by him, I think it will be seen that I asked the right hon. Gentleman whether it was not a fact that Lord Lansdowne had made a statement in the House of Lords at 4.30 in answer to Lord Spencer. I thought that the right hon. Gentleman would naturally wish to communicate similar facts to the House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: This is what appeared in The Times;

"Mr. Grant asked whether a full statement by the Foreign Secretary was not made in the other House at half-past four o'clock in answer to Earl Spencer. Mr.

Balfour.; This is the first intimation I have received of it. I have no doubt that if the hon. Gentleman says, it is so it is true, but I am not aware of it."

I think that settles the hon. Gentleman so far as that particular point is concerned. The questions put to us were as to what occurred in the other House.

That we had no official means of knowing. As a matter of fact we did not know.

If the hon. Gentleman chooses to say that Lord Lansdowne should have sent down to say, "Lord Spencer gave private notice of a question; I have answered it," I think that would have been a desirable thing to have said. But in twenty-nine

cases out of thirty, as anybody sees who looks at the clock now, it would have been perfectly vain as far as this House is concerned, because at the moment when the question of Lord Spencer was answered by Lord Lansdowne we enter upon the Orders of the Day, and the opportunity of giving an answer is passed. I hope that puts the matter clearly. Of course we are not backward in answering questions, and what astonishes me is, if the right hon. Gentleman was on the tenter-hooks of expectation, as he now describes himself, with regard to the incidents at Tientsin, that he did not imitate the example of his colleague in the other House, and did not send private notice either to my noble friend the Secretary of State for India, to myself, or to the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs. Had he done so, had he shown or had any Member of this House shown this extraordinary anxiety which it appears they felt with regard to Tientsin, and given us notice, they would have received, of course, similar information in this House to that which we gave in another House. I do not understand why the hon. Gentleman opposite should make a complaint of not receiving an answer to a question which he never put, and which, if he had put it with the ordinary notice given in such cases, would, I feel sure, have received the fullest and most careful consideration.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): The right hon. Gentleman has not addressed himself to the question that was put to him yesterday by the hon. Member for Carnarvon. I have the words he used here, and he said;

"May I ask whether an arrangement has been arrived at whereby both Russian and British troops are to retire from the disputed territory, that matters are to be referred to Count von Waldersee, and that] an apology is to be offered by the party found to be in the wrong."

And the question is, why the Leader of the House did not answer the inquiry. That brings before the House a matter of the most vital importance, and that is the relation of the Leader of the House of Commons to this Assembly (for I do not enter upon any question of Under Secretaries here). I have sometimes had the honour and responsibility of occupying that position, and the first condition that I specially made on accepting that duty—was that when the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary were in the other House, whatever office the Leader of the House of Commons might hold, he should be placed in relation to foreign affairs in as full and immediate knowledge of every matter of importance as was the Prime Minister or the Foreign Secretary. I put it specifically on this ground that unless that condition was fulfilled I could not discharge the duties that I owed to the House of Commons. Therefore, passing by Under Secretaries altogether, I maintain that the House of Commons has a right at every moment to expect that the Leader of this House shall give as full information to this House upon foreign affairs as could the Prime Minister or the Foreign Secretary if he were sitting here.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Nobody denies that. All that is asked for is that when information is wanted some notice, private or public, should be given.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, when there is a question of critical importance and the Leader of this House has that knowledge I should have thought that to relieve public anxiety in all parts of this country it would have been a very

proper thing to have volunteered the information or to have solicited some one to put a question in order that such an answer should be given. The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the question put to him by my right hon. friend near me. He has not said when the Russian despatch arrived; he has not told us when that despatch was answered; he has not stated when it came to his knowledge that those despatches had been received and answered; and he has not told us whether, when the question was put yesterday in the House of Commons, he knew the terms of that settlement. If that be so, I venture to say that the Leader of the House of Commons is not in the position we have a right to expect, upon matters of this importance, to give us information to which we are entitled. Here is a specific question put to him which contained, and accurately contained, the terms of settlement. Why did not he answer it? Did he know it? He has not told us whether he knew it or not. If he knew it, why at the end of this interrogation did not he give an answer? He has answered neither of these questions. He has not told us whether he knew, and why, if he knew, he did not give an answer. I venture to say that such a situation has never before in the House been occupied by any Leader. I say it is the bounden duty of the Leader of this House to be in a position to answer questions of that kind on critical foreign affairs, and it is for that reason that this question has been properly raised here. I have frequently put questions when I considered them of high and critical importance, not to the Under Secretary, but to the Leader of the House, because the Leader of the House being a principal, and for our purposes the principal, member of the Cabinet here, we have a right to expect that he knows everything not merely that the Cabinet knows, because you cannot always call the Cabinet together in a moment, but everything that the Foreign Minister knows, everything that the Prime Minister knows; that it should be immediately communicated to him, not merely because he is a member of the Cabinet, but, above all, because he is the Leader of the House of Commons. The House of Commons is the body that has the first right to have information upon these questions that so vitally concern the interests of the nation. An Under Secretary may require notice of what answer to give, but the position of the right hon. Gentleman as a principal member of the Cabinet and as Leader of the House of Commons ought to require no notice at all. He cannot get up and say he knows nothing at all about it. He has not told us;

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I never did say that.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: He has not told us; he has been asked and he has not answered; when it was that this information came to his knowledge, when he saw the telegram that was sent from Russia, when he saw the despatch or telegram by which it was answered. If he had seen those telegrams why should he have refrained from stating to the House that which it would have been a great satisfaction to the House and the country to know? That is a thing on which we have received no information yet. I do not put it upon the question of notice or on the ground of the Under Secretary being prepared or not prepared, but simply and plainly upon the ground that we have a right to information from the member of the Government who is responsible to this House in such matters when a critical question of this kind arises. As to notice being required, what notice

could be required that a question would be asked about the position of affairs between Russia and England at Tientsin? It was absolutely certain that a question would be asked, and if it was not possible at that time to give an answer, then no answer could have been given no doubt. But when there was a satisfactory answer, when a matter had been settled, when all danger was removed, why in the world that question was not answered has not been explained by the right hon. Gentleman in anything that he has said to-night.

*SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): It must be evident to the majority of this House that this motion for adjournment is a tempest in a teapot. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House, in his opening statement, in answer to a question put, took the sting out of the complaint, and gave really to the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition the opportunity of not moving the adjournment. The Leader of the House has told us in the clearest possible way that the Government have no intention and had no intention of refusing information to the House of Commons. He has promised, in addition to that, that he will make every effort to supply all the information which he possesses so as to keep the House up to date in regard to these important issues, it is evident

that a slight slip has occurred somewhere. Humanity is subject to slight slips, especially in cases of this importance, where negotiations are conducted by telegraph. It is perfectly clear to every hon. Member that the Foreign Secretary, the Minister responsible, may have received information, or may have sent a final telegram, within half an hour or quarter of an hour before coming down to the House of Lords, and it may have been impossible to communicate it to his colleagues in this House. If the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House had not taken the line he has done in promising all information to the House, and in regretting that any information had been withheld from the House owing to accident, there might have been some good reason for a motion for adjournment. I would point out to the Leader of the Opposition what a mistake he and his friends make in occupying the time of the House on questions like this when they absolutely neglect their duty on questions of far greater importance. They have absolutely failed to take any steps to bring any of these great issues in China before the House and the country. They might have raised debates in regard to Manchuria, the seizure of our railways in North China, the proposed evacuation of Peking, or the refusal of the Russian Minister in Peking to agree to the punishment of high-placed Chinese criminals. If the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition had taken action on any of these subjects he would have been acting in a way worthy of his position; but after the explanations offered by the Leader of the House it is wholly unnecessary to take up the time of the House by this idle motion for adjournment.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R. Barnsley): We have reason to complain that the Government does not give to the House in regard to important foreign affairs all the information which, with due regard to the public interest, they might afford us. On Monday last I put a question to the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs;

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order; There is a definite case before the House,

and

the hon. Gentleman cannot go into other, eases.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON: I bow to your ruling, Mr. Speaker. I can only express my hope, that in the future, as promised by the First Lord of the Treasury, closer relations will be maintained between himself and the Minister for Foreign Affairs in the House of Lords, in order that this House may have always early information in regard to matters of extreme importance to this country.

*MR. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House has stated that he never knew of a more frivolous pretext for a motion for the adjournment of the House than that offered by the Leader of the Opposition, but the object of the motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition is to protest against the frivolous manner in which the Government have treated the House of Commons in this matter. I asked the Leader of the House why, if Lord Lansdowne was prepared to give an answer in the House of Lords, he was not prepared to give an answer here. The right hon. Gentleman treated my question as one of a general character; but the special object of my question was to indicate that if Lord Lansdowne was informed about a matter of great national importance, one which must necessarily be settled by the Government as a whole, it was the duty of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House to be able to furnish the House of Commons at once with the information which Lord Lansdowne was prepared to give to the House of Lords. What was the question which the hon. Member for Carnarvon asked yesterday? It was whether the right hon. Gentleman had any announcement to make as to the negotiations between Russia and this country. Now, a settlement could not possibly have been arrived at without the knowledge of the Government of which the right hon. Gentleman is a principal member; and yet the reply of the right hon. Gentleman was, "No, Sir; I have no statement to make." But Lord Lansdowne had a statement to make in the House of Lords, and was prepared to make it on short private notice, and without making any reference to official documents. Why was not the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House in a position to give the House of Commons the same information? Then, later on, the hon. Member for Carnarvon asked this question very pointedly; he said;

"May I ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether an arrangement has been arrived at whereby both Russian and British troops are to retire from the disputed territory, that matters are to be referred to Count Von Waldersee, and that an apology is to be offered by the party found to be in the wrong?"

Now that is a question of the most specific character possible, and the right hon. Gentleman either knew or did not know what were the facts. If he knew the facts, what excuse has he for not communicating them to the House? If he did not know these facts, how came it that other people knew them hours before? The hon. Gentleman the Member for Carnarvon asked for an answer to the specific question which he put and to that the right hon. Gentleman did not deign to give any reply whatever. This House, after all, is the representative Assembly of the country, and whatever respect we may have for the other House it has not the representative character which this House possesses. It is this House which

disburses all the funds for carrying on foreign wars, and on a question of this kind; of a grave international question arising between this country and Russia; this House ought to have the first information. Now, I desire to ask the right hon. Gentleman specifically, Did he know or did he not know the terms which had been arranged with Russia when he came down to the House yesterday? MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said it seemed to him that the vital part of this discussion as he looked at it appeared to be that the Government did not appreciate the real feeling of the country. On the previous day the country had been very much concerned at the position which had arisen between this country and Russia in China. The Government hardly seemed to realise the extreme feeling which had arisen on this important matter, because, had they done so, directly the new communication had come to Lord Lansdowne he would have at once informed the Leader of the House, and the House would not have had to ask for information, because that information would have been volunteered. He had always thought that the formation of the Government was such, especially what was termed the internal Cabinet, that intercommunication between Ministers was rendered as easy as it was possible to be by domestic affairs. The House, seemingly, had lost the advantage of that intercommunication, because the Leader of the House did not know anything about this matter. If the right hon. Gentleman did know about it the position of things became more extraordinary than ever. If a matter of this importance was known to the right hon. Gentlemen, surely it was only right and proper that the information should have been put before the House at once. Having regard to the extreme tension of the country and its anxiety upon the matter it would have been only fair to volunteer the information.

MR. PHILIPPS (Pembrokeshire) asked did the right hon. Gentleman yesterday, when the question was put to him, know, or did he not, that the question had been answered in the House of Lords? The right hon. Gentleman had shown considerable heat in the matter when one of his supporters had taken it for granted that he did not know of the answer yesterday. He (Mr. Philipps) was one of those who on the previous day heard the question asked, and, lightly or wrongly, thought from the answer given the right hon. Gentleman knew nothing whatever about the subject. Would the right hon. Gentleman now say whether he did or did not know? The right hon. Gentleman was extremely angry when the House took it for granted that he did not know.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not angry at all. I do not care what you assume.

MR. PHILIPPS did not suppose the hon. Gentleman made what assumption was made. He could only judge from his action, and the right hon. Gentleman certainly did show extreme annoyance when one of his supporters assumed that he did not know. Why could not the right hon. Gentleman answer the question? Why could not he volunteer the information? The noble Lord the Member for Rochester had stated that he was not allowed to answer extemporaneous questions, and no doubt there were good and wise reasons for that, but was the process to be carried further? Did the Government now assume that the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury was not a fit and proper person to be trusted with information? Was it possible that the Government were telling him nothing?

Either the right hon. Gentleman did not know, in which case it was a matter for the discretion of the Government, or he did know, and if he did, then he had cleverly concealed his knowledge on the previous day, and was continuing to conceal it. The House had become a good deal accustomed to wars and rumours of wars under the present Government, but many hon. Members not yet habituated to rumours might think a war with Russia at this time on the top of our other liabilities a sufficiently serious matter for the right hon. Gentleman to take an interest in. If the right hon. Gentleman did know the position on the previous day, he had been guilty of an act of great levity in not making a statement in regard to it. If the right hon. Gentleman did not know, it looked very much as if the inner circle of the Cabinet of which the House had heard so much had been restricted to a still narrower limit, and that not only the noble Lord but the right hon. Gentleman himself was not to be trusted to answer extemporary questions on foreign policy, which might account for the heat he had shown.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing) said a few words from, him might possibly put an end to a discussion which, so far as he could see, was really a sheer waste of time. Not one of the gentlemen who had spoken had shown the least appreciation of the facts. He thought he could in half a dozen words make perfectly clear what the situation was. The situation at Tientsin at one time was a very critical one, and if there had been a collision it would have been difficult to see what the end would be. Therefore, when negotiations were opened for the purpose of settling the Tientsin dispute in a satisfactory manner, it was essential that not a single word should be said until these negotiations had gone so far as to make it certain that the arrangement proposed had been finally accepted by both parties. Did not that explain the position? Yesterday the Government were in possession of a satisfactory proposal from the Russian Government, but they had to send an answer to that proposal. That answer was sent, and it was not until the Government knew that it was accepted that it was possible for anyone to make a statement in the House. The only person who could judge as to when a statement could be made was the man in charge of the negotiations. Although his right hon. friend and the noble Lord the Under Secretary and himself knew what was going on, not one of them could have ventured to open his mouth until he knew the transaction was closed. He believed Lord Lansdowne had no intention of making a statement on the subject, but he was conducting the negotiations, and just before he left his office he believed they had got to such a point that it was possible to make a statement without in any way endangering the success of the negotiations. When Lord Lansdowne got to the House of Lords, Lord Spencer, as he understood without notice, intimated that he wished to put a question, and he being in possession of all the facts, which, of course, none of the Ministers in the House of Commons knew;

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Then the right hon. Gentleman did not know?

LORD G. HAMILTON: Lord Lansdowne, knowing exactly how far the negotiations had gone, and this nobody else could have known at that moment, for it was a question of minutes or, at least, half-hours;

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Might I ask at what hour was the reply sent?

LORD G. HAMILTON said it was a close shave between the time the answer was sent and the time the statement was made by the Foreign Secretary. Although Ministers in the House of Commons were in full possession of the proposals made, and although they believed that the acceptance of them would conclude the negotiations, there was not a single man in the House with any sense of responsibility who would have ventured to make a statement to the House on the actual information then in their possession. The only man to whom it was possible to make a statement was the Foreign Minister, who went to the House of Lords, he believed, without any intention of doing so, The India Office was next door to the Foreign Office, and he was in constant communication with his brother J official, who certainly would have informed him if he had any intention of making a statement.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): May I ask the noble Lord whether Lord Lansdowne did or did not inform Lord Spencer that if a question were put he would be prepared with an answer?

LORD G. HAMILTON: All I can say is that while Lord Lansdowne was seised with full information, not one of us in the House of Commons was in a position to take the full responsibility, having a sense of what might have been entailed by the failure of the negotiations, to make a statement in the House, which must have been immature or premature. When certain gentlemen came back from the other place yesterday they said a statement had been made. I still think that if the Leader of the Opposition had put a definite question as to whether these negotiations were proceeding satisfactorily, we could have given the answer that they were; but we could not possibly have made the statement that they were concluded. So far from not taking the House into our confidence or wishing to deprive hon. Members of information to which they might be legitimately entitled, whatever reticence was shown yesterday was due to the fact that we knew what was going on, and, knowing what was going on, we felt it our duty not to say a single syllable which might prejudice the negotiations.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): The right hon. Gentleman has made the case very much worse. He says that Lord Lansdowne was asked this question in the House of Lords without notice. Now, the right hon. Gentleman here had notice.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Without public notice.

MR. LAMBERT: I understand that Lord Spencer, when he came to the House of Lords, asked Lord Lansdowne whether he could make a statement or not. The noble Lord the Secretary for India had notice of a question to this effect when he came down to this House.

LORD G. HAMILTON: And I answered all the questions put to me.

MR. LAMBERT: If the right hon. Gentleman had any respect for the honour and dignity of this House, he would have given the same answer here as Lord Lansdowne gave in the House of Lords. Lord Lansdowne's statement was made in the House of Lords at 4.30, and the right hon. Gentleman was not asked here until 5.30, so that he had really an hour wherein he could get the information from Lord Lansdowne. I maintain that the noble Lord the Secretary for India, in that

confused statement of his, has actually shown that he deliberately treated the House of Commons with disrespect in this matter. He cannot get away from the fact that while Lord Lansdowne had short notice indeed, he had ample notice, and that he withheld the information from the House. When the right hon. Gentleman says that it is a sheer waste of time for the Leader of the Opposition to get up to vindicate the honour of the House, I begin to think that he forgets what is due to the hon. Gentlemen who are elected by the people of this country. I venture to say that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire, if such a question had been put to him when he was Leader of the House as was put to the noble Lord yesterday, would have answered it, and given the fullest information in his power. If we had been on the verge of war with Russia, does the right hon. Gentleman mean to say that we in this House are not entitled to know some-

thing on such an important subject? We were entitled to the information as early as the other House, especially when notice was given to the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India. The noble Lord says, "I am in full communication with Lord Lansdowne, but I could not venture to make a statement bearing on the negotiations." But Lord Lansdowne made a statement in the House of Lords an hour earlier, almost without notice. I contend that the House of Commons has been treated with disrespect, and it was the obvious duty of the Leader of the Opposition to bring the matter before the country.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): There was one observation which fell from the noble Lord which is not quite consistent with the information I have had of the circumstances in the House of Lords. The noble Lord the Secretary for India, in defending the action of the Government, stated that Lord Lansdowne was taken unawares, that his answer was impromptu, and that he had no intention of making a statement. As a matter of fact, Lord Lansdowne had his answer written. When he was asked the question by Lord Spencer he took a written statement out of his pocket and read it. How does the noble Lord find this consistent with his statement that it was an absolutely impromptu statement on the part of Lord Lansdowne? The Government had no information yesterday as to what happened in China; they have no information to-day as to what actually happened in the House of Lords. Either they give no information to the House of Commons at all, or the information they give is not absolutely reliable. Surely this is a very serious state of things. Here is a matter which might have involved war between two of the greatest Powers in the world. We know what war means even with two small Republics in South Africa. Here we have troops facing each other, not knowing the moment we might be precipitated into war with Russia. We were informed that Russia would accept nothing but an apology. A question is put to the First Lord of the Treasury, the Leader of the House of Commons, as to what happened, and he says he does not know.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: What had happened in the House of Lords.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. He has forgotten what he said yesterday. I asked him specifically, not what had happened in the House of Lords, but what had happened in China, and the right hon. Gentleman turned round in blank astonishment, and asked everybody whether they knew what had

happened in China.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman is not quoting accurately. I did not say I was unaware of what was happening in China.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): Did you know?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I know that I asked the right hon. Gentleman what had happened, and, if he knew, he was deliberately concealing from the House of Commons what had already been given to the House of Lords. One of two things must have happened. Either the right hon. Gentleman knew or he did not. If he knew that an arrangement had been arrived at, and did not answer the question respectfully addressed to him, he must have been deliberately withholding the information from the House of Commons. The other alternative, I think, is the true one. It is the one which, I think, is borne out by the action of the right hon. Gentleman. He did not know what was happening at all. What a Government we have got! No wonder they are making a mess in South Africa. They do not know what wars they have on. We have one office taunting the other, one saying "These wars belong to you," the other saying, "No, they belong to you," and another Minister, the Leader of the House of Commons, does not know whether there is war or not with Russia. It is a serious state of things. [Mr. BALFOUR, ironically: Hear, hear.] Yes, and it is by treating these things with a light spirit here that wars are precipitated.

MR. GOULDING (Wiltshire, Devizes): It is by inopportune questions.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Are they inopportune in the House of Lords? A question invited by the Foreign Minister in the House of Lords is inopportune when it is asked in the House of Commons. This is part and parcel of an attempt which seems to me to be deliberate, step by step, to lower the dignity and the efficiency of the House of the people, and it is time that without any respect to party at all we should protest against a Government whose whole conduct is deliberate contempt of the House of Commons.

MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): A great deal of heat seems to have been engendered by this motion to adjourn the House. We are told that the public was waiting with extreme anxiety to know what was going on, and that the Government were withholding from the public what it ought to know. It seems to me that if there was all this great anxiety, and so much indignation on account of the action taken yesterday, the motion for the adjournment ought to have been made yesterday, and not this afternoon. I think it is an extraordinary illustration of the anxiety of this House that it should be translated in the form of a supplementary question put by an hon. Member who had just come from the House of Lords, having heard the answer he desired to obtain. The hon. Member for Carnarvon said there appeared to be some doubt as to whether the First Lord of the Treasury knew.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: No doubt at all.

MR. MALCOLM: The hon. Member has been carried away by the autobiography of the right hon. Baronet the Member for West Monmouthshire. He said he made it a condition that he should know all that the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister knew of Foreign Affairs. Fancy having to make such a condition before you take office. That is the revelation of a secret of the late Cabinet for which we are

grateful to the right hon. Gentleman.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Will the hon. Member allow me to say that I was placed in a position of difficulty which was not felt under the former Government. When I succeeded to office I was placed in the position of not having the Prime Minister in the House of Commons. The difficulty arose from the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary both being in the House of Lords. Everybody knows that in Foreign Affairs communication is direct between the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary, and therefore it was necessary that communication between the Leader of this House and the Foreign Secretary should be as direct as it is between the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary.

MR. MALCOLM: It is extremely necessary, not only for the safety of this country, but for the safety and good feeling of other countries, that the declaration made should be identical in form in this House and the other House. Hon. Members are not so absolutely unacquainted with the English language as not to know that the same statement might be put in one form in this House and in another form in the other House, and it might easily appear, and indeed it has appeared, to foreign nations that the two Houses are contradicting each other. It would have been possible to give the same answer here if Lord Spencer had persuaded his colleagues on the Front Opposition Bench to take the same step as he took to translate the public interest in the matter by asking a question. I think my right hon. friend the First Lord of the Treasury is safeguarding the interests of the nation by refusing to answer questions without notice as he did yesterday afternoon.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.): I do not think the part taken by the Secretary of State for India in this debate has improved the position of the Government. The First-Lord complains that notice was not given of a question in this House, and I believe one of his explanations with regard to this particular matter is that due notice was given in the House of Lords to the Minister responsible. I wish to remind hon. Members that a written notice of his intention to ask a question on this subject was banded in by my hon. friend and colleague several hours before Lord

Lansdowne came down with a written explanation. That shows that the Government were in possession of the facts, while at the same time the noble Lord here was pretending he had not been given sufficient notice. Moreover, if the answers given in the two Houses are compared it will be seen that they differ in every material point; and whereas the explanation given in the other place was full, that given here was meagre and evaded nearly all the points raised by my hon. friend. The contention now put forward that the answering of the question might endanger the negotiations was not raised yesterday, and nothing can be clearer than that information in the possession of the Government was refused to the House of Commons, but given to the House of Lords. That is only in keeping with the treatment we have received at the hands of this family Cabinet and with the manner in which the present Government has behaved towards the House of Commons.

*MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I think the words used by the First Lord of the Treasury and the Secretary of State for India in the first sentences of their speeches amply justify this motion. The First Lord actually

used the word "frivolous," while the Secretary of State for India thought this a waste of time. If anything were needed to prove the want of appreciation they have of the occurrence of last night those expressions would reveal it to the House. Even now we are left in ignorance as to whether the First Lord actually was cognisant of what was known and stated by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. I rather gathered from the noble Lord the Secretary for India that he knew nothing about it. As to the opportunity given yesterday for answering the question there can be no doubt whatever, as a specific question was put by the hon. Member for Carnarvon. Why was no answer given to that question? The right hon. Gentleman had as ample an opportunity for answering that question as Lord Lansdowne had in the House of Lords if he was able to do so from his own knowledge. If he was not able he stands convicted.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the hon. Member will pardon my interruption, I may say that nothing could induce me to answer a difficult and delicate question of that kind under those circumstances without having some opportunity of knowing what my noble friend had said, especially in regard to negotiations of that kind.

*MR. JOHN ELLIS: There was an opportunity of getting to know, since the question was not put here until an hour after Lord Lansdowne's reply in another place. But I will pass from that. We are discussing merely an incident, but it is a very grave symptom in regard to the treatment of this House by the Government. We are entitled to receive from the Executive Government of the day on all the important matters which are proceeding the very latest and fullest information. We are the representatives of the taxpayers, and I must say I am astonished at the attitude of hon. Members opposite. Some of them will come back after the next election and some will not, but apparently they might as well be coming here as mere voting machines. We are all Members of Parliament, and whether we sit on the one side or the other everyone is entitled to the fullest and latest information from the Executive Government. I do hope the right hon. Gentleman will lay aside this terrible nonchalance in regard to matters concerning this House, and that he will see that we have at all times the fullest and latest information laid before us as to the conduct of the Executive Government in such very grave matters.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): I desire to call the attention of the House to the manner in which the Secretary of State for India answers questions of which he receives due notice. The question was put to him whether additional British troops had reached Tientsin yesterday or to-day, or were expected to arrive there immediately, and the answer was that a certain number of white troops had been substituted for certain of the native Indian troops at Tientsin. That answer conveyed the impression to the House that a certain number of native troops were with-drawn;

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order; That matter is not within the leave given. It was referred to by another hon. member, and I did not interrupt because it was merely suggested that the question had given an opportunity to the noble Lord to make the statement which Lord Lansdowne is said to have just made in another place. It is only in that light that the reference was in order.

MR. O'SHEE: I understand the motion for adjournment was made on the ground that

the Government have declined to give information to this House on important public questions;

*MR. SPEAKER: On a certain specific case yesterday.

MR. O'SHEE: I submit that the specific case was the position of affairs at Tientsin, and therefore I am entitled;

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member cannot deal on this motion with the question of whether or not the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India answered a question about reinforcements at Tientsin in a proper manner.

MR. O'SHEE: What I desire to point out by way of illustration is that on this particular matter;

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order; The hon. Member must really conform to my ruling.

MR. O'SHEE: Then I will only refer incidentally to this question. In connection with this matter the Government undoubtedly refused information which was at the disposal of the public through the ordinary channels of communication, and if the Government are entitled, having had notice of a question, to refuse information which has already become known through the public press, it is an extraordinary state of affairs. I submit that the action of the Government with reference to that specific question was inconsistent;

*MR. SPEAKER again called the hon. Member to order.

MR. O'SHEE: Well, Sir, I support this motion on the ground that in this matter the Government has not treated this House with proper consideration, and I hope that the protest which has been made this evening will have some effect in changing to some extent the attitude of the Government in its treatment of this House.

MR. ROBSON (South Shields): I would point out to the House the very narrow point to which the matter in controversy has now been reduced, and how on that very narrow point we are still refused any kind of material information. When the discussion started the House was in doubt as to whether the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury did or did not possess the information for which we on this side of the House vainly pressed yesterday. That doubt no longer exists. It has been made clear by the remarks of the noble Lord that the First Lord of the Treasury did not possess the information. But the First Lord has been anxious to repudiate any suggestion that he did not possess that information.

LORD G. HAMILTON: I did not say so.

MR. ROBSON: The noble Lord scarcely remembers the purport of his own remarks. He said that not only did the First Lord not know, but he did not know himself.

LORD G. HAMILTON: The question put to my right hon. friend was whether certain negotiations were going on.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Everyone knew that.

LORD G. HAMILTON: But the point which I endeavoured to make was that although we knew negotiations were going on, and going on satisfactorily, we did not know whether they were in such a state as would justify a statement to the House.

MR. ROBSON: Several times during the course of his remarks the noble Lord, when

he found himself interrupted, said, "At least I might be allowed to proceed without interruption," I, on the other hand, am grateful to the noble Lord for his interruption, because; he has in reality confirmed our contention and almost repeated the very remark I was addressing to the House. He tells us now that, of course, the First Lord knew that negotiations were going on. What a remarkable piece of information!; He thinks it worth while to get up and inform the House of Commons repeatedly and indignantly that the First Lord of the Treasury did know that negotiations were proceeding, but he goes on to add that the right hon. Gentleman did not know that these serious troubles had arrived at a settlement. It was with regard to that settlement the question was put. What we desired to know yesterday was whether this critical state of affairs had or had not come to an end. It had come to an end. The danger of war between two of the greatest Powers in the world had passed away, and the First Lord of the Treasury, who is Leader of this House, was not aware of it!; The Secretary of State for India, who certainly would have been very materially concerned in his Department if the trouble had not passed away, told us, as an interesting piece of political geography, that he is next door to the Foreign Secretary, but the Foreign Secretary had not told him anything about it. LORD G. HAMILTON made a remark which was inaudible in the gallery. MR. ROBSON: The noble Lord said that the Foreign Secretary had not told him he was going to make a statement. How am I to interpret that interruption? Does it mean that, although the Foreign Secretary did not tell him he was going to make a statement in the House of Lords, he acquainted him with the substance of the statement he was going to make? Does the noble Lord mean that? It is perfectly clear from what the noble Lord has told us that this has happened, whether he knows it or not; that an answer to a question of which notice had been given in the House of Lords, I believe some days previously; LORD G. HAMILTON: No. MR. ROBSON: The noble Lord, should make inquiry upon that point. LORD G. HAMILTON: I have. MR. ROBSON: Let him repeat his inquiry. The question had been put down, the answer was settled in the Foreign Office, and the written reply was read out in the House of Lords. But the noble Lord did not know that until about half an hour ago. He does not know it now!; An answer appears to have been settled by the proper officials next door to the noble Lord concerning a matter so vitally affecting the safety, peace, and prosperity of this Empire and the world, but the Minister, a colleague of the noble Lord, who settled that answer, sitting on the other side of the door, did not think it worth while to give any information to the noble Lord, or to the Leader of this House, or by any means whatever to the representatives of the English people concerning the determination of that trouble. That is the position the House of Commons is in. If the First Lord had possessed the information and withheld it, our complaint would have been that he had displayed gross disrespect, but in this case that gross disrespect has been displayed by the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary, which makes the question all the more serious. Is this to be treated as the usual course of business as far as this Cabinet is concerned? Whenever

the Government have wars or when we have rumours of wars, is the House of Commons going to be treated in this way when it asks for information? This involves very gross disrespect of the House of Commons by the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary; a disrespect which every Member of this House, however humble, has a right to resent, and a disrespect which, I believe, will be noted and resented by the English people. That is the significance which will attach to the vote which we now proceed to give.

MR. CLANCY said he rose to put a question to the Secretary of State for India. The noble Lord spoke of a final telegram received from Russia, and he stated that no answer could be given until that final telegram had been received. He wished to know if the final telegram referred to by the Secretary of State for India was the long

message from the Russian Ambassador of which Lord Lansdowne spoke in the House of Lords, and which he said had been received that morning, or was it some other final telegram of which he made no mention whatever. [Nationalist cries of "Answer, answer."]

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order; The hon. Member has resumed his seat, and I have called upon another hon. Member. The hon. Member cannot compel an answer. COLONEL PRYCE-JONES (Montgomery Boroughs) said he was a loyal supporter of the Government and should vote with them on this occasion, but he felt that all Members ought to feel much obliged to the Opposition for raising the question. He felt that this great Assembly had not been treated with respect in regard to this particular matter. He believed, with other Members, that the privileges of the representatives of the people of this country were, being curtailed by degrees by the Government. It would not be difficult to refer to several small matters of late in which the consideration due to that House had not been shown by the Government, of which he was a supporter. He referred to the treatment they received at the opening of Parliament, and various other matters, and he was of opinion that they ought to be justly jealous of the great privileges of that House, because, after all, the House of Lords depended on the House of Commons, and the House of Commons depended on the people. [Ministerial cries of "Divide;"] It was all very well for his hon. friends to call "Divide," but he knew that he was voicing the opinion of scores of Members on the Ministerial side of the House when he gave a gentle hint to the Government that the business of the House and of the country must be conducted on business lines. If he did not think and feel assured that the Leader of the House and of the party to which he belonged had given them to understand that in future a repetition of what occurred the previous day should not occur again, out of respect for the House of Commons he should not have supported the Government on this matter. In this case he thought they were perfectly safe in following the Leader of the House of Commons.

MR. C. P. SCOTT (Lancashire, Leigh) said he thought the House was entitled to an answer to the question put by the hon. Member for North Dublin as to the reception of the official telegram from Russia by the Government. The matter was one which concerned the honour of the House of Commons, and they wanted to know whether the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was in possession of that

information. They were told that the Leader of the House and the Secretary of State for India did not know at 6.30 in the evening that a certain telegram had been received from Russia. The hon. Member who last spoke had, he thought, expressed better than some Members the true state of feeling on the Ministerial side of the House. It was not a small thing that the Leader of the House and the Secretary of State for India; the two Ministers concerned in this matter ; should come down and tell them that they did not know at 6.30 facts known to the Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the course of the morning. [Opposition cheers and cries of "Divide, divide!"] They all knew that the statement was made by the Secretary for Foreign Affairs at half past four in the afternoon in the House of Lords, but no information was forthcoming an hour later in the House of Commons when a question was put. [Ministerial cries of "Divide!" and Nationalist cries of "Order, order!" and "Call in the police."] He believed it was contrary to all tradition and precedent in matters of this kind that when a statement was made in the House of Lords upon a question of policy no intimation was sent to the Leader of the House of Commons or to the Minister directly concerned in this House. In preceding Governments information had always been conveyed from the House of Lords to the representative in the House of Commons, with an intimation that a statement had been made. The Leader of the House, the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and the Secretary of State for India were in a blissful state of ignorance as to what had happened in the House of Lords on the previous day, and he thought that circumstance showed to what a position they were drifting in this matter and the kind of spirit of contempt in which the House of Commons and its Members were treated. The two Members of the Government in the other House did not even condescend to pursue the course which was usual in this matter of warning their own colleagues of what had been done. He thought they were entitled to have a plain answer to that question.

DR. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.) said the right hon. Gentleman had declared that nothing would induce him to answer a question of that kind while negotiations were going on. They had from the Secretary for India a statement that neither he himself nor the noble Lord the Member for Rochester knew what was going on in the other House. He should like to know which of those statements they were to believe. He thought a very easy way out of the difficulty would be to send for the Colonial Secretary and get his version of the affair. It was high time that they made a stand against the contempt which was being shown for the House of Commons.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) I seem fated to be obliged to intrude again upon the time of the House. I had to intrude at some length last night, because on a previous occasion I asked a question and I got no answer from the Government. The result was that I had to take up some more time, and the same thing occurs again this afternoon. I asked the First Lord of the Treasury respectfully a question which was quite pertinent to this matter, and he did not condescend to give me a reply. Therefore, I am compelled to ask the same question again at this juncture. The question I asked was one which, had it been answered in a satisfactory way, would to a great extent have curtailed this debate, and saved greatly the time of the House. I asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he could

assure hon. Members of this House that, for the future, the Foreign Secretary would make arrangements, when he had important information with regard to foreign affairs in his possession, that he would take the earliest opportunity of informing his representative in this House, the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, of that information, so that such information might simultaneously be conveyed to the House of Commons as well as to the House of Lords. I do not think there was anything unreasonable in making a request of that kind, and I think most hon. Members will agree that it is a question which at least deserves some consideration and some answer from the Leader of the House of Commons. I submit that not only in this matter of refraining from giving the House of Commons information which is given to the House of Lords, but also in the practice of Ministers in this House refusing to answer questions put to them, the rights and privileges of hon. Members of this House are being ignored and curtailed, and almost done away with. What is the cause of this trouble? The whole cause lies in the fact that the Foreign Minister; who is the most important Minister of the whole Cabinet; is not in this House along with the representatives of the people, but he is in the House of Lords.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not keeping to the definite question before the House.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I am endeavouring to show that the adjournment has been properly moved, because Members of this House were denied information which was put before Members of the House of Lords, and I am endeavouring to show that that inconvenience was caused by reason of the fact that the Minister responsible for the case in question had not a seat in this House.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member cannot upon this motion discuss the question as to whether the Foreign Secretary ought or ought not to have a seat in this House.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I have not the slightest intention of disobeying your ruling, nor do I intend to discuss the broad question as to whether a great Minister of State should have a seat in the House of Commons or a seat in the House of Lords. I am confining myself to the fact that this information did not reach

Members of the House of Commons as soon as it ought to have reached them, because the Minister responsible to the country was in the House of Lords. What did take place at four o'clock yesterday afternoon was that there was an announcement made in the House of Lords of first-class importance, upon a matter in regard to which it was a question, perhaps, whether war would take place or not between this country and a great continental Power, and it was an announcement which the people of this country were anxiously looking forward to. At four o'clock that information was given to the House of Lords, and one and a half hours later the elected representatives of the people of this great country asked for that information, and were refused it by the First Lord of the Treasury. I have heard it stated in this debate that the noble Lord the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs was not asked directly for this information which was given in the House of Lords. But the First Lord of the Treasury was asked directly for this information, and he conveyed to the House of Commons the

impression that he had not got that information. Therefore you have the extraordinary and unprecedented state of affairs that a private Member of this House, who happened to be in the House of Lords at four o'clock that afternoon, found himself in possession of information with regard to this grave matter, and when he came across the lobby from the Lords to the Commons he found that the information which he had got by the accident of being in the House of Lords was not in the possession of the Leader of this House and the occupants of the Treasury Bench. I say that that is an outrageous state of affairs, and to treat the House of Commons in that way is to make an attack upon the rights and privileges of the House of Commons. I say that the Members of this House are entitled to have at the very first opportunity; I will venture to say that they

AYES

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)

Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert Henry

Black, Alexander William

Allan, William (Gateshead)

Atberley-Jones, L.

Blake, Edward

Ambrose, Robert

Austin, Sir John

Bolton, Thomas Dolling

Asher, Alexander

Barry, E. (Cork, S.)

Boyle, James

Ashton, Thomas Gair

Bell, Richard

Brand, Hon. Arthur G.

are entitled to have it before the Members of any other Assembly; the fullest information upon all these subjects. The hon. Member opposite, who is a supporter of the First Lord of the Treasury, has spoken in deprecation of the action of the Government in this matter, and he was met with loud cries of, "Divide, divide"; from Members sitting opposite. I hold that the view he expressed is the view which is largely held outside this House by supporters of the Government, and if Conservative opinion of the action of the Government is desired, I invite hon. Members to read the Globe and other Conservative newspapers, and there they will find leading articles condemning the action of the Government quite as strongly as the Leader of the Opposition and other Members of this House have condemned it. If we are not to have the responsible Member for Foreign Affairs in this House, the least that we can ask for, at any rate, is that he shall have as his representative in this House somebody to whom we can direct questions with some hope of them being replied to, instead of having a man like the noble Lord, who deliberately told us that he was only at liberty to say what the First Lord of the Treasury gave him leave to say. I say that if this kind of thing is to continue, a seat in the House of Commons will become a mockery to a man calling himself a representative of the Government, and I say here that I do not believe there is a single Member opposite who could

face a public meeting of his constituents and justify before them the fact that the House of Lords was informed of this important matter, and that the very same day the House of Commons was refused the same information.

Question put.

The House divided:;Ayes, 168; Noes, 250. (Division List No. 88.)

Brigg, John

Hayne, Rt. Hn. Charles Seale-

O'Shee, James John

Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson

Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)

Partington, Oswald

Burke, E. Haviland-

Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.

Perks, Robert William

Burns, John

Jacoby, James Alfred

Philipps, John Wynford

Buxton, Sydney Charles

Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)

Pirie, Duncan V.

Caine, William Sproston

Joyce, Michael

Power. Patrick Joseph

Caldwell, James

Kearley, Hudson E.

Price, Robert John

Cameron, Robert

Kennedy, Patrick James

Priestley, Arthur

Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)

Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth

Rea, Russell

Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.

Kitson, Sir James

Reddy, M.

Carew, James Laurence

Labouchere, Henry

Redmond, John E. (Waterford)

Carvill Patrick Geo. Hamilton

Lambert, George

Redmond, William (Clare)

Clancy, John Joseph

Layland- Barratt, Francis

Reid, Sir R. T. (Dumfries)

Colville, John

Leamy, Edmund

Rickett, J. Compton
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Rigg, Richard
Crean, Eugene
Leng, Sir John
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Cremer, William Randal
Levy, Maurice
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Cullinan, J.
Lewis, John Herbert
Robson, William Snowdon
Daly, James
Lloyd-George, David
Roche, John
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Lundon, W.
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan)
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Schwann, Charles E.
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Scott, Chas. Prestwich (Leigh)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
M'Crae, George
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Dillon, John
M'Dermott, Patrick
Sinclair, Capt John (Forfarshire)
Donelan, Captain A.
M'Fadden, Edward
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Doogan, P. C.
M'Kenna, Reginald
Soares, Ernest J.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C.R.(N'thants
Duffy, William J.
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Stevenson, Francis S.
Dunn, Sir William
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Strachey, Edward

Ellis, John Edward
Morgan, J. Lloyd(Carmarthen)
Sullivan, Donal
Emmott, Alfred
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Tennant, Harold John
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Morley, Rt. Hon. John (Montrose
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.
Evans, Sir E. H. (Maidstone)
Morton, Edw. J.C. (Devonport)
Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Moss, Samuel
Thomas, F. Freeman -(Hastings-
Farrell, James Patrick
Murphy, J.
Thompson, E. C. (Monaghan, N
Fenwick, Charles
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Thomson, F. W. (York,W. R.
Ffrench, Peter
Newnes, Sir George
Tomkinson, James
Field, William
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Ure, Alexander
Flynn, James Christopher
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
Wallace, Robert
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipper'ryMid
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Fuller, J. M. F.
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Furness, Sir Christopher
O'Connor, James (Wicklow W.
Weir, James Galloway
Gilhooly, James
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Goddard, Daniel Ford

O'Doherty, William
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Grant, Corrie
O'Donnelli, T. (Kerry, W.)
Wodehouse, Hn. Armine(Essex
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
O'Dowd, John
Woodhouse, Sir J.T.(Huddersf.
Hammond, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)
Harcourt, Rt. Hn. Sir William
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
Yoxall, James Henry
Hardie, J. Keir (Mert'r Tydvil
O'Malley, William
TELLERS FOR THE AYES;Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. Causton.
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
O'Mara, James
Hayden, John Patrick
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
NOES.
Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Balfour, Rt. Hn. Gerald W. (Leeds
Carson, Rt Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Banbury, Frederick George
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Aird, Sir John
Bartley, George C. T.
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire-
Allhusen, Augustus Hy. Eden
Bathurst, Hon. Allen B.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Allsopp, Hon. George
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
Chamberlain, Rt.Hon J.(Birm.
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Bignold, Arthur
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
Arrol, Sir William
Bigwood, James
Chapmar, Edward

Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Bill, Charles
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Cohen, Benjamin L.
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Brookfield, Col. Montagu
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Brown, Alex. H. (Shropshire)
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Baird, John George Alexander
Bull, William James
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Balcarres, Lord
Bullard, Sir Harry
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Baldwin, Alfred
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasg'w
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Butcher, John George
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edw. Bainbridge
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Cranborne, Viscount
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Pretymann, Ernest George
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Jebb, Sir Richd. Claverhouse
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Pym, C. Guy
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Randles, John S.
Cubitt, Hon. Hemy
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Cust, Henry John C.

Kenyon, Hn. G. T. (Denbigh)
Reid, James (Greenock)
Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Dickson, Charles Scott
Kimber, Henry
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Knowles, Lees
Rentoul, James Alexander
Dimsdale, Sir Joseph Cockfield
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Renwick, George
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fd.Dixon
Law, Andrew Bonar
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Lawrence, William F.
Ridley, S. Forde(Bethnal Green
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Lawson, John Grant
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Duke, Henry Edward
Lecky, Rt. Hn. William Edw. H
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Lee, A. H. (Hants, Fareham)
Round, James
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Faber, George Denison
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Fardell, Sir T. George
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol,S.)
Saunderson, Rt. Hn. Col.Edw. J
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edw.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee

Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Man'r)
Lowe, Francis William
Sharpe, Wm. Edw. T.
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Shaw-Stewart, M.H.(Renfrew
Finch, George H.
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Fisher, William Hayes
Lucas, R. J. (Portsmouth)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, E.
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward A.
Macartney, Rt. Hn W. G. Ellison
Smith, H. C. (North'mbTyneside
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Macdona, John Cumming
Smith, James Parker(Lanarks
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Maconochie, A. W.
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Flower, Ernest
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Garfit, William
M'Killop, Jas. (Stirlingshire)
Stewart, Sir M. J. M'Taggart
Gibbs, Hn. A.G.H. (City of Lon.
Majendie, James A. H.
Stirling-Maxwell. Sir John M.
Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (St. Albans
Malcolm, Ian
Stroyan, John
Gordon, MajE.-(T'r Hamlets)
Martin. Richard Biddulph
Strutt, Hn. Charles Hedley
Gore, Hon. F. S. Ormsby-
Maxwell, Rt.Hn. Sir. H. E. (Wigt'n
Sturt, Hn. Humphry Napier

Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf' d Uni.
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Graham, Henry Robert
Milward, Col. Victor
Thornton, Percy M.
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Greene, Sir E. W. (B'ry S. Edm'nds
Montagu, Hon. J. S. (Hants.)
Tufnell, Lt.-Col. Edward
Grenfell, William Henry
More, Lt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Valentia, Viscount
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Morgan, David J. (Waltham'w)
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. H. (Shef'd.
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Morrell, George Herbert
Warde, Lt.-Col. C. E.
Hain, Edward
Morris, Hon. Martin Henry F.
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Morrison, James Archibald
Welby, Lt.-Col. A.C.E. (Ta'nt'n
Hamilton, Rt. Hn Lord G. (Mid'x
Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
Welb'y, Sir Chas. G.E. (Notts.)
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Mount, William Arthur
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Harris, Fleverton (Tynem'th)

Muntz, Philip A.
 Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.),
 Haslett, Sir James Horner
 Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Grakam (Bute
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Hay, Hon. Claude George
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
 Wilson, John (Glasgow)
 Heath, Arthur Howard(Hanley
 Nicholson, William Graham
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh, N.
 Heath, James (Statfords, N.W.)
 Nicol, Donald Ninian
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
 Heaton, John Henniker
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
 Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
 Holder, Augustus
 Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
 Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
 Henderson, Alexander
 Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
 Wrightson, Sir Thomas
 Higginbottom, S. W.
 Parker, Gilbert
 Wyndham, Rt. Hn. George
 Hoare, Ed. Brodie(Hampstead
 Peel, H. Wm. Robert Wellesley
 Yerburch, Robert Armstrong
 Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)
 Pemberton, John S. C
 Young, Commander (Berks, E.
 Hobhouse, Henry- (Somerset, E.
 Penn, John
 Hope, J F (Sheffield, Brightside)
 Percy, Earl
 TELLERS FOR THE NOES; Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.
 Horner, Frederick William
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Howard, J. (Midd.,Tottenham
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
 Plummer, Walter R.
 SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE (EXEMPTION FROM THE STANDING ORDER).
 Motion made, and Question put, "That the Business of Supply, it under
 discussion at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing

Order,ittings of the House.";(Mr. A. J. Balfour.)
The House divided::Ayes,"248; Noes, 165. (Division List No. 89.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Leigh- Bennett, Henry Currie
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Aird, Sir John
Faber, George Denison
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Allhusen, Augustus Hry. Eden
Fardell, Sir T. George
Long, RtHn Walter (Bristol, S.)
Allsopp, Hon. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edw.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Anson, William Reynell
Fergusson, Rt.Hn.Sir J. (Manc'r
Lowe, Francis William
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Arrol, Sir William
Finch, George H.
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Fisher, William Hayes
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsm'th)
Austin, Sir John
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Lyttlelton, Hon Alfred
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward A.
Macdona, John Cumming
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Maconochie, A. W.
Bain, Col. James Robert
Fletcher, Sir Henry
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Baird, John George Alexander

Flower, Ernest
M'Killop, Jas. (Stirlingshire)
Balcarres, Lord
Garfit, William
Majendie, James A. H.
Baldwin, Alfred
Gibbs, Hn. A.G.H (City of Lond.
Malcolm, Ian
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (St. Albans)
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds
Gordon, Maj. E.-(T'rHamlets)
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H E (Wigton
Banbury, Frederick George
Gore, Hon. F. S. Ormsby-
Maxwell, W.J. H. (Dumfriessh.
Bartley, George C. T.
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Milward, Colonel Victor
Bhowanaggree, Sir M. M.
Graham, Henry Robert
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Bignold, Arthur
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Bigwood, James
Green, Walford D.(Wednesb'ry
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
Bill, Charles
Greene, Sir E.W.(B'rySEdm'nds
More, Robert J. (Shropshire)
Boseawen, Arthur Griffith -
Grenfell, William Henry
Morgan, Dav. J. (Walthamst'w
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Morrell, George Herbert
Brookfield, Col. Montagu
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill

Morris, Hon. Martin Henry F.
Brown, Alex. H. (Shropshire)
Hain, Edward
Morrison, James Archibald
Bull, William James
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
Bullard, Sir Harry
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (M'dd'x
Mount, William Arthur
Butcher, John George
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Muntz, Philip A.
Cavendish, R. F. (N, Lancs.)
Harris, F. Leverton(Tynemouth
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
Cavendish V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Murray, Col. Wyndham(Bath)
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Nicholson, William Graham
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Heath, Arthur H. (Hanley)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J.(Birm.
Heath, James (Staffords, N.W.
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Chamberlain, J. Austen(Worc.
Heaton, John Henniker
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Chapman, Edward
Helder, Augustus
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Henderson, Alexander
Parker, Gilbert
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Higginbottom, S. W.
Peel, Hon. Wm. Robert W.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A.E.
Hoare, Edw Brodie (Hampstead
Pemberton, John S. G.

Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Hoare, Sir Samuel (Norwich)
Penn, John
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.
Percy, Earl
Colomb, Sir J. Charles Ready
Hope, J. F (Sheffield, Brightside
Pierpoint, Robert
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Horner, Frederick William
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Corbett, A. Cameron(Glasgow
Howard, J.(Midd., Tottenham
Plummer, Walter R.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Cox, Irwin Edward Bain bridge
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Pretymann, Ernest George
Cranborne, Viscount
Hutton, John (Yorks, N.R)
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Pym, C. Guy
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Randles, John S.
Cross, H. Shepherd (Bolton)
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Reid, James (Greenock)
Cust, Henry John C.
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh
Remnant, James Farquharson
Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Dickson, Charles Scott
Kimber, Henry
Rentoul, James Alexander
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-

Knowles, Lees
Renwick, George
Dimsdale, Sir Joseph C.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred. D.
Law, Andrew Bonar
Ridley, S. Forde (BethnalGreen
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Lawrence, William F.
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Lawson, John Grant
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Duke, Henry Edward
Lecky, Rt. Hon. Wm. Ed. H.
Round, James
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Lee, Capt A. H.(Hants. Fareham
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Saunderson, Rt. Hn. Col. Edw. J
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Uni.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Seely, Charles Hilton(Lincoln)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh, N.)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Thornton, Percy M.
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (Renfrew
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Tufnell, Lt.-Col. Edward

Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Valentia, Viscount
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Smith, H. C. (North'mbTyneside
Vincent, Col. Sir C.E.H. (Sheffield
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Warde, Lt.-Col. C. E.
Young, Commander (Berks,E.)
Stanley, Hon Arthur(Ormskirk
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Welby, Lt.-Col. A.C.E. (T'unt'n
TELLERS FOR THE AYES;Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M' Taggart
Welby, Sir C. G. E. (Notts.)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John L.
Stroyan, John
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
NOES.
Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Flynn, James Christopher
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
O'Brien, Kendal(Tipper'ry Mid
Ambrose, Robert
Fuller, J. M. F.
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
Asher, Alexander
Furness, Sir Christopher
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Gilhooly, James
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert H.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
O'Doherty, William
Atherley-Jones, L.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Grant, Corrie
O'Dowd, John

Bell, Richard
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
Black, Alexander William
Hammond, John
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
Blake, Edward
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm.
O'Malley, William
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
O'Mara, James
Boyle, James
Hannsworth, R. Leicester
O'Shaugnessy, P. J.
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Hayden, John Patrick
O'Shee, James John
Brigg, John
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Partington, Oswald
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West
Philipps, John Wynford
Burke, E. Haviland-
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Pirie, Duncan Y.
Burns, John
Jacoby, James Alfred
Power, Patrick Joseph.
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.
Price, Robert John
Caine, William Sproston
Joyce, Michael
Priestley, Arthur
Caldwell, James
Kearley, Hudson E.
Rea, Russell
Cameron, Robert
Kennedy, Patrick James
Reddy, M.
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Kinloch, Sir John G. Smyth
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Campbell- Bannerman, Sir H.

Kitson, Sir James
Redmond, William (Clare)
Carew, James Laurence
Lambert, George
Reid, Sir R. Threshie(Dumfries.
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Rickett, J. Compton
Causton, Richard Knight
Leamy, Edmund
Rigg, Richard
Clancy, John Joseph
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Colville, John
Leng, Sir John
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Robson, William Snowdon
Crean, Eugene
Lewis, John Herbert
Roche, John
Cremer, William Randal
Lloyd-George, David
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Cullinan, J.
Lundon, W.
Schwann, Charles E.
Daly, James
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Scott, Chas. Prestwich (Leigh)
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
M'Crae, George
Sinclair, Capt. John (Forfarshire
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
M'Dermott, Patrick
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Dilke, Rt. Hon Sir Charles
M'Fadden, Edward
Soares, Ernest J.
Dillon, John
M'Kenna, Reginald

Spencer, Rt. Hn. C.R.(Northants
Donelan, Captain A.
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Stevenson, Francis S.
Doogan, P. C.
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
Strachey, Edward
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Sullivan, Donal
Duffy, William J.
Markham, Arthur Basil
Tennant, Harold John
Dunn, Sir William
Morgan, J. L. (Carmarthen)
Thomas, A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Ellis, John Edward
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Morley, Rt. Hn. J. (Montrose)
Thomas, F. Freeman-(Hastings)
Evans, Sir F. H. (Maidstone)
Morton, E. J. C. (Devonport)
Thompson, E. C. (Monaghan,N
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Moss, Samuel
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Farrell, James Patrick
Murphy, J.
Tomkinson, James
Fenwick, Charles
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ffrench, Peter
Newnes, Sir George
Ure, Alexander
Field, William
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
Weir, James Galloway
Wodehouse, Hn. Armine (Essex
TELLERS FOR THE NOES;Mr. Emmott and Mr. Wallace.

White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Yoxall, James Henry

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE (SATURDAY).

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I beg to move the motion standing in my name. It is not of a very cheerful character, but the necessity for it must be obvious to everybody who has followed the statements I have made from time to time as to the position of Supply. As the House is well aware, we must complete Supply by the end of the week in order to deal with the Report of Supply on Monday, and bring in then the Appropriation Bill and read it a first time, so that we may be able to obey the law. I regret the additional strain which is placed on hon. Members, but I think they will readily adopt the course which I now propose.

Motion made, and Question proposed. "That this House do meet to-morrow for the business of Supply unless (Votes A and I in the Navy Estimates and the Excess Votes for Civil Services and Revenue Departments, 1899–1900, are previously disposed of.";(Mr. A. J. Balfour.)

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I have an Amendment to this resolution, and have no hesitation in rising to move it at once, because it will not in any way interfere with the general discussion. The Amendment which I propose to submit is, "To omit all the words of the resolution from the word 'Supply,' Inline 2, to the end of the resolution," so as to make it read, "That this House do meet to-morrow for the business of Supply." I object to the form of this resolution. To say the least of it, it is most unusual, and so far as my memory carries me, unprecedented. When, in the past, the Leader of the House has decided to ask for a Saturday sitting, he has always put the resolution on the Paper, asking for it categorically; but this resolution is in the nature of a menace, saying, "Unless you grant us certain Supply";we are even informed at what hour of the night we must grant it;"you must have a Saturday] sitting." I object to this irregular; system of doing the business of the House of Commons, and of carrying it on under threats and continual pressure. The Leader of the House is armed with great powers;he has just now suspended the Twelve o'clock Rule;great powers of closure, but the object of this resolution is to get a new system of closure in spite of the Chairman. It is a device, a new patent dodge, by which the Government seek to force Supply through the House of Commons, and to add to their armoury, already pretty well stocked, of coercive measures. Although my colleagues have been frequently accused of an intention to obstruct the business of the nation, they are prepared to come down on Saturday to do that business. I say it is the First Lord of the Treasury who is now obstructing the business of the nation, when he declares in a melancholy manner at the Table that he moves this resolution in order to force the House of Commons to scamp the work of Supply-to-night. The Leader of the House ought to be prepared to come down manfully on Saturday to finish this business of Supply. For my part, I think it would be much better, both from the point of view of doing the business promptly and properly, and for the convenience of hon. Members, that we should have a Saturday sitting rather than sit up to-night all night. Many of us have suffered

already from the perpetual late sittings during the past fortnight. I maintain that the continual recurrence of these late sittings is the result of the mismanagement of the business of the House. No Leader of the House has ever had such power as the right hon. Gentleman, but the result is that no Leader during my twenty years experience has been responsible for such a procession and succession of late sittings at this early period of the session. It comes to this, that the more power we give to the Leader of the House the longer he keeps us to the small hours of the morning. I say that such a condition of things is a reproach to him, and shows that he does not devote sufficient attention to carrying out his responsible duties in the arrangement of the business of the House. The First Lord of the Treasury says that he has already explained the condition of Supply and the necessities of the case; but who created all these necessities? The condition of Supply arises from the fact of the late meeting of Parliament and the short time devoted to Supply. Such a continuous amount of Supply is absolutely unprecedented and unparalleled in the history of the House of Commons, and the unhappy position that has arisen is entirely due to the Leader of the House and not to the action of the House itself. It is a hard thing that we should be subjected to the fatigue of sitting up till six o'clock in the morning, and then be told it is brought about by some superior power over which the First Lord of the Treasury has no control. I am of opinion that the old procedure should be adhered to, and if we are to have a Saturday sitting it should be categorically stated, and should not be held as a threat over our heads.

Amendment proposed, to leave out all the words after the word "Supply," in line 2, to the end of the Question.:(Mr. Dillon.)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The motion in its present form was put down necessarily before I knew we were going to have this discussion, which has occupied three hours of our time. It is now quite clear that a Saturday sitting will be absolutely necessary, and therefore I assent to the Amendment.

MR. DILLON: I am much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman.

*MR. HERBERT LEWIS: Upon a point of order, Sir, I was going to move as an Amendment to the Amendment that the sitting should commence at three instead of at twelve o'clock, having regard to the late hour at which the present sitting may terminate.

*MR. SPEAKER: That hardly arises upon this question.

Amendment agreed to.

*MR. HERBERT LEWIS appealed to the right hon. Gentleman as to whether it would not be better to commence the Saturday sitting at three o'clock. Right hon. Gentlemen and hon. Gentlemen might have to remain in the House till six o'clock in the morning, and under those circumstances would it not be more reasonable to make the sitting commence at three, in order that they might have some rest before commencing their labours on the morrow?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is not possible to make any distinction between the hours for meeting to-morrow and the hour for meeting on a Wednesday, and it would be

far preferable to meet at noon than at three o'clock in any case.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport) pointed out that if the Government were successful in getting Vote A and Vote I that would take away every opportunity of continuing the general discussion upon the Votes. As some arrangement had been made to continue the general discussion upon Army Estimates, would the right hon.

Gentleman give the Navy Estimates similar consideration?

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: With regard to the Army Estimates, which have been referred to, when the arrangement was made I happened, unfortunately, to be absent. The Government got the two first Votes upon the condition that a resolution was put down on some later date which would give an opportunity for general discussion on those particular Votes; besides that I trust there will be an opportunity given for some discussion on the ordinary Estimates; a general discussion of more detail and of a less restricted kind. If there is a resolution, discussion must be confined to the matters contained in the resolution. Now, there has been no opportunity for a free discussion such as we usually have on Supply, with the Speaker in the Chair, on general Army matters. There are many Members of the House who no doubt consider it necessary, or at least extremely desirable, that there should be a full opportunity of discussing these matters. Will the right hon. Gentleman set aside one of the Votes upon which greater latitude would be

allowed for discussion than is usual in Supply? It is a thing often done, and I think a similar practice ought to be followed with regard to the Navy Votes.

SIR FORTESCUE FLANNERY (Yorkshire, Shipley) said, with regard to the Navy Votes, a considerable number of Members desired to discuss the Navy Votes, and it would be inconvenient if the discussion was restricted.

MR. BLAKE (Longford, S.) said that the reason why the right hon. Gentleman had assented to the motion of the hon. Member for East Mayo was that he merely desired to take these two Votes. Was that the intention of the right hon.

Gentleman? Was he right in assuming that there was no intention of conducting any other business of Supply beyond Vote A and Vote I?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The only business we shall ask the House to deal with to-morrow is the discussion affecting Vote A and Vote I and the Excess Vote. Committee of Ways and Means is a formal matter, necessary for the introduction of the Appropriation Bill. With regard to the observations which fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, the arrangement made with regard to the Army Votes was this. We felt that the case brought forward by my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War and the speech which embodied those views foreshadowed what might be called a constructive scheme of Army reform, and we thought to confine that discussion within the fixed and rigid limits of the twenty-three days allotted to Supply would be putting a great strain upon the Supply rule. We thought that we ought to bring forward a subsequent motion embodying the main ideas of my hon. friend's scheme, which would leave open a full opportunity for dealing with the Army Estimates. I hope those opportunities will not be pressed beyond a certain point; not in the interests of the Government, but in the interests of Supply. Then I am asked whether I will not apply the same principle to the Navy Vote. I do not think I

could do that to the same extent, because the Votes do not profess to embody any considerable scheme of naval reform.

SIR FORTESCUE FLANNERY pointed out that there were many matters of general interest which could not be discussed at the late hours available, and as the granting of Vote A and Vote I would shut out in the future the whole discussion on those matters, he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would see his way to give some opportunity for a full discussion at a later date.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My desire is that we should do our best to give every opportunity for the discussion of the ordinary Votes. I will do my best, but it must rest with the Chairman to a very great extent. So far as in me lies I will do the best I can.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) suggested that, having regard to the necessity of Supply being obtained by the 31st March, only the Money Vote should be taken; Vote 1. If they did that they could bring up Vote A upon another occasion. He understood that if the Government obtained the money on Vote I the law would be complied with, and, if that was so, he did not see why Vote A could not be kept back for general discussion.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said he did not think that Vote A could be kept back in that way, because Vote A was the Vote for the men, and the Vote for the men only extended to the end of the financial year.

Main question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That this House do meet to-morrow for the Business of Supply.

NEW BILLS.

COUNTY JUSTICES' CLERKS.

Bill to prohibit Clerks to Petty Sessional Divisions of Counties from undertaking prosecutions of persons committed for trial by the Justices of such Petty Sessional Divisions, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lloyd Morgan, . Mr. Abel Thomas, Mr. Lawson Walton, Mr. Brynmor Jones, and Mr. Wallace.

COUNTY JUSTICES' CLERKS BILL.

"To prohibit Clerks to Petty Sessional Divisions of Counties from undertaking prosecutions of persons committed for trial by the Justices of such Petty Sessional Divisions," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 17th April, and to be printed. [Bill 113.]

AGED PENSIONERS.

Bill to provide Pensions for aged deserving poor, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Colling, Mr. John Mutton, Mr. Bousfield, Mr. Strutt, Mr. J. W. Wilson, Mr. Raymond-Greene, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Churchill, Mr. Carlile, and Colonel Williams.

AGED PENSIONERS BILL.

"To provide Pensions for aged deserving poor," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 18th April, and to be printed. [Bill 114.]

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION.

Bill to extend the provisions of the Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act, 1896, ordered to be brought in by Major Rasch, Mr. Sinclair, and Mr. Galloway.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION BILL.

"To extend the provisions of the Poor Law Officers' Superannuation Act, 1896," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday, 1st April, and to be printed. [Bill 115.]

REGISTRATION OF FIRMS.

Bill for the registration of Firms and Persons carrying on business under Trade Names, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Emmott, Mr. Heath, Sir Alfred Hickman, Mr. Holland, Mr. Oldroyd, and Mr. Walter Palmer.

REGISTRATION OF FIRMS BILL.

"For the registration of Firms and Persons carrying on business under Trade Names," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 8th May, and to be printed. [Bill 116.]

SUPPLY (NAVY ESTIMATES).

Order read, for resuming Adjourned-Debate on Main Question [21st March], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

SIR FORTESCUEFLANNERY: I think both the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Secretary to the Navy deserve great credit for their courage in asking the Boilers Committee for a Report which would enable them to guide the policy of the Navy upon the important question of boilers in the immediate future, but at the same time I consider that in the comprehensive statement which he made to the House the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty omitted any reference to several important matters. In dealing with the question of construction he omitted to tell the House what the result of our construction was in comparison with the navies of the world. What the country really desires to know is, is our Navy strong enough, and how does it compare with the navies of other great Powers? The country has had an awakening with regard to Army reform. We have seen the decay of a great soldier who was sadly unwilling, and in some degree unable, to perform his duties. The War Office had concealed deficiencies which did not become known until recently, but which have had a disheartening effect upon the country, and people are now asking themselves whether similar weakness exists in the Navy, or whether the Navy is really equal to all the demands which could be made upon it. By comparison this country can really afford to play with the Army, because the Navy is of far more vital interest than the Army can be said to be. We talk of the Navy as being the first line of defence, because if it were not possible to patrol the seas and keep them open for our commerce, for the carrying of our food, we should be starved into submission without a shot being fired. The Government have now been in charge of the Navy for six years, and they ought to know whether the comparison between the British and, foreign navies is such as to enable them to pledge themselves that the Navy is sufficient for all purposes.

The hon. Member for Devonport said that the programme of construction was only a programme after all and then he went on to speak of the five submarine vessels, and mentioned that they were ordered in 1900, even before the House sanctioned the building of submarine boats at all. But what were the Government to do 2 If they bring in a programme they are attacked, and if they take time by the

forelock they are criticised for giving orders which were not sanctioned by Parliament. It seems to me that in this particular the Admiralty were completely justified in the action they took. Everybody remembers the outcry made as to the Admiralty getting behindhand in connection with submarine boats, which was so great and so general that the Admiralty had no alternative but to resort to their own experiments. Personally I do not think that submarine vessels would have any appreciable effect in naval warfare, but information as to their likelihood of being valuable had to be obtained, and such information should be obtained first hand. Contrasts have been drawn between the naval expenditure of this country at this time and the Naval expenditure of years ago. Seven years ago this country spent £14,000,000 on the Navy: the Estimates now amount to £33,000,000, and the question has been asked where is this expenditure to stop; is there to be no limit? If there is one truth which ought to be accepted by the House, it is that the Navy is above all parties and above politics, and if £33,000,000 is too great an expenditure I trust that before the debate draws to a conclusion some statement will be made as to what the Government consider to be reasonable and sufficient provision for naval defence. There is a limit, and I think that limit is what is sufficient for the defence of the country without any doubt whatever. This matter of naval defence is vital, and that is the only limit which the country will recognise as in any way reasonable.

In 1889 the noble Lord the present Secretary of State for India stated that the Navy should be at least equal to any two other navies, and the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition used these memorable words, which I hope are binding on his follower the late Civil Lord of the Admiralty;

"I accept the doctrine of the standard of supremacy, that our Fleet should equal any two other fleets in the world."

There you have a binding agreement made in 1889 between both sides of the House, which has been accepted as the standard ever since. Now, is it a fact that our Fleet is equal to any two other fleets in the world? At the present time we have battleships in number sixty-six, built or building, and within measurable distance of completion. France has forty battleships under similar circumstances; Russia has twenty-nine; and Germany has also twenty-nine. Thus, you see, if you take the two nations which together would produce the largest number of battleships, you have sixty-nine which may be arrayed against us, and we have sixty-six to compete with them. That is at least, not an equality in our Navy. When one remembers the special character of the duty of our Fleet; the necessity for blockading the enemy's ports, and the necessity for keeping the sea clear for our food supply and our commerce; we see clearly enough that there is not an equality as yet, even supposing the three battleships my right hon. friend has promised to be added to the programme were completed, which they cannot be within at least three years. It seems to me that the programme of battleships is not sufficient. It seems to me that instead of proposing three battleships the hon. Gentleman would have been wiser, and would have been more in proportion to the comparison with other fleets on the basis of this agreed standard between both sides of the House eleven years ago, if he had proposed

ten additional battleships. It is true that there are twenty cruisers under construction, and that the Admiralty propose to add eight in the new programme, but the cruisers can never take the place of battleships. We know that both in the Mediterranean squadron and elsewhere there is even at the present time a deficiency of cruisers. It is a matter of great satisfaction to the House to believe that there is no longer the difficulty as regards new construction and proceeding with the ships sanctioned in this House which until recently existed. It is a satisfaction also to know that the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Hallam Division as to armourplate has been fully justified. That statement was that if a reasonable continuity of orders were promised by the Admiralty there would be a great increase in the appliances for producing armourplate in Sheffield. We are told in the printed statement of the First Lord that five makers have laid down appliances, and that there should be in the near future no difficulty in regard to the production of armour plate. Another point of great importance in relation to this question of pushing on ships and saving delay in naval construction is the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the causes of the delay in carrying out the contracts. That Committee, I believe, is an exceedingly wise step. My hon. friend the Member for Devonport, whom I am glad to see in his place, objected, I think, to that Committee on the ground, if I recollect rightly, that the Admiralty was devolving much of its responsibility on the Committee. Well, it seems to me that if you have the possibility of getting the services of men like Sir Thomas Sutherland and the hon. Member for Maidstone, who have had experience in the ordering of ships and of their delivery in good time, the Admiralty are wise to take advantage of their knowledge and of their experience in the mercantile marine.

MR. KEARLEY: I objected on the ground that the Admiralty have plenty of experience. They have a body of men of great experience, and they ought not to call upon outsiders to help them.

SIR FORTESCUE FLANNERY: Unfortunately it is the case that some outsiders are better informed.

If the Admiralty are wise enough to accept teaching in this instance, as they have not done in regard to the Belleville boilers, then the House should approve and applaud and not condemn them. May I venture to make a suggestion to my hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty, and that is that the overseers whose duty it is, on behalf of the Admiralty, to superintend the building of ships have not had a sufficient amount of responsibility and freedom left to them. Let me explain this to my hon. friend. An overseer is always a practical shipbuilder. He is taken out of a dockyard and sent by the Admiralty to reside day by day and hour by hour at the shipyard where the ships are being built by contract. He has not only to examine the work as it proceeds, but he has also to report to the Admiralty and get letters back. The result is that every little detail in the ship has to be dealt with, not as it might be, and not as it is in the mercantile service, on the spot by a responsible officer, but by Whitehall through the medium of the higher officials. The aggregate result is that a

vessel built by contract under this system costs more and occupies much longer time than would be necessary under a wiser system. We have heard much of decentralisation as regards the Army. Let me appeal to my hon. friend to initiate, as one reform in his administration of the Admiralty, the decentralisation of the overseeing staff, so as to facilitate the quick and economical execution of contracts for the building of ships.

There are several features in the statement of the First Lord and in the speech of my hon. friend to which I should like to refer. The Fleet Reserve, as my hon. friend the Member for Devonport said, is likely to prosper because of the bounty, pension, and other attractions. It is a leaf taken, if I may say so, out of the book of the recent Army reform proposals; that is to say, the time-expired men or the veterans are to be utilised and secured for the future service by enrolling them in a new section of the Navy List, which will enable them to have the advantages of civil life, and at the same time be under the knowledge, and in a large degree under the care, of the Admiralty. Therefore I think that this Fleet Reserve is a matter of congratulation to the country, and that it will, as the hon. Member the Secretary to the Admiralty anticipates, be a success in raising the 15,000 men he hopes to obtain. On the question of the Naval Reserve there is a matter which I think calls for some explanation on the part of my hon. friend. It is as regards the number of executive officers that have been enrolled in the Naval Reserve. There are 1,500 executive officers in the Naval Reserve and 330 qualified candidates who are applicants for appointments. There are 400 engineer officers in the Reserve and only fifteen candidates who are stated to be seeking appointments. What do these figures prove? As a matter of fact, and in this I believe the hon. Member for Gateshead will bear me out, there are more engineers in the mercantile marine than deck officers. Notwithstanding that there is a large field from which to draw supplies here, we have this dearth of applicants in the Navy when there are more engineers to draw from than there are deck officers. That is something I will speak about on another occasion; the unfortunate position of and the injustice done to the engineers of the Navy. I would make as one small suggestion, in the first instance, to my hon. friend that he should secure every superintending engineer in the mercantile service as a recruiting officer for his reserve engineers by re-establishing the abolished rank of honorary chief engineer, which was mainly for the purpose of giving commissions to the engineers of the great steamship companies. It was unfortunately abolished, for no reason that I can explain. I believe it will be of considerable assistance to my hon. friend in increasing this beggarly supply of fifteen aspirants for commissions in the engineer rank of the Naval Reserve. I come now to the matter referred to by the hon. Member for Dundee; the Royal Naval Reserve on merchant cruisers. My hon. friend referred to the fact that the Vote for the expenses of these cruisers has disappeared. The explanation given in the statement of the First Lord is one which no one can deny is a satisfactory explanation so far as it goes. There are forty-eight of the finest ships in the mercantile marine secured to the Admiralty at a comparatively small cost; that is to say, the call

of these ships is secured. But is that all the organisation we could have? Is there not something more complete than that? Not long ago I was in a foreign dockyard ;I dare not say which dockyard;and I saw something that showed me the extremity of organisation and preparation that these foreign navies have established. There was a row of houses and over the front door of each house, was the name of a ship. Anyone who had permission to enter that front door would find in the house all the fittings down to the smallest details required for the ship whose name was painted up outside, so that in the event of an emergency they had only to summon the particular vessel, and, without any fuss or bother, or risk, the fittings would be brought out from the house. In a few hours the vessel might be sailing away a fully armed cruiser. Has any such arrangement been made or attempted in regard to these forty-eight steamers of the mercantile marine which my hon. friend referred to in his speech? I hope he will tell us when he comes to reply.

I come now to the question my hon. friend the late Civil Lord referred to in the commencement of his speech, which I regard, and which I think this House regards, as the most sensational question relating to the Navy that has arisen for many years. The situation has with all its difficulties some compensating advantages, because it has served to arouse the attention of the country to the Navy and its needs;a matter which has not been easy, having regard to the sense of security on the part of the people generally. I refer to the question which is deservedly associated with the name of my hon friend the Member for Gateshead;the boiler question. The boilers of a ship are apt to be forgotten by the ordinary observer. They are as concealed from observation as the heart and the lungs of a strong man, but they have exactly the same relation to the power, mobility, and usefulness, to the very life of the ship, as the heart and lungs have to the strength of the man. What is the use of a muscular arm if there be no power behind it? What is the use of the strongest ship with the best armour and the most powerful guns if she has not absolutely reliable motive power? There-

fore the boilers, though unseen, though until recently almost a bye-word, are, after all, more essential to the well-being and efficiency of a ship of war than any other part which is not associated with her propulsion and her mobility. Let me say a few words on the history of this question from my own standpoint. It is quite twenty years ago that a Boiler Committee was appointed for the purpose of inquiring into the possibility of the improvement of the boilers in Her Majesty's ships, and that Committee advised that two small ships should be fitted with boilers of this new type;a type which had been tried and found wanting, which was despised and rejected in the Mercantile Service, not in one line of steamers, but in many. At that time my hon. friend the Member for Dundee was in office as Civil Lord of the Admiralty, and he accepted the suggestion of the then Boiler Committee. At that time also there was a very powerful cruiser which had aroused an enormous amount of attention in this country because she had been prepared by Russia, and because it was said she was capable of steaming all round the world without the necessity of coaling at any coaling station;a most terrible power if it could be obtained. Our Admiralty set to work to give

an answer in a friendly way to this enormous cruiser, and the answer was to be found in two vessels; the "Powerful" and the "Terrible," the largest cruisers which, up to that date, had ever been attempted. The suggestion of the Boiler Committee was that two little steamers should be fitted for experiment, but that was enlarged by the Admiralty to the fitting of these large cruisers with these new experimental boilers. The hon. Member last night challenged my hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty to say what was the opinion of the technical advisers of the Admiralty now upon this question. I do not believe my hon. friend thought of sheltering himself behind the technical advisers, but it would have been more chivalrous and more fair if he had boldly said the experiment made by him was made after full determination by the then Board of Admiralty, and was not made on mere technical advice. But what happened after the boilers were fitted into these large cruisers? Was there a trial? Yes, there was a trial of six hours. Was there another trial? Yes, there was one of twelve hours. Finally there was a long trial of thirty hours. After thirty hours steaming these vessels were pronounced so successful as regards their boilers that the whole of the Navy afterwards was to be fitted with this new type of boiler. Could folly ever go further? Could the desire for scientific experiment ever more thoroughly carry the people away than was the case in this instance? What did we find afterwards? The hon. Member for Dundee in his speech last night referred to the fact that the hon. Member for Gateshead was not supported five years ago in the pressure which he brought on the Admiralty to at least try these boilers in any one of their ships for endurance by a voyage at full speed before they committed the Navy to the enormous expenditure of fitting the ships with boilers which might not be reliable. Refusal after refusal was made. Questions were answered at the time, and it was denied that there was any necessity for sending any one of the ships on a single passage across the Atlantic at full power for the purpose of testing the endurance of the boilers. Then came all that humiliating series of breakdowns which my hon. friend has already referred to. We had the "Europa" going out to Australia for the purpose of bringing troops from that country to South Africa. We found that she had to come home at, I do not know how slow a speed, because she was unfit to perform the duty. We had the "Hermes" towed into Esquimaux like a derelict ship on her first voyage. We had other cases, and it was only after a threat to divide this House that the Admiralty allowed the Committee, of whose Report we have recently heard so much, to be formed. The Report reflects credit on the Members of the Committee, on the First Lord of the Admiralty, and on my hon. friend for their boldness in admitting all the mistakes. This Committee consisted of mercantile engineers. At its head was Mr. Bain, the superintending engineer of the Cunard Company, whose steamers pass with the regularity of clockwork from Liverpool to New York. This Committee, with all these men of capacity upon it, has given a Report within six months of a definite character in some respects, although naturally it does not in other respects. The recommendation of the Committee is precise in one regard, and that is that the Belleville boilers should not continue to be fitted in any vessels on which too much progress has not been made. It means the condemnation of a very large

amount of property besides boilers, representing more than a million of money; and it means the condemnation of the boilers themselves, which may reasonably be estimated to have cost at least £3,000,000 more. Therefore we have this fact, that an amount of money corresponding to the cost of three battleships has been lost over this experiment. But that is nothing compared with the fact that vessels already fitted, costing many, many more millions than the cost of the boilers themselves, are crippled and rendered useless, by comparison, for the defence of the country.

Why am I railing against the Admiralty in this way? Is it to congratulate myself after the manner of the prophet of evil who rejoices in saying, "I told you so"? No, Sir, it is not. I desire to bring home to the House and the country the fact that some action should be taken immediately to restore to these ships the mobility and perfection of which they have been robbed, and in that view I venture to offer a suggestion which I hope will receive the earnest consideration of the new Board of Admiralty; namely, that the vessels which are already fitted with these condemned boilers should, at the earliest possible date, be fitted with boilers of the old cylindrical type, pending the completion by the Boiler Committee of the investigations they are making, and which must necessarily occupy a considerable amount of time. Let me for a moment refer to two quotations from the Interim Report. On page six, these words occur; "The Committee are of opinion that the advantages. …are so great.…that, provided a satisfactory type of water tube boiler be adopted;"

but I search in vain throughout the Report for any statement as to what is a satisfactory type. The fact is the Committee do not know, and no engineer knows, what is a satisfactory type of water-tube boiler. In the course of my professional experience I have had opportunities of examining all of them, and I respectfully agree with the Committee that no one knows at the present time what is a satisfactory type, notwithstanding the great military advantages which they undoubtedly possess. The Committee recommend that two vessels of a comparatively small size should be fitted with water-tube boilers for the purpose of experiments, and no doubt that is a wise recommendation. But until those experiments are made and the Committee have arrived at what they regard as a satisfactory water-tube boiler, the Admiralty are in the position of not knowing what to do; at least, they ought not to know what to do if they are going to act upon the suggestions of the Committee; and they dare not pause in naval construction, as we are already too far behindhand. What, therefore, is the course they will adopt? Will they go on fitting vessels with these water-tube boilers? Or will they reconcile themselves to the admitted loss of speed consequent upon the increased weight of the old type of boilers, by gaining, at any rate, their safety and security? I venture to say that the difficulty is much less than at first sight may seem to be the case. There are many people who are able to take orders for cylindrical boilers at the present time, and if the Admiralty will go about the matter in a systematic businesslike way, as any large steamship company would do, the hon. Gentleman will find the difficulty not nearly so great as might be anticipated, and he will have the

satisfaction within a year or a little over of having restored to many of the vessels now under condemnation the proper mobility and completeness of high speed which was intended in their original design.

I shall make reference, only for a moment, to a question which has already had sympathetic treatment in a general way by my hon. friend; namely, the question of engineers in the Navy. The main question in a sentence is this: The engineer, whilst having the duty of maintaining discipline and order in one-third of the ship's company, has no authority over his men. He has as much and as little authority as the doctor, the paymaster, or the chaplain. Yet that officer, with authority over executive rank, has done good service both ashore and afloat. At Ladysmith an engineer officer did good

work, and in the expedition for the relief of the Embassies at Peking an engineer officer, when the marine artillery officer was killed, took charge of the men and acted so well that his name was mentioned in despatches. I venture to claim that the time has now come when, as a matter not merely of justice, but of wisdom and prudence in the interests of the Navy, engineers should have the proper rank and authority of Engineer Officers. I see the right hon. Member for South Antrim in his place. Among the great services he rendered at the Admiralty there is one which stands out very prominently in my mind. He was a member of a Committee which consisted of himself, Prince Louis of Battenberg, and, I think, Admiral Douglas, which inquired into the question of the proper pay of engineers in the Fleet, and one of the recommendations of the Committee was that engineers should have the executive rank.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): I do not like to interrupt my hon. friend, but there is no foundation whatever for saying that the Committee made any recommendation in the direction he has just stated.

SIR FORTESCUE FLANNERY: Perhaps my right hon. friend before this debate closes will state, as far as official limitations will allow, what he regards as a wise course in this matter. At all events, it is generally understood throughout the engineering service in the country that that recommendation was made by the Committee. I thank the House for having listened to me, and my only excuse for trespassing upon its indulgence at such length is that the subject is of vast and vital interest to the country.

*MR. BLACK (Banffshire): One of the features which the present war has brought out prominently is the importance in the Army of what is known as the human element. It appears from our experience in the South African War that we shall in future warfare have to rely more on the initiative of the rank and file. That this feature is not confined to the Army alone has been shown by the prominence given in this debate to the same element in the Navy. The hon. and gallant Member for Great Yarmouth

frequently made reference to the necessity of paying particular attention to the human element.

The next matter which has been brought very largely under our notice in these debates, more particularly by the right hon. Member for Dundee, is the necessity, before very long, of increasing the personnel of the Navy as regards numbers. The large shipbuilding programme now being undertaken implies that

before many years are over we shall have to look forward to a very large increase in the manning of the Navy. This brings one to the consideration as to whether it is not time that the Admiralty should begin to look for fresh recruiting grounds for the Navy. It is a matter of common knowledge that as things at present stand the Navy is recruited almost entirely from one portion of these islands; namely, the southern or south-western portion. Now, that recruiting ground is limited both as regards numbers and quality, and it is of the utmost importance, in view of this human element, that the Navy should present a microcosm of the nation in the sense of having in its ranks men recruited from all parts of the country. This impels me to call attention to the magnificent recruiting ground in the north-west and north-east of Scotland. I believe that not more than 3 or 4 per cent. of the men in the Navy come from Scotland, and this is all the more remarkable when one considers that in Scotland and certain parts of Ireland we are face to face with a state of things which calls for the Congested Districts Board to deal with. How much better would it be if, instead of introducing doubtful emigration schemes, we were able to induce the admirable material which exists there to enter the Navy. I suppose the hon. Gentleman opposite will be ready to admit that it is desirable that men from all parts of the country should, if possible, be induced to enter the Navy. I think that in itself is an object worthy of being pursued. Not only have we to deal with the people of these islands, but the question has been ventilated more than once in the course of this debate that we shall probably have to look to the colonies in the future for some contribution to our Navy in the shape of money, and I think we may look forward also to their contributing in the shape of men. It is desirable that in this manner also the colonies should also contribute. If that be an object desirable in itself, the question arises, How is it to be attained? We are frequently directed to the Navy as an example for the Army, but here I would venture to direct the attention of the Admiralty to the Army as presenting them, to some extent, with a model by which they might proceed to attract recruits for the Navy. What would the Army have been to-day if it had been recruited upon the same principle as the Navy? Suppose the Army had been recruited almost solely, as is the case with the Navy, from within districts of England. We should then have found that in Scotland and Ireland there would have been some reluctance to join the Army, and we should not have had those magnificent Scotch and Irish regiments who have distinguished themselves so much both in the present and past campaigns. May I suggest to the Admiralty that they might apply their minds to the idea of having Scotch, Irish, and colonial ships? I do not suppose that this idea is a new one. The Admiralty has already endeavoured so far to carry it into effect by stationing training ships all over these islands, but these do not serve the same purpose, because it is well known that as soon as men have passed through the training ships they will be scattered over all the other ships in the Navy, and they will not have the opportunity of consorting with their compatriots. In many of those recruiting districts to which I have referred the national or clan feeling is very strong, and it will be a long time before it dies out. This view may not commend itself

to hon. Members representing other parts of these islands, but it is a fact, and it is a factor to be dealt with. Surely it would be possible to have in the Channel Fleet one Scotch ship and perhaps another Scotch ship in the Mediterranean. On the Pacific Station we might have one colonial ship, recruited from Australia and Canada, and in that way we might encourage recruiting from those places.

An incidental advantage that would accrue from this is the one which was alluded to from the Benches below the

gangway in the discussion upon the first Amendment yesterday ;namely, that it would in large measure solve the religious difficulty, which no doubt is a pressing one. I think the Secretary to the Admiralty felt that the Irish Catholics had a grievance which he was willing to endeavour to redress as far as he could. This scheme of territorialising would very soon redress this grievance. I believe it is the fact, and it is in accordance with the common experience of humanity that clergymen, not only in Ireland, but in Scotland, do not encourage the young men of their districts to join the Navy. I believe that is a fact, and it is in a manner justified, because the clergymen are there to preserve the youth under their charge in that religion in which they are brought up. So that the clergymen in doing this are only doing their duty. The clergy in Scotland and Ireland do not encourage recruiting for the Navy, but if we had this territorial scheme we should get rid of that difficulty, and I do not doubt that recruits would flow freely both from Scotland and Ireland. The Secretary to the Admiralty and the Admiralty officials, I know, have some red-tape objections to this scheme. They advert, I believe, to the great variety of ratings in the Navy as distinguished from the Army, and not being able to get the proper proportions of men for national ships to fill each rating. But surely, without arriving at exactitude in the way of having all the men on one ship of one nationality, it might be possible to arrive approximately and broadly at this result., even although men of other nationalities were in measure drafted in to fill ratings in which the nationality to which the ship belonged was deficient. In any event, it is the duty of the officials not to be bound by red tape, but to burst asunder such bonds, and find some way of meeting the point with which I have been dealing. I commend to the most serious attention of the Admiralty this suggestion of territorialising, some ships. I would like to call attention to, another point, affecting the officers. The training of our naval officers must be lamentably deficient in the matter of naval history. We owe it to America that she has

produced the only officer who has been capable of awakening the mind, not only of Americans, but of Europe, upon the importance of the great question of sea power. There are many officers in His Majesty's Navy who have not undertaken, with all the diligence that is necessary, the study of works in naval history like that produced by Captain Mahan and others, and this is a point I should venture to commend to the attention of the Admiralty.

MR. MAJENDIE (Portsmouth) said he very much regretted that the hon. Member for Dundee was not present, for he had a very considerable amount of fault to find with one statement of the hon. Member. He practically stated that he objected to

the amount of money provided for in the Naval Estimates this year. As one of the strongest supporters of His Majesty's Government, he (Mr. Majendie) rejoiced to think that in no way had there been any retrenchment as regards expenditure on the Navy. In other words, knowing as they did that there must be a considerable sum voted for the Army Estimates, they found that in no way had the Navy suffered in the sum to be voted for the Navy Estimates.

Passing to another subject, he listened with great interest last night to the speech of the hon. and gallant Member for Great Yarmouth, in which he spoke of the personnel of the Navy, but he would like to touch upon that subject in a different manner altogether. He would like to bring up the question of the food supplied to the lower deck. Probably not many Members of this House understood fully what the food of the lower deck was. To begin with, he would give the number of meals provided. The hours of meals were: six o'clock, breakfast; dinner, twelve o'clock; tea, from four to five. Of course, this varied in many ships, but he wished to go into the subject of the food provided. The breakfast of the seaman consisted of a piece of dry bread and a pint of tea. His dinner might consist of one pound of beef with half a pound of vegetables, or a variation of one pound of salt pork, three-quarters of a pound of salt beef with preserved potatoes, or three-quarters of a pound of mutton with rice. He maintained that was not sufficient food for the British seaman. The Navy was supposed to be thoroughly fed in every way, but he would compare it with the Army in this respect. The Army were given free clothing, free food, and free everything at the same time. Taking a rough estimate, he would say that a man in the Navy had to pay at least 15s. a month out of his pay towards these things.

He would pass from the ordinary seaman to the chief petty officers, which he thought was a question standing out in a glaring manner before everyone. There were three classes of petty officers, and every one of them were leading men on the lower deck. The chief petty officer was the man whom everybody on the lower deck looked up to, for he was responsible practically for the discipline and the carrying on of the whole of the work on the lower deck. Again, when the chief petty officer retired from the Service he was only eligible for a first-class petty officer's pension. Why should he not get due compensation for the work he had done, and why should he be reduced at the moment of his retirement? What he wanted was that the pension should be a day. He sincerely hoped that something would be done to create in the Navy a rank corresponding to that of quartermaster in the Army. What inducement was there for a good man to enter the Navy when he could rise no higher than a warrant officer? In the Army commissions were given over and over again from the ranks. Why should not the senior Service have an equal privilege extended to them? Three commissions only had been given in the Navy; one to Mr. Creely, one to Mr. Webber, and one to Mr. Sims, the two former in respect of service in Egypt, and the latter during the present war. He noticed that the Secretary to the Admiralty had stated that certain rank was to be given to 100 electricians, but where did the chief armourer come in? He had practically charge of all the electrical appliances in the ship. Then, at present the chief stoker could not rise above the rank of

chief petty officer. He suggested that the chief stokers should be granted the rank of warrant officers.

He had himself been down in the engine-room, and had seen the tremendous responsibility that lay on these men. Coming now to the officers on the quarter deck; an officer when abroad was granted a fortnight's leave, but if he was on a permanent station he had a right to claim six weeks leave. All the leave which the seven or nine officers on board the "Centurion," the flagship on the China station, and which was recommissioned on 1st April, 1897, would have would be eight weeks. On the other hand, there was not an officer in the Army who could not claim two or three months leave in the year, and if not they could have indulgences and could get many a forty-eight hours leave to go on urgent private affairs; whereas in the Navy an officer who had been abroad for many years could only get six weeks leave, and perhaps only two or three, to visit his friends. He would like to say something as regarded the ships of the Navy, He maintained that the Mediterranean squadron had been materially reduced by sending the "Ocean" to China. He was not saying that that was not just It was necessary to have the strongest possible fleet in China; but the Mediterranean Fleet should not be so materially reduced, and we had not a single battleship to send in place of the "Ocean." Then the "Centurion" and the "Barfleur," in the China Squadron, ought to have been relieved long ago, but we had not the battleships to spare for the purpose. It was hoped that the "Albion" and the "Implacable" would be shortly ready for sea, but the gun-mountings had been taken out of the "Implacable" and put into the "Irresistible." He felt that he was making a speech against the Government, but he hoped that every effort would be made to get more battleships. As regarded the first-class cruisers, he had nothing to say against them. With the programme we now had we should have the finest set of first-class armoured cruisers in the world. [An HON. MEMBER: When?] He maintained that at this moment we were not short of first-class cruisers. As to the second-class cruisers, he had nothing to complain of but their speed. Ten years ago we were content with a speed of twenty knots; but he contended that that was not sufficient now. Quite recently eighteen second-class cruisers had been built, mostly in private yards in England, with a speed of over twenty-two knots. Two ships had been built for China and one for Russia; the latter not built in an English yard; with a speed of twenty-four knots. Home people said that there was no use for second-class cruisers; but he maintained that they were useful for watching our enemy's ports. If we were at war with a foreign nation the most useful ships would be the second and third class cruisers. He had not the slightest idea of what the speed of the new cruisers to be built would be, but he did urge on the Admiralty that they should improve the speed of those already built. They had heard something about submarine boats, and he must confess that it pleased him that France was a little scared that we were building five submarine ships, the policy of which he entirely endorsed. Everybody had listened with great attention and admiration to the speech of the Secretary for War in regard to Army reform. One sentence in that speech had struck him particularly, and that was that further inducements would be held out to men to join the Army, such as the reduction of barrack

square drill. He could not in any way advocate this in regard to the Navy, but many reforms might be introduced in the training of the men on the lower deck. It was said that had it not been for the present war the unsatisfactory management of the Army might have gone on long enough. He did not wish for a moment to speak against the Army; but he said, Clod forbid that we should have to have a naval war before it was necessary to introduce that needed reform in our Navy.

*MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.) said that the dispute as to whether the old style of boilers or the Belleville boilers should be adopted in the Navy was not a matter which interested him or his constituents. It had been alleged by hon. Members opposite that Ireland had as much interest as other parts of the Empire in increasing the effective naval forces of the Empire. That he denied. The English Government had not dared to ask Canada, Australia, or the other self-governing colonies to contribute towards the maintenance of the Navy in the same measure as they had asked the poorer country Ireland. He observed in these huge Navy Votes £;300,000 was to be spent in new works at Gibraltar, £;30,260 on the dockyard at Bermuda, and £;60,000 on a coaling station at the Falkland Islands. Now, he maintained that these works were of as much if not more advantage to Canada and to the Australian colonies as to the people of Ireland. That was putting the case of Ireland on a very low ground indeed; but right hon. Gentlemen who sat on the Treasury Bench had not dared to ask Canada and Australia to contribute a single penny towards the expense of these works. It was a mere playing with words to say that Ireland was as much interested as other parts of the Empire in this expenditure. There was no expenditure from which Ireland got so little benefit as that on the Navy. What interest had Ireland in maintaining the supremacy of the seas for England? Ireland existed on the produce of Ireland, and, indeed, she sent a great deal of her produce, in addition, to England, Scotland and Wales. Therefore, he protested against the theory that Ireland was as much interested as Great Britain in this enormous Naval expenditure. Ireland should be placed in the same position, so far as the Naval expenditure was concerned, as Australia and Canada occupied to-day. He had another objection to this Vote, and that was, that Ireland received little or nothing at all from the actual expenditure of the many millions asked from the House. He asked the hon. Gentleman who represented the Admiralty why Ireland was not considered in allocating the contracts for the building and repair of war vessels for the Navy. A most extraordinary thing to his mind, as a business man, was that the south of England was chosen for the expenditure of many millions of money on dockyards and the equipments of dockyards. It was a singular fact that not a single site in the neighbourhood of these dockyards had been chosen by commercial firms for the erection of great manufacturing works. Contrast with that the great shipbuilding centres of Scotland and Ireland; the Clyde, Belfast and Londonderry. He ventured to assert that there was not a single dockyard or shipbuilding centre in England the establishment of which could be defended on commercial principles by any member on the Government Benches. Their policy in this, as in every other case, was that the English Government had been more anti-Irish than commercial. In no

part of the three kingdoms could cheaper or more efficient labour be obtained than in the city of Londonderry. The establishment of dockyards and other great Admiralty works at Londonderry and Belfast had been raised time and again from these Benches, but not a single penny of Government money had been spent in building or repairing warships at these ports. He remembered that on the eve of the General Election of 1805 the right hon. Member for South Antrim, who then represented the Admiralty in the House, came to Londonderry and addressed a Unionist meeting there, and the burden of his speech was that Derry would get, not the building or repairing of one warship, but the building of dozens of warships; at least that was the purport of his remarks, and that was why he was brought down as a decoy duck for the electors of Derry to address an election meeting.

MR. MACARTNEY: I deny the correctness of what the hon. Member has stated, and I ask him to quote any portion of my speech which bears out the assertion he has made.

*MR. O'DOHERTY: Although I was election agent for the Nationalist candidate, I went to the Guildhall, where the right hon. Gentleman addressed a meeting. It was a reason put forward by the Unionists as to why Derry men should support the candidate favoured by the hon. Member.

MR. MACARTNEY: No, Sir, I must ask the hon. Member to quote my exact words. I have denied the correctness of his statement, and I must ask him to withdraw it;[Cries of "Oh" from the Irish Benches];unless he quotes the speech bearing the construction he has placed upon it.

*MR. O'DOHERTY: In the law courts in which I practise if personal and direct testimony can be given quotations or secondary evidence are not admitted. I am now giving my personal recollection.

MR. MACARTNEY: I really must insist on the hon. Gentleman;[Cries of "Order, order!" and "Who are you to insist?" from the Irish Benches.] I am entitled, according to the practice of the House, to ask the hon. Gentleman to quote the speech upon which he relies for the statement he has now made in the House. I have denied that there is any foundation for the statement, and I must ask him either to withdraw that statement or to produce the speech. [Cries of "Order!" from the Irish Benches.]

*MR. O'DOHERTY: I ask the right hon. Member if he did not come to Londonderry at that election to support the candidature of Mr. Herdman and address a meeting in the Guildhall.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! This is a very long way from the question of the Navy Estimates.

*MR. O'DOHERTY: It has something to do, Sir, with the building of ships and the spending of some of this vast Naval expenditure in our country.

*MR. SPEAKER: It has nothing to do with the building of ships in the sense in which shipbuilding is provided for in the Estimates.

*MR. O'DOHERTY said he would bow to the ruling of the Chair and not further refer to the matter. But when the right hon. Member and other hon. Gentlemen on the other side asked the Irish people at election times to return their party to power on these promises he thought it was only fair that he should refresh their

memories now across the floor of the House. In 1887, Mr. Justin McCarthy, who was then Member for Deny City, raised the question in this House, and was told by the present Secretary of State for India that the Derry shipbuilding yards would be examined to find out whether they were fit for Government work. In 1889 Mr. McCarthy was

further told that this shipbuilding yard had been examined by an expert, and that this expert had certified that the yard was fit for Government work. Though that was thirteen years ago, not a single penny of Government money had been spent in the city by the Boyle, either in the repair or the building of warships. When the Channel Squadron visited the waters of the Foyle or Lough Swilly the slightest repair that had to be made on any vessel of that squadron was executed in an English dockyard. The Derry shipbuilders were not allowed to do any repairing work, although the ships were actually in their port. He ventured to say that out of all the millions spent on the Navy not £;50 were spent in Ireland. It struck him that if the cities of Londonderry and Belfast had not been Irish cities dockyards would have been established there long ago. And in this respect he might add that the orange tint of the sky in these cities had no more attraction for the Admiralty than had the green tint in Cork. This question had been discussed at the General Election, not only in Londonderry, but in the city of Galway and elsewhere, and Unionist candidates had assured the Irish voters that if they only elected them the Government which they supported would have dockyards and shipbuilding yards growing up like mushrooms in their bays and rivers. Months had passed, and not a single ship, or even row boat, had been constructed, and, as in the past, the electors in these cities had been duped. One point more. When questions had been raised as to the expenditure of these huge sums of money for the Navy, it had never been raised by hon. Gentlemen from Ireland who sat on the opposite side of the House, but invariably by the Irish Members on these benches. It was they who protested that more money was not spent by the Government in Ireland. Where were those hon. Members to-day who were so flippant with their promises as to the building of warships in Ireland in October last, and why was this question left to hon. Members like himself, who were not particularly interested in the shipbuilding towns of Ireland, but who were only concerned with the general material progress and prosperity of every part of their country? He would appeal to the hon. Gentleman who represented the Admiralty in the House and who represented a constituency whose well-being was bound up with the shipbuilding in Ireland, to see that when contracts for the building and repair of warships were given out by the Admiralty, a fair amount, all things being equal, should be given to the Irish shipbuilding yards. He had no doubt that if the hon. Gentleman did that a new industry would grow up and flourish in many of the seaport cities of Ireland, as the shipbuilding industry had sprung up and flourished in Belfast.

*MR. MACARTNEY said that the concluding observation of the hon. Gentleman deserved a good deal of attention. He, however, wished to draw attention to the criticism on Naval expenditure made the previous night by the hon. Member for Dundee, which must be regarded with a certain amount of anxiety seeing that the

hon. Gentleman represented, in Naval matters, the party opposite. The hon. Member had emphasised very strongly his views in regard to the expenditure on the Navy in this country, and had expressed the greatest anxiety as to the magnitude of the proposals of the First Lord of the Admiralty. The hon. Gentleman had taken up a position which he was bound to admit he was justified in doing, of requiring full explanations of these gigantic proposals, and no doubt before these debates were over the hon. Gentleman would hear a justification from the Front Bench for the proposals which he hoped would enable him to acquiesce in them. If, however, the hon. Gentleman was not fully satisfied he is bound to move an Amendment which would give definite expression to the feelings he enunciated the previous afternoon. The hon. Gentleman laid before the House certain figures which, so far as the position of this country was concerned, in respect to construction, were liable to misconstruction, and to give a misleading view as to the relative position of England and other countries. He compared the gross expenditure of the United Kingdom in 1893 with the gross expenditure of France and Russia in that year, and then he pointed out that in the interval our gross expenditure in naval matters had overlapped that of these two countries by something like fourteen millions. That was a comparison which was excessively misleading, if it were accepted as a true criterion of the relative position of Great Britain and its foreign competitors. What they had to look to was the position of the new construction abroad, and the new construction in this country. He thought if they did so that the House would agree that the proposals made by the First Lord of the Admiralty were far from being excessive, and, in-reality, only met the natural requirements and the necessities of the moment. In 1899 the expenditure of France and Russia was a little over £8,000,000, and during the same period our expenditure was £7,500,000. France and Russia were £500,000 ahead of us in expenditure for new construction in 1899. In the present year their expenditure was estimated at £7,600,000, and ours was estimated at, and he hoped it would approach, £8,460,000, so that only in the present year had we recovered the position we had lost in 1899, in new construction. Upon these grounds he submitted that the proposal made by the Government was not excessive, and only adequate to the responsibilities of the country. It was entirely beside the question to compare the gross expenditure, which in recent years had been swollen by claims which other countries had not to bear, with that of foreign Powers.

He had heard with great pleasure the admission of the hon. Gentleman that the delay in new construction was due to natural causes, which the Admiralty could not control. The hon. Gentleman said that the paralysis of new construction was the result of difficulty in procuring machinery, not only for putting into the ships, but also the machinery necessary for manufacturing for all purposes required in Admiralty construction. He had no criticism to offer in regard to the Committee which had been appointed to inquire into the delay, because he believed that the conclusions arrived at by that Committee would sustain the statements which had been made by his hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty. The Com-

mittee would be forced to the conclusion that the delay in construction had not been the fault of the Admiralty, but had been due to circumstances over which they had no control, and which the contractors had been unable to combat. It had been suggested that the delay in new construction had been accentuated by the omission of the Admiralty to enforce penalties, but having regard to the fact that that delay had been caused largely by strikes, he did not believe the House would accept the proposition that the enforcing of penalties by the Admiralty against the contractors, would have in any way prevented it. The contractors had conclusively shown that they had done everything in their power to facilitate construction, and penalties were never enforced by the Admiralty unless they were perfectly convinced that the contractors had failed to do their best to carry out the work which they had in hand. He did not think that the Admiralty would depart from this rule, and at the same time he could assure the House that the penalties were always inflicted when there was just cause for their infliction. With regard to the rate of shipbuilding, the hon. Member for Devonport, speaking on the previous day, had said that the country had entirely lost that rapidity of shipbuilding which was in existence in 1894.

MR. KEARLEY: Not the country but the Admiralty.

*MR. MACARTNEY said the hon. Member for Devonport had stated that the rapidity of shipbuilding had entirely disappeared, and the inference which was deduced was that it was entirely the fault of the administration. Shipbuilding had decreased in rapidity, but the Admiralty in this regard was still ahead of foreign Powers. The rate of shipbuilding by the Admiralty in the Government dockyards was three years or a little over. The rate in the Government yards of France was three and a half years, in Russia five years, in Germany between three and four years; and the only country which could approach us in this matter, and who built their ships in this country, was Japan, whose average was a little under three years. So

that if the rates of shipbuilding were compared there was not after all much difference. One advantage which foreign countries building in Great Britain had over the Admiralty arose from the fact that the persons responsible for the building of the ships were also responsible for the designs upon which those ships were built; but though this gave them an advantage, he did not think it would be wise for the Admiralty to alter the procedure which they adopted, because in all new classes of vessels which were being built there were questions arising which could only be solved from experience gained afloat, and which of a necessity could not be dealt with by the contractors, and could only be dealt with successfully by the Admiralty after they had consulted their experts. It was upon the period within which the "Majestic" and "Magnificent" were built that the exaggerated feeling in this country about the increased time of Admiralty ship construction was based. These two ships, which were built one at Chatham and one at Portsmouth, were built in two years and two months. How was it that in these two dockyards they were able to turn out these two ships in that period? The whole strength of the yards was turned on to them, and of the whole of the new construction money for 1894-95, amounting to £4,427,000, one-fourth was spent absolutely on these two ships. The "Renown,"

which was laid down one year before either of these two ships, was put on one side.

The hon. Member continued: I am not blaming the Admiralty of the day for the course they took, but it is the fact that the exceptional rate of construction arrived at in the case of these two ships was arrived at principally by turning on to them the whole strength of the yards, and by certainly not expediting any other new ship under construction, and by putting on one side the power of the yards to carry out the reconstruction and repair of other ships. That is admitted, and therefore I say it is an unfair standard to set up, for all the other ships of the "Majestic" class took two years and nine months, and, practically speaking, the average period was not much less than it is now. I feel confident that the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite will agree with me that, taking one year with another, and taking the conditions in private yards and the conditions in the Government dockyards, it would be impossible for the Admiralty to contend that a battleship could be built in a less period than three years. Therefore I submit that the delay in construction to which the public mind has been so much directed in the last few years has been the result entirely of natural causes: but the rate of construction has not materially diminished, and as compared with our great European competitors we are still practically ahead of them in the rate of our shipbuilding progress.

I wish to allude to other two questions referred to in the statement of the First Lord. One is the supply of shells and the other is the question of submarine boats. My hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty. I am sure quite unwittingly, used an expression in alluding to armour-piercing shells which has been taken up by some newspapers in the country in order to level an attack upon the late First Lord. Lord Goschen. One paper drew attention to it by saying that the Secretary to the Admiralty had referred to the great services Lord Goschen rendered to the Navy, and at the same time twitted him by saying that now for the first time the Admiralty had a supply of armour-piercing shells in the Navy. This question was under the consideration of the late administration and the Admiralty for some years, and it was Lord Goschen who first took money for the supply of these shells. Undoubtedly the late administration would have taken money for the supply of these shells if they had been in a position to place orders with contractors for their manufacture. But as hon. Gentlemen in the House who have taken an interest in the matter know, it was some time before the Admiralty succeeded in reaching a design which combined all the qualifications necessary for an effective armour-piercing shell. With regard to submarine boats, that was a matter which was dealt with by the late administration, and the contract for submarine boats was carried out by the administration of which Lord Goschen was at the head, but it is not quite clear from the statement of the First Lords. Practically, I may say, nine-tenths of what appears in the First Lord's statement is a statement of the policy carried out by Lord Goschen. A very important question, raised by the hon. Member for the Brightside Division, was that of Treasury control. I entirely disagree with the views he brought before the House, and I think it right to say

a few words about it. I suppose the Secretary to the Admiralty has more to do with the Treasury than almost any other individual. I entirely deny that the Treasury in any way impedes the proper exercise of the responsibility of the Admiralty in expenditure it is a delusion that exists in the public mind that the Treasury in some way or other has the power of preventing the Admiralty spending the money Parliament votes for naval purposes. The Treasury has no power whatever to interfere in the expenditure of the Admiralty. But above and beyond that, the Treasury invariably permit the Admiralty to apply, if they show proper reasons, any unexpended surplus which may accrue on one Vote to the necessities of another. Above all, should any sudden emergency arise, or should the Lords of the Admiralty consider it expedient from the point of view of public necessity, or in the interest of the Admiralty, to incur an expenditure for which they have not Parliamentary sanction, if the Lords of the Admiralty assume the responsibility of showing that this expenditure is necessary in the public interest and cannot be deferred without detriment to the public service, the Treasury invariably give way. The hon. Member for the Brightside Division naturally has not had the opportunity of studying those valuable Reports known as the Appropriation Account and the Dockyard Expenditure Account. If he had, he would have seen that there are in almost every page letters written by the Admiralty to the Treasury proposing expenditure, to which the Treasury give their sanction on the ground that the Admiralty have stated that to withhold sanction would be detrimental to the public interest. Over and over again in the last five years the Admiralty have received the sanction of the Treasury, unhesitatingly given, for the expenditure of public money for which the Admiralty have obtained no previous Parliamentary sanction; but the First Lord and his administration must

take upon themselves the responsibility of justifying to the Treasury and the country the necessity for the exceptional demand which they make. I am bound to say, from the experience I had at the Admiralty of the numerous communications I had to make to the Treasury, that it is an absolute delusion or misrepresentation of the facts to suppose that the officials of the Treasury connected with Admiralty administration show any indisposition whatever to give just recognition to the claims of the Admiralty.

I wish to call the attention of the Secretary to the Admiralty to a most important question, which I can only raise on the general debate, but I do not ask an answer now. It is the question where the Army and Navy have interests which adjoin each other, and which very often become conflicting interests. At Chatham, Portsmouth, and Devonport, and in some foreign ports, the Army and Navy have establishments. The Admiralty ground and the War Office ground are mixed up in a positive jumble. Over and over again questions arise in which one Department or the other requires to give way. In many cases mutual concessions are arrived at without great difficulty. But the question which I wish to raise is one which does not rest upon small details. I shall choose Chatham as an illustration. If a question arises affecting the amount of ground which the naval authorities have there, and if they have established the necessity for expansion to the satisfaction of the Defence Committee of the Cabinet, or the

Cabinet itself, there ought to be no question as to whether their demand should be conceded. The Army can go anywhere. They are not tied to Chatham, but the Navy are bound to that port. What I wish to impress on my hon. friend is the fact that we are spending enormous sums on expansion at Chatham, and the principle I have raised must be decided unless the naval service at Chatham is to be confined within limits which will be disastrous to the health of the men stationed there. I hope that the First Lord will realise that this is a matter of vital importance for the naval service, and that he will press it upon the Defence Committee of the Cabinet or the Cabinet itself. I do not profess to be competent as a scientific critic to discuss the Report of the Committee on water-tube boilers, but I do hope that the House will not be carried away by panic with regard to this matter. I hope the House will not press the Admiralty to come to some sudden conclusion which might not be altogether justified by the Report of the Committee. I feel bound to make this appeal to the House on account of the speeches which have been made by the hon. Members for Gateshead and the Shipley Division. They have to my mind put the case too strongly before the House. They have insisted that the vessels in which there are water-tube boilers are crippled in comparison with all the other vessels. I say, with all respect to my hon. friend the Member for the Shipley Division, whose professional knowledge I do not desire to dispute, that is a statement that cannot be supported. It is perfectly true that there are four or five of these vessels. [An HON. MEMBER: More.] The cruisers in which there are water-tube boilers have exhibited most serious defects. They have practically broken down. I admit all that, but that is not the whole case. There are in Chinese waters, and in the Mediterranean, battleships and cruisers which are doing the ordinary work of the Fleet with complete satisfaction. In Chinese waters the "Glory," "Goliath," and "Ocean," three battleships, are, for anything I know, doing the ordinary work which all the other ships in the squadron are doing with complete satisfaction. The "Canopus" is the fastest ship in the Mediterranean Fleet. The "Andromeda," "Vindictive," and "Gladiator" are all carrying out the work of the Fleet. These facts do not justify those who are urging that water-tube boilers should be taken out of all these ships. It would deprive the country of valuable ships which are doing their work admirably. It would diminish our naval strength without any adequate reason. I do not say anything about the proposition that the Belleville boilers should be put on one side. I am only deprecating the position taken up by the hon. Member for Gateshead, supported by the hon. Member for the Shipley Division; namely, that every ship with

Belleville boilers should have others substituted.

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN (Gateshead): The boilers are condemned by your own Committee.

*MR. MACARTNEY: I am not arguing that. I am arguing the statement superimposed on it. They are not crippled by comparison when you take the whole of them. You have these battleships doing the work of the squadrons without any complaint. I know that the hon. Member for Gateshead is perfectly in earnest in his views, but I say that he is pressing the matter too far on the House when he appeals to the Admiralty to take out of these ships water-tube boilers which have succeeded

admirably. I have not the slightest doubt that the Admiralty and their advisers will consider this most serious matter, but I am sure the House and the country may rely upon them to do nothing to injure the present strength of His Majesty's Fleet.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: The Secretary to the Admiralty thought it necessary to make the request that we should keep back anything that could be kept back, and speak only on matters of first-class importance arising in the course of the present debate. There are two or three matters of importance which have arisen in the course of the present debate on which I have a few words to say, and I think those words should be said now rather than at a later stage. The hon. Member who has just sat down has made an admirable speech, and I hope that his criticisms may not always bear so official a tinge as they do at the present moment, when he is naturally defending his administration. The hon. Member began his speech by alluding to the speeches which had been made apparently against large expenditure. The hon. Member for North Donegal and the Irish Members generally, of course, view the matter from a different point of view from the other Members of the House. The Nationalist Members have their own point of view, which we understand and appreciate, but it is not necessary to argue things with them from exactly the same point of view as that from which

we argue among ourselves. I turn to the remarks of the right hon. Member for South Antrim, and the other speakers to-night. The late Leader of the Liberal party, the Member for West Monmouth-shire, a few days ago made a speech in this House upon the naval and military expenditure of the country. In that speech while attacking, and announcing for this session further attacks on military expenditure, he went out of his way to say that he would cheerfully grant any money the Admiralty thought necessary for the Navy, in order to provide for the safety of the country. I think my hon. and learned friend the Member for Dundee, although he guarded himself in a way, left on the minds of many hon. Members the impression that he did not take the same view, and that he was not prepared to accept so willingly the statement of the Government as to what was necessary in the way of Naval expenditure during the present year. In the statements of my hon. friend the Member for Dundee to which I allude he said;

"He wished to place before the House the view taken by those who sat on that Bench and on that side of the House on the very important proposals of the Admiralty this year"; He wanted to call the serious attention of an indifferent House and an indifferent country to the magnitude of the proposals contained in the Estimates. Some years ago Mr. Goschen apologised for the Estimates of the day, and admitted they were colossal. They were colossal as compared with previous records, but they were pygmies as compared to the Estimates now before the House; These Estimates were so vast and went so far beyond the standard it had hitherto been the object to attain, that they ought not to be made to the House without a full declaration of what they were wanted for."

If that is all he means, I am with him in thinking that Estimates so large as these ought not to be made without the fullest explanation of exactly what they are wanted for. I admit that the speech of the Secretary to the Admiralty was

not so full a statement on many points as it might have been, but it was made under difficult circumstances, and was probably shortened by a long discussion which had preceded it. I hope therefore that the statement will be supplemented in the course of the later stages of this debate. I agree that we need much information to justify Estimates so large, but I hope my hon. and learned friend has been misunderstood

when he is supposed to have said that these Estimates were too large, and that for reasons which I will very briefly give. My hon. and learned friend is reported as saying that;

"the provision for new construction was £9,000,000, the largest total for new construction ever proposed in this country."

I fear that those words, if not explained, will be misunderstood outside this House, because "new construction" to us here has a technical meaning. It is not what the country understands by new construction. Probably the great majority of the electorate when they read about that £9,000,000 for new construction will think it has to do with the new shipbuilding programme, whereas it is almost entirely for ships the building of which has been fully agreed to in past years. Our shipbuilding has fallen very heavily into arrear, and this so-called new construction programme is enormous because of the rapid efforts which have to be made to make up for the arrear of the past. The actual new construction in the ordinary service of the year is the very small programme which will be commenced, under the bad habit we have got into of recent times, at the end of the financial year. It is a very small programme; three battleships. There are many Members who believe, in spite of the remarks of the hon. Member for South Antrim, that these programmes are occasionally reduced through Treasury influences. It is a curious thing that although that statement is always denied in the House, Mr. Childers, who had a unique experience, having been First Lord of the Admiralty, Secretary of State for War, and Chancellor of the Exchequer, has in his Memoirs left it on record that he agreed with Sir John Briggs, an Admiralty clerk, in that famous book which made such a great sensation, in thinking that the truth is not always told in this matter, and that the Treasury does sometimes produce a prejudicial effect.

The hon. Member for Dundee suggested that we were in some degree exceeding the standard of which we have heard so much, and which in past years has been laid down as the standard for shipbuilding in this country. I have often said that that standard was a very-useful one. A war between this country and the two Powers of Russia and France,

which is contemplated in this standard, is a most unlikely one, but the advantage of the standard has always, been that it has given you a margin by the efficiency of your Fleet to fight single-handed against possible allied operations which was sufficient to make even a more formidable group of Powers pause before attacking you at sea. That standard, in spite of occasional scares on the one hand, and, on the other hand, statements as to exaggerated Estimates, has not in practice greatly varied for a great number of years. In 1883 it was possible to argue, as Mr. Childers argued, that we had a practical superiority over four fleets. Even before the scare of 1884-1885 the standard was

substantially that which we have since maintained, and I believe that at no time have we fallen very greatly short of it. But there have been, no doubt, within the last year or two a number of delays.

Of course the expenditure involved is very great. The Secretary for the Colonies a few years ago made a speech in favour of an alliance with a military Power. He said that the alternative was to build up so as to make ourselves safe against a combination of three Powers, and that that would entail an addition of 50 per cent. to the Estimates. Since that time we have added more than 50 per cent. to our Estimates. Of course the expenditure is very great; but is there a man in this House; I am not speaking of the Irish Nationalists, who have their own point of view, which we perfectly appreciate; who believes that it is not necessary for us to continue to maintain that practical standard which would lead even three Powers to hesitate before attacking. During the last year we have, happily had friendship between ourselves and Germany; I believe that that friendship may long continue, and I hope it will. But it is impossible to shut our eyes to the fact that there have been distinctly proposed to the German Houses, by Admiral Tirpitz, Estimates which are based on the possibility of an outbreak of war with England. Von der Goltz, who is the highest literary authority on this subject, has said the same thing. We have seen also that remarkable preparation of strategic cables on the part of Germany, in which they have combined with Holland to

have their own system of cables; Dutch and German; throughout the world, in order to be entirely independent of British cables in the event of a possible Naval war. In face of facts of that kind, which can be infinitely multiplied, it seems to me it would be monstrous on our part to fail to maintain that Standard, and that it is our bounden duty both to make up for the delays which have occurred and to vote programmes in the future which should be sufficient to keep up that standard.

With regard to the delays, they are admitted. There is no suggestion now that the delays have not been very serious. The right hon. Member for South Antrim has, to some extent, officially explained them to-night, upon grounds which I think will not bear very serious examination. He has alluded, for example, to the Japanese battleships. Now, what is the reason given by the suppliers of those battleships for the great difference of pace at which we can build, in this country, battleships for foreign Powers as compared with vessels built for ourselves? Mr. Hills gives it in the papers of to-day in his speech at a launch, and it strengthens our ease against the Admiralty. I thank the Secretary to the Admiralty for the step he has taken in consulting on this subject great specialists like Sir Thomas Sutherland and the hon. Member for Maidstone, by appointing a Committee on this matter. With regard to these delays, there is also the extraordinary case recalled by a question of the hon. Member for Devonport in this House the other day. The resuscitation of the dockyard strike by the right hon. Member for South Antrim as a reason for the delays is greatly affected by the extraordinary difference between ship and ship in our own dockyards. There were four ships of the "Bulwark" class built in the same dockyard; Devonport; and the difference between them was simply extraordinary. It

was suggested that the dates of launching mean nothing, because of the different quantity of tons built in before the ships are launched. But an examination of the figures shows that even allowing for the difference in tons built in, the difference between ship and ship is something like two to one. The right hon. Member has said that in cruisers we have shown that we can build as fast as anybody else. Here are the facts with regard to the four vessels of the "Cressy" class. They were announced to us beforehand, as it were, in February, 1897; they were proposed in a Supplementary Estimate, accompanied by the strongest possible language as to their instant necessity by the administration, of which the hon. right Member for South Antrim was a Member, in July, 1897. These ships were launched between July and November, 1898; yet only one of those ships is ready now, and we do not know when the other three will be ready at all. Just contrast with that the cruiser "Gromoboi" to which the right hon. Member for South Antrim alluded, built at St. Petersburg. He maintained that we can still build cruisers as fast as they can in Russia. What would have been thought four or five years ago of such a statement as that? It was always said that the Russian Navy did not count, as they could not build the ships; and yet now, all that we can claim, and that very doubtfully, is that on the average we can, build cruisers as fast as they can. In this particular case the cruiser was laid down in May, 1898, that is to say, almost a year after the Supplementary Programme of Mr. Goschen concerning the four cruisers to which I have referred. That ship is actually in commission now.

MR. MACARTNEY: That is the only instance.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Put is it not a marvellous thing that they should have made such progress, and that that which seemed incredible a few years ago, should now be so easy of accomplishment? There is one matter in connection with the Belleville boilers to which I should like to allude, because it has not been mentioned in this debate, and it appears to me to have an essential bearing on the subject. I do not profess, and I have never professed, to have an opinion worth giving to the House upon technical subjects of this kind, but what the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Yarmouth last night called the "human element" has played a part, I am quite certain, in connection with this boiler question, which is insufficiently appreciated by those who have strong opinions on either side. It perhaps does not suit particular specialists on either side to admit the enormous part which the human element undoubtedly plays in this matter. I have consulted the very highest Naval authorities in this country, and they all say most strongly that it is the training of the stokers which, after all, lies at the root of this question. These water-tube boilers are highly delicate instruments; they are like watches in their construction, and it is most dangerous to put these instruments in the hands of untrained men. The Admiralty made a great advance during Mr. Goschen's administration in the training of stokers, but they have not yet reached the point which should be reached. In regard to these matters the Admiralty are improving rapidly. They have even decided this year, I believe, that strategy should be taught. It is about three years ago that such a proposal was scoffed at and ridiculed in this House, but they are now making a small

beginning in that direction by throwing the teaching of strategy upon an already overworked, but very-good man. In regard to the training of stokers they have done a great deal, but there is much more they must do. At the present moment they are still short of superior engine-room ratings and of sufficiently trained stokers; they are able now to pass only one-half of their engine-room artificers and stokers through the instructional ships. A new ship going to sea for a first command has from one-half to one-third of her engine-room complement consisting of raw hands. I believe, from the inquiries I have made, that the mischief is done on these first voyages; the boilers are really half destroyed on the first voyage out. A great deal has been quoted from the Belleville Report, but what both sides say with regard to the human element has not been quoted. Upon that both sides are agreed. The majority say that;

"more than ordinary experience and skill are required on the part of the engine-room staff. It appears, however, from the evidence placed before the Committee, that the engineer officers in charge of Belleville boilers have not been made acquainted with the best method of working the boilers."

That is what the majority say, while the distinguished member of the Committee who supports the Belleville boiler says;

"From the evidence of engineer officers who have had charge of boilers of this type in

commissioned ships; it is a good steam generator, which will give satisfactory results when it is kept in good order and worked with the required care and skill."

I am convinced that there lies the secret. My hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty in his excellent statement rather suggested that the Admiralty had a boiler up their sleeve, as it were, which they would be able to produce in new ships. Unless they are going to take the retrograde step of going back to the old cylindrical boilers I believe they must attach a rapidly growing importance to this human element, and that it is in the training of the stokers that success will be found.

As my hon. friend perhaps suggested a little too easily that there was a boiler which could be adopted for future use, so too, perhaps, he suggested rather too easily another matter. He spoke of our new middle-sized guns, and said, with regard to the great erosion by cordite, that he hoped to produce a new powder which would give good results. I very much fear there may be a difficulty as regards the guns themselves in that new powder. If, as is foreshadowed in the Report which came out yesterday, we are to adopt a nitro-cellulose powder instead of our present cordite, the bulk of the powder will be much greater, and the result may be that we shall have to rearm all our ships. That is a very dangerous point, and if the hon. Gentleman can reassure us on that point we should be glad.

I will only add one word of congratulation to my hon. friend on the excellent statement he made the other day and express once more the hopes of all naval reformers in this House that he may continue to rouse that keen interest in the Navy in the future which he has hitherto displayed.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: May I venture to urge the House now to allow the Speaker to

leave the Chair and to get on to Vote A and Vote 1? We can then continue the discussion which has been going on. The opportunity for discussion will be quite as great with the Chairman of Committees in the Chair as it is at present, and the same topics will be discussed without the rigid limitation which obtains when the House is sitting. There is one other argument I would urge in the same direction, which I am

sure will have weight, and that is that my hon. friend who has this Vote in charge cannot reply to the many questions, comments and criticisms which have been passed upon his statement until the Speaker leaves the Chair, as he is precluded from again addressing the House.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) asked whether Irish Members would have an opportunity of placing their views before the House. They did not wish unnecessarily to prolong the debate, but only one Irish Member had yet taken part in the discussion.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course they will have their opportunities like the rest of the House upon Vote A and Vote I.

MR. DALY (Monaghan, S.) pointed out that of the £32,000,000 involved in these Estimates Ireland would have to pay £3,000,000, and yet she received not one penny of benefit in return. The protection of the Mercantile Marine had been spoken of, but if there was no Mercantile Marine there would be less food-stuffs coming into this country, with the result that a larger quantity would have to be obtained from Ireland, and market prices there would be enhanced. Another reason why Irishmen should protest against these Estimates was that while £21,700 were to be expended upon public buildings in Great Britain, only a few hundreds were to be expended in the same direction in Ireland. The hon. Member complained that none of the money for shipbuilding was expended in Ireland, and urged that the Admiralty should ascertain whether the work could not be done as efficiently, as well, and as cheaply, in Irish dockyards as elsewhere.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green), dealing with the question of Belleville boilers, said he was prepared to pin his faith in this matter to the opinion of such experts as the hon. Member for Gateshead. The lives of the seamen manning these ships should be a matter for the House to consider, and if such experts as the hon. Member for Gateshead said that such boilers as the Belleville boiler were likely to prove a danger to the lives of the sailors, no time should be lost in get-

ting them out of the ships and removing the peril to the sailors which the use of these boilers entailed. One point he wished to call attention to was that although a large portion of the money which was now being asked for would fall upon Ireland, she had never been allowed to have the ships which she had asked for to protect her fisheries, nor had she any part of the shipbuilding.

Shipbuilding yards ought to be established in Ireland by the Government, if not to build, at least to repair, His Majesty's ships. He believed that if some of the contracts for building ships had been placed in Ireland, a large amount of the congestion on construction would have been avoided. There was also the question of clothing for the sailors. He thought that some of the factories in Ireland ought to be requisitioned to make a portion of that clothing. The whole

policy of this country seemed to be to rob Ireland as much as possible and to make no return whatsoever.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I beg to move that the Question be now put.

*MR. SPEAKER: If hon. Members tell me that there is a prospect of the discussion coming to a, speedy conclusion, I shall not accept the motion, but if hon.

Members tell me that they intend to continue at length, then I am afraid I must accept it.

MR. NANNETTI: I represent a very important maritime constituency, and I much regret that the closure should have been put upon me.

*MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) said it had always been his practice to support whatever Government might be in power in their efforts to maintain the efficiency of the Fleet, but he desired to call attention to the fact that many of the ships on which large sums of money had been expended were lying idle at Portsmouth, and Chatham, and other naval ports, and it was only fair that such ships as were lying idle should be utilised for patrolling the fishing grounds around our coasts. The only extra cost entailed would be for coal, and these ships would be doing useful work instead of lying idle in port. The grievance of the fishermen was very great

all the inshore fishing grounds were being rained by trawlers. The Admiralty said it was not the work of the navy to catch trawlers, but police duty. That was an absurd idea, which he hoped would disappear. In his opinion it was of the utmost importance that the fishermen, not only on the coasts of Scotland, but also of England and Ireland, should be taken care of. Some of these days men who followed this occupation might be, required for the Navy, and if through the neglect to conserve the fisheries they were driven into the towns they would be far less adapted for naval service it was, therefore, highly desirable to preserve the fisheries, and so keep these men on our coasts. He appealed to the Secretary to the Admiralty to send some of these idle boats to patrol the fisheries. He also desired to draw attention to the importance of sending training ships round the coast, so that opportunities might be given to the sons of fishermen, already used to a sea-faring life, who would make far better recruits than boys taken from the towns. He also urged that the reserve station at Stornoway should be mounted with modern guns and not the, old muzzle-loaders, which had been there for years.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said there could be no question that the matter under discussion had now been fully discussed. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House had made an appeal to the House to go into Committee. Some of the Irish Members desired to draw attention to a great many matter's in connection with the Vote which, in his opinion, might be discussed more freely in Committee than in the House; therefore if those who were responsible for the Votes would undertake to give some consideration to the remarks of his hon. friends in Committee, and would endeavour to answer the questions put, he thought it would be desirable that this discussion should end. There was to be a sitting next day, the business of which was to be confined to getting these two Votes and another formal matter' to enable the Government to proceed with the Appropriation Bill; therefore, if the Government would come to an understanding

that the sitting would not be prolonged to a late hour, and would give that assurance to the House, he on his part would advise his friends to reserve any remarks they desired to make until the House went into Committee.

MR. A.J. BALFOUR: I think the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman is a very reasonable one. I do not propose that there shall be a late sitting to-night, and if that is understood on my part, I hope it will be also understood on the part of hon. Members that there will not be an inordinately late sitting to-morrow.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said he could not give any undertaking as to the length of time which the Saturday sitting would take. Many of his friends had specific matters to refer to, and he was unable to give any undertaking, but he thought if a conciliatory disposition was shown by the Government upon these Estimates there would be no reason for the sitting on Saturday to be inordinately prolonged.

MR. ASQUITH (Fifeshire, E.): I understand that if the Speaker leaves the Chair and we go into Committee there is no intention on the part of the right hon. Gentleman to take the Reports after he has succeeded in getting the Votes.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No; I propose that the whole of Monday shall be devoted to Reports. No Reports are to be taken to-morrow.

MR. E. J. C. MORTON (Devonport): Do I understand that in these circumstances the right hon. Gentleman will try and get the two Votes to-night?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Certainly not Vote 1. I should like, if possible, to get Vote A.

AN HON. MEMBER rising to continue the debate;

Question put, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

The House divided::Ayes, 232; Noes, 52. (Division List No. 90.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex.F.

Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne

Morgan, Hn. F. (Monm'thsh.)

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel

Fisher, William Hayes

Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)

Anson, Sir William Reynell

Fitz Gerald, Sir Robert Penrose-

Morrell, George Herbert

Arkwright, John Stanhope

Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon

Morris, Hon. Martin Henry F.

Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.

Flannery, Sir Fortescue

Morrison, James Archibald

Asher, Alexander

Flower, Ernest

Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford

Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis

Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.

Morton, E. J. C. (Devonport)
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Garfit, William
Mount, William Arthur
Atherley-Jones, L.
Gibbs, Hn. A.G.H.(CityofLond.
Mowbray, Sir Robt. Gray C.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert Jn.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Nicholson, William Graham
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Godson, Sir Augustus Fred.
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Bain, Col. James Robert
Gordon, Maj Evans-(T'rH'ml'ts
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Baird, John George Alexander
Gore, Hon. F. S. Ormsby-
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Balcarres, Lord
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John E.
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r
Goschen, Hon. George J.
Parker, Gilbert
Balfour, RtHn Gerald W.(Leeds
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Partington, Oswald
Bartley, George C. T.
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
Pemberton, John S. G.
Beach, Rt. Hon Sir M. H. (Bristol
Greene, Sir E. W. (B'yS.Edm'nds
Penn, John
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Pierpoint, Robert
Bell, Richard
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Bignold, Arthur
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Plummer, Walter R.

Black, Alexander William
Hain, Edward
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Pretymann, Ernest George
Brigg, John
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord G.(Middx
Price, Robert John
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robt. W.
Pryce-Jones, Lieut.-Col. Edw.
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Randles, John S.
Bull, William James
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Bullard, Sir Harry
Harris, Fleverton (Tynemouth
Ratcliffe, R. F.
Butcher, John George
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Rea, Russell
Caldwell, James
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Reckitt, Harold James
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward H.
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Reid, James (Greenock)
Cavendish, R. P. (N. Lancs.)
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hants)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire)
Henderson, Alexander
Rentoul, James Alexander
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Higginbottom, S. W.
Renwick, George
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.
Ridley, Hon M.W.(Stalybridge
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.
Hope, J. F. (Sheff'ld, Brightside
Ridley, S. Forde (Bethnal Green
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r

Hudson, George Bickersteth
Rigg, Richard
Chapman, Edward
Mutton, John (Yorks., N. R.)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Robson, William Snowdon
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Ropner, Colonel Robert
Colomb, Sir John Charles R.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Kenyon-Slaney, Col W.(Salop.
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Corbett, A. Cameron(Glasgow)
Keswick, William
Saunderson, Rt.Hn.Col.Edw.J.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Knowles, Lees
Seely, Chas. Hilton (Lincoln)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Lawrence, William F.
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Cranborne, Viscount
Lawson, John Grant
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Lee. Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham
Smith, H. C. (Northmb. Tyneside
Cust, Henry John C.
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Smith, Jarnes Parker (Lanarks.
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C.R. (Northants
Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.

Stanley, Hon Arthur (Ormskirk
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
Levy, Maurice
Stanley, Lord (Lanes.)
Dickson, Charles Scott
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Bristol, S.
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Lucas, Col. F. (Lowestoft)
Stroyan, John
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Dimsdale, Sir Joseph Cockfield
Macartney, Rt Hn W. G. Ellison
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Macdona, John Cumming
Thomas, David Alfred (Merth'r
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Maconochie, A. W.
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Thornton, Percy M.
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
Tollemache, Henry James
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William H.
M'Crae, George
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Egerton, Hon. A de Tatton
Majendie, James A. H.
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Elibank, Master of
Malcolm, Ian
Pre, Alexander
Faber, George Denison
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfres.
Valentia, Viscount
Fardell, Sir T. George
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)

Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Fenwick, Charles
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Warde, Lieut.-Col. C. E.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Man'r
Moon, Edward Robert Pacey
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
More, Robt. Jasper(Shropshire)
Webb, Colonel William George
Finch, George H.
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Weir, James Galloway
Welby, Lt.-Col A.C.E.(Taunton
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Young, Commander (Berks,E.)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh, N.
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wodehouse, Hn Armine(Essex
TELLERS FOR THE AYES;Sir William Walrond and Mr. Anstruther.
Wilcox, Sir John Archibald
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
NOES.
Abraham, William(Cork, N. E.
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
O'Dowd, John
Ambrose, Robert
Hayden, John Patrick
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
Boyle, James
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
Burke, E. Haviland-
Joyce, Michael
O'Malley, William
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Kennedy, Patrick James
O'Mara, James
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton

Leamy, Edmund
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Clancy, John Joseph
London, W.
O'Shee, James John
Condon, Thomas Joseph
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Crean, Eugene
M'Dermott, Patrick
Reddy, M.
Cullinan, J.
M'Fadden, Edward
Redmond, John E.(Waterford)
Daly, James
Murphy, J.
Redmond, William (Clare)
Doogan, P. C.
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Shipman, Dr. John, G.
Duffy, William J.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Sullivan, Donal
Ffrench, Peter
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Thompson, E.C. (Monaghan, N.
Field, William
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipper'ry Mid
Flavin, Michael Joseph
O'Connor, James(Wicklow,W.
TELLERS FOR THE NOES;Captain Donelan and Mr.
Flynn, James Christopher
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Gilhooly, James
O'Doherty, William
Patrick O'Brien.
Hammond, John
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1901–2.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That 118,625 men and boys be employed for the Sea and Coast Guard Services for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1902, including 19,805 Royal Marines."

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): I think perhaps it would be convenient, after the long discussion we have had, if I were to reply now to the various questions addressed to me yesterday and to-day. My right hon. friend the Member for South Antrim raised one or two matters which I think demand attention. He spoke about the introduction of the armour-piercing shell, and I want to make it clear to the Committee that that was contemporaneous with the introduction of a new class of armour. I had no intention of suggesting that anything that had been lacking in the past was now supplied for the first time. I also

wish to say as emphatically as I can what my right hon. friend has stated, that the submarine boat was in fact ordered by Mr. Goschen. There is one point with regard to myself which my right hon. friend has mentioned, and which I should like to qualify. He said that I had stated that in my opinion the arrears of shipbuilding were solely due to causes over which the Admiralty had no control. I do not think I committed myself to that, and if I did, I am quite certain it was not what I intended to convey. What I wished to make clear to the House was that while in my opinion these arrears were in a large measure attributable to causes over which neither the Admiralty nor the contractors had any control, there was a disputable margin of responsibility into which it was our duty to inquire. The very fact that we are now inquiring into the matter, and that I have been appointed to sit on a Committee to consider it, is proof that the Admiralty are willing to admit that there is a possibility of a further margin of responsibility existing, and that we are determined to get to the bottom of the question as to whether there is any responsibility on the part of the Admiralty or not for the delays that have taken place. If we find, as we may find, that there are methods of procedure adopted by the Admiralty which can be altered to the advantage of rapidity in shipbuilding we shall profit by the instruction we shall get.

My principal duty now is with reference to the very animated and very interesting speech made by the hon. and learned Member for Dundee, who has held a responsible post in connection with the administration of the Navy, and who was heard, as he was entitled to be heard, with interest and respect. The hon. Member asked me several specific questions, and he is entitled to replies. He asked me why Vote 16 had disappeared from the Naval Estimates. Vote 16 was a Vote connected with the payment in respect of the ships of the Australian Station, and the explanation of its disappearance is very simple. The Admiralty undertook to pay out of the Navy Funds to the Treasury a certain fixed sum during a period of ten years, which represented the capital value of certain ships on the Australian Station. The ten years have now elapsed, and the Vote which gave an account of that expenditure has also passed away from the Naval Estimates. The Agreement between the Admiralty and the Australian colonies had really nothing to do, except remotely, with the appearance of that Vote on the Estimates. That Agreement requires two years notice for its termination, and the notice has not yet been given. Then the hon. and learned Member asked me as to the increase in the number of subsidised cruisers.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): On a point of order, and for the information of the Committee, is not this Vote for a certain number of men and boys, and how, therefore, can the hon. Gentleman in Committee on that Vote deal with the other services included in Votes 1, 2, 3?

*THE CHAIRMAN: I thought the hon. Member was aware that on the first Vote of either the Naval or Army Estimates the general discussion takes place. It is a very old rule.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The hon. and learned Member asked me as to the very valuable and important increase in the number of subsidised cruisers, and he pointed out that there was no correspond-ins; addition to the Vote. I confess I am

a little surprised that the hon. and learned Member asked me that, because his memory will probably tell him that this particular Vote is not in respect of the same year as the other Votes, and that the money will not become due in the following year, and therefore does not appear in the present Estimates.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Part of it does.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Not to bring up the list as it now stands.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Instead of £;63,000 in previous years you are only taking £;7,000 this year.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER The contracts have now been altered. A new system has come in, and the payments due in respect of the contracts will not come in for payment for another year. The hon. and learned Member also asked me about the new Admiralty contract, which he said had been a long time in concoction, and he inquired if it would be laid before the House. That is a most reasonable request, and will be complied with.

The hon. and learned Member passed from these matters of detail to much more important concerns of general principles, I and he complained; I do not say in any very censorious tones, but in what he considered grounds of national welfare ;of the large amount of these Estimates. That is perfectly legitimate, because, without grave necessity, it is not desirable that these enormous sums should be spent, He asked me where we were going to stop. What was to be the limit? I think my hon. friend who has spoken has given an answer to that. The limit is not one which we can place on this expenditure. We are complying with the resolution of this House, often expressed and often confirmed, that we shall maintain a numerical equality with the two next most important naval Powers. I can assure the hon. and learned Member that, large as these Estimates may be, they are framed strictly upon that basis, and they are so calculated that, if the House gives us the Supplies we require, we shall at any rate be able to comply

with what I believe to be the general wish of the House;to keep pace with the efforts that are being made by other Powers. The question of limit does not lie with us, but with those who, with interests far inferior to ours, with less responsibilities than ours, think it their duty to pursue a remarkable career of shipbuilding, which this House has already on many occasions signified its opinion we ought to take into consideration in framing our Naval Estimates. I think I remember the hon. and learned Member saying that he was not at all

opposed to that view which is largely held inside and outside the House, and that he was not at all reluctant to favourably consider the policy which we propose in accordance with the canon laid down for our guidance. There was one point in the speech of the hon. and learned Member with which I am specially sympathetic. He spoke, as he has often spoken before in this House, about the desirability, almost the necessity, of sharing the burden of naval defence with those other great members of our Imperial community which get the benefit of that defence. The hon. and learned Member is not one of those who share the unfortunate view expressed in the House last night that the colonists who volunteered for the service of the country can be justly-described as "jail-birds and corner-boys." I can only say that there will be no want of co-operation on our part which may produce such a state of feeling in our colonies as to bring about the most desirable result wished for by my hon. and learned Member. There was, however, a time when the party to which the hon. and learned Member belongs was not as favourably disposed towards that idea as he now is, and I am not quite sure that the shortest and most certain way to obtain the co-operation we desire is to blame the colonies for not having given that which they have not been asked to give. We may take a lesson from the old fable, and believe that the sun will induce a man to take off his cloak sooner than the storm.

Several questions were also raised by the hon. and gallant Member for Great Yarmouth in his interesting speech, and he made one or two observations which are specially entitled to attention. He said that more time was needed by the officers of the Admiralty who are responsible for the defence of the country. I have neither the experience nor the position which would entitle me to go into that question, but I believe that the officers engaged in the defence of this country should have more leisure given them to consider the great problems which confront them. I believe that leisure will be more easily and certainly given, not by additions to the central staff, but by a greater decentralisation of the subordinate branches. The Admiralty hold that view, and they not only regard with favour, but desire most earnestly, to effect a decentralisation of some of the work which is now pressing on the office. The hon. and gallant Member spoke, as he has a full right to speak, for it is a matter to which he has given an enormous amount of attention, about masts-and-yards training for the Navy. He asked me if I could give the view of the Admiralty in regard to mast and yards training, and I wish I could answer the question as categorically as he put it. The Board is however, a new one. There are four new members on it, and this important question must be considered very gravely and very carefully, in view of the great divergence of opinion which has marked the utterances of leading sailors with reference to it. At the present time, the possibilities of war are making such special demands on our cruisers, and our depots for manning the cruisers, that it is practically speaking, impossible to contemplate at this moment a return to a masted squadron, however desirable that may be. I think I have made that proposition clear.

At the present moment we have a large number of cruisers all over the globe, cruisers on the South African coast and the Chinese coast, and in order to make

up their complements we have had to break up the training squadron for a time. The hon. and gallant Member suggests that a return to mast-and-sail training should be made. That may be a sound view, but I would point out to him that, such has been the increase in the personnel of the Navy, if we were going to give that training to all the seamen it would be necessary to build no less than sixteen sailing ships. That is an important aspect of the question. We have now four sailing ships which I think have gone through a very long and very creditable service, but which can hardly be regarded as now suitable for the training of the Navy. They would be quite incapable of giving the necessary instruction, and instead of four we should have to have sixteen ships, practically all of which should be either built or purchased for the purpose. Therefore I think when we consider the strain imposed upon us by the present situation, and also the very serious question involved in the supply of such large machinery for mast-and-sail training, it is the duty of the present Board to allow a reasonable interval to elapse before coming to a decision on what is undoubtedly a most important question.

The hon. and gallant Member spoke, as I knew he would in terms of appreciation of the institution of a school of strategy at Greenwich. I entirely share the view that we have not commenced a moment too soon that important addition to our course of naval instruction, and I am not inclined to differ very largely from the hon. and gallant Member when he said that £200 could not be looked upon as a sum never to be exceeded in the future.

The hon. Member for Devonport also delivered a very interesting speech, owe him an explanation, as I believe I led him into a misapprehension in regard to the Royal Fleet Reserve, in which he, is interested. He stated that I had led him to believe that 15,000 men was the total we hoped to obtain in the Royal Fleet Reserve. I certainly may have led him to that conclusion but I may state now that we hope and believe that in Class B alone; the class composed of short-service men; we shall eventually obtain 15,000 men. If I misled the hon. Member on the subject I take this opportunity of putting the matter right. He asked me two other questions to which I can give more or less satisfactory replies. He asked me whether, considering that the pension of the widows of soldiers killed in action would be 5s., naval pensions would also be increased to that amount. I am happy to say that the Admiralty will make that very reasonable change. The money will come from the Naval Fund, and not from the Greenwich Hospital Fund. The hon. Member also referred to a matter which he has made particularly his own, namely, the question of the rewards to be granted to warrant officers. I do not propose to discuss at this moment some of the questions affecting warrant officers, but I wish to reply to the question of the hon. Member. He asked me whether any decision had been come to to vary the statutes of the Distinguished Service Order, so that it might be conferred on warrant officers. It is a remarkable fact that warrant officers are at this moment debarred from the honorary distinction which they have earned in the past, and will earn in the future, although it is conferred on soldiers in the Army who may be regarded as of equivalent rank. That anomaly is clearly indefensible and cannot be prolonged, and although I cannot state the precise

form and way in which it is to be removed. I can give the hon. Member a most positive assurance that the matter is not only under consideration, but has almost approached a point of decision, and I hope we shall shortly be able to announce a full solution of the question.

The hon. Member criticised the determination of the First Lord to appoint a Committee to take into consideration the question of arrears. He said he thought the Admiralty were quite competent to deal with that matter themselves. That is no doubt a very satisfactory view, but I can picture to myself the hon. Member taking a different view, and he; a very competent business man himself; saying, "This a great business question. Why do you not, like other business people, take the opinion of two or three competent business men?" I believe that view would be taken by many hon. Members, and it is a view which has often been expressed in this House. I myself venture to think that the course taken by the First Lord is not in any way incompatible with the maintenance of the responsibility of the Admiralty, and I believe that, on the whole, the course adopted will recommend itself to the House and to the country. We have been charged with remissness in respect to a definite and particular matter. We have been told that we have

lessons to learn from business men outside the Admiralty, and we have now appointed a Committee to examine whether that be so. If I happened, as Secretary to the Admiralty for the moment, to come down to the House and make the same report which I trust this Committee will make in a few months, I should be criticised, and anyone in my place would be criticised, and I should be told that what I said was simply the view of the Admiralty officials, and the whole question would be reopened again. If the Committee report that the delays are not the fault of the Admiralty, that will be a comfort and consolation to the Admiralty; if the Report suggests that the Admiralty had not done something that ought to have been done, that too will be a great advantage. Something of very much the same kind arose in connection with the criticisms of my hon. friend the Member for Gateshead and the hon. Member for Shipley.

My hon. friend the Member for Shipley has criticised us somewhat strongly upon this question of boilers, but here again I do ask the House; to look fairly at the question. How does the matter really stand? The House hailed almost unanimously the appointment by the late First Lord of a Committee to inquire into this question. My hon. friend says we ought not to have unprofessional criticism upon Admiralty matters; but I have yet to learn that this House is not an unprofessional body. This matter of boilers was criticised so effectively that the House was all but convinced that it ought to divide on it against a strong Government. This House was practically unanimous in its acceptance, not only of a Committee, but of this Committee. I wish at once to say that no blame can be attached to this Committee for having issued an Interim Report. It has been said that their Report is incomplete. No doubt it is incomplete, but that is not the fault of the Committee. The situation, after all, is simply this. The Admiralty had to come down to this House and ask for a large Vote to commence the new programme for shipbuilding. I put it to any hon. Member whether it would have been possible for the representative of the Admiralty in this House to ask

the House to vote that large sum of money without satisfying it that this great question which had been referred to the Committee had been decided in one sense or another? The First Lord put no pressure on this Committee at all, and he did what I respectfully suggest was the common-sense thing. He asked this Committee whether, in view of the meeting of the House of Commons, they were in a position to make an Interim Report to guide the representatives of the Admiralty when asking for Supply for the Navy. The Committee replied that they were in a position to do so, and they accordingly made an Interim Report. I think it is only fair to that Committee to point out that they made their Interim Report because they were asked to do so by the Admiralty. I want to make the position of the Admiralty absolutely clear in this matter. I do not object to being here as the whipping-boy of the Admiralty upon this question, though the position is rather an odd one, but I believe that what the country wishes to know is not who is to blame, but what we are going to do now, and I believe I can show that what is proposed by the Board of Admiralty is practically the only course which any sensible body could adopt under the circumstances. I have great respect for the hon. Member for Gateshead and his opinion, and he knows it. But, after all the hon. Member is not Solomon in all his glory, and his is not the last word on this question. He has contributed very valuable information, and he has been the inspiring spirit of this inquiry. But we are nevertheless face to face with the fact that there are other opinions also upon this question. The hon. Member for Cardiff has expressed an opinion almost equally strong in an exactly contrary direction, and the hon. Member for Cardiff is a man of vast experience upon this question. But he is not the only person who takes a view directly contrary to the hon. Member for Gateshead.

Let me remind the Committee what the issue is. There are two issues to decide. The hon. Member for Gateshead says we should have no water-tube boilers at all; the Boilers Committee say, "Let us have water-tube boilers, but not this particular type."

We have to decide whether the hon. Member for Gateshead or the Committee be right or wrong. It may be that the Member for Gateshead is quite right, and that the cylindrical boiler is the only practical boiler. I do not think this House would be inclined to accept that view, because there is a vast amount of opinion to the contrary which it is not possible to ignore. We have the opinion of every advisory board of nearly every Admiralty in the world; Germany. France, the United States, Japan. Russia, Italy; and all of them take a view directly opposed to that of the hon. Member for Gateshead. We have also the view of this Committee, against the composition of which nobody has spoken a word. Therefore, speaking as a representative of the Admiralty, I am bound to take the view that the water-tube boiler system is the system which should be adopted in the Royal Navy.

I now come to the question as to what we are to do in regard to the ships at present fitted with the Belleville boilers. It has been argued by some hon. Members that we ought to take all the water-tube boilers out of the ships in which they have been fitted and replace them by others. But that is not the view of the Admiralty. It is a grave exaggeration to say that the Belleville boiler

is destroying our ships. I do not take the view that the Belleville boiler is the best that can be obtained, but it is a boiler which is doing excellent work. The hon. Member opposite asked me if this boiler had ever done more than a thirty hours run. I do not think that there is any real foundation for the kind of criticism which has been passed on this point. The "Ocean." The "Andromeda." and the "Diadem" have all run long courses at sea, and have steamed efficiently with these boilers. The "Diadem" ran 1,123 miles at 19'7 knots; the "Andromeda" 891 miles at 19'7 knots; and the "Ocean" has just successfully steamed to China, and she has run 790 miles at 10'9 knots, or nearly 17 knots per hour. These are occurrences which are taking place every day. Nor should I like to commit myself to the admission that we may not be able to improve the steaming qualities of the Belleville boiler. On the contrary. I agree with the Member for Forest of Dean that an enormous amount depends upon the manipulation of these boilers, and I think it would have been an advantage if the training of the men who work them had been put upon a wider basis. At the present moment no effort is being spared to increase the opportunities of training stokers in regard to the manipulation of water-tube boilers, and every day we are increasing the facilities for training the stokers in relation to Belleville boilers. That being so, what are we to do? The Boilers Committee has not recommended any boiler to take the place of the boilers at present in use, but it has recommended that cylindrical boilers should not take the place of Belleville boilers. Indeed I am assured that that cannot be done without the sacrifice of speed and efficiency.

We have given a pledge to the House that we will stop the introduction of Belleville boilers wherever it is possible without causing unnecessary delay in the building of our ships. I think it would be wrong on the part of the Admiralty to give a pledge which would involve any considerable delay in the completion of these ships. Experiments are being made with the greatest possible celerity for testing amply those other boilers which have already been amply tested in the ships of other nations, and we are endeavouring to ascertain whether they can with advantage be substituted for the Belleville boilers. Those trials will be undertaken and completed so soon that the experience to be gained from them will not delay by one single day the completion of the ships for which the new boilers are intended, and by taking this course I believe this House, and the country as well, will think that we are serving it in the most effective way possible. It is not impossible, that some enormous advantage may be shown on behalf of these boilers by this inquiry, and that the experience gained may be applied with advantage to the ships fitted with the Belleville boiler. I do not profess to be an authority on engineering questions, but I do not think it is impossible to replace the Belleville boiler with a water tube boiler of another type. I think I am also justified in saying that it would not be possible to replace the existing Belleville boilers in the ships which possess them by cylindrical boilers without sacrificing something in the way of speed and efficiency. We do not want to add to the weight or diminish either the speed or the coal supply unless there is some absolutely overwhelming necessity for it. My belief is that the

example set by Germany and the United States is one which we might follow without very great fear. I should like to read one very short extract from an authority which will command the confidence of this House. This is an extract from the Report made by the chief adviser of the American Navy;

"Some years ago this Department (the Bureau of Steam Engineering) was urged, with no little pressure, to adopt the Belleville water-tube boiler as a standard for the new ships. This Bureau opposed the innovation wholly upon a close examination of the designs, criticising the very defective features which in later years have made conspicuous the comparative inefficiency of this type over the purely straight-tube non-screw-joint type, for which I have given continuous and urgent preference. The Department is to be congratulated upon escape from this 'pressure,' and upon the conservative approval it has given to the change in the boilers of naval ships. Instead of having been encumbered during the last war with ships powered with type of boiler necessitating a specially trained force even for its safe operation, the most effective vessels had either retained the Scotch boiler or possessed the simple straight-tube Babcock and Wilcox boiler, and remained free from any real danger."

After their experience during the blockade of Cuba the United States Navy Department decided to abandon the Scotch boiler and to put in its place the water-tube boiler manufactured by Babcock and Wilcox, which is the boiler now being experimented with by our own Admiralty.

I believe that I have now said enough to persuade all reasonable men that the Admiralty are taking the proper course in regard to this question of boilers. We refuse to delay the completion of any ship, and we are going to put a water-tube boiler into every ship in which they can be put so as to secure efficiency and speed. We are, going to reserve any alteration in existing ships until we have some further evidence to guide us, and I may say that we are not going to go in advance of our information. We are not

going to destroy the efficiency of any of His Majesty's ships until it has been made perfectly clear that it is absolutely essential in the interests of the Navy that we should do so. If it is necessary to alter any of those ships it will not be in the interests of the Navy that such alterations should take place on a great scale, but it will be necessary to withdraw the ships one by one and place them in the hands of the dockyard officials. That is all I have to say upon this important matter, and if I have spoken too long about it, it is because I know that by the evidence I have received in this House and outside that it is a matter which is receiving and deserves to receive very careful attention.

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Forest of Dean has spoken upon the question of the new powder. I will repeat the statement which I made on another occasion, namely, that we are, sanguine that the work of the Explosives Committee will have a favourable result, and we do not anticipate the difficulty which very naturally suggests itself to the right hon. Baronet with regard to the guns. It is a fact that in all probability the new powder will be of larger bulk than that now used, but there is no reason to believe that that will prove a practical difficulty in adapting it to the chambers of our existing guns. I

trust that I have now dealt with all the principal matters that have been mentioned. There are other matters which are not unimportant, such as those raised by the hon. Member for Portsmouth, which have a great bearing upon the welfare of the sailors and those who serve on the lower deck. I do not set them aside to-night because they are unimportant, but because I venture to say that they might be more advantageously dealt with at another stage of our proceedings. I have confined myself to the important matters which legitimately come within the scope of general discussion, and I, think I have given answers, as far as I can remember, to all the questions which have been raised.

Committee report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

Adjourned at half-past Twelve of the clock.