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1901-09-12

House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker took the chair at 2 p.m., and read prayers.

PETITIONS

Mr. MANIFOLD presented petitions from the residents of Allansford, Mepunga, Nirranda, and Wangoom, and from the members and adherents of the Presbyterian Church, Mortlake, praying that clauses 54 and 55 of the Post and Telegraph Bill might be passed into law.

Petitions received.

QUESTIONS

POST-OFFICE SAVINGS BANKS

Mr KIRWAN

asked the Minister representing the Postmaster - General, upon notice -

Whether the Post-office Savings Banks of the various States are still worked in conjunction with the Postal department ?

Whether the Government intend taking any steps towards taking over the Post-office Savings Banks?

What arrangements, if any, are being made in connexion with rent of postal buildings used for Savings Bank purposes ?

Minister (without portfolio)

Sir PHILIP FYSH

- The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follow : -

The Savings Banks of the various States are still worked in conjunction with the Postal department, so far as the country branches are concerned.

As the Savings Banks are State institutions administered under State Acts, the Government of the Commonwealth does not intend to take any steps towards taking them over.

The rent or use of postal buildings for Savings Banks purposes, will be considered in connexion with the general arrangement for the working of such branch banks, by the officers of the Post and Telegraph department for the State Governments.

AUSTRALIAN SEAMEN FOR DEFENCE PURPOSES

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Sir LANGDON BONYTHON

asked the Minister of Defence, upon notice -

Whether he will obtain from the Senior Naval Officer of the Federal Naval Forces (Captain Creswell), and lay on the table of this House, a report as to the best method of employing Australian seamen for the defence of the floating commerce and ports of the Commonwealth, as well as the estimated cost of any scheme he may recommend?

Minister for Defence

Sir JOHN FORREST

- The answer to the honorable member's question is as follows : -

The question of establishing a Colonial Naval Reserve was remitted to a committee of the Naval Commandants of the several States in August 1 899, and fully reported on. Captain Creswell was a member of the committee, and as he did not attach to the report any additional memorandum of observations of his own, it is assumed that his views were fully represented in the report of the committee. If Captain Creswell has any further suggestions to make, I should be very glad to receive them. I now lay a copy of the report of the Naval Commandants referred to on the table of the House.

TELEPHONE BETWEEN BALLARAT AND GEELONG

Mr MAUGER

asked the Minister representing the Postmaster-General, upon notice -

Whether he has yet come to any decision with regard to the requests of a recent deputation from Ballarat and Geelong asking for a direct telephone between those places, and a reduction in telephone charges on guarantee being given?

Sir PHILIP FYSH

- The answer to the honorable member's question is as follows : -

The service between Ballarat and Geelong has been much improved by recent alterations, and the committee of electrical experts have recommended the telephone charges shall in all cases be based upon the mileage of line actually used for conversations. If an adequate guarantee is provided the matter will be further considered.

PAPERS

Mr. BARTON laid on the table the following papers : -

Return upon motion by Mr. Bamford showing exemption tickets granted to kanakas under the Pacific Islands Labourers Act.

Papers communications made to the press by Mr. Outtrim, Deputy Postmaster-General of Victoria.

Ordered to be printed.

SERVICE AND EXECUTION OF PROCESS BILL

Motion (by Mr. Deakin) agreed to -

That the Bill be recommitted for the purpose of reconsidering clauses 10, 13, and 14.

Clause 10 (Proceedings where no appearance entered) -

Clause verbally amended and agreed to.

Clause 13-

When a summons has been issued by any court or judge or police, stipendiary, or special magistrate having jurisdiction in any State or part of a State or part of the Commonwealth, commanding any person who is charged with any offence alleged to have been committed in such State or part, whether such offence is punishable by indictment or upon summary conviction, to appear to answer to such charge or to be dealt with according to law, such summons may be served on such person in any other State or part of the Commonwealth.

Attorney-General

Mr DEAKIN

. - Acting on a suggestion made by the honorable and learned member for South Australia, Mr. Glynn, I move -

That the words "on information upon oath" be inserted after "issued," line 1.

This is intended to afford a further safeguard in regard to the issue of summonses which are capable of being served in any part of the Commonwealth.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 14 -

When a subpoena or summons has been issued by any court or judge, or police, stipendiary or special magistrate in any State or part of the Commonwealth, requiring any person to appear and give evidence in any civil or criminal trial or proceeding, such subpoena or summons may by leave of such court, judge, or magistrate, on such terms as the court, judge, or magistrate may impose be served on such person in any other State or part of the Commonwealth.

Mr DEAKIN

- I promised the honorable and learned member for Bendigo, who was good enough to withdraw an amendment which he had proposed, to find a place for it in the first sub-clause, where he could not at that time move to insert it. I now move -

That the words "upon proof that the testimony of such person is necessary in the interests of justice " be inserted after the word "may," line 9.

This will be a further safeguard against the possibility of the hasty summoning of witnesses from distant parts of the Commonwealth.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Bill reported with further amendments.

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Mr DEAKIN

- As the amendments made to-day are purely verbal in their character, and have not made the slightest alteration in the substance of the Bill, I would ask honorable members to consent to the suspension of the standing orders to permit of the Bill being passed through its remaining stages.

Mr Glynn

-What is the hurry ? It is a great mistake to suspend the standing orders except in cases of great emergency.

Mr DEAKIN

-Does the honorable member object to the suspension of the standing orders ?

Mr Glynn

- I object to the standing orders being unnecessarily suspended.

Mr DEAKIN

- Very well ; I will not press the point.

IMMIGRATION RESTRICTION BILL

Second Reading

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Debate resumed from 6th September (vide page 4666), upon motion by Mr. Barton -

That the Bill be read a second time.

Mr. RONALD(Southern Melbourne).In resuming my remarks on this Bill I do not desire to waste the time of the House, and my concluding observations will be brief. We have come to the conclusion that there is absolute unanimity among honorable members as far as the object of the Bill is concerned, and we have reduced the controversial matter down to the subject of the clause which provides for subjecting undesirable immigrants to a linguistic test. On the former occasion I ventured to say that this round-about or indirect way of excluding undesirable aliens was not an effective method, and that it had been proposed in order to obviate the possible obstruction of the measure by the British Government. I also remarked that that was a needless precaution, because there was no likelihood of the British Government attempting to interfere with our expressed wishes - not with the expressed wishes of this House only, but with those of the whole Commonwealth. Since then I have gone to the trouble of looking up the speeches of the Secretary of State for the Colonies - the Right Honorable Joseph Chamberlain - upon foreign and colonial affairs, and I find, in a volume edited by him and officially given by him to the world, that throughout his speeches -he is thoroughly committed to a non-interference with Australia, and that he trusts entirely to their community of interest, common religion, common laws, and common love of liberty, to keep the bond intact between the colonies and the old country. Therefore Mr. Chamberlain, without falling over himself in a very conspicuous way, could not interfere with us when we are seeking to give expression and legislative effect to our desire to preserve a white Australia. Mr. Chamberlain has a very forcible way of putting things, and expresses himself in a way that one cannot very well forget. In speaking of the colonies he says that what they want is population, and in effect he puts it in this way - " Get population, and all other things shall be added unto you." This may be taken as an official utterance of Mr. Chamberlain as to what we want, and I take it that when he said that we wanted population, he meant a white and not a coloured population. Again, he goes on to say, in the same speech, that he believes in the expansion of the Empire, because he believes in the first instance in the British Empire and in the British race. We desire to say that we, too, believe in the British race, and when we are agitating for a white Australia we are assuming that a white Australia really means a British Australia. We are not going to set up that national Pharisaism which trusts in itself and despises all others. We remember the great empire of Rome which rose and fell in ages past, and we remember that what brought about the downfall of that empire was that supercilious contempt for other people and the sentiment expressed in the words *civis Romanus sum* - that, in effect, everything that was Roman was right. We stand in some danger now of cultivating a similar sentiment in so far as the feeling prevails that everything English is right and that whatever is not English is wrong. Guarding ourselves against that Pharisaism, I believe that we are at one with Mr. Chamberlain in desiring that a white Australia shall be a British Australia. We have ample evidence in the shape of the fullest and most explicit utterances on the part of the Secretary of State for the Colonies to show that there is really no fear of the British Government interfering with our efforts to accomplish our purpose in a direct and immediate manner. As that is the only controversial element in the measure before us, I wish further to point out that the linguistic test proposed by the Government is altogether inadequate as a test to keep out undesirable aliens. We have the power to legislate for the restriction of the influx of criminals, and I venture to say it would be just as sufficient a test to guard against the influx of criminals if we prescribed for them a

knowledge of the ten commandments, as it will be to prescribe the linguistic test for aliens. Therefore I hope that this blemish upon the Bill will be removed. The vital principle of the measure is one upon which there is no controversy. The blemish upon it lies in the means by which we seek to attain our end. I hope that the Government will see their way before the conclusion of the debate upon the second reading of the Bill to remove this blemish from what is otherwise a very desirable measure, in order that we may accomplish the end to which we are all pledged.

Mr Wilks

- It is not a blemish ; it is a blot.

Mr RONALD

- The honorable member is quite right. I wish to say, in conclusion, that this debate is one which brings us for the first time into the real realm of our functions. We have been dealing hitherto with matters which are mostly national, but here the Federal Parliament has to deal with the great purpose for which we were called into existence, namely, with those matters which are relative and co-relative to international affairs. It is a large question, and a very interesting one. It is a question which goes into the very rudiments of sociality, which touches the relationship of black and white races, and embraces the problem of whether the former are or are not desirable immigrants. We have resolved that we cannot blend with coloured aliens without deterioration to our own people.

Mr Wilkinson

- The British are not the only white race.

Mr RONALD

- I am perfectly aware of that. I have just said that I want to guard against that national Pharisaism which assumes that we are. But we desire, at the same time, to preserve a British Australia. Certainly our aim ought to be in that direction. Let it be known to the world that we are seeking to enact this legislation in the interests of the integrity of the Empire, and I venture to say that there will be no opposition, either in this country or the old country, to our ideals and our aims. The Government deserve well of this House for having so speedily brought forward a measure to deal with what is becoming a very urgent matter indeed. Only two hours ago I saw a lorry-load of 30 Afghans coming up from Port Melbourne, in spite of the fact that we were assured by the Prime Minister that these men would not be permitted to land. Presumably they are all British subjects.

Mr Barton

- With the consent of honorable members, may I be permitted to say a few words? I explained to the House on more than one occasion that no act of State can be exercised to the exclusion of British subjects. That is a reserve executive power which exists only in regard to the subjects of foreign countries. I directed that rigid inquiry should be made whether these persons were British subjects or not. If they were not British subjects they were to be excluded. My instructions were acted upon, and in all cases it was found that they were British subjects, who cannot be excluded until a Bill of this character is passed.

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Mr RONALD

- What I wish to say is that they are a most undesirable lot of people to have coming into the country. The sooner we pass such a measure as this, so that there may be some restriction upon the wholesale flooding of Australia with this obnoxious element the better. That is why I venture to think that an amendment must be made in the clause which proposes to restrict their admission under the linguistic test. As that is the only controversial matter in the whole Bill, I simply wished to quote Mr. Chamberlain's speeches in order to show that he is the last man in the world who will be likely to interfere with our ideals in this direction, because, over and over again, in that volume which he has edited and given to the world, he has expressed his opinion that the tie which binds us to the old country must be one of affection, of blood relationship, of common law, and of common religion -

Where love unites, then space divides in vain, And hands may clasp across the raging main.

Those are his sentiments, and I am perfectly sure that the Government have raised a bogey in asserting that this indirect way was the only way in which we could accomplish our end. I sincerely hope that the heroic method will be adopted on this occasion, and that we shall let it be understood in a graceful manner that we intend to have a white Australia, and to exclude all coloured aliens from our shores,

irrespective of whether or not they happen to be British subjects. I am perfectly sure that this can be done, and that is all that I desire.

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Mr DEAKIN

- The honorable member who has just concluded has, in his last few sentences, summed up the situation as regards the measure before the House. He has also indicated, and very properly so, that in this Bill we find ourselves in the presence of a problem infinitely vaster than the particular issue which we shall require to debate when we come to consider the clauses in committee. The fact is that compared with this measure - great and important as are the Bills which have been previously submitted - none of them is so fraught with possibilities - none of them gives rise in the minds of thoughtful men to so much anxiety. None will have touched a chord of deeper determination to deal with the issue involved in the most determined manner. We here find ourselves touching the profoundest instinct of individual or nation - the instinct of self-preservation - for it is nothing less than the national manhood, the national character, and the national future that are at stake. I also re-echo the statement which has been made during this discussion, that in dealing with the question in its largest aspect we are not wasting words. We are not unnecessarily occupying time or travelling from the matter in hand in declaring the purpose of this measure, and the ultimate policy of the people of Australia in regard to the coloured races which surround us, and are inclined to invade our shores. Statements of that kind, when made deliberately and without heat, are none the worse for being emphatic. There is no seal upon our lips, and no closure that can be applied to us when we speak with unqualified and inflexible firmness what we believe to be the demands of the people of Australia. This debate ought to be, and probably will be, read elsewhere, and it becomes honorable members on either side of the House, through some of their representative speakers, to signify their acceptance of their responsibility, their recognition of what is meant by this measure, and their intimation of what is implied by it. At this early period of our history we find ourselves confronted with difficulties which have not been occasioned by union, but to deal with which this union was established. No motive power operated more universally on this continent or in the beautiful island of Tasmania, and certainly no motive operated more powerfully in dissolving the technical and arbitrary political divisions which previously separated us than the desire that we should be one people; and remain one people without the admixture of other races. It is not necessary to reflect upon them even by implication. It is only necessary to say that they do not and cannot blend with us; that we do not, cannot, and ought not to blend with them. This was the motive power which swayed tens of thousands who take little interest in contemporary politics - this was the note that touched particularly the Australian born, who felt themselves endowed with a heritage not only of political freedom, but of an ample area within which the race might expand, and an obligation consequent upon such an endowment - the obligation to pass on to their children and the generations after them that territory undiminished and uninvaded. A coloured occupation would make a practical diminution of its extent of the most serious kind. It was this aspiration which nerved them to undertake the great labour of conquering the sectional differences that divided us. We, therefore, find ourselves to-day confronted with the possibility of dealing in a practical way, and for the first time in the history of our union, with the question which assisted so largely to unite us. We are fortunate, since at the very outset of our career, and indeed when the foundations of the Commonwealth of Australia were being laid, that the Convention which drafted the Constitution was alive to the vital character of this problem. Fortunately we are better equipped than our cousins across the Atlantic. Our Constitution marks a distinct advance upon and difference from that of the United States, in that it contains within itself the amplest powers to deal with this difficulty in all its aspects. It is not merely a question of invasion from the exterior. It may be a question of difficulties within our borders, already created, or a question of possible contamination of another kind. I doubt if there can be found in the list of powers with which this Parliament, on behalf of the people, is endowed - powers of legislation - a cluster more important and more far reaching in their prospect than the provisions contained in sub-sections (26) to (30) of section 51, in which the bold outline of the authority of the people of Australia for their self-protection is laid down. We have power to deal with people of any and every race within our borders, except the aboriginal inhabitants of the continent, who remain under the custody of the States. There is that single exception of a dying race; and if they be a dying race, let us hope that in their last hours they will be able to recognise not simply the justice, but the generosity of the treatment which the white race,

who are dispossessing them and entering into their heritage, are according them. In regard to the people of every other race within our midst, we have special power to legislate. We have power over emigration and immigration, of which this measure proposes to take advantage. We have the power of dealing with the influx of criminals, without restriction of race or colour. We have the undefined powers relating to external affairs, and the connexion of the Commonwealth with the islands in the Pacific, the exact meaning of which no one to-day can exactly define, and very happily so. I undertake to say that those provisions, like certain sections of the American Constitution, may slumber for a certain time - in our own case, perhaps, not a long time - but they can be interpreted, and will be interpreted, to meet whatever may be the necessities of any situation that arises outside the boundaries of the Commonwealth affecting the future of this country, or of the multitudinous islands of the Pacific. So we enter on the consideration of this great matter fully equipped in our Constitution. The responsibility of dealing with it rests directly on our shoulders. It is that burden which we are now endeavouring to lift. We inherit a legacy in the shape of the aliens which have been already admitted within our borders. The programme of a "white Australia" means not merely its preservation for the future - it means the consideration of those who cannot be classed within the category of whites, but who have found their way into our midst. Unfortunately the statistics of the last census are not sufficiently advanced in this regard to enable one to say definitely the number of those within our territory who are capable of being dealt with under sub-section (26) of section 51 of the Constitution. But I should say that at a very moderate estimate, based on reference to the last census, there are from 70,000 to 80,000 aliens already in Australia. A certain number of these may be naturalized, and a certain number may have been British subjects before they came here.

An Honorable Member. - These are not European aliens?

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Mr DEAKIN

- No ; I should say there are about 80,000 coloured aliens in Australia. Of these, probably somewhat less than one-half are Chinese, and apparently about 9,000 are Polynesians. The remainder are recruited from a variety of people, mainly those of the neighbouring countries of Asia. We find on our hands this not inconsiderable number of aliens who have found admission to these States, either before there was the protection, such as several of the States now enjoy, or who are still able to find their way into States which, like Victoria, are, unhappily, not protected to the same degree. It has to be remembered in connexion with this question that so long as any of the States of the union remain without having their doors closed, as much as other States, the protection which those other States enjoy is absolutely defeated and rendered of no effect. From the States which have no restrictions, immigration is sure to flow, and is flowing overland into those which have certain restrictions. What we have to face, therefore, is not an Australia protected to the full extent of State powers, but an Australia which, being only in part protected, is scarcely protected at all - excepting in regard to the Chinese. Even in regard to these, there are considerable differences between the restrictions imposed in the various States. We find ourselves to-day, it may be said, with, at all events, a half-open door for all Asiatics and African peoples, through which entry is not difficult, and through which, as the experience of the honorable member for Southern Melbourne proves, there is still entry from time to time. It was with a full recognition of those facts that the first plank in the Government platform, as submitted at Maitland, and emphasized at every opportunity since, was the plank which for ease of reference was called the declaration for a "White Australia." It was for this reason that so much stress was laid on this issue, and it is for this reason that since the Government took office, no question has more frequently or more seriously occupied their attention, not only because of this one proposal now before the House, but with regard to executive acts that have been and will be necessary. There have been determinations which hereafter may have important consequences arising out of our administration, as well as other measures which will be submitted to Parliament, all having in view the accomplishment of the same end. That end, put in plain and unequivocal terms, as the House and the country are entitled to have it put, means the prohibition of all alien coloured immigration, and more, it means at the earliest time, by reasonable and just means, the deportation or reduction of the number of aliens now in our midst. The two things go hand in hand, and are the necessary complement of a single policy - the policy of securing a "white Australia." The Bill now before us is to be supplemented in a few days by a special measure called for by the circumstances of the

Pacific Islanders who have found their way into this country under State guarantee and with State encouragement. In addition a measure will be necessary to bring the Chinese restriction laws in the various States absolutely into line, so that the strictest conditions imposed in any State shall be imposed in all the States. No State which has to the best of its power protected itself against this influx ought to be inflicted with an overland overflow from States less efficiently guarded. There are other proposals which will in due course be submitted, because it is scarcely possible, even if it was desirable, to attempt, by one single provision, to deal with an inflow that will seek every crevice in our statutory armour, and will require that we should stop all possible leakages effectively one after the other, as many of them and as rapidly as possible. This chain of legislation, supplemented by executive action, should prove, within a very short time, a means of considerably reducing the number of those aliens we now have within our borders. The origin - the source of our action - requires some little exposition to those who look at us with old world eyes. One can well understand the attitude of the statesmen of Europe, absorbed in their own affairs, and in the control of large populations within comparatively narrow areas, approaching amazement when they regard what appears to be the arrogance of a handful of white men, most of them clustered on the eastern littoral of this immense continent, adopted before they have effectively occupied a quarter of the continent, and with the great bulk of its immense extent little more than explored, or with a sparse settlement. Those European statesmen may well view with surprise the anxiety exhibited here in this respect. There are those who mock at the demand of a white Australia, and who point to what they consider our boundless opportunities for absorbing a far greater population than we at present possess, who dwell, if commercially-minded, on the opportunities for business we are neglecting by failing to import the cheapest labour to develop portions of our continent which have not as yet been put to use. But the apprehensions of those abroad, even when cursorily examined, are soon seen to proceed from a far narrower outlook than that which belongs to those who feel themselves charged with the future of this country. We should be false to the lessons taught us in the great republic of the west ; we should be false to the never to be forgotten teachings from the experience of the United States, of difficulties only partially conquered by the blood of their best and bravest; we should be absolutely blind to and unpardonably neglectful of our obligations, if we fail to lay those lessons to heart. Cost what it may, we are compelled at the very earliest hour of our national existence - at the very first opportunity when united action becomes possible - to make it positively clear that so far as in us lies, however limited we may be for a time by self imposed restrictions upon settlement however much we may sacrifice in the way of immediate monetary gain - however much we may retard the development of the remote and tropical portions' of our territory - those sacrifices for the future of Australia are little, and are, indeed, nothing when compared with a compensating freedom from the trials, sufferings, and losses that nearly wrecked the great republic of the west, still left with the heritage in their midst of a population which, no matter how splendid it may be in many qualities, is not being assimilated, and apparently is never to be assimilated in the nation of which they are politically and nominally a part. It is we, and not our critics, who in this matter are adopting the broader and more serious view - the view which the future will approve. It is a view which, when explained, will, even by critical statesmen, be necessarily admitted to be sound - one in which a democracy, in some respects impatient, is imposing on itself as a restraint in the interests of the future generations who are to enter into and possess the country of which we at present only hold the border. This note of nationality is that which gives dignity and importance to this debate. The unity of Australia is nothing, if that does not imply a united race. A united race means not only that its members can intermix, intermarry and associate without degradation on either side, but implies one inspired by the same ideas, and an aspiration towards the same ideals, of a people possessing the same general cast of character, tone of thought - the same constitutional training and traditions - a people qualified to live under this Constitution - the broadest and the most liberal perhaps the world has yet seen reduced to writing - a people qualified to use without abusing it, and to develop themselves under it to the full height and extent of their capacity. Unity of race is an absolute essential to the unity of Australia. It is more, actually more in the last resort, than any other unity. After all, when the period of confused local policies and temporary political divisions was swept aside it was this real unity that made the Commonwealth possible. It prevented us from repeating the ridiculous spectacles unhappily witnessed in South America between communities called republics, the same in blood and origin, but unable to develop together or live side by side in peace.

Mr Wilks

- Why not carry that idea out in the Bill 1

Mr DEAKIN

- If the honorable member will wait a moment he will see that is the very point I am endeavouring to arrive at. I do so without apology for touching on the aspects with which I am at present dealing, because, as I have said, these utterances of ours are not for home consumption only. I am speaking not merely for myself, but for the Government, when I say how entirely and absolutely they realize the fundamental character of the principle which lies below their declaration for a white Australia, and that it may be seen that there is no uncertain note, there is no divided feeling, there is no conflict of opinion within this House, or without it ; that the unity of Australia must be secured on this question if not on any other ; that we stand shoulder to shoulder with practically an inconsiderable minority against us, so small as to be scarcely discoverable. At the very first instant of our national career we are as one for a white Australia. I say that because, if I may be pardoned for prophecy, it seems to me that this declaration for Australia is likely to stand with the declaration in the United States made some 70 or 80 years ago, received with derision where it was not ignored when made, but which, with every succeeding decade, has advanced towards greater influence, and a wider acknowledgment, until at last, practically the whole civilized world, however unwillingly, has been compelled to accept the Monroe doctrine as applied by the United States of America. We may have in the future some development which may call for the application of the Monroe doctrine in the Pacific. But far more important than that, and a far more significant declaration at the present time, is this for a white Australia. It is the Monroe doctrine of the Commonwealth of Australia. It is no mere electioneering manifesto, but part of the first principles upon which the Commonwealth is to be administered and guided. Various attempts have been made- in this direction even before union. I need not recapitulate them, but it is with some pride I recollect that my native State has been to the front in this movement from the very earliest days. It was in 1849 that Port Phillip emphatically and in the most decisive manner possible refused. to permit a single convict, even from the mother country, to be landed upon these shores. It was "in 1855 that the first Legislative Council of Victoria passed the first legislation in this hemisphere for the exclusion of the Chinese, and I had the honour of being a member of the Government which, in 1883, conveyed, without any qualification or reservation, its intimation to the British Government of the day that, much as we appreciated the difficulties under which they had been placed by all that followed from the unhappy tragedy of Phoenix Park, no one of the men connected with that tragedy, even if under the shelter of the law as informers, should be permitted to land in this country.

Mr Barton

- And that attitude was taken up all over Australia.

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Mr DEAKIN

- We were first challenged in the port of Melbourne, and that was our reply. The first occasion on which my honorable colleague, the Minister for Trade and Customs, and I were officially associated was when we sat on the conference which met in Sydney in 1888 to consider the then threatened invasion of the continent by Chinese immigrants. It was then that we drafted a programme, which was followed thereafter, not only in regard to the Chinese, but which was, in 1896, adopted by a conference of Premiers in regard to coloured aliens generally. My right honorable and learned friend drew the Bill, and I drafted the declaration for submission to our colleagues, which was wired to the British Government. This informed them of the vital importance that Australia as a whole attached to this question of purity of race, and that we relied upon two means to protect us. The first was the diplomatic action of the mother country, which we invoked, and did not invoke in vain, and the other was uniform legislation throughout Australia ; then a difficult thing to secure when six States had to be dealt with, but now, happily, within the province of this single Legislature. From that conference flowed a series of Acts which were accepted in the mother country and put a stop to the serious inflow of Chinese, reducing it thereafter to a very small proportion. In 1896 a conference of Premiers decided to apply exactly the same provisions to all other Asiatics besides Chinese. Four or five of the colonies, if I recollect aright, passed measures upon the lines of the Chinese Acts, naming the people proposed to be excluded and applying to all coloured Asiatics, without qualification, the provisions which had been previously accepted in regard to the Chinese. In 1897 the Premiers visited the mother country.

Mr V L SOLOMON

- Did South Australia pass such an Act 1

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Mr DEAKIN

- Yes. New South Wales, New Zealand, South Australia, and Tasmania passed these measures, not one of which, by the way, was accepted by the Home Government. In 1897, at a conference of Premiers the explanation of this apparent departure from the previous endorsement of legislation of this character was made by the then and now Colonial Secretary, Mr. Chamberlain. It is published, so far as Victoria is concerned, in the correspondence subsequently presented to Parliament. Here we begin to pass from a general consideration of the question to the particular consideration of the form of this Bill. Honorable members who are aware of what the policy of the Government is, and who know how they have realized from the very first moment the importance of this issue, have asked from time to time during this debate why the Government adopted the particular form of this measure, and why they have not put upon the face of it a prohibition of the particular Asiatic people whom it is desired to exclude. They put that question as if it was not within common knowledge, as if the Government was in possession of some private and secret information of somebody's wishes, and as if the very conditions upon which any measure of this kind requires to proceed, if immediate acceptance is to be looked upon as a certainty, had not been laid down in the most public fashion and communicated to the people of all the States. What Mr. Chamberlain said to the Premiers who met him in London in 1897 related to Bills couched in just such terms as those which it is now suggested should be adopted by this Chamber in preference to the Government proposal in this Bill. Mr. Chamberlain said -

I wish to direct your attention to certain legislation which is in process of consideration, or which has been passed by some of the colonies -

I am quoting now from page 15 of the Victorian copy of the correspondence - in regard to the immigration of aliens, and particularly of Asiatics.

I have seen these Bills, and they differ in some respects one from the other, but there is no one of them, except perhaps the Bill which comes to us from Natal, to which we can look with satisfaction. I wish to say that Her Majesty's Government thoroughly appreciate the object and the needs of the colonies in dealing with this matter. We quite sympathize with the determination of the white inhabitants of these colonies, which are in comparatively close proximity to millions and hundreds of millions of Asiatics, that there shall not be an influx of people alien in civilization, alien in religion, alien in customs, whose influx, moreover, would most seriously interfere with the legitimate rights of the existing labour population. An immigration of that kind must, I quite understand, in the interests of the colonies, be prevented at all hazards, and we shall not offer any opposition to the proposals intended with that object -

Honorable members will observe that no opposition is to be offered - but I ask you also to bear in mind the traditions of the Empire, which make no distinction in favour of or against race or colour and to exclude, by reason of their colour, or by reason of their race, all Her Majesty's Indian subjects, or even all Asiatics, would be an act so offensive to those peoples that it would be most painful, I am quite certain, to Her Majesty to have to sanction it.

It will be observed that there is no question of refusal. There is an intimation that if pressed the demand must be granted, but that it would pain Her Majesty to grant it; an intimation that it will be granted, but a request that "I must ask you to consider that it will be painful to Her Majesty." I now omit some parts of the report relating to what Mr. Chamberlain said as to the relative antiquity of Hindu families. Then, proceeding to touch the matter in hand again, he said -

I say, you, who have seen all this, cannot be willing to put upon those men - (meaning the Hindus) - a slight which I think is absolutely unnecessary for your purpose, and which would be calculated to provoke ill-feeling, discontent, irritation, and would be most unpalatable to the feelings not only of Her Majesty the Queen, but of all her people.

Mr V L SOLOMON

- Has not the honorable and learned member omitted a considerable portion of that report ?

Mr DEAKIN

- Yes, I pointed out that Mr. Chamberlain had made a reference to the relative antiquity of the Hindu families. I have missed nothing except that. Of course, this is a public document. Every one will be able to

see what I "have read ; nothing is concealed by my omitting the part referred to. Mr. Chamberlain proceeded -

What I venture to think you have to deal with is the character of the immigration. -

I must be understood as reading, but disagreeing with this part of the statement - It is not because a man is of a different colour from ourselves that he is necessarily an undesirable immigrant, but it is because he is dirty, or he is immoral, or he is a pauper, or he has some other objection which can be defined in an Act of Parliament - the last I have no objection to - and by which the exclusion can be managed with regard to all those whom you really desire to exclude. Well, gentlemen, this is a matter I am sure for friendly consultation between us. As I have said, the colony of Natal has arrived at an arrangement which is absolutely satisfactory to them, I believe : and remember they have, if possible, an even greater interest than you, because they are closer to the immigration which has already begun there on a very large scale, and they have adopted legislation which they believe will give them all that they want, and to which the objection I have taken does not apply, which does not come in conflict with this sentiment, which I am sure you share with us; and I hope, therefore, that during your visit it may be possible for us to arrange a form of words which will avoid hurting the feelings of any of Her Majesty's subjects, while at the same time would amply protect the Australian colonies against any invasion of the class to which they would justly object.

That was a plain, frank, and quite friendly request on behalf of the British Government to the Australian colonies, that in excluding those whom they wished to exclude they should adopt a certain course. It was put as plainly as possible that our object was entirely sympathized with, and that what we asked would be done, but, in return, the counter request is made that we shall do what we desire in the way of exclusion without casting any slur upon subjects of the Empire, and without offence to other peoples whom we wish to keep at a distance from our shores. That was a perfectly reasonable request, providing that it could be proved that the means suggested will be effective, or that they can be supplemented by other means which, operating with them, will make them effective to secure the desired end.

Mr Poynton

- How will this produce a white Australia ?

Mr DEAKIN

- If we exclude all coloured peoples we go a long way towards obtaining a white Australia. I understand the honorable member to imply that, while the educational standard may exclude a great many, it will not exclude all of these, as there are races whom it is desired to exclude who are quite capable of fulfilling all the conditions imposed in the Bill?

Mr Poynton

- Yes, and races which are not British subjects.

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Mr DEAKIN

- I shall not take advantage of the objection that the persons who annoy us most- the Syrians and Afghans, who seek to make a living by peddling ; the Polynesians, from whom there is little danger once the State legislation has been dealt with, and 99 per cent, of the Chinese who come here - would fail to pass the test imposed by the Bill. The Chinese and Japanese who arrive belong to poorly-paid classes, and are the least educated and least informed of their countrymen. It is not the highly-cultured who come here. The number of such people who come here in any one year could be counted upon the fingers of both hands. So that, for the present immigration the provisions of the measure would be operative. Similar provisions have already been operative in State Acts. The best proof that Mr. Chamberlain's suggestion was not received in an unfriendly spirit by the colonies is that, since he made it, the States of New South Wales, Tasmania, Western Australia, and the colony of New Zealand have all passed Acts framed upon the model of the Natal Act, and embodying an educational test. The conference at which Mr. Chamberlain's suggestions were made was held in 1897.

Mr Watson

- But the New South Wales Act was passed only in December, 1898.

Mr DEAKIN

- A return has been laid on the table showing the immigration and emigration of certain peoples year by year. It refers to seven specified classes of persons and a general class. It is as full as the State figures

allow, but, unfortunately, some of their records are very incomplete. The total arrivals in New South Wales from 1896 to 1901, counting in part of this year, which would have been affected by the provisions of this measure if passed, and including Chinese, amounted to 739, and the departures to 2,296. It must be remembered that for half of that period New South Wales did not enjoy the protection of the Natal Act, which was passed at the end of 1895; but since then there has been a great improvement.

Mr Glynn

- How can departures be affected by this measure?

Mr DEAKIN

- They are not said to be affected by it, but in seeking to determine the future of Australia, we must take into consideration the circumstance that not only is there a certain influx, but there is also a certain efflux of these peoples, and we have reached a very happy condition of things when we can reduce the influx, below the efflux, because then we are on the right road to the reduction of our alien population. In the six years which I have mentioned, three times as many of these people left New South Wales as arrived. In Queensland, during the same period, 6,700 Polynesians arrived and 4,700 departed, showing an increase in their number of 2,000. Of other peoples who would have been affected by this measure, if it had been passed, no fewer than 8,000 entered the State and only 6,000 left, so that as against an influx of 739 in New South Wales, there was an influx of 8,000 into Queensland, and as against an outflow from New South Wales of 2,296 there was an outflow of 6,000 from Queensland.

Mr Sawers

- Did not they flow out of New South Wales into Queensland?

Mr DEAKIN

- There were very few to flow out of New South Wales.

Mr Barton

- The returns show that out of 411 arrivals in New South Wales, all but 66 came from the other States.

Mr DEAKIN

- Three hundred and one, forty-five of the New South Wales arrivals, came from the other States.

Mr Watson

- Naturally the influx into New South Wales would not be so great as into the northern State.

Mr DEAKIN

- I agree. As the effectiveness of this measure may be challenged, and honorable members may desire to satisfy themselves on the question, they will find in this return information dealing with all the States. I take as the most striking contrast it affords, that between Queensland and New South Wales. It can be put in two or three words. Queensland without the Act attracted 3,000 aliens, while New South Wales with it attracted 300.

Mr McDonald

- Most of them Chinese, upon whom a poll tax of £100 is imposed.

Mr DEAKIN

- The number of Chinese coming into Queensland was 4,400, of which only 2,400 left. Leaving the Chinese out of account, the number of aliens coming into New South Wales was only about 400, and into Queensland between 3,000 and 4,000.

Mr McDonald

- Does the Minister mean it to be inferred that that has been the effect of the operation of the New South Wales Act?

Mr Salmon

- I can understand the impatience of honorable members to obtain information, but I ask as a point of order if these interjections should be allowed. I am very desirous to hear a continuous statement from the Attorney-General, and it has already been indicated to us that all these speeches will probably be read in another part of the Empire, and certain results may flow from them.

Mr SPEAKER

- All interjections are out of order, but, so long as they are short, and do not interrupt the thread of the speech which is being delivered, I do not think I should interfere. At the same time, during the last few moments, the interjections have been rather more frequent than I think is to the best interests of the House.

Mr DEAKIN

- I recognize the kindness of the honorable member for Laanecoorie in rising to the point of order, but regard the interjections which have been made as quite friendly, and as assisting the elucidation of points. Even though the continuity of my speech is broken, if the House is more fully informed the better result is gained. The most recent communication which has been made public property in which the attitude of the British Government is defined, is the despatch which accompanied the Queensland Central Sugar Mills Bill, when it was returned within the last two or three months. The measure contained a provision which named, as it is desired we should name in this Bill, the classes of persons whom it was sought to exclude by colour, and race. In regard to that proposal, Mr. Chamberlain says - His Majesty's Government fully appreciate the motives which have induced the Government and Legislature of Queensland to pass that particular provision of the Bill.

That was not a provision excluding these persons from Queensland ; it was a provision excluding them from employment in certain mills in the central division of that State. I should say that there was stronger justification for the insertion of this provision in a measure of that kind without it being considered likely to give offence than in an Act to prevent them from entering the country at all. Nevertheless, even in that modified form, it was taken exception to, on the grounds which are the same as those which I have already indicated to the House in quoting Mr. Chamberlain's speech to the Premiers. They need not be repeated except for one or two very significant sentences, which show that the Imperial Government has not changed ground, and indicate what it is prepared to approve if Australia desires. Mr. Chamberlain says-

In the first place it embodies a disqualification based on a place of origin - that is, practically a distinction of race and colour. Any attempt to impose disqualifications on the base of such distinctions, besides being offensive to a friendly power, is contrary to the general conceptions of equality which have been the guiding principle of British rule throughout the Empire. Disqualifications by educational tests, such as are embodied in the immigration laws of various colonies, is not a measure to which the Government of Japan or any other Government can take exception on behalf of its subjects ; and if the particular tests in these laws are not regarded as sufficiently stringent, there is no reason why more stringent and effective ones of a similar character should not be adopted.

That is a most signal sentence - nothing could be plainer. If honorable members consider that the test of writing 50 words in the English tongue will not exclude those whom we are determined to exclude, it is open to us to increase the educational test, with the hearty approbation of the British Government. Mr. Chamberlain says that, if the lines are not regarded as sufficiently stringent, there is no reason why more stringent and effective ones of a similar character should not be adopted. It is for us to affix an educational standard that shall be exclusive. If we do not, the fault rests with ourselves. It is for us, while considering the effectiveness or non effectiveness of the Bill, to remember that so long as the particular lines suggested are followed, no limitation of any kind is to be imposed upon us. Mr. Chamberlain then repeats -

But disqualification for certain employments on the sole ground of place of origin is a measure to which any Government concerned may reasonably object : and in the present Bill the aboriginal natives of two continents and of the Pacific Islands are disqualified solely on that ground.

Then he adds -

In the second place, besides being contrary to the general policy on which the British Empire is based, the Bill is objectionable as embodying a provision which is peculiarly offensive to Japan, a power with which His Majesty's Government is, and earnestly desires to remain on friendly terms. It not only excludes Japanese from certain employment ; but in excluding them it places them in the general category of Asiatic races, without any consideration being paid to their state of civilization, a proceeding which is not agreeable to the Japanese Government, as the Consul at Townsville stated in his letter of the 6th November, 1899, to the Chief . Secretary. I will also lay these on the table of the House - they have been published in all the papers.

Mr MCDONALD

- Will the Attorney-General explain why the other Bills which contained the same clause were assented to?

Mr DEAKIN

- I do not pretend to explain that. I have no means of explaining anything that the British Government has done except what it has itself publicly explained. An explanation of other people's motives is never worth much at any time, and in this case I do not know what reasons actuated the British Government. The point is that the Government are asked why they have adopted the particular proposals contained in this Bill. I have given the answer, which is perfectly public. The Government had no particular love for this method of proceeding any more than for any other method, but they realized - as honorable members of this House who share their responsibility must realize - that when a reasonable request was preferred in a most reasonable conciliatory manner to the people of Australia, it had to be taken into account. Referring for a moment to the last allusion of the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Empire of Japan, it has never been my privilege to visit that country or to become acquainted with its inhabitants, but we all know, from the merest acquaintance with current news and with critical literature, how high a position that nation occupies in art and letters, and how worthy they are of the place, in our estimation, generally conceded to the highest and most civilized among the nations of the world. Many of the most competent artists of the day say that in the development of European art the introduction and knowledge of the art of Japan will form one of the chief landmarks of our history. This is an outside illustration, but I mention it in order to point out that a nation which is capable of the achievements which Japan is able to exhibit artistically, politically, and of the industrial expansion now going on in that country, is justified in resenting - as we should ourselves resent - any unnecessary reflection upon its character by another nation. Japan is justified in resenting any unnecessarily offensive legislation on the part of another nation, just as we might object to being classed with the peoples of the Pacific Islands, as if the Polynesian residents of those islands and ourselves were on the same plane. When it becomes necessary for us to exclude people like the Japanese it is reasonable that we should exclude them in the most considerate manner possible, and without conveying any idea that we have confused them with the many uneducated races of Asia and untutored savages who visit our shores. To lump all these peoples together as Asiatics and undesirables would naturally be offensive to a high-spirited people like the Japanese, and surely without any request from the British Government or without any representations from the Japanese people mere considerations of courtesy, such as should exist between one civilized people and another, should lead us to make this distinction. Considerations of simple politeness, such as honorable members extend to each other in this House, should at least govern the actions of civilized nations in their dealings with one another.

Mr Conroy

- Does the Attorney-General advocate Japanese immigration 1

Mr DEAKIN

- No; I say that the Japanese require to be absolutely excluded.

Mr Wilkinson

- They are the most dangerous of all.

Mr DEAKIN

- I contend that the Japanese require to be excluded because of their high abilities. I quite agree with the honorable member for Moreton that the Japanese are the most dangerous because they most nearly approach us, and would, therefore, be our most formidable competitors. It is not the bad qualities, but the good qualities of these alien races that make them dangerous to us. It is their inexhaustible energy, their power of applying themselves to new tasks, their endurance, and low standard of living that make them such competitors. I quite agree with the honorable member for Bland that the difference that separates them from us is quite as much in their standard of living as anything else. At all" events, the faculties that make them dangerous to us are those which make their labour so cheap and their wants so few. The effect of the contact of two peoples, such as our own and those constituting the alien races, is not to lift them up to our standard, but to drag our labouring population down to theirs. It is the business qualities the business aptitude, and general capacity of these peoples that make them dangerous, and the fact that while they remain an element in our population, they are incapable of being assimilated, makes them all the more to be feared. The Japanese represent the highest class of those who seek to come here, and they are people who are capable of being dealt with on the same footing as any other civilized power. The

Government of Queensland met Japan by means of a treaty, and succeeded in a great measure in preventing the introduction of more Japanese into that State. This was a graceful recognition by Queensland of the position of Japan amongst civilized nations, and has enabled that State to check the influx of Japanese without giving any offence to a friendly power.

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Mr McDonald

- The Japanese immigration has not been stopped.

Mr DEAKIN

- It has not been absolutely stopped, but it should be stopped ; and it remains for us to provide for the absolute prohibition of this and every other class of colored alien immigration by such means as shall not be unnecessarily offensive to the peoples to whom they belong. We ought to accomplish our ends with their good will, and probably in the case of Japan and of India, with the assistance of the Governments concerned.

Mr Conroy

- Does the Attorney-General think that the educational test will block such capable people as the Japanese ?

Mr DEAKIN

- I think it will for the time being, and for this reason. The Government of Japan, which has high hopes and far-reaching aspirations, does not desire to lose any of its population at present. It has much better employment at home for all its people, particularly the better educated, and desires to keep them nearer at hand than they would be if they immigrated to this country.

Mr McDonald

- If the Attorney-General wanted 500 men to-morrow, he could engage them from Japan.

Mr DEAKIN

- Perhaps so, but I am speaking of what the Government of Japan desires. The honorable member could secure recruits from any country. I disclaim, however, any attempt to enter into questions of foreign politics, not that they are remote from this issue, but because they occupy too much time. Japan wants all the strength she can command; she wants all her men at home. She has great fields opening up for their employment, where they will be of undoubtedly greater advantage to her than here, and we have every reason to suppose that the Japanese Government would meet the Commonwealth even more than it has met Queensland, to the extent of assisting us to make the prohibition absolute, that is, if we approach them with that reasonable consideration due to a civilized power. If the honorable member for Kennedy meant to refer to the possibility of the introduction of the Japanese under the contract system I may say that I am heartily with him in prohibiting that.

Mr McDonald

- They have been doing it for years in Queensland.

Mr DEAKIN

- The amendment of the honorable member for Bland aimed at the contract system, has the approval of the Government. There is nothing offensive in that, and there can be no difficulty about conceding it.

Sir William McMillan

- That deals with more than foreign powers.

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Mr DEAKIN

- Yes; it deals with a power within the Empire. It deals with British India. There again we have a government that does not desire to lose its people, which has had to be approached again and again to supply coolies for Fiji or the West Indies, and which has only granted the concessions asked for under pressure. It is quite possible for us, through the British Government, to obtain the assistance of the Government of India in rendering the prohibition of immigration from that country most effective - a prohibition that would prevent people from coming here, and obviate the necessity of their being turned back. I have been rather drawn away from the point which I was discussing, but there are so many subsidiary issues in connexion with this great question - all of which have to be taken into account - that I am glad to see that the House is disposed to pardon me. Coming back again to the point which I left before this long divergence, I hope that honorable members will now begin to see why the Government

have adopted the proposal embodied in this Bill, and why they continue to press it upon the House with all urgency. There is a second and important reason - As the Secretary for State for the Colonies has said, a measure couched in terms such as would make discriminations by origin and by colour will be necessarily offensive to a great power like Japan, and will offend some semi-independent potentates and powers-that-be in the British Empire of India. Consequently it is reasonable to suppose that representations from the British Government to these powers, or to others who may seem to be affected, may be thought desirable by them before the British Government assents to this Bill. It may, after what has been said, wish to explain to a foreign nation or to the people within its own bounds what the circumstances are under which this Bill has been passed, what the feeling of Australians is, and what is intended by us. This will all mean delay. The proposal of the Government does not by any means imply - and it is not intended to imply - that we have reached finality in regard to our immigration legislation when we have passed this Bill; but it is clear that the Bill, in its present shape, is one that can receive, and no doubt would receive, immediate assent, and may therefore become law within a few days or weeks of the present time. It would come into operation over the whole of Australia. While partial State prohibitions have necessarily failed, complete prohibition, as far as it is possible by this Bill, would be at once established in every part of the Commonwealth, and would give to the whole of the continent more than the measure of protection already afforded by some of the State Acts. This Bill is already stronger than the State Acts, and it could be made stronger still. The Government are prepared to assent to that.

Sir William McMillan

- What does the Government propose to do with regard to the Chinese Acts at present in force 1

Mr DEAKIN

- We propose to assimilate those by raising all to the highest power - whatever the strongest restriction is anywhere, we propose, after the passing of this Bill, that it shall be imposed everywhere.

An Honorable Member. - Will that not be offensive to the Chinese 1

Mr DEAKIN

- It may or may not be, but we must trust to the diplomatic representations of the British Government, where they are well able to make them effectively.

Sir William McMillan

- Is it proposed to have the double tests provided for in this Bill and in the State Acts running alongside one another 1

Mr Barton

- Yes, certainly ; but if we apply this Bill in priority, that may not be necessary.

Mr DEAKIN

- We shall apply them both, and thus make assurance doubly sure. This Act is not finality. It is so far from being the last word that it is the first word in regard to immigration legislation. But it has this immense value, that it becomes immediately operative.

Mr McDonald

- It establishes the principle.

Mr DEAKIN

- Certainly, but it is not a principle which is exclusive, and which prevents us from adopting any other principle we may think it fit or necessary to adopt hereafter.

Mr Poynton

- It is putting the Government flag up half-mast.

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Mr DEAKIN

-That is one of the phrases which, when it was used on previous occasions, really meant that the flag of the Opposition was hauled down to half-mast. There is absolutely no hint in this measure of any intention of making it a stopping place. It is one of the chain of measures which the Government themselves propose to pass, and if any other measure beyond this is necessary they are perfectly prepared to pass it. They are as anxious as any honorable member can be to see this proposal assented to. All that they feel called upon to point out is that this great advantage is to be obtained at once by the stretching out of the hand without any suspicion whatever of delay arising, whereas any proposal of the nature submitted by the honorable member for Bland is likely to occasion delay. Although we are justified in relying upon the

express assertion of the British Government that we shall have conceded to us all that we desire, still it will be more consistent with our own self-respect, with a consideration of what is due to other nations and to the mother country, if we can achieve the desired result by means which are acceptable to the Imperial authorities than will be the case if we adopt means which are repugnant to them. During this debate I felt a little pained to hear it implied that in taking this action the Ministry were being affected by some unknown, invisible, secret influence or coercion on the part of the British Government. Such a conception is so absolutely foreign to the facts that I do not know how it could for a moment be entertained. I speak with the knowledge that at all events it has twice been my fortune to visit London on behalf of the State of which I have the honour to be a citizen, and to make important representations upon certain great questions to the British Government. In each case it has been my fortune to be absolutely in opposition to both the Secretary of State for the Colonies, his colleagues, and the officials of his department. It was my lot in relation to the New Hebrides and other questions to speak in private - as one is able to speak, and as my colleagues did only last year in regard to the Commonwealth Bill - words as considerate, but as plain, unvarnished, and unyielding, as were ever addressed to the ears of any Minister in any part of the world. That was our duty upon the last occasion, as it was my duty upon the first. What treatment did we receive, although absolutely in opposition to the Imperial authorities? We received the same courtesy and consideration as honorable members extend to each other on the floor of this House, the same recognition that we had entire liberty of opinion and of action. It was recognised that we spoke for a people whose determination alone was to bind us, and that if we could not be influenced by argument in a public way we could not be influenced at all. I hold that the attitude which the British Government adopted then, and which is adopted to-day in the House of Commons, where from time to time one may hear proposals debated which, in the opinion of a majority, aim at nothing short of the dismemberment of the Empire, must command our admiration. It is simply monstrous to suggest that a country which exhibits that spectacle of liberty and of equity, which is unsurpassed in any part of the world, is at the same time ruled by a Government which by surreptitious means seeks to dictate to the self-governing States the course which they shall pursue. The whole scheme is so much in contrast with patent facts that it simply needs to be stated to carry refutation on its face. Colonial representatives occupy an unassailable position when they have nothing to hope for and nothing to fear from the British Government. Their loyalty stands out in the greatest relief when they are the spokesmen of a self-governing people, not afraid to make their opinions known, or to return courtesy for courtesy. We occupy as good a position as if we were in the House of Commons itself, represent constituencies as important as any member of that august assembly.- We are as much entitled to be heard, and as little entitled to be awed. The whole suggestion of any intimidation from Downing-street which has been put forward is pernicious. It has influenced some honorable members, to my deep astonishment.

Sir William McMillan

- Nobody said so.

Mr DEAKIN

- The honorable member should not interject because I desire to pass by certain passages in his speech without a single word of reference.

Sir William McMillan

- The honorable and learned member is merely doing now the part of misconstruction which has been done elsewhere. 14 I z

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Mr DEAKIN

- I wish to avoid every personal reference whatever, but I say that it is a wanton, unjustifiable misrepresentation of the attitude of the British Government in this regard even to imply that their¹ action is directed to defeating the aims of Australia so that we are actually called upon to consider the last and gravest step of all to assert our national rights - that we are obliged, forsooth, to weigh the question of a white Australia on the one hand against that of our loyalty to the Empire on the other. No official or unofficial utterance can be produced to justify such an assertion. It is utterly mischievous and unwarrantable. I am content to refute it by reference to the official records dealing with this question, which show that on the matter of a white Australia the British Government sees eye to eye and stands shoulder to shoulder with us. We have received an express assurance to which we can if necessary hold

the Imperial authorities, but to which it is not necessary to hold them, that they will in this matter lend us every possible assistance in their power. They approve of our object. All they ask is that we shall adopt such means to gain our ends as will avoid giving offence to other nations, although it is plainly indicated that they would in the last stage accept the course proposed if Australia absolutely believes that no other course is possible. Any other suggestion misrepresents their attitude, and it is an attitude which should not be misrepresented in this chamber, where they have no representatives who are under any obligation to speak for or defend them. Evidently what is sought is to put those who are sensible of what we owe to the mother country in the apparent position of being prepared on that account to sacrifice some Australian right or some Australian privilege. The Government, of which I am a member, and myself also, are under no obligation whatever to this or any other British Government that every citizen of Australia is not under. But I did think that in the earliest days of the Commonwealth, when we looked at the charter so recently gained with the unanimous approbation of both Houses of the British Parliament and of the whole British people - an endowment of freedom such as has never been paralleled in the history of the world, conceded to us in the most cordial manner possible and without any question of bargaining or exchange - that we should have recollected at least sufficient of our origin to have prevented the expression of such opinions. We should ill begin our career by repudiating our incalculable obligations to the mother country. " Until we are challenged by some act of the British Government which calls for resentment, it is in the highest degree unstatesmanlike and mischievous to set up such a bogey to obscure the issue with which we are confronted.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- Why does the Minister beat the air ?

Mr DEAKIN

- If I have only beaten the air the air would not complain. I have freely expressed all that I think upon this matter, but have said it without being personal. That is the whole position. The difficulties with which we are confronted are not difficulties of our own creation. Charges have been levelled against the Government measure, and tirades and torrents of meaningless epithets have been employed. It has been said that the Bill is a fraud, that it is underhanded, that it is an hypocrisy, and in some sense a deceit. These charges are made in regard to a measure that is drawn expressly in view of the published and printed declarations of the British Government. When the British Government ask that a particular course shall be adopted and this Government adopts it, we have told that we are adopting an underhand, fraudulent course, and that our object is to deceive the British Government. The only charge which can be laid against us is that this Bill proposes to ask the House to put a large trust in the Administration of the day, whoever that Administration may consist of. This measure imposes an educational qualification without distinction of race or colour. It can be applied to white as well as to black and to black as well as to brown. It can be applied to all. Then having drawn the Bill so as to place in the hands of the Administration power to apply it to all, the Prime Minister couples it with a declaration that it is not and never was intended to be applied to those white residents of European countries who come here to make their homes with us, and many of whom are among our worthiest citizens and most prosperous settlers. When he indicates that the measure is not intended to apply to Germans, Scandinavians, &c., that they will be welcome to come and make their homes with us, and to assist in building up the nation of which they would soon become a part, we are charged with bringing down a hypocritical measure. I do not say that there are not classes of white-skinned people against whom it may be necessary to protect ourselves. The power placed in the hands of the Administration of the day is the power to specially discriminate between white and white. Between white and brown there is no difficulty in discriminating. We hold that the test should exclude alien Asiatics as well as the people of Japan, against whom the measure is primarily aimed. But while it is primarily so aimed it is not to be construed that the power in the hands of the Executive will not be used to exclude certain persons who are whiteskinned. I have already alluded to cases in Victoria in which citizens of our own nation were excluded when they came here. Other cases of a cognate nature may arise. It would simplify our task if we could put upon the face of the Bill what would be a sufficient direction to the officers administering it. That would be preferable, but as it is not possible to do so without running the risk of using expressions which will delay its passage we have adopted the only alternative course. This Bill incidentally may exclude, in some few cases, white-skinned people, but it is not intended to exclude qualified European immigrants who come here to

make their homes amongst us, and who, whether they pass the test or not, we shall be glad to welcome. Whether they can write 50 words in English or not We are anxious to have such immigrants here, because they are men of enterprise and courage, who strengthen every country into which they enter. When the House is told by the head of the Government exactly what the intention of the Bill is, I confess that I do not understand the charge that we are pursuing an underhand course. If any declaration could be plainer or more explicit and unequivocal, I should like to hear it. I submit, in conclusion, that the Bill is drawn in the best interests of Australia, and is so drawn because similar tests, though not so stringent, have proved effective in all the States in which they been applied. If it is desired to make the Bill more stringent on the same lines, that can be done later without the slightest prospect of the passage of the measure being delayed at all. Any other course will involve delay - not defeat, but delay.

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Mr Wilks

- For how long ?

Mr DEAKIN

- Who can tell? It might, be a few months, but who can say ? I have no information as to its being delayed at all, except what is contained in the printed and published documents read to-day, which show that nations have to be considered, their susceptibilities studied, and communications addressed to them. They show, also, that if we insist on what is considered unnecessarily discourteous action, and make the burdens of British statesmen heavier instead of lighter, we can follow our own course, and, like spoilt children, get our own way. But when we have the frank assurance that we have the support and assistance of the British Government in securing this continent for the people of the white race by any means not offensive to other portions of the Empire or foreign powers, we may safely rely on that assurance. No one will insinuate that the British Government may not be relied upon to fulfil its pledges. We have the opportunity of immediately securing this continent against the influx of aliens, which is already taking place day by day - an influx which is not large, but yet is too large. It is an influx which we can absolutely prohibit at the instant. The men who came to-day, and were seen riding on a lorry, would, I have no doubt, be unable to write 50 words of English, even if they could speak them and to prevent such immigration would be a great gain. In addition, when this Bill goes elsewhere it goes explained by this debate. No one welcomes more than the Government the frankness and freedom of speech which have been properly used in the House in regard to this great issue. There will be no mistake as to our meaning when these speeches are read, and when our votes are seen. Members on both sides of the House, and of all sections of all parties - those in office and those out of office - with the people behind them, are all united in the unalterable resolve that the Commonwealth of Australia shall mean a " white Australia," and that from now henceforward all alien elements within it shall be diminished. We are united in the resolve that this Commonwealth shall be established on the firm foundation of unity of race, so as to enable it to fulfil the promise of its founders, and enjoy to the fullest extent the charter of liberty under the Crown which we now cherish

Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- As the misrepresentation of certain words which I uttered in this debate is of such a serious character, I think I can ask your courtesy, Mr. Speaker, and the courtesy of the House, to allow me to say a word or two in personal explanation. I have read very carefully in the draft report of Hansard the words I uttered in this debate, and I do not withdraw one word of that statement. It is very curious that when I uttered that speech there were no signs of dissension at this so-called disloyalty ; and this is the first time in my life I have ever been accused of being a disloyal subject of His Majesty. I clearly set forth that I believed the proper attitude for this Commonwealth was to tell the British Government what we mean ; and I also said I believed the British Government would see a way out of the peculiar difficulties surrounding the subject. I then drew a picture of the difficulties which might arise in the Government of the British Empire, partly made up of the colonies and partly made up of great Imperial interests in connexion with India and her spheres of influence, and I simply said - it was purely a hypothetical idea - that if in the future in any of those difficulties, emanating from the Government of the Empire itself, it was found impossible to reconcile the demands of the colonies with the aspirations of the colonies, then I, for one, if I had on the one hand a picture of Australia in the same condition as the United States of America, and it was necessary to choose - if that was the only condition under which we could remain part of the British

Empire - I would know what course to choose. I candidly say so again, and I uttered no word of disloyalty when I gave expression to that opinion.

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Mr PIESSE

- The Prime Minister, in introducing this subject to the House, said it touched the region of high politics ; and I am sure that all who have taken part in the discussion must realize that they are considering one of the most responsible matters which will engage the attention of this Parliament at any time. On what we do now depends, to a great extent, the realization of all we hold dear in the Constitution which we have established, and under which we are now living. On the right exercise of our responsibility will depend the future national life of Australia. We may be brought into conflict with great and important powers, and we may have to discuss very important

Imperial issues, but all these matters will have to be considered, I take it, from the stand-point of what is good for us as Australians. Every State should speak by its representatives on this question, so that there may be no doubt as to the united voice of Australia. I made this matter clear in every address I gave to my electors, who came to the conclusion, I trust, in electing me, that I would have no hesitation in saying that I was bound to them, as they are to me, in the conviction that this Constitution should be developed by means of those who realize the political ideals we are endeavouring to follow. I take it that that is the most important phase of this question. We have endeavoured in this Commonwealth to give to every man by virtue of his manhood - and we are presently to give, I believe, to every woman also - the right to take a share in the government of this country. We are, therefore, face to face with the fact that we are asking from every elector a high standard of political intelligence, and a resolve to take his share in the development of the Constitution. We cannot see in those Asiatic and African people, to speak generally, the possibility of any help in realizing what we want to realize under the Constitution, and it is there I see the gravest danger in admitting them in any numbers to the Commonwealth. There is no Asiatic people, saving the one doubtful instance of the Japanese, who have ever shown themselves capable of realizing what is understood by representative government. The industrial questions are sufficiently momentous, I admit, and what has been said on the social aspect of the question is of grave importance; but, after all, we are demanding from the citizens that they shall, one and all, serve the Commonwealth by taking a share in the government, and by being politically intelligent enough to solve the problems which meet us. Those aliens whom I have indicated have not the qualities to enable them to take a share in that work, and, therefore, in defence of our very existence, we must say to them - " We cannot receive you amongst us." The alternative of having them here, and not giving them citizenship, would be almost worse. To have a servile race in very large numbers in

Our midst brings about a condition of things which even the virile character of the English people has not been able to experience without hurt. The Boers whom we are now fighting in South Africa were at first of the best and purest stock of European people. They were Huguenots, who, for freedom of conscience, had left their country, and Dutch, who, rather than submit to invasion by the power of Spain, broke down the sea walls and let the ocean sweep over their country. These are the people, the descendants of whom we have been fighting so long, and with such disastrous results. Why have they come to their present degraded position ? I think there is no other explanation than that they have associated with an inferior people, and that in this way the powerful race of the Dutch and the Huguenots have come to be the Boers with whom Great Britain is in conflict to-day.

An Honorable Member. - But they have not lost their courage.

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Mr PIESSE

- No, they have not lost their courage ; but it must be admitted that they have deteriorated, and the only explanation is their existence among and a large infusion of an inferior people. I think there is only one other point I need dwell on. The Attorney-General has said much that was in my mind ; but I do urge that this question is urgent. The Attorney-General quoted figures showing the number of aliens in Australia. My information had led me to expect that there were at least 100,000 Asiatics and Africans in Australia, which is, I believe, one to every 380 of our people. But that does not represent the full measure of the position. My figures represent one alien to every ten of the present adult male population of Australia, and if our friends in Great Britain, the Government and the people, could be led to imagine a similar position

there, I think they would look upon this matter in a very different light. They would see at once that this is an urgent question in Australia - a question vital to our best interests, and one on which we can have but one voice. I trust that the united voice of Australia will be to exclude all aliens, not only in our own interests, but also in the interests of the Empire of which we form a part. Here we are endeavouring to work out one of the great national problems of the world, and we can get the best chance of working it out only by human instruments likely to fall in with the principles on which the Commonwealth Constitution is founded. I do not at present say what needs to be done further than is proposed.

I think the Government should go further than they have admitted their willingness to go, and I trust we shall not rest, but will, even this session, take further steps if necessary.

Mr Wilks

- We do not want to waste time.

Mr PIESSE

- That is just the point. We do not want to waste time, but we shall do so if we reject the Government proposal, and attempt at once the drastic form of legislation, which I shall ultimately be prepared to support. We want to stop the influx at once. The way to do that is to adopt a measure which we know can be assented to without delay. That is only the first step, and I hope it will be followed very speedily by a second, and more thorough-going one, to secure the full object we have in view. I feel that we are speaking here with a great responsibility placed upon us, but as I ventured to interject during the speech made by the honorable member for Kooyong, we are prepared to take the risk of going to the extreme, that we feel necessary, in order to secure our ends. Following on the lines pursued by the honorable member for Wentworth, I say that even if we have to stand alone and meet this difficulty, with the antagonism of Japan and China, we had better meet it than have our country in such a state that we should never be able to realize the ideals upon which we have founded this Commonwealth. Therefore, I say, that no honorable member will accuse me of wishing to delay the settlement of this question. On the whole, I think, it is best to take the Government proposal as one step on the way in which we should go. We should take a further step immediately, in order that during the coming session we may realize as speedily as possible the full protection that we desire from this measure.

Mr HUGHES

- I feel that to endeavour to offer any kind of criticism on the most admirable speech delivered by the Attorney-General would be not only ungrateful but entirely uncalled for. No man could have put the question, considered from every conceivable aspect, better - few could have put it as well - as the honorable and learned gentleman. I am sure that every honorable member and every one outside who reads his words will re-echo their sentiment with reference to the necessity of maintaining the purity of our race. I realize thoroughly that the

Attorney-General, in putting forward such a defence - I will not say of the provisions underlying this Bill, but of the spirit which animated it - did so because it may be necessary to show those elsewhere that the honorable and learned gentleman speaks not for himself or for his Government, but for all Australia in this matter. I am very certain that no Government could possibly afford to palter with this question. Certainly the Bill brought forward is one which cannot be held, judged by the standard of previous Bills in the same direction, to fall short of what one would desire. While agreeing entirely with all that the Attorney-General said as to the necessity of exclusion, while admiring the honorable and learned gentleman's argument in favour of pursuing one course rather than another, yet I venture to think that he did not make his reasons clear for adopting this particular course, rather than that outlined by the honorable members for Wentworth and Bland. Let us see for a moment what objection the Attorney-General had to urge against the thorough-going attitude assumed by the honorable member for Wentworth.

Mr Wilks

- - The honorable and learned gentleman called him a red raw republican.

Mr HUGHES

- I pass over that aspersion of the honorable gentleman's loyalty.

Mr Deakin

- I did not asperse it.

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Mr HUGHES

- If the honorable and learned gentleman did not it is well. No one would accuse the honorable member for Wentworth of disloyalty, but as to the attitude adopted by the honorable member for Wentworth and the honorable member for Bland, I desire to offer one or two remarks. It has been urged by the Attorney-General, as a reason why a prohibition of coloured aliens should not be substituted for the educational test in this Bill, that in the despatches that have passed and that in the general negotiations that have taken place between the Home Government and the colonies, the Home Government has stated that although it would not, if pressed, carry its objection any further, still it would pain her Majesty to have to assent to a measure which would give offence to her Majesty's Indian subjects and to foreign nations. I desire to deal with that point for a moment, because that is the crux of the whole question. My honorable and learned friend says that the Natal Act met with no objection on the part of Her Majesty's Government, and that the Natal Act, as adopted in these States, has been successful.

Mr Deakin

- Fairly successful.

Mr HUGHES

- The Attorney-General said that it might be reasonably presumed that the Natal Act would be successful if applied to the whole continent. That is the position taken up. We have no guarantee, however, that His Majesty's Government would consent to the Bill now under consideration. The honorable and learned gentleman said, as we know, that Her Majesty's Government did assent to the Natal Act and the Acts based upon it in these States. Those Acts adopted any European language as the test. Surely that is a very different thing from the adoption of the English language as an educational test in these matters. I want to point out that, if it be a source of offence to discriminate between coloured and white people, if it be a source of Offence to the Japanese nation to be included amongst the Polynesians and the degenerate people of the Archipelago, then how much more will it be a source of offence to the European nations to be forbidden entry under this Bill unless they speak the English language. There has never yet been any attempt to adopt a test of this rigorous character as applied to Europeans, and I venture to say, excepting in the case of America, where such a thing may be occasionally done, that the English test-

Mr Deakin

- A provision of this kind has been passed in Western Australia and accepted.

Mr HUGHES

- I would point out that even if it were accepted in reference to a State, it by no means follows that a measure of this kind would receive the assent of the Government when applied to a nation. For my own part, I see absolutely no evidence adduced by the Attorney-General to show that we should stop short at this Bill instead of going on to a complete and satisfactory measure for the prohibition of undesirable coloured aliens. Let us see what the Attorney-General says. He puts forward as an argument that these aliens who come here are uneducated and ignorant ; that the educated and higher classes of coloured aliens do not come here. Then the honorable and learned gentleman delivers a eulogy of the Japanese ; of their adaptability, their readiness to accept the teachings of civilization, their pride, and their success. All these things are undeniable, and if this measure is aimed at the Japanese it will prove a failure. I do not believe there is a nation more capable of acquiring a knowledge of foreign languages - certainly no Eastern nation - than the Japanese, and I say that a German would as readily be prevented by this Bill from entering Australia as a Japanese. A Russian certainly would. What difficulty is there in the way of a Japanese acquiring a knowledge of 50 words of English ? Who is to apply the test ? The test as applied in New South Wales in many cases is a farce. It is notorious amongst people, whose credibility can hardly be doubted, that the men appointed to make the test supply the information. I do not say that they do so upon receipt of a consideration, but they supply the information, and the candidate gets through. If a person has to write or read 50 words in the English language, and a complaisant official supplies the necessary interpretation, what difficulty is there in the way ? Absolutely none. As a matter of fact, I am assured, by information received from the Custom-house, that this is done, at least in New South Wales, if not elsewhere. The aliens can avoid the test by the simple expedient of getting the Custom-house official to supply the information.

Mr Deakin

- That reflects upon the administration.

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Mr HUGHES

- This provision is to be largely- -if not entirely - subject to executive discrimination. The Executive may apply it to one person and not to another. Of course, the test of the English language is an excellent one. I admit the greatness of the English language, whether as a vehicle for the conveyance of the gems of English literature, or as a medium for commercial intercourse. I would remind the Attorney-General that, as a matter of fact, there are a very large number of people in the British Isles who cannot speak a word of English. At least 20 per cent, of the people in the country from which I come would be unable to pass this test. Until I was about eight years of age I could not speak one solitary word of the language which is required to be written under the test provided for in this Bill. Not only will many Irishmen and Gaelic Scotch be excluded by this test, but also the inhabitants of the Channel Islands, whose loyalty, as compared with the average Englishman, is most effusive. The same thing would apply to the French Canadian, who, although he may occasionally entertain some doubts as to the wisdom of his allegiance to the Empire, has, taking him all in all, been a loyal subject during this last century. We are asked to pass provisions which would exclude a number of amiable, industrious, and desirable people, but there is nothing in this Bill to keep out the people we want to keep out. The provisions in the Bill would, I admit, keep out the Andaman Islander or the low caste Hindoo, but they would not keep out the Japanese, and I doubt whether they would exclude the Chinese. I do not think they would do anything more than shut out the very lowest type of coloured Asiatic. As to excluding the Assyrians, I doubt whether they would have that effect. The Assyrian is a very intelligent man, who engages in commercial relations with white people, and in some cases achieves no paltry success in business, and surely he may be assumed to be able to pass this test. Apart from all this, it is clear, from the Attorney-General's own admission, that there is no certainty that this Bill will do what it is alleged it will do. The figures supplied to the House are inconclusive. They do not supply, as far as New South Wales is concerned, any record for 1896 and 1897, the two years previous to the imposition of the Natal Act. During those years they kept no record of the arrival or departure of any aliens, except Chinese, who, of course, have been unaffected by the Natal Act. In Victoria no record has been kept of the arrival or departure of people of any nationalities other than Chinese, either before or after 1898. In Queensland no record has been kept other than which was kept before, and we find that, in spite of the non-imposition of the Natal Act in that State, there has been a falling off of immigration of coloured aliens into that State. The falling off has not been much short of the falling off proportionately in New South Wales under the Natal Act. For instance, in 1899, 44 Assyrians came into New South Wales, whilst in 1901, two years afterwards, the total fell to 24, or a reduction of some 50 per cent. The falling off under the Natal Act in New South Wales has been very little more, proportionately, than the falling off in Queensland without a Natal

Act ; and in the other States little or no difference can be noticed, the immigration having been very slight. In Queensland there has been a large increase of Chinese, who represent a steadily increasing quantity in that State. We may readily understand that if the Natal Act, which has been applied principally in those latitudes where little or no temptation is offered to the coloured races to immigrate, had been extended to Queensland, and a substantial reduction had resulted therefrom, some evidence would have been available to guide us. No evidence, however, is furnished by the statistics quoted by the Attorney-General, and the honorable member's own attitude when quoting the statistics was sufficient to show that he was not at all satisfied in his own mind that this Bill would do all that is required. That attitude on the part of the Attorney-General and of the Government generally is rather extraordinary. The Attorney-General says that this is the beginning of a series of Bills - a series which is to end, probably, in the total prohibition of coloured aliens. If we are not to end there, where are we to end ? And if we are to end there, why should we not begin there? Why should we hesitate? I can understand the attitude assumed by Her Majesty's Government when it is very well known that her late Majesty the Queen entertained a personal affection for her Hindoo subjects which grew on her with advancing years, and caused her to have a personal antipathy to signing anything that would have the effect of excluding them as a race from a part of her dominions. But I have yet to learn that even the personal likes or dislikes of a sovereign of the realm is to guide the destinies of a free people. And further, I have yet to learn that His Majesty the King entertains the same disinclination as did her late Majesty the Queen. This, however, is merely a theoretical way of looking at the question of a refusal to give the Royal assent. As a matter of

fact it is the disinclination of His Majesty's Ministers to recommend the giving of the Royal assent, because it might involve European and general difficulties. That is at the bottom of the whole thing. It is notorious that to-day Great Britain stands almost without an ally. She is now driven into a corner, and she is dependent upon the support, tardy and reluctant, of Japan. Amongst all the nations of the world Japan is the only one to support Great Britain - that is what I understand, although I do not venture to enter upon a discussion of foreign politics the end of which is labyrinthine and chaotic. I would point out that His Majesty's Ministers are reluctant to assent to such a Bill as that desired by the honorable member for Wentworth and the honorable member for Bland, not because it will offend His Majesty's subjects in India, and not because it will offend the fine susceptibilities or tender feeling of our brothers in Japan, but because it will rob Great Britain of an ally of which in the future she may stand dearly in need. I admit that that is a point which requires consideration. But I say, too, that we are to regard this matter not altogether from the stand-point that the Attorney-General put forward. that is to say, that we may offend somebody at home by pressing this matter to a conclusion, or that we may offend the nice and tender susceptibilities of the Japanese, or that we may annoy the Eastern nations generally; but we are to consider the question as to how it will affect us as a free people on the very threshold of our national career. We are here, according to the honorable member's own statement, clothed with supreme authority as far as this particular question is concerned ; we are here speaking with one voice. The Attorney-General says that those who oppose this principle are a negligible quantity, and that whatever their opinions may be they speak them in faint and unintelligible tones. A little while ago there were men who spoke against the exclusion of our coloured brethren from this country, but these are now either dead or have been converted, or are suffering from some affection of the vocal organs, and are dumb as far as this community is concerned. We hear them not,' and therefore we are speaking as one people ; and the Attorney-General has well voiced the aspirations of this nation in what he has said this afternoon. Why, however, does he stop short? The only argument in favour of our stopping short is that if we go on we shall offend the Japanese or annoy and embarrass His Majesty's Ministers. Although the Attorney-General has not proved it. We know very well that it will offend the Japanese - we may take that for granted - but the Attorney-General has not proved that His Majesty's Ministers will be embarrassed, although that is pretty clear. These things, however, are not to be considered when opposed to the great principle that the Attorney-General himself has so well and admirably voiced this afternoon. We want a white Australia, and are we to be denied it because we shall offend the Japanese or embarrass His Majesty's Ministers? I think not. The honorable member for Wentworth wished to disclaim any wish - as do we all - -to consider the question of what would happen if the Government of Great Britain refused to agree to such a measure as we desire. For my part I do not desire, and I do not think there are 5 per cent, of the people of this country who desire separation from Great Britain, but while I do not wish it, I do not fear it. If it is to come it is to come from no act of mine, and it is to come from no act on the part of those who think as we do ; but it is to come because we are denied that which we have an inalienable right to have. We are to work out our destiny unaffected by that terrible blot referred to by the Attorney-General as affecting America, without the leprous curse that is spreading its sway through Queensland unhampered and unhindered, and which threatens to make it a country no longer fit for a white man, because it will shortly be a country where no white man can compete with our cheap, industrious, and virtuous, but undesirable Japanese and Chinese friends. The Attorney-General has said that we object to these people, because of their very virtues. I do not object to their virtues, but I say many of their virtues, when weighed in the economic scale, become vices. For a man to work for a wage of 2d. a day is a vice which, if it became general amongst white men; would reduce society to chaos. Where would our manufacturers and merchants and storekeepers be ? Where would that noble and palatial enterprise, which was honoured by a visit from some honorable members of this House to-day, be if men only earned and spent 2d. a day? There is no vice, and I say it advisedly, like the vice of small expenditure when carried to a ridiculous and un-European length, and as- this alien competition aims a blow at the very basis of our industrial system we oppose it. We are to try this matter not by the standard of some faddist, who writes of how to cure the unemployed difficulty by teaching people how to live upon 6d. a day, but from the stand-point that it is only by maintaining a certain standard of living that wages are kept up to a decent level. Reduce the standard of comfort and immediately the wages go down. If a horse could live upon a straw a day, then a straw a day would be the keep of the horse. Similarly, if I could live on a penny

a day, a penny a day would be the amount of my wage. We object to these people because of their vices, and of their immorality, and because of a hundred things which we can only hint at, and our objections are not to be met by the declaration that the Imperial Government will be embarrassed by them. We must approach this question as the Americans did the question of the right to govern themselves - in a calm and deliberate spirit. The Attorney-General has obtruded into this debate nothing of a personal character - there is no necessity to be personal. This is a matter upon which we may have legitimate differences of opinion. I am an Englishman, and I claim to be as loyal to the Empire as is any man in it. I should be sorry indeed if any act of mine, or of any other person, severed the ties which bind us to the Empire. But, just as one may have an undesirable relation whom one would hesitate to consign either to a lunatic asylum or to gaol, and yet be compelled to do so, so occasions may arise when it may be necessary to be cruel to be just, or even to be kind. My honorable friend has put forward an illustration of what this Bill will accomplish. He says it will keep out undesirable aliens of a certain kind. But even he admits that it will allow the educated Japanese to gain admission to our shores, and it is the educated Japanese that we fear. Do honorable members who are protectionists realize that it would be possible without contracting for a solitary Japanese to introduce men here who could pass this test, and who would readily consent to work for 1s. a day in Victoria? The Factories Act might be strained in vain to control these men who would work for a minimum wage, and quickly make that minimum our maximum. There is no conceivable method by which the Japanese, if they once got a fair hold in competition with our own people, could be coped with. There is no social legislation by which we could sufficiently handicap them. We must face this matter whilst there is yet time. We have talked about their peddling - about alien hawkers. But these are merely the advance guard of the great army of coloured men who, when they go back to their country as the advance guard of the Israelites did of old, will tell their compatriots of the splendid opportunities which await them in the promised land. Then the higher classes of coloured men will come in, and the educational test will be swept aside by men who can learn any trade in half the time which it takes a European to acquire it, and who in their own land will erect factories - and who are now making intricate machinery, manufacturing rifles and other things, which are equal to anything produced by the European. And we propose to stop such men by the educational test. Though such a test will not stop them, it will prevent the admission of our own fellow countrymen. A fellow countryman of mine, for example, upon being asked to spell accurately 50 words in English, would find the task absolutely impossible. The intelligent, educated, sensitive Japanese would gain admission, whilst my fellow countrymen would be turned back. This is the kind of policy which is not to annoy His Majesty's Ministers. I think it can be readily proved that it will annoy them. It will annoy them, because although the European nations might not have their attention directed to so small a matter as the exclusion of their subjects from Western Australia, when a nation in embryo, such as we are, and upon whom the limelight is concentrated just now, enacts legislation of the character proposed, they will speedily wake up to the fact that we wish to exclude persons who cannot speak English. Are Germany, France, Russia, and Italy to endure without protest such ignominy? Here is an Empire, whose watchword has always been freedom, which has hitherto imposed no embargo of colour, race, creed, or language, but which now proposes to impose an embargo so rigid as to exclude the whole of the inhabitants of Europe, save under exceptional circumstances, from coming within our shores. Are we to suppose that that will not embarrass His Majesty's Ministers? I think it will. I prefer to risk the embarrassment hinted at by the Attorney-General, and to press home this matter in thorough fashion now, and not later. The Attorney-General spoke of this measure as if it were the beginning of a long series of Bills having a similar object in view. This then is the beginning. Next week we are to have the Pacific Islands Labourers Bill, and the week after, or the year after, or next century, we are to have another Bill which will go still further. So we are to go on, and doubtless by some discovery which unhappily is now in the womb of futurity, conferring immortality upon us, we may yet live to see the time when this Government shall deem it to be opportune to introduce such a measure as I speak of. In the meantime, however, vested interests will arise. In the meantime our coloured educated brothers from Japan will have arrived in such numbers that it may be necessary to extend the franchise to them, because we could not in decency refuse them that privilege. "We who have fought, and are still pursuing a great war for that very purpose, must extend the franchise to all. And, when in the future some gentleman representing a constituency almost exclusively composed of our intelligent and supersensitive friends from Japan shall rise in this Chamber and oppose the thunder of his

eloquence to the timidity of the honorable gentleman who introduces this measure, I venture to Say that, whether it be this century or the next, there will still be a hesitation to go on with such legislation. I prefer to go on now, because our whole national course is to be shaped by our initial movements. If we are to go on making things smooth for His Majesty's Government if our first and only desire is to shape our policy to fit the ends of the Imperial Government - then ours is not a hopeful future. -But if we are to shape a policy to suit our own ends, then we know where we are. We have come, it appears to me, to the parting of the ways. We are to decide now, at the beginning of our new national life, whether we are to go on inspired by the victories which our forefathers have won in this country, in America, and in England. We have to decide whether, warned by the lessons of other men, we shall say that we will have a white Australia by the only possible and sure way of getting it, namely, by absolutely prohibiting the introduction of undesirable aliens. The amendment of the honorable member for Bland, which aims at that, should receive the support of every honorable member. I shall listen with the keenest interest to any arguments that may be adduced to show that such a course will be fraught with danger. For we are told in so many words that there is no danger of a veto. To secure the passage of the Bill, we are assured it needs only to be pressed on with a whole-souled effort. If I know the temper of this House and of this country we shall press it on. If it needs pressing on more than once or twice, I believe that we shall have the courage, as I am sure we have the desire, to do it. But the Attorney-General says prohibition may mean delay, and that it is an undesirable thing to delay, because delay brings with it a hundred dangers. But what danger is there in delay if what the Attorney-General says is true, namely, that all over Australia the influx of coloured aliens is diminishing! If that be a fact where is the honorable and learned gentleman's argument that there is danger in delay. Obviously, the longer we delay the better off we shall be.

Mr Barton

- Because there are three States in Australia where there are no such Acts.

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Mr HUGHES

- I find that in Queensland the Japanese arrivals in 1900 numbered 52, in 1899 they totalled 154, and in 1901 they had dropped to 98. According to the statistics of the Attorney-General the Japanese influx is diminishing in Queensland. Therefore we shall lose nothing by delay. The same remark applies, to the other States. In any case, what delay can there be, when on the one hand we have an earnest House and a united country, whilst on the other we have a determined Government? If the Government be as determined as the admirable speech of the Attorney-General led us to believe, there can be no delay other than that involved by a few months. The only delay involved would be that caused by the transmission of the Bill to the Imperial authorities. There does not appear to be any immediate prospect of the completion, of the present session, so that there seems to be no reason why the argument as to delay should be considered for a moment. Summed up, the arguments in favour of the measure are first, that it would meet with the approval of His Majesty's. Ministers. That has not been proved. Secondly, that it would involve no European, Asiatic, or other foreign complications. That has not been proved. My honorable friend rests on the calm assurance of mere statement. I, for my part, am inclined to believe that European protest will follow the passage of such a measure. Whether the British Government will take any serious notice of such a protest remains to be seen. Still, to suppose that a powerful nation like, that of France or Germany will sit down under the imputation that the whole of Australia is closed to its subjects -without even a protest on the part of their diplomatic agents, is to suppose that such agents are very negligent of their country's interests. The other argument is that there may be delay, but I have already dealt with that, and I have said that I think there will be none. The Attorney-General has stated that there will be no veto, and there is no question of separation. Certain alarmist articles appearing in the press, which are very likely inspired, predict as a result of putting forward such a Bill as we desire, that we should have to separate from Great Britain, and should shortly have to meet a Japanese or Chinese invasion - not a mere immigration, but a hostile and armed invasion. But I think we may relegate such predictions, not to the limbo of Hades, but to the Minister for Defence, under whose caro, with the admirable and very comprehensive defence measure he has introduced, all these difficulties will pass happily and readily away. AH these objections may be put on one side, and then what do the Attorney-General's arguments amount to? He has put forward the most admirable reasons for prohibition, and stopped short of introducing it. He has shown in his speech what was shown to be necessary in the

speeches of the honorable members for Wentworth and Bland, and, having done that, he proposes to rest on this flimsy, and, according to his own statement, unsatisfactory measure now before the House. He has, with the eloquence of an orator, put before the House and the country reasons which will echo and be re-echoed in the mind of every man in the country, why these aliens should be kept out, not in fifty years time, but to-day, and having shown that, he tells us that he does not propose to keep out these people, because that may embarrass the Home Government. And while I am unable to see any reason at all why the amendment of the honorable member for Bland should not be incorporated in the measure, [I am unable to understand the attitude of the Government. I do not know whether the Government are prepared to accept the amendment of the honorable member for Bland or not, and I venture to say that nobody else knows. If honorable members only knew to what length the Government were prepared to go - whether they were prepared to accept the amendment or reject it - we should know where we were. If the Government were prepared to accept the amendment, we should not waste our eloquence, and the time of the country, and the House by discussing the proposal. But if the Government are not prepared to accept the amendment, do they regard this as a vital question? If they do not regard this as a vital question, what would they regard as a vital question? If they do not regard this as a vital question, why do they not make a declaration to the House in so many words? We should then know whether the Government are prepared to stand on any flimsy statement about embarrassing the Home Government, the displeasure of the Crown, or anything of that kind. We should know what the intentions of the Government are. They have the option of taking one of two courses. They can either stand by the Bill, or they can accept the amendment of the honorable member for Bland. If they stand by the Bill they must take the whole responsibility on their own shoulders, and if they are defeated, I presume something will happen. If, on the other hand, they are prepared merely to take the sense of the House, let us come to a division, so that the Government may know what to do. I should have been glad if in the admirable dissertation of the Attorney-General, we had been favoured with ever so slight a hint as to the Government's intentions. For myself, I gathered nothing excepting that the Government are in earnest about excluding the coloured man, but that they are not in earnest about the way of doing it. Of course, a man may be in earnest about earning his own living, but if he is not in earnest about the particular way of getting that living, nothing happens. No words could have better conveyed the desire we have at heart, than the opening words of my honorable friend's speech, but all that he finally gave forth to the House and the country was the declaration that these aliens are undesirable and ought to be kept out. As to how they are to be kept out, it might be done in one way or in some other way. As to what way, I am at a total loss to understand how the Government stand, and I want to know. It appears to me that when one of two methods is certain, and involves no danger of veto, and the only objection that can be urged against it is, that it may embarrass the Home Government, and when another method may or may not do something, but will certainly have to be followed in time to come by a more restrictive or harsher measure, then, I say, that on the threshold of our career as a young nation, there seems nothing for us to do but to take our stand boldly with one voice, and have placed before the Home Government our real desires. We were told by the Attorney-General that we ought to adopt the Government's proposal out of gratitude to the Imperial Parliament for giving us the freest Constitution in the world. Are we showing our gratitude to them by bartering this right, which is given to us under the Constitution, of having whom we please as citizens, out of gratitude to the Home Government, or are we to prove ourselves worthy of it by regarding this instrument and great heritage, given to us at the request of the people of the country by the Imperial Parliament, as a means by which we shall here and now have a "white Australia" uncontaminated, providing for that uncontamination by a measure which, on the face of it, prohibits the importation of a single coloured alien?

Mr WILKS

- It must be recognised that this is now not so much a matter for second-reading debate as one of anxiety to know what is the attitude of the Government. The Government have been asked whether they are prepared to accept the amendment of the honorable member for Bland, and if they would make a reply, it would save much time. In the interests of the people of Australia, and in the interests of the House, it would be wise for the Government to intimate now whether they intend to withdraw their objection to the amendment.

Mr Higgins

- The honorable member is making this Bill too much a party question.

Mr WILKS

- I trust that the Prime Minister will take an assurance, even from a humble member of the Opposition, that we on this side of the House feel that there is no room for party in a matter of this kind. The question of a "white Australia" is not one which should depend on party issues or party votes. The honorable member for Wentworth has been accused elsewhere of having made this a party matter, but so far as honorable members on this side of the House are concerned, he did not call a meeting, and there was no consultation. We hope to be able to carry out the suggestion of the Attorney-General and speak with unflexible firmness, uninfluenced by the authorities of Downing-street. I do not think the members from the State of New South Wales have shrunk to such small proportions that they are prepared on every occasion to make a party question of a matter of national policy, of a matter a vital character. The Attorney-General's speech was the greatest appeal that could have been made on behalf of the amendment, his attitude from the beginning being an absolute demonstration of the necessity of the proposal of the honorable member for Bland. The only objection that could be made to the honorable member's speech was his unkind reference, made purely in a party spirit, to the honorable member for Wentworth. But I think the Attorney-General regrets those remarks, and he must admit that the position he takes up is the position of the honorable member for Wentworth, when that honorable member said that, assuming the British Government refused to give full power of autonomous government, he would be compelled to make his decision. No man who knows the political history of Australia would look on the honorable member for Wentworth as a republican, and if there has been any effort to make this a party issue, it has been on the side of the Government, when the speech of the honorable member for Wentworth was attacked on the ground of disloyalty. We have been asked to show inflexible firmness ; but how can that be shown unless the two Chambers are unanimous ? I would like to see such unanimity as to show to the authorities at Downing-street, that the people and Parliament of Australia are determined in demanding effective control in regard to the introduction of alien labour.

Mr Deakin

- Hear, hear.

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Mr WILKS

- The Attorney-General says " Hear, hear " but that is the whole position. I trust that the Prime Minister, when he has an opportunity of hearing honorable members, will not think there is an opposition on this vital matter, because it is only right that the Federal Parliament should deal with this matter on a broad, national basis. The Prime Minister must recognise that our people are not afraid to speak in no uncertain manner to the authorities of the home country, and I hope he will see the wisdom of accepting the amendment of the honorable member for Bland. I would remind honorable members that the Attorney-General said there was no finality in this measure. But if he admits there is no finality, he admits that there is danger of failure, and it is curious that such a powerful logician could not see the position into which he was driving himself. Again, if a further argument is required as to the extent of our powers in this matter, the Attorney-General himself has supplied it. He says we have the power under the Constitution, and he has cited sub-section 26, of section 51 of the Constitution Act, in support of that statement. We have the power to deal with this question thoroughly. This Constitution was given to us by the British Parliament. The British Parliament indorsed the powers contained in it, and the Attorney-General is as well aware as any other honorable member, that the British Parliament knew at the time the effect of the section he quoted. If they have given us this power to pass an effective measure for the restriction of coloured alien immigration, are we to consider for a moment that the Imperial authorities will oppose our demands when they are made in a thorough manner? The Prime Minister rose to a high level - as he can do upon constitutional and important political questions - some weeks ago when dealing with this question. He told us that this was a matter of definite and high policy on the part of the Government. If we examine the Bill in the light of those adjectives, we shall discover whether it is a measure containing a high or a definite policy. The Attorney-General has told us himself that there is no finality in it. If the honorable and learned gentleman was speaking accurately, then he contradicted the Prime Minister's assertion that he took up a high and definite stand upon this question. Then we are told that this high policy appears in the provision for an educational test, and that while the full application of that test would keep out Europeans, it will

never be exercised against them. We are told that under a judicious administration - those were the words used by the Prime Minister - the hurtful effects of this measure will not be applied to Europeans. Is this in accordance with the high ideals of a new nation which desires to show the people of the world the high standard that it aims, at ? I think we are placed in a most degrading position when the Prime Minister is prepared to tell us that under the operation of this Bill officials will wink the other eye. That is an expressive Australianism, and I am compelled to use it to carry home with as much force as I can the unfortunate position in which the Prime Minister has placed himself. Again the Prime Minister, in his speech on the second, reading, anticipated the attitude the Attorney General has taken up to-day when he said - "If this Act does not effect the purpose we shall come to the Legislature for further powers." There is an indication that the Bill will not accomplish the desired effect ; a proof, again, of its want of finality I do not wish to deal with the dangers that surround the introduction of coloured aliens in Australia, because I think they are admitted. It would be simply a waste of time to give illustrations either from Queensland, New South Wales, or any other portion of our island continent as to the danger of continued incursions of alien races. A grave danger is to be feared from the infiltration of these races. By a slow and unobserved process a steady and gradual invasion is taking place from which we have the most to fear. It is said that Japan is an ally of Great Britain, and that that is one reason why we should approach the Home Government in the way proposed in the Bill. What we have to consider, however, is whether a fight should take place now by the refusal of Australia under this Bill to allow the influx of these colored races, or whether it should take place in the future after this steady, disagreeable, and iniquitous process of infiltration has been going on for years. I venture to say so far as the Japanese are concerned, that any treaty which may have been arranged between Great Britain and Japan, relates simply to the position of the mother country in the eastern seas, and has nothing whatever to do with Australia. We are a self-governing power, and we have a right therefore to go to the Imperial authorities and ask their assent to the exclusion of any races that we may desire to shut out from this continent. The Attorney-General says that the Japanese are powerful, that they rapidly assimilate European customs and acquire knowledge, and that they are fast becoming the best educated force in the world. Does the honorable and learned gentleman mean to tell Downing street, then, that the educated and talented Japanese cannot see through this movement of ours ? Does he mean to tell this House that the highly-qualified Japanese, possessing great powers of perception and adaptability cannot see the weak part of this Bill, that they cannot see it is an attempt, to use an Americanism, "to whip the devil round the stump," notwithstanding the high ideals of Australians.

Mr Higgins

- Which is the devil and which is the stump ?

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Mr WILKS

- The devil is the man on the stump who advocates black labour. I believe the honorable and learned member who interjects belongs to the devil's brigade, so that he is better able to answer the question than I am. If the Japanese can so rapidly adapt themselves to European customs, if they have readily adopted the manners of western civilization, what difficulty will they experience in passing the test provided in this Bill? The sole requirement is a knowledge of the English language, and it is only reasonable to suppose that upon the passing of this measure such an astute people would immediately start schools for the instruction of the Japanese in that language. If Downing street is to give any consideration to this measure at all, it must see clearly that the European powers will have an excuse for provoking a quarrel with England in the proposal contained in the Bill to make a knowledge of the English language the test for the admission of all aliens to Australia. They may say that this is diplomatic - that it answers the description of the diplomatist as an honest man who leaves his country and lies in another - that Australia with her high ideals should start her national life by lying to the other nations of the world. I for one, however, am opposed to it. One of the arguments in favour of federation, as presented by that skilled speaker, the Attorney-General, and by the Prime Minister, was that the individual States of Australia spoke to Great Britain with a feeble voice, but that with the federation of Australia they would be able to put forward with a robust and united voice the desires of the people. Are we, after the consummation of federation, to still approach the Imperial authorities as the individual States approached them in the past ? This very Bill goes no further than a measure introduced in a State Legislature "would go. The attitude of

the State Parliaments in the past has not been exceeded by the attitude of the Commonwealth Government upon this matter. The inflexible purpose and firmness of the Australian people can be no better exemplified than by clearly expressing to Downing-street their aspiration that a white Australia shall come and come speedily. Reference has been made to the danger of delay. The Attorney-General admits that there is no ground for saying that this measure will be accepted by the Imperial authorities. All that the honorable and learned gentleman knows is that it is to the spirit of the people who direct the Imperial authorities, and not to the desire of the Imperial authorities themselves, that we have to look. The spirit of the people is such that they are prepared to allow their own kinsmen in Australia to determine who shall, and who shall not, be inhabitants of this country. If it is expressed with inflexible firmness that the whole of Australia requires a measure that will be thoroughly effective, we shall attain our wish. We shall obtain it by a straight-out course. Why should there be any humility on our part ? Why should we be asked, in our manhood's day, to take the step of a child when the step of a man is required ? Shall we reduce the opposition of the eastern nations to our proposals by covering up our intentions in this Bill, and piloting the measure past the Imperial authorities under a subterfuge ? Shall we not also gain the respect of foreign powers by openly stating that we do not require their people here, and that we are prepared to take the consequences of refusing to admit them ? There is not the slightest doubt that the black labour problem in the United States of America is a very serious one. The black people there have increased to such an extent, and have gained such power, that the jurists and statesmen there pause and look with fear upon them. A repetition of the trouble will occur in this country if these servile and objectionable races are allowed to continue to invade our shores. We are told that self-preservation is the first law. That is an aphorism we have known since our childhood. The Prime Minister admits that self-preservation is an instinct which rises above international law and Imperial relations.

Not that any member of this House seriously entertains the idea of separating from Great Britain, nor can any of us believe that the Imperial authorities, in their present day advancement, would refuse the properly expressed desires of federated Australia. We have now an opportunity of stating forcibly and unmistakably our wishes in regard to this matter. It is no party question, and both Opposition and Government can join in assisting the aspirations of the people to keep our land pure and unsullied from these Eastern nations. I trust, therefore, that the Ministry will withdraw their objection to the amendment, that the House will pass it, and that it will be agreed to by the other Chamber, so that the measure may go to the Home authorities as the outspoken unanimous expression of the desires of the people of Australia. The "cut-the-painter" policy has died but. Since the war with America, Great Britain has given full liberty to her colonies. She has allowed those who have been the pioneers of civilization throughout the globe to have the fullest liberty of action in matters of selfgovernment. We were all pleased to read of the manner in which the Attorney-General was received by the Imperial authorities, and the weight which was attached to his statements as an accredited representative of Australia ; but it has been the constant desire of the Imperial Government not to provoke the resentment of the colonies. That being so, no one to-day would advocate the "cutting of the painter." I hope that the Attorney-General will have the courage, before the debate closes, to withdraw the unfair inference for which he is responsible, that the honorable member for Wentworth is seized of narrow republican ideas of government. The honorable and learned gentlemen cruelly misinterpreted the remarks of the honorable member for Wentworth.

Mr Deakin

- The honorable member for Dalley misinterprets my remarks in reference to the honorable member for Wentworth. I only replied to something I was challenged to reply to.

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Mr WILKS

- Are we to understand that the honorable and learned member's unkind remarks applied to some other person existing in some other country ? If that is so, the honorable member for Wentworth is cleared of the aspersion that he has adopted a republican attitude. The Prime Minister has stated that this Bill is not aimed at Europeans, although, if put into operation, it will restrict the immigration of certain classes of Europeans. Such a statement is an admission of duplicity, and surely it is undesirable that a great nation like Australia should be a party to anything that is not straightforward. The Attorney-General, too, told us that the measure is aimed primarily at the Japanese, but he has admitted in the course of his remarks that they are so skilled, and have such great powers of acquiring knowledge that their civilization is now

almost equal to ours. Therefore, we are aiming at them an arrow without a barb, and the measure will have no practical effect in excluding them. Then we are told that there is to be no finality in this legislation - that the passing of this Bill will call for the passing of another measure later on. Such a statement is an admission that the measure will be a failure, an admission which you, Mr. Speaker, must have heard with a good deal of astonishment. The people of the State of New South Wales have read with admiration and pleasure the remarks of the honorable member for Wentworth. His cautiousness in State politics may have led some to believe that he would adopt a different attitude on this question, but I am pleased to see him in the radical ranks, and, as you, sir, know, the radicals in this House sit not behind the Government, but on the Opposition side of the chamber. The powerful Melbourne press have tried to insinuate that the honorable member for Wentworth was conservative in type, and that he would therefore not adopt an attitude of loyalty towards Australia. The people do not want to see the question of a white Australia dallied with by politicians, or used as an issue by which one side or another may get into power. They expect that the Parliament of Australia will obtain for them what has been refused to the State Parliaments. The Government should either withdraw the Bill or intimate to the House that they are prepared to accept the amendment of the honorable member for Bland, and thus show that they are trying to uphold the ideas of the people. No doubt Australia, in dealing with this problem, will have many difficulties to face, but they will be better faced by immediate action than by allowing delay. The Attorney-General cited an historical incident, when, in the early days, the people of Port Phillip resisted the landing of convicts on their shores. Surely if in those days the people here could resist the landing of British subjects of British birth, federated Australia is in a position to ask the Imperial authorities to allow her to carry into effect the desires and aspirations of her people. 1 In answer to the objection that the people have not fully considered this matter, I would say that the States have considered it, and that prior to the union some of them passed Statutes restricting the immigration of undesirable and servile races. I believe that the chief reason why Queensland joined the Union, at great sacrifice to her own present interests, and interference with her internal administration, was that her people thought that the Federal Government would insist upon the carrying out of their aspirations in this respect. I believe that if the authorities at Downing-street took the trouble to obtain a knowledge of the wishes of Australia, they would find that from one end of the continent to the other the people are ready to speak in one tune and in one voice in favour of restriction. With regard to the educational test I think it is absurd, and I trust that we shall not be weak enough to approach the British Government with any such subterfuge, but that our attitude will be characterized by robustness and honesty, instead of our taking a roundabout course. We should adopt such a straightforward method of expressing our desires as to compel the respect and admiration of the Imperial authorities. There is no necessity for us to exercise that diplomacy which has grown up in Europe through centuries of tradition, but which with us ought to be an unknown art. We know that the Chinese are adepts in the arts of dissimulation, and we should not present ourselves to them in such a way that they may be excused for regarding us as equalling them in that respect. We should adopt the most direct and simple means of achieving what we require, and I earnestly ask the Government to reconsider the whole matter, and to embody in the Bill the amendment that aims at keeping out all these people by the most direct and efficacious methods. I do not think that the Imperial authorities will hesitate to grant us what we want. We shall have to assert our position sooner or later, and we might as well assert it on straight and just lines as by means of a subterfuge. We are told that this Bill is not to be carried into effect so far as it might operate to the exclusion of the European races, but we are asked to rely upon a judicious administration where they are concerned. In effect we are desired to pass a law which will have a general scope, but which will be applied only to the servile races, and which will not be used for the purpose of excluding foreign peoples of the same colour as ourselves. Instead of expressing our wishes by an Act of legislation plainly and simply, it is proposed that we should shelter ourselves behind the action of the Minister who may have the administration of this particular Bill. It is possible for us to take up a high and honorable position, and, as the Attorney-General, like the Prime Minister, has put this to us as a matter of definite and high policy, I hope he will give us an opportunity of expressing our desire by speaking out with inflexible firmness. My attitude on this matter, as expressed by my vote, will, certainly be in favour of this course. 1 hope we shall not hear any further suggestions that the members of the Opposition are influenced in their attitude on this subject by any party considerations. In all these great matters of national concern the members of the Opposition can apply themselves to the

consideration of the matter in hand, without any straining after positions on the Treasury benches. We are not -all so anxious to secure office that we are willing to take any opportunity to get there, even at the expense of plunging the country into disgrace. If we were to disregard our duty in a matter of this kind, we should bring disgrace upon the country as well as trouble upon the Ministry. My desire is to see carried into effect speedily and effectively the establishment of a white Australia, and I hope that we shall arrive at that end by the most straightforward and dignified means.

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Mr TUDOR

- The question with which we are now dealing is one entirely beyond all party considerations. Australia spoke with a unanimous voice on this subject of shutting out coloured aliens at the time of the Federal elections, and I think I went further than most honorable members, when I stated that I was prepared to stop the influx of coloured aliens immediately. I preferred to cut off the tail of the dog at once, instead of taking off a joint at a time - as much for the sake of the dog as for the sake of the person performing the operation. If we mean business - and I believe that honorable members are unanimous as to the desirability of excluding coloured aliens - the Home Government will have no hesitation in assenting to a measure that will carry out our wishes. Honorable members need not be afraid that there will be any delay in the matter, because when the Home Government are made aware of the unanimous feeling that has been expressed during this debate, they will, without doubt, assent to the measure. The Attorney-General in his speech referred to the utterances of the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain when the Australian Premiers were in England in 1897. At that time Mr. Chamberlain said that the Home Government would offer no opposition to any law that might be brought forward, even though it might be painful to the British Government. It would be more painful to us, seeing that we have suffered from the effects of this coloured immigration, if we could not do something to restrict the influx of such undesirable additions to our population. If the Home Government conceive any idea that we are willing to accept half measures, they may feel inclined to concede us only a quarter of what we really require ; but if we are bold and firm in our attitude, they will accede to our wishes with a good grace. The effects of the introduction of aliens amongst us have been very serious in some parts of Australia. In Victoria some trades have suffered particularly, and in the furniture trade the competition that has been brought about by Chinese workers has been such that, had it not been for the Factories Act, that trade would have been wiped out of existence so far as European workmen were concerned. I recently formed one of a deputation which waited upon the Premier of Victoria with reference to this question, and upon that occasion employers and employees were unanimous in stating that the Chinese were continually endeavouring to break down the Factories Act - that they were not law abiding citizens, but were continually transgressing the Act which others were compelled to obey. I took the trouble to go through the factory inspector's reports, and I found that whilst there had not been one prosecution for a breach of the Act amongst the 242 European manufacturers, there had been over 50 prosecutions and convictions amongst the Chinese manufacturers. Fully 40 per cent, of the Chinese manufacturers had been before the court in twelve months, and had been convicted of breaches of the Act. These men would still be in our midst even though we passed the Bill in its present form, and I would go further and support -the -honorable member for Coolgardie in the amendment which he intends to propose, to the effect that when any of these aliens who are now amongst us are convicted of any offence against the law they shall be deported. I suggested to the Premier of Victoria that some such action should be taken in that State. It was then represented that it was very hard to secure convictions against these men, but my feeling is that when they are caught steps should be taken so that they may not have an opportunity of offending again. We know that the conditions under which these people live are not such as to commend themselves to Europeans, and the experience I have gained in travelling through my electorate, where there are a number of Chinese gardeners, would enable me to throw a good deal of light upon that aspect of the matter. . It has been said that the white workers are to blame for patronising Chinamen who trade in the metropolitan and other areas.

Mr Page

- So they are.

Mr TUDOR

- I have never dealt with a Chinaman in my life, but I know that some other people do, and I am aware

that in the country districts particularly the Assyrians make themselves such a pest that many women are glad to purchase goods from them in order to get rid of them: The Chinese have not only gone a very great length towards monopolising the furniture trade of Victoria, but fully five-sixths of the men engaged in market gardening in and around Melbourne are Chinamen, and we find that their numbers are increasing, notwithstanding statistics which seem to point the other way. I trust that the Government will not be satisfied with the provisions of the Bill as they now stand, but will be prepared to rise to greater heights and to accept the amendment of the honorable member for Bland, and also that of the honorable member for Coolgardie.

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Mr FOWLER

- I do not intend to dwell upon the gravity of this question, nor do I intend to add anything to what has been already said concerning the urgent necessity of legislation in the direction of the exclusion of these aliens. I believe with the Attorney-General that the time of this House is not by any means wasted in eliciting¹ an expression of opinion from honorable members with regard to this very important matter, and coming from Western Australia, I think I can commit myself with very little hesitation indeed to the opinions which have met with general expression in this House. In Western Australia we have the coloured alien evil manifesting itself in quite as serious a form as in any other portion of the continent. The northern parts- of our States abut very closely upon those portions of Asia from which this invasion is most to be apprehended, and we have already on those shores a very large proportion of Malays, Japanese, Chinese, and the heterogeneous elements coming from the Asiatic archipelago. In fact every settlement on the northern, portion of our coasts comprises a very large majority of these undesirable persons.

Mr Deakin

- Is the honorable member speaking of Western Australia or of Australia ?

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Mr FOWLER

- I am speaking of Western Australia. Even in Perth -itself, as I had occasion to remind honorable members a few nights ago, these aliens are being introduced into all manner of industrial enterprises in a way which ought to point a moral to us in dealing with this matter. I was very pleased to listen to the excellent speech of the Attorney-General, not altogether because of its qualities in general, but because of One or two matters with which he dealt, and which I think required some clearing up. I was very glad to hear what he had to say concerning the position taken up by the Imperial authorities in regard to this matter. was pleased to learn that no underground influence was being brought to bear, and although I have always been of opinion that such influence is most unlikely to come from the Imperial authorities, yet, in view of the fact that it has been repeatedly hinted at during this debate, I welcome the emphatic contradiction by the Attorney-General of such a report. The honorable and learned gentleman has also made it perfectly clear to us that all that is required in order to obtain the assent of the Imperial authorities to any measure of this kind which we put forward is a strong expression of opinion from this Parliament. He has given us to understand that, although the way in which the Government propose to deal with this matter is the one which will most commend itself to the Imperial authorities, still the other and more stringent method would not be refused. That being so, and taking into consideration the fact that we are agreed upon the principle, the matter resolves itself into a question of what is the best policy to adopt. It is, indeed, a question of expediency. I am not convinced by the argument of the Attorney-General - an argument which in turn was used by Mr. Chamberlain himself - that the methods proposed by the Imperial authorities are by any means the best methods. We must be perfectly sure of our position." We must, if possible, take up a position which will be absolutely unassailable, not only by the Imperial authorities, but even by those people to whose presence in Australia we so strongly object. I can see more objection to the course urged by the Government than to that suggested by the honorable member for Bland. The honorable member for Bland does not say anything with regard to the cleanliness or immorality of these people. I think that Mr. Chamberlain himself indicated in some of his remarks that in a general -way we could take exception to their admission upon those grounds.- But surely if we do take exception to them upon those grounds, we have no right to assume that they will not resent such objections. Therefore, if we can find a general statement in regard to our position, which will not be offensive to them in any

degree, we should adopt it. If we simply say to them that we bear them no malice whatever, that we are not even prepared to argue that they are inferior to us in any way, but that simply because Australia is to be the heritage of the British people we object to their coming here, we shall be taking up a position which is absolutely unassailable. I would not for one moment argue that these people are inferior to us on many of the grounds urged by honorable members. When we talk about morality in connexion with the Japanese and Hindoos I think we are entering a house which is composed of very brittle glass indeed. We may point out that the Japanese in Australia are by no means the highly moral race that they ought to be, but I think that the Japanese can fairly retort that the British people who visit Japan are by no means so moral as the Japanese themselves would like them to be. With regard to the Hindoos, although doubtless the well-known summing up of the Ben gale se by Lord Macaulay still holds good, it must be remembered that there is quite a variety of races in India, and that many of these peoples are at least our equal in all that goes to make up morality, or even intellectual or physical qualities. We should not, therefore, argue this question upon such grounds. But if we take up the position that Australia is, in our opinion, a heritage for the British race alone, we can ask the acceptance of that dictum even by the Japanese themselves, because if Japan were threatened with an influx of foreign people in any such numbers as we threatened in Australia are threatened with, they would no doubt feel thoroughly justified in taking the measures which we are about to adopt. So, also, would every other nation on the face of the earth. As the Attorney-General points out, self preservation is the first law of nature, and our first obligation is the preservation of Australia to the people who inhabit it at the present time. I have another objection to urge to the course proposed by the Government. No doubt the language test is not intended to be applied in an all-round fashion. We are given to understand that desirable Europeans will not be subjected to that test. We wish to see Europeans of the proper kind as regards intelligence, morality, and material condition coming to our shores to take up our lands, and to enter upon that course of production which assists the country so materially, and which can be expanded so indefinitely. We wish to welcome them here. But what will be the effect of such a suggestion as that put forward in this Bill going abroad amongst the peoples of Europe? We say in the Bill that we exclude those who cannot comply with this test. Then we wish to insinuate, under our breath as it were, that we are not going to apply the test in the case of European people. How are these people going to learn that? Will they not take the Bill as it stands, and conclude that they are practically shut out from Australia ?

Mr Deakin

- The Bill provides that they shall submit to the test when they are asked. It is only when they are challenged.

Mr FOWLER

- Even with that construction of the measure I still see a difficulty. After scraping together, a few pounds to take them away from their own country they will begin to consider the possibility of being excluded from Australia ; and no doubt that will weigh with them very largely in determining whether or not they ought to risk the voyage. I see very great dangers indeed in the policy of the Government in this direction. The simplest way out of the difficulty is certainly the best. The proposition of the honorable member for Bland, to my mind, is thorough-going, straightforward, and effective. It says what it means, and there can be no misapprehension about it. I feel sure also that if we put the proposal of the honorable member in the Bill, and let the nations who are most concerned understand that with us it is simply a matter of self-preservation, they cannot have any objection to it. For that reason I shall certainly support the amendment submitted by the honorable member for Bland.

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Mr BAMFORD

- It seems to me that there is a refreshing unanimity of opinion with regard to the Bill now before the House. There has been no note of dissent with regard to the Bill going too far. The only note sounded has been that it does not go far enough. I agree with that. It was with the object of putting one phase of this question in a more prominent light that I rose to take part in this debate. The honorable member for Wentworth said that he thought the Bill did not go far enough. I was very pleased indeed to hear the remarks that fell from the honorable member in that respect. Some honorable members have expressed surprise at the honorable member's utterances. To me, it seems a poor compliment indeed to express any such surprise. By any one imbued with Australian sentiment and patriotism, I am sure that the

honorable member's remarks would be received only as an exaltation of that sentiment. I am sure that the honorable member for Wentworth is as loyal and patriotic as any of us. When I use the term patriotic I do not refer to that spurious spirit of patriotism which has been too much in evidence during the last year or so, but to a spirit of pure Australian patriotism which I think is something altogether different from that which we have recently known. What I particularly wish to refer to in following the honorable member for Perth is the way in which this legislation may affect European immigrants. The Prime Minister has ridiculed the idea that this Bill can in any way be taken to affect Europeans inasmuch as the clause only provides that this educational test may be applied to them. I wish to show that intelligent people are of opinion that this clause may affect Europeans. I refer particularly to the utterances of the Premier of Queensland, who, during a debate in the Legislative Assembly of that State a few days ago, in answer to some reference which was made to the Danes, said - "Ob, there will be no more Danes when the Immigration Restriction Bill is passed."

Mr Page

- That was meant to influence the Darling Downs election.

Mr BAMFORD

- I disagree with the honorable member for Maranoa. I am aware from personal experience that some peculiar things have happened in Queensland during election times, but I think that no man occupying the dignified position of Premier of that State would stoop so low or would lend himself to the unscrupulous dissemination of what he knew to be a falsehood. Therefore, as I cannot attribute the Premier's attitude to his political dishonesty, I am compelled to attribute it to his political stupidity. But if a man in such a position - a man reputedly intelligent and conversant with what is going on in this Parliament - can fall into such an error, how can we expect other people, not so favorably circumstanced, to read between the lines of the Bill? Anybody who knows our German and Scandinavian fellow colonists, knows that they are some of the best. Wherever we find those people settled, we have honest, industrious, thrifty, prosperous, law-abiding communities, who literally make "the desert blossom as the rose." I for one would oppose the Bill at every stage if I thought for a moment that such people as these were aimed at. But when I see gentlemen such as the Premier of Queensland falling into error, it behoves us to be very careful. How do we know that persons may not make political capital out of such a measure? It is possible that the press might look with an unfavorable eye on the coming of immigrants from, say Germany or Denmark, and stop their immigration, thus depriving us of what would have been a most admirable addition to the population. I ask the

Prime Minister to seriously consider this view of the question. If the amendment of the honorable member for Bland is not carried, I trust the Prime Minister will, at any rate, use the words "European" instead of "English," so that there may be no misconception or ambiguity.

Mr Barton

- I have not any objection to insert, in the case of any serious difference of opinion, the word "European" instead of the word "British." I do not think this is in any sense a vital part of the Bill.

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Mr BAMFORD

- The honorable member for South Australia, Mr. Glynn, said that some £300,000,000 of British capital is invested in China, and that China would on that account be delicately treated by the Colonial-office. But if such an argument holds good in the case of China, it has much greater force in our favour, because Australasia owes British investors some £370,000,000, on which we pay £14,000,000 per annum interest. The honorable member for Kooyong expressed the opinion that white men are not capable of working in Northern Queensland, and as a Northern Queenslander I could not sit here tamely and allow that remark to pass unchallenged. We know very well that all the pioneering work in Queensland has been done by the whites, and that the undesirable immigrants came later on. The honorable member for Kooyong said also that the white race was deteriorating in North Queensland. I do not know what authority the honorable member had for that statement, but possibly it was a paper read by Dr. Ahearne at a philosophical meeting in Sydney some time ago. But the data in North Queensland, although there are perhaps two generations of born whites there up to the present, does not extend over a period sufficiently long to justify the honorable member in making such a statement. In any case, Dr. Macdonald, of the Herbert River, a man of great experience and talent, takes quite an opposite view. On the 2nd of January

last during the Commonwealth celebrations, I saw a procession of over 4,000 children in the streets of Townsville, and I say unhesitatingly that these children compared favorably with any similar procession have seen in this southern capital. I trust that the honorable member for Kooyong will change his views with -reference to white men in North Queensland, where they are doing the hardest possible work in mines, in which I believe he is interested.

Mr Knox

- And doing it well.

Mr BAMFORD

- As they would where ever they work. Railways have been built in the far north entirely by white men, who have done all the hardest work, and are still capable of doing it. I will not enter into the question of coloured labour, because I hope an opportunity will be afforded us at an early period of discussing it, when the Pacific Islands Labourers Bill is before us. Another argument used is that if we assert our absolute right of excluding Asiatics, at which this Bill aims, we shall be giving offence to those people, and - I believe it was the honorable member for New England who said so - that this would be dangerous for us. For myself, I believe that it will make no difference what stand we take up - that if these people assail us at any future time, our present action will not be a factor in either urging them to attack or causing them to refrain. We had the Chinese bogy some time ago, but that, I think, has to a great extent been banished; and now we are threatened with a Japanese bogy. I have no fear of the Japanese bogy : but if some day or other we have to come into conflict with Japan, it had better be to-day than by-and-by, when, if this measure is not passed in a more drastic form, we shall have the enemy really within our gates. I should like to show how the influence and the presence of undesirable aliens is corrupting the whites in our northern settlements. I am not going to point to the moral sinks of iniquity which exist in some places, but will just say that in one of our northern towns, which I will not name, the Chinese give an occasional banquet, attended by a great many of the leading citizens. The visitors propose the health of the Chinese, and the Chinese return the compliment, and it has now become an axiom in that place that some of the leading citizens "eat with the Chows and sleep with the Japs." This measure reminds me very much of a celebrated gun which used to shoot round corners. If we adopt the amendment of the honorable member for Bland, we shall have a weapon which will aim at and, I hope, hit the bull's-eye of absolute and immediate prohibition, because that is the only way we can obtain our object. I will not dwell on the educational facilities in Japan, or on the attainments of the Japanese, but there is, in my opinion, no doubt that this measure, as it stands, will not effect the purpose for which it is intended. I hope that when we reach the committee stage, the Government will have made up their minds to adopt that very sensible amendment of the honorable member for the Bland.

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Mr POYNTON

- I shall briefly give a few reasons why I am going to vote, not against the Bill, but for the amendment, when we reach the committee stage. I have been gratified to notice the practical unanimity there has been in the debate, although there is a difference of opinion as to the right way to achieve our object. It seems to be generally admitted that our dangers are from Africa and Asia. I am one of those who believe that in this first Australian Parliament, on the first occasion when we have an opportunity to speak for Australia, we ought not to attempt in any shape or form to conceal the aspirations of the people. There should be no misunderstanding about what we mean when we speak of a "white Australia." Cover it up as you will, the provisions in the Bill do conceal an aspiration of the Australians. We are attempting by a subterfuge, and not by a straight issue, to gain the goal of our ambition. It has been said that this Bill is a delusion and a fraud. I do not believe that the Government introduced the Bill with any such ideas, and I am prepared to accept the statement that they consider it the best way of achieving our object. At the same time the Bill is a delusion, and it is deceptive. It is a delusion inasmuch as it will not produce a "white Australia," and it is deceptive because it says on the face of it that only those who are able to write a certain number of words in the English language will be allowed to enter the Commonwealth. I am aware that some alteration is to be made, and that the Minister in charge has recently announced that he is prepared to substitute for a British any European language. The fact remains, however, that the Bill as introduced is, from the Prime Minister's own statement, deceptive. We are told that it is not intended to apply the measure to Germans and others who may make desirable colonists, but to apply it only to the

people of Asia and Africa. If that be our intention, would it not be much more honest to say straight out that it is? There ought not to be pished by this Parliament - and particularly as it is the first national Parliament that Australia has had to speak upon this question - a Bill which understates our ambition. Hitherto, the States have dealt with this matter individually, and some of them have refused to accept Bills on lines similar to that now before the House. Yet they have had no increase in their alien population such as the Prime Minister would have us believe would happen to Australia if we were to reject this Bill. I do not wish to be misunderstood in what I am about to say. I say that now is the time, and the proper time, to tell Mr. Chamberlain, as the representative of the Imperial Government, that upon this question, at any rate, we are best able to judge for ourselves. We consider that the people aimed at are not the class to produce the best citizens for the nation, and it is far better for us to tell Mr. Chamberlain straight out what our views are upon the matter than to have to introduce half-a-dozen measures dealing with this subject. As indicated by the Attorney-General to-day, this Bill forms only one link in the chain. If the question is to be faced, if we are to have a white Australia, we should speak straight out. Every honorable member knows that the education test will not produce a white Australia. What are we to learn from the Attorney-General's speech? If it taught us anything it taught us this - that from the very race that he eulogised we have the greatest danger to expect. In view of the cleverness of these people, will this Bill keep them out? Do they not teach to-day the English language in their schools? And is it a question of educated or uneducated aliens? Will the fact that they are educated in any way alter the racial distinctions which we so much object to? Not a bit of it. There is more to be feared from educated than from non educated aliens, because the former will fill every avenue of business. The racial trouble will remain just the same whether the aliens who come here are educated or not. I venture to say that we speak on this subject with matured judgment. This is not a question that has cropped up recently. This question has agitated the public mind for many years past, going right back, as indicated by the Attorney-General, to the earliest period of our existence. In the past Australia has not been able to grapple with this problem in a united and masterful way. But the position is very different to-day. Although we are only at the birth of our nation, we speak with matured judgment upon this question. Just as we fix our standard, whether we put it half-mast or three-quarter mast, so will our request be regarded by the Imperial authorities. What will they think of us if we send this Bill to them and tell them it contains what we want? Ministers know, and have admitted on the floor of this House, that the Bill does not contain what they or any of us want. Why should there be any subterfuge resorted to? Let us tell the Imperial authorities that a white Australia is not to be obtained by the educational test. Some people have raised the objection that it is wrong to adopt this course, because of the requirements of the tropical portions of our territory. I am one of those who consider that we have a mission to fulfil in this Parliament; that the people have decided at the elections, whether it is right or wrong, that we are not to take into consideration the labour requirements of the tropical portions of our continent in dealing with this measure. We are to have a white Australia. It is a sacred trust imposed upon this first Parliament. We are to hand it down to our successors, who will have a chance of reviewing the situation later on. It will be for them to review our work - they will have the power of amendment - and to say whether we have done right or wrong. I feel that it would be wrong for this Parliament to fix the standard at half-mast, or to say in any way what we do not mean.

Mr Higgins

- In other words, we should put the responsibility on the right shoulders.

Mr POYNTON

-We should put the responsibility upon ourselves, and not shirk our duty in connexion with this important question. It is an important question - one of the most important, irrespective of the Tariff, about which there has been so much said, that this Government will have to deal with.

Mr Page

- The Home Government recognise that.

Sir Malcolm McEacharn

- And yet the honorable member wants to put the Home Government in a difficulty.

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Mr POYNTON

-We do not want to do anything of the kind. If we ask for half we cannot expect the whole. Just as we fix

our standard of a white Australia in this Bill, so will it be dealt with by the Imperial authorities. What rubbish has been uttered in regard to what is to be done subsequently. We are told that the ultimate standard is prohibition. We are told that deportation is part of the goal which we are seeking to reach, and yet we are advised that we ought to let this Bill go now and take some measure subsequently for turning out the alien races now in Australia. Does any one believe that it will be easier to do that 10, 20, or 50 years hence than it is at the present time ? As long as we allow these alien races to come in how are we going to bring about the standard suggested by the Attorney-General? I am one of those who think that it would only complicate matters to adopt such a course; that it would be much better to call a spade a spade in the first place than to beat round the bush in this manner. I object to that portion of the Bill prescribing the educational test, but I am going to vote for the second reading with the object of securing the insertion of the amendments of the honorable member for Bland. I desire to say briefly that the condition implied in clause 9 will act unfairly if carried out. It will place shipping companies in a very unfair position. It is unfair to cast upon them the responsibility of coming here with a number of alien passengers who they may think capable of passing the educational test, but who might not be able to do so from a want of knowledge of the exact test prescribed. From the indications that have been given in some of the speeches, the education test is to be varied. It is not to be a stereotyped form that can be taught elsewhere. The result will be that owners of vessels bringing aliens to our shores may have them thrown upon their hands. That is not a fair position to put them in. With regard to the Chinese it was quite a different thing. Ship-owners knew their exact responsibilities. They knew the number they could bring in according to the tonnage of their vessels, and that if they went beyond the prescribed limit they would be liable to penalties. I do not wish to say any more at present. I shall certainly vote for the second reading, but I shall support the amendment proposed by the honorable member for Bland, because I think it is better to indicate straight out exactly what we want than to place a sort of embargo on our powers in order to get at the people of two particular countries ?

Mr CAMERON

- A few months ago, just before the Federal elections were held, two of the most prominent questions that were invariably asked by the electors of all the candidates were - " Are you in favour of old-age pensions?" and, " Are you in favour of a white Australia?" In the course of the meetings which I had the pleasure of addressing, I was invariably asked those questions. My answer in regard to old-age pensions was - " I am not in favour of them." When I was asked - " Are you in favour of a white Australia?" I invariably asked my questioner what he meant by the words, and the answer usually was - "A country inhabited by white people." I then pointed out that, inasmuch as the continent contained a large number of aboriginal inhabitants, and there were also a large number of persons belonging to coloured races who had been allowed to come in and settle, it was a matter of impossibility . to have a white Australia, unless those men, women, and children were sent out of the place, and I was not in favour of that. I can understand why certain working men are in favour of a white Australia, as they term it. They are afraid of the competition of persons of coloured races, who, they hold, are able to work for lower wages than those upon which they can subsist. But I cannot understand why some of the most intelligent and well educated members of this House should have stated that they also are in favour of a white Australia, and that rather than not have . a white Australia, they would sever the link which now binds us to old England. At the present time it is we, the people of Australia, who are receiving all the benefits of the connexion with old England. Old England is receiving no benefit from us.

Mr Watson

- The benefit is mutual.

Mr CAMERON

- It is not mutual. England maintains a fleet in Australian waters.

Mr Page

- Who pays for it?

Mr CAMERON

- The taxpayers of England.

Mr Page

- And the taxpayers of Australia.

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Mr CAMERON

- The fleet that is maintained in our waters costs somewhere about £3,000,000, and between £800,000 and £900,000 per annum are required to maintain the vessels in a state of efficiency, and to pay the wages of the sailors and officers. To that expense Australia contributes the paltry sum of £125,000. Do honorable members mean that that is a fair contribution towards a fleet for the protection of Australia? .

Mr Page

- It is too much.

Mr CAMERON

-It seems to me that the honorable member has a very little mind. I contend that England is bestowing benefits upon us, but we are not benefiting her. Some of our prominent legislators have said that it is a standing menace to the people of Australia to have New Caledonia in the possession of the French, and Samoa in the possession of the Germans, and I ask them to think what would happen if the English fleet were removed from our waters, and we had to depend upon our own defences. We have a few cannon, but we have no gunpowder and no means of manufacturing any. We are in a state of absolute unpreparedness to take the defence of Australia upon our shoulders, and we must look to England to do it for us. Further, England has always shown a desire to protect her children, and since she shows such a noble spirit we should surely be prepared to meet her in the same manner. We did our best when we thought she wanted assistance in South Africa.

Mr Page

- We saved the Empire.

Mr CAMERON

- I do not think we did.

I have always held the view that England could have saved the Empire without our assistance, but there is no doubt that we have a great conceit of ourselves because of the bravery which our sons displayed in South Africa. I ask honorable members to remember, however, in dealing with the South African war, that England had an army of from 220,000 to 240,000 men there fighting against from 35,000 to 40,000 Boers. When the people of Australia commence to talk about being able to defend themselves without the assistance of England, I would ask them to remember that the Boers themselves were unable to meet England in a pitched battle. They had to abandon Pretoria, Johannesburg, and all their large towns, and, though we might eventually maintain our independence if we had munitions of war, we are not in a position to defend our larger towns against any warlike nation such as Russia, Germany, or even France. Therefore, it seems to me suicidal in the extreme to talk of paddling our own canoe. A good deal has been said about the inhabitants of Japan. Japan is the sole nation with whom England is at the present time on terms of friendship. I would ask honorable members to remember that she is so, because she wants an ally against Russia. Russia has lately occupied a large portion of Manchuria, and we know that she never goes back. Japan is on terms of friendship with England, and prepared to go to war with Russia, as she was prepared to do only a few years ago if England had concurred, but if England had not the assistance of Japan, she would have very little chance against Russia in Eastern waters. Are we, who are the sons of Britons, or at any rate, their descendants, to do anything which is likely to offend the power upon whose good will we may want to depend in the future? It seems to me that, taking a calm and dispassionate view, we ought to do everything that will make the people of Japan friendly towards England, and prevent a feeling of ill will being created. There is another race on the borders of India whose assistance has always been of great use to England - the Afghans. But within the last 48 hours a number of Afghans were refused permission to land in Australia. Afghanistan is the buffer State that protects India against Russia. If Russia were on good terms with Afghanistan, nothing would prevent her at a favorable moment from sweeping down on to the plains of India. Why should we who are British do anything to cause a feeling of animosity or distrust to arise in the minds of the people of these two races who are our natural friends against our enemy, Russia?

Mr Higgins

- Ought we not to ask the Afghans to stay in Afghanistan to fight against the Russians?

Mr CAMERON

- If we show the people of Afghanistan that we in Australia recognise the friendly feeling they have shown towards England we are likely to cement their friendship with Great Britain, while, by turning them back as

if they are a bale of goods of no value, we must arouse their animosity. I have always held that it is a physical impossibility to thoroughly develop this country, and especially the tropical portions of it, without the assistance of coolie or other alien labour.

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Mr Piesse

- Then we must do without that development.

Mr CAMERON

- I do not think we can, and to prove my assertion, I call the attention of honorable members to the fact that, although the Northern Territory has belonged to South Australia for some 40 years, the white population there amounts to only some 2,000 inhabitants.

Sir John Forrest

- Not so many.

Mr CAMERON

- Those people are unable to develop that territory, although it contains some of the best pastoral and mineral lands on the continent. Why is that ? Because of the tropical climate. No matter what may be said to the contrary, Europeans are not able to work there.

Mr McDonald

- Nearly all the people in the territory are coloured people, and yet they have not developed the country.

Mr CAMERON

- The total population there does not exceed 4,000 persons, of whom about 1,500 are whites.

Mr Page

- Why do they not develop the territory?

Mr CAMERON

- Because the coloured population is not sufficiently large. They have a railway from Pine Creek to Port Darwin, a distance of 150 miles, and they run one train each way every week. They do not run more trains, because the country is not developed, and there is nothing to carry. There can be no question in the minds of those who have been there that the Northern Territory contains some of the most valuable land in Australia, within the tropics, but this cannot be developed without coloured labour. There is another question of much more importance, to which I wish to direct the attention of the House. I believe that all honorable members are imbued with the spirit of fair play, that whatever they give they are prepared to receive, and that all they want is equal rights for all. I would like to ask honorable members what treatment the Chinese have received from the English people as a race ? I say without fear of contradiction that no race on the face of this earth has been "treated in a more shameful manner than have the Chinese. They are about the most conservative race in the world, and up to late years they had no desire whatever for any intercourse with what they called the outer barbarians, but they were forced at the point of the bayonet to admit Englishmen and other Europeans into China. Now if we compel them to admit our people into their land, why in the name of justice should we refuse to receive them here?

Mr Higgins

- We have not compelled them to receive us.

Mr CAMERON

- No, but the honorable member's forefathers did. This is an extremely religious House, and we know that honorable members are very well acquainted with the Bible, in which we are told that the sins of the fathers shall be visited upon the children. Therefore I say most emphatically that we are responsible to a certain extent for forcing an entrance into China, and that we should, in a spirit of fair play, allow the Chinese to come into Australia in reasonable numbers. I am not prepared to see any large invasion, but I do not think we should take up this cry of a white Australia-more particularly when we know that if we abandon England we shall not be in a position to maintain it. We should show a spirit of fair play, and extend to the Chinese the same privileges that we have exacted from them. A few months ago the European nations declared war against China, and these States, particularly New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia immediately offered their services to the Empire to assist in thrashing China.

Mr Watson

- Only to protect the people of our own race who were in danger.

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Mr CAMERON

- Well, assuming that we intended to protect our own people who were settled there, the position is much the same. There is a large number of missionaries in China, some of whom have been sent from Australia, and I would ask how honorable members would like it if the Chinese were to send missionaries here to preach the doctrines of Confucius and endeavour to convert our people. We should poll-tax them to start with, and would probably try to charter a leaky vessel in which to send them back to China, in the hope that they might be drowned on the way - at least that is what I judge from the way in which some people are advocating a white Australia. In speaking on behalf of the Chinese, I am actuated simply and solely by a spirit of fair play, and if I were going to China I would ask no more from the Chinese than I would be prepared as an individual to give them when they come here. It appears that two thirds of the honorable members of this House really object to the Chinese, not so much on the ground of the possible contamination of the white race, as because they fear that if they are allowed to come into Australia the rate of wages will go down.

Mr Fowler

- Is that not a fair thing to resist ?

Mr CAMERON

- No, I do not think so. Some honorable members have urged against the Chinese the fact that they are prepared to work for a shilling a day, but I would ask honorable members to look at the latest statistics relating to Italy. They will find that in Sicily and in the southern portions of Italy men are working for the bare means of subsistence - at the rate of 5d. per day. I honestly believe that if 2,000 or 3,000 Italians, or a similar number of Hungarians or Austrians were to come here at once and offer their services at a lower rate of wage than is now prevailing, the same howl would be raised throughout Australia as is at present directed against what are termed the alien races.

Mr McDonald

- Hear, hear.

Mr CAMERON

- I have tolerably good grounds for my opinion. About two years ago a number of Hungarians went to New Zealand to work on the kauri gum fields, and the same howl was at once raised against them, although they were white people. I am perfectly well aware that no words of mine will convince men whose minds have been already made up, but I have never been afraid to express my opinions fearlessly, or before any body of men, and I am not afraid to express them now. In my opinion the treatment the Chinese and the various alien races have received, and are going to receive if the people of this Commonwealth can prevail upon England to agree to this Bill, is unworthy of the so-called white race of Australia.

Mr R EDWARDS

- Owing to my absence in Queensland during last week, I had not the privilege of listening to the able speeches made in connexion with this Bill, but I had the advantage of consulting a number of leading men in Brisbane with regard to this measure. I found that they were utterly opposed to the Bill so far as paragraph (a) of clause 4 is concerned. As honorable members are, no doubt, aware that paragraph has the effect of prohibiting from entrance into the Commonwealth any person who, when asked to do so by an officer, fails to write out and sign a passage of 50 words in the English language as dictated by the officer. It was my intention to vote against the second reading of this Bill, until the Prime Minister stated that it was intended to substitute other words for " the English language."

Mr Barton

- I did not say I would substitute other words, but that I would look with great consideration upon an amendment of that kind - I do not think it is vital.

Mr R EDWARDS

- I understood that the Prime Minister intended to strike out " English " and insert " some European."

Mr Barton

- I will take that amendment, because I do not think the matter is. vital.

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Mr R EDWARDS

- I admit that the Bill is one of considerable importance, and I am quite in accord with it so far as the

restriction of criminals, persons suffering from infectious and contagious diseases, and insane persons are concerned, but I think that the restrictions go too far. The Bill as it stands at present would prevent the introduction into our country of French, German, Scandinavian, and other people of the Continental nations, and yet men of these races have been amongst the best of our settlers in all parts of Australia. In Queensland we have quite a large number of Germans and Scandinavians, who are excellent colonists, and who have done a great deal to assist in developing the resources of the State. During my recent visit to Queensland I met a considerable number of Germans, who are very indignant indeed at the introduction of this Bill into the Federal Parliament, because they look upon it as placing them on the same footing as Hindoos, Assyrians, and Afghans. Prior to my visit had received a communication from some of the German colonists in Queensland, in which amazement was expressed at the provisions of the Bill, and in which they asked, " Have the consequences been considered should this Bill become law " ? No doubt the consequences would be that British subjects would suffer retaliation at the hands of Continental nations. Whenever they visited those countries, they would be asked, in the same manner as is proposed in the Bill, to write a sentence of 50 words in the language of the particular country, and under such conditions very few English people would be able to visit any place outside of England. I think it would be a very serious mistake for us to legislate so as to keep out this very desirable class of people. So far from being shut out, they should be encouraged to come here. We shall be told that the Bill is not meant to apply to people belonging to the Continental nations, but to Asiatics : but if we really want to keep this country for white people, we should endeavour to restrict Asiatic immigration in some more direct, honest, and straightforward way than this. We ought to be able to say what we mean in any measure brought before this House, and not put into it anything that we do not mean to carry out. The day will come when we shall have to face this problem, and the sooner we grapple with it the better. I venture to say that if we state honestly and directly what we want, the British Government will stand by us and assist us in bringing about the end we have in view. Mention has already been made by one or two honorable members of the fact that in the British Isles there are quite a large number of people who could not possibly pass this educational test. Within 200 miles of London, or eight or nine hours' journey by train, I know that there are thousands of men and women who could not possibly comply with this test, not because they are illiterate or uneducated, for they are as well educated as are the English-speaking people generally, but they are educated in another language. To come a little nearer home, I may mention that had this Bill been law at the time I came to Victoria, in the sixties, I would not have been allowed to land here. I do not suppose that would have made very much difference to Australia, but it would have made a very great difference to me. It would be a very serious mistake to allow this Bill in its present form to pass. I hope that the Minister will consent to such amendments as will make it more acceptable to honorable members generally. Our great object of course is to keep the Asiatics out of the Commonwealth. With that object in view I think we ought to legislate in a more direct, honest, and straightforward way. The educational test will not be adequate to exclude the very people whom we desire to exclude. In Japan, English is taught freely, and it will be a matter of a very short time - a few months probably - when any one delirious of coming to Australia from that country will be able to learn sufficient of the English language to comply with this test.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- Was the honorable member just now referring to the Welsh people 1

Mr R EDWARDS

- I was referring to my own people, and I happen to be Welsh. The Syrians are another class upon whom it is desirable that we should keep a watchful eye. They do business most freely with our people, and they are even civilized enough to take advantage of the Insolvency Court. I hope that the Minister will accept such amendments as will make the Bill more acceptable to honorable members generally, or that he will be prepared to withdraw it in favour of a measure which will deal directly 'with the restriction of the admission of Asiatics into the Commonwealth.

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Mr McCAY

- On a matter of the importance of this Bill, both directly and indirectly, no apology, I think, is needed for any honorable member occupying a few minutes in an expression of his views. It is fraught with immense and important consequences for us as a nation, and it may also have important results in regard to our

relations with the Empire of which we form a part. It seems to me that if- there is one subject on which the Australian people have been for some time, and are practically, unanimous, it is the question of what is commonly known as a white Australia. It is the only matter to my knowledge on which the whole people of the Commonwealth speak with one voice. We know the danger with which we are menaced - it is not an imaginary danger. Consequently it becomes our duty as the representatives of the people to do what we can to meet that danger. If the matter ended there, only one course would be open to us, namely, the adoption of a direct, clear, and completely effective method of securing our freedom from the coloured taint. That is the proposal submitted by the honorable member for Bland, who favours the course of specifically stating who are the people that we intend to keep out of Australia. If, I repeat, the matter ended there, only one course would be open to us. The House are unanimously in sympathy with what, practically, the whole of Australia desires, and the Ministry and the House alike would be bound, if there were no other considerations arising, to give effect to the desires of Australia in a distinct and practically final method. But it seems to me that there are other considerations. We have always been not only proud to acknowledge our connexion with the Empire, but glad to reap the benefits which that connexion gives to us. Although it may sound paradoxical to say so, the very cause of the difficulty which has now arisen is also the cause of enabling that difficulty to arise. If it were not for our connexion with the Empire we should think twice before introducing a proposal to absolutely debar all Asiatic and African aborigines from entering Australia. Our relations, as an independent nation, with Japan would not take the haughty "don't care" sort of attitude which some honorable members would now have us assume. We should not be utterly regardless of any consequences or hostility that might be aroused elsewhere, and that probably would be aroused, were it not that we rely on the strength of the Imperial connexion. I feel strongly that it is our duty, in common decency, I might also say, to recognise that the source from which we draw our strength in these very matters---

Mr Higgins

- And our quarrels also?

Mr McCAY

- That is perfectly true. But some honorable members, it seems to me, want to reap all the benefits of the Imperial connexion without having to submit to any of the disabilities connected therewith. We cannot at the same time affirm and deny. If we wish to enjoy the benefits of the connexion we must also share its burdens. I have not the slightest doubt that if we pushed this matter to an issue, and insisted that we must have the Bill as it is proposed to amend it, the Imperial authorities would ultimately agree to our desires. What would be happening in the meantime it would be very difficult to say. It is not within the bounds of reasonable possibility that, if we passed the Bill as it is proposed to amend it, it would receive the Royal assent forthwith. The Governor-General, it is practically certain, would withhold his assent. It is also practically certain that the Imperial authorities would negotiate with us upon the matter, and that delay would inevitably arise. We must remember that it is not Downing-street with which we are having this dispute, neither is it Mr. Chamberlain nor the Imperial Government. It is the Empire, of which we form a part; which we have to consider as well as ourselves. I take it that the House would require some extraordinary emergency to arise, to induce it to consider even the possibility of severing the tie which binds us to the mother country. But let us suppose that the Imperial Government says. - "We cannot, in view of Imperial considerations, which affect you as well as us, accept the Bill in this form." What are we to do, then, when we know that there is another course open to us which will achieve, if not the whole, a large part of that which we desire? We know that the maintenance of the Imperial strength in the Pacific ocean is perhaps the most immediately important factor to the security of Australia, so far as international politics are concerned. We have already expressly decided within the last two years that we will take part in those Imperial quarrels to which the honorable member for North Melbourne refers. I am perfectly satisfied with our action in that respect. But we cannot blow hot and cold in the matter, and we must continue to take our share of Imperial responsibility, unless we are prepared to take the other course.

Sir William McMillan

- Who is attempting to repudiate all this?

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Mr McCAY

- When honorable members argue half way in the matter they might as well go the other half and see the

logical effect of the position which they take up. Personally, I believe that if we said to the Imperial authorities - " We want a Bill specifically forbidding the aboriginal inhabitants of Asia and Africa from gaining admission to Australia, " the Imperial authorities would, in the long run, yield to our desires. But if the Imperial authorities can show reasonable grounds for asking us to adopt a course which will not hurt them and which will accomplish the greater part of what we desire, it is our business, if we have any gratitude in us, to follow the course suggested, and to meet the rest of the Empire as far as we possibly can. We must remember that we are not a sovereign power and that, consequently, our actions are not free and unfettered. Although the Constitution in terms gives us unrestricted power to deal with the subjects set out therein, we know perfectly well that it is subject to the fact that we are a portion of the Empire, and that our desires may, at times, conflict with Imperial necessities. It is only when our desires become necessities absolutely, and necessities which are vital to our existence, that we are compelled to take up the attitude of hostility that is suggested. No one can say that Downingstreet, Mr. Chamberlain, or the Imperial authorities have shown any desire to take up an unnecessarily hostile attitude to us in regard to this matter. Their attitude has been one of conciliation from first to last. But they say that there are reasons why it is desirable, not necessarily in the interests of Australia alone, but in the interests of the Empire as a whole, that we should take this other course, unless it is obviously an ineffective one. Now, is it ineffective? The proposal of the Bill is to require intending immigrants to be able to write out a certain number of words in the English language, or, as it may prove to be, in some other European language. We have been told about the high intellectual standard of many of the Indian subjects of the King, and of the high attainments of many of the Japanese. But I would like to ask honorable members who have used this argument whether they are serious in urging that under present conditions - I will not refer to the future for the moment - any appreciable percentage of objectionable immigrants who come to our shores, will be able to pass this test. It is perfectly true that the Universities of the old country have Japanese and Hindoo graduates but these are not the people who come to Australia. We see very few of those University graduates visiting us, and there are very few aliens here who are able to pass even such a modest educational test as that proposed. Surely when discussing this bill, practically, as a question of immediate and pressing urgency, we should discuss it in view of existing facts. We know perfectly well that the vast majority - I venture to say 95 per cent. - of those coloured immigrants whom we want to keep out, are people who are not able to pass the test proposed in the Bill ; and the test can be made more severe if that be considered advisable. The second fact is that every month we delay in' this matter means an increase of the number of those immigrants to Australia. They come here in considerable numbers, and the knowledge of the likelihood of legislation will cause them to come faster than they otherwise would.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- They ought to be stopped without the Bill.

Mr McCAY

- We cannot stop British subjects by an act of State.

Mr Barton

- There are three colonies, without any such measure as this.

Mr McCAY

- We can, of course, by an act of State prevent say, Japanese, from coming in, but Japan could if she chose regard that act of State as an act of hostility on our part. Japan as well as Australia has an option.

Mr Higgins

- The United States are careful to prohibit Chinese subjects from entering.

Mr McCAY

- The United States of America are a sovereign power, whereas we are not. I do not want to be involved in a legal argument with the honorable, and learned member for Northern Melbourne.

Mr Higgins

- There is nothing inconsistent in Great Britain excluding from some part of her territory British subjects?

Mr McCAY

- I dare say Great Britain, could do that, but I do not want to enter, into a legal argument. As I understand? the matter, a sovereign power takes the re-1 responsibility, and the exercise of this act of State may be regarded as an act of hostility or act of war.

Mr Isaacs

- There cannot be an act of State against a State's own subjects.

Mr O'Malley

- Then the whole of India, may come in.

Mr Barton

- That is so, unless this -Bill be passed.

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Mr McCAY

- At any rate, seeing that we are approached in a conciliatory way, and have been all along - seeing the cheerfulness and generosity which Britain has always displayed in meeting our wishes in every possible way - now that we have come into existence as a Commonwealth, it is only reasonable on our part to see whether it is not possible to show some consideration, and make some concession to those who have made so many concessions and shown so much consideration to us. If it be found that the educational test, simple or severe, be insufficient, we shall be in a position to say - "Now, we have done what you asked us to do, in view of the necessities or requirements of Imperial policy; but we find that the concession is not producing the desired result, and is not as effective as it ought to be, and, therefore, we must ask you to go the rest of the way -and . agree to our proposal." But the threat to trail the tail of our coat. before the Imperial authorities in this unnecessary way:--

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- Nonsense !

Mr McCAY

- The honorable member for Parramatta is the best authority on nonsense in the Commonwealth, and therefore I greatly respect his opinion.

Mr WATSON

- We in New South Wales were told the same thing by the Government, of which the honorable member for Parramatta was a member in 1898.

Mr McCAY

- If the honorable member for Parramatta was concerned in advocating a course of the kind, it makes me feel more apprehensive than I did before as to the propriety of the suggestion I am now making.

Mr Watson

- We "fell in "!

Mr McCAY

- There is only one other point on which I want to say a word. The honorable member who spoke last suggested that there should be what he calls some more honest way of proceeding, and other honorable members have described the Bill as an act of- hypocrisy. What the Imperial Government says to us is - " We do -not desire you to pass the Bill in a certain form, because we find it will interfere with matters of high Imperial concern, and with the carrying out of that Imperial policy, which we think is best calculated to secure the unity, safety, and- .well-being of the Empire. We, therefore, ask you to pass legislation in another form, which apparently, by the ordinary reading of the English in it, does not and will not produce exactly the same result, but maybe wider, as well as possibly narrower, in its operation. We know the object you have in view, and we believe you can achieve the greater portion of the object, by the course we suggest, .and you will consider our feelings and consult Imperial interests by taking this course. We know what you want and what you desire to do, and we ask you to do it in a certain way." Is that hypocrisy ? Is it hypocrisy to do what they ask and produce the result we know we desire to 'produce? Hypocrisy, in the sense in which honorable members have used the word, consists, it seems to me, in an endeavour to delude the authorities at home or elsewhere that we are trying to do one thing, whereas in reality we are trying to do another. Everybody knows what we are trying and proposing to . do, and how then can there be any hypocrisy ?

An Honorable Member. - It is diplomacy.

Mr Higgins

- We pretend we want education, and we do not.

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Mr McCAY

- We do not pretend in the least degree that we want education. We say we ask for education because we know that the people we want to keep out have not education. We refrain from applying the test to white people, although I know of cases where it might advantageously be applied ; but we say openly and frankly that, although in its terms this test applies to everybody, we shall apply it only to a certain class of immigrants which we want to keep out. It is to oblige the Empire that we do it in that form, and all I can say is that if there is never any more immoral course of hypocrisy on the part of Parliament, or of any honorable member than to do what we avowedly intend to do, in a form for which somebody else asks, and in order to oblige them, I think we need not fear that the recording angel will make a very black mark against our names. I, in common with the rest of the House, am determined to have Australia white. The Constitution says that this is to be an indissoluble union under the Crown, and we are determined that that indissoluble union shall be a union of white people. That is the third term that Australia is determined to practically put in the preamble of the Constitution. But while those words " under the Crown " remain we must be prepared in matters which affect not only ourselves but those beyond us in the Empire, and those even beyond the Empire, to consider reasonable representations from those who are responsible for the conduct of Imperial concerns. Unless we do that we are in the position, as I said at the beginning, of those who desire to receive everything and give nothing. It is all very well to talk about a " straightforward, honest, clear, and more effective way." The other way suggested may be the more effective way, but it is not more straightforward or more honest in the true sense of the term than is the course now proposed, seeing that we openly avow our object and are using terms of which everybody understands the meaning. It is no more immoral, dishonest, or hypocritical proceeding than are some of those known as legal fictions. We are using, in fact, what might be called a legal fiction to effect a very obvious purpose. If we cannot do it in that way it will then be time enough to flaunt our newfound strength in the face of the Empire which gave us that strength - it will be time enough to talk about submitting to the dictation of some one outside ourselves. The Empire is not outside ourselves by any means. It will be time enough to talk in that way when we are given reason to do so, and when we find that the effectuation of our wishes cannot be secured without such language being absolutely necessary. .

Mr ISAACS

- I entirely agree with those honorable members who have stated that in their opinion there is no measure which has yet been placed before us, or which I think could be placed before us, that possesses more vital interest for us in regard to our immediate surroundings, or is of greater import with regard to Imperial relations, or of more lasting concern to the future of the Commonwealth than is the present measure. There is scarcely a single phase of our development, or a single path of our progress, or, I may say, a single page of our history that is not involved and will not be influenced by the ultimate solution we are prepared to give to this question. With these important consequences before us I do not wonder that so many honorable members are prepared to hold, and to fearlessly express, the strongest opinions. One danger I see is that we may be led, according to the stand-point from which we regard the question, to give undue emphasis to the position from which we view it. The greatest danger of all is, I fear, that we are tempted to regard the matter from one stand-point only. I do not hesitate to say that our first and foremost duty is as Australians. We have a trust and a duty here that we cannot deny and cannot forget, and we are placed in our present position with a responsibility that no amount of special pleading can evade. Those around us - our constituents of to-day, and our fellow countrymen and those who come after us, will doubtless scrutinize our acts and our words to see if we have faithfully carried out with unswerving fidelity the principles upon which we have been sent here. Consequently, I am prepared to do all that is necessary to insure that Australia shall be white, and that we shall be free for all time from the contamination and the degrading influence of inferior races. There is one way to do it, and if we were free to regard the matter from the one stand-point of Australia, I should not hesitate to do, without cavil or question, the very thing the honorable and learned member for Corinella 14 n thinks we should refrain from doing. I should not hesitate to do in this regard what seems to me the clear, short, decisive act of expressing in unmistakable terms what we mean to effect. In doing that I would simply follow the line that nature herself has drawn, that nature herself has painted in ineffaceable tints, and I would say in so many words that the colour line is the one that shall mark the distinction ; the colour line is that which shall bar inferior races from entering Australia. But are we entirely free from other considerations? Surely not. We must not forget that while we are Australians, while our primal and surpassing duty is to Australia, we

have other responsibilities, responsibilities to our brethren of the Empire, responsibilities that may slumber long, but will never die, responsibilities that may be awakened at any moment to a terrible activity ; and while that is so I deny that we are at liberty to consider this matter from one stand-point only. Let us beware of giving undue or solitary emphasis to the one chief consideration in our minds. If it were necessary, I should be prepared to vote, without hesitation, for any words that would preserve Australia from the contamination that we fear, and if it can be shown to me that that course is necessary, I am prepared to adopt it now. As at present advised - and I shall state my reasons - I do not think it is necessary. I believe that an addition, small in compass, but great in power, which I shall endeavour to suggest, can be made to this Bill, which will, and ought to, at all events, reconcile all my honorable friends to the ideas and desires expressed by the Government. We are told by the Ministry that to do what we all wish to do, in a direct, clear-cut fashion, would embarrass the Imperial Government. Speaking frankly, I am not so sure that it would. I am not at all absolutely convinced that it would offer any real embarrassment to the Home authorities if we were to take the decisive course of expressing in so many words what we desire.

Sir William McMillan

- That is our contention.

Mr ISAACS

- But it is not the whole position.

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Sir William McMillan

- No one says that it is.

Mr ISAACS

- Let me endeavour to show what considerations have actuated my mind in arriving at the result which I venture to express. However we may be in doubt as to whether the Home Government would be embarrassed, we have the highest assurance that in the last resort, if Australia presses for a measure as desired by some of my honorable friends, Australia will get it. Still, we must not forget that there is a possibility of embarrassment. If it were necessary - if I thought that the only effective way of achieving our end was by placing in black and white the words which my honorable friend the member for Bland wishes to insert - I would unhesitatingly support that proposal. I cannot forget that at the present moment there is being enacted - fortunately near its termination, I hope, but still being enacted - a drama which offers us a striking example in regard to this matter. We all recollect that when the Boer war commenced, and the princes of India came forward, with noble fidelity, and loyally offered troops of their races to the British Government, that Government said - " No ; we decline with thanks. This is a white man's war." I recognise to the fullest that here in Australia we have a white man's war. It is a struggle for life; it is a struggle for that higher and fuller life that all progressive nations must feel and share in. It is that struggle for victory over adverse circumstances which is the pride and glory of all advancing civilizations. It is a white man's war that we must face, and I would not suffer any black or tinted man to come in and block the path of progress. I would resist to the utmost, if it were necessary, any murky stream from disturbing the current of Australian life. I feel convinced, however, that while there is - a possibility of embarrassment in taking a direct course, there is no danger in taking a less direct but equally effectual course. I do not believe that we need fear the result to our Australian population of taking a cautious, careful, and considerate course. We can be just as powerful in the result, and, indeed, we may be speedier in achieving that result. I recognise that our first care is for Australia. I recognise that all this paraphernalia of the Commonwealth, all the splendour that we see around us, all the officialdom, from the Governor-General downwards, would be a mere nothing if it were not going to better the lot of the workers of Australia - the men who are - at the base of the whole structure. That is our primal and greatest consideration. If we can get that without hurting anyone's susceptibilities; without endangering or spoiling, or assailing the great fabric of the Empire, of which we form a part, why should we take unnecessarily the other course? I believe that it is just possible that the Bill, as it now stands, may require amendment. I recognise that the first sub-clause of clause 4, may not be effectual to carry out what we desire. I recognise that the educational test may fail in two directions. It may fail in this first direction, that it will not keep out many whom we wish to keep out, and that it may exclude some whom we may not desire to exclude. What

We want to get is, on the one hand, an effectual provision, and on the other something that will not wound

the susceptibilities of other nations whose amity may be of the utmost importance to the Empire at large, inclusive of ourselves. I think that might be achieved - because all these things are matters of compromise to some extent - by inserting a provision in the Bill that, in addition to those who have to pass the educational test, in addition to those who may be excluded for defects physical, mental, or moral, the Government of the day shall have instant power in any emergency to exclude any person whom this country thinks is undesirable. If we insert in a very few words some provision to this effect - that in addition to all those who are enumerated in the Bill, all persons and classes of persons shall be deemed to be prohibited immigrants who are so proclaimed by the Governor-General, it seems to me that one short clause to that effect;-

Mr Mahon

- It would give a fine opportunity for a despotic Government to act upon an outside panic !

Mr ISAACS

- A despotic Government ?

Mr Mahon

- Yes, a despotic Government, taken off its feet by a panic, such as sometimes seizes the public.

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Mr ISAACS

- Surely it could not be more despotic, if we can use such a term at all, than the proposal which is now suggested. It could not be more despotic than to say that British subjects, because they are black, are to be excluded. It could not be more despotic than that. Still, I am not complaining. I think we ought to go to that length if it were necessary. But if we are going to offer a reproach to a measure because it is despotic, we must not forget that without a despotic provision we cannot do what we want at all. To insert a provision of the kind I have suggested in the Bill would enable the Government of the day, if they saw the country was in danger of an invasion of Hindoos, or Afghans, or Japanese, or any one else, to proclaim them at once as prohibited immigrants. What greater power could we have ?

Sir William McMillan

- What difference would that make in the international question?

Mr ISAACS

- I think the advantage of the course I propose is that we should have the fullest power to do all that we want to do, while we would not put on the face of the Bill anything that would wound the susceptibilities of any nation. We know that we would never extend these powers to any European nation, that we would exercise them only for the purpose of effecting what we desire to do ; and with such a provision inserted in the Bill, I think there would be no honorable member in this House, however far he might desire to go, who could not have his desires effected.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- Does the honorable and learned member think we would not wound the susceptibilities of foreign nations when we exercised such a power ?

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Mr ISAACS

-The power would be exercised only when the necessities or the interests of Australia demanded it ; and when the necessities or interests of Australia demanded it I would not hesitate to wound the susceptibilities of those nations. But they are much less likely to be wounded by a Governor-General's proclamation than by an Act of Parliament that places a bar on record for all to read. And, what is more important to us at the present time, we could get that provision through as part of this Bill without any hesitation on the part of the British Government. That is the point we are considering most of all at the present instant. We do not want to say to the British Government - " Here is something which proclaims on the face of it antagonism to one important nation ; here is something which draws a distinction between powerful nations here is something which says that a German or Frenchman may enter Australia, but that a Japanese must not." We do not want to draw distinctions in that open and combative manner if it can be avoided. But if we can get the same result, if we can secure the same advantage, by less aggressive means, why are we to refuse the method that I suggest? I have risen for the purpose of expressing my views as shortly as I possibly can upon this important question. I recognise that there are features of this matter that extend themselves in all directions. We know that if we were deprived of the

advantage of British protection we should not sleep so soundly or securely as we do at the present time. We must not forget that that little spot of land to which we all turn so proudly has great burdens and great responsibilities. I do not want to be one to add unnecessarily to those burdens and responsibilities. I do not want to fail in my duty to Australia, and I will not fail in my duty to Australia. But at the same time I do not want to unnecessarily hamper those men who have to look around them and consider how they can best discharge the great responsibility that their position at home has cast upon them. I believe that it is possible for us, while treasuring our heritage as a portion of this Empire, whilst standing loyally and faithfully to the flag, to rear here without aggression a stalwart and strong race, which will not be degraded or contaminated by any influences such as we fear, and which we hope to exclude by a measure like that which we are now considering.

Mr. McDONALD(Kennedy).- This debate, or at all events the latter part of it, has descended to a piece of special pleading, on the part of certain honorable members, for the Bill before us ; and, if I wanted any arguments in support of the honorable member for Bland, they are certainly to be found in the speech which the Attorney-General made this afternoon. When that honorable and learned member was dealing with the effect which the presence of large numbers of coloured aliens would have upon the Australian people, he said all that could be said against any proposal to allow such people to Come here, and what has been said this afternoon is sufficient to point out the danger to Australia of allowing the influx of coloured aliens ; but the reasons he put forward for accepting the Bill were not very valid. Since he has spoken there has been an attempt - and I am sorry to say that he himself introduced it as a side issue - to arouse the jingoistic patriotic feeling of which we have had in Australia more than sufficient during the last couple of years, and which has taken from a good many of our inhabitants the capacity for true reasoning, and put them in the position in which men are when a panic exists. But this is not a question of patriotism or loyalty to the Empire ; it is a question of patriotism and loyalty to the people of Australia.

Mr Kennedy

- Australia is an integral portion of the Empire.

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Mr MCDONALD

- We all admit that, and, as we all come from English stock, we must respect those who were the means of our being here, and those who gave us our Constitution and the splendid heritage we enjoy. But I cannot forget that I am an Australian, and that my duty is to Australia. The Attorney-General told us that if we accept the Bill it can be carried into effect at once, but that if the amendment of the honorable member for Bland is accepted the result will be that the English Government will probably have to negotiate with foreign powers before they can say whether they will allow it to pass. Will any one tell me that the English Government would so degrade themselves as to go to Japan, or some other similar power, and ask them whether this or any other Bill was offensive to them ? I am not going into the question whether we should allow coloured aliens to enter the Commonwealth. We are pretty well unanimous on that point. Only one honorable gentleman has had the courage to say that he believes we should develop this country with the assistance of coloured labour, and while I admire the courage which he displayed, I, and I think most other honorable members, entirely differ from the view which he takes. In England an attempt has been going on for some time past to draw a colour line through the tropics, so that syndicates may get possession of large tracts of country there, and develop them by coloured labour. My opinion is that if we admitted coloured labour into the northern parts of Australia, only one result would follow. After a time the influence of those who had interests there would become so powerful, and the number of the coloured population so great, that the power of those in the southern portions of the continent would be insufficient to keep them north of the colour line. I recognise that there are splendid resources in the northern portions of Australia which ought to be developed, but I am of opinion that it will be better to leave them undeveloped than to attempt to develop them by employing coloured labour. The honorable member for West Sydney touched upon the economic aspect of this question in a manner which should convey to every honorable gentleman who heard his speech the conviction that it would not be a good thing to allow any large number of coloured aliens to come to Australia. Thursday Island has been spoken of as the Gibraltar of Australia, and large sums of money have been spent in fortifying it, but, since the Japanese came there, they have found twenty passages through which a navy could come to Australia. A few years ago there were nearly 2,000 Europeans on Thursday Island employed in the pearl shelling

industry, but to-day there are only 65, and the tobacco industry of Queensland has practically been handed over to the coloured aliens. Under these circumstances, it is time that we put down our feet and said what we want to say. The Bill has been termed hypocritical, crooked, and a fraud. I believe that it is so, and that it will not have the desired effect. The figures which have been cited to-day concerning the effect of the educational test in the various States of Australia are not such as should cause any honorable member to believe that that test has been successful. The Government say that if we insert in the Bill the words Asiatic, African, Polynesian, or similar terms, the Bill will not be accepted by the Imperial Government, or, if accepted, will be accepted only after a great deal of persuasion and almost a display of force on the part of the people of Australia. To get over the difficulty the Government propose to apply the educational test. They provide in the Bill that the test is to apply to all foreigners, English subjects included, but they say "We do not intend to apply it to Europeans." If that is not dishonesty I do not know what is. We find that the Government are prepared to allow certain immigrants to enter, while the provisions of the Bill are to be enforced to keep others out. If it would hurt the susceptibilities of the Japanese that neither Asiatics nor natives of Africa should enter the Commonwealth, would it not still more insult them if we said that we intend to keep them out by this indirect method ? Has not the Japanese Government its representatives in this city, and will they not read the debates and let their Government know exactly what we intend to do ?

Mr Deakin

- Hear, hear.

Mr MCDONALD

- I maintain that a man who tells me straight out that he does not believe in me is far more honest than the man who tells my next door neighbour, and lets his opinion come to me second-hand. The Government are taking a second-hand course in dealing with this matter. When the American Government dealt in a similar way with Japanese immigrants coming into Honolulu, the Japanese Government took exception to the fact that their subjects were treated differently from Europeans, and if we allow Europeans to come in here without passing the educational test, while we apply the tests to Asiatics and natives of Africa, will not the Japanese Government take exception to our action ? It stands to reason that they will do so. What is all the trouble about ? It is that Great Britain has made a treaty with the Japanese which allows the Japanese subjects to roam abroad throughout the British dominions. At the conference in 1897 Mr. Chamberlain tried to impress upon the Australian premiers the desirability of accepting that treaty.

Sir John Forrest

- I was there, and I do not think he tried to influence us in any way.

Mr MCDONALD

- He would not have much trouble in influencing the honorable member. I may say that the Japanese treaty of 1895 came into operation four years after it was signed, and was entered into for a term of twelve years, the right being given to either party, at the end of eleven years, to give twelve months' notice of a desire to renew or revoke the treaty. Article 1 states -

The subjects of each of the Two High Contracting parties shall have full liberty to enter, travel, or reside in any part of the dominions and possessions of the other Contracting Party, and shall enjoy full and perfect protection for their persons and property.

Without delaying the House by quoting the article, I may explain that it goes on to say that the subjects of each contracting party shall enjoy in the dominions and possessions of the other the same privileges, liberties, and rights, in conformity with the laws of the respective States. Article 19 contains the most important point that I have to make in connection with this treaty. That article says -

The stipulations of the present Treaties shall be applicable, so far as the laws permit, to all the colonies and foreign possessions of Her Britannic Majesty, excepting to those hereinafter named, that is to say, except to India, the Dominion of Canada, Newfoundland, the Cape, Natal, New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Tasmania, South Australia, Western Australia, New Zealand.

I want to know what becomes of all the offence that we are going to give to Japan when Japan has already signed a treaty under which it has agreed that the States and colonies that are mentioned shall be at liberty to prevent a particular class of immigrants from coming into their territories. I maintain that under this Bill, as it is proposed to amend it, there will be no offence to the Japanese people at all ;

although there might be from another point of view, which I will leave to be discussed by honorable members like the Attorney-General and the honorable member for Northern Melbourne, who are familiar with Constitutional subjects.

Mr Deakin

- I read my authorities for the opinions that I gave ; they are not my own.

Mr MCDONALD

- Now one of the States mentioned in article 19, namely Queensland, has signed the Japanese treaty, and here, in my opinion, is where the difficulty comes in.

Sir John Forrest

- They can withdraw at very short notice, if my recollection is right.

Mr MCDONALD

- I would refer the Minister of Defence to article 21.

Sir John Forrest

- I. do not think that is the treaty that was signed.

Mr MCDONALD

- This is the only one we could get possession of, and it is the only one that is published. I have made inquiries of the Premier of Queensland, and this is the only treaty I could get.

Sir John Forrest

- I think they can terminate it at twelve months' notice.

Sir William McMillan

- Were any special provisions made by Queensland for the introduction of labour, over and above the treaty ?

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Mr MCDONALD

- Yes, I am coming to that. Article 21 says -

The present treaty shall not take effect until at least five years after its signature. It shall come into force one year after His Imperial Japanese Majesty's Government shall have given notice to Her Britannic Majesty's Government of its wish to have the same brought into operation. Such notice may be given at any time after the expiration of four years from the date hereof. The treaty shall remain in force for the period of twelve years from the date it goes into operation.

Either High Contracting Party shall have the right, at any time after eleven years shall have elapsed from the date this treaty takes effect, to give notice to the other of its intention to terminate the same, and at the expiration of twelve months after such notice is given this treaty shall wholly cease and determine.

If there is another treaty I do not know what that treaty is.

Sir John Forrest

- I think there is.

Mr MCDONALD

- Here is another point that the Government will have to take into consideration, namely, that the Queensland Government have entered into an agreement with the Japanese Government to allow the number of Japanese who are now in Queensland to remain the same as at the present time ; that is to say that in the event of 20 or 30 or more Japanese leaving that State at any time, a similar number shall be allowed to enter the State so as to keep up the present number in the State. I think that is a very serious matter for this Parliament to consider. I could not give the exact date, upon which this contract was made, but I have it on the best authority that the Queensland Government have entered into that arrangement with the Japanese Government. Under these circumstances I think it is necessary that we should deal with this matter in a straightforward and manly way, and that we should not seek to effect our purpose by any roundabout methods, as is now proposed. I am sorry that the Attorney-General has not looked into this matter a little further. He referred us this afternoon to the Queensland Sugar Works Guarantee Bill as affording a reason why we should accept this Bill in its present form.

Mr Deakin

- No.

Mr MCDONALD

- Then the honorable member's words had no meaning at all 1

Mr Deakin

- They were Mr. Chamberlain's words.

Mr MCDONALD

- After the Attorney-General had finished with the despatch from which he read, he hinted that if we attempted to amend this Bill in the direction suggested by the honorable member for Bland the same thing would happen as occurred in connexion with the Queensland Sugar Works Guarantee Bill. I asked at the time why it was that the Attorney-General had not something to say with regard to the four Acts that were assented to in the same month as that in which the Sugar Works Bill was reserved for the Royal assent, but the honorable gentleman carefully avoided any reference to those. I would not have brought the matter up but for the fact that this Bill has been referred to over and over again in the course of the debate. The Attorney-General mentioned it in connexion with another debate on black labour last week, and the Prime Minister has on two occasions referred to this particular measure. I think, therefore, that it is necessary that we should go into this matter fully, because the Attorney-General put it forward as one of his trump cards in endeavouring to persuade the House that we should not accept the amendment of the honorable member for Bland. He stated that owing to the Queensland Sugar Works Bill having been defeated, it was reasonable to suppose that any Bill containing a similar clause would also be rejected. Now, I have the whole of the Acts to which I have referred that were passed in Queensland, and I am going to quote from them to show that there is no real danger of our Bill being vetoed even if it should contain a provision such as that suggested by the honorable member for Bland. The Bill to amend the Sugar Works Guarantee Acts 1893 to 1895, which was reserved for assent on 28th December, provides in clause 5 -

From and after the passing of this Act no aboriginal native of Asia, Africa, or of the Pacific Islands shall be employed by any company to which any advance has been or may hereafter be made under the provisions of the Sugar Works Guarantee Acts .1.893 to 1900.

That was the Bill that was rejected, and on the rejection of that Bill we are told - from the despatch that the Prime Minister has read, and referred to by the Attorney-General - that the reason was that it was offensive to certain Asiatic nations.

Mr Deakin

- That is what Mr. Chamberlain says ; I did not say so.

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Mr MCDONALD

- If that is what Mr. Chamberlain says regarding the Sugar Works Bill, what does he say about the Mines Act of Queensland of 1898, which provides in section 15, sub-section (7), paragraph (a), as follows : - ' No alien holding a miner's right, who by lineage belongs to any of the Asiatic, African, or Polynesian races, shall be entitled to exercise any of the rights or privileges hereby conferred, otherwise than for the purpose of mining for gold on alluvial ground, or for purposes connected with such mining, or to exercise any of the rights or privileges aforesaid for any purpose whatsoever upon any gold-field other than a gold-field upon which tin Asiatic or African alien was at the commencement of this Act permitted to mine for gold, and no consolidated miner's right shall authorize the employment by virtue thereof of an Asiatic or African alien upon any gold-field or mineral field.

This Act has been passed since Mr. Chamberlain took up the high attitude of telling the various Australian Premiers, in 1897, that the British Government would not sanction any Bill that would place disabilities on certain Asiatics, and upon Japanese in particular.

Sir William McMillan

- Was that Bill assented to '(

Mr MCDONALD

- Yes ; it is the Consolidated Mining Act of 1898. I understand they have a similar Act in Western Australia, but that was passed some years previously. Now, let us see what position Mr. Chamberlain has taken up on a more recent date. I said that the Sugar Works Guarantee Bill was reserved for the Royal assent on the 28th December, 1900, and on the 21st December an Act was assented to called the Albert River, Burketown, and Lilydale Tramway Act of 1900. We find that in section 7 of that Act it is provided - No aboriginal native of Asia or of the Pacific Islands shall be employed by the company in or about the construction, maintenance, or management of the tramway, &c.

No exception was taken to that provision, but the Act was assented to right away. Now we come to another Act, called the Mount Garnet Freehold Mining Companies Railway Act of 1900. Section 7 of the Act, which was also assented to on the 21st December, provides -

No aboriginal native of Africa, Asia, or of the Pacific Islands shall be employed by the company in or about «the construction, maintenance, or management of the tramway, &c.

Here we have a second Bill, passed during the same month, containing exactly the same clause. On the 6th December, 1900, an Act was assented to, called the Gladstone-Callide Railway Act of 1900, which provides, in section 6, that -

No aboriginal native of Africa, Asia, or of the Pacific Islands shall be employed by the company or any of its contractors or sub-contractors in or about the construction, maintenance, or management of the railway, &c.

We have a fourth Act, called the Glassford Creek Tramway Act 1900, which was also assented to on the 21st December, 1900. - _____

Mr Higgins

- Is there any Act that provides that a coloured alien shall not travel on the tramways ?

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Mr MCDONALD

- No ; but it would be a very good thing if there were such an Act. Section 6 of the Glassford Creek Tramway Act, says -

No aboriginal native of Africa, Asia, or of the Pacific Islands shall be employed by the owners in or about the construction, maintenance, or management of the tramway, or in or about the mineral lands referred to in this Act, under a penalty of £1 for each such person for every day during which such person is employed.

What becomes then, of the whole of the arguments to the effect that the Imperial Government will not sanction a Bill which contains a clause similar to that which is proposed by the honorable member for Bland 1 Here is precedent to go upon. In the five Acts which I have mentioned - and I dare say that if honorable members looked up the Acts of their respective States they would find a number of similar statutes - there is a precedent established to guide us in this matter. There is one peculiar feature about the withholding of the Sugar Works Guarantee Bill for the Royal assent. The Bill provided that there should be about £150,000 spent upon certain central mills. Whether or not the Government were in a position "to spend that money is quite another thing. The State finances of Queensland to-day, however, show pretty well the position which the Government then occupied. The most peculiar feature about the whole thing was that the Attorney-General of Queensland recommended to the Governor that the Bill should be withheld for the Royal assent. Why was this particular Bill withheld for the Royal assent as against the four other Bills to which I have referred ? When Mr. Rutledge was called upon for an explanation the other day, he said that his action was prompted by the fact that about the year 1883 an amendment was carried in connexion with the Transcontinental Railway Bill prohibiting the employment of coolies in the construction of that line. He asserts that he interpreted that action as indicative of the policy of the country, and, therefore, it was quite legitimate to prohibit the employment of coolies in connexion with the Bills mentioned ; but that as it was not the policy of the Government to prohibit them from working in the sugar mills he had | asked the Governor to reserve the Sugar

Works Guarantee Bill for the Royal assent. As far as I can recollect, there has always been a desire on the part of the Parliament and the people of Queensland to prevent coloured aliens from working in the sugar mills. But the statement of Mr. Rutledge shows how frivolous is the excuse urged, coming as it does from such an able man. His best friends will marvel at the extraordinary explanation which he has made.

To my mind there can be only one reason for the action of the Governor in withholding the Bill for the Royal assent The Government had not the money to go on with the proposals contained in the measure, find therefore attempted to throw discredit upon the person responsible for the insertion of the particular clauses referred to. I have been induced to come to this conclusion by the action of the Government, and by the perusal of leading articles in a certain Queensland paper, which to a large extent controls the policy of the Government of that State. When we take all these matters into serious consideration, I think that the prospective failure to get the Royal assent to this Bill in the event of the amendment of the honorable member for Bland being carried is a mere fiction and a bogey on the part of the Government.

Anybody who listened to the Attorney-General this afternoon must have concluded that when he was attempting to support the educational test in the Bill he was not at home. He did not feel comfortable.

Mr Thomson

- The honorable member does not say that he was insincere ?

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Mr MCDONALD

- I think there was a doubt as to his sincerity regarding that portion of the measure as compared with his sincerity in the former part of his speech. In dealing with a matter like this I take it that in our first act of national policy, we should be fair and above board. We should deal with it honestly and straightforwardly. In this connexion I must certainly compliment the acting leader of the Opposition, the honorable member for Wentworth, upon his manly, straightforward utterance concerning this Bill. Though I probably differ from him more than from any other honorable member of this Chamber upon politics generally, cannot but admire his manly speech upon this question. I hope that when the next black labour Bill is discussed the Government will deal with the question as straightforwardly as did the honorable member with this Bill. As far as Queensland is concerned I have had a fair opportunity of seeing what has been the result of the introduction of coloured aliens there. Any one who has visited Queensland, and observed the various phases of the attempt to dovetail the coloured population into the white must have realized the evil results of that attempt. Those results are so bad that only the other day we find a schoolmaster taking the extraordinary course of lecturing his pupils upon the unwisdom of returning a common labour man, who was opposed to black labour, to the Federal Parliament. We find this schoolmaster telling his pupils what a horrible creature the aforesaid labour man is. He referred, I am told, to the honorable member for Herbert. Here is a man who has lived so long among the black races that he considers it absolutely necessary to go out of his way to malign an honorable member of this House. I am not going to deal with the moral aspect of this question. We all know what has happened in Queensland. In one important town in that State a large coloured population exists. A number of Japanese women of an undesirable character located themselves there. Certain people of the town desired that these women should be removed, and accordingly they presented a petition to the Council to that effect. What was the result? Upon the casting vote of the chairman, who was the mayor, it was decided to allow these women to remain. What was the reason for the adoption of that course? In a conversation with the councillors which was published in the press, it was distinctly stated that the reason which prompted their action was that they feared their wives and daughters would not be safe from the coloured population. When we find a town in Australia having to adopt such extraordinary measures to protect its people, I think it is about time that we dealt with this matter straightforwardly. I could mention a number of other cases of a similar character, but I do not wish to occupy more time. I hope that in committee the amendment of the honorable member for Bland will be carried. If defeated upon it we will go down fighting. If the Government have not sufficient backbone to stand up and fight for a white Australia, let them go about their business and let us get another Ministry who will. I certainly think that a little stiffening on the part of the Government would do them good. After the splendid, and almost unanimous, vote throughout the Commonwealth that we should have a white Australia, I think the Government ought not to have come down with a half-and-half measure such as we have before us. Certainly my vote will be cast to deal with this matter in a manly and straightforward way.

Mr THOMSON

- The remarks of the honorable member who has just resumed his seat, and his estimate of the courage required to speak one's opinions in this House, have partly induced me - as I differ from his views upon this question - to state exactly what are my opinions. I do not think that after an honorable member of this Chamber has expressed his opinions to his constituents, he need fear expressing them to the House. Nor does it require any courage to speak in Parliament as one would speak to his constituents. When I rise to speak upon this question, it is to differ from the opinions expressed by the acting leader of the Opposition, the honorable member for Wentworth. That is at once, I think, a refutation of those base insinuations, which have appeared at any rate in one organ of the press, to the effect that the honorable member was trying by a party move to take advantage of the Government, and was thus representing opinions which he did not hold in order that he might place the Government at a disadvantage. When I told the honorable member after his speech that I did not altogether agree with him, instead of asking me to make the

question a party one he said that he did not look upon it as a party question at all, and would be glad if I expressed my own opinions. I am quite sure there can be no complaint made of the treatment which the honorable member for Wentworth has, in his position of acting leader of the Opposition, extended to the Government upon all occasions. I think that we are all at one upon this matter, and I agree with the honorable member for Kennedy that we are determinedly of opinion that no colour stain shall be introduced into our Australian population if we can avoid it. We are resolved that no colour difficulty shall be raised such as was created and such as still exists in the United States. I go further and say that I would be very sorry indeed to see our white workmen displaced by this cheaper labour, which is only cheap because of the lower conditions of life which those labourers accept. Only one of two things can happen if we give free admission to those coloured competitors ; and that competition can go on not only in Queensland, but throughout the Commonwealth. We must either lose the backbone of our community, or our white labourers will have not only to take the low wages of the imported aliens, but also accept the low conditions under which they live. None of us Want to see that ; and I am entirely at one with many members who have spoken on the subject. I will not say, however, that if it can be shown that there is no danger of a coloured question, and no replacement of our white labour because the work is such that white men can not or will not do it, and if conditions can be devised for the temporary settlement and return of coloured labour, for the development of our northern agricultural areas, we ought to absolutely abandon those areas. I blame the Government because they have not been sufficiently definite when bringing forward this measure, which is important to those northern areas, one of which we are asked to take over as part of the Commonwealth. The Government have not stated the conclusion that they have come to as regards the advisability of coloured labour in that portion of the Commonwealth.

Sir William McMillan

- Tins Bill only deals with the unregulated labour.

Mr Deakin

- We have another Bill which we hope to introduce next week.

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Mr THOMSON

- The kanaka is another question. People may object to kanaka labour on other grounds altogether to that of the introduction of coloured labour. They may object to it on account of its character, and on account of the improper injury we are doing to the residents of the South Sea Islands. The Ministry have not stated whether they intend, under the exemptions, to admit coloured people, not for settlement, but under a regulated immigration and return system, for the cultivation of those tropical agricultural areas. I do not say these coloured labourers should be admitted, but I point out that we have to go to the honorable member for Kennedy and individual members if we want to get an opinion. If the Government do not intend to admit this labour under the Bill, they should say to the House, what they would be perfectly justified in saying, that after full consideration and inquiry they could not admit coloured labour for agricultural purposes without danger to our race, and, believing that, they were not going to allow the importation of such labour for the northern agricultural land.

Sir William McMillan

- Is that not a further matter after this has been settled ?

Mr Deakin

- I hope the honorable member for North Sydney will be told that early next week, and before we settle this finally.

Mr THOMSON

- This is the first Bill we have had which largely touches the question, and we should have an expression of opinion by the Minister. I was going to say I would vote with the Ministry on this Bill and on clause 4, which is the particular bone of contention, but perhaps I would be rather hasty in making that statement. I intend to vote for the clause, but that may not be voting with the Ministry. There was a considerable note of indefiniteness in the eloquent speech of the Attorney-General this afternoon.

Mr Deakin

- Was there? I do not think so.

Mr THOMSON

- I thought so, as did also a good many other honorable members. I will not say, therefore, that I shall

vote with the Government, as, when a division comes, the Government may be found voting against their own clause, but I intend to vote in support of clause 4 with the amendment the Prime Minister has promised.

Mr Higgins

- The honorable member will not vote with the Government, but will vote for the Government clause.

Mr THOMSON

- That is so ; whether I vote with the Government will depend on the Government. I quite agree that strong exception can be taken to the terms of the Bill. As it was introduced before the promised amendment of the Prime Minister it would seem to me more a Bill for the propagation of the English language than for the restriction of aliens. That would be the inevitable effect of the clause, as it was introduced, and yearly it would become less restrictive. Then there was the strong objection that if it did not exclude Europeans, it at any rate would give Europeans the impression that they were excluded, and would keep from our shores many desirable immigrants. It would be a bad thing in many ways if we shut out the best people of Europe from the shores of the Commonwealth, because they are not only good citizens, but they give a blending of the best qualities which have done so much to make the British nation what it is. I do not like the Bill, which is only workable by a certain amount of evasion, and, under certain circumstances, I would be glad to adopt a more direct method, as suggested by the honorable member for Bland. I believe, however, that the Bill can be made more effective than it is, and the Prime Minister's amendment will assist in that. Of course, if we provided that no one should be admitted who cannot square the circle, we could exclude everybody, and let in whom we liked under the exemption. I do not, however, go that far, but say that the Premier's amendment is a great safeguard against undesirable immigration.

Mr Higgins

- Is the man coming in to have the choice of the language?

Mr THOMSON

- There is this safeguard - that under the wording of the amendment, a Japanese who had studied English might be asked to write 50 words in French, Italian, German, or Russian. Very few immigrants, not knowing what language they would have to write, would be able to prepare for the test. There was a great deal of objection taken to the evasive, illusive, and deceptive nature of the measure. But the amendment of the honorable member for Bland is only an addition to the measure, and he accepts the provisions of the Bill as to the test of languages.

Sir William McMillan

- No.

Mr THOMSON

- The amendment adds new subclauses, shutting out an aboriginal native of Asia or Africa, and all persons under contract or agreement to perform labour in the Commonwealth.

Mr WATKINS

- It is a very valuable addition to the Bill.

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Mr THOMSON

- But it accepts all the illusiveness, and all the deception, and only attempts to make the Bill more restrictive. I do not think that the Bill need be more restrictive now that the Prime Minister has agreed that any European language may be used. There is a possibility of entrance of undesirable immigrants even if we adopt the proposed sub-clauses of the honorable member for Bland. A native of West India, of Cuba, could come into this

Commonwealth under those provisions ; that is if the education test be struck out.

Mr Piesse

- 'And American negroes.

Mr THOMSON

- Yes, and others. How are we going to say that any one is an aboriginal native of Asia or Africa? I am quite sure that the birth-rate of the West India Islands will increase at a most rapid rate if that be the only restriction on aliens entering the Commonwealth. If the education test be excluded, which is objected to so strongly as deceptive, it would be difficult to prove that an intending immigrant was a native of Africa or

Asia, and although I dislike the elusive principles of the measure, I still more dislike the only alternative, namely, that we should put the British Government in a position in which it has stated it does not desire to be placed. It is all very well for members to say we cannot embarrass the British Government by passing a measure stating directly how aliens are to be excluded, but surely the British Government is the best judge. Surely the Prime Minister and the Attorney-General who have lately been in communication personally with the British Government, are able to say whether that is the opinion of the home authorities. That being so, it is useless to point to certain small measures passed in Queensland, which have only local application.

Mr Piesse

- Private Bills.

Mr THOMSON

- Private Bills as to the labour that should be employed on certain undertakings.

Mr Page

- They were public Bills.

Mr THOMSON

- The Burketown railway was a private measure - they were private syndicate railways.

Mr Page

- It was decided they were public Bills.

Mr THOMSON

- I know the Government took the measures up and though the honorable member for Maranoa may be technically correct, they were Bills for private companies. They were comparatively small works, and there might have been restrictions put in, excluding Queensland white settlers of over 45 years of age or any other. No conclusion can be drawn from the small measures of private companies. The British Government, while accepting those small measures, might be embarrassed in accepting a Bill keeping out certain races from Australia. I have no sympathy with those hysterics, not in this House, but outside, which shriek "no interference by the Colonial Secretary with Australian affairs." Are we not part of the British Empire? Do we not desire and value the security which that Empire gives? Have we not lately for the unity of the Empire shed blood and given life? And are we after that to say that unity shall cease the minute we do not get what we want in the manner we want it. I am not alluding to what happened in this House, but to what has happened outside. A statement was made in the press that a party had been formed, the main object of which was to flout the British Government.

Mr Winter Cooke

- A party of one.

Mr THOMSON

- I do not know how many there are in it; I hope there are no more than one. We have a right to give every consideration to the difficulties of the British Government, and only when our claims are infinitely more vital than those of any other part of the British Empire have we the right to insist that those claims shall be settled, and settled in the way we desire. If it is found by the British Government that we are unable to do that which we desire by taking the course they wish us to take; if our vital claims are not met by the legislation that we pass in accordance with their wishes, I am as sure of this as any one can be sure of the future - sure of it on the history of the past - that the British Government will never in such circumstances refuse to Australia what is necessary and desirable for its national life. I think, therefore, that in the first place we might try to extend that consideration to the British Government which they have asked. I must say that if the main provision is altered by the substitution of any European language for the English language test, we shall have ample security in the measure before us if it is properly administered. If there is any risk of its not fulfilling its purpose, why not limit its currency for, say, two years? That would force the question to come before us before the expiration of that period. The experience of that period would be sufficient to show whether the measure had effected its purpose or whether we need then go to the British Government and demand what the honorable member for Bland proposes to move for.

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Mr Wilks

- Why not ask -the Attorney- General whether he will give us such an assurance?

Mr THOMSON

- I do not know whether the Attorney-General would give us that assurance.

Mr Higgins

- If we adopted such a course it would leave us without any Bill at all, just as in the case of the Factories Act in Victoria at the present time.

Mr THOMSON

- I do not see that we would be left without any Bill if the matter were taken up in sufficient time, and surely this is not such a passing feeling with honorable members of this House that they would allow it to be neglected.

Mr Higgins

- Is it not as easy to enact this measure and repeal it if it proves to be ineffective ?

Mr THOMSON

- The fear is expressed by some honorable members that if we accept this measure definitely the British Government will be more reluctant to alter it, and that our own Parliament may settle down to the acceptance of the Bill, whether it is successful or not. On the other hand, if it is bound to be a question that will come before our Parliament at the end of two years there can be no such acquiescence. We could then demand a renewal of it, or an Act in the terms of the amendment suggested by the honorable member for Bland. If our experience showed the necessity for such a change, I am sure the British Government would not refuse it.

Mr Isaacs

- - -There will never be any apathy in Australia on that subject.

Mr THOMSON

- I think not, and consequently there will be no danger of its being laid aside. Some honorable members, however, have expressed the fear that if we pass a measure with unrestricted currency, nothing else will be obtained. I will not labour the question, because a good deal of what I intended to say has been already put forward. I was rather surprised at the lightness with which the honorable member for West Sydney seemed to view the embarrassment of the British Government. It seems at least ungracious on our part to risk embarrassing that Government - so long as we can avoid it - which has endeavoured time after time, on our representations, to avoid embarrassing us. That Government which discovered and annexed this continent upon which we stand ; that Government which bore the burden of this continent whilst it was a burden ; that Government which transferred it to us as a noble heritage when it became a remunerative heritage; that

Government which lately gave us a charter of liberty that hardly any nation, before has ever received at its birth, is deserving of every consideration from us, especially when, as I believe, we can secure, with a slight amendment, under this very Bill all the safeguards we need against alien immigration and against alien admixture in Australia.

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Mr F E McLEAN

- Fortunately for those who come late in this discussion, it has now resolved itself very largely into a question of whether the method proposed in the Bill by the Government or that proposed by the honorable member for Bland in his suggested amendment, is the better one. It appears that the discussion has practically narrowed itself down to the desirability of accepting one of the two methods. Incidentally the question of loyalty to the Empire, and of the difficulties that will attach to the Imperial Government in giving or withholding their assent from whatever legislation we may pass, has come into the discussion. I am afraid that rather too much importance has been attached to this so-called question of loyalty to the Empire. I do not think there is an honorable member in this House - I do not think there are very many men in this country - who have any other feelings than those of strong loyalty to the British Empire. There may have been a time in the history of these States when there was some strong feeling amongst certain sections of the people, which found vent in wild expressions in regard to cutting the painter and that sort of nonsense. But we have lived that kind of thing down long ago, and there is certainly a growing feeling, which is just as well responded to amongst the most extreme democrats in the community as it is by those who call themselves conservatives, in favour of attachment and loyalty to the British Empire. I do not think questions of that kind need be brought very seriously into a debate like this.

While I am inclined to support the amendment foreshadowed by the honorable member for Bland, and while I feel that the Government have not brought forward so drastic and perfect a measure as might have been introduced into this Chamber, I am not unaware of the difficulty that surrounds a question of this kind, nor would I advocate any extreme amendment if I thought it was likely to involve any difficulty between the Commonwealth Government and the Imperial

Government. I think those who have spoken in that strain are assuming that these difficulties would arise when there is no solid ground for such a belief. We know perfectly well that the Commonwealth has been called into existence, and this Parliament and the Commonwealth Government have been charged with very grave responsibilities, for the purpose of working out the destiny of Australia in regard to these very important matters. I could recall from memory, and had I time I could quote scores of speeches delivered during the federal campaign by honorable gentlemen who now hold office in the Commonwealth Government, in which they declared that one of the strongest reasons for federating was that as a Commonwealth we should be able to talk with a very much more emphatic voice, and be heard to much greater advantage in Downing-street. What, after all, is going to be the advantage of federation - what is going to be the advantage of this achievement of Australian unity, so far as the great masses of the people are concerned, if we do not secure immunity from the dangers of invasion of alien races, especially of those classes that are likely to depress wages and degrade the social tone of the community? I believe one of the very strongest reasons that led most of the people of Australia to accept federation was the belief that it would become an effective weapon for defending ourselves against this alien invasion. Holding that belief, I regret to think that we are bound to adopt legislation calculated to cause any misapprehension as to what our intentions are in regard to this very important question. This afternoon the Attorney-General devoted a very large part of his speech to an effort to convince the House that he was as strongly in favour of utterly stopping Japanese immigration and the immigration of all Asiatic races, as those who are advocating a more radical measure. But if the Bill is really intended to keep out these races, can any good reason be shown why that should not appear on the very face of it, and why our intention should not be expressed in an Act of legislation? Surely the mere form of the Bill is not going to create difficulty with the British Government.

Mr Deakin

- I have read to the House what they say.

Mr.F. E. McLEAN.- I know that, and I am prepared to believe that as a mere matter of official etiquette, they would prefer to receive the Bill which has been submitted to us by the Government. I do not think, however, that their objection to extreme legislation is of such a definite and emphatic character as to lead to any strained relations between the Commonwealth and the Imperial Government.

Sir William McMillan

- Opinion has strengthened since the conference took place.

Mr.F. E. McLEAN - Very much so.

Mr Deakin

- The despatch relating to the Queensland Sugar Bill is only three months old.

Sir William McMillan

- But I am referring to the negotiations between the Home Government and the Premiers, to which reference was made by the Attorney-General.

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Mr Deakin

- The despatch with regard to the Sugar Bill repeats the objection then taken.

Mr.F. E. McLEAN. - I am convinced that we shall not gain anything by approaching the Imperial Government in any timid attitude on a question of this kind. They know perfectly well the loyalty of the people of Australia. We do not want to prove our loyalty by any mere timidity in a matter of this kind. Our loyalty has been proved, and can be proved again if it is ever put to the test. I believe that it is our loyalty to the Empire, and the supreme conviction that it is the destiny of the British Empire to rule in these southern seas that has prompted us to this drastic kind of legislation. It is the strong conviction of the people of these States that we are to hold this continent for the British people - it is that strong feeling of Imperial loyalty that has led to this kind of legislation. Of course we cannot ignore the importance of the social question, as we all recognise that the competing Asiatic is a dangerous foe to our artisans and

labourers, and we have the right to protect them from degrading competition of that kind. This, however, is recognised by the Imperial Government, who are sufficiently aware of our difficulties in connexion with these matters, and must sympathize with us in every effort we make to maintain a high social standard for our people. I am convinced that we shall gain nothing by passing any half measures, but that we shall hasten the work we desire to accomplish by placing on the face of the Bill a very clear expression of our intentions. I do not wish to labour the question, but I cannot help expressing my feeling that we shall be doing the wisest and best thing for the people of this Commonwealth if we act straightforwardly in this matter. I do not for one moment doubt the sincerity of the Government, but, on the other hand, give them every credit for voicing the aspirations of the people of Australia and- their desire to restrict the influx of these undesirable immigrants. I regard the Bill as an evidence of their intention to stop such immigration, and I am sure it would be administered with that view; but I cannot disguise the fact that, as drawn, it would not effect the object desired, but would lead to a great many more difficulties than would be brought about by more drastic legislation. It has been pointed out that the educational test would really prevent the immigration of desirable people, whilst, on the other hand, there is no absolute guarantee that it would prohibit the introduction of those people whom we desire to prevent from landing here. But if a straight course is taken - I do not say an honest course, because I do not wish to imply that there is anything but an honest desire on the part of the Government - to express in the Bill what we mean, I have no fear but that the Imperial Government will respect our wishes. The honorable member for North Sydney spoke as though we, being under so many obligations to the Imperial Government, should approach them with a great deal of consideration, and with a desire to give them as little difficulty in connexion with this matter as possible. "We all appreciate that feeling, and we all desire to create as little difficulty for the Imperial Government as possible; but the question is - are we creating a difficulty when we express in plain language what is intended to be expressed by the roundabout educational test proposed in the Bill? In the administration of the Bill, it would probably be found as time rolled on that distinctions would be made between the Asiatic and European races, and we should probably have complaints made by the Japanese Government that their people were being treated differently in regard to the educational test for Europeans. This would raise no end of difficulty for the Imperial Government - far more difficulty than is likely to arise from a plain and unmistakable expression of our desires on the face of the Bill. The honorable member for Kennedy has quoted from the treaty that has been entered into with Japan, and which so far as we are aware has not yet been annulled. Under that treaty special provision is made for these particular States of Australia, in consequence of the laws that we have passed from time to time to restrict the influx of Asiatic peoples, and, as the Imperial Government have to some extent safeguarded our rights in the drafting of their treaties with other countries, is it likely that any serious complications will arise from the passing of the Bill in the form suggested by the honorable member for Wentworth and the honorable member for Bland? I believe we should state clearly what we mean, and not leave too much to the administration. I think that one very serious fault in connexion with recent legislation is that we are leaving far too much to those who are to administer the laws, that we are casting undue responsibilities upon them, whereas we ought to take the responsibilities upon ourselves by putting upon the face of the Bill what we intend to do, and indicating how far we wish to go in the direction of excluding undesirable immigrants. I give the Government credit for the utmost sincerity. I know they intend to do the best they can for the Commonwealth, but I believe that their method will prove ineffective, and that the amendment proposed will afford a more effectual means of attaining our ends, without causing any trouble.

Sir JOHN QUICK

- As the hour is growing late, I would suggest that the debate might now be adjourned.

Mr Deakin

- I would ask honorable members to continue the debate so that we may make progress with the Bill.

Sir JOHN QUICK

- I shall decline to speak if the adjournment is not granted, because it is not "fair to ask honorable members to speak at this late hour.

Sir WILLIAM MCMILLAN

- If an assurance were given that the debate on the second reading would be concluded to-morrow afternoon, it would probably answer all requirements. So far as I am concerned, I am quite ready to

agree to that. I understand that there is no intention to go into committee, except proforma, until next Wednesday. There will probably be no division on the second reading of the Bill, but the real crux of the measure will be dealt with on Wednesday.

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Mr DEAKIN

- I understand that honorable members of the Opposition desired that the division on the crucial clause, No. 4, should not take place until Wednesday, but the arrangement made with the Prime Minister was that, whilst he was willing to remit that decision until Wednesday, he hoped, in the meantime, not only to pass the second reading, but to dispose of the remaining clauses of the Bill, which are practically non-contentious. I would suggest to the honorable and learned member for Bendigo, whom I am sure we all desire to hear, that as the practical question appears to be narrowing itself down to the discussion of clause 4, perhaps we might have the advantage of hearing him in committee without depriving the House of the benefit of his speech, while at the same time we might considerably facilitate our business. We are being so pressed in one way and another with the work that has to be gone through before the Tariff that, unless we make very large demands upon honorable members, I am afraid that we shall not be able to finish our business within the time that we had hoped to be able to fix for its introduction.

Sir John Quick

- I am willing to waive my right to speak.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee :

Clause 3 (Repeal of State Acts).

Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- I see that the only Acts repealed are the three State Immigration Restriction Acts, and that the Acts providing for a poll tax upon Chinese are not in any way touched. I should like to know whether those Acts will be administered by the States or by the Commonwealth?

Mr Deakin

- - They are being administered now by the Customs officers of the Commonwealth.

Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- Will the whole of the jurisdiction in connexion with the Chinese Restriction Acts be under the supervision of the Commonwealth officers?

Mr Deakin

- I think so.

Sir WILLIAM McMILLAN

- It would be very anomalous to have two sets of officers carrying out the provisions of the different Acts.

Mr ISAACS

- I am not quite sure whether it would not be well to postpone this clause. I would like to have an opportunity of considering whether we have power to repeal these Acts. We can override State Acts, but I am not quite sure that we can repeal them.

Mr HARPER

- Is it intended to continue the Chinese Restriction Acts in operation after this Bill is passed?

Mr Deakin

- Yes, for the present.

Clause postponed.

Clause 4 (Prohibited Immigrants).

Progress reported.

CUSTOMS BILL

Bill returned from the Senate with amendments.

EXCISE BILL

Bill read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT

Order of Business. Adjutant of New South Wales Forces. Payment of State Bounties

Attorney-General

Mr DEAKIN

. - I move -

That this House do now adjourn.

I might state that if the amendments in the Distillation Bill are completed in accordance with the wishes of the committee in time, the Minister of Trade and Customs will be able to go on with that Bill and with the Excise Bill to-morrow. The non-contentious clauses of the Immigration Restriction Bill will be considered, leaving only the questions that may be in dispute to be taken on Wednesday. In the event of any time remaining, some progress will be made with the Defence Bill.

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Mr WATSON

- I should like to bring under the attention of the Minister of Defence a paragraph which appears in the daily papers of this morning, with reference to some of the men who are returning from the war in South Africa. In the published list is mentioned the name of Captain Sinclair McClaggan, an Imperial officer, who is coming to Australia as an adjutant of the New South Wales forces. From this press statement it seems that some adjutants are being imported, although to my knowledge there is a sufficient number of capable men in New South Wales at the present time to fill the vacancies which exist. If the report be true, it is strange that we are importing men to fill purely administrative offices. Whilst it may be a proper thing to import general officers to look after large commands, surely the same reason cannot be advanced for importing officers for minor purposes. I wish to direct the attention of the Minister for Defence to the statement, and to invite him to see if it is not possible to avoid the continuance of this practice if the report be true?

Mr. SYDNEYSMITH (Macquarie). In the Age, of this morning, there is a long paragraph to the effect that representations had been made by the State Government to the Federal Government with respect to the payment of bounties. From this paragraph I gather that correspondence has been going on for some considerable time, and that during that period the payment of bounties has been suspended by the State Government. The correspondence is, I believe, in the hands of the Minister for Trade and Customs, and, as I propose dealing with this question at a later stage, I shall be glad if the right honorable and learned gentleman will lay the papers upon the table of the House so as to place honorable members in possession of the whole of the facts. Several phases of the question are of great importance, if the paragraph referred to be true.

Mr WILKS

- I should like to indorse the remarks of the honorable member for Bland regarding the appointment of adjutants. Many of the officers who went to South Africa were under the impression that their services would be utilized for Australia upon their return. If the Minister for Defence will consider this aspect of the question, he will see the advisability of accepting the services of those trained officers in their own country.

Minister for Defence

Sir JOHN FORREST

. - I believe that there is truth in the statement referred to by the honorable member for Bland. A few days ago it came to my knowledge, through a letter from the War-office, that a request which had been made by the New South Wales Government for an officer as adjutant had been approved. The paper showed that the application was made some time ago - long before the Defence department was taken over. At that time the Imperial Government could not provide an officer, and the War-office now wrote intimating that they could supply the officer, and that Captain. McClaggan had been appointed, and was under instructions to sail from the Cape to Sydney. As soon as I saw this document I telegraphed, through the Governor-General, asking that Captain McClaggan should not come, and inquiring . whether means could not be taken to avoid the appointment being made. I have not heard any more upon the subject. Probably in the light of information which the honorable member for Bland has given us my telegram was too late, and Captain

McClaggan has sailed. I can assure honorable members that if such be the case it is altogether against the wishes of the Government. We should not have thought for a moment of making such an appointment. Of course, now that it has been made upon the request of the New South Wales Government, I do not suppose that there is any way of getting out of it, but at any rate we are not in any

way responsible for it.

Mr JOSEPH COOK

- I rise, sir, to ask you a question. I heard tonight with very great surprise - and I cannot think that it is correct - that it is the custom for honorable members to send up a list of the names of those who wish to speak. It is suggested that you call upon them in the order in which they apply for permission to speak. I desire to know whether that is a fact, so that those who are now ignorant of any such practice may know what to do. It would be a matter of great convenience if we knew that we had to send our names up, and that we were likely to be called upon in the order in which we got our names into your hands. I am very much surprised to hear this statement, and I hope that it is not correct.

Mr SPEAKER

- It is not the practice for honorable members to send up their names to me, and to be called upon in the order in which they supply them. Upon several occasions - the latest of which was this afternoon - five or six honorable members have risen together, and then have informed me that they wished to speak in a certain order, so that they might know when they are likely to be called upon, and thus not be kept waiting unnecessarily. When that has taken place, and such an arrangement has been made, they have been called upon in such order, but no one has been called upon in such away since five o'clock this afternoon.

Mr. DEAKIN(Ballarat- Attorney-General). - I am sorry that I cannot afford the honorable member for Macquarie any information on the subject to which he has directed attention. I am not aware of any transaction in regard to the question of bounties. I will cause inquiries to be made to-morrow, and if there is correspondence upon the matter, will then be able to give the honorable member a description of it, so that he may be enabled to table a motion, which, of course, will be unopposed.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

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22:25:00

House adjourned at 10.25 p.m.