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1901-08-01

House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker took the choir at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

PAPERS

Public Servants' Salaries and Allowances.

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Minister for External Affairs

Mr BARTON

- I beg to lay on the table certain papers relating to officers' salaries and allowances. I said that, with regard to certain questions that were debated last night, I would obtain such information as the time at my disposal would allow. The papers I am presenting are necessarily . incomplete, and in respect to the salaries attached to positions in New South Wales and Victoria similar to those occupied by Commonwealth officers, there are many matters regarding which I have not had time to obtain full particulars. Still, I lay the papers on the table in order to give honorable members the fullest information at my command. I would like to say that the matter that was discussed last night was under the consideration of the Treasurer and myself before that debate took place.

Mr Wilks

- Why anticipate the debate that is to take place this afternoon 1

Mr BARTON

- I am not anticipating anything, but I am simply stating that the matter was under consideration before any debate took place, and the Cabinet, as I said would be the case, have considered the matter to-day. The living allowances to officers were suspended pending that consideration, and the result has been that the allowances are to be discontinued, and if there are any cases of hardship which require to be rectified they will be left over until the Estimates are considered. I move -
That the papers be printed.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

INTER-STATE COMMISSION BILL

Mr THOMSON

- I desire to ask the Prime Minister, in the absence of the Minister for Home Affairs, when the promise made to the honorable and learned member for Parkes will be fulfilled? That promise was that the clauses from other Acts quoted in the margin of the InterState Commission Bill would be printed for the information of honorable members.

Mr BARTON

- I was not aware of such a promise, but my honorable colleague will . be here very soon, and I will confer with him on the subject with a view to carrying out any promise which may have been made.

THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- I would like to ask the Treasurer if he is aware that by this time all the Government Gazettes in the different States' showing the public accounts for the last twelve months have been published. I might suggest that it would be . a good thing if the Treasurer could give us a synopsis of these accounts, including the Customs revenue and expenditure of the Commonwealth for the six months, which would supplement the Customs revenue and expenditure of the States for the first six months. This information would give us statistics which would be very useful to us at the present stage.

Treasurer

Sir GEORGE TURNER

- I have sent to the various States with a view to obtaining official returns as to the receipts and expenditure, for use when I am making my financial statement. I will get the fullest information I possibly can for honorable members on all these points.

SOLDIERS RETURNING TO SOUTH AFRICA

Mr CROUCH

- I would ask the Prime Minister as a matter of urgency whether his 'attention has been drawn to certain paragraphs in the public press about, arrangements having been made at Sydney and Brisbane for

sending men to South.

Africa. The paragraphs are as follow -

Sydney, Wednesday.

Arrangements have been made by which returned soldiers desirous of going back to South Africa can obtain "indulgence passages" on the following conditions : - " That they have not suffered from enteric fever within the past twelve months, and are otherwise fit for going on service, again ; that they enrol themselves for service, and that they pay a small daily sum for rations on the* transport."

It is stated that numerous men of the Citizens' Bushmen's Contingent are anxious to return to South Africa.

Brisbane, Wednesday.

The enrolment of returned soldiers who again desire to proceed to South Africa will be commenced, to-morrow. So far the number of applications from eligible men is not large, but numbers of others have announced their willingness to go if given a chance.

I asked the Minister about this matter last week, and he said that he had communicated with the Imperial authorities stating that the Commonwealth Government had taken over the defences-. I would like the Prime Minister to state whether he has had any reply, and whether he proposes to take any action to stop the State Governments from sending soldiers to South Africa.

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Mr BARTON

- If there has been any reply, so far, to my cablegram, it has not come to my . knowledge to-day. The position is this - that in the cases of officers in the defence forces holding themselves out in any way as persons who might conduct enrolments, they have been asked by what authority they do so. As the House knows, I have communicated with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and have pointed out that the military services were taken, over by the Commonwealth on the 1 st March. These indulgence passages seem to be under the control of a naval transport officer who has Imperial authority. As to that matter - that is, as far as I can ascertain, and answering the question, as I am doing, without notice - the position is that that officer has the power to grant indulgence passages, I believe, free. They do not, therefore, fall upon the finances of the Commonwealth or of any State, and if the naval transport- officer chooses to grant indulgence passages any citizen may take advantage of them.

Mr Conroy

- Any citizens other than returned soldiers?

Mr BARTON

- I do not say that, because I do not know that the privilege has been extended to other than returned soldiers. Any citizen in that category can, as far as I know, take advantage of an indulgence passage, and exercise his liberty to return to South Africa if he chooses to go. The Government are not taking any steps in this matter; they have not made any further offer of troops, and do not intend to do so unless they are asked.

Mr MCDONALD

- Is it not true that the Federal Government have already informed the Secretary of State for the Colonies that they object to the recruiting of men for South Africa in Australia ; and further, does not the Prime Minister think that the method that he has just spoken of is actually recruiting men, and will he not take the necessary steps to prevent it ?

Mr BARTON

- No communication of that sort in one direction or the other has been made by the Commonwealth Government, nor have they received any application. If there are soldiers who have returned from South Africa and who wish to go away again, exercising their liberty, I do not propose to take any action, until I learn that there is active recruiting going on, simply because that is a matter within the personal liberty of each man.

EXCISE BILL

Minister for Trade and Customs

Mr KINGSTON

- I beg to give notice that I will to-morrow move for leave to introduce an Excise Bill, and I may remark for the information of honorable members that that will be the last of the Customs machinery Bills.

Honorable Members. - Hear, hear.

PARLAMENT BUILDINGS

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- I would like to ask the Prime Minister if his attention has been directed to some statements made in the State Parliament last night concerning the Parliament Buildings here. An honorable member said that we were practically pulling the building to pieces, that we were busily engaged in fitting up bed-rooms and all sorts of places of private resort.

Mr Conroy

- But I believe it was after dinner when the honorable member referred to made these remarks.

Mr Kingston

-Is it worth while taking any notice of them 1

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- I think it is worth while.

Mr HUME COOK

- If the honorable member knew the man, he would not ask any question at all.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- Then I will say nothing more about it.

Mr BARTON

- I do not intend to take any notice of any statement of this kind unless I have a communication made to me in the proper official method by the Premier of the State of Victoria.

ADJOURNMENT

Public Servants' Salaries and Allowances

Mr SPEAKER

- I understand that the honorable member for Illawarra desires to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, "the extraordinary expenditure of the Government in connexion with the Commonwealth service."

Five members having risen in their places,

Question proposed.

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Mr FULLER

- I make no apology for moving the adjournment of the House, because I think this is one of the most important matters that could be discussed by the House of Representatives of Australia. I submit this motion in consequence of the answer which was given to me by the Prime Minister to questions I asked him the night before last as to allowances, Inter-State tickets, and so forth, in connexion with officers of the Commonwealth. I may as well remind honorable members of the questions which I asked the Prime Minister, in order that the matter may be definitely placed before them. First of all I asked the Prime Minister -

Is it a fact that every officer of the Commonwealth transferred from the other States to Victoria is in addition to his salary drawing from 10s. to £2 2s. a week extra, according to his grade, for expenses?

The Prime Minister last night made a correction, and we find that instead of the allowances being 10s., they vary from £1 to £2 2s. I asked him secondly -

If there are any exceptions, and in what cases do they apply?

Will these payments, if made, be continued until the federal capital is ready for occupation ?

Is it the intention of all Ministers except the Attorney-General and the Treasurer to remove to Sydney with their staffs when the House goes into recess ?

Will all members of the various staffs receive similar allowances for expenses to those mentioned in question No. 1 ?

Has a large number of Inter-State railway tickets been secured to enable under secretaries, private secretaries, and senior clerks to travel between the States from Friday to Tuesday?

It appears to me that these were very plain straightforward questions. I feel quite satisfied that there are a great number of honorable members who were very dissatisfied indeed with the answer which the Prime Minister gave. It appears to me from the way in which the Prime Minister spoke, and from his subsequent statement last night, that he, if I may be permitted to use the term in offensively, tried to evade the

position put by me in connexion with the questions. We were told by the Prime Minister, in laying the return on the table of the House this afternoon, that this matter of allowances has been under the consideration of himself and the Treasurer.

Mr Barton

- That night ; at once.

Mr FULLER

- We are told now that the matter has received the consideration of the Cabinet, and that these allowances will be done away with altogether. What is the reason for this sudden determination on the part of the Prime Minister and of the Cabinet? It appears to me that if this matter had not been prominently brought forward by the series of questions which I put to the Prime Minister, and also by the expressions of opinion from different honorable members, it would not have received the serious consideration which it has received at the hands of the Cabinet, and would not have been decided so quickly. I should like to be further informed by the Prime Minister, now that we have this report laid on the table of the House, whether any allowances have been made to Ministers, in addition to the salaries they are drawing. I should like to be informed whether Ministers are receiving any allowances in addition to their salaries.

Mr Barton

- Had the honorable member not better finish his speech ? I have had enough of this sort of nonsense.

Mr FULLER

- The Prime Minister may think it nonsense, but a large number of honorable members, and a great majority of the voters, do not think this question of allowances in addition to salaries is nonsense.

Mr Wilks

- It has destroyed many a State Ministry.

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Mr FULLER

- Those of us who have had the opportunity of representing constituencies in the State Parliaments know that an overpaid Government service has been a great incubus on the taxpayers of the various States. I know that so far as New South Wales is concerned, and I understand this applies more or less to the other States, we have had for years past an overburdened Government service which has been- a great drag on the taxpayers. A great number of us came into the House of Representatives with the full determination that in the establishment of the Federal Government we would do our utmost to prevent an overpaid Government service. We know perfectly well that there is necessity for certain expenditure which must be incurred consistently with the carrying on of the Government of the Commonwealth. But when certain salaries supposed to be paid to the various officers of the Commonwealth are submitted to the House of Representatives, that ought to be the beginning and the end of their remuneration. It appears to me that the Prime Minister and the Government generally ought to have taken the House into their confidence when the salaries were submitted for approval. The position is that behind the backs of the representatives of the people, and in a secret fashion, additions have been made to the salaries of many officers - additions which were unknown to many of us sitting here. We find from the papers that some of the highly-salaried men - and I suppose the higher the salary the more allowance they get - receive £2 2s. a week as an allowance for extra expenses, and that £1 is allowed to officers of a lower grade. In the various States of the Commonwealth these allowances have been a matter of great concern and dissatisfaction. ' In New South Wales, it has been found that allowances to military men in very many cases exceeded the salaries paid by the Government. Once and for all, so far as the House of Representatives is concerned, we ought to put our foot down firmly and say that these allowances shall cease. If these allowances are going to be made in connexion with . the department presided over by the Prime Minister, we shall find, when the Defence department is established under the Defence Bill now before the House, similar allowances permitted. In that way salaries will be paid to gentlemen in the' various departments of which the representatives of the people know nothing. In the papers a comparison is made between the salaries paid to the various officers of the Commonwealth and those paid to officers in similar positions in the States. My individual opinion is that that is a very unfair comparison indeed. I will take the first name on the list in order to show what I mean. If I remember rightly the first name on the list is that of the secretary of the Department for External Affairs, Mr. Atlee Hunt, who gets, in addition to his

salary of £500 a year, a living allowance of two guineas per week. A comparison is made between the position occupied by that gentleman, and a similar position, occupied in New South Wales by Mr. Critchett Walker, and also a similar position occupied in Victoria by a gentleman whose name I do not know. I think the comparison is very unfair. Mr. Atlee Hunt is quite a new officer in connexion with a department created under the Commonwealth. He has never been in the civil service of any of the States, whereas Mr. Critchett Walker is a man who has had the largest experience in connexion with the department over which he presides, and who has been in that department, I think I can safely say, for the last 30 or 40 years: It is not fair, therefore, to put the comparison in that way. We were told, when the question of federation was before the people, and we have been assured by the representatives of the Government since we came into this House, that the greatest economy would be practised in connexion with the civil service. A great number of people had the idea, when the question of federation was submitted to the States, that the spoils of office would go to the victors - that we should establish in connexion with federation one of the worst systems, taken from one of the worst pages of American politics. Has not the result in connexion with appointments to these various departments confirmed this opinion? At any rate, we find that in one of the great departments men who have been politically associated with the Prime Minister have been appointed to the highest offices. Indeed the Government have gone one better than giving positions to political friends. Behind the backs of representatives in this House an extra allowance of two guineas a week has been made on the salaries voted for those officers. So far as I am concerned, and I believe it is the will of the great majority of honorable members. I think this should be put a stop to without delay, and that nothing further of the kind should be permitted in connexion with the Government of the Australian Commonwealth. I should like to say further, that I had intended moving the adjournment of the House yesterday, but I was stopped by the motion of another honorable member to the same effect. I do not wish to make any further reference to that matter, although it did seem strange indeed that the honorable member who moved the adjournment was so very ill prepared, and that the Prime Minister, when he stood up to reply, should point out that he had no information to give the House. However, after two explanations from the Prime Minister, we have arrived at the discussion on this subject this afternoon. The Prime Minister pointed out last night that so far as his department was concerned, the total allowances for the session among seven persons would be only £260.

Mr Barton

- I said that would be the amount for an average session of, say, half a year.

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Mr FULLER

- The amount of allowance for an average session of the seven officers in the Prime Minister's department would be about £260. I do not care whether the amount be £260 or £2,600, the principle is the same. Extra allowances have been granted, of which many honorable members in the House knew nothing. The fact of the Prime Minister pointing out that the allowances amounted to only £260 has no weight at all so far as my judgment and opinion are concerned. I should like to ask in connexion with what was pointed out by the Prime Minister the night before last - that these allowances were only to be taken as a temporary measure - what does "temporary" mean under the circumstances? Before this matter was referred to in the press of Victoria and in this House, it appears to me that the "temporary" measure which the Prime Minister spoke of was such that so long as the Government was carried on in Melbourne, and until the establishment of the federal capital, these allowances would have "been continued. This "temporary" measure which the Prime Minister spoke of might, and would, probably have continued for a considerable number of years. While I am one of those who wish to see the federal capital established and "the Federal Parliament meeting in its own capital at the earliest possible date, it seems to me that it may be a good many years before that comes about. A question was asked by the honorable member for South Australia, Sir Langdon Bonython, in connexion with rumoured allowances to the Governor-General. The honorable member asked whether it was a fact that it was proposed to make allowances to the Governor-General to the extent of £18,000 a year. In connexion with this matter, I do not know whether any promise has been made by the Ministry, but I believe that it is fixed by the Constitution that the salary of the Governor-General shall not be less than £10,000 a year. I most certainly think that it ought not to be a penny more. I think that £10,000 a year is quite sufficient for a gentleman occupying that high position, and in the interests of the taxpayers I do not think that any further

allowance should be made to the occupant of the distinguished position. The Prime Minister made one extraordinary statement in connexion with this question on the night before last. He told us that the Treasurer and himself had been engaged in conference upon the matter, and that it would also receive the attention of the Cabinet, the members of "which would consider " the equalization of the remuneration paid to officers with a view to including all ' the remuneration in the salary." That " equalization of remuneration " appears to be an extraordinary phrase. To the Prime Minister evidently the equalization of remuneration meant that as soon as this matter was brought forward, the Cabinet would stop the allowances altogether. ' In using this wordy phrase, he seems to have attempted to cloak something of a disagreeable nature to his own supporters and to other honorable members of this House.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- The Cabinet has condemned the whole business.

Mr FULLER

- The Cabinet, I understand, has decided to stop the allowances altogether.

Mr Wilks

- That is a vote of censure within a vote of censure.

Mr FULLER

- I also asked the Prime Minister whether there was any exception to this allowance system. With all respect to I him, it appears to me that he evaded answering that question. I should like to know whether any exceptions were made in connexion with these allowances which have been given to various officers who have been transferred from the other States. I have not definite information upon the matter, but I am told that some of the transferred officers have been exempted from participating in the allowance which has been paid to other officers who have been similarly transferred. It seems to me that if any officer is entitled to an allowance, then all transferred, officers are equally entitled to it. I do not see why any exception should be made, although I hope that the result of this motion will be that no further allowances will be paid in any shape or form. I do not wish to take up more of the time of the House, because I know that there are a good many honorable members who wish to speak upon this subject. I have brought it forward because the explanation of the Prime Minister was of an entirely unsatisfactory nature. These allowances were being paid behind our backs, and officers of the Commonwealth public service were in this way receiving bigger salaries, than honorable members supposed them to be in receipt of. The honorable member for Tasmania, Sir Philip Fysh, in introducing the Postal Bill, told us that economy should be the first aim of the Commonwealth. I entirely agree with that expression of opinion. I think that economy should be the first aim of the Commonwealth in connexion with the whole of the public service. We were told when we came into the House of Representatives that, with the advent of federation, we should: have a higher, a purer, and a rarer political atmosphere. I came forward as a representative of the people, feeling that we should have a higher and a rarer political atmosphere in this Parliament than we were accustomed to inhale in the> State Parliaments. But whilst we should have that higher and rarer atmosphere in. connexion with legislation I . sincerely trust the outcome of this motion will be that we shall have that atmosphere also in connexion with the administration of the present Government of the Commonwealth.

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Mr WATSON

- As a matter of privilege, I desire to draw attention to the fact that, at the instance of some one, one of the messengers has distributed a number of documents with a view to influencing honorable members in respect of the Post and Telegraph Bill. I do not blame the messenger at all, but I certainly think that you, sir, should take steps to prevent anything of the sort occurring again.

Mr Wilks

- Ask who gave the authority for their delivery.

Mr WATSON

- We know that there are means by which any one desiring to influence the House can approach it, such as by petition. I certainly object to the distribution of handbills with a view of influencing honorable members whilst the House is engaged in business.

Mr SPEAKER

- I may say that the handbills were shown to me, and the honorable member for Tasmania, Sir Edward

Braddon desired that they should be circulated. I saw at once that they had come, apparently in print, from the distant State of Tasmania, and I intimated that under the circumstances I should permit them to be circulated, but that in future any such document must bear upon its face the name of the honorable member by whose authority it was to be circulated.

Mr WATSON

- Are we to understand that any honorable member can, while the House is sitting, get documents of this character circulated ? I hope not.

Mr SPEAKER

- Any document which is not of an objectionable character I should imagine will be open to be circulated amongst the members of the House, without any disturbance of the business, upon the authority of any honorable member who desires so to have it circulated.

Minister for External Affairs

Mr BARTON

. - Without forfeiting my right to speak, may I suggest that it might be a proper settlement of the matter to lay down the rule that no document shall be distributed amongst honorable members of the House - whilst business is proceeding - which does not appertain to the business then before the House, and especially that documents shall not be circulated unless they are addressed to an honorable member.

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Mr THOMSON

- If any honorable member thinks that because I sit on the Opposition side of the House I rise with pleasure to criticise the action of the Ministry in connexion with these allowances, I can only assure him that he is mistaken. It would have been a pleasure to me, being at one to a great extent with the federal aspirations of the Prime Minister, if the administration of the Federal Government gave no cause for doubt whatever to the people of Australia, and if that confidence which we all hope will be created in the Parliament and the Ministry of the Commonwealth was being established by every act of the Ministry. Differing as I do - and as I will on opportunity show - from the Prime Minister in regard to his fiscal views, yet I should be pleased if his Ministry created a record in carrying on the affairs of the Federal Government with such openness, such candour, and such purity as to secure in respect of their administration the confidence of Parliament and of the whole people of Australia. I feel sure that the members of the Cabinet cannot defend, and never hope to be able to defend, the action which has been taken, if not by the Cabinet, at any rate by some of its Ministers. What are these allowances ? I have seen a return, from which it appears that they are made up of allowances to sixteen members of the Commonwealth service. These sixteen members get at the rate of £25 per week divided amongst them. Of these officers, seven are in the department for External Affairs, three in the department for Home Affairs, and six in the Postal department. Glancing at the salaries which they receive I find that five of them receive over £400 and up to £1,000 per annum ; four receive £250 and over, but less than £400 ; five receive from £140 up to £250 ; and two only receive under £100. Now, I maintain that there is no justification for the payment of these allowances in the way they have been paid. Further than that, there is no justification for the payment of such allowances at all. I allude to this because the Prime Minister last night indicated that he would probably propose increases of salary in place of these allowances. Why should we give a larger salary for the work which we require to be done to certain individuals, because of their special circumstances, than we give to other individuals whose circumstances are different? The persons accepting these situations ought to recognise that they do so in view of the opportunity to obtain permanent positions in the public service of the Commonwealth, and that during its initial stages they - as well as the members of this Parliament - will have to submit to certain personal inconvenience, and, it may be, to certain personal expenditure. If their circumstances are such as to prevent them from accepting the positions under these conditions, there are scores of others who are not only able, but would be exceedingly glad to accept them under such conditions as will apply during the earlier years of the Commonwealth. Just as in other public services, there are some positions that cannot be accepted by those who are in certain circumstances owing to the conditions attached to them - so in the Commonwealth Public Service there will be positions, especially during the earlier stages of its history, which can not be accepted save by those whose circumstances will permit of it. Consequently I would be against - as I think we have given fairly liberal salaries for the various positions - either an allowance for

these special circumstances or an increase of salary to cover them. The Prime Minister, instead of replying to the good and sufficient reasons given by the press for calling attention to these allowances, took great pains to seek for a hidden and improper motive, and said that the criticism of the Victorian press was animated by a desire to retain the Federal Parliament and the seat of Government in Melbourne. I do think that in making such a statement the right honorable gentleman made a mistake. We are not concerned with the criticism of any section of the Victorian press. We are concerned with Parliament and the Members of Parliament. So far as I know, when the time comes - and the more quickly it comes the better - for the removal of this Parliament to the territory of New South Wales, the members of this House by a large majority - and in that majority I include the Victorian members - will faithfully stand by the Constitution and execute its conditions to the letter. That being so, I do not think that that defence was at all necessary. Then, again, the Cabinet has admitted by its action that there is a difference between yesterday and to-day. What is that difference? Yesterday it was considered right and proper to pay these allowances; to-day it is not. Yesterday the Prime Minister considered that it was desirable to pay allowances in addition to salaries. To-day he says that he is of opinion that there should be no allowances, and that salaries should cover every requirement. What is the difference, then, between yesterday and to-day? It is simply the fact that the payments have been discovered. The payments were being made before. The argument was that it is not only right, but necessary to make them. If that be true, then the Cabinet should have stood by it; it should have come down to the House and maintained its position before the discovery of these payments was made. What was the method adopted by the Ministry in connexion with these payments? If honorable members will cast back their minds to the occasion when we had the Supply Bill before us, they will remember - whether they be on the Government or Opposition side of the House - that it was made abundantly clear that in the opinion of this House no excessive salaries should be paid, and that the salaries given were a sufficiency for the work done, and for the circumstances of the work. Were not honorable members on both sides of the House induced to vote in support of the proposed salaries by the belief that the Ministry had displayed everything to us, and that the whole remuneration which these officers were getting was represented by the amounts set forth in the Supply Bill? Was it not wrong for the Ministry - after hearing that discussion, and knowing that honorable members had fixed those salaries as the maximum for the positions - was it not deceptive for the Ministry to refrain from stating to the House that, in addition to those salaries, certain allowances were being made to some members of the public service? I say that their action was not in keeping with the confidence which this House should receive from the Ministry which guides it. I very much regret that Ministers were not open and candid in their treatment of the Chamber." I think it will be admitted that the action of Ministers, was not justifiable. These allowances are equivalent to special salaries to suit special circumstances, and it must be the most extreme circumstances that have to be considered. If a man says it will cost him £2 more a week to live here than it would cost him in Sydney, then another man has a perfect right to get the same allowance, although it costs him nothing more from the fact that he has been living here from the first. These allowances are not justifiable. Salaries should cover all conditions of employment. Knowing the circumstances of the Federal Parliament, knowing that it would not come to rest in its own capital for several years, we decided with our eyes open that the remuneration which we passed was sufficient, and that nothing else should be payable either in the way of allowances or salaries. The whole question is one of confidence. If the Ministry is not going to have any confidence in Parliament; if it is not going to openly and straightforwardly disclose its acts to Parliament, then what right has it to expect that Parliament will have confidence in it? No right whatever. Unless in the future it displays more confidence in the Parliament than it has done in connexion with these and some other matters, I venture to say that it will be doing the best it can to destroy the confidence of Parliament in itself. There is a further question of confidence which to my mind is the most important connected with this matter. The result of the openness and candour of the Ministry, of its confidence in Parliament and of Parliament's confidence in the purity and straightforwardness of its administration, must be that there will grow up among the people of Australia a confidence in our Federal Parliament and Federal Government. If we desire, as I am sure we all desire, to see this Federal Government and Parliament do good to the maximum of its powers for the people of Australia, then that can be achieved only through the confidence of the people of Australia in them. I would say, in conclusion, that once let a want of confidence arise, and the Federal Parliament will be shorn of its usefulness, and the future which

we expect will be robbed of much of its benefits to the people.

Sir GEORGE TURNER

- I desire to say a word or two with regard to this matter, as I feel that I am to blame for the fact that these allowances were not mentioned to Parliament before. When I introduced the first Supply Bill I had a note on the Bill to remind me to mention to honorable members that these allowances were being made.

Unfortunately, however, I overlooked it.

Mr Conroy

- I asked about them under the head of contingencies.

Sir GEORGE TURNER

- The word " allowances " was mentioned there, but I certainly overlooked the fact that I intended to tell the House that these extraordinary grants were being made. When the Estimates were sent to me from the various departments I returned one which I received from the department for External Affairs - in which I knew allowances had been made - and asked that an asterisk should be placed opposite the name of each gentleman who was in receipt of an allowance, so that that fact would be shown, and the House might have the fullest information with regard to the matter. When the Estimates were returned to me I at once placed myself in communication with the Right Honorable the Prime Minister. I have been in conference with him since for the purpose of discussing the question whether these allowances should be made, and if so to what extent. I assure honorable members that that was done three or four weeks ago - long before any statement was published as to the granting of these allowances ; and that my action was taken with a view of giving the fullest information to the House. The Victorian representatives know that when I was Treasurer in the State Government I always gave the State House the fullest information.

Honorable Members. - Hear, hear.

Sir GEORGE TURNER

- It was my desire to do so on this occasion. I may say that in addition to the facts I have mentioned, I sent round to the departments and asked for a list, of the allowances made, because I received from New South Wales a return showing that the military allowances amounted to £12,000, a sum very close up to the amount of the salaries which the men concerned were getting. Personally, I am strongly opposed to allowances. I think men should be paid by salary whenever possible, and that the salary should cover everything. If an allowance is made then it should be shown on the Estimates. I express my regret that I did overlook my note in introducing the Supply Bill and that that omission on my part has caused this trouble.

Mr Conroy

- I asked that the second Supply Bill should be sent back in order that we might get information as to these very matters.

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Sir GEORGE TURNER

- Not with regard to these matters. The honorable and learned member referred -to contingencies, and I told him that the contingencies were the same as were mentioned by certain words in the Supply Bill. No further information could have been given except that set out in the original Supply Bill. I am perfectly certain that honorable members will take my assurance that it was an oversight on my part ; that I did intend to mention this matter on the occasion I have referred to, and to give the fullest information on the subject to the House.

HONORABLE Members. - Hear, hear.

Mr Wilks

- What about the Ministerial allowances 1

Sir GEORGE TURNER

- That is a matter with which the Prime Minister must deal.

Sir EDWARD BRADDON

- These allowances are to be discontinued.

Mr Barton

- That has been stated already.

Mr McCAY

- It appears to me that to a large extent the object of the motion for the adjournment has been met by the announcement made by the Prime Minister. Although I say that, I do not rise to endeavour to bolster up a weak cause or anything of that sort. As the House knows, I took occasion some weeks ago to draw attention, so far as I was concerned, to what I conceived to be wrong tendencies shown by the Ministry. Honorable members sitting on this side of the House having faith in the good intentions of the Government cannot help a feeling of regret when they find that everything that ought to be done, is not being done. The fact that the Ministry is not perfect, is no justification for saying that we can get a perfect Ministry from the other side of the House. I myself have felt that the Ministry has not realized, as they should have realized, the tendency to extravagance that we have seen exhibited for some time past in connexion with our affairs. They are now awakening to the fact that the people of Australia are extremely exigent on this matter, and properly so. They desire to feel assured that not a penny is being spent unnecessarily by the Commonwealth Government. I was very pleased to hear that it had been determined that no further allowance should be paid without express parliamentary sanction. As to certain appointments which have been made, I have already stated that I do not like them. On the first Supply Bill I drew attention to the unhappy resemblance which they bear to the spoil system in America. It certainly does appear to me that some organized attempt has been made to discredit the Ministry in connexion with this matter. I must confess that it seemed to me that they were going wrong ; . but the Ministry have come forward and said frankly that this particular practice was wrong, and that they have decided to stop it. What more can we ask them to do - what more can we expect from them t Of course it is said on the other side that we can no longer trust them, but I do not think we should condemn- a Ministry or a man for a single offence of this ---- I say frankly that I had thought for some time that as far as expenditure was concerned the Ministry was going on wrong lines, and my wish was to get them to go on right lines, and not to try other persons who might go on still more wrong lines. Another point I wish to refer to is one upon which I regret that I must differ very materially from the Prime Minister. I refer to his statement last night as to the alleged ulterior motives of a portion of the Victorian press in connexion with this matter. He did not answer the complaint, but he said instead that the motives of certain people outside the House who raised the question were not pure, and he seemed to me to follow the old principle - "when you have no case, abuse the plaintiff's attorney." I regretted very much to hear him speak as he did, and I regretted, further, to hear him say that the departments of the Commonwealth would be travelling about Australia during the recess. I recollect very well how carefully we watched the proceedings of the Premier's Conference at the time the draft Constitution was amended prior to its being adopted by a second referendum and passed by the Imperial Parliament. I remember that after the Premier's Conference was over the universal public impression was that the Federal Government would, as common sense demanded, be carried on in one place - it did not matter so much what place - until it went to its permanent home in the federal capital.

Mr Watson

- That was certainly not the impression in New South Wales.

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Mr McCAY

- It was the impression in New South Wales until circumstances connected with State politics induced a statement to be made, which pointed out that the Constitution did not render it obligatory that the seat of Government should remain in Melbourne. I would like each Premier who was present at the Conference to say what impression he came away with, and I would be quite prepared to abide by what they said upon that question. As far as we Victorians are concerned, we are quite as anxious to carry out our bargain as we are to require others to- carry out theirs, and I am quite satisfied that there will be no objection either from the representatives of Victoria or from the people, in reference to the early settlement of the site of the federal capital. I would ask, however, whether it is a common - sense thing to have a peripatetic administration during the recess. To my mind it is obviously wrong. The picture the Premier drew was of a Governor-General flitting from place to place.

Mr Barton

- No, no.

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Mr McCAY

- The Prime Minister represented that the Governor-General would have to travel from capital to capital, spending most of his time in the two largest States. I would ask if Ministers are to follow the Governor-General wherever he goes, supposing he does travel about during the recess ; and whether the personal staffs of Ministers are also to follow them ? Are we to have such a procession, and winding up the procession are we to have a bill for all the travelling expenses - for that is what it comes to ? No department can be properly administered unless it is fixed as far as possible in one place. I believe the general impression throughout the Commonwealth was, as it certainly was in Victoria, that though it was not in express words in the Constitution, there was an honorable understanding amongst all concerned that the practical, economical, and common-sense method should be followed of keeping the seat of Government, as far as the departments and the administration of them were concerned, in the one place. I do not say that the Ministers should always be in the one place all the year round, but the permanent heads of each of the departments should be in the one place as far as possible. It is not a question of these departments being in Melbourne at all. There was never any question, raised in Victoria so far as the federal capital was concerned. I think that the provision in the Commonwealth Bill is a very foolish one, and so far as I am concerned I would have been prepared to put the names of the various capitals in a hat and draw out one, and fix upon that as the federal capital. I think the site of the federal capital is a matter of infinitesimal importance compared with the whole question of the federation of Australia, and it was not in Victoria at any rate that this question was raised. I was very sorry to hear the Prime Minister state last night, apparently with the idea of placating some of the States - I do not say any particular State - and so as not to give rise to any ill-feeling, that the Ministers and their departments are to travel round. I suppose that it will not be contended that because Ministers are living in Sydney they should go there and take their departments with them, because it seems to me that Ministers must study the Commonwealth first and their personal convenience afterwards ; and that if they are not prepared to incommode themselves by living away from their homes, they should avail themselves of the opportunity which is always presented to them of giving up their positions. While Parliament is sitting, of course all the departments should be in the place where Parliament meets, and for the rest of the year it is only common sense to say that they should be allowed to stay where they are for the greater part of it. The departments could not travel round with all their staffs and all their records - that would be almost impossible, entirely apart from the expense entailed; and I think, moreover, that it will be most injurious to the interests of the Commonwealth if the departments do not continue to carry out their work for the whole year in the place where it is necessary for them to be for the greater part of the year. I very much regretted to hear the Prime Minister suggest anything else, and I say most emphatically that it is a course of action that I do not consider to be in the best interests of the Commonwealth. The importance of our respective cities will not be determined by the fixing of the seat of government - Washington is not the greatest city in the United States. Personally, I think it is very undesirable to have a city where the only atmosphere is a political atmosphere, because it must necessarily be an artificial one, and calculated to carry men out of touch with the industrial and economic interests of the community. I do not think that we should have this ambulatory form of government at all, but that we should have our government situated where we can most conveniently and economically and beneficially carry it on in the interests of the whole Commonwealth. I am sure that, so far as the States are concerned, New South Wales does not grudge the fixing of the State departments in Melbourne any more than Victoria grudges to New South Wales the fixing of the permanent federal capital in that State.

Mr A McLEAN

- If they do, we will make a fair exchange with them.

Mr McCAY

- In the interests of economy and good government, I think it is eminently desirable that the administration of Commonwealth affairs should be carried out systematically in one place all the year round.

Mr WILKS

- With your parliamentary experience, Mr. Speaker, you must have been very much interested in this debate, considering the very weak defence which has been made by the Ministry against the strong indictment of the honorable and learned member for Illawarra. The honorable and learned member for Corinella said that now that the offence of the Government had been admitted, it was all right.

Mr MCCAY

- No ; I did not say that.

Mr WILKS

- That was the impression that was conveyed to this side of the House.

Mr McCay

- I am not responsible for that.

Mr WILKS

- The honorable and learned member said that the Ministry having admitted their sin, it ought to be condoned.

Mr McCay

- I am not responsible for that impression either.

Mr WILKS

- Probably the honorable and learned member is not responsible for anything except the support he gives to the Ministry, and his want of responsibility was shown by his cleverness in imitating the head of the Government by referring so much to the federal capital site, which is not the matter under consideration at all. The defence of the Government is a very weak one. The amount involved in the allowances is not so much a matter of consideration as the character of the offence itself. Many Ministries in the various States have been thrown out of office' for offences not nearly so great as that which has been committed by the Ministry to-day. The gravest censure has been passed on the Ministry by themselves. One night the Prime Minister defended the action of the Government, and now to-day we find that it has been decided in Cabinet not to continue the allowances which have been objected to. If the action of the Government had been right in the first instance, they would probably have been prepared to still defend it. They now admit they were wrong, but only after the repeated efforts of the honorable and learned member for Illawarra to obtain satisfactory information, and after the exposures made by- the Victorian press. If the honorable and learned member for Corinella is satisfied because the Ministry have admitted their offence, after a series of attacks and exposures such as have been made, I do not think the people of the Commonwealth will be satisfied, either with the explanation or with any indorsement on the part of the Federal Parliament. One honorable member desired to know under what special provisions these allowances to officers were paid, and also what authority the Treasurer had to sign the warrants for payment ; and the fact was established that an absolutely unconstitutional action had been taken. No graver charge could be made against any Ministry in any State, or under any form of government. All the members of the Cabinet have occupied the position of responsible Ministers previously to their joining the present Government, and the people have looked to them for a higher standard of government and a higher respect for the principles of responsible government than might be expected in the ordinary way. Yet we find that sums of money have been paid away for which no constitutional power is provided, and that the Treasurer - has not been able to show what authority existed for making these payments. The Treasurer has in the past always given the very fullest information regarding matters of Supply, and has built up for himself an Australian reputation which has caused honorable members in the smaller walks of political life to look up to him as an. example, and I am grieved to think that the right honorable gentleman, who has been so careful in the past, should have proved so lax in this matter. Perhaps his conduct may be due to the influence of the bad company with which he is surrounded in the Ministry.

Mr HUME COOK

- In view of the Treasurer's protest, the honorable member's comment is most unfair.

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Mr WILKS

- I say that the public have a perfect right to know all the facts, and to call upon the Treasurer to justify his action. His reputation in the past has been built first. of all upon economy, and then upon honesty of administration and the clear presentation of facts to the House and the country ; and I now want to know why it is we find that the public have been denied the most necessary information in this particular matter. It seems to me that the Treasurer is now defending the Ministry, and hence I call attention to his inconsistency.

Mr Harper

- The honorable member does not believe Ins statement 1

Mr WILKS

- I am compelled to accept his statement. I wish to point out that in this matter the Prime Minister and the Minister for Home Affairs have both protested against payments being made in this most unconstitutional manner in the State of New South Wales. The very position that the Minister for Home Affairs occupies here to-day is owing to a situation having been created in his State very similar to that which is now presented.

Mr Chapman

- Very different.

Mr WILKS

- The Government whip says that the circumstances were very different, but they were different only in that this is not a vote of no confidence, but simply a motion for the adjournment of the House. If honorable members would refer to the attack made by the present Prime Minister of the Commonwealth against unconstitutional payments as false in principle and dangerous to the Government, they would find a parallel between the two positions. As the honorable and learned member for Illawarra says, the Federal Parliament is regarded as being in a rarer atmosphere of politics, and the State Parliaments and the people are looking to this Parliament to guard the public funds in a more rigorous manner than they have been guarded by the State Parliaments in the past. The State Parliaments and the people are looking to the members of the Federal Parliament to destroy the contention of the opponents of federation and the anti-Billites, who said that in connexion with the Commonwealth there would be found the spoils system, and that sucking barristers of very little practice would receive the first appointments, and that the system of Government would be extravagant. I am compelled to say that, as events are pointing now, these prophecies will be fulfilled with marvellous accuracy. We find that the appointments to the high offices have been from the ranks of those who are looked on as sucking barristers, and if we are to accept as true the contention of the Prime Minister last night, that these allowances were necessary to secure the services of these high officials, the choice of officials must be very limited indeed. Had it been known, for instance, that the position of secretary to the department for External Affairs, now held by Mr. Hunt, not only carried £800 a year, but also carried allowances, we should have found a large number of civil servants, not only in one State, but throughout Australia, applying for the position. These officers, however, were prevented from applying, simply because they considered that the salary of £800 a year was all they would receive. The Commonwealth has thus been limited in its choice of civil servants, and we are now placed in the position that, while some of us have voted after a strong debate against certain appointments and high salaries, allowances have been paid in an obscure way to those appointed. Had it not been for the action of the press and of the gentlemen who have raised this question, it is questionable, indeed, whether the Ministry would not have continued these allowances. It has been suggested by the honorable and learned member for Illawarra that the Ministers are receiving allowances. That was news to me, as I think it was news to most members, and it is only right that, at the earliest possible moment, the Prime Minister should satisfy the House as to whether the suggestion is correct or not. If the suggestion be correct, and Ministers are receiving allowances, I take it that their position is worse. If the Ministry have decided to abolish the system of payment of allowances to civil servants, and continue to take allowances themselves, their position is worse than when the honorable and learned member for Illawarra submitted this motion. When we have such a high constitutional authority as the honorable and learned member for Bendigo, who is such a warm supporter of the Ministry, questioning their position in this regard on constitutional grounds, I ask, with all due respect to the Government, whether that is not a reason, not for a motion of adjournment, but for the more serious step of a motion of want of confidence.

Mr Chapman

- What 1

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Mr WILKS

- It is all very well to talk in a flippant way, but the people of Australia are not going to allow the civil service to grow and finally break down under extravagance. I doubt whether any one made a keener fight in the past than the Government whip against similar allowances when he was a member of the State Parliament of New South Wales. If this kind of expenditure is to continue, the necessity for a retrenchment party in the House will be absolutely necessary - a party to watch over the interests of the Commonwealth

and of the taxpayer. As to the honorable member for Eden-Monaro, who is now Government whip, it is marvellous how a change in position changes a man's attitude. If it was right in the past in New South Wales to vote against obscure allowances to military officers, it is equally right now to vote against them in regard to the, civil servants of the Commonwealth, whatever position they may hold. I do not wish to refer to the question of Inter-State railway tickets, because that is a very small matter. But I would like honorable members to take notice that, while the living allowance to the man with a high salary is large enough, the allowance to messengers is very small indeed. I do not see what regulates these allowances. Surely it is not intended that by these allowances we are to keep up the social status of these officials. However, there is no reason to further oppose them, because the Government have admitted they are wrong. These officers accepted their positions with their eyes open, knowing the salaries and the disabilities of the posts. They knew that for a certain time their services would be required in Melbourne as the temporary seat of government. In spite of that they accepted the positions, and they must be content with the salaries as voted by this House openly and freely on the Estimates. I would like to say that the Prime Minister, with his powers of perception, is apparently - although I do not wish to be personal - beginning to think that possibly he is on very "rocky" ground on the question of public finance. I do not wish to impute that to him at all ; but I should like to call his attention to the time when he, in the interests of constitutional government, opposed the payment of a certain sum of money in New South Wales without the vote of Parliament. We are in exactly the same position to-night, because, although the amounts now under discussion may be covered by "contingencies," no honorable member was aware that these allowances were intended. Supply Bills which contain provision for contingencies are always accompanied by a schedule, so as to allow honorable members to understand the amounts of the allowances. We are exactly in the same position we were in in New "South Wales, and I would rather have seen, and I think the Ministry would rather have seen, a direct motion of no confidence.

Mr SPEAKER

- The honorable member has exceeded his time, and cannot continue his speech.

Mr HUME COOK

- I wish to add only a very few words to the debate. The matter has now assumed such a position that it is necessary to say a word or two in order to justify the course one may take. I understand there is to be a division, and that being so, while not wishing to vote against the Government, I desire to express as firmly as I can my entire disapproval of their proceedings in connexion with these allowances. I had hoped that some private protests I have taken the opportunity of making would have sufficed, but as there is to be a division I say at once that I do not approve of these allowances, and I would like the public to know what my attitude is. The whole matter now has assumed a somewhat different position, because the Government have admitted their error, and the only good we may hope for from the debate is an indication from the Government that in the matter of public expenditure the gravest consideration and care will be exercised before extending that expenditure in an undue degree. I took occasion last night in speaking on the Defence Bill to express my apprehension at the alarming way in which moneys were being expended in connexion with the federal administration. This is only another indication of the manner in which moneys are being lavishly and wantonly expended. I wish again to enter my protest. The public have made up their minds that the Commonwealth should be wisely and economically administered, and they have sent here representatives pledged to see that that is done, no man possibly being more pledged to that than I.

Mr V L SOLOMON

- Some of them pledged to speak one way and vote another.

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Mr HUME COOK

- Well, sometimes it is advisable to do that. When we can get a Government who admit their error and retrace their steps, that Government is on the right road to success. I am very doubtful whether we could get such an admission or retraction from some gentlemen on the other side of the House. In any case, although I express my disapproval, and have no desire to see these allowances paid, I have a great deal more confidence in the present administration than I should have in any administration picked from the other side. I am going to vote for men I know some thing about - men who admit their error and who desire to retrace their steps, and are going to do the right thing, although in a small way they have been

doing the wrong thing.

Sir William McMillan

- - It is hoped we shall have as many candid friends if ever we get over there.

Mr HUME COOK

- The best friends of a Ministry are sometimes those who openly tell them their faults. I hope I may be able to say what I think about matters of this kind freely and frankly, without in the least deserving to be told that I am in any way disloyal to the Ministry. In matters of general policy and principle I am with the Government ; in this matter they admit having made a mistake, and having made that admission in a manly fashion, and promised to retrace their steps, I intend to vote with them, whilst expressing disapproval of any expenditure not authorized by this House. All kinds of expenditure can be authorized by a vote of the House, and no expenditure should take place without such a vote.

Mr A McLEAN

- I must confess that last night I felt very strongly in reference to this question.. In fact, I have felt very strongly about it ever since we ascertained these allowances were being paid. Last night I felt that I would go to any length to mark my disapproval of what has been done. But when the Government come down frankly and tell us that after full consideration of what has been done they themselves agree that it was not the right thing to do, and that they are determined to stop it- well I certainly would not be one to go any further in condemnation of their action. I sincerely hope there is no intention - I never thought it was intended until the honorable member mentioned it just now - to go to a division. I thought that the motion was for the purpose of discussing this question, and I sincerely hope there will be no attempt to go to a division. I may say I have been asked by several gentlemen sitting around me to "voice their views in the same direction, and to say that they have no intention of going to a division.

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Mr POYNTON

- I feel confident that although we have occupied some little time over this matter, the debate will be of some benefit to the people generally. I was struck with the ingenious trail which was drawn across this discussion by the Prime Minister when he last night tried to raise the bogey of "The Constitution in danger." While we may all agree that that was very ingenious, it appeared to me that his attack on the particular newspaper to which he referred 'was very ungenerous. If there is a newspaper on this continent to which he has a right to be grateful, it is that particular newspaper. Had he attacked it on the schedule making a comparison of salaries which was published by it, he would have been on' much safer ground. But to try and placate honorable members by suggesting that this was being done to cause Parliament to sit continuously in Victoria was, to say the least of it, ungrateful to the organ to which he owes so much. The real question at issue is not whether the salaries in connexion with the Commonwealth public service are higher than those which are paid to officers filling similar positions in the various States. The question at issue is whether the allowances were justified, and whether the Prime Minister and the Government were warranted in adopting a course of action of which this House knew nothing. I am quite prepared to except the Treasurer's statement today as conveying the absolute facts of the case, but I expect him also to be equally prepared to believe that the honorable and learned member who raised this question was in thorough ignorance of what was in the minds of the Ministry. The only means we had of knowing that anything of this kind was being done was through the medium of the press. When I read the public statements, and particularly the paragraph in the Argus, which confined itself to the question of allowances, I came to this House with the intention of immediately directing attention to it, because I believed that if the statements were true, we should not be worth our salt if we allowed the system of allowances to continue; whilst if they were not true the lie should be contradicted. When I arrived here, I found that it had already been arranged that the honorable and learned member from Illawarra should take the matter up. We are all pleased to know that these allowances are to be discontinued, and that- we shall hear no more about them henceforth. But I should like to ascertain from the Ministry upon what ground they were granted. "What justification is there for those which have already been paid ?

Mr Wilkinson

- They were voted in the Supply Bill.

Mr POYNTON

- They were not in one sense. They may be covered by the Supply Bill, but there is not an honorable

member of this House - apart from the members of the Ministry - who can say that he thought that these allowances were covered by the Bill. If the officers concerned have so much work to do, it would have been better for the Government to candidly tell the House the facts of the case, and allow us to make whatever additional allowances were necessary. But if I judge aright some of the gentleman who are receiving two guineas a week for subsistence cannot be so very much overworked, otherwise they could not pay so much attention to the galleries here when this question is being discussed. Again I ask - "What justification is there for giving one man two guineas per week when he is receiving £800 a year, whilst allowing another who is in receipt of only £132 annually, £1 per week"? I cannot understand the reason why this distinction should be made. Whilst dealing with this question of allowances, I wish to ask the Prime Minister to make a note of the fact that there are some alarming rumours current in reference to the amount of the allowances which were granted to the military officers in connexion with the Commonwealth celebrations in this State. I should like the Prime Minister to bring down a return showing the allowances which were granted to military men in connexion with their meeting here during the celebrations which took place in May last.

Mr Barton

- Neither the Treasurer or I have heard a word of - it.

Mr POYNTON

- I have heard of it, and I can tell the Treasurer quietly what I have heard. The rumour must be in general circulation, or otherwise I should not have heard it. If there be no truth in it, then the sooner the press make that fact known the better. I do not know that I have any more to say on this question. I believe that it is our duty to study economy. We are here as the custodians of the public purse. While it may be said that we have been extravagant in connexion with some measures - and I accept my responsibility in common with other honorable members in connexion with them - it cannot be urged that there has been any extravagance as regards highly-paid officials. If we have erred at all, we have erred upon the side of trying to provide in connexion with the federal legislation that there should be a living wage, at any rate, within a reasonable period, for all adults in the Commonwealth public service. The State Parliaments are making capital out of our, alleged extravagant expenditure. I was very pleased to see in to-day's paper a statement of the -new expenditure as debited to each of the States throughout the Commonwealth. I hope that the> Treasurer will see that a similar statement is published each month.

Sir George Turner

- We do it every month.

Mr POYNTON

- If that is done, it will to some extent allay the uneasiness of a number of electors in the various States.

Mr Barton

- Did the honorable member not know that we have been doing that all the time ?

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Mr POYNTON

- I was not aware that it was being done. I know that there is in all the State Parliaments - certainly in the Victorian Parliament, which is in a better position to know what is being done than the other State Parliaments' - a feeling that we are indulging in extravagance. We can not make the . various States too well acquainted with what is being done. I am glad that the Ministry have thought fit to discontinue . these allowances. I do not think there is any fear that what the Prime Minister spoke of last night will occur. The right honorable gentleman led us to believe that several of these officers will probably ask to be transferred to the States from where they came. That may be true, but I am perfectly satisfied that some of the officers who have been receiving the highest salaries and allowances are not likely to ask the Government to relieve them of their positions. In my opinion they are being very well paid, and they know it. An officer who comes from New South Wales and happens - whilst the Parliament is sitting in Melbourne - to be located here, has no more right to receive a subsist allowance than has the officer who, for the time being, is resident here and who came from another State. I can see no- necessity for the Governor-General going round from State to State, and for the whole of the departmental officers following him and incurring expenditure on behalf of the Commonwealth until the seat of Government may be fixed. Some honorable member has said that the railway fare3 do not amount to anything. But they do. They mean money, and we shall have to pay it. We shall have to pay it to the State railways, and all these

accounts will be debited against us by-and-by. When that time arrives, probably some honorable members who are chiefly blameable for this sort of thing, will be beyond the pale of criticism.

Mr McCOLL

- I merely desire to say a few words. Whatever may have been the motives underlying the action of the gentlemen on the other side of the House, who brought this matter forward, I certainly think that the thanks of this House and the country are due to them. I think that the position has been put in a fair, manly, and honest way by the honorable member for North Sydney. I do trust that the Government will take the lesson to heart, and will in future avoid placing their supporters in the difficult and painful position which they occupy today. There is a good deal of talk going on outside in reference to extravagance in one department and another. I can quite understand that the gentlemen composing the Ministry, who have hitherto been holding the reins of power in their respective States, may have different ways of doing things, and that they may not yet have shaken down to working order. There may be some little differences between them that require reconciling, and it may take a little time to effect that reconciliation. But it must be remembered that there is considerable talk outside in regard to extravagance, especially in the Postal department. I do not know whether it requires a separate building and also a separate staff to be engaged when there is ample room in the present post-office building, where the head of the staff can be in touch with the whole of his officers. I have been travelling about the country lately, and on every hand people are talking of the expense which is likely to fall upon the States and the Commonwealth. I trust that the Government will take warning by this debate, that they will set their house in order, and submit Estimates as early as possible so that we may know what the expenditure for the year is likely to be. I will not join in any motion that is likely to embarrass the Government, but at the same time I do not object to the action of the honorable and learned member who has brought this matter forward.

Mr. WINTERCOOKE (Wannon).The speeches of honorable members on the other side of the House remind me of the position of a country-cricket umpire. When it was manifestly a case of a batsman being out, he said - " Not out this time, but it will be next." That is the spirit which some honorable members have evidenced, and probably if I were sitting on the other side of the House I should take precisely the same view. What I rise chiefly for is to ask the Prime Minister what he means by stating that he proposes to put upon the Estimates any case where allowances may be necessary. From what I can gather--

Mr Barton

- I did not say that. I said that in allotting salaries on the Estimates, any case of hardship would have its opportunity of consideration then.

Mr WINTER COOKE

- I understand the Prime Minister to mean that though the allowances are suspended for the present, yet there might be, in the opinion of the Ministry, some cases where allowances are necessary, and that such cases would be put upon the Estimates for discussion.

Mr Barton

- I assure the honorable member that I did not say that at all. '

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Mr WINTER COOKE

- That is really the only point upon which I wish to speak. I am very glad to know that we shall hear no more of these allowances. When the first Supply Bill was under consideration, I recollect a speech by the honorable member for Wentworth, who said distinctly that all salaries, whether Ministerial, parliamentary, or otherwise, should include the pay necessary for the position, and that there should be no allowances whatever. The Ministry have therefore no excuse for having kept the House in the dark in regard to this matter.

Mr. BARTON(Hunter- Minister for External Affairs). - I should have been glad if I could have spoken earlier in this debate. Nevertheless, I hope I shall be able to say what I have to say within the limited time at my disposal. No one can impute motives to those who have raised this discussion a third time. But it is quite permissible for me to say that from the tone of the speeches made on the other side, and from the covert insinuation against myself by which some of those speeches were characterized, it is not difficult to distinguish this as being a party debate. This is a matter put forward for party purposes, and I suppose that under our system of party Government no one can say that I impute a wrong motive in saying so.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- That is not correct.

Mr BARTON

- I may be allowed to draw my own inferences as to the object of the motion. I am never at a loss to draw my own inference from the attitude of the honorable member who interjects.

Mr Conroy

- But if it is correct all on this side must vote against the honorable gentleman ?

Mr BARTON

- If it is correct they may vote against me. It would have been better, far better, if there had been courage enough to put this question in the form of a direct vote of censure, and not as a vote of censure lurking under a motion for adjournment, leading members to suppose that no division was to be taken, when at any moment a division might be taken. That is not the way to conduct politics.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- We will come to the right honorable and learned gentleman for lessons.

Mr BARTON

- The honorable member might well do so sometimes. I am not a know-all ; I do not profess to know everything, and. I do not profess from any self complacency of mine to be .able to instruct the whole Commonwealth ; therefore I am no imitator. I am able to recognise the object of this motion from my experience in Parliament quite as well as is the honorable member who interrupts me, and I have no hesitation in describing it as a party motion.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- I say that is not true.

Mr SPEAKER

- The honorable member must withdraw that remark.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- Surely I am not out of order in saying distinctly that a certain statement made by the right honorable and learned gentleman is not true.

Mr SPEAKER

- Undoubtedly the honorable member is out of order in characterizing any statement as being an untruth. I understood the honorable member to use that expression.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- Very well, Mr. Speaker, I withdraw ; but I hope you will allow me later on to show that I am perfectly in order according to the best traditions of the House of Commons.

Mr SPEAKER

- The honorable member must unconditionally withdraw the statement. He must not qualify the withdrawal.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- I withdraw the statement.

Mr BARTON

- So much for this portion, of the matter, which, as it appears to inflict an irritation of a very natural character, I had better leave now.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- The Prime Minister had better say what he likes.

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Mr BARTON

- I will not ask the honorable member's leave to say what I like. Now, I could have hoped, for the sake of public business, that this matter would not be 'debated at the length which it has been to-day, the third occasion on which it has been brought forward. Having been already raised twice and fully debated, and the fullest information possible on the subject having been given by me, it might well have been left in the limbo of those matters which have been raised twice on a motion for adjournment, instead of being brought up a third time, and made once more the subject of a similar motion. If the honorable members who support it had had the courage of their opinions, and proposed a vote of censure, it would have been different. I am accused of having given a. wriggling sort of an answer when in reply to a question on the motion for the adjournment on Tuesday night I gave all the information in my possession. Before the

business of the day began yesterday, I gave all the information that I had since been able to obtain, and having gained all the information possible subsequently, and being desirous of laying it before the House as soon as possible, I did so as soon as we met to-day. Is that wriggling? How was it possible to have better kept faith with the House than by giving every particle of information obtainable? Surely that has been done, and therefore aspersions of the kind which have been made are not warranted. The mover of the motion will refrain from making such aspersions when he has gained more experience. I respect his character sufficiently to believe that he will. Reference has been made to the sudden determination of this matter. The reason for such determination is this: first, with the qualification that the determination has not been sudden, I may say that upon the Estimates of the first Supply Bill, the information as to these allowances was given. The Treasurer sent back for further particulars in regard to the persons receiving these allowances, and obtained them at once. As he has explained to the House, it is only because he forgot to make the statement, of which he had made a note on his copy of the Supply Bill, that this information was not given when the Bill was moved. It was intended to be given under the heading of "stores, stationery, allowances, telegrams, travelling and incidental expenses." It was my colleague's intention to explain the position in dealing with those matters. It will thus be seen that there has been no withholding of information from the House except by inadvertence, of which manly admission has been made by the Treasurer, and therefore to that extent it is not our fault. There is this to be said, that the vote specifying these allowances, has been earned, and, therefore, although it may be a misfortune that the full information which was intended to be given to honorable members was not laid before the House, it is not correct to say that this money has not been voted, or that there is no constitutional authority for it. The money was voted on those Estimates. The reason why it was put into the temporary Supply Bill was because that was only a temporary measure. Everything relating to "contingencies" was voted under that general heading, a statement being made at the time that there was no variation in the frame and system of the appropriation sought by that Supply Bill from the previous one, except such as was indicated on the face of it. Honorable members know that the frame-work of the whole matter was exactly the same as that in the first Bill. The whole matter rests on this: That there was an unfortunate omission on the part of my right honorable and learned friend, the Treasurer. I do not blame him for it. The House knows well that there is no more honest administrator of finance than he is.

Honorable Members. - Hear, hear.

Mr BARTON

- As to there being any sudden determination, I may say that at that time the matter was taken into consideration by the Treasurer and myself, it being admitted that while there might be cases in which it was a right thing to alleviate hardship, it was a more desirable thing that these matters should be dealt with under salaries. We were of one mind - as to that, and therefore before this question had been raised the payment of these allowances had been suspended. As that was pointed out on the first occasion, surely there has not been any warrant for this debate. These allowances having been suspended, it is not right to accuse us of a sudden determination of the matter because that determination has not been brought about by anything the honorable and learned member said. That decision was arrived at before the honorable member who moved the motion spoke, and even before we heard that he was going to speak.

Mr Fowler

- How long ago was that?

Mr BARTON

- I am reminded by the Treasurer that it was practically decided during the first week in July, that was before anything was heard of this motion.

Mr Kirwan

- Was it before the appearance of the paragraphs in the newspapers?

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Mr BARTON

- Decidedly, days before. We held some conferences about it, and after devoting to the subject a little of that time which is so very limited when we are so long in Parliament, we took steps to suspend these allowances with a view to the determination of the question in connexion with the question of salary, if the occasion required. Whether the occasion required it or not, is solved by a reference to the statement

which [have laid on the table of the House. Take the case of some of the lower salaries. I am accused in print of having come to a sudden determination upon this matter, while I was on my feet. As a matter of fact I had come to that determination before I spoke, and before I was challenged. I do not propose to deal with any salaries over £500 per annum, but there are cases, where men are receiving under £500 per annum, in which there is distinct hardship, for the reason that there is a very great difference between the payments received by these officers, and the payments made to men filling similar positions not only in Victoria and New South Wales, but in the service of the Commonwealth itself. Messengers employed in the House of Representatives receive £18S per annum, while in the Senate they receive £168 per annum. The messenger and the despatch clerk to whom I referred particularly last night .are in my department. They receive £100 and £140 respectively. Surely there is a vast discrepancy there. The list includes other officers in a similar position of disadvantage, and shows that the senior clerk receives £250 as against £425 and £350 per annum received by officers discharging similar duties in New South Wales and Victoria. I leave the consideration of the rest of these items to honorable members. They will find full details in the list. So far as Ministerial allowances are concerned, scarcely any advantage has been taken 'of them. The Executive Council allowances in New South Wales, as we ascertained, are £3 3s. per day. What we proposed for Ministers while travelling from one State to another is £2 2s. per day. For myself, however, I do not care whether the above thing goes by the board or not, because it is not a matter which troubles me at all. I have travelled for a considerable portion of the last seven months, but I have taken only eight days' allowance. So far as that is concerned, I hope that our example will be followed by our successors, for I intend to pay back the allowances which I received in respect of those eight days.

Honorable Members. - No, no.

Mr BARTON

- I received them while I was officially engaged in representing the Commonwealth on an important occasion ; but I would much rather be. out of pocket than have to undergo this contumelious treatment, which ought not to characterize the proceedings of an Assembly of the kind in "which we are seated.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- It came from the Minister's own side.

Mr BARTON

- I take no notice of the honorable member's interruption after what has happened. I leave him to Mr. Speaker. These Ministerial allowances have, been made in nearly all the States. I hear that they are not allowed in Victoria. My honorable friend, the member for Wentworth, who has held office as -Treasurer, will know that it has existed in New South Wales.

Sir William McMillan

- Not during my time of office.

Sir William Lyne

- Yes. All the time.

Sir William McMillan

- I never received a farthing on that account.

Mr BARTON

- It existed, I know, before the honorable member was in office. It has, in fact, existed for some time. So far as I am concerned, however, I am quite prepared to let these Ministerial allowances go by the board. I want none of them. As to the comparisons that have been made between the duties of the Secretary for External Affairs and those of other officers, surely the judgment of this House should have some regard to what the office is, what are the duties, and what .they are worth. Whether ' this officer receives £300 a year less than that paid to a similar officer in New South Wales has nothing -to do -with the question. If that New South Wales officer were transferred and sent to live in another State in which he had not lived before, he might not consider his salary sufficient.

Sir William McMillan

- Why need we debate what has already been agreed to by Parliament 1

Mr BARTON

- I am talking only of the comments that have been made, and which ought to have had more regard for that fact.

Mr Thomson

- The department over which this officer presides is a small one compared with the State department.

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Mr BARTON

- But, because of the small staff, and the great variety of duties, he has as much to do as any undersecretary in the whole of Australia. It frequently happens, when the House is not sitting, that he has to , be with me from 8 p.m. till 2 a.m., dealing with papers. It is responsible work. It is not the mere signing of papers, but the consideration of very large questions, and surely there must be some allowance made for the importance of the position. It is idle to make a comparison between the remuneration an officer received before, or in a State service before he joined the Commonwealth staff and what he receives on a promotion involving extra pay. When the duties which he is performing are accurately and well done, the remuneration which he should receive must, after all, be measured by the importance of those duties, and by what men are getting elsewhere for similar work. Now, I am not going further into this part of the subject, nor am I going to* answer many of the insinuations made against me personally. These we can leave ; but I want to tell the House this - that the determination to do away with these allowances was come to in pursuance of a consultation which took place upon the ,subject before it was raised either in Parliament or by the press. My honorable friend the Treasurer will corroborate me in regard to that, but I hope the day has not yet come when the House requires any corroboration of a statement made by rae in all good faith.

Honorable Members. - Hear, hear.

Mr BARTON

- I am told that I took great pains to look for hidden and improper reasons for the action of the press in commenting upon the policy of the Government in this matter. I took no pains whatever. Any one who reads the paragraphs can tell why they are written, and with what object. I absolutely and honorably absolve every honorable member of this House of any part in this matter. My remarks were "directed to the press, and particularly to one organ, which, if I do owe it gratitude for support, should not be held to be beyond correction when that which is incorrect appears in its columns.

Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- I am willing to make every allowance for the irritation of the Prime Minister in this debate, which is so essentially of a personal character, but it does seem to me rather an outrage on the Opposition that the Ministry should have come down to the House, and confessed their fault in every respect, even to the withdrawal by the Prime Minister of his claim to certain payments which he had taken himself-

Mr Barton

- To which I was entitled :all the same.

Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- And that they should then say that this is purely a party question got up practically as a vote of censure on the Administration. I do not think that is a fair charge to level against us. The whole of the facts, as alleged, have been admitted, and not only so, but the wrong done by the Ministry has been freely acknowledged. I "know that the Treasurer has, to some extent,- disarmed censure by his candid admission of certain facts of the case, but the very fact that he omitted to give that information to the House should have made him doubly anxious that no such allowances should be made. This is not the first tune that a note of warning has been raised. When the question came up about the Ministry taking their parliamentary allowances as well as their salaries, I voted against that course, because I thought it was unconstitutional, and I said candidly, in answering an interjection, that I would be perfectly willing to vote for an increase in the salaries of the Ministers ; and I then went on to say that I could clearly see, owing to the peculiar character of our administration during the earlier period of the Commonwealth, that there would be a large amount of contingent expenditure, the particulars of which would scarcely be disclosed to Parliament ; that allowances might be made, and that other things might occur which might be highly objectionable. This has been a growing evil for the last ten years. When I had the honour of being Treasurer of New South Wales, to which fact the Prime Minister referred, I never, during the three years of my occupation of office, got one sixpence outside of my salary.

Mr Piesse

- How much did the honorable member travel ?

Sir WILLIAM MCMILLAN

- I travelled continually, and the only privilege I obtained was a private carriage to myself on the railways.

Mr Mauger

- But the honorable member did not travel to any other States.

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Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- Now, where are the candid friends of the Ministry ? The moment we get up in any party spirit - I presume it is according to the dictum of the Prime Minister - all those gentlemen who are so anxious to promote economy in the State immediately smell danger to their party, and are absolutely down on' their knees. -I hold, as I have always held during my political career, that the question of public economy and accounts is not a matter of party politics. The bringing in of a Tariff, or the introduction of any new system of taxation or anything of that kind, may involve party politics, but there is a duty resting on members on both sides of every House of Parliament, first to see that the public accounts are clearly and honestly placed before the country, and secondly to guard against any extravagance in the public expenditure. These matters should be above every party consideration, and any Ministry who attempt to be fool the public by not disclosing the true state of the public accounts, or who are wilfully extravagant with the public money, deserve to be turned out of office whatever their policy may be. I think that although this is a nauseous subject, this discussion will not prove a waste of time. - We have had this question discussed in connexion with the military estimates in New South Wales, and on many occasions in regard to different services, and I say that you cannot give carte blanche to Ministers in regard to these allowances without great evil existing, and probably corrupt practices coming in. It would be far better to honestly meet the present conditions of the Commonwealth. We know well enough that all the Constitution says is that, until the federal site is obtained and fit for occupation, the Parliament of the Commonwealth must be held in Melbourne; but it does not say that the Executive Government of the Commonwealth is to be in Victoria ; and ' although I see great disadvantages attached to the situation, and although I deplored the arrangement when it was introduced into the Constitution, we have never- allowed that, because the Parliament is in Melbourne - although it maybe, perhaps, a matter of great convenience to have the Executive there, and the Executive must be where the Parliament is during the sitting of Parliament - the Executive officers must be exclusively in Melbourne during the whole of the twelve months.

Mr.O'Malley.- We do.

Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- Now, the question we have to deal with as far as these allowances are concerned is this : In the case of an officer whose home is in New South Wales, and who is residing in Melbourne under certain conditions while Parliament is sitting, has he any right to get an allowance during that period. I say that we must either give him an allowance which will be plainly set out. on the Estimates for Parliament, or we must increase his salary if we do not think that salary is sufficient for the purpose. I. think that under all the circumstances, however, it will be far better to lay it down as a general principle that no allowances shall be recognised at all. This opens up a question which I have no doubt will have to be dealt with, and when I stated that without these parliamentary allowances the Ministers had not a sufficient salary for all the exigencies of this peripatetic period of -the Commonwealth life, I foresaw that if we had a Minister residing in Melbourne, and- he had to go to Sydney on public business when the Commonwealth Parliament was not sitting, his expenses would have to be paid by special allowance; and the question is whether that allowance should be entirely in his own hands. Anything that would make it necessary to bring up these pettifogging votes from time to time in Parliament, anything "that would make it necessary to have a system of espionage into the doings of the Ministers, would be degrading to the Executive Government. A debate such as this is degrading to the country and to ourselves ; and therefore my only object in rising this afternoon, after a complete explanation has been made by the Ministry, is to, if possible, avoid such an undignified position in the future, because it is very painful. We are talking of mere pettifogging sums drawn on the strength of the Executive authority by men whom we have placed in their present positions as presumably possessing the' confidence of the country; and to bring under review continually in Parliament matters of this kind is to my mind most offensive and degrading. I agree with the Prime Minister that rather than have this sort of thing repeated it would be better to refuse any of these allowances under any possible circumstances.

Mr Barton

- We intend to.

Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- If we find that during the period between the present time, and the consolidation of our Government in the federal capital it is necessary for Ministers to travel from one part of the continent to another, let us, if necessary, increase their salaries, but let it be done in a definite way, so that no one in any State may say that Ministers are practically purloining sums of money from the Treasury for their own purposes under an extravagant rule. I regret very much that the Prime Minister has taken rather an offensive way of dealing with this side of the House.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- As he always does.

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Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- I do not think the Ministry can complain of any obstructive or unfair tactics on -the part of any members on this side of the House. Indeed, a great deal of the destructive work in connexion with the Bills that have been before us has been done by a coterie of honorable members who sit in the Ministerial corner, and it would have been perfectly simple for me to have sat night after night without uttering a word, leaving the destructive process to be worked out by honorable members opposite. We do not intend to divide the House on this motion. We do not want to put the Government in danger. We do not want by any side issue - especially in a matter in which there has been the most abject apology - to defeat the Government. We do not desire for one moment to divide the House and magnify this into a vote of censure. We hope that the time will come when we shall occupy the Ministerial benches, and my colleagues and myself have been anxious during the last three months to show honorable members opposite a pattern Opposition, an example for them to follow when we take their places.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK (Parramatta). The honorable member for Wentworth is beginning to find out what he will get for being magnanimous towards a Government who do not appreciate his magnanimity. I venture to say that this House has never seen a more sorry spectacle than that presented by the conduct of the Prime Minister all through these proceedings. I am an humbler member of the House and of society than the Prime Minister, and yet I tell him that I would not for one day hold the position that he does, and subject myself to the indignities to which he has subjected himself over this matter alone. The right honorable gentleman's "backing and filling " over this question has been enough to make the gods weep over " Australia's noblest son."

Mr Barton

- I noticed the honorable member did not weep.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- The Opposition is now saying a word in reply to the rude and uncalled for remark of the Prime Minister to-night, when he got up and savagely assailed us as attempting to throw the Government out over a paltry tiling of this kind. When the Prime Minister accuses us of every motive he can imagine except the correct one, it is time somebody made some reply to his heated and unjustifiable remarks.

Mr HUME COOK

- In a calm way.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- We have not so much occasion to be calm on this side of the House as honorable members have over there. They know very well that they dare not vote against this Ministry.

Mr Mauger

- What nonsense.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- Honorable members over there know that until the Tariff is. out of the way they are bound as the slaves of the "Ministry, and that is what causes the dead calm when any question arises affecting the fate of this Government.

Mr Mauger

- And which so much annoys the honorable member.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- Where does all the destructive criticism come from in connexion with this matter ? The honorable

member for Gippsland last night got up and denounced this Government more than the Government have been denounced by the Opposition at any time during the consideration of this question. We are told to-day by honorable members on the other side that the Government have made a mistake, and that they must not do it again. The Government have been practically told by their own supporters that if they make a similar mistake again, out they go. However, it is all blank cartridge. I have as much right as have members on the other side to protest against what has been done by the Government, and I do that more consistently, because I am opposed to the Government, while those honorable members are not. The question is not as to whether these officers are entitled to the allowances - that is entirely beside the question. In this matter I should like to refer to the difference in the statements made by the Prime Minister last night and to-day on this matter. To-day we are told that the Government has already decided to discontinue these allowances.

Mr Barton

- I said they had been suspended.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- Last night we were told a different thing. Last night the Prime Minister gave a very different version of the matter, and pleaded with the House that these allowances were necessary, urging that unless they were made it would result in the service of the Commonwealth being confined to the State of Victoria.

Mr Barton

- I told the House that the allowances had been suspended just as I have told the House to-day.

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Mr JOSEPH COOK

- The Prime Minister told us yesterday that the Government had decided to suspend the allowances after consultation with the Treasurer, and perusal of the newspaper reports will bear out what I say. The Prime Minister was ready to catch at a straw last night in order to avoid the criticism levelled at him on the other side, and to enable him to get into Cabinet to-day and arrange on some further course of action. What is the Prime Minister's explanation to-day ? We could have had the Treasurer's explanation just as readily last night. If the Treasurer had made his explanation then, probably no further action would have been taken to-day. It is strange that the Treasurer should have sat in the House while all this criticism was going on, he knowing well that he could explain it satisfactorily. Yet the Treasurer never moved. He could make an explanation only after the Cabinet had sat and decided that some explanation was necessary, I accept the right honorable gentleman's statement that he queried these items, and that he was going to put them . on the Estimates but for an oversight. Many weeks have elapsed since then, and the allowances have been paid in the meantime. Why did he not come down and tell the House about this lapse of memory, and why not have refused to pay them until the sanction of the House had been obtained ? Instead of that we are told that since these items we overlooked these allowances have been paid. Surely the Government have not paid all these allowances without once thinking of their constitutionality - as to whether they ought to receive the sanction of the House. That is what I have to complain of in regard to the Treasurer. We were told by the Prime Minister that his Treasurer was to be a guarantee of sound finance to the whole of Australia, and we had a right to expect that the Treasurer would have consulted the House at an earlier occasion than this - indeed, we have no right to suppose that any explanation would ever have been offered had not the newspapers taken hold of the matter and made as much of it as they did. I cannot help saying that in my judgment the Prime Minister descended to some very paltry tactics when he tried to make a federal point in connexion with this matter, and endeavoured to give the whole question a federal twist as he undoubtedly tried to do last night. But that is an old game of the right honorable gentleman. When anybody says anything that does not quite suit his book for the time being he brings out the bogey of anti-federalism with which to answer his opponents. Last week he was in New South Wales, where there is some very strong feeling in regard to the Inter-State Commission.

Mr SPEAKER

- Order. I do not think the Inter-State Commission has anything to do with this debate.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- I am aware of that, but I think I am right in emphasizing that what the Prime Minister is doing in connexion with this debate is an old practice. I think I am perfectly, in order in saying that the same cry

was got up in Sydney, viz., that these criticisms come from the anti-federal quarter. The Prime Minister said the same thing last night. The moment we begin to criticise the expenditure the Prime Minister says that it is an anti federal move. I say that the Prime Minister has traded on this sentiment far too long, and now that he is ensconced in office he ought to try and exist on his own merits and not on the high and cherished sentiments which we all as federalists entertain for the Constitution. Honorable members may have been a little particular about this matter, but the Prime Minister, and I presume the Minister for Home Affairs, have memories. I want to say that, but for a similar occurrence of much smaller dimensions than the one under review, the Premier would not have been leader of the Commonwealth to-day, nor would the honorable member for Hume have been Minister for Home Affairs in the Federal Parliament. Nobody has condemned the practice more emphatically than those two gentlemen who now are principally concerned. When we in the Government of New South Wales paid without parliamentary sanction the small sum of £350 as out of pocket expenses to Senator Lt. -Col. Neild, when he made his report on the question of old-age pensions, those two gentlemen were leaders of an attack on the Government for doing that behind the back of Parliament.

Mr BARTON

- After first giving Parliament a distinct and assured promise that the Government would not pay anything. That is in evidence.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- The Prime Minister knows why that promise could not be attended to, and why it was not attended to.

Mr SPEAKER

- I cannot allow incursions into regions of local politics. The honorable member must confine himself more directly to the subject of debate.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- I am confining myself to this point, and I am sorry you, Mr. Speaker, are so severe with me to-night. I confine myself to the point that those honorable gentlemen, who now have been guilty of the practice of paying money behind the back of Parliament, have themselves aforetime been most earnest in their denunciation of a similar practice.

Mr SPEAKER

- That general statement is in order, but not the further statement the honorable member was making.

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Mr JOSEPH COOK

- I will leave the further statement. Here is what the Minister for Home Affairs said -

I say, when once you do that, you lose the strong power that the representatives of the people should hold as against the Ministry of the day, and the Opposition and the Parliament are simply at the mercy of the Prime Minister, to do as he likes, and to tread upon the privileges of Parliament exactly as it suits him, and not in the best interests of the community over which he should properly govern.

That is the point of criticism we make in connexion with this proposal. Our point of view is that there have been abundant opportunities for submitting the whole proposal for the -expenditure to the approval and criticism of Parliament if need be. I for one do not take exception so much to the payments that have been made, as to the manner in which this business has all been done. Twice we have had Supply Bills submitted. The leader of the Opposition warned the Government at the time, and expressed the hope that none of this kind of thing would come afterwards. The leader of the Opposition told the Government that they ought to be very plain in their statements concerning incidental and contingent expenses, . and expressed the further hope that nothing would be brought up afterwards that ought to be made clear to the House then. In spite of that; warning, and in spite of all the intervening time - in spite of the fact that another Supply Bill has since been submitted, and in spite of the fact that there has been ample opportunity since then of acquainting the House with everything that has been done - we find not a word breathed about these expenses until the newspapers brought the facts to light in the nature of a revelation to the country. If the Ministry can do this regarding the expenses of these officers, they can do it in relation to much larger and more important matters. I now quote, in substantiation of the position I have taken up, the language of the Prime Minister in the Parliament of New South Wales-

The question is whether this is a proper and constitutional transaction, and, if it is not, those who are responsible for it must suffer their responsibility. The whole thing resolves itself into a question of secret

dealing with public money, secret in this sense, that there was an opportunity of informing the House of what was going on ; but the House, instead of being informed, was put off the scent, or lulled into a sense of security.

That is our complaint against the Government on this occasion.

Sir Malcolm Mceacharn

- Is the honorable member not proving . that his own Ministry did the very thing of which he now complains ?

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- And I say we paid the penalty for what we did, and I do not mind telling the honorable member frankly that we deserved it. Is that frank enough for the honorable member 1 The honorable member now takes up a very different role. He said that we deserved it and he put us out of office, or assisted his present Minister for Home Affairs to do so.

Mr Barton

- I took part in an honest, straight-out vote of censure, which the honorable member does not do.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- The right honorable gentleman took part in what we thought was a federal grab, and it turned out to be so. If the right honorable gentleman wants any more facts of the case I shall be very happy to give them. He saw a chance to get the federal vote, and he took the chance of turning out the Government.

Mr Barton

- Is that imputation of motives in order? I can answer for myself if necessary.

Mr SPEAKER

- I do not think the honorable member for Parramatta is in order in making a statement offensive to any honorable member. . If the Prime Minister says the remark is offensive it must be withdrawn.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- If the Prime Minister- says so, I certainly withdraw it. The right honorable gentleman in the very first sentence of his speech to-day made an imputation of motives to this side of the House in as savage a way as possible. It does seem to me strange that I should be called to order in this way while the right honorable gentleman is not called to order. However, we will let that go. There never was any intention to press this matter to a division. I may tell honorable members on the other side of the House something further. The acting leader of the Opposition did not know until last night, when, it was ' announced in the House, that we were going to submit a motion for the adjournment.

Mr Batchelor

- The acting leader of the Opposition ought to keep his supporters in better order.

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Mr JOSEPH COOK

- The acting leader of the Opposition ought to keep his supporters in better order than the Ministry can keep theirs. At any rate we do not keep prodding at our leader as honorable members do on the Government side of the House. Every night we are treated to the spectacle of the Government being lectured from the benches behind them, although those honorable members vote for the Government when the call comes. I do not complain of that. They are responsible to their constituents, and it is an understanding that nothing whatever must be done to displace the Government until the Tariff question is settled. Doubtless that accounts for the tame attitude of honorable members opposite, who are content to swallow all 'these unconstitutional and dangerous practices rather than give a vote which would have the effect - as has been said to-day - of placing perhaps a less perfect Ministry upon the benches opposite. However, that is a matter for themselves. All I wish to do is to protest against what I regard as an unconstitutional proceeding - a proceeding for which we were punished and corrected. I do not think it is a right thing to spend money without the authority of Parliament except in a case of very grave emergency.

Mr Harper

- Has not Parliament given authority for this expenditure 1

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- Certainly not. We have given a general authority, but we had no idea that the money was to be spent in this way.

Mr Harper

- The honorable member should have seen to that matter when the Estimates were under discussion.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- How could we see to it 1 We did everything that we possibly could. We asked for an explanation of what these " contingencies " included. The Government were told that it was not intended to give them authority to spend money in the way of allowances and salaries which would otherwise be subject to the scrutiny of this House. I protest against the attitude of the Prime Minister to-day. His attitude all through has been a magnificent shuffle, and quite unworthy of the man who expects to receive the confidence and support of the people over whose destinies he at present presides.

Mr KING O'MALLEY

- I have carefully listened to the speech, or rather the wail, of the honorable member for Parramatta, which was founded principally upon New South Wales politics. We have heard a good deal this afternoon. I expected it from the famine party ; but it seems to me that we are simply fighting the political battles of New South Wales in this House. The whole question seems to have hinged on the fact that the honorable member for Parramatta lost his Governmental billet in New South Wales and came over here to weep about it. Honorable members on this side of the House will admit that the Ministry made an error. But is there not such a thing as repentance 1 My honorable friend on the other side of the House has been upon the stool of repentance ever since he lost his billet. Is there not a verse to this effect -

While the lamp holds out to burn,

The vilest sinner may return.

I think that we owe a debt of gratitude to the Age for having called attention to this matter, because I do not wish to lose the Ministry. I am a straight-out Barton supporter, because I am a protectionist, but had this sort of thing gone on, and these mistakes continued, I should have been bound, as a democrat, to have crossed the floor of the House. But now the evil complained of will cease, because we have the word of the Prime Minister upon that point, and his word is his bond. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to the Prime Minister. There would have been no federation and no Parliament here to-day if the Prime Minister had taken the same course as my ' honorable friend opposite, who has wasted his time in accusing him this afternoon. So long as the Prime Minister is willing to reform and to admit his mistakes - if he makes any - he will have my support. But he will not have it because I am in any way. frightened. I did not come here as the echo either of the Prime Minister or of the leader of the Opposition, but as a living voice expecting to get the Prime Minister's position as soon as I can myself.

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Mr CONROY

- It appears to me that the Ministry, behind the backs of Parliament, and certainly without the knowledge of honorable members, have been making allowances to various officers in. the Commonwealth public service. When I look back at the debates which took place in this House, I certainly think that the Ministry have parliamentary authority for the moneys which they have spent. I am bound to say that. When this same vote was under discussion, I stood almost alone in demanding that the Supply Bill which contained it should be referred back to the Government. I pointed out on the second Supply Bill that the promise of the Government had not been fulfilled, and that under the heading of " contingencies " a great many abuses might creep in. These abuses have crept in.

The Ministry are to blame for it, but Parliament is also to blame, because we did not insist - as we should have done - upon sending that Supply Bill back, and getting the full information to which we were entitled. The attitude of the Prime Minister himself, and of the Minister for Home Affairs, when a somewhat similar line of action was taken in New South Wales, has already been made clear. On the occasion in question, I think both stated that they reprobated the course of conduct which the Reid Ministry had pursued. I think that the Ministry are to blame for having paid these allowances. At the same time I wish the Government to understand that I am not so much opposed to the payment of the Allowances as I am to the manner in which those payments were made. Had the Government approached the House and said that the salaries paid to these officers were insufficient, . probably honorable members would have been willing to grant any reasonable allowance which might have been asked for. However, there has been an intimation to the Ministry that we do not seek to press this motion to a division, and therefore, having protested against their action, and received the assurance of the Prime Minister that it will not be repeated, I shall not take

>up the time of the House any longer.

Mr.FULLER (Illawarra), in reply. - I shall not detain the House long in replying to the arguments put forward on this motion. It appears to me from the speeches made by honorable members on the other side of : the House, and also from the admission and climb-down by the Prime Minister, that I. have been amply justified in the interests of Australia in bringing this matter forward. The Prime Minister stood up - as has been stated - in the most savage fashion and talked about this side of the House not having the courage to bring the matter forward as a motion of censure. I wish to say that I submitted the motion upon my own responsibility. Whilst coming over from Sydney I saw the article in the Age, and determined to ask the Prime Minister ; a series of questions in connexion with the statements contained therein. So far as this : side of the House is concerned there was nothing of a party character connected "with, the motion for adjournment which I submitted this afternoon. But I had a very much higher motive than a party one. I am a young Australian who is proud of his country. I have been looking forward during the past twenty years to the establishment of a federal government to control the destinies of my native land, and I am anxious and earnest that in the carrying on of that government its administration shall be as pure as we can possibly make it. It was because I thought that in making these allowances behind the backs of the representatives of the people, the administration was not being carried out in the pure way in which I thought it should be, that I took upon myself the responsibility of moving this motion. I am pleased indeed to find that the Prime Minister recognises the mistakes which he has made. I accept the assurance of the right honorable gentleman who controls the Treasury, as absolutely accurate. I believe that he has told us the absolute truth of the matter. Still, it is a remarkable thing that when these matters were brought forward previously this information was withheld from us. I feel that I have done a public duty in submitting this motion. The statements made from all sides of the House fully confirm me in the course of action which I have taken, and if it only results in putting an end to this system of allowances in all branches of the Commonwealth service I shall feel deeply gratified.

Question resolved in the negative.

EXCISE ON BEER BILL

Consideration of the report upon His Excellency the Governor-General's message.

Report agreed to.

CUSTOMS BILL

Third Reading

Motion (by Mr. Kingston) proposed -

That this Bill be now read a third time.

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Mr CONROY

- When I was speaking upon this Bill, I drew attention to some very stringent clauses which it contains. I pointed out that there are provisions for the imposition of penalties which are out of all proportion to some of the offences that may be committed. I pointed out that any attempt to evade the Customs Act - even though a man may have acted in the most innocent manner - will render him liable to a penalty of £100; and that under clause 242 there can be no mitigation of that penalty, even if the court thinks that a lesser penalty should be imposed. I did not know of any case then. But in the train yesterday morning it was my lot to have a very sad illustration indeed of the stringency of these very clauses. An honorable senator from Queensland was a passenger by the same train. He alighted at Albury, and upon the platform a Customhouse officer met him, and asked what he had in a small box which he was carrying. He innocently replied, "Some ginger." Although he is a member of the other branch of the Legislature, the Customhouse officer demanded 3d. per pound upon the ginger, or 2s. 6d. for the box of 10 lbs.

Mr Chapman

- Was the ginger for the use of the Opposition ?

Mr CONROY

- No. Perhaps if it were distributed amongst the Ministerial party it might give them courage to vote according to their own opinions. The senator left the box on the platform, and refused to have anything more to do with it, and if it had not been for the care of one or two friends it might be there still. I have looked through the proceedings of -the Senate, but I find that the matter has not been mentioned there.

Mr Piesse

- Then why need the honorable member refer to it 1

Mr CONROY

- I mention it because if the Minister prosecutes under clause 242, the minimum penalty will be £0, although there was no attempt at concealment. I ask the right honorable gentleman if that clause might not be omitted altogether. With regard to clause 49, it has been pointed out that if its provisions were extended to prohibit the landing of any enemy, there would be no need for a Defence Bill.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a third time.

DEFENCE BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed (from 31st July, vide page 3329) on motion by Sir John Forrest -

That this Bill be now read a second time.

<page>3416</page>

Mr SALMON

- Although the measure has been described as one of paramount importance, it has been so exhaustively discussed that I think it might be wise for me to refrain from any lengthy remarks, and to defer, until we reach the committee stage, the suggestion of any alterations which I desire. There are, however, one or two points to which I feel that I must direct attention at this juncture, in order that my position with regard to the vital principles of the Bill may be thoroughly understood. I agree with those who have stated that the creation of an effective system of defence does not depend entirely upon the enlisting and training of a sufficient number of men ; we must provide them with the means for resisting the invasion of an enemy; they must have arms and ammunition and means of transport. But the Bill makes no provision for anything but the raising, training, and discipline of men. I should like to have an indication from the Government that it is their intention to take into consideration the question of providing arms, and ammunition at an early date. In the Bill the active forces are divided into permanent men, partially-paid men, and volunteers. It will be necessary that the permanent men shall have every opportunity to perfect themselves, not only in one, but in every arm of the service. I should not like to see them continuously employed in one fort or in a series of forts ; they should be transferred from place to place in the Commonwealth, so that they may become thoroughly conversant with the fortifications in those places, and the different arms used there - which, unfortunately, are very diverse in character and pattern. I am not in favour of a large permanent force. I think that the permanent force should be as small as possible, consistent with efficiency. But to do without a permanent force would be impossible. It is necessary to have men who will give up the whole of their time to making themselves efficient in the use of the various weapons in our forts, and after making themselves efficient, they should have an opportunity to return to their ordinary avocations, becoming a sort of reserve force ; and, if necessary, being paid a retaining fee, and being required to attend a certain number of drills every year, in order to keep themselves up-to-date. Such a force would be a very valuable skeleton for the whole army, and its members would be useful either in active service, or, if their physical condition prevented them from going into the field, they could take up the work of instruction. It must be remembered that in modern times the use of mechanical appliances has rendered the employment of large numbers of men unnecessary. With the old kind of guns - and this applies especially to the working of the armaments of a fort - a very large number of men were required. ; but various contrivances have been invented which allow a great diminution in the number of men required, and that is a strong argument for making our permanent force a very small one. We should, however, bear in mind that these large pieces of ordnance are very valuable, and that many thousands of pounds worth of machinery might be destroyed through ignorance, or possibly by design, if proper control were wanting. But while we must have a body of highly-trained men for the defence of our shores, I should not like them to give the whole of their lives to the work ; and therefore I am in favour of what is known as the short service system. Then I am strongly in favour of having, apart from the permanent men, an entirely volunteer force; but until the community as a whole consider that the duty of fitting themselves to defend their country devolves upon them personally, it will be necessary to offer some incentives to induce men to enter the forces. I recognise that it is difficult in large centres of population to get men to give up time for military training which they can use in more congenial pursuits. The objection I have to a partially paid force is that an invidious distinction is often made between

volunteers and partially paid men. During my experience in camp I have known friction to not infrequently occur because of the system adopted in Victoria. The system is too subversive of the principles of democracy. In my opinion it is not enough to say that it is the duty of every man to defend his country. I go further, and I say that long before the necessity arises he should fit himself to take his part in the national defence, in an intelligent and effective fashion. (House counted.) No one will accuse me of want of loyalty because I am opposed to the excessive exhibition of the military spirit, but the third objection I have to the system is that it tends to create militarism. I am a member of the defence force of Victoria, and while I am a noncombatant, I value my position very highly, although I do not look forward with any degree of pleasure to the possibility of being called upon to exercise my profession in time of war. I am, however, endeavouring to fit myself for the proper exercise of it then, because I believe that it is the inherent duty of every member of the community to do his best for the defence of his country. I have a horror of war, and I feel that there can be no greater menace to the well-being of a country than the establishment of the military spirit among its people. The greatest despotisms that the world has known have been military despotisms, and the greatest menace to the well-being of a community is the growth of the spirit of militarism, which in the past has allowed peoples to be overawed and their liberties to be subverted, and which may be abused again in the future for the same purpose. Under these circumstances I feel sure that honorable members will agree that no other, course would be open to me than to oppose any step that might be taken in this direction, when I recognise even the partial payment of the militia as such a step. There is, however, one important argument in favour of such a -course, which I feel at this juncture outweighs the three objections I have stated, and that is that the great majority of the people do not realize what their duty is in the matter of defence, and until it becomes not a matter of sentiment, but a matter of duty, it is well that those who fail in their duty should be called upon to contribute something in coin, if they do not contribute in work, towards our defence system - in other words, those who do not fit themselves to defend the country should contribute something towards the equipment and maintenance of those who do. This will be a powerful lever in the future in moving the public to a sense of their duty in this regard. The volunteer system is, in my opinion, preferable to all others. I was astonished to hear one of our Victorian members say that the Victorian volunteer system has been a failure. I assure that honorable member that he is absolutely wrong, and that the volunteer system has been a perfect and complete success. The best men who went from this State to South Africa were volunteers who received their training in the mounted rifles and the Victorian rangers.

Sir Malcolm Mceacharn

- And from the Scottish regiment - do not forget them.

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Mr SALMON

- I must say that as an Australian native I deplored the establishment of a Scottish regiment in Victoria. I was under the impression that we ought to do away with distinctions existing in the old country, and that we should here have only Australian regiments. However, if the* members of the Scottish regiment have done- good service I am glad to hear of it, but no doubt they were drawn from the mounted rifles and the rangers. We have had the happiest results from our volunteer system, and there is no lack of enthusiasm in the young men of Victoria in joining such corps. It has been a matter of wonder to me how the Government in the past has missed opportunity after opportunity of having a perfect system of volunteer defence in Victoria. Last year, when the war scare was on, application after application came in from various parts of the State asking that detachments and companies of the volunteer regiments and the mounted rifles should be formed. Hundreds of men sent in their names, but the Government felt that they could not undertake the expense, not of equipping these men, but of drilling them. It was found impossible to provide them with even drill instructors, and, except in one part of the State, the opportunity was allowed to pass. It will not be necessary in future to have highly-trained soldiers to do the work of defence here. What we require principally are mobility and straight shooting. Our men must be able to judge their distance and to hit their marks, and if in addition to that they are able to move about from place to place rapidly, they will prove far more effective soldiers than men who are trained in the barrack yard. We have one arm of the service which is capable of great expansion, and which might' be made the most powerful - I refer to the rifle clubs. In Victoria, at the commencement of last year, we had 1,500 men belonging to these rifle clubs, but before the close of the year the membership had increased to 20,000,

and these men were to be found 'practising regularly at the ranges and fitting themselves to carry out the work that we have seen so well performed by our own men in South Africa.

Mr A McLEAN

- I think there were about . 2,500 men in the rifle clubs at the beginning of last year.

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Mr SALMON

- I had a good deal to do with this matter, and I feel certain that the number did not exceed 2,000 ; I am under the impression that it was 1,500 or 1,600. There must be certain facilities given to the men who are engaged in rifle shooting in connexion with these clubs. When we have a permanent force, or partially paid forces, we cannot expect a large proportion of our men to come forward for defence purposes without some incentive.

So long as the volunteer system is not uniform, it is only fair and just that the State should recognise its duty to the members of the rifle clubs. There is one improvement which I think might be made in their work. I am not in favour of giving them the extended drills that are now suggested, or of putting them into uniform, because I think their only uniform should be the bandolier, together with their rifle. I think that these men should be put into camp at least once a year, and that they should be, if possible, accustomed to horseback. The movements for mounted infantry are extremely simple, and can be learned by any intelligent man in a few hours. . A man can soon learn what certain movements of the hands mean, and also what certain sounds of the whistle indicate. These are called the Boer movements, and when Major-General Hutton, then in charge of the New South Wales forces, drilled a body of mounted rifles at Langwarrin some years ago, the manoeuvres were followed with interest by all those in the camp. It was marvellous how rapidly the men who had been used to company drill, fell into the work, and proved themselves very apt pupils indeed, calling from the general his very highest commendation. We have, however, had something even better than that. We have seen what has been practically experienced in South Africa. It was not the closely massed battalions of the British Empire, but the extended columns of the mounted infantry which successfully combated the Boers, and if we are called upon to fight we shall probably be required to do so under almost exactly the same conditions as the residents in the Transvaal. We shall be mainly on the defensive, . and not compelled to act as the British were, on the offensive. We shall be on our own soil, and shall know the lay of the country and all the natural difficulties we shall have to contend with, and all we shall require in addition to our natural advantages will be the mobility I have already indicated and a proper tuition in rifle shooting. I am strongly in favour of the cadet movement. I believe that putting aside altogether the advantage from a military point of view, the physical and also the moral training these lads will receive under a proper cadet system will be of inestimable value to them and great gain to the State. I should, however, be very sorry to see the work limited, or placed under the control of the Education department. I have had experience of the difficulties of dealing -with the ordinary education of the young, and if this physical training is to be complete and effective it must be taken over by those who are responsible for the defence of the Commonwealth. With regard to the administration, I indicated on a previous occasion my firm belief in the necessity for a civil, as well as a military, administration, and I am glad to see that the Government, in preparing this Bill, have provided for a modicum of civil control. I would like to see the civil control even more stringent than is proposed, although I am not in favour of giving too much power to the Minister. I am so well aware of the wanton extravagance that is shown by those of purely military training that I would be very loth indeed to hand over the administration of such a department as this to the military authorities. With regard to promotions, it is a pity that it appears only possible that these should proceed along the lines of seniority. It would be far preferable if promotions could be by merit, and the only way we could possibly attain that end would be by instituting a series of examinations. It would be expensive, no doubt, but it would establish a very much better feeling throughout the various branches of the service, and would also give us the guarantee that we desire - that men who enter the ranks should have opportunities to rise to the highest positions in the service. I trust that means will be devised whereby, under regulations, an attempt will be made to give merit and attention to the,, demands which will be made upon our citizen soldiers some, consideration in the way of promotion. The question of service outside the Commonwealth is one that should be seriously examined, but I am strongly of opinion that we should have no provision in the Bill that any men belonging to any branch of our defence force should be sent beyond the confines of our Commonwealth without

their consent. We need have no fear of any disinclination on the part of members of the defence forces who may be called upon, for reasons of empire, to go beyond the Commonwealth. They have done it in the past, and they will do it again, and they will always take their places side by side with others in order to preserve the integrity of the Empire. I admit that it may be found necessary to go beyond the confines of the Commonwealth to protect the Commonwealth, and under such circumstances there must be power given to the Government of the day, but it will be too much to allow the word " emergency " to be construed just as any Minister might like. There is just one other point about which I feel very strongly, and that is the expense connected with the positions of officers connected with the defence forces. When the mounted rifles were formed, the officer who first established that regiment and who still holds command, laid down two principles. The first principle was that no man should be an officer who had not been through the ranks, and the second was that there should be no expense attached to the position of officer. The first principle has I believe been almost invariably acted upon, but the second has, I regret to say, been seriously departed from. The expense which an officer in the mounted rifles has to incur, in order to provide himself with the uniform considered necessary, is far beyond what it ought to be. The amount of gold lace does not appear excessive, or does not reach anything like the quantity used in other branches of the service, but it is far too much in very many cases for the position of those who would otherwise take up the work of commanding companies.

Mr Winter Cooke

- Does the honorable and learned member know what the cost is ?

Mr SALMON

- To fit an officer out in the mounted rifles costs about £70, which includes mess dress, changes, and so on. I have never been in a position myself to get a complete kit up to the present time, but have been compelled to go along in quite an ordinary way.

Mr Manifold

- I thought there was no mess dress in the mounted rifles.

Mr SALMON

- The honorable member is in error.

Mr Crouch

- And there is a good deal of lace on the mess dress.

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Mr SALMON

- There is a great deal more lace than there ought to be; in fact I do not think it necessary that there should be a mess dress at all. There is a summer uniform, a winter uniform, full dress, mess dress, and review order, and all this runs into a considerable sum of money. I believe it would be better to do away with this outlay altogether. In no arm of the service do we need to consider anything but the health and comfort of the men. They require, perhaps, a serviceable summer dress, and a serviceable winter dress, with good boots ; but beyond that we should not carry out any decoration at all. I remember that a little while ago it was contemplated to put the 3rd Battalion into red tunics, for the purpose, as it was said, of attracting men to the ranks. But I believe we have got beyond that point. I believe that sentiment is dying out, and that our plain duty is becoming evident to all those who are members of the Commonwealth. All adult males I feel sure are beginning to realize that there is cast on them a duty either of serving themselves or of contributing towards the maintenance of those who do serve in the military forces. Under these circumstances there will not be the necessity for attracting men by the gaudy glitter which seems to have obtained in the past. There are only two other points to which I desire to refer with regard to fitting our men to do their part. We know that our men have courage, bravery, and stamina, and we are providing in this Bill that they shall have the training and drill which is to make them effective. But we must also provide them with arms, and I would like the Government to take up the question of arming our men with weapons made within the Commonwealth. These weapons could be manufactured here, either in the Government workshops or under bonuses given by the Government to private enterprise. I know it is impossible to get arms manufactured here, at the same price that they could be manufactured for in England ; but we must be prepared to make some sacrifices in this direction, in order that we may be self supplying, and not dependent on the old land or any European nation for arms and ammunition in times of stress or trouble. The question of ammunition is one to which I have given some consideration. The

question was under the consideration of the New South Wales Government quite recently, and the Government of which I was a member in Victoria also took the matter up, and went into it very carefully in Cabinet. Estimates were prepared, and the whole matter was fully discussed. We had the assistance of an officer in Victoria, who is second to none in any part of the British Empire as an authority on explosives. Mr. Hake has been employed for some time by the Victorian Government, and is an authority whose word is taken in the old country as that of one of the very best men in his line ever turned out by Great Britain. I have had frequent opportunity of discussing this most important matter with him. Conferences were held between Mr. Hake and various members of the Cabinet of which I was a member, and the whole matter might have been settled, I might tell honorable members, had it not been for one important consideration. This all happened towards the latter part of last year, and the consummation of federation was then so near that it was unanimously felt by the Government that it would not be well for the State of Victoria to enter into obligations which would bind the Commonwealth. It was felt that this was a matter which should be left to the Federal Government to deal with. I feel so strongly on the matter that I have made up my mind to move in the direction of having a committee appointed for the purpose of going into the whole question of the supply of arms and ammunition to our defence force. No better work could be undertaken by this House, or by a select committee of this House, than that of devising means whereby we can arm our men ourselves. I recognise that in the exigencies of administration, there is an enormous amount of work connected with the inauguration of our Federal Parliament, and that this prevents Ministers from giving their attention to the question of supplying arms and ammunition which its importance demands, and which also its urgency demands. It will not be surprising to some honorable members to know that applications were made to the old country a few months ago for arms and ammunition, and that those applications were absolutely refused, the old country not being in a position to give us what we required, although we were prepared to pay a price above contract price.

Mr Page

- That is a good argument for establishing our own factory.

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Mr SALMON

- How much more would be the certainty that the old country would not be able to assist us in this particular direction should we be in danger of attack. When the rifle club movement started in Victoria we had over 4,000,000 rounds of Martini-Henry ammunition. Demands came in so rapidly from every part of the State that this supply, which was our reserve for emergencies in defence purposes, was becoming rapidly exhausted, and we made the application I have already referred to, with the result that we were told that for the present, at any rate, the old country could not supply our demands. There was a book published last year by, I suppose, the greatest authority on these matters, namely, Captain Mahan, and he points out the desirability of the Mediterranean fleet being kept and maintained there, and that bases should be established in the outer parts of the Empire.

Mr Crouch

- What is the title of the book ?

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Mr SALMON

- The title of the book is "The Problem of Asia," and the whole volume really has a very powerful bearing on the future of Australia. It brings home to us in the most direct fashion the undoubted danger we are in. The contiguity of those Eastern nations places us in a position of the very greatest danger, and even the recent crisis in China was due, as I have reason to know, from a very large number of men who have given time and attention to the question, to a great deal of unrest and dissatisfaction, it being felt that we were at the time in a position of peculiar danger in regard to possible eventualities. At page 82 of his book Captain Mahan says -

The truer solution for a State already holding Malta and Gibraltar would seem to be to grasp Egypt firmly, to consolidate local tenure there, and to establish in India or Australia and the Cape sources of necessary supply - whether manufactures or depôts - in ammunition and stores, against the chance of temporary interruption on the side of England.

We recognise, I feel sure, that this temporary interruption is bound to occur in the case of any great

international war. We feel that Captain Mahan's recommendation to England is really a recommendation to us. We have taken on ourselves the defence of these shores. This Bill provides "the men, and it is our duty to go further and provide the arms and ammunition. That this can be done I have not the slightest doubt. We know that the manufacture of ammunition has progressed enormously during the last ten years, and that the old black powder has gone out of use - so much so that we will not be able to procure it very shortly, the cost of production being so great. Freight, insurance, and other charges operate strongly against our being able to procure this black powder except at a very high cost.

Under these circumstances we must turn away from the old obsolete material, which, though it has done good service in the past, has been proved recently to be comparatively harmless. We must turn to higher forms of explosives which are now manufactured, and which present points of difference and improvement well worthy of our consideration. I have carefully gone into the matter of the preparation of these explosives, and I find there is one which is far and away superior to any other in use in any part of the world. I refer to cordite - a material which exactly "fills the bill." There are a good many explosives which are just as effective as cordite, but they are uncertain in their action, and insecure in their constituents. They do not stand the climatic tests that cordite has been subjected to and 'has been found to withstand admirably. These other explosives are a source of danger to those who handle them, as well as to those against whom they may be directed. Under the circumstances I think that honorable members »who have given this question any consideration will agree that cordite is the explosive which should be adopted. It is a nitro-glycerine compound, used in the form of long strings or ropes. It may be burnt in the open air with impunity, because it is only when it is confined that the ballistic properties, as they are called, evidence themselves. In order to manufacture cordite certain machinery is required, with, of course, a number of carefully trained workmen. This is expensive, the machinery which is necessary in order to fit a factory costing something over £100,000. But- fortunately we have in Victoria a factory which is already manufacturing these nitro-glycerine compounds, and which for a very small sum, comparatively speaking - some £14,000 or £20,000 - could be fitted up to produce all the cordite necessary for us. This matter, as I have already said, has been very carefully gone into, and I do not wish to weary honorable members by prolonging the debate: I would like to indicate, however, that the possibility of manufacturing our own" ammunition and arms is not beyond the power of this Parliament. We will find that it is not such an expensive affair, and that just as effective a supply could be obtained within our own borders as we could get from any other part of the world. Although I frankly admit that the establishment of a factory might be an expensive affair, we must remember that, although all the wants of the Commonwealth might be supplied in a month Or six weeks, the Commonwealth need not be our only source of demand. We could supply the Imperial Government. Why should the Imperial Government not take cordite from us and send it to India, where it cannot be manufactured on account of the climatic conditions ? Why should we not send to India, to the East, and to the various naval stations dotted all along the coasts this ammunition which we can manufacture here with exactly the same properties as it possesses when manufactured in the old country.

Mr. Barton. - How much would the extra plant cost ?

Mr SALMON

-From £16,000 to £20,000. There is £60,000 worth of plant there at present, they say.

Sir William Lyne

- I think that the honorable member is very much underestimating the cost. It would cost nearer £200,000.

Mr SALMON

- The representative of Nobel's Company, whom I saw, said it would cost £14,000 or £15,000 to manufacture the rifle cordite, and that in regard to the ordnance, larger machinery is wanted, and a testing range which would cost £5,000. The factory which we have at the present time can manufacture the rifle cordite. Honorable members will understand that cordite is manufactured in strings of varying thicknesses, which are regulated by the gun in which it is to be used. The whole process of manufacture is performed by powerful machinery. The cordite is drawn through gauges which limit its size. For ordnance it will be necessary to have different machinery, in order that the paste may be made of the requisite diameter. I have already said that the Imperial Government might come to our assistance. But there is another aspect of this matter. At the present time we pay to the Imperial authorities a certain annual contribution. Why should we not pay that contribution in cordite, in ammunition, and by repairing

the arms which the various cruisers in the squadron carry 1 Why should we not replace those weapons which are already stored in the arsenals in the Pacific and Indian oceans. There is no reason at all why we should not do this. We have on every strong argument in favour of undertaking this . work which I am sure the

Imperial Government will not be slow to recognise.

Mr Winter Cooke

- Does the Imperial Government use cordite altogether ?

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Mr SALMON

- Yes ; they have cordite on their cruisers, but they also carry black powder. The latter is used for saluting purposes at the present time. I have here a list of the relative distances of the various naval stations from Melbourne and London. "In regard to Bombay, Melbourne has an advantage over London of 530 miles. The advantage as regards Madras is 1,930 miles, Trincomalee 2,000 miles, Singapore 4,345 miles, Hong Kong 4,475 miles, Shanghai 4,045 miles, Durban 968 miles, and Yokohama 5,628 miles. This mileage would operate very seriously in case of great national complications. Under these circumstances I feel that this question is worthy of the attention of the Commonwealth Government. I have already indicated that it is possible I shall take further action in this matter, and I do not desire, therefore, to detain honorable members. But I feel in regard to this question of defence that as each individual of the community realizes that sentiment to a large extent must be obliterated, and a sense of duty take its place, so we shall find the cost of defending the Commonwealth decrease. It is my desire to see it reach the vanishing point. We should not have an expensive force here. In dealing with the appointment of officers, I trust that the Minister will recognise, especially in connexion with those who are to occupy the higher positions of command, that it is not necessary to have a large number of highly salaried men filling positions in the defence force of this country. I see that provision is made whereby officers may be transferred from time to time. But that is rather a delusive hope. Our past experience has shown that whenever an officer is appointed to a good position he will hold it as long as he possibly can. He resents any attempt to dispossess him in favour of any one else. Although we find that these military officers are united enough when making a demand upon Parliament, there is amongst them an amount of jealousy which is simply appalling. There are men who in private life we regard as decent, good-natured fellows, but who, when a question of precedence, or seniority, or promotion crops up, we find to be the most virulent detractors of other men's merits that we can possibly imagine. The simpler, therefore, we make the appointments the less friction will be engendered. I hope that Australian officers, more especially those who have proved their fitness in the field, will receive every consideration from the Government. I believe that they will. ' I hope that those who have done well in the past will be stimulated to' greater deeds in the future. I hope, above all, that the advertising officer will be promptly squelched. There are too many of them. There are men in the service who have done magnificent work in South Africa, who have performed deeds of heroism there, of which we have never heard, and who are now being shut out in the cold.

Mr Higgins

- There is heroism everywhere.

Mr SALMON

- These men showed great heroism. They proved not only their bravery and courage, but their resource and power of initiative. Yet they have never been mentioned in despatches. Of course we know that decoration, like kissing, goes very much by favour, and unless a man is under the eye of his commanding officer, he has a very poor chance of recognition. I have been staggered at the decorations conferred upon men who have been spoken of by those on whom I could rely in the most disparaging terms. I regret that there has not been more discrimination shown in what has been done. There have been men decorated who have never seen an engagement.

Sir Malcolm MCEACHARN

- This is the military jealousy of which the honorable member is speaking. .

Mr SALMON

- No, because jealousy rarely exists between a private and an officer. What I am speaking of is between officer and officer, and it exists to a very large extent, unfortunately. The evidence which I have had

submitted to me in regard to some of these decorations is unimpeachable. It is the evidence of men who are not interested themselves, and who therefore cannot be charged with jealousy. They have spoken out of the fulness of their hearts in favour of some other man who has" not been recognised. They have mentioned as a reason why he should have been recognised some, deed . or deeds which he has performed, and they have pointed out how others who have done nothing have been lauded up to the skies. This sort of thins will obtain so long as human nature is what it is. But I trust that under the defence system which we are inaugurating merit will always be recognised.

Mr Winter Cooke

- Get rid of human nature.

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Mr SALMON

- I think that if we always recognise merit we shall better human nature and make it something higher than it is to-day. We should get rid of .all those influences which in the past have operated so fatally in the defence systems of the various States. Social influence has been referred to. I have seen that influence operating very strongly upon certain occasions. I have seen it operating very unfairly towards certain individuals and in favour of others. But there is another influence which will have to be guarded against - I refer to the press influence. There are men who seem to be able to get the ear of the press, and to have magnified in the press an)' work which they may perform. Under these circumstances, I hope to see a very much better system inaugurated in the Commonwealth. I feel that I have detained honorable members longer than I should have done. I recognise that the debate has been a very protracted one. To some, doubtless, it has been wearisome, but to those who desire to see the Commonwealth effectively defended, I feel sure that it has conveyed some lessons at least. I hope that the result will be that we shall have here a system of defence sufficient for all our needs for a century to come, and that should we unhappily be called upon to show the product of the legislation we are now enacting, it will be found able to stand every strain put upon it.

Mr. RONALD(Southern Melbourne).The Bill seems to me an admirable effort towards a compromise between militarism and what is the proper policy for Australian defence - the establishment of a citizen soldiery. Although the measure has many defects, these will, no doubt, be remedied in committee. There are one or two directions in which I think it might be materially improved, arid which I would point out to honorable members. In the first place, the Bill makes no provision for that healthy emulation and rivalry which in the ancient and modern world has done so much for the development of military prowess. In Australia, as perhaps in no other country in the world, the game of cricket has been brought almost to the point of, perfection by the healthy rivalry existing between the various States, and I feel that if the Government made provision for the holding of an annual pan-Australian military tournament, it would do a great deal to develop the military prowess of our people. The experience of the present day is that military weapons very soon become obsolete and antiquated, and even though we may manufacture our own ammunition and arms, we cannot hope to keep pace with the novelties and inventions that will be introduced. But there is one thing that never becomes obsolete, and that is healthy, well trained young men. The genius of a force to adapt itself to the use of new weapons and conditions of warfare will never become useless, and we can best create that faculty by offering prizes, rewards, and honours to those who excel in military pursuits. Something of this kind has been done in the old country. At Wimbledon formerly, and at Bisley now, a high standard of proficiency in rifle shooting is kept up, and by offering rewards for proficiency in shooting and other military exercises we may create a healthy rivalry, such as that which exists in the pastime of cricket. (House counted.) Wo might also have an opportunity to compete with other parts of the Empire, and I believe "that it has already been hinted that the time is not far distant when we may hope to see a pan-British gathering of the kind to which I refer. I am quite sure that at any such gathering our young men will take a very honorable position. We can begin by training our boys in military exercises by establishing cadet corps in connexion with all the State schools and other schools. AVe should endeavour to cultivate those abilities in the art of war which can best be transferred to and used in industrial arts, and the peaceful pursuits to which we hope Australians will devote their chief attention and their greatest energies. I should" be very glad to believe that the day is near when we may " beat our swords into ploughshares and our spears into pruning hooks" ; but as the attitude of the nations to each other at the present time is one of armed neutrality, such a proposal would

be Utopian and impracticable. That being so, it is best to employ a sword which is easily convertible into a ploughshare, and a spear that will make a good pruning hook. This can be done by developing the physique of our young men by military training, and applying it to the work of our industrial army. We should never have in our community a class "that toil not neither do they spin," and it is one of the great advantages of military exercises that they develop physique which can be put to better purpose than merely military pursuits. We must also have regard to the changes that are constantly taking place in the art of warfare. Just as in the industrial world the men who have invented improved methods of production have been encouraged, so we should encourage men in the improvement of our military resources. In a ship-building firm at home with which I was acquainted, awards were given to men who invented improvements in connexion with the art of shipbuilding, and in this way a great many useful patents were brought into existence. If we recognised similar merit in the invention of improvements in the art of warfare, we should increase the intelligence and energy of our young men, and do something towards leading the way in that art. Another important point is that we should give a great deal of attention to the question of fortification. With our extensive seaboard we should make provision for adequate fortifications, and provide them with disappearing guns, smokeless powder, effective earthworks, and everything that may be necessary to prevent the invasion of a foreign foe.

Mr. Crouch. Where would the honorable member put these fortifications ?

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Mr RONALD

- At important strategic points. I know that it may be argued that in the event of an enemy capturing our fortifications they could be used against us, but to prevent that we should make them secure and impregnable. No doubt in modern defensive warfare the artillery service is the arm which should have precedence, and in the administration of which the largest amount of skill is required. But, not only should we trust to the skill and training of our soldiers ; we should also lay the chemist's laboratory under tribute to supply us with the means of defence. Our artillery should be of the best and highest order, to be used purely for defensive purposes - not field artillery, but stationary well - defended armaments. Another important matter is the establishment of efficient army service and medical corps. In the present and in former wars, the greatest waste of life has been due to insufficient attention to the wounded and injured. We waste an enormous number of lives in time of war, because of our primitive methods of dealing with our sick and wounded. It was stated that the French army would have lost thousands - of men during the Franco-Prussian war, if a single shot had not been fired, simply through "the want of an efficient army service and medical corps, and proper arrangements for the health and comfort of the men. This is a matter to which we in Australia should give greater attention, and proper provision should be made for it in the Bill. The general principle which the Government appear to have kept in mind is, that the best way to prevent war is to be well armed. We are not to have a large permanent force, but there is to be large available reserves, which will give us an army, of about 50,000 men on a peace footing, and in time of war about 120,000 or 150,000 men, counting reserves. Such an army should be sufficient to make us feel secure, and enable us to go, on our way attending to our industrial wants, , developing the resources of the country, obtaining and preserving to ourselves the trade of the Pacific, and assisting the Empire, if not actively engaged in its expansion. The various matters to which I have referred are matters which can be very well dealt with in committee. Above all things I desire the Government to realize the importance of providing an effective army service and medical corps, and of providing for every contingency of warfare, so that, although war must always be a painful and awful necessity, we shall be able to carry it on with as little loss of human life as possible. In the various speeches which have been made, various models have been ' held up to us of the type of soldier which we should endeavour to create, and various methods have been suggested for producing that type. But if we want the model of an ideal soldier, he is to be found in the army of the Roman Republic and of the Roman Empire. The legions of Caesar and Pompeius were composed of purely citizen soldiers, whose generals were men of skill, and who were able to control their men because of their high moral integrity. There was no gold lace and braid about Cincinnatus when he was' called from the plough to take charge of the Roman army. In that army the physical abilities of the soldiers were brought as nearly to perfection as they have ever been brought within the history of the world. I wish next to say a word or two as to the comparative merits of militia and volunteer forces. The three branches of our proposed defence force consist of regulars, militia, and

volunteers. A good deal has been said in praise of the volunteer system, comparisons having been made favorable, to the volunteer as against the militia system, but I would like to point out that the volunteer system, unless carefully guarded, has' -certain dangers incidental to it which would become very grave menaces to any community. We know the tendency on the part of mankind, wherever we have gregarious humanity, to collect themselves into various cliques and sets, and it is quite possible that very power- ; ful and numerous volunteer regiments might be got together that no working man could join. Thus we should have the classes pitted against the masses in the community. This could not happen under a militia system. The partially-paid men would necessarily be drawn from the ranks of labour, and, consequently, the militia system offers a safer element for a defence force than the volunteer system which lends itself to class and caste' distinctions. I think there is some parity between the principle of the militia and the payment of members. The men who are able to stand the most hard work, who are capable of performing the longest forced marches, and who would be the best defenders of our hearths and homes, would not, owing to' their want of leisure and want of money, be able to enter a purely volunteer force, but, under a militia system, they would have every encouragement to come forward. I do not not oppose the volunteer system, but I think a militia force should be a very prominent and formidable part of the defences. A volunteer force might be the cheapest from an economical point of view, but in the main there is a kind of connexion in most people's minds between the cheap and nasty, and so the volunteer system might prove in the long run. If a thing is worth having it will be worth paying for. I am not in favour of entirely superseding or extinguishing all the volunteers, because our rifle clubs :will be voluntary, and their unadorned uniforms will rid them of that element of danger that 1 specially fear in connexion with ornamental crack volunteer regiments. The plain unadorned rifleman will be a volunteer, and will not offer any encouragement to that 'class element .which will creep into any ordinary volunteer system. I hope to see the militia the strongest and most important arm of our defence forces. Regular soldiers will, no doubt, be kept as a kind of standard and model which the other branches of "the force will approximately follow, and I hope that we shall have a large body of men drawing very near to their standard of excellence. 1 am very glad that there is no proposal in this Bill to herd men together in barracks. We know what the dangers of barrack life are in any community, and I am pleased that we are not to have that to any considerable extent here. I suppose honorable members know the danger of bringing men together in groups anywhere. Men will do things in mobs that they will npt do singly, and things which would be regarded as outrageous by the individual do not appear in the same light when men are acting together. The means to be devised for the mobilization of our forces is perhaps the most important matter to be considered in- connexion with our defences. It would surely lead to confusion worse confounded if our men were suddenly called out in a case of emergency, and the officers did not know where to find their men, whilst the men did not know .where to find their kits. We ought to have a recognised system of signals under which, at the first sound of the tocsin the men would betake themselves to the place where they could find their kits and their officers, and everything else that was requisite. This is one of the most essential things in connexion with any defence scheme, that is, to gather our men quickly together to enable them to meet the invading foe. Any one who has read the poetry of Sir Walter Scott will remember the " Fiery Cross," which was a primitive, but effectual, method of gathering the people together. On every hill the beacons blazed forth, and the men gathered together from all parts until they formed a solid force. Now, we have the telegraph and wireless telegraphy, and we should have a perfect system by which we could call our forces together quickly in the event of invasion. It is understood of course that our forces are purely defensive and that they would be mobilized for purely defensive purposes. If we make effective arrangements 'there will be no confusion, and we shall go a long way towards enabling our forces to repel any attempted invasion. It is right that we should remember that after all an invasion is- a very remote possibility so far- as Australia is concerned. It would be about the most difficult thing in the world for any nation in Europe to land an army of more than 15,000 or 20,000 troops in Australia. Then Australia is blessed with one of the most inhospitable shores in the world, and unless the enemy were well provided for before he came, he would not be able to exist here. No doubt we shall have a force sufficient to repel any foe of that sort ; but let us not live in a fool's paradise, and believe that this can be done haphazard. We must have our army well in hand. An army is an organ of units under the command of one man - a vast machine which can be set into operation to serve the purposes for which it is called into existence. When we are deliberating what, is the best kind of machine we are studying it at rest, and my desire is

that we may never see it at work. But, meanwhile, we have an opportunity of perfecting that machine, and one of the most important matters in that direction seems to be the devising of a proper scheme of mobilization. This will involve railway communication between the various centres that we may decide upon as rendezvous. Australia is fortunate in having no foreign element, among her neighbours. We are all of the one kith and kin. Perhaps one of the best models we could have in the formation of a new defence force would be the plan of Machiavelli, in Florence, during the middle ages. There the difficulty was that they had foreign neighbours all around, whom it was dangerous to arm, even though they were allies. We have no fear of that, and we have simply to decide upon the various centres and to bring them into proper communication with each other by rail or by water, whichever may seem to be best. To sum matters up, I would remind honorable members of the great importance of giving an impetus to our defence movement by offering prizes, in the form of honours that would be coveted by our -young Australians in connexion with the performance of feats of arms at military tournaments. In practising for these, and by engaging in the various arts attached to military drill and training, our young men would become fine specimens of humanity, which are never obsolete. We should pay attention to the formation of an army service -and medical corps, because many lives are lost for the want of adequate provision in this direction, and I hope that -some- amendment will be made to provide for this apparent defect in the Bill. So far as the main body of the defence force is concerned let us keep to the militia principle. The militia in the old country are certainly the least respectable of the various branches of the British army. But that bad odour does not cling to the militiamen in these colonies, and I want to see our militia playing a very prominent part, because I feel sure "that if we want a good defence we must pay for it. By paying the men we shall . counteract the effects of that want of tenacity of purpose for which our young men are so conspicuous. "Without payment they will start volunteering, and after two or three seasons' drill they will throw up the whole thing, but if the men are paid the position will be quite different. We should not pay our militiamen any extravagant rates, but we should give them sufficient remuneration for the time spent in drilling. If we take it for granted that people, will come forward to form our defence forces, we shall find that the whole movement will be confined to a few enthusiasts, who will work ardently for a few months, and then the whole movement will die out. If we have a militia force we may be perfectly sure that it will be drawn from those sections of the community which will furnish us with the best material, and there will be no fear of any class or caste distinctions which will be calculated to exclude the proper type of men from our fighting forces. Our militia will be composed of the men .who have formed the backbone of the English army in times gone by - men drawn from the peasantry, and from the horny - handed sons of toil, men who have toughness and endurance, men such .as those who went through the forced marches in the Crimea - the men who have really done the " Deeds that won the Empire." We want such men again, and if we have a purely volunteer system,- with the militia subordinate, I am afraid we shall not get the class we desire. These are the lines on which we should shape the Bill, which, I am perfectly sure, is quite capable of being moulded in that direction. I have no doubt it will come out of committee a much better Bill. This is really, an honest and faithful endeavour to give expression to the national policy of the country. It will give assurance to the citizens that we are perfectly safe against invasion, and will enable us to pursue -the national policy of developing the marvellous resources of Australia without interruption from a foreign foe.

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Mr CRUICKSHANK

- I should like to say a few words before the Bill passes its second reading, feeling as I do that it is one of those important measures for which probably federation was brought about. We always heard that the great necessity for federation was that we might have Inter-State free-trade and a uniform system of defence . for the shores of Australia. The Minister who has introduced the Bill has a great responsibility, and he ought to be proud of the position he holds. The measure has now been' discussed in this Chamber for something like a fortnight, and we have had honorable members speaking from all points of the compass. AVe have had those who are in favour of compulsory enlistment, and those who say there should be no compulsion whatever. We have had those who believe in paying for services rendered, and we have had those who thoroughly believe in a purely volunteer system. Still, it is admitted on all sides that the Minister has introduced a Bill which can be altered in committee to suit the wishes of everybody. It has been said by some who have spoken that this Bill contains nothing new. But I should think that a

Minister who undertook to put a lot of novel ideas into a Bill of this kind, ideas which are unknown in the military departments of the world, would undertake a grave responsibility. We are told that this Bill is drawn on the lines of the Swiss and Canadian system. I feel with the Minister that we are dealing with a measure which provides no return or source of income, but a measure which introduces taxation, and as to which our action will be closely observed. Whether we have a partially-paid force - whether we are under a militia or volunteers - I do not desire to see voted a sum of money that will exceed the present military vote. We must cut our cloth according to our measure. We must live within our means, and as far as possible I wish to see this Bill passed in such a shape that every Australian who wishes to be drilled and fitted to take part in the defence of his country when called upon, will be able to do so. I hope the Bill will be such that the Government will be enabled to afford every facility for our young growing men being so drilled as to form part of our army. Before I go into details connected (with this measure, I would like to say that probably I have my own feelings and my own ideas in regard to military matters. I feel that an Australian army is for defence purposes more than for the purpose of aggression. While I love my own country and would fight for her, I feel that other people respect their country as I respect my own. I appreciate the man in another country who fights to maintain his own flag, and I have no desire to become possessed of every man's land. I believe that whenever England's flag is in danger we will -run to the rescue. We will do that on principle, because we are proud to be Britishers and proud to live under the flag of England. At the same time I cannot but feel that we are forming an army for the defence of the Commonwealth, and that the danger to English interests outside the Commonwealth is a matter for consideration when the time arises. When that danger does arise I am quite sure the Australian will not be reluctant to volunteer where his services are required. My experience as a member of the State Parliament of New South Wales was that when the Government of the day asked for volunteers to serve in South Africa they were simply pestered with applications from young men. There were so many applications that, after the number who had gone into camp had been reduced to 1,250, the Government found themselves prepared to take only 500,' and those who had the power of choosing said that the men were so well drilled, so capable, and so fitted for service of any kind, that they did not know how in justice any of them could be thrown out to reduce the number to that which the Government were prepared to provide for. Therefore, I feel that within the shores of the Commonwealth we have material to take part in war at any time should the men ever be called on. What has struck me rather forcibly is that when" the Commonwealth measure was being discussed, there was a general feeling that New South Wales would be called on to pay a heavier ' proportion of taxation. And I must say that there are States which have joined the federation which have never contributed very largely in the way of military expenditure. Tasmania has come into the federation on an equal basis, while she has spent only £12,000 a year in this direction.

Mr Piesse

- £25,000 a year.

Mr CRUICKSHANK

- The sum of £12,000 was mentioned by the Minister of Defence as having been spent by Tasmania. It appears to me that Tasmania and South Australia, the latter of which contributes £21,000 a year, have lived very happily under the idea that any one who . goes to war with' any of the States goes to war with the whole of Australia, and that they can fully and safely rely on the military expenditure contributed by the taxpayers of the other States.

Mr Piesse

- How could the Australian army help Tasmania ?.

Mr CRUICKSHANK

- If an enemy touched Tasmania the whole of the Commonwealth would be involved in war.

Mr E SOLOMON

- How could the army get to Western Australia?

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Mr CRUICKSHANK

- All the States will be contributors through the ordinary revenue. We shall be taxpayers to the Treasury of the Commonwealth, and in that way we shall be contributors. Further, we have a proposal for a transcontinental railway to the West, which we are told is one of the principal objects of a system of '

military defence. I do not object to joining in the taxation, but I cannot help pointing out that I think the smaller States have got rather the best of the deal, because New South Wales and other States have been large contributors to the military expenditure. Like other speakers I should like to see every inducement offered to men to make soldiering their profession. We have in all classes of life particular divisions and interests. Those who take up soldiering, like men who take up the profession of the Bar, or men who take up politics or any other vocation, hope to attain the highest positions. After a man has served in the army for a time, unless provision is made, little is left for him unless it is the Government asylum, or whatever charitable organization the Government of the day choose to establish. We have, at the present time in all the States, 1,500 men in the permanent forces, and I should like to see that force not increased, but made efficient. I should like to see these who are appointed to the different branches of the military service throughout the States appointed through that permanent force as far as possible. I should like to see them enter that force from the ranks, after they had served in minor positions and passed the ordinary curriculum. Those who have shown ability and a desire to make the army their life's work should have open to them positions in our permanent force, and there should be a system of insurance or some provision made for them in their old age. And I hope that the training and drills will be such, either through expert military information from England or through advantages we shall have here as time progresses, that our permanent force will not only be a body that Australia can be proud of, but an army able to take its part in proportion to its numbers in any part of the world. One thing struck me last night when the honorable member for West Sydney was pointing out the advantages of the Swiss system. Considering that England has pretty well conquered the world, I would say that if Australia with an active force consisting of 29,000 men could not defend the Commonwealth against 50,000 of say the Swiss army I would no longer own them as Australians. My impression is that we have no particular need to go to Switzerland, Canada, or anywhere else for a model on which to form our army. With our own experience in war - with the experience we have from the generals who are sent out here from the British army to -organize our forces from time to time - I feel we are quite competent to pass a satisfactory measure with the assistance of honorable members who have had professional experience. I am glad to see here so many honorable members who have had such experience, which I am sure will be of use in assisting to pass this measure in a shape that will be useful and serviceable to Australia. I feel that there is not much need to go to other countries to "learn what sort of defences we ought to possess for our Commonwealth. We are told that in other countries the military expenditure is so much smaller than ours. I see that in Canada 36,000 men cost £500,000, or an average something like £14 per head. In Switzerland the payment is ls. 5d. per day. I do not know how many drills the men have to attend, but if they drilled daily the cost would amount to about £26 per man. Comparing all these countries where there is a citizen soldiery with our volunteer system, I find that there are no countries defended so very much cheaper than are the Australian States at the present time. I feel that if we offer any sort of liberal inducement to men to join our military forces we shall experience no difficulty in getting an army sufficiently strong for the defence of Australia. I have upon my list at the present time fifteen or twenty applications from people in my own electorate who wish to form either companies of Australian horse or of mounted rifles, or who desire the establishment of rifle clubs in different parts of the interior. I am quite sure that if all over Australia applications come in to the same extent we shall have an army the maintenance of which, even upon the volunteer system, will prove costly.

Mr F E McLEAN

- There are thousands willing to be enrolled now.

Mr A McLEAN

- In Victoria we wanted 700 men, and between 5,000 and 7,000 applied.

Mr CRUICKSHANK

- Exactly. For that reason I am disposed to lean as much as possible towards the volunteer system. I should like whatever money we vote in this House for defence purposes to be expended in supplying the necessary arms and accoutrements for the equipment of an effective force. At the same time I am not prepared to assist in voting large sums of money for military purposes. I believe that we shall be able to do a good deal with the funds at our disposal. The experience of Tasmania and South Australia, we are told, in regard to military matters, has been most successful.

Mr Piesse

- The men did not disgrace themselves in South Africa.

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Mr CRUICKSHANK

- But if the military forces in those States can live upon the small sums which have been put before this House, then New South Wales and Victoria must either be prepared to cut down their military votes or to do more with the funds at their disposal. I wish to get the greatest efficiency from the smallest possible expenditure. We shall have the military vote discussed from time to time, but no doubt in the initial stages of our history we shall need to proceed very guardedly. I cannot forget that the success of Great Britain has been owing chiefly to her navy. If Australia became involved in any great war the British navy would have to come to our assistance. I am, therefore, prepared to assist the Government in extending our naval service. I feel that more ought to be done in this direction. When I read in "Deeds that Won the Empire" of the great battles and victories which England has achieved by means of her navy, I feel that we are too prone to be carried away with a desire to have a land force exclusively. As a matter of fact, England owes her success principally to the navy. I should like to see the question of extending our navy considered by the Government. I know that when we subsidized the first of the ships which came out to these States we were very jealous lest they should be sent beyond Australian waters. But I would rather see ships of our own, which we could govern and keep within Australian waters. It is not pleasant to feel that the ships which defend these shores are entirely in the hands of the British Government, and that we are taxpayers, but have no voice in their management.

An Honorable Member. - But we have.

Mr CRUICKSHANK

- We have not in a way, because they are manned by English officers. I should prefer to see our own ships built here, and manned and officered by our own men.

Mr G B EDWARDS

- Can the honorable member show us where the millions are to come from ?

Mr CRUICKSHANK

- Of course I recognise that we shall have to live within our means. But I would rather own three or four ships than feel that I owned the decks of half-a-dozen.

Mr G B EDWARDS

- Even that would mean an expenditure of three or four millions.

Mr CRUICKSHANK

- We are living under the British flag, and I suppose we shall be defended by the British navy as far as possible should we ever be threatened with invasion. But, whilst we are making preparations for our landed forces, I should like the Government to give a little consideration to the question of establishing an Australian navy. We shall no doubt establish such a navy as time advances. I feel that we are not legislating sufficiently in that direction. At the same time we can only raise either in regard to a navy or to a land force such a force as can be provided for by reasonable taxation. I do not suppose for one moment that we are going to lose our heads with the small amount of funds at our disposal, and to spend large sums of money for military purposes. I am not in any way a State socialist, but I feel that the clothing and provisions necessary for our army should be made either in Government workshops or by the Government.

Mr Page

- That is State socialism.

Mr CRUICKSHANK

- I do not know that I am a State socialist, and I do not want the honorable member to think that I am. Although I am a protectionist, I would allow everything required for defence purposes to come through the Customhouse free. I favour the Government establishing stores and providing military supplies on the best and cheapest lines. If they can make their own supplies in their own workshops, by all means let them do it, but if they can import them with more advantage, by all means let them do it. So as to give those who join our army every opportunity for being drilled, I wish to see any expenditure that we undertake disbursed in such a way as to provide the greatest efficiency obtainable for the money. I would allow the Government to have their own workshops, or, if they could import cheaper, I would allow all articles required for the Defence department to come in free of duty.

Mr Henry Willis

- They come in free now.

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Mr CRUICKSHANK

- Not here, but they do in New South Wales. They will not, however, after we pass the Tariff. I should like to say a few* words concerning clause 15 of the Bill, which refers to tenure of appointments. That clause makes provision that no office shall be continuously held for more than five years, with a Government right to continue it for a further two years. Whilst that is the rule in the English army, I feel that it does not apply here. In the English army they have so many positions to offer to those who have retired. The system there works well, because it offers opportunities for rapid promotion.. Again, those who have served five years there go on to the half-pay list. If they take a holiday and go abroad, fresh appointments are found for them upon their return. If they have reached an age when they are not able to re-enlist they are provided with a pension. We have no provision of that character in this Bill. If we want them to enter our permanent forces, to give up their lives to soldiering, and to make it a profession, we must offer encouragement for them to do so. I do not believe that any man can reach the highest position in any walk of life unless he gives up his brains entirely to that particular work or service.

There is not one eminently successful man in the world who' is a jack-of-all-trades. The jack-of-all-trades becomes master of none. A man should be in a position to give the whole of his attention to military matters.

Mr Kirwan

- Does not the honorable member consider De "Wet a successful general?

Mr CRUICKSHANK

- He has lived in Africa all his life, and under a system of warfare such as that which is now being carried on in South Africa, the defenders always have a great advantage over those who are invading their country.

Mr Kirwan

- What about the generals in the American Civil War ? They were not professional soldiers.

Mr Watkins

- Yes, they were.

Mr Barton

- Many of them were educated at West Point.

Mr CRUICKSHANK

- Yes, and they had to meet men who had had opportunities only equal to their own. In my opinion a great deal of what we read about the exploits of generals and of great men in other walks of life is partial, and at the present day they would not be found better than other people.

Mr Page

- Australia is full, of would-be generals.

Mr CRUICKSHANK

- Yes ; but they will never become generals if we provide that every officer shall get promotion only on proving his merit upon examination. Without such a provision I do not think our army will be a great success. I wish to point out that no provision is made for the future of officers who are now in the permanent forces, and who 'have given up their life to soldiering. If they are compelled five years hence to retire in the prime of life, there will be nothing for them to do. Men in the English army can rejoin after six months, and serve another five years.

Mr Henry Willis

- Provision is made in the Bill for the retirement of officers.

Mr Barton

- Under clause 15 they are not absolutely retired from the service. They can hold their command only for a certain period, but afterwards they can be employed in any other command.

Mr Watkins

- That means retirement in the case of volunteers.

Mr Barton

- There is a difficulty with regard to militiamen.

Mr Henry Willis

- Annuities are provided for men who retire.

Mr CRUICKSHANK

- But not in the Bill, although the Minister for Defence said that he believed in gratuities and pensions. I believe in the old-age pension system, but I do not believe in the pension system provided in the Bill. The measure goes very far when it gives the Governor-General power to transfer officers from any part of one State to any part of another State. ' It is very difficult now to get officers for country corps. What are required are men who will take an interest in the work, and who are sufficiently men of means to have the time for it. In my experience, it is next to impossible to get people to accept captaincies in country companies. In many cases the officers are mere figure-heads, and in New South Wales Members' of Parliament have often, been appointed. I believe that the practice originated in the idea that it would be well to have in Parliament men who would support the military estimates.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- Nothing of the kind.

Mr CRUICKSHANK

-I have been appointed a captain on three occasions, although I have never belonged to any corps, and I have not held the position longer than it took me to refuse it by telegram. In the Senate we have several colonels and majors who were appointed probably for political purposes. These gentlemen are mere figure-heads. They are exempt from service in time of war, and the drill and management of their regiments is conducted largely by the adjutant and other officers.

Mr Barton

- That is a little unkind.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- They have all had to pass examinations.

Mr Watkins

- One of them passed more examinations in 24 hours than Lord Roberts has passed in all his life.

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Mr CRUICKSHANK

- I know one gentleman who was appointed captain on Saturday and who on Tuesday was a major. If he passed all the examinations he is said to have passed, they must have been very light. In my opinion, public men should not ' hold these positions, and we should not have 'figure-head captains. If we can get men who are prepared to give their time and attention to the management of companies in country districts, we should allow them to hold their positions as long as they are capable of serving ; but we shall never get suitable men if they ave to be at the beck and call of the military head, because men will not be prepared to break up their homes in order to carry on military duties in another district. Another clause of the Bill provides that if a man who has joined the service wishes to be released, he must pay £2 if he has served one year, and £1 if he has served two years ; but, in my opinion, if a man joins a volunteer corps, a militia corps, a mounted corps, or a rifle club, he should be allowed, if he moves from the district in which that corps or club is stationed into another district and settles there, to join the branch of the service in that district. Once a man has enlisted in the service he should be eligible to join his particular branch of it, and attend its drills, wherever he may happen 'to move to. My idea is that the volunteer service should be made as easy and pleasant as possible, and that every opportunity for training should be given to those who join it. Coming now to the question of leave of absence, I believe that the Bill provides that leave of absence is to be dealt with in a way similar to that in which it is dealt with under the Public Service Act. But I would' point out that our military officers are men whom it is desirable to allow to travel about to gain information and experience in connexion with military matters, and perhaps to see service elsewhere. Therefore, in my opinion, questions o,f leave should be entirely in the hands of the Governor-General of the day. To make a volunteer service attractive, I would offer those who attended drills, and passed examinations proving their efficiency, privileges such as exemptions from serving on juries.

Mr Henry Willis

- Why should the names of volunteers be left off jury lists 1

Mr CRUICKSHANK

- As' an encouragement to men to join the volunteer forces, and to make themselves efficient in military services. I think, too, that a man in the permanent forces is as competent to record a vote for Members of Parliament as the policeman or public servant. During election times the public service bring great pressure to bear upon candidates to secure their own interests, and the Government have advocated the giving of a vote to every one. That being so, I do not see why the soldiers should be disfranchised. I think that the right to vote should be given to every one in the permanent forces of the Commonwealth.

Mr Winter Cooke

- There is nothing against that in the Bill.

Mr CRUICKSHANK

- No; but under the laws of the States our military men at the present have no votes. I feel that the Government have a very great responsibility in this matter. I was very glad to hear the honorable member for Maranoa, speak as he did, and to find that we had an honorable member amongst us who had been, on active service in South Africa. I am perfectly in accord with the statement that was made by one honorable member, that we should do everything possible to prevent any class distinctions or interests being introduced into our military service. I have conceived a very great admiration for the cadet system, and I felt particularly pleased to see the extent to which it has been developed in Victoria. The cadets who paraded before the Duke of York during the recent review at Flemington comprised a lot of boys who, no doubt, have a great future before them, and I should like to see every encouragement offered to those who show any fitness for rising in our military service. The opportunities given to the poorest boy should be equal to those offered to any one. I hope we shall all be able to join in assisting the Government to pass through this Chamber a Defence Bill that will be a credit to the Commonwealth.

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Mr FOWLER

- In the midst of the chorus of universal condemnation with which this Bill has been received I have been trying to find something in the way of approval, if only for the sake of variation and a desire to show some little loyalty to the Minister of Defence, who is one of the small band of representatives from the far distant State of Western Australia. My efforts have not been attended with any great success; and although I cannot go as far as many other honorable members whose opinions I share on other political matters, I am obliged to confess that this Bill seems to me to be characterized, on the one hand by work which has evidently emanated from the representatives of a military caste, and on the other hand, by the work of politicians, who have too closely confined themselves to the unfortunate traditions of the various States in regard to defence matters in the past. We have a good deal of procrastination, and certainly a deplorable lack of that thoroughness which should have characterized a Bill of this kind. I wish to thank those honorable members who have been so thoughtful as to refer to the necessity for a railway to Western Australia in connexion with the defences. That is a matter upon which the people of Western Australia feel very keenly, and they will be glad to realize that honorable members are fully alive to the necessity of constructing defence lines, even though they have to traverse such a wide extent of country as lies between the eastern States, and Western Australia. I should probably not have troubled the House with any remarks on this question had it not been that I had observed a tendency on the part of some members to fail to realize fully the position of the Commonwealth in respect to matters of defence, so far as its association with the Empire in general is concerned. We have heard a good deal about Commonwealth defence, without any consideration having been given to the fact that we are part of a great Empire, and whatever may be the notions of honorable members with regard to the advantages or disadvantages of this connexion, I feel sure they have only one idea with respect to the immense benefits we enjoy in the matter of the naval defence of Australia, for which we rely on the mother country. We have heard from several honorable members very urgent reasons why we should adopt a more forward policy with regard to the naval defence of Australia, but I regret that I am totally unable to follow them. In the first place, it is utterly impossible for the Commonwealth to attempt a scheme of naval defence which would be at all effective against any serious invasion of our shores, and I am glad to be able to remind honorable members that it is totally unnecessary to attempt any such scheme, for the simple reason that so long as Great Britain has the immense naval strength she now possesses we have no need to fear any invasion on a comprehensive scale. If we are going to have only a toy navy, comprising one or two ships, costing £1,000,000 each, I would ask honorable members whether we

should get such advantages as would compensate us for the expenditure. The most we can expect in regard to naval expense is a fairly effective scheme for guarding the principal harbors of Australia, and I would remind honorable members in this connexion that the world, has before it at present in the submarine vessels, which

France in particular is constructing with such feverish* haste, an effective method of defending harbors which would seem to be eminently suited to our requirements. As far as the land defences of Australia are concerned, I cannot follow those honorable members who would confine our attentions solely to our own shores. The honorable and learned member for Northern Melbourne, in particular, has an amendment prepared with regard to the interpretation of the word "emergency" from which I totally dissent. It may become absolutely necessary that in our own defence we should attempt to meet an enemy beyond our own shores. That great master of war, Napoleon himself, has, if I remember correctly, laid it down as an axiom of successful war that the attacker should, if possible, separate his opponents and overcome them in detail. That was a method that he himself adopted with very great success. The British Empire is already separated in detail, and on that account it would be worse than foolish of us - it would be absolute madness - to withhold our assistance from any of the portions of the Empire that might be seriously threatened. It is just possible that the mother country might be invaded, and if we sat here with our arms folded, as some honorable members have suggested, what would it mean to us eventually? If the mother country happened to be overcome in a death struggle with some of the European nations we might be certain that the time would not be long between that serious disaster and an invasion of Australia on such a comprehensive scale that we could not resist it.

Mr Barton

- An invasion would be much easier then, of course.

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Mr FOWLER

- For these reasons I must express my surprise that an interpretation is sought to be placed upon the word " emergency," which, to my mind, will seriously cripple Australia, even in the matter of the defence of her own shores. I would not place the responsibility of deciding upon taking such action as I have indicated in the hands of the- Governor-General, even when advised by his Executive, because the matter would deserve the most serious consideration of Parliament itself. I am not sure that even then I would allow the possibility of members of our defence force being sent away outside of Australia against their will. I think it would be a misfortune if we were to compel members of the defence forces to leave Australia in numbers against their will, but if the Parliament decided that the occasion was one which demanded the operation of our defence forces outside of Australia, there would be no need to compel unwilling fighters to go. If such were the verdict of the Federal Parliament, assistance of a most material kind would be forthcoming in a purely voluntary form. As to the general character of our defence force, I may say that, whilst feeling a great admiration for the speech made by the honorable member for West Sydney, I do not think it is necessary for us to proceed to the extreme indicated by him. There is no doubt that the ideal of a citizen soldiery, such as exists in Switzerland, is one that has its attractions. But we in Australia are not quite in the same position as are the people of Switzerland. The Swiss people are surrounded on all sides by nations that are armed to the teeth, and a descent in force on Switzerland is at any time possible. As I have already indicated, we in Australia have no reason to fear an attack on a large scale. Therefore I think that if we had an effective defence force on the volunteer system largely, we should be in a position to do all that requires to be done: The cadet system is one that I thoroughly approve of. I would wish to see a system of training applied to the boys, and even to the girls, in our schools, although, of course,, the girls would not be liable for fighting purposes. I would like to see the system of training applied as a mere matter of physical development, and as a matter of discipline, which is of immense advantage to the children, and remains with them as an advantage throughout their lives. A system of training of a military kind, to a certain extent, would undoubtedly benefit the rising generation of Australia. I have only to remind honorable members that German statistics show most conclusively a tremendous improvement in the physique of that nation since the military system in vogue there was adopted. Looking at the children as they come from our schools, I feel sorry many a time that more attention is not given to their physical development so as to enable them to grow up* healthier men and women than they promise, in their childhood at least, to be. With regard to our boys, I certainly think that

during their school age we can give, them a training in military knowledge which will be an immense advantage to them and to the nation a few years after. I cannot agree with those honorable members who would like to see the present system of volunteering and of the militia continuing side by side. It is a mistake to have these two systems in competition to a certain extent with one another, necessarily impairing the efficiency of both. But there are good points in connexion with both branches of the service, and it is just possible that we may adopt those good points from both branches, without doing anything that will impair the efficiency of a general scheme of defence. The volunteer in past years, notably in the mother country, and in a less degree in Australia, has been discouraged on every side. But he has outlived those discouragements, and is now beginning to be recognised as no insignificant portion of our defence force. I would like to give the volunteer system even better conditions than it has at present. I would like to give the volunteer more encouragement than he gets under present conditions. I would suggest that the capitation grant which is given to the company to which the volunteer belongs, should be increased to a slight degree and a portion of it given to the volunteer to recoup him for those expenses which he has incurred during his season of exercise. With regard to the officering of our defence forces, I must say that I am absolutely opposed to the continuance of a system that is founded essentially on a vicious caste principle. I have served in the volunteer forces myself, and I am only too well aware of the fact that a very large number of the officers are often men who ought not to occupy their positions. Many of them, of course, are thoroughly worthy of those positions, but the conditions are so unfavorable with regard to effective men rising from the ranks, that time and again the defence forces are compelled to accept as officers men who certainly should not have had commissions.

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Mr G B EDWARDS

- They are mere uniforms, not men.

Mr.FOWLER.- There is certainly a great deal of attraction in a uniform. There is attraction in the social position that is given to an officer, and these are considerations that ought not to enter into the officering of our defence forces at all. I would wish to see every officer rise from the ranks to the various grades. If such officers, on examination, proved themselves thoroughly fit in all respects in regard to what they have learned during their probationary period, then, if further education is required of a more highly technical kind, I would certainly make it the duty of the nation to afford that education. So far from wishing for a condition of things that would necessitate only gentlemen of leisure .spending a few years at a West Point in Australia, I say that is totally opposed to the conditions under which this Bill is supposed to operate. As regard arms and ammunition, I am pleased to see in so many unexpected quarters manifestations of a growing fondness for socialism. We have had a number of honorable members approving very heartily of the principle of the Government manufacture of small arms and ammunition.

Mr McDonald

- Surely the honorable member does not call that socialism.

Mr FOWLER

- I am afraid it approximates towards that objectionable principle. I feel sure it is absolutely necessary that we should adopt the plan of manufacturing our own arms and ammunition. We are so isolated from the rest of the Empire that we must manufacture those necessities of defence. I certainly would not for one moment intrust 'such an important function to private firms, but would put the work into the hands of the Government, when we should be able to put the responsibility for any shortcomings on the proper shoulders. I have little more to add, but I do hope that when we are dealing with this Bill we shall remember that it is not our duty to follow lines that have been laid down by precedent in the State Parliaments. There is no question of imminent danger threatening the Empire. As we are all participants in the advantages that accrue from our connexion with the Empire, so we must also be prepared for ensuing dangers. I hope that whatever is done in committee will be done in a spirit of thoroughness. Whatever principles we may adopt, and whatever may be the final lines on which we shall proceed, I hope the excellent fighting material we have in Australia will be given such conditions as will enable our men to withstand in an effective fashion any opponent who may venture to approach our shores.

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Mr WATKINS

- In the few words that I have to contribute to this debate, I do not propose to go into the question of the

necessity for defence. I think it is agreed that if ever there was a time when we should put our house in order that time is now, seeing that we have proclaimed to the world that Ave are a fighting people by our participation in the present Avar. But the chief thing we must debate and consider is the best way in which to defend the shores of Australia. We have had honorable members favouring the building up of a strong permanent force, and Ave have had those who favour practically a purely volunteer system. On the one hand, I am distinctly opposed to the building up in this Commonwealth of anything like a large permanent force. I recognise that if we go on those lines, Ave shall perhaps bring about as great a state of insecurity as if Ave practically had no force at all. I recognise that the building up of a military class might be to the worst interests of the people in following their civil avocations. On the other hand, it is for us to consider whether Ave can rely upon a purely volunteer system in the building up of our defences in Australia. I am one of those who think that the experience of the past has proved that it would not be possible for us to build up anything like a reasonably adequate defence force on a purely volunteer system, in the sense that some honorable members have put forward - that is to say, that Ave are to expect men to follow out daily drills, and do all the studying necessary to become perfect soldiers, without any recompense whatever. So far as Ave understand the term " militia " in these States, the remuneration is such that I see little difference, practically speaking, between the militiaman and the volunteer. I think the fair line to draw is that the men who serve in the defence of their country should receive such remuneration as at least Will prevent them from being out of pocket in following their studies. If they give their time to the defence of their country that is all we can expect. In speaking in support of the volunteer systems operating here and in New Zealand, it has been stated that New Zealand has produced a larger roll of volunteers than Ave have been enabled to do in the biggest State of Australasia, namely New South Wales. But it is one thing to be able to show a list of volunteers, and another thing to prove the efficiency of that particular number of men. If we take the history of the volunteers and compare it With the history of the partially-paid forces, Ave can come to only one conclusion, namely, that while we may be able to show from time to time a full number on the rolls of the different companies of a volunteer force, it does not follow that the whole of these men have by any means served an adequate time to make themselves perfect. Experience has shown, unfortunately, that in many cases, while the fever has been on them, men have been ardent followers of this particular movement, but that they have afterwards dropped away, and their places are being continually filled by new recruits. That is not exactly the force we want to build up here. We want men not only to join when they are enthusiastic, but to remain in the force sufficiently long to make themselves proficient, and thus build up an adequate defence force for these States. It is not a sufficient security for us to listen to the argument that all we require to do is to teach our men to shoot, and to give them one or two lessons in drill. In these days we know that an artillery man must practically be a mechanic. We know, too, that there are corps of engineers, the members of which have to build bridges and other intricate works. That sort of thing, I think, shows that we want something more than a drill or two to make these particular branches of the defence force adequate or efficient. In order to prove that the militia has been a success in these States, I cannot do better than examine what has been done in the past. In New South Wales I find that we commenced by the enrolment of volunteers. The first regiments formed there absolutely died out. Then a second effort was made to form a defence force in that State upon the volunteer system. Upon the second occasion failure doomed that particular system. Then the Government had to offer grants of land to men to become volunteers, and to serve for five years. Even this scheme did not meet with the success expected of it. I learn from the report of the Royal commission which inquired into this matter that a parade was called in 1877, but was not a success, owing to the fact that only 36 -4 per cent, of the volunteers attended ; 200 of the artillerymen attended out of 846 ; whilst of the engineers 30 out of 70 put in an appearance. Out of the first regiment of volunteers, 176 attended out of 455, whilst of the second regiment 140 attended out of 442. After that they attempted to follow upon the lines of the present partially-paid forces, and from that period onward it will be found that the attendances at drills and encampments, and indeed upon all occasions when the men were required, have been more satisfactory. While speaking on behalf of the partially-paid forces, I wish it to be understood that though I believe in a citizen soldiery, I do not believe that a citizen should himself be called on to go to any unnecessary expense. It should be sufficient for the Commonwealth that he is prepared to give his time and attention to the work which he is called upon to perform. To me this Bill savours too much of an attempt to build up a permanent force as against a citizen soldiery. There are a

few clauses which have been drafted as though they were intended to build up a permanent force in this Commonwealth. Clause 51, for example, provides that every 'competent officer,' after having held the command of a regiment for five years, shall be removed from that command to take up some other position in the forces of the Commonwealth. That may be right enough so far as our permanent forces are concerned, but how we can expect a man who is following a civil avocation to remove from the district in which he resides to another district, for the purpose of holding a position in the force, I fail to understand. While I quite recognise the fact that we must have some provision for the purpose of weeding out the duffers from time to time, I think that this clause must be radically altered. I recognise that if a man pays due attention to his work, and thoroughly studies the business in which he is engaged, if he is going to be competent at all it will be after he has had five years of experience. Whilst saying this, I think that we should provide that these men may be brought up at the end of five years for examination so far as health, physique, and their military education are concerned. If we do that, we shall have a sufficient check against the retention of duffers from time to time. Then there is the question of the appointment of officers. I am with those who say that, so far as officers of any standing are concerned, the commissions must be won by merit and examination. On the other hand, there is a provision in the Bill for the appointment of subordinate officers by the commandant of a district, which, of course, means a State. We may have an officer holding the position of colonel commanding a regiment, and yet he will not have the power to make the most humble appointment, although he is the very man who knows full well the man in his regiment best fitted for it. Coming to the schedule, I find that we have laid down a fixed law for the retirement of officers of various grades. To my mind, as a layman, that rule will be found to work very badly, because it will be admitted that for the purposes of command and instruction, a man at the age of 60 years is, in many cases, better than others would be at 40 or 45 years of age. It is amusing to consider what would be the effect in the case of men like Lord Roberts if in England such a hard-and-fast rule for the retirement of officers were laid down. It seems to me that there must be some alteration made in this provision. It will be sufficient if these men at the age set down in the Bill are again examined so far as their military attainments and physical capabilities are concerned. There are many other little amendments which I think are necessary in this Bill, and which perhaps will tend to improve it. I admit at once that I do not agree with those who think that we can put everything that is required to build up a defence force within the four corners of a Bill like this. I look upon it as practically a machinery Bill, under which, by wise administration, we can build up a capable force for the purpose of defending this Commonwealth. There is one matter which I might mention, in respect of the proposal as to the command of our forces, should they ever be called upon for active service. Everything in this Bill tends to encourage the permanent man as against the volunteer or militia commander. The Bill points out that should our forces be required for active service, they will be placed under an officer of the permanent force, irrespective of whether we have a man in the militia or volunteer forces who may be senior to the man under whom it is proposed to place them. That to me does not appear to be a wise provision. I take it that if in the militia or volunteer forces we have a man whose experience, ability, and service make him senior to the permanent officer who will be appointed to take charge of the forces in time of emergency, then the former should not be made junior to the latter. If there is any utility in the volunteer or partially paid systems of these States, then, if our officers are not efficient, it is time that they were made efficient. If we cannot make them efficient under a partially-paid or volunteer system, it is idle for us to talk about building up such a system at all, because the officering of the regiments is about the most important part of the whole concern. Another very important fact, upon which we cannot lay too much stress at the present time, is the fearful necessity that exists for some provision for putting modern guns into the hands of those who have to use them. When we come to consider that if we were attacked to-morrow there is not one place within the Commonwealth where we could repair one of the guns which are at present upon any of the points of our defence, it will be seen what a deplorable position we occupy. If one of our strategic points were bombarded, and a gun went wrong, we should have to hoist the white flag and ask the enemy to stand off until we could send it home for repairs. It seems to me an absolute farce to talk about building up a system of defence unless we have a place where we can make the implements by which to defend ourselves. That appears to be the base of the whole system. It is notorious that when we sent men to South Africa from New South Wales, we had one company of artillery which was equipped with modern guns. Those men were sent away with the guns, with the result that if we had been attacked

during their absence we should not have had one corps of artillery possessing a gun which we could guarantee would go off at the right end.

Mr Barton

- That is as regards field guns.

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Mr WATKINS

- Yes. I am not saying anything against the men. They are armed with obsolete weapons that would hardly do credit to China. If we are going to put our house in order in this respect, we must arm our men with the most modern equipment, and it is time that we depended upon ourselves in this regard. To depend for our 'supplies, ammunition, and arms upon a nation 16,000 miles away from us, is to reduce the whole business to the character of a farce. I urge upon the Government to provide for the building up of an efficient force, and at the same time to make provision for the manufacture and repair, not only of small arms, but also of the larger guns, which are placed upon the various points of defence round the Commonwealth. There are one or two other amendments which I should like to see made in the Bill, but I hope that the chief aim of honorable members in dealing with the measure will be to provide that the backbone of our land forces shall be the partially-paid and volunteer branches of the service. Although I admit that the first line of defence must be naval defence, I say that we should not altogether neglect our land defences. As a layman, I cannot say how naval defence can best be provided. I admit that I think it premature for us to begin to build battle-ships, though, perhaps, we may have to contribute a little more to the maintenance of an auxiliary squadron, but the ships of that squadron should be up to date, and I think that it is only fair that we should have a voice in the manning of it, and that young Australians should have an equal chance with their English- brothers of serving on board those vessels. In conclusion, I have only to say that the success of the measure must depend largely, upon its administration. Whether we shall or shall not have a good defence force, will depend largely upon the way in which the measure is administered, and the men encouraged. I would always be the last to try to inspire an ardent military spirit in the breasts ' of our youth, but I think that, for the purpose of national defence, encouragement should be given to the boys who leave our schools to join volunteer or partially-paid regiments. But I, with others who have had experience of the way in which the military affairs of the States have been managed in years past, will carefully scrutinize the proposed expenditure upon the three branches of the forces, and I shall fight against the building up of a large permanent military force. While I shall object to the appointment of highly paid officials in connexion with our forces, I shall be prepared to give every encouragement to our young men to join volunteer and partially-paid regiments, because I recognise that, while we need not proclaim ourselves as a fighting nation, we have our responsibilities as part of the British Empire, and, as Australians, must prepare to defend our hearths and homes. In committee I shall perhaps take a -prominent part in dealing with the .various clauses, and I hope that we shall frame a measure which will establish a scheme of defence which will prove satisfactory to the people of the Commonwealth.

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Mr PIESSE

- There is hardly a subject which is likely to engage the attention of this Parliament which I shall approach with less pleasure than I do this Bill. I recognise, however, that the two impelling forces which brought it before us, and to which we must largely ascribe the federation of the States and the creation of this Parliament, are the desire for a . better organization and a united control of our forces, and the military spirit - which we must not allow to influence us too much - evoked by the- action of the States in taking part in the- ! struggle in South Africa. . As to the latter 1 motive, I may perhaps be permitted to al- lude to some of the remarks which have fallen from other honorable members who have addressed the House. If I thought that the honorable member for Maranoa was correct in his statement of ' the reasons which led to the war - that Great Britain was desirous of dispossessing the people of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State of their territory - I should consider it a most lamentable thing that Australia has taken part in the struggle. But is the honorable member right in assuming that that was the reason for the war? As one of the latest statements of the reasons which Englishmen give for entering into the conflict, I may quote from, the " Times History of the Wai.-," the first volume of which has only lately reached this State - The struggle has been to secure political, equality for Englishmen in a country where the English

comprised more than half the whole white population. We have fought to vindicate the white man's birthright - the right of all white men to come into a new country and join in the work of developing and making it, and to claim their share of its political privileges.

Our endeavour has been not to increase our hold over an alien dependency, but to prevent a vast region inhabited by men of English blood and of that stubborn Low German stock which is so nearly akin to it. - a region so susceptible of development, and destined at some time to play an important part in the history of the world - from being lost to the community of liberty loving and progressive nations that make up Greater Britain. For this reason I feel more satisfied that Australia has taken her share in the struggle. But we must also bear in mind that there had to be settled there, sooner or later, one of those great national problems which arise when there are conflicting national aspirations. The great reason and excuse for Australia joining in the struggle was that, there was an invasion of colonies governed by the English people. The resources which have been displayed by the Boers, and the prolongation of the struggle, indicate that their intention was not only to defend their country - for which there can be small blame to them - but also to drive the British out of South Africa, and to establish their own supremacy there.

Mr Higgins

- Does the honorable and learned member believe that ?

Mr PIESSE

- I do. I think that there is no other explanation of the preparations which must have been made for this war long before it began, for its long continuance, and for the agitation, unrest, and rebellion, which has been fomented in South Africa.

Mr Higgins

- They began to prepare after the Jamieson raid.

Mr PIESSE

- If they thought that their country was likely to be taken from them they had good reason to prepare for war but the preparations were altogether beyond what would have been commensurate with such an intention.

Mr Barton

- They had three times as many rifles as they could have wanted for themselves.

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Mr PIESSE

- Yes ; and there are many other facts which support my contention, but I do not want to allude to them. I have referred to the matter only by way of dissenting from a reason which some honorable members have given for the war. I feel, however, that there is a danger, now that the prowess of Australia has been so well established, that the military spirit may take too great a possession of our people, and find expression in our legislation. I am with those who have spoken for economy in connexion with the establishment of a military system, and I may, perhaps, take this opportunity to reply to the comments which were made upon the defence expenditure of Tasmania. The honorable member who quoted figures, which I believe he thought were official, was quite wrong, and when I interjected that the amount voted last year was £25,000, I understated it, because the actual amount included in the last Appropriation Act to be expended during the current year was £25,863. It is not quite fair to assume that the efficiency of the military organization of a country is to be judged only by the amount spent on that organization. I believe that in Tasmania, although we are but a small, community, we have not shown ourselves unworthy in this regard to be classed with any other Australians, come they from where they will. Even in regard to the number of those of our people who took part in the struggle in South Africa, the men sent from Tasmania are in a higher ratio to the population than the number sent from some of the larger States of the Commonwealth, and if I may be allowed to say it, no one need be ashamed to stand up and acknowledge himself a Tasmanian when he remembers how his countrymen have borne themselves through that great struggle in which, I am glad to say, we have all bravely and worthily taken our part. I hope honorable members will bear with me when I make these remarks in reply to certain observations, which, if not answered, might have given a wrong impression as to the true position of affairs. I believe I am right in saying that the forces in Tasmania, including rifle clubs, the partly paid forces, and so on, number about 3,000, and if honorable members will run those figures out in proportion to our population I think we give quite our fair proportion of military service in comparison with the rest of

the Commonwealth. I think we would do well, speaking generally on this subject, to look to what has been the method adopted in the United States of America with regard to defences, rather than allow ourselves to be too much guided by what we have been ourselves accustomed to. It will be well for us to consider whether we have not lessons to learn from that great republic. The last figures obtainable would seem to show that before the Cuban War the army vote of the United States was \$49,000,000- or £9,800,000. The population of the United States at that time, as far as I can estimate it, was about 75,000,000, and that gives an expenditure of 2s. 9d. per head of the population. Here we have some guide as to the expenditure which ought to be sufficient in connexion with the defence of our Commonwealth, and I trust that we shall keep well within bounds and not exceed some such sum as that. There are two other matters to which I desire to refer. One of these was the question brought before the . House by the Society of Friends. I know that in some of the Defence Acts there is what is known as a conscience clause, which has the effect of relieving from the necessity of service in connexion with the defence forces those who have conscientious scruples against taking up arms. And 'I hope that ' honorable members will give due regard to the prayer of the Society of Friends in this matter. These people will not be able to affect, any of our positions by taking part, if they were inclined to do so, in any agitation to deprive us of our seats, if we did not vote in response to their prayer. But it can be shown that, although they do not desire to be made soldiers, they have never shirked their fair share of the work of the community. It may be said with some truth that they have even done more than their share, and even in the services connected with war the Society of Friends have done good service to the country, by coming to the relief of those who have been injured, and in bringing about - as they did on one notable occasion, by successfully interviewing the Emperor of Russia - a cessation of the terrible war then raging between England and that country. I do not wish to labour this point at present, but merely call -attention to it in the hope that honorable members will bear it in mind in connexion with that, portion of the Bill which provides for what has been termed conscription, and insert such a conscience clause as already finds a place in other measures of this kind. I feel that there is a great deal to be done in bringing this measure into the condition in which we desire to see it. I have been very much impressed whilst listening to the various speeches which have been made, and I have learned a good deal that is new to me, and which I hope to bear in mind when we go into committee, so that I may be able to assist those honorable members who are desirous of improving the Bill in the direction in which I think it ought to be improved.

Minister for External Affairs

Mr BARTON

. - I am afraid I am in a difficulty about this matter again. A number of honorable members have spoken to me, stating that they wish to speak on the second reading of this Bill. Of course I do not intend to take the Bill beyond the formal committee stage until the Minister for Defence returns, because I think it is only fair that he should be in charge of his own Bill in committee. In the meantime a number of honorable members wish to speak, and I am afraid that I must have led some of them to believe that the second reading stage would have lasted beyond this. If some honorable member will move the adjournment of the -debate, I have a short Bill with which I can deal. On , Tuesday there will be the Postal Bill to be considered, and I hope to be able on Tuesday, at the beginning of business, to move the second reading of the Immigration Restriction Bill, in order that honorable members may be in possession of a statement regarding it.

Debate (on motion by Mr. McDonald) adjourned.

SERVICE AND EXECUTION OF PROCESS BILL

Second Reading

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Mr BARTON

- I move-

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This is a Bill which has come from the

Senate to this House, and is one of those measures which carry out the provisions of the Constitution in respect to the federalizing to a certain extent of the laws of the States, that is to say, the legal proceedings of the States as distinguished from their substantive laws. It is referable to the 24th sub-section of the 51st section of the Constitution Act, which gives power to the Commonwealth to make

laws in certain cases. The 24th sub-section gives the Parliament power to make laws for the peace, order, and good government of the Commonwealth in respect to - among other matters - the service and execution throughout the Commonwealth of the civil and criminal process, and the judgments of the courts of the States. There has already been dealt with in the Senate and in this House a measure dealing with the recognition throughout the Commonwealth of the laws, the public acts and records, and the judicial proceedings of the States. This is a Bill designed to complete that class of legislation as far as is reasonably possible at present, by providing for the service and execution of civil and criminal process, and the judgments of the courts of the States. It will be within the memory of honorable members that each State is at the present time largely in the position of a foreign country in regard to the others in the application of its laws. With certain exceptions the courts of each State have jurisdiction, which does not extend beyond the limits of the State, and therefore their processes have no operation beyond their territorial limits. A man contracting a debt in one State - which he undoubtedly owes - may go to another State and live there beyond the jurisdiction of the court of the State where the debt was contracted. There are exceptions to the breadth of the statement which I have laid down referring to criminal jurisdiction in some respects, and also the effects of judgments in some respects. With regard to these latter there is by the comity of nations a recognition of the judgment of one State in another - using the word State in the larger sense. In the Australian States, that is expressed by certain Acts, which enable the filing of a memorial in court, regarding a judgment in one State, and then issuing execution from the court in which that statement has been filed. With regard to the criminal law there is a proceeding known as the backing of warrants. The warrant issued in State A comes before a magistrate in State B, and the police in State B execute it, and bring the offender before the magistrate in the same State. Then on inquiry the offender is remitted to the place where the offence was committed. There is also further provision in the Fugitive Offenders Apprehension Act in the old country, also for the backing of warrants that extend to more serious offences. Now, the Government proposal on this matter has already been dealt with by a Federal Council measure which may apply in all of the States, and which certainly applies to those of them which were at the time subscribing to the Federal Council and joined in its operation. But this Act has not operated in the State of New South Wales, at any rate, and so to that large extent its provisions are inapplicable, and will be until legislation is passed. I may say that the provisions I am speaking of are in criminal matters very similar to the civil process portion of this Bill. Then there is another Federal Council Act, the Civil Process Act, and a companion measure passed at the same time, the Australian Judgments Act, which provides in the same way as do the provisions of this Bill regarding the recognition and enforcement of judgments. It comes down to this - that as to civil process and the recognition and enforcement of judgments, the provisions of this Bill are very much the same as those of the Federal Council's two Acts of 1886, and as to criminal process, the provisions are very much the same as the laws now in force relating to fugitive offenders, as carried out between the States by the backing of warrants. I do not propose to give a long detailed account of the various clauses of this measure. I have stated the general objects and purposes of the Bill which has been carefully gone through in the Senate. The purposes of the Bill are obvious, and obviously beneficial. It would be only unnecessarily dealing with the details if I were to explain the various clauses one after the other, having already stated the purposes and objects of the Bill. If any honorable member requires time to consider the measure, I shall, of course, consent to any application for an adjournment of the debate.

Sir JOHN QUICK

- I beg to move -

That the debate be now adjourned.

I have been considering the Bill and making inquiries, and it appears to me that some little time is required to consider the provisions. A second-reading debate would tend to improve the Bill, and to strengthen the grasp of the House of its general provisions, rather than impair its efficiency or in any way delay it.

Mr BARTON

- Though I may have some qualms about adjourning the House about three-quarters of an hour before the ordinary time, I certainly do not intend tonight to go on with any other business than this Bill. Under the circumstances, however, as honorable members are probably tired by the week's work, as I certainly am myself, there can be no objection to adjourning at this hour. I think the most critical Oppositionist

cannot think there is any harm in that.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Debate adjourned.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

Resolved(on motion by Mr. Barton) -

That the Standing Orders Committee have power to confer with the Standing Orders Committee of the Senate with reference to the proposed, new standing orders.

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21:48:00

House adjourned at 9.48 p.m.