

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL. Tuesday, 15th October, 1901. First Readings-Third Reading-Taheke Settlers-Maori Antiquities Bill. The Hon. the SPEAKER took the chair at half- past two o'clock. PRAYERS. FIRST READINGS. Cornwall Park Duties Exemption Bill, Evidence Further Amendment Bill, Opium Prohibition Bill, Charitable Institutions Rating Bill, Egmont National Park Bill, Factories Bill. THIRD READING. Trustee Amendment Bill. # TAHEKE SETTLERS. On the motion of the Hon. Mr. JENKINSON, it was ordered, That the recommendation contained in the report of the Public Petitions Committee upon the petition of J. Gordon-Jones and other settlers of Taheke, brought up on Friday, the 11th instant, be agreed to. MAORI ANTIQUITIES BILL. This Bill was committed, reported, and read the third time. The Council adjourned at five minutes to three o'clock p.m. # HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. Tuesday, 15th October, 1901. First Readings-Bills discharged-Petition re Maori Degradation-Patea Election-Supply. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER took the chair at half- past two o'clock. PRAYERS. # FIRST READINGS. Gore Cemetery Reserve Vesting and Enabling Bill, Public Health Bill (No. 2), Unclaimed Moneys Bill, Public Trust Office Bill, Chatham Islands County Bill, Medical Practitioners Bill, Hawera Borough and Public Trustee Enabling Bill, Crown Tenants' Rent Rebate Bill. BILLS DISCHARGED. Smoking by Youths Prohibition Bill, New Zealand University Bill, Young Persons' Protection Bill, Land and Live-stock Auctions Bill, Law Amendment Bill, Discount Stamps Bill, State Fire Insurance Bill, Property Law Bill, Fair Rent Bill, Rating on Unimproved Values Bill, Rating on Unimproved Value Bill (No. 2), District Courts Bill, Orchard and Garden Pests Bill, Cycle Boards Bill, Crown Grants Bill, Limitation of Profits and Prevention of Rings and Combines Bill, Juvenile Smoking Suppression Bill, Impounding Bill (No. 1), Gaming and Lotteries Bill, Libel Bill (No. 2), Settlers' Fire Insurance Bill, Fire Brigades Bill, Contagious Diseases Bill, Bicycle-dealers Registration Bill, Absolute Majority Vote Bill, Impounding Bill (No. 2), Totalisator Abolition Bill, Inspectors of Schools Bill. PETITION RE MAORI DEGRADATION. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) said he wished to present a pictorial petition from Samuel Lawry and seven others in re Maori degradation. Mr. A.

L. D. FRASER (Napier) wished to ask, Whether it was in compliance with the Standing Orders that petitions could be pre- sented which bore on the face of them most insulting allusions to a section of the people of the colony-the Maoris? The pictures on the petition, several of which had been presented

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who caused them to be placed there, and conveyed a most untruthful and unchristian innuendo. They were nothing but an insult to a portion of the community, for whom he and a great many others had much respect. Mr. PIRANI would like to point out that the only insult on the petition was a number of bottles of cordials. An Hon. MEMBER asked, What about the barrel ? Mr. PIRANI said it was ginger-beer. He defied any honourable member to prove there was anything but ginger-beer in it. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) said it was a ques- tion for the House to consider how far this sort of thing was to be allowed to go on, and, if allowed to go on, what it would come to. would therefore, if in order, move, That the petitions be not accepted. That would put a stop to a practice that otherwise might be- come objectionable. He understood it had already been ruled that petitions of the kind could not be received. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER said he had not ruled yet upon the point now raised. Mr. PIRANI believed the picture touched the Premier " on the raw." Mr. SEDDON said it was a question of degree. He remembered there was a long de- bate at one time about a plan being laid upon the table. However, he would accept Mr. Deputy-Speaker's ruling. It was an innova- tion, and the sooner it was dealt with the better. Mr. HOGG (Masterton) said that on the pre- vious Friday evening he presented a petition similar to the one now objected to, and after it had been inspected by Mr. Deputy-Speaker it was returned to him, on the ground, he under- stood, that it was an evasion of the Standing Orders of the House. He sent the petition back to the parties who had forwarded it to him. That course having been taken in regard to his petition, he submitted the same course should be followed with any similar petitions. Mr. McGUIRE (Hawera) said he was ac- quainted with and knew the subject-matter of the petition, and what was alleged in it he believed to be truthful, and what had been proved before the Public Petitions M to Z Committee; and if the House did not take steps to prohibit the Natives from indulging in in- toxicating liquor - the men as well as the women-a similar class of petitions would con- tinue to deluge the House. The sooner the House put a stop to the drinking habits of the Maoris the better it would be for a race that he had the greatest admiration for. The Na- tives were destroying their health and wasting their substance through excessive drinking, and the House should rise to the occasion and pre- vent it by amending the Licensing Act. Mr. MONK (Waitemata) did not agree with the remarks made by the honourable member for Napier. The statements in the petition were quite correct. While he was not going to be an advocate of pictorial petitions, he could assure the House that if there was any subject Mr. A. L. D. Fraser that which was embodied in the picture on the petition. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER said the honour- able gentleman could not discuss the subject- matter of the petition. Mr. A. L. D. FRASER (Napier) wished to make a personal explanation. He had not seen the pictures, and he did not know what words accompanied them. Mr. MONK .- You said they were untruthful. Mr. A. L. D. FRASER said that what he had stated was that the inference to be deduced from the picture on the petition was untruth- ful. He had never seen barrels of beer or bottles of liquor among the Natives. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) understood Mr. He Deputy - Speaker was asked to rule whether the petitions should be received or not. If they were against the Standing Orders Mr. Deputy-Speaker would no doubt rule that they should not be received ; but he would ask him to rule in strict conformity with the Standing Orders, and not be influenced by anything that had been said with regard to the petition itself. A ruling might be given which would be unjust to those who were dealt with in the petition ; but if there was any doubt about the truth of what was alleged in the petition, it would

be far better that it should be considered by the Public Petitions Committee of the House, and the truth of what was stated in the petition proved or disproved. But it would be obviously wrong for us to rule these things out of order simply for the purpose of burking inquiry, if there was anything to inquire into. Mr. McNAB (Mataura), in speaking to the point of order, said that it could not be too strongly impressed that the question, so far, had nothing to do with the merits or demerits of the petition, and that Mr. Speaker's ruling would simply be as to whether a petition could be presented to the House which contained a photograph of a pile of eleven barrels of beer and fifteen bottles of whiskey. He thought it was a scandal. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin), in speaking to the point of order, said it seemed to him there was a certain amount of responsibility on the member presenting the petition. Standing Order No. 308 said, " Every member presenting a petition is to take care that the same is in conformity with the rules and orders of the House." And No. 310 said, " Every petition is to be respectful, decorous, and temperate in its language." It seemed to him, if there was any doubt as to whether a petition was in conformity with the Standing Orders or not, it would be the duty of the Clerk to call the attention of Mr. Speaker to the petition, and then it would be the duty of Mr. Speaker, guided, of course, by the Standing Orders, to decide if the petition could be allowed to proceed or not. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER said that Standing Order No. 300 provided that every petition had to be written, printed, or lithographed in the English or Maori language. In his opinion, a petition with a picture, drawing, or cartoon, or anything of that sort, would be contrary to

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 was allowed to creep in he did not know where this practice would drift to. He should therefore rule that these petitions were out of order, and could not be received. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) said he desired to present a petition on the same subject with the picture cut out. Mr. HALL - JONES (Minister for Public Works) said, In view of Standing Order No. 297, which said, " No printed or lithographed petition will be received if it contains any erasure or interlineation," this petition was mutilated, having a portion cut out, and he asked if this was in order ? Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER said, In his opinion the petition could not be accepted, because it had either an erasure or an interlineation upon it. Mr. G. J. SMITH (Christchurch City) wished to ask if Mr. Speaker's ruling was that no petition could be presented that had any illustration or lithographed plan attached to it ? Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER said that no petition could be presented that had attached to it or delineated upon it any picture or drawing. Mr. ATKINSON (Wellington City) asked if a petition would be in order if the erasure was initialled. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER said, Yes.
 PATEA ELECTION. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) said he desired to announce, in respect to the first notice of motion on the Order Paper for the issue of a writ for the Patea Electoral District, that he had had supplied to him from the Clerk of the Writs a notification. From this it appeared, in the first place, that there was no Returning Officer. He believed a gentleman had been asked to act, and would be in town on the following day. Then, whoever the officer was, a few days would be required to revise the existing polling-places, of which there were fifty-six, to secure Deputy Returning Officers, and to arrange generally for the holding of the election. It would therefore be advisable to postpone the motion for direction to the Speaker to issue his warrant to the Clerk of the Writs, because if once that was issued the election must be proceeded with. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston). - Why not get Mr. Edwards to make the arrangements ? Mr. SEDDON said he did not know why a question of that kind should be put. So far as the Government were concerned the election could go on upon the following day; but the fact was that a responsible officer informed him that there was no Returning Officer; that he had to find fifty-six Deputy Returning Officers to make arrangements for the election, and that the rolls were not ready. Consequently, he (Mr. Seddon) could not move the motion now, and would postpone it until Friday. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) could only say that it was a matter of great regret to himself, and, he believed, to other members of the House, that delay should occur which seemed perfectly substantial reason why the writ should not be issued, and why the Returning Officer had not been appointed and all arrangements made, before this. Mr. SEDDON .- You

will tell me that we knew what the decision was going to be. Mr. J. ALLEN said the Government knew what the decision was going to be, just as the members of the Opposition knew. The Government suited themselves as to the course that was taken when elections were to be held, and he ventured to say the delay was intentional. Mr. SEDDON said he objected to an honourable member making a statement of that kind. They could have the election take place at once if they were so determined, and have another muddle made of it. Captain RUSSELL (Hawke's Bay) said he thought that every one would agree in the hope that the election would not be postponed until the House had closed its sittings, and so that Ministers could go to Patea and stump the country when the election came on. Everything ought to have been ready for the issue of the writ, though it might, perhaps, be impolitic to say, as his honourable friend Mr. Allen had done, that this delay was intentional. He had, however, no shadow of a doubt that every advantage would be taken of the delay, and that the House would be doing wrong unless it expressed the opinion that the Clerk of the Writs was to blame in not having ready the machinery to proceed without delay with the election. The fact was, the constituency was to be disfranchised because the Clerk of the Writs had not seen his way to keep the whole machinery of election in proper order. There was another point upon which it was well to say a word or two. On a previous occasion he had denounced the abominable system under which the Auckland electoral roll had been kept, a manner which was a disgrace to all the persons responsible. There was no word in his vocabulary strong enough to express the contempt he felt for the Government allowing an official who was a strong political partisan to control the electoral rolls in the Auckland District. It had been proved that the rolls were kept in a disgraceful condition. It was true that the election for Patea had not taken place very long ago, but there was no reason why the rolls should not have been revised so that there would have been no need for delay. As it was, many people who had no more right to vote in that electorate than he himself had would be placed on the roll, contrary to everything right and proper. The roll ought to have closed on the very day that the writ was issued. That writ ought to have been issued at the shortest possible time, but instead of that the whole district would be canvassed over first in the Government interest. There would be persons, both directly and indirectly, paid by the Government to canvass the district. Mr. SEDDON .- They cannot do that. Captain RUSSELL said they could do it, and they would do it. It was notorious that there was no election in the colony at which there

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were not paid canvassers employed-paid out of the people's money-to tout for votes in favour of the Government. Mr. HORNSBY .- I can deny that, at all events, as far as my district is concerned. An Hon. MEMBER .- And I too. Captain RUSSELL .- You cannot deny that it was so in the past. An Hon. MEMBER .- What about Armstrong ? Captain RUSSELL said, Yes : what about Armstrong ? What about the Appropriation Act? It had been notorious that it was the case, and that the canvassers were paid, although they said they were not touting for the Government, but were simply getting names on the roll. It was a disgrace to Parliament more than it was a disgrace to Ministers that they should tolerate such things. If members had the spirit of men he did not believe this wretched condition of things in connection with our electoral system would be allowed to continue for another moment ; but honourable members were prepared to swallow everything that was attempted to be thrust down their throats, and the way in which our elections were tampered with for the benefit of the Government was a standing disgrace to the whole colony. Sir J. G. WARD (Colonial Secretary) said it was very extraordinary to hear the statements just made by the honourable member. Captain RUSSELL said he had made them half a dozen times before. Sir J. G. WARD said he meant in connection with this particular matter. Now, the facts were these : During the passage through the House this session of the Colonial Secretary's estimates, on the question of Returning Officers, the then member for Patea, Mr. Haselden, commented on the undesirability of the local Post-master, who was the former Returning Officer, being continued in

the position in which he was, although he (Mr. Haselden) said nothing against him. He referred to the fact that it had been said that, in the event of the election resulting in a tie, the Returning Officer would be afraid of doing his duty for fear of getting into displeasure with those who were over him-namely, the Government of the colony. He (Sir J. G. Ward) then said that, while he did not believe-and neither did Mr. Haselden himself believe-that this officer would swerve from doing his duty, yet that steps would be taken to have a fresh Returning Officer appointed for the next election. He then did not know, nor, of course, did any other member of the House know, that the seat would be declared void by the Electoral Court; and the statement was made then publicly by him that a change in the Returning Officer would take place in consequence of what the member stated. And he might add that Mr. Haselden, when he spoke, did not in any way reflect on the Returning Officer. But, in consequence of what the member said, he (Sir J. G. Ward) stated that the Returning Officer would be changed. Honourable members were now trying to make out that this was a pre-meditated delay in the issue of the writ in order Captain Russell to help the Government. It was nothing of the kind. It was a regrettable thing that the moment anything was done by the Government suspicions were at once created in the minds of certain honourable members who looked at the whole thing from a prejudiced party point of view. A tender was accepted for the printing of the roll a week or two ago-some time before the election was declared void. They had not yet got the roll to go on with. The Returning Officer would be appointed to-morrow, and it would be unfair to both candidates for the seat not to have the rolls ready for them as soon as possible. He had stated what was the sole cause of the delay, and upon that text the honourable member for Hawke's Bay had entered upon discursive matter regarding the last Auckland elections. He (Sir J. G. Ward) assured the House that in this matter nothing whatever was attempted to be done other than that which was right. They accepted a tender for the printing of the electoral roll at Wanganui about a fortnight ago, and he had not got the roll yet; and it would be an improper thing for the writ to be issued before even the Returning Officer was appointed. The honourable member was entirely mistaken in the supposition that it was with the view of enabling Ministers to go up and take part in this particular election that the issue of the writ was delayed. Ministers intended to do nothing of the kind, and from all they heard the seat was particularly safe for the Government. He regretted exceedingly that, while the necessary departmental machinery had to be turned round so as to get things into a proper position, because of that these charges were sprung upon them as if something extraordinary and unfair were intended to be given effect to by the Government in connection with the matter of the election. He could assure honourable members that nothing of the kind was intended. If it had been possible to have the necessary machinery ready they would have had the writ issued, and then there would have been no reason for any delay whatever. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) rose again to point out to the Colonial Secretary what he had stated half a dozen times previously: that if the system used by the Wellington Registrar in connection with the electoral rolls were enforced throughout the colony, almost any roll could be completed in two days after the writs were issued. It was a system of cards, and a very good system; and over and over again he had endeavoured to get the Government to adopt it in the districts of the colony. He had received a promise that it would be done, but he supposed these promises were, like pie-crust, only made to be broken. Now that the Colonial Secretary was acting for himself, perhaps he might be induced to make inquiries and get that system enforced. Mr. SEDDON.- That is the ticket system? Mr. PIRANI.- Yes. Mr. SEDDON.- It is a very good system. Sir J. G. WARD (Colonial Secretary) would make inquiries into the matter.

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anything about the circumstances which had led up to the present position, but he did say that the position, so far as the people of the Patea district were concerned, was a most unfair one, seeing that they were practically disfranchised at the most important part of the session. Let him remind the Premier of what took place on an almost similar occasion, when Mr. Shepherd Allen was unseated for Te Aroha.

In that case the certificate and report from the Court was read to the House by Mr. Speaker, and, on the motion of Mr. Ballance, directly afterwards, it was ordered that Mr. Speaker be at once directed to issue instructions to the Clerk of Writs to prepare a new writ for a fresh election for the district of Te Aroha. That was in the year 1891. Mr. SEDDON said there had been amend- ments of the Electoral Act since then. Mr. MASSEY said the position was exactly parallel with the present one. No amend- ments that had been made in the Electoral Act since had anything to do with it. This matter was reported to the Speaker last Saturday morning ; it was now Tuesday, and they were informed by the Premier that it was intended to still further postpone the issue of the writ. Was it any wonder members were suspicious ? Sir J. G. WARD said it was only to be post- poned until Friday. Mr. MASSEY understood that. Supposing the motion for the issue of the writ were moved on Friday, how soon after that would the writ be issued ? Could the honourable member tell them that ? Sir J. G. WARD said it would be issued forth- with-on Saturday. Mr. MASSEY asked, How soon after that _ would the election take place. Mr. SEDDON said, It must take place in about fourteen days from the issue of the writ. Mr. MASSEY thought the Premier was wrong. Mr. SEDDON said the writ must be back in twenty-one days. Mr. MASSEY thought that was the position. He did not want to labour the point, but he did hope the writ would be issued on the earliest possible day, so that there might be a possibility of the new member taking his seat this session. Mr. MILLS (Commissioner of Customs) wished to reply to the last speaker in a very few words. He would like to remind the honour- able gentleman and his party that it would have been much better for them if they had shown a little more solicitude towards the con- stituents of the Patea electorate when a former member, who belonged to their own side in the House, retained the seat for a whole session while he was away from the colony, and thus allowed these electors to be disfranchised. The Government had no wish whatever for them to be disfranchised ; but, in view of the sudden impatience of the Opposition on this matter, he just wished to point out that not so many months ago there was no solicitude at all felt, or expressed, by members of the Opposition about these people being disfranchised, and the remark : When the member for Hawke's Bay was leader of the Opposition, one of his first lieutenants offered to provide \$50 towards de- fraying the expenses of a candidate to keep him (Mr. Mills) out of the House; and it was in- correct to say the Government had paid can- vassers out of public funds to canvass in districts against the Opposition. Captain RUSSELL (Hawke's Bay), as a per- sonal explanation, said that he was unaware of the fact referred to ; but the money would have been absolutely squandered, considering the strength which the honourable gentleman brought to the Government. Mr. SYMES (Egmont) wished to deny the allegation of the member for Hawke's Bay as far as his district was concerned. He said, without any fear of contradiction, that no paid canvasser was ever in his district. He objected to the appointment of a man as Returning Officer who was unable to attend to his duties. The Postmaster at Patea, who had been ap- pointed, was, for instance, quite unable to attend to his duties as Postmaster and also as Returning Officer. He did not think there need be so much fuss about disfranchising Patea, as it had been disfranchised for the past twelve months, which had not only entailed a great deal of work upon him, but he had also incurred the displeasure of the Government by trying to help settlers who had no one else to help them. He wished to join with the member for Palmerston in drawing the Colonial Secretary's attention to the system of preparing the rolls. The Registrar at Stratford had everything in such order that within five minutes of the receipt of the telegram he could have the roll in the printer's hands ; and, if every Registrar adopted the same system the whole thing could be done within two days at the outside. In his opinion no Government officer should be appointed a Returning Officer. Mr. MCLACHLAN (Ashburton) could say, without fear of contradiction, that the Govern- ment had paid no canvassers to help him into the House. Mr. McGUIRE (Hawera) said, In regard to the Patea election, if the Government wanted a really good man as Returning Officer, they should appoint Mr. C. E. Horner, who had always given satisfaction in that and similar capacities ; and had the Government retained his services there would be no necessity to

have another election on account of any irregularities on the part of the Returning Officer. Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa) had some personal knowledge of the canvassing which went on in various electorates : but it was incorrect to say that paid men were sent round by the Government. In his own electorate the Registrar had an absolutely free hand in the appointment of persons to get names on the roll in 1899, but amongst those appointed there were active canvassers on the side of his opponent. The Government, however, had nothing to do with that. The Registrar was instructed to put men on to make the roll as complete as possible, and engaged the men personally. Be-

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fault of the Registrar's, who had never been a partisan. He referred to the ex-Registrar, who was Postmaster at Greytown. Some of the men engaged simply happened to be partisans against the Government. With regard to Mr. Adam Armstrong, whose name had been mentioned by some of the members of the Opposition, statements had before now been made in the House regarding that gentleman which, if made outside, would have been met by the issue of a writ for criminal slander. A former member of the House, who had made a statement in his place in the House regarding Mr. Armstrong, had been challenged by that gentleman, in a letter he wrote to the Post, to make the same statement outside the House; which challenge had never been responded to. The House was to a certain extent "coward's castle," and members could say just what they chose ; but Mr. Armstrong had been most unjustly accused and vilified in a place where the law could not reach his detractors. He (Mr. Hornsby) would be wanting in his duty if he did not say that never in any electorate had there been a better or more efficient officer than Mr. Adam Armstrong. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) had not expected this debate. The motion was that the matter should stand over until Friday, and he had given the reasons-namely, that the appointment of a Returning Officer had not been made, the rolls were still in the printer's hands, that there were fifty-six polling-booths, and fifty-six Deputy Returning Officers were required ; it was, therefore, unreasonable to expect a man who was just appointed to select fifty-six others at once. How the action of the Government could be complained of, and how it could be insinuated that they were trying to promote their own interests, he could not understand. So far as the Government interest was concerned, he would rather have the election come off to-morrow. An Hon. MEMBER .- Have you a candidate ready ? Mr. SEDDON had very great pleasure in announcing to the Opposition that, so far as he knew at present, there was going to be a straight-out run between Mr. John Heslop and Mr. Haselden. The moment honourable members opposite heard that announcement they turned pale. They wished for more time, so that they might do their best to, as usual, get another crop of candidates to come out in the Government interest ; and, so that there might be no chance of doing that, he would like to see the election take place to-morrow. The leader of the Opposition said it was decided in Cabinet to challenge the election of Mr. Haselden. Now, that statement was absolutely incorrect. It was without the slightest foundation. Hon. MEMBERS. - Oh, oh. Mr. SEDDON .- The honourable gentleman knew that, as a gentleman, he would not make that statement if it was otherwise. He would say, further, that the seat belonged to the Government. Their candidate was returned but for the bungling of the Returning Officer. Mr. Hornsby tion-and all the world should know it-from the Returning Officer that Mr. Heslop was returned by fifteen votes. Then he received a second intimation that he was returned by six votes. An Hon. MEMBER .- You have no position in the matter at all. Mr. SEDDON said the Government had a position. The notification came from the Returning Officer to the Clerk of Writs. Then, the Clerk of Writs was notified that Mr. Heslop was returned by a majority of one. Subsequently, by taking papers out of the packet which should not have been touched at all, but which were illegally interfered with, Mr. Heslop was defeated by a majority of one. A more unique situation it had never been his lot to know. Then, it was found that some of the voting-papers had never reached the Returning Officer until the writ had been sent down with the member returned on it. That came out in Court. The Government were not responsible for that, but that

was the position. Then, the honourable member for Hawke's Bay said the Government had paid canvassers. He gave that a most unqualified denial. Probably this was the kind of thing that used to go on in connection with the Administration of which Captain Russell was a member, and the honourable member jumped to the conclusion that the present Government did it also. Probably that was what the honourable member had in his mind's eye. Bribery and corruption! Why, a telegram was sent to a candidate who had at one time opposed him (Mr. Seddon) saying, "If you give #1,000 for a track I can put out Seddon." From the Administration came back these words: "Track is granted." And one of the Ministers said it was cheap to get rid of Seddon at the price. That was the way they used to do it in days gone by, when a few thousand pounds to influence an election was neither here nor there. An Hon. MEMBER .- Where was Mr. Edwards at the last election? Mr. SEDDON said he was doing his duty. His salary was paid out of moneys subscribed by the Liberal party, as was the case in connection with every defined party in politics. It was the case at Home; and if their supporters liked to put their hands in their pockets to pay Mr. Edwards's salary, and keep him in the interests of the party, who should blame them, more especially when there was the National Association who for years had paid a salary. The statement he denied was that Mr. Edwards was paid by the Government and by the colony. Mr. Edwards had never received a shilling in the way of money or consideration from the colony. His salary was paid out of the funds of the Liberal party. An Hon. MEMBER .- We know who appointed him. Mr. SEDDON .- Who appointed him? An Hon. MEMBER .- You. Mr. SEDDON said he was appointed by the Executive Committee. If he had been appointed by him (Mr. Seddon) he would have been able

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good man; but the appointment was conferred on the able member for Hawke's Bay and the gentleman by the Executive Committee of the Association. men opposite that the resignation of Mr. Hon MEMBERS .--- Oh! Mr. SEDDON said he was well recommended. Now, he was going to emphasize this point: that there were no paid canvassers by the Government either in connection with the Patea or any other electorate throughout the colony. The honourable member for Hawke's Bay did not mince matters, and was not over particular what he said about the Government. Captain RUSSELL .- Hear, hear. Mr. SEDDON said, Then they must agree to differ. In the Electoral Bill of last year, he believed, they passed a clause making it almost criminal to canvass. He had heard it said that the co-operative workers were paid voters for the Government; and the late sitting member, Mr. Haselden, attacked them and said it was a shame they should make 10s. a day. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER said the honourable member could not refer to that. Mr. SEDDON said he would not pursue that matter any further. Then, with regard to the honourable member for Egmont, who said that gentleman had got a friend and did not know because he had taken some action in respect to the requirements of the Patea district he had incurred the displeasure of Ministers. Nothing of the kind. He might say that in some instances matters had come direct to him (Mr. Seddon) from the district, and he had acted as member for the Patea district, because that district was placed in a most unfortunate position. He was not going to blame the Opposition, but he did say if there was any scandal in connection with the Patea seat it was due to the fact that for nearly the whole of last session that electorate was disfranchised. The sitting member had made up his mind never to come back to the colony. An Hon. MEMBER .- NO. Mr. SEDDON said that gentleman had left the colony, and it was stated unmistakably that he was going to be domiciled in South Africa. He had no intention whatever of coming back, and he said so. Mr. FLATMAN. - It was in the hands of the Opposition last session. Hon. MEMBERS .- NO. Mr. SEDDON said, At all events, he was not on the rolls? The next question was, as it had going to be thrown off the trend of his remarks. If there was any scandal attached to it, it was by reason of the fact of a gentleman leaving the colony for good, and not resigning, and leaving his district disfranchised for two-thirds of the session. An Hon. MEMBER .- What about New Plymouth? Mr. SEDDON said the question of a sitting member who had not left the colony for good, but who was away

on business in the interest of the colony and of the district he represented, and who had gone Home with the entire concurrence of his constituents, was entirely different : and the House, recognising that, had granted him leave of absence from time to time. The electors of Patea were entitled to the fullest Government of seeing that the Returning Officer sympathy. Then there came another phase of George Hutchison was in New Zealand, and that it was held over till Parliament assembled. And what reason possible was there for that ? Was it that the sitting member should draw the salary without penalties ? Mr. MASSEY said there were penalties last session. Mr. SEDDON said, At any rate, the question was, Why should that resignation have been withheld, when it was a matter of such moment now, as laid down by the member for Hawke's Bay, that there should be no postponement ? If it was so urgent that the election should take place now, why was it that the resignation, being in the hands of a supporter of the Opposition- Mr. MASSEY .- Who was it ? Mr. SEDDON said, Mr. Mullock, Mr. Hutchison's manager. Mr. MASSEY said he had never heard the name before. Mr. SEDDON said, Well, the honourable it. He simply said that the person was responsible for losing five weeks of the session to the Patea electorate. He was the gentleman who held the resignation, and there was such a close affinity between that gentleman and Mr. Haselden that he could simply say that the resignation was held over with the knowledge and with the consent of some one who held the view held by the leader of the Opposition, namely : "We will not put in the resignation until the session starts, because if we put it in then Ministers cannot get away from Wellington to take part in the election." An Hon. MEMBER .- Absolute nonsense. Mr. SEDDON said, That may have been the reason why the resignation was not tendered, and it was quite open to him to put that colour upon it. He called that reasonable and fair criticism, and it was turning the tables on the member for Hawke's Bay. There was another matter that members did not seem to know and realise, and that was that nearly 50 per cent. of the electors did not vote ; and the question was, should they be given an opportunity of getting been declared no election, should they ever have been struck off the roll? That opened up a very wide field. The reason why he asked for a fortnight's extension was that the electors claimed that, owing to the day of the election being wet, and regarding it as a certainty with two Government candidates in the field, they did not vote. Now that we asked for three days to give them a chance of getting their names on the roll, it was not right or generous that he should be met in the way he had been that afternoon. Personally, he thought that both Mr. Heslop and Mr. Haselden were sufficiently well known ; and it was for the electors to decide who was to represent them in Parliament. There was the responsibility on the appointed saw that the rolls were complete, and

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of his deputies. The election could not take place in less than ten days, and the writ had to be back within twenty-one days. With so many outside districts in the electorate, a long distance from the centre, it would practically only give seven days in which to get the returns back to the Returning Officer in order to have the writ down here on the twenty-first day. There was not even much chance for the candidates to address the electors, and, practically, he thought that both men would have to go upon their merits. was an extraordinary situation, and one that could not have been foreseen. There was no foundation whatever for the statement that Cabinet had troubled about upsetting the election ; but it was well known that, if Mr. Heslop had been declared elected, Mr. Haselden would have tested its validity. He thought it rebounded to Mr. Heslop's credit that he would have nothing whatever to do with the case. He (Mr. Seddon) thought the election ought to be upset. Mr. Haselden did not obtain a majority ; he was practically defeated by five hundred votes; and if there had been an opportunity of giving evidence, which could not be admitted at the time, there would have been no doubt whatsoever as to the election being invalid. However, they would get the election held as soon as possible. He hoped they would be in a position to pass the resolution on Friday, issue the writ on Saturday, and the election would take place within fourteen days afterwards. Captain RUSSELL (Hawke's Bay) said he desired to make a personal

explanation in re- gard to two matters referred to by the Premier. The right honourable gentleman said that he (Captain Russell) was a member of an Adminis- tration which sent down £1,000 to make " Sed- don's Track," in order that it might help a can- didate to win the seat against Mr. Seddon. He begged to give that a most unqualified denial. There was no foundation for it, he believed, oven in the honourable gentleman's own imagination. Where it had come from he could not under- stand. There was not a tittle of truth in it. The other point was that, by implication, the honourable gentleman wished the House to understand that he (Captain Russell) and the leading members of the Opposition knew where the resignation of Mr. George Hutchison, the late member for Patea, was deposited while that gentleman was away from the colony. He (Captain Russell) could say unreservedly for himself that he never had the slightest idea as to where it was-and he did not believe that any member of the Opposition had ; and he might say that up to the very latest he tried to find out where it was, but was unable to do so. Mr. SEDDON said he must accept the state- ment of the honourable gentleman, so far as he was concerned, that what he had said as to the existence of the statement was incorrect. The honourable member was probably not aware of it. The telegram, initialled by Sir Harry Atkinson, was shown to him (Mr. Seddon) by the late Mr. John Ballance. Mr. Seddon ment years ago in the House. It was in the year that Government came into office ; and, what was more, the telegram was flaunted by his opponent at the time. As to the resignation of the late member for Patea, he would accept the honourable member's statement, because the honourable member was not aware of it. As regarded the honourable member knowing of the resignation, or being a party to the resig- nation being kept back, he never said what the honourable member stated. He simply said it It was well known ; because one of the "Whips" of the other side took exception to it-spoke out plainly-and disagreed with it being kept back. An Hon. MEMBER .- We did not know where it was. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) said, As far as he was concerned-and he thought he could speak for all the members of the Opposition-not a single member knew where it was. They tried to find out, but could not do so. Motion, that the consideration of the resolu- tion be postponed till Friday, agreed to. # SUPPLY. CLASS IX .- DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR. Department of Labour, £7,790. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) said he noticed there was quite a number of increases in this department, totalling nearly £160. No doubt the Minister of Labour would be prepared to tell the House the reason for them. Mr. SEDDON (Minister of Labour) said the first increase was £15 to the Chief Clerk; the next was an increase of £10 to the Clerk, which was a yearly increase, by arrangement, to bring the salary up to £200. The next was an in- crease of £15 to the Shorthand-writer and Typist, who was one of the best in the service, and who would not remain in the service unless he got this rise. Then, there was provision made for a new Inspector at £165, who was wanted for relieving purposes. Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) would like to ask the Minister whether the expense of the Labour Journal appeared in these estimates ? Mr. SEDDON said he thought it would come under the heading of "Expenses of Bureau, £2,700." Mr. HERRIES would then ask the Minister whether he thought the Labour Journal was any use at all. It seemed to him to consist of clippings from reviews published mostly in America, and its information was generally out of date. He would also like to ask what were the "estimated credits" expected from. He saw they received £389 last year. Surely that did not come from the sale of the journal ? Mr. SEDDON said the principal portion of that amount came as a refund from men who had received advances towards railway and steamer fares to go to work. Mr. ATKINSON (Wellington City) hoped the Minister would give some indication as to what the cost of this journal was, because, in addi- tion to the actual cost of printing, there must

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and supervision and so on, and he could not imagine it did any good proportionate to the expense. He would also like the details of " Expenses in connection with 'The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1900,' £2,600." He noticed that £2,128 was actually expended last year. Mr. SEDDON said they had a long list of paying subscribers, and a large number of persons outside had made application for it from

America. There was an interchange, and the latest application for the journal was from Russia. There had also been applications from Germany. Whatever members might say, the journal was well worth maintaining ; and the cost, he thought, was something under \$200 a year. Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa), with regard to co-operative labourers sent by the Labour Bureau to country districts, desired to suggest that what might be termed a " black list " ought to be kept. He did not blame in any way the officers of the department, who did all that was possible under the circumstances ; but the fact was that some men obtained work, lived on the storekeepers, left them unpaid, abused the officers of the department, did everything that rascality could dictate, and then they went away to turn up at some other labour agency and get work again. Some of the men sent to his district had behaved in the way complained of. The department did every- thing they could to right the wrong done, but could not secure justice to those who had been victimised. He therefore suggested that it would be the right thing that a "black list " should be kept in such cases, so that those who abused the kindness shown them should not again be employed through the Labour Depart- ment. Mr. ATKINSON (Wellington City) asked that an indication should be given of how the amount was made up of expenses in connection with the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitra- tion Act. Mr. SEDDON said these consisted of the following :- Conciliation Board- s. d. € 8. d. Fees 310 8 0 . . Expenses 81 6 11 1,301 14 11 Court of Arbitration- 0 Fees 1,273 11 . . Expenses 291 16 9 1,565 7 9 Other expenses under " The In. dustrial Conciliation and Arbi- tration Act, 1900 " 1 13 4 . . Total expenditure under Act . . £2,958 16 0 Mr. ATKINSON wished to know if the salaries and allowances to the members of the Board were included in that. Mr. SEDDON replied in the affirmative. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) said that while he considered there ought to be a pre- ference of employment for married men on VOL. CXIX .- 27. carried out to the total exclusion of single men. Mr. SEDDON said that was not done. Vote, \$7,790 agreed to. CLASS X .-- MINES DEPARTMENT. Mines Department, £5,945. Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) asked for in- formation about the Mining Bureau. They had every year a vote for the Secretary of this Bureau, who no doubt conducted it very well, but they never heard of any business being done by it, and he would like to know whether there was any necessity for the Bureau. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) said that some two years ago he had had occasion to speak with regard to the Inspectors of Mines, and had pointed out that they were under-staffed and underpaid. The work that had to be done by the Mine Inspectors was perhaps the most im- portant work of the Mines Department. The lives of the men and the safety of the mines to a large extent depended upon the Inspectors, for he took it the employers looked to the In- spectors to inform them of any dangers they might have overlooked. He thought there ought to be sufficient of these Inspectors to make such ample inspection as would insure the safety of both men and employers. They ought to be well paid to insure that they were thoroughly competent. He did not say that the Inspectors were not competent: he be- lieved they were. But the matter was of such great importance that he hoped the Minister would assure them that either he was satisfied, and that there were sufficient Inspectors his (Mr. Allen's) own opinion was there was not- or, if not, that he would have fresh Inspectors appointed, and that he would see that they were more adequately paid, in order that the Government might obtain the best possible talent procurable in New Zealand. Mr. HOGG (Masterton) asked the Minister to explain why the salary of the Under-Secretary for Mines was increased from £550 to \$600 this year, and whether they might expect another increase of \$50 next year. He would also like to know why the Chief Clerk-who was also Secretary to the Board of Examiners under the Coal-mines Act, for which he got £50, and Private Secre- tary to the Premier, for which he got £25 was increased by £35, which would make his salary £440 altogether. He would like to know why it was deemed necessary to give these increases. Mr. McGOWAN (Minister of Mines) might say, in reply to the member for the Bay of Plenty, that the principal work of the Secre- tary of the Mining Bureau was conducting the publication known as the Mines Record. His opinion was that he was worth much more, inasmuch as inquiries for copies of this work had come from every country in the world in

which mining was going on. Foreign nations were repeatedly writing asking for this Record, and its importance was shown by the fact that the information contained in it was reprinted in some of the foreign publications devoted to mining. It gave the information in regard to the output of gold, original articles on mining,

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mining, and also original discoveries in relation thereto. Only a short time ago they paid for an original article on that particular matter written by Mr. McLaren, a New Zealand boy born and bred, who had obtained a scholarship at Home. With regard to the Inspectors, he considered, himself, that since the development of the dredging industry, and in view of the increased areas taken up for hydraulic sluicing, and so forth, it would be necessary to appoint some additional Inspectors of Mines. With regard to the pay, when he took charge of the department he instituted a system by which the Inspectors would work up to a salary that he thought was reasonable. It was the same with regard to the Sub-Inspectors. Owing to the greater demands now, and the great development that was likely to occur in regard to coal-mining, it would be necessary to have an increased number of Inspectors. During the past year he had appointed an additional one in the South, but some more were needed. He was going into the matter during the recess, and would see what was best to be done. He believed in having the best possible men, and in paying them a reasonable remuneration. In reply to the member for Masterton, he might say the Under-Secretary for Mines had forty- three years' service, and was one of the best officers in the public service, and ought to have a reasonable remuneration for the position he held. He had earned this increase, and it was justly due to him. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) asked what the Government intended to do about the State coal- mine. It was mentioned in the Speech from the Throne that the Government intended to start a State coal-mine in some suitable district for the purpose of supplying their own requirements. Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley) understood early in the session that the Government intended to do something in the way of working a coal- mine in the interest of the public service, and also in the interest of the public at large. In the face of the coal-deposits in New Zealand, it was simply monstrous that the people of Wellington and Christchurch and other parts of the colony should be paying such high prohibitive prices for coal as they were now paying. He asked, therefore, had the Government decided on any scheme with a view of opening up coal-mines ? He had understood a Bill was to be introduced dealing with the question. Perhaps the Cabinet was considering the question, and they might have some scheme in hand which was not fully enough evolved to bring before the House at the present stage. He thought the Minister of Mines should make some statement as to what the Government intended doing in the matter. Mr. ELL (Christchurch City) wished to point out that last year a concession had been made in the carrying of coal on the railways, but the people had not got the benefit of it. Mr. MCLACHLAN (Ashburton) said that a large coal-bed of very excellent coal existed in his district, the quality of the coal being equal Mr. McGowan should arrange for a report to be furnished as to the coal-measure in the Mount Somers district. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) wished to know what were the duties of the three Assistant Inspectors, and where the Inspectors and Assistant Inspectors are located. Mr. BUDDO (Kaiapoi) thought the Government should pay some practical attention to the increased price of coal in the colony. At present it appeared to him that coal increased four times in value from the time it left the West Coast till it reached the East Coast. Mr. COLVIN said, In regard to the point raised by the last speaker, that screened coal realised in West port £1 2s. a ton, and unscreened coal could be bought in Wellington for £1 7s., delivered from ship's side. He noticed there was provision for six Inspectors. He thought four of this number were for the inspection of coal-mines, and the other two for the quartz and alluvial mines. He would like to know if these Inspectors received travelling-expenses, because he thought from £200 to #300 a year was a very small salary to pay men for such important work. He hoped the Minister would consider the advisability of increasing the salaries of these officers, and also increase the number of

Inspectors. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) asked if there was any appropriation provided for a State coal-mine ; and, if so, where was the item to be found ? Mr. McGOWAN said, with regard to the State coal-mine, this was a large question, and it would be very foolish to enter into an enterprise of this kind without due inquiry. Inquiry, however, was now being made by the Inspecting Engineer, the Government Geologist, and others best qualified to guide the Government in this matter. They were examining coal districts with a view to advising the Government, and would report as to the best coalfield for them to open up for their own requirements, first of all. In regard to inspection, he might say, in reply to the honourable member for the Buller, that the Government employed Inspectors well qualified to inspect both coal-mines and gold-mines. In Otago they had Mr. Green, who was a very excellent Inspector; and on the West Coast there was an Inspector who was an old coal-miner, and who had been at the business for a lifetime. He also had an Assistant Inspector with long experience in quartz-mining. In the North, one Inspector had a knowledge both of coal- and gold-mines, and the other had more particularly a knowledge of gold-mining. He might say, in Otago, where there was not so much quartz-mining, Mr. Green and his assistant were able to thoroughly cope with the work. The Government intended to appoint some additional Inspectors as soon as possible. though he was not as yet able to give the exact number. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) said the Premier had told the people of Wellington that they were being robbed by the coal-dealers

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he gave the people the impression that a Bill would be introduced as soon as possible after ' the Parliament met, with the view of bringing down the price of coal. On the 6th August he (Mr. Fisher) asked the Premier in the House if he intended to carry out that promise, and the Premier said he most certainly did ; and in answer to a further question said he was going to do so this session. He had, however, looked through the estimates in vain for any provision for a State coal-mine. Mr. LETHBRIDGE (Rangitikei) asked the Minister, when looking into the matter of a State coal-mine, not to overlook the North Island Trunk Railway. He understood there were some splendid seams of coal right on the line, and the centre of the Island near the railway would be a splendid place for a State coal mine. Mr. COLVIN (Buller) said the Union Company and the Westport Coal Company landed coal at Wellington at a fair price. It was the middlemen in Wellington who made the money. The companies were not making large profits. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) said the Premier had told the House that the people in Wellington were paying from 7s. 6d. to 8s. a ton too much. The Premier was the originator of the agitation against the price of coal in Wellington. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) said, If the Government wanted another State coal-mine offered to them there were a few down South ; in fact, he had a going concern himself which he would be very pleased to put under offer, especially as under the conditions which now existed it was almost impossible to work these mines satisfactorily. However, he would have something to say on that point later on. The cost of coal, he ventured to say, would have been less in New Zealand to-day but for the agitation with respect to a State coal-mine. The Minister might perhaps state whether the gentlemen who were inspecting the coal areas on the West Coast had been appointed a Royal Commission, or what standing they had. Mr. WITHEFORD (Auckland City) thought it was too bad to refer to dear coal in Wellington as being a disability or reason why a Federal City should be established elsewhere ; but if the capital city of the colony were established on the block of seventy thousand acres of Crown land between Te Kuiti and Mokau, where it is stated that thousands of acres of coal country existed, that would do away with the difficulty of coal supply. Residents might even sink shafts under their houses and lift up their supplies of coal into their dwellings as they would lift a bucket of water out of a well. He considered the vote of \$5,000 on the estimates was quite insufficient for the mining industry of the colony. The Geological Department should be worked on different lines. The different districts should be taken serially, and if practical men worked them in conjunction with the Schools of Mines great good

would undoubtedly result. He hoped that next year more energy would be put into the department. Vote, Meteorological and Museum Department, £761, agreed to. Miscellaneous services, £16,615. Mr J. ALLEN (Bruce) wished to know something about the Coal-mines Commission. How was it appointed ; and why was it that when the report was laid on the table the usual practice was not followed of submitting the evidence with it ? Mr. McGOWAN said the appointment of the Commission arose in this way : Complaint was made with regard to the inspection of mines in a certain part of the colony. The complaint was sent on to the Goldfields and Mines Committee of the House, who recommended that a Royal Commission should be set up. The Government thereupon appointed a Commission, and that Commission had duly reported ; and in laying the report on the table he had explained to the House that owing to delay in the Government Printing Office he could not at that time lay the evidence on the table. However, in the course of a few days the evidence would be ready, and would be laid on the table. Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) would like some explanation with regard to extinguishing the fire at the Cardiff Coal-mine. A sum of \$500 had been on the estimates last year for this purpose, and there was a similar sum on the present estimates. The expenditure had been \$616. He would like to know if it was worth while to try to extinguish this fire. The matter had been before the Mines Committee last year, and evidence had been given that there was very little coal left in the mine. He would like to know why the evidence given before the Commission on Coal-mines had not been printed. There had also been a Royal Commission on Rivers, and he desired to know what effect, if any, had been given to the report of that Commission. Mr. McGOWAN said the amount set down in connection with the fire in the Cardiff Coal-mine was a liability. The fire, he believed, was burning yet ; but the evidence was that all that was possible had been done to prevent the spread of the fire towards the place where it was believed good coal existed. They had not only the report of the Inspector, but also the report of gentlemen in that district, who were examining the country for the purpose of locating a favourable place for a State coal-mine. It was not worth while to continue the expense further, as the fire was confined to a part of the mine where there was only a small seam of coal. There was no danger now where the valuable coal was believed to exist. Regarding the Rivers Commission, this Commission had been in existence for some time. Its labours had been completed, and its recommendations, in a number of instances, had been acted upon. Some rivers had been already proclaimed and an amount of compensation paid. It was not decided yet whether the Government would proclaim certain others or not. Certain claims had come in to the Government, but whether the report upon them would be adopted in its entirety or not he was unable to say. So far

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recommendations of the Commission. In some cases the necessary notice had been given with a view of allowing the claims to come in. Regarding the amount spent on "Contingencies," the items were as follows :- s. d. £ Auctioneer's fees, sale of sections, 2 12 Millerton . . . Bullion assay 2 2 Building dam, Cardiff Mine fire 30 12 .. Cleaning offices, fuel, &c. 1 10 Cleaning typewriter 1 11 Furniture 9 4 15 Foreign postages . . 1 Lodging allowances 14 11 Miners' lamps 1 11 .. Miscellaneous 2 16 Stationery, books, &c. 0 19 . . Telephone subscriptions 34 19 Kumara Water-race Inquiry 29 3 . Wages, office-cleaners, &c. 16 8 .. Preparation of plans . 8 8 Total £189 11 3 As to the question of the honourable member for Bruce, he would inform him that, of those who composed the Coal-mines Commission, Mr. Proud held an English certificate. Mr. Lomas, he believed, held a certificate, and he was certainly a skilled miner, and well fitted for the position. The time spent on the inspection of the Shag Point Mine was three-quarters of an hour. The mining experts inspected the mine, and Mr. Haselden, the Magistrate, took the evidence while they were inspecting the mine. The Commission spent two hours and a half in inspecting the Allendale Mine, and about an hour and a half was then spent in taking evidence. The Commissioners left Dunedin early in the morning, and returned in the evening, having inspected those two mines during the day. Mr. J.

ALLEN (Bruce) said the Commission had reported upon a mine that he was largely interested in. They now heard that the Commission had spent two hours and a half in inspecting the mine. His information was that they had spent two hours. They were also told the Commission spent three-quarters of an hour inspecting an equally large mine. The duty of the Coal-mines Inspectors was to visit and inspect these mines during the course of the year, and complaints had been made that an Inspector could not satisfy himself as to the safety of a mine with the visits now paid. Those visits occupied a much longer time than the members of the Commission gave. Now, they had a Commission set up to review the Inspectors, and if the Inspectors required reviewing it could not be very satisfactory. The Commission, however, found that three-quarters of an hour was sufficient time to examine one mine; and, in another, two hours and a half was sufficient. The shortest road through that mine was one mile, and the Commission reported they had found it dangerous, and that the men were afraid to report the danger to the mine-manager, because, if they did, the Mr. McGowan presumed the members of the Royal Commission know the law upon the subject, and the law laid down that it was the duty of a miner to report any danger or any want of ventilation to the mine-manager. If a miner failed to do this he was not complying with the rules under which he worked. It was the duty of a miner instantly to report anything of the sort to the mine-manager. Was it not the interest of the miner, and also the manager, to have such things reported at once? And yet it was said that the men would be dismissed for reporting danger. What would the Conciliation and Arbitration Court say to the dismissal of a man for complying with the rules under which he was bound to work. He (Mr. Allen) denied absolutely that any mine manager in the colony would be such a fool as to dismiss a man because he reported danger. The Commission ought to have known that this was the rule. If they did not, they had no right to make the report they had made. And if they did know it, then the report amounted to this: that the Commission reported the men were breaking the rules that were laid down for them. With regard to the mine he was interested in he had endeavoured to get from the men an expression of opinion whether this report was correct or not, but they would give him no expression of opinion at all. This Commission reported that in this particular mine the airway was dangerous, and that the pillars had been taken out. He was able to say that on one side of the airway not a single pillar had been touched till this day. On the other side the pillars were left in to an extent that was, without any question, sufficient to retain the airway. Since the report was made they had removed some of the pillars. And yet this report stated that some of the pillars were taken out and thereby rendered the airway unsafe! The Commission also reported that the air in the mine was bad. He admitted that they were altering their air-course, and had been for a fortnight so doing, with a double shift of men, before the Commission visited the mine. Under those circumstances, it was unavoidable that for a day, perhaps, or for several days, when the external air was not suitable, the ventilation underground was sometimes bad. It was so when the Commission visited this mine. Altogether the Commission's report was one that ought to be reviewed by somebody else. They were four hours in the district investigating two "dangerous" mines, and yet very few accidents had occurred in these mines. Of his own knowledge he only knew of one death that had occurred, and yet one of the mines had been working for twelve years and the other for thirty years. There were less accidents there than occurred in the English and the New Zealand mines generally, and yet the Commission reported that one of these mines was in a dangerous state. Members did not know how the Commission took their evidence, or what the value of the evidence was; but, at any rate, it was impossible for them at the time at their disposal to either

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examine the mines or take such evidence as they could find the report upon which was placed before the House. Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) said, With regard to the Cardiff Mine, he noticed that in the "contingencies" something was put down for a dam, which, he thought, ought to be charged to the

company for which it was put in. He did not think they should find anything further for the Cardiff Mine beyond the £616 which they had already spent in extinguishing the fire. Mr. McGOWAN said, This was another dam altogether. Mr. R. MCKENZIE (Motueka) had a grievance against the Minister for keeping back the evidence of the Commission, because it was absolutely useless unless it was laid on the table. He was informed that this report was a direct contradiction to the evidence supplied to the Commission. He hoped, therefore, before the session closed the Minister would give them an opportunity of perusing and discussing that evidence. He had asked for it on various occasions, and could not account for the delay in putting it on the table, unless it were intended to put it on the table after the House rose. He strongly approved of one recommendation in the report, and that was that a General Inspector of Coal-mines for the whole colony should be appointed. At present one Inspector had to travel the whole of Nelson, Marlborough, and Westland to inspect the mines in those districts, probably about a thousand in number. If he were travelling all his time it would be impossible to inspect them all. The greatest trouble was that there was no real practical expert head to the department, and, consequently, there was no one responsible, and there was no proper inspection of the mines. He suggested that it would be a good thing for the State to pay one or two men working about a mine a small amount annually for making reports direct to the Minister, and then if anything went wrong the Minister could instruct the Inspector to see that it was rectified. He hoped the Government would appoint a Chief Inspector of Mines as soon as possible, and he thought there ought to be separate Inspectors for coal-mines and for gold-mines. Mr. McGOWAN thought the honourable gentleman must have been absent when he explained the position with regard to this matter before. Some members seemed to confuse the position of the Inspecting Engineer with the Inspectors of Mines. The former was a Government officer who had control of the expenditure of money in regard to bridges and so forth, and also in regard to the mines all over the colony, and saw that the public money was not wasted ; but he had not the position in law that the Inspectors had. They were empowered to take action where necessary, and did take action. The proposal to pay men in the mines to give secret information to the Government was about the most absurd that was possible. The Inspectors of Mines were entirely free from the influence of any mine-manager or company, because they held their position by law, and could not be interfered with. He had already said it was the intention of the Government to appoint additional Inspectors, and that was the true way out of the difficulty. The colony was very well served by its Inspectors, who were well-qualified men. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccarton) 8.0. wished to know the necessity for the further sum of £1,200 for the Rivers Commission. Last year £500 had been voted, and £1,270 spent. Had the Commission finished its business ? Mr. McGOWAN .- Yes. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL asked, How was it, then, that another £1,200 had been run up in connection with the Commission ? Mr. McGOWAN said the Commission was a very important one. It had been in existence for two years, and had been operating over the whole colony. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) moved, That the item, "Expenses of Royal Commission on Coal-mines, £1,900," be reduced by £1. He did this in order to ask the Minister whether he would not give the House an opportunity of reviewing the report of that Commission, by either referring it to the Goldfields and Mines Committee, the Inspecting Engineer, or some Court outside Parliament. It seemed unfair that their report, which had the effect of destroying confidence in certain mines, should be allowed to go without opportunity of review. Mr. McGOWAN said the member for Bruce had hardly put the matter fairly in connection with the time occupied by the Commission in investigating the mine referred to, because, as a matter of fact, the Commissioners spent four hours there ; two hours and a half in inspecting the mine, and an hour and a half in taking evidence. In regard to the discussion of the report, he would not delay the House by discussing it ; and, in regard to what had been said about the delay in the production of the evidence, he was not in charge of the Printing Office, and was not responsible. He had made application to the Printing Office, and had been told that it would be ready in a few days. In regard to

sending the report to any Committee of the House, or any outside tribunal, he had no intention of doing anything of the sort. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) said he did not think it wise that gentlemen occupying the position of Royal Commissioners should be attacked by the honourable member for Bruce as they had been, as they held very onerous positions ; and it was also unfair to prejudice the position in the eyes of honourable members without having the evidence before them. He would say that the Government had had possession of the evidence taken by the Coal-mines Commission, and he had gone through it respecting the particular mine to which the member for Bruce had referred ; and he was satisfied that the Commission could have come to no other conclusion than that which they had come to. It

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was not on the evidence of prejudiced individuals, but on the evidence of Mr. Green, the Inspector of Mines, that the Commissioners had founded their report. If the honourable member was agreeable, he would read the evidence of Mr. Green. Would the honourable member take exception to that course ? Mr. J. ALLEN. - Lay the whole of the evidence on the table. Mr. SEDDON said the honourable member took exception to that course, but he could not complain about having received this correspondence principally from the Inspector :- [Extract from Coal-mines Report, 1901.] " Inspector of Mines Office, Dunedin. " Allendale Colliery, Shag Point (A. Gillanders, Manager) .-- (19499) : Continued work in the seam proves that the coal is still variable in thickness, the minimum, so far as yet seen, being 3 ft. 6 in., and the maximum thickness 8 ft. Taken as a whole, the roof is rather bad, and the coalfield disturbed by numerous small faults. In the new mine the solid workings are approaching the old mine-workings, where the coal is still standing in pillars. The ventilation is very fair. The attention of the manager was drawn to some minor matters in connection with the working of the mine, verbally, and also by letter under date of the 22nd April, 1899. A fatal accident occurred at this mine on the 13th April, 1899, the particulars of which will appear under the head of 'Accidents.' (26999) : There is now a considerable area of ground opened out, and the work of extracting the pillars near the rise of the field has commenced. A cross-measures tunnel, driven from the bottom level, has cut an underlying seam 4 ft. 6 in. thick, so far as proved. This seam is from 30 ft. to 40 ft. (vertical) below that hitherto worked, and as yet very little has been done in it. Ventilation very fair on the whole, although near the old workings the air was slightly charged with black-damp. This was perhaps all the more noticeable on this date, in consequence of the ordinary work of the pit being suspended for the day owing to falling-off of demand, and advantage being taken of this to effect needed overhauls to the pumping plant. The steam was necessarily cut off, and as the ventilating power is largely augmented by the heat from steam-pipes the decreased ventilation for the time being is easily understood. Mr. Gillanders subsequently informed me that he had improved the ventilation generally throughout the mine. "J. HAYES, Inspector of Mines." " Office of Inspector of Mines, Dunedin, 14th May, 1900. "SIR, -On the occasion of my visit to your mine (11th instant) the air was dull in No. 2 North level face (Dunn's), also in the bord faces in the vicinity. These places being some distance from the airway, it is necessary that measures be taken by you forthwith to provide these places with an adequate amount of ventilation, so that they shall be in a fit state for Mr. Sedilon working and passing therein (see section 33, subsection 1). - Yours, &c., " E. R. GREEN, Inspector of Mines. "A. Gillanders, Esq., Mine-manager, Allendale Colliery." " Dunedin, 19th June, 1900. "SIR,-The survey of your mine is considerably overdue. Please attend to this matter .- Yours, &c., " E. R. GREEN, Inspector of Mines. "Mr. A. Gillanders, Manager, Allendale Colliery, Shag Point." " Dunedin, 23rd June, 1900. "SIR,-I enclose tracing of your mine, to be filled up to date, and returned at the earliest opportunity .- Yours, &c., "E. R. GREEN, Inspector of Mines. "Mr. A. Gillanders, Mine-manager, Allendale Colliery, Shag Point." " Dunedin, 22nd November, 1900. "DEAR SIR,-In regard to our conversation of yesterday, please see . The Coal-mines Act, 1891,' section 33, subsections (39), (40), and (47) ; section 36 ; section 40. Also see appended Special Rules applicable to Coal-mines. - Yours, &c., "E. R. GREEN, Inspector of

Mines. "Mr. A. Gillanders, Mine-manager, Allen- dale." " Shag Point, 24th November, 1900. " DEAR SIR,-I am in receipt of yours of the 22nd, and have duly noted contents. The matters referred to will be attended to at once. - Yours, &c., "A. GILLANDERS, Manager. "The Inspector of Mines, Dunedin." " Office of Inspector of Mines, Dunedin, 29th March, 1901. " Re non-compliance with section 33, subsec- tion (1). " Coal-mines Act, 1891," on the 21st instant, at the Allendale Coal Company's Mines, Shag Point - Mine manager, Alex. (Gillanders ; General Manager, Allan Meln- tosh ; Secretary, W. Everest, all of Shag Point. "I HAVE to report that whilst visiting this mine, as above, accompanying the Coal-mines Commission, I found that, -- "(1.) There was a deficiency in the ventila- tion at the pillar face workings, No. 2 North level, off No. 2 jig. main seam. The air was not conducted to the faces, the stentons were not stopped off, and the air naturally took the nearest route to the return, leaving the working faces unsupplied ; the air where Hinks and Son and Wilson and Mebellan were working was polluted with black-damp from the waste, the temperature was high, and the men were work- ing under very uncomfortable conditions. " (2.) There was also inadequate ventilation in the new workings which underlie the main seam, and have only recently been opened up.

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and McKay-work in the section visited (north side). The air was smoky and hot at the face, being almost stagnant. " There was so little air current in the intake to this district (stone drive) that I could not obtain a record of movement on my anemome- ter. "The air at the main intake (old mine- mouth) measured 6,750 cubic feet per minute, an average of 143 cubic feet per minute for each of the forty - five men and two horses underground. This would be an adequate quantity under ordinary circumstances if con- ducted to the working faces, but in this mine the air intake traverses the old mine-workings for some 9 chains before the present workings are reached. Naturally there is an exudation of black-damp from the old workings into the intake air. "I mentioned this to Mr. McIntosh in May last year. when he informed me that he was considering the question of sinking a shaft for ventilation and second outlet. This matter now requires immediate attention, a 'creep' on the old mine is causing the intake bottom to heave badly, most of the timber is broken, and the airway throughout its entire length is so low and contracted in area that it cannot be called a travelling-way (\ve had to go through it bent double, or on hands and knees). A double shift of men should be put on at once to lift and stow bottom, and renew timber where broken. The main engine incline has not been receiving proper attention. Several sets of timber knocked out have not been renewed, and the fallen stone from the reef lies where it fell on the travelling-way. "I have written Mr. McIntosh in reference to these matters, and have also required him to remedy the same forthwith. "E. R. GREEN, Inspector of Mines. " Under-Secretary, Mines Department, Wel- lington." " Dunedin, 29th March, 1901. "SIR,-I visited your mine on the 21st instant, while accompanying the Coal-mines Commission, and found that,- "(1.) There was a deficiency in the ventila- tion at the pillar face workings, No. 2 north level, off No. 2 jig, main seam. The air was not conducted to the faces, the stentons were not stopped off, and the air naturally took the nearest route to the return, leaving the working faces unsupplied. The air where Hinks and son and Wilson and Mclellan were working was polluted with black-damp from the waste, the temperature was high, and the men were work- ing under very uncomfortable conditions. " (2.) There was also inadequate ventilation in the new workings which underlie the main seam, and have only recently been opened up. Six men work in the section visited (north side) ; the air was smoky and hot at the face, being almost stagnant. There was so little air current in the intake to this district (stone drive) that I could not obtain a record of move- ment on my anemometer. measured 6,750 cubic feet per minute. This would be an adequate quantity of air under ordinary circumstances, if conducted to the working faces. "In your mine the air intake traverses the old mine workings for some 9 chains before the present workings are reached, and naturally there is an exudation of black-damp from the old workings into the intake air. " I discussed this matter with you in May last year, when you informed me that you were considering the

question of sinking a shaft for ventilation and second outlet. This matter now requires immediate attention ; a 'creep' on the old mine is causing the intake bottom to heave badly, most of the timber is broken, and the airway throughout its entire length is so low and contracted in area that it cannot be called a travelling-way (we had to go through it bent double, or on hands and knees). A double shift of men should be put on at once to lift and stow bottom, and renew timber where broken. "The main engine incline has not been receiving proper attention, several sets of timber knocked out have not been renewed, and the fallen stone from the roof lies where it fell on the travelling-way. "I have to require that these matters receive your immediate attention, and be remedied forthwith .- Yours, &c., "E. R. GREEN, Inspector of Mines. "Allan McIntosh, Esq., General Manager Allendale Coal Company, Shag Point." " Dunedin, April 12th, 1901. "SIR,-Re my memo. to you of the 29th ulto. : What has been done by the management to remedy the state of the mine at the time (21st ulto.) ; and what are your proposals as to the arrangements for ventilation and second outlet in the future? Please reply at your earliest convenience .- Yours, &c., "E. R. GREEN, Inspector of Mines. "Allan McIntosh, Esq., General Manager, Allendale Coal Company, Shag Point." "Shag Point, 13th April, 1901. "DEAR SIR,-Ke your memo. of the 29th ulto., I handed same to Mr. Gilianders, mine- manager, and thought that he would have replied thereto. However, I may inform you that since you were here four men have been employed in the air-course, enlarging it to 4 ft. by 5 ft. in the clear, and expect to have it completed in about a month from date, when I trust it will be to your satisfaction both for an air-course and second outlet .- Yours, &c., "A. MCINTOSH. "E. R. Green, Esq., Inspector of Mines, Dunedin." Mr. J. ALLEN said that on the 21st November, 1900, Inspector Green reported as follows of the Allendale Mine :- "I always found the management careful and solicitous for the safety of employés." And then on the 21st November, 1900, he says,-

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creep setting in. The airway was standing in good order, but low, the seam there being only about 5 ft. thick ; and I also noticed that there was a good circulation of air throughout the working-places." He admitted at once that on the day the Commission went there the mine was in bad order. It was unfortunate, but it was unavoidable. They had been discussing as to the advisability of putting down an air-shaft, and instead of putting down an air-shaft they had decided to construct a new airway, and a double shift had been at work for a fortnight before the Commission went there, and the new air- way was partly opened up. There was another airway on the south side of the mine that the Commission never went to see at all. His grievance was that they did not examine the mine ; nor could they examine the mine in the short time they were there. He had sent for all the reports of the Mine Inspector, but only two had been sent to him, and he supposed that that was all that there were. One of the letters read by the Premier was written seven days after the Commission visited the mine. He had not got the letter which the Premier said was addressed to the mine- manager in May, 1900, and he would not be surprised to find that it was addressed to the Minister. If a report adverse to the mine was sent to the Minister, it was the duty of the Minister to advise the mine-owners of it. He had moved for a return of the deaths that had taken place in this mine, but he could not get 32106019788261 it. He had no fear of a return of the deaths and accidents that had occurred in this mine going before the country. Mr. SEDDON said the attack had been made upon the Commissioners because they had reported on the condition of things they had found in the Allendale Mine on the day they visited it, and yet the honourable member himself had informed the House that it was then in a bad condition. From the evidence submitted by impartial persons who were intrusted with great responsibilities, and who had visited the mine, it was found that a condition of things existed which the honourable member himself admitted was not desirable. He did not want anything more than that. The point was that the mine-manager, in reply, instead of asserting that the statements made in the letter were incorrect, admitted that the statements were correct, and that steps were taken to apply a remedy. Had Mr. McIntosh denied the statements, and challenged the Inspector,

there would have been an answer ; but playing to the galleries and suggesting that they should now go before the Goldfields Committee or some other tribunal was of no use. An opportunity had been given to the owners and managers to show definitely that the statements contained in the report and the evidence given by Mr. Green were not correct ; but that had not been done. They did not, however, want anything more than what had been said by the honourable gentleman. When the report of the Commission was read by him, as Mr. J. Allen because he had not heard of any complaints as to this state of things existing. It was fortunate in the extreme that the Commission had visited the mine and had reported, because now these things had been remedied. There was a report of the 17th April, 1901, showing that the remedies had been applied. Since the defects had been remedied there should be an end of the matter; but he thought that, when gentlemen had done their best in giving a report according to the evidence, and according to their own evidence - because they had gone through the mine-instead of being blamed they ought to receive credit for what they had done. It seemed to him unreasonable to expect that Mr. Haselden, the Chairman of the Commission and a Magistrate, would do anything that was unfair or improper. Then, there was the fact that Mr. Lomas was a working miner of great experience: what prejudice could he have against the mine-owners ? His sole interest would be in seeing that everything was right, and that any danger that existed was removed. The other member of the Commission, Mr. Proud, was a mining manager of great experience, the holder of an English certificate, and, so far as he (Mr. Seddon) knew, was a most amiable man, a man who, if anything, would prefer, if circumstances would permit, to take a favourable view rather than to do anything that was unpleasant. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) said he had not complained of Mr. Green's report at all, but of the report of the Commission. He maintained that there was no more danger during the last six months in the mine than at any other time. As to Mr. Proud, he had nothing to say against him as a Commissioner ; but he was of opinion that no man with an English certificate without New Zealand experience in the mining of brown coals was in a position to properly form an opinion about New Zealand coal-mines. What he complained of was not that they said the mine was in bad order,-which was admitted, and which condition was being remedied at the time of their visit,-but that they reported that there was danger; and, further, he complained that they reported they had found prevalent a feeling on the part of the miners that if they gave evidence they would lose their employment. There was nothing of that in Mr. Green's report, and no evidence that the miners were afraid to report danger. He did not believe that the miners were so afraid. They had previously reported danger, and had reported bad ventilation, and had never suffered for so doing. He denied that insufficient supports had been left. On the south side of the airway not a single pillar had been removed, and on the north side, when the Commission made its report, there was more than ample support for the roof. He also denied that there was not sufficient timber in the mine for its safety. There was ample for the safety of the mine, and the proof was that they had had very few accidents. Mr. SEDDON said Mr. Proud thoroughly understood what he was doing. The honour-
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fact: that on the 29th April, 1901, they had not done in this mine that which they had promised in May, 1900 : that was, to improve the ventilation. This was shown in Mr. Green's letter written to Mr. Gillanders. Then, writing to Mr. McIntosh, Mr. Green said, " I discussed this matter with you in May last year." The Commissioners visited the mine in April, 1901, and found the ventilation had not been attended to. He could show that the honourable member, in respect of the points raised by him, was doing the Commissioners an injustice, because this question of the men being afraid and that the mine was dangerous to the health of the men rested on the evidence of Mr. Green, the Inspector. They could not, therefore, blame the Commissioners for that; and he would say that the Commissioners had no feeling in the matter whatever. At any rate, the Government accepted the responsibility, and it was the duty of the Government to see that the health of the miners was preserved. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccarton) had

been watching the duel between the Premier and the member for Bruce, and out of pure curiosity had sent for the Mines Report of 1900. The Premier had stated that Mr. Green had reported the bad ventilation of this mine. Now, according to the Mines Report it was not Mr. Green at all, but Mr. Hayes; and this officer, in his report, stated that the ventilation of the mine was "very fair," and that the attention of the manager was drawn to some "minor matters." If they were things upon which life depended, surely they would not be described as "minor matters." If the mine was in the 9.0. state described by the Premier, then there ought to be a record of the fact in the Inspector's report. Amendment negatived. Vote, £16,615, agreed to. CLASS XI .- DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE. Department of Agriculture, £57,218. Mr. LANG (Waikato) wished to draw the attention of the Government to the necessity of being more generous to farmers whose stock were attacked by anthrax. He did not wish to blame the department or its officers for carrying out their duties, but, where the necessary steps were taken by the Government to prevent the spread of anthrax, the farmers should be to some extent compensated for their loss. He pointed out that the presence of anthrax was by no means the fault of the farmer; in fact, it generally broke out in places where the farm was in a high state of cultivation. In the Auckland Province and the Waikato district they were particularly fortunate in the Stock Inspectors and officials, and they had nothing to complain of on that ground. It was right that the department should take drastic means to prevent the spread of anthrax ; but at the same time he thought farmers should be compensated in some way for the loss they were put to, for it was a matter that not only affected the farmer on whose place the outbreak took place, but it affected every farmer in the but the consumers also. The loss sustained by the farmer in preventing the spread of the disease should be borne by the colony at large, and not wholly by the individual settlers. He had reason to believe that the bones were not properly treated in Australia, and, as a preventive of anthrax, he advocated the sterilisation under proper supervision of bone manure in the colony, for then farmers would be sure that they were getting pure bone. They were not sure of that now. It would be the means of employing labour in New Zealand instead of Australia, and would reduce the price of bonedust. Mr. HOGG (Masterton) recognised that a large amount of important work was being done by this department, which was, in his opinion, one of the most important in the State ; but it was a question whether they should enter into the huge expenditure which appeared on the estimates. There was something like £30,000, in round figures, expended annually on Inspectors of all sorts under this department. Mr. HOUSTON (Bay of Islands) would like the Minister to inform the Committee where the thirty-one veterinary surgeons were located. Those gentlemen never made their appearance in the extreme North of Auckland. That part of the colony contributed their share of the £8,000 for the payment of these gentlemen, and he thought that they should have the benefit of their services. He thought they should travel through the country, and not be located in one spot. Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa) said he noticed that the salary of the Secretary and Chief Inspector had been raised from £500 to \$600, while the Produce Commissioner in England was to be raised from \$300 to £400. There were also four Fruit Experts, three at £200, and one at £160, or £160 more than last year. So far as any good which was said to accrue to the colony from the efforts of these Fruit Inspectors, they might say it amounted to nothing. Fruit in New Zealand was decreasing in quantity, and what was the use of having these Fruit Inspectors when disease was rampant, and fruit trees were being cut down in all parts of the colony ? He would test the feeling of the Committee in that matter a little later on. But, first of all, he would move that the item, " Secretary and Chief Inspector, £600," be reduced by £50. There was a strong feeling in the colony, and in the part which he represented, against the way in which this department was being mismanaged. A deal of satisfactory work had been done by the department, but it had been done in spite of those who were at the head of it. Mr. MCLACHLAN (Ashburton) complained of the department not having in any way carried out the provisions of the Thistle Act of last session. He thought they should prevent this salary growing too big, and if the head of the department did anything in the way of effectively coping with the

thistle plague during the year, they could then agree to increase the salary to the extent now proposed by giving him another £50.

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was futile to attack individual salaries in the manner which was now proposed. If the supporters of the Government were not satisfied with the estimates, why did they not meet in caucus-as was done in 1888, when they demanded that £50,000 be taken off, and it was done-and compel the Government to reduce their estimates or tell them that they no longer had their confidence ? That was the constitutional position. It was not only unfair, but futile, to proceed in the manner now suggested. What would result would probably be that perhaps a salary of a man was reduced who should have been the last one on the estimates to have his salary attacked; and then the members would go home, satisfied that they had done something, and allow other men and much larger salaries to go through unchallenged. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) said the proposal was not to reduce a salary, but to prevent the increase of the larger salaries on the estimates. The constitutional position, as defined by the member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher), had been altered by the fact that there were now no parties in the House, and it was impossible for any set of members to say that they alone were the supporters of the Government. Every member supported the Government-when they were right-and conscientious members opposed them when they were wrong. It seemed to him far better to make representations to the Ministers in the House and before the public rather than to endeavor to do so by caucus, as suggested. The point was that certain members of the House considered that this was the wrong time to increase the salaries of any officers in the public service who were already getting large salaries. He would like to know whether this officer had received any bonus under the vote for services rendered in connection with the despatch of Contingents. Mr. DUNCAN (Minister of Lands) said, Not that he was aware of. Mr. BOLLARD (Eden) thought the attack upon this officer was unfair. If they looked at the estimates they would find the head of this department had to do with an expenditure of nearly \$92,000, and, that being the case, he surely ought to be worth a salary of £600 a year. For his part he was not one of those who favoured cutting down the salaries of officials. What he complained of was that there were more officials than there ought to be. He thought there should be fewer, and that they should be well paid. The Secretary of this department did not occupy a popular position. He was generally called upon to act when some person was doing wrong, and it was his duty to endeavour to put that wrong right ; and if he had incurred the displeasure of any of the members it was probably because he had been over zealous in the discharge of his duty. The officer in question was, in his opinion, courteous and obliging, and did his work as pleasantly and, at the same time, as efficiently as possible. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccanton) objected to the way these estimates had been prepared. £57,000. That was, they were asked to pass the whole of the department in one vote, with the exception of miscellaneous services. He hoped that in future the vote would be divided into reasonable amounts, so as to facilitate discussion. He did not think it necessary that this officer's salary should be raised by £50. He had only been in the public service seven or eight years, and other officers in a similar position had to be in the public service for twenty years before they reached the salary he received. He had evidently been pushed along. Any increase that could be given in the vote for the department should go in the direction of increasing the efficiency of the department. The Biologist, who was one of the most zealous officers in the service, and did very valuable work, was only receiving \$300, and there was no proposal to give him an increase. He would like to know from the Minister how much was received from the local bodies for the services of the Government Veterinary Surgeons. Sir J. G. WARD (Colonial Secretary) did not understand why members should be attacking this officer or the increase of his salary. This department was doing an immense amount of good for the settlers of the country, and it required on the part of the Secretary not only special fitness, but he had to be everlastingly on the move. Then, the altered condition of the times must be borne in mind. There was scarcely a

member of the House who would be content now with the salary or the income he was getting five or six years ago. This increase of \$50 was very carefully considered in Cabinet, and it was given because every member of the Ministry believed it was well earned and that the officer in question was doing good work. The Agricultural Department had been of immense value to the country, and it required from the Secretary close attention both before and after hours. He could assure members the Government would not have given the increase unless it had been fully earned. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) said the estimates up to the present moment had not been reduced by one shilling, and after all the discussion that took place on them they would not be reduced by one shilling. Then why discuss them? He had heard members say this department was in a horrible condition. If so, why did not those members make good that statement? Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa) said, The other day there was a meeting of the Masterton County Council, at which a letter was received from Mr. Ritchie stating that there had been another thistle put into the Second Schedule of the Bill-namely, the Scotch thistle, and they were ordered to destroy this weed. Now the members of that body were all practical farmers, and they were indignant at this notice being sent to them, because, as every one knew, the ordinary Scotch thistle was not a menace to the farmers at all; and to ask the farmers of any district to destroy it was to ask them to do that which was outrageous. Then,

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there was far too much circumlocution in connection with the work of this department. If an account was sent in to a Stock Inspector for 3s. for some service which had been rendered, it had to pass through so many hands, and undergo so much stamping, and such an amount of routine, that it cost the country about 15s. or £1 by the time the amount was finally paid. With regard to the increase to the Secretary's salary, it was wrong to be continually raising the salaries of these highly-paid officers. When this officer was appointed, Mr. McKenzie said he could get one of the best men in the colony for \$500, and that was all that was necessary to pay. Yet Mr. Ritchie was getting \$500, and he was now being raised to £600, and most likely his salary was more than doubled by travelling expenses. Mr. BOLLARD (Eden) pointed out that this officer had the responsibility of dealing with some £92,000 a year. A number of highly paid officers had already left the colony and taken service elsewhere. However, he not only objected that heads of departments were underpaid, but a large number of their junior officers also. Mr. GILFEDDER (Wallace) recognised the importance of maintaining the efficiency of the department, but he believed that the present Secretary was not maintaining that efficiency, more particularly in regard to the administration of the Rabbit Department. Mr. HOGG (Masterton) did not wish to criticize the ability of the officer in question. It was always a painful duty to meet heads of departments face to face in the House, and at the same time be compelled, in the interests of public economy, to endeavour to keep their salaries within reasonable limits. If he voted for the amendment it was not because he was actuated by any wish to disparage the officer concerned or did not appreciate the work he performed. It was because he wanted to discharge satisfactorily his duty to his constituents. Mr. LAURENSEN (Lyttelton) said this was one of the most important departments of the State, and if they had a thoroughly competent man at the head of it-and he understood Mr. Ritchie was a thoroughly competent man-the position was well worth £600 a year. Men occupying similar positions in the commercial world received far larger salaries. As far as he was concerned, he was opposed to voting large sums for persons occupying ornamental positions, but he had no hesitation in supporting this vote. Mr. DUNCAN (Minister for Agriculture) said Mr. Ritchie was appointed head of the Stock Department ten years ago at a salary of £500, and between that time and the present the department had grown enormously, and included the dairying, grading, and abattoirs sections, which were not in existence when he was appointed. It took him ten years to get £50 added to the £500, and he was cheap at the money. During this last year he believed he had saved the colony thousands of pounds in the horse purchases alone. Mr. O'MEARA (Pahiatua) asked the Minister for an

explanation in connection with the administration of the department. He wanted to know how the Inspectors were paid-whether by favour, experience and knowledge, or by length of service. In Wellington the Stock Inspector received £310, in Napier the Stock Inspector received £300, and in Auckland £310. He could not help thinking that some of the officers of the department were favoured, to the great disadvantage of many of those who had been in the department for a long time, but, owing to being in disfavour with the head of the department, were kept back. Mr. DUNCAN said the Inspector in 11.0. Auckland was a man who had been for many years in the service, and was an efficient officer. He was well worth the money he received. The same might be said of the Wellington Inspector, who was in the service twenty years ago. Captain RUSSELL (Hawke's Bay) said that a question put by the honourable member for Pahiatua had not been answered. The question was, Why the Stock Inspector at Napier was paid a smaller salary than was paid to the Inspectors in other large centres. The Auckland Inspector received a larger salary, and that district contained about one-fifth the number of sheep that there were in the Napier district, involving less responsibility. Upon what basis were the salaries paid? The difference, he admitted, was not great, but it was a reflection upon a man who had the greater responsibility to receive a somewhat smaller salary. He would like the Minister to explain why these officers were not put on the same footing. Mr. DUNCAN said there were scarcely any rabbits in Hawke's Bay. The Auckland district was a larger district, and, in his opinion, the work of the Inspector there was more important, as he had to overlook three farms there, and to report upon them from time to time. He considered the Auckland Inspector well worth the extra money. Mr. G. J. SMITH (Christchurch City) said he thought the whole question was whether the work of the department was being done efficiently or not. The department was a large and important one, and if the work was done efficiently then the salary of £600 was by no means exorbitant. The country members had repeatedly congratulated the late Sir John McKenzie upon the efficiency of this department, and if the Secretary was efficient under Sir John McKenzie he was not likely to be less efficient because he had had two years more experience. He wished to know if the Minister considered that the head of the department was conducting its business to his satisfaction. Mr. BUDDO (Kaiapoi) said that whatever credit was due to the Agricultural Department in the last year or two belonged to the Secretary. The marvellous success of the dairy industry was in large measure due to the administration of this department. He intended to support this vote, and largely on the ground of the importance of the department. Mr. O'MEARA (Pahiatua) would like to have some further explanation from the Minister

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before he recorded his vote. He would also like some information as to the number of years the Inspectors had been in service, and why those who had been a lesser number of years in the service than the Inspector in Napier had been promoted over his head. Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley) saw no reason for the increase of this officer's salary. He considered that, with the large army of officers there were in the department, a great deal more might have been done than had been done. He pointed out, for instance, that the Kaikoura district-a very isolated community-was never visited by the Veterinary Surgeons. The Committee divided on the question, " That the item 'Secretary and Chief Inspector, £600,' be reduced by £50." AYES, 20. Hall Arnold Pirani Herries Russell, G. W. Barclay Collins Hogg Tanner McLachlan Ell Thompson, R. Field McNab Tellers. Fowlds Monk Hornsby Meredith. Gilfedder O'Meara NOES, 32. Allen, E. G. Graham Rhodes Hall-Jones Russell, W. R. Bennet Heke Bollard Seddon Buddo Lang Smith, G. J. Carncross Symes Lawry Carroll Massey Ward Colvin McGowan Willis Mills Duncan Witheford. Fisher Napier Tellers. Fraser, A. L. D. Palmer Laurensen Parata Fraser, W. Lethbridge. Majority against, 12. Amendment negatived. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) agreed with the opinion expressed by the honourable member for the Bay of Islands, that the Veterinary Surgeons of the Government should visit the district north of Auckland as well as any other part of the colony. He would

also like to support what had been said regarding compensating farmers in the matter of anthrax. So far as the Auckland Province was concerned bone-dust was an absolute necessity ; but it was doubtful whether the restrictions that had been placed on the importations had had the desired effect of preventing diseases being brought into the colony by the bones. He hoped the matter would be handled in a business-like manner, and placed in a better position than it was at the present time. Mr. BUDDO (Kaiapoi) asked the Minister whether it was proposed to do anything with regard to the grading of meat, as it was intended by the Bill of last session. Regarding the Noxious Weeds Act, he thought some indication should be given to the House and the country whether it was intended to enforce the Act more strictly this coming season than last ; unless more activity was shown, the Act would be a farce. He knew of several Mr. O'Meara greatly by being covered with Californian thistles. With regard to the Inspectors, he would like to see them do very little in the way of drawing up voluminous reports and do a little more moving around, in order to see for themselves what was wanted. Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) agreed that something should be done to put the Noxious Weeds Act in force, for as things were at present those who tried to rid their land of thistles had their efforts nullified by the failure of their neighbours to work in the same direction. He also thought that some compensation should be given to farmers who had cattle die by anthrax, for it was only by that means that the farmers would be induced to report the deaths of cattle by anthrax. He suggested that the Government should take over the paddocks which were condemned for three years through stock dying from anthrax, and themselves lime the ground and do the other necessary work for eradicating the poison. Regarding the inspection of rabbits, he thought the Inspectors were far too energetic, especially in settled districts, where rabbits would never increase. Mr. BOLLARD (Eden) said there was provision made on the estimates for thirty-one Veterinary Surgeons. He would like the Minister to say if he did not think the time had arrived when a school of veterinary surgery should be established, so that our young men might learn to follow this profession. Mr. WITHEFORD (Auckland City) said he was prepared to support the increase in the salary of Mr. Cameron, the Produce Commissioner in London. This was the man who had been conducting the prosecutions in the Old Country to prevent the nefarious practice that was going on of selling inferior and diseased meat as New Zealand mutton. This action was a decided step in the right direction, and would prove beneficial to the colony. He would have much pleasure in supporting the increase proposed in order to mark his approval of what had been done. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccanton) wished to ask the Minister why he had allowed the Secretary for Agriculture some months ago to try to compel the South Island Meat Company to use the Gear Company's labels. Mr. DUNCAN said that the attention of the Government had been drawn to anthrax. They had not decided definitely what was to be done, for, as honourable members would know, the matter was one that it was exceedingly difficult to deal with. Bones were brought from all parts, and especially from Queensland, where it was known this disease existed. The information he had received went to show that if the bones were cleaned thoroughly their introduction would be quite safe. At the present time the Government did not allow bones to be brought into the colony without a certificate that they had been steamed up to a heat that was supposed to be sufficient to kill the germs of the disease. It had been thought that was sufficient; but it might be necessary that something else should

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With regard to the frozen mutton trade, the forty-seven Inspectors, thirty-seven rabbit difficulty was that each firm wanted to run its agents, thirty-two veterinary surgeons, and own business independently. The right thing, nine assistants to Meat Inspectors. Now, who he thought, would be to get the representatives of the different firms together to see if they could they, and what duties did the assistants to not agree upon a plan for more concerted action, because he was sure that if the right steps were taken better prices would be obtained. He was sure that our New Zealand mutton did not now bring the money it deserved, that it was sold at a high price to the consumers at Home, while a very low price was received

for it by the pro-ducers in the colony. With regard to the question of the member for Riccarton, this was simply a sample brand to show that it could, with advantage, be used. It was not compulsory. Mr. BUDDO (Kaiapoi) asked what was being done about the eradication of noxious weeds ? Mr. DUNCAN said this year instructions had been given to look after this noxious weeds business. Of course, the thing could not be got into full swing at once. With regard to the question of the member for Eden, he thought the time had come when the matter of providing instruction in veterinary surgery should be taken in hand. Unfortunately, there was no place in the colony to which young fellows desiring this kind of education could go. The matter was now under consideration. Mr. R. THOMPSON (Marsden) asked where did the Minister intend to locate the thirty-one Veterinary Surgeons who were now in the service of the Government. Was it intended to divide the colony into districts, and place one in each district ? Mr. DUNCAN said these officers were imported specially to act under the Public Health Act, and their principal duty was to inspect the abattoirs and slaughterhouses. If disease broke out in any particular district, or there was any exceptional mortality amongst stock or anything unusual that required attention in connection with diseases among stock, they were available and could be sent to visit and report. They were not brought out for the purpose of competing with the ordinary veterinarians in the country in going on to a farm and doing the work usually performed by a veterinary surgeon. There were enough abattoirs in the colony to keep the whole of them employed. In Wellington alone he thought it would be necessary to have at least two of these officers. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) asked if they reported upon the milk supplies ? Mr. DUNCAN said, In many cases they did. Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa) hoped the Minister would not permit the Stock Inspectors to be appointed as Inspectors of slaughterhouses, as it would place them in a false position. If anybody was to inspect these buildings let it be a peripatetic officer, for a resident officer was bound to have local influence brought to bear on him. Mr. SYMES (Egmont) asked what were the veterinary surgeons doing in the meantime ? Were they employed in other parts of the colony, or were they all located in Wellington ? were the Meat Inspectors, and where were Meat Inspectors discharge ? He thought it would be a good thing if the Government translated into the Maori language the leaflets that were distributed to the farmers, more particularly those relating to poultry, because the Maoris take a very great interest in poultry-raising, and it would be a good thing to encourage them in this industry. He would like to know what amount was raised under the sheep-tax. and also the amount supplied by freezing-works and abattoirs towards the payment of these Inspectors. Then, he wished to remind the Minister that year after year the Government had promised to establish a dairy school in the North Island, but up to the present time they had only had the annual promise and no fulfilment of it. Mr. O'MEARA (Pahiatua) wished to know what the four Dairy Inspectors were doing. This was an industry which should be fostered by the department, and he would like to see the number of Inspectors increased by about eight. Mr. HOGG (Masterton) asked if it was the case that the Scotch thistle was included in the Second Schedule of the Noxious Weeds Act. If treated as a noxious weed it would be ruinous to many farmers. He would like to know at the instigation of what expert this was considered a noxious weed. Mr. DUNCAN (Minister for Agriculture) said it rested wholly with the local authority as to what noxious weeds were included in the Schedule. Mr. ELL (Christchurch City) asked if all the dairies in Christchurch had been inspected. Mr. DUNCAN said he believed they had. Mr. HALL (Waipawa) asked if the Government would consider the advisability of increasing the grant for the destruction of rabbits on Crown lands in the Napier district to, say, £500, and also if they would consider the question of establishing a State farm in the Bush districts, somewhere about Norsewood. By doing that the quality of the dairy herds there would be improved, and the breed of stock also, and great good would be done to the district. He would like the Minister to see to it that when the department took upon itself to prosecute anybody under the Sheep Act it would take them to the nearest Courthouse. There was a case in his electorate where a man had been summoned to Napier, when his home was quite close to

Waipawa. Mr. WITHEFORD (Auckland City) said he thought there was reason for something being done in connection with the inspection of fruit. At the present time the Inspectors condemned oranges in Auckland, and the same fruit was sent down to Wellington, allowed to be landed, and sold for consumption. The same thing had also happened only last week in connection with a shipment of apples. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) advocated the aboli-

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pose of paying Inspectors and other people to see to the extermination of the disease. The disease had now been exterminated, and there was no more reason why the sheep-tax should be kept in force than that a tax should be put on cattle, or any other stock. Mr. LANG (Waikato) asked the Minister if he would give some reply to his question put earlier in the evening, as to anthrax. As to the poisoning of rabbits in the King-country, he thought there was no necessity for that, for they could be kept down very well by trapping and the Government paying for skins that were brought in. He agreed that it would be a very desirable thing to have milk tested by Government officials, and if that were done a great boon would be conferred upon settlers. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) said that anthrax required stamping out, and to do that demanded preventive measures. What brought the disease was the importation of bones and bone-dust. Last year about 10,000 tons had been imported into the colony, and the question naturally arose, whether those bones had been properly treated by private enterprise. His opinion was that they might have to shut out the 1.0. bones altogether. He was not sure but that would be the proper thing to do; and after the treatment they were receiving from Australia, he was not sure that they would be doing wrong to spend £10,000 in providing digesters for this colony in order to prevent anthrax coming from Australia. His opinion was that other manures could be used, and, if the germs were not in the bone-dust, then bone-dust might be purchased. The matter had not escaped the attention of the Government, and the department were grappling with it to the best of their ability. It was only a question of expense. There was one digester in Auckland, but that would only put through a certain quantity. At the present time the matter was before Cabinet, and recommendations were being considered from the department. There was some danger in the Government going into this business; serious claims for compensation might be brought, and he objected to playing with dangerous weapons. It could not be said that the Government or the department had ever been harsh to settlers. Mr. FIELD (Otago) said that the reply to a question he had put to the department on the subject of the numerous complaints regarding the milk-testing had not been satisfactory. He had since written several letters to the department on the subject, to which no satisfactory replies had been obtained. He trusted the Minister would realise, from the number of members who had spoken, that the complaints were genuine, and would see that the matter was one which should be immediately dealt with. Respecting the supply of cream by the Experimental Farm to the Wellington Fresh Food and Ice Company, he might say that the figures he had received from the Levin Dairy Factory were at variance with those supplied to the Minister. He would like to know if the Mr. Massey story should have been given the business unless there was some very good reason to the contrary; and if that factory was prepared to give as large a price as the Fresh Food Company the matter was one for serious inquiry. Then, as to the question of a site for the Wellington Abattoirs, he wished to know whether any reply had been received to the last communication from the Minister to the City Council, disapproving of the Ngahauranga site, and, if it had not been, whether the Government meant, at all hazards, to adhere finally to Banks's site at Kaiwarra. There could be no two opinions as to which site was the best. Banks's site was the one which would suit the small butchers, as well as the farmers. If it were adopted he saw good reason for hoping that we should have a satisfactory small butchers' market, and that the Meat Export Company's pressure would be removed. Mr. DUNCAN said the question of the site was still unsettled. Of the three sites selected in company with the Abattoirs Committee of the City Council, there could be no doubt that Banks's site was the best. There was every-

thing required there, and the objection that it was not level did not hold good, because a level site was not the best site for abattoirs. Mr. FOWLDS .- Did you not say that you would approve of any one of the three sites ? Mr. DUNCAN replied that what he had done was to lay down what he thought necessary for an abattoir site, and he had said that he would approve of any site that fulfilled those conditions. As to the destruction of cattle suffering from anthrax, he believed there had only been one or two beasts destroyed at a time. At the very outside they would not amount to more than twenty-five or thirty. Mr. FIELD (Otaki) pointed out that the Kaiwarra site for the Wellington Abattoirs was approached by both railways. If it was adopted it was practically certain that at the Khandallah Station, close by, saleyards would be erected. At the Kaiwarra site there was room for the necessary paddocks, but the site at the Nga- hauranga Gorge had no paddocks at all. The owner of the Kaiwarra site had offered to allow the land to be taken under the Public Works Act, or to allow the price to be settled by arbitration. Mr. LANG (Waikato) said there were ten distinct places in the colony in which anthrax had broken out. Besides the stock which had died from it, one man had died and three others were seriously affected. It was, therefore, a very serious matter. He considered that those whose paddocks had been closed in consequence of this disease ought to receive some compensation. Mr. HALL (Waipawa) pressed for an answer to his question about the sheep-tax. Would the Minister instruct the department, in cases of prosecution in this matter, to take the case to the nearest Court, and not sixty miles away, as had been done with one case in his district.

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Mr. HALL suggested that the Minister should establish a stud farm in the Bush district. He also complained that #350 was an utterly inadequate sum for keeping down the rabbits on the Crown lands in the Hawke's Bay District. Mr. DUNCAN said the honourable gentleman was completely at sea with regard to this latter matter. The Government did not kill the rabbits, but gave the Rabbit Boards the money for the purpose. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) said the Premier was in error in stating that 10,000 tons of bones had been imported last year. He found from the papers that only 368 tons had been imported. The difficulty in connection with these bones was that they were not properly steamed before being brought into the colony. What was wanted was to have the bones, immediately upon being landed, taken to some establishment and steamed under Government inspection, or else for the Government to undertake the steaming of the bones themselves and charge the importers. Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley) considered the importation of manures was of vital importance to the farming community, as they could not keep up the production of lambs and fat sheep unless they imported largely bonedust and manures from outside. 29,173 tons of turnip and rape manure was imported last year. In regard to the spread of anthrax, he had heard no complaints from farmers as to its introduction into the colony by means of imported manures. Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa) wished the Minister to inquire into a case of an Inspector who had not appeared to prosecute a case ; he might not have been in a position to do so. Mr. A. L. D. FRASER (Napier) wished to draw the attention of the Minister to the necessity for appointing an Inspector for Hawke's Bay who understood the Native language. In regard to the charge made by the member for Wairarapa, he knew all the Inspectors in Hawke's Bay, and knew them to be hardworking and conscientious in their duties. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston), in order to give the Minister an opportunity of replying, moved to reduce the vote by £5. Mr. HORNSBY said he would have no difficulty in proving his assertion. Amendment, to reduce vote by £5, negatived. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) asked for particulars regarding "contingencies." Mr. DUNCAN said they were as follows :- s. d. Exhibitions: Christchurch ; Crystal Palace, London ; Winter 350 5 3 Show, Dunedin Clerical assistance, Agent-General's Office, London, Head Office, and other offices in colony 1,163 4 2 Compensation for stock poisoned 26 0 1 Experiments, bush sickness in cattle, Auckland 30 12 6 Expenses re swine fever outbreak, 6 Riverton 19 11 soldiers at Chelsea through eating New Zealand cheese 13 2 6 . Camera and photos for annual report 5 8 3 .. Tests in branding meat . . 5 12 5 Costs of prosecution, fraudulent 10 11 0 sales of frozen meat ..

Fodder for Government horse, Auckland 6 6 0. Repairs, trap and harness, Master- ton and Nelson 13 19 0. .. Sundries 74 15 5 .. Total £1,719 9 6 .. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) asked if officers. when travelling were allowed to include tips to hotel servants in their expenses. Mr. DUNCAN said he did not think so. Vote, £57,218, agreed to. Miscellaneous services, \$34,663. Mr. SYMES (Egmont) desired some explanation about the proposed expenditure upon the establishment of dairy schools. Last year £1,000 had been voted, and only £56 spent. Nothing had come of the proposal so far. A similar amount was on the estimates this year, . and he would like the Minister to tell them whether it was the intention of the department to establish dairy schools, and where, and when. Mr. O'MEARA (Pahiatua) was of opinion that there was a necessity for establishing these schools throughout the colony, and that, instead of £1,000, #5,000 should be voted for this purpose, and the amount saved in some other expenses. If that was done, a large- amount of good would be done for the staple industry of the colony. At present they were starving the dairying industry. He hoped a. sufficient sum of money would be placed on the estimates for the establishment of schools at. Pahiatua and every other dairy centre. There ought to be, also, an increased number of dairy instructors. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) wished to know if there was any possibility of a dairy school being established next year at Palmerston North the same as last year had been carried on at Strat- ford. There was no centre in the colony that could command so many factories as Palmerston North. A factory there would serve the dairy- ing interests so well that if the department studied the interests and convenience of the people concerned in this industry they would establish a dairy school at this place without delay. The railway service would enable stu- dents to reach Palmerston and return home daily from Masterton, Waipukurau, Foxton, and Wellington and the intervening settle- ments, facilities which did not exist in connec- tion with any other place in the North Island. Mr. MCLACHLAN (Ashburton) hoped the Minister would not increase this amount by a fraction. He had been engaged in dairying for thirty years, and did not believe a dairy school would be of much advantage. It would be far better to have experts travelling round to give the farmers the necessary instruction

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by good judges that the imported horses were not of the class that any one would have bought except the Government. It was said the reason why they were so small was that the buyer was instructed to get them of a certain size. He wanted to know whether the buyer was in- structed from this end, or from the English end. As far as the pedigrees of the horses were concerned, they seemed to be fairly well bred. As far as racing was concerned they were not of a good winning strain. They were not meant for thoroughbred mares, but only for half bred mares. It was an extraordinary idea that we should have small horses to get remounts. At any rate, the Government could have got just as good horses in Australia or New Zealand. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) said the officer wanted a trip Home. Mr. HERRIES said that in Christchurch good judges considered third-grade New Zea- land horses were better than these imported ones. The Government should not compete with private individuals ; and, if they could only bring out weeds from Home, the sooner they closed this branch of the business the better. Mr. DUNCAN said the instructions given to their officer was to go to the War Office and get those that were in a position to guide him to select the horses that were most suitable. The officer knew the class of horses that was sent out from England to South Africa, and it was these low horses that were shown to be the best. None greater than 15.3 in height were taken to South Africa. He believed that the men who had condemned these horses in New Zealand were those who were anxious about racing, and, of course, it was not for this purpose at all that the horses were imported. Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa) was rather astonished to hear that when a Government agent was sent home to buy horses he was told to go to the War Office. Of all the things they had heard this capped the lot. Those who had followed the war in South Africa must be aware of the hideous blunders made by the War Office, resulting in enormous losses, and particularly through this question of horses. It was known that the best horses that were sent to South Africa were those sent from

New Zealand. He wished the Minister to give him some explanation about the item, "Allowance for special services in connection with purchase and inspection of horses for contingents, \$500." He had noticed an advertisement the other day in the Wellington papers offering for sale a number of horses which had been previously bought by the department for the contingents, but the euphemism employed in the advertisement was that they had been "used for training the men sent to South Africa." As a matter of fact, these horses were bought for active service, were branded on the hoofs, and had to be rejected because a number of them were perfectly useless, and yet as much as from £14 to \$20 was given for them. Instead of a \$500 bonus being given by way of allowance for special services in purchasing these animals, they should insist upon some refund of the losses occasioned to the men who were sent out to make these purchases. He asked the Minister to explain how many horses purchased for the contingents had to be rejected, and what was the loss on the horses sold the other day in Wellington. Mr. DUNCAN said only ten had been rejected out of the whole lot, and, as far as he knew, none were rejected because of anything being wrong with them, but merely that they were under the height required; and, as for the honourable gentleman's other question, no horses had been sold by the Government the other day. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) thought the Government had made a serious mistake in connection with these horses. It was not necessary to go outside the colony, and he did not think that what the Government were doing in importing thoroughbreds was the best way to improve the breed of horses in the colony. The Imperial Government gave a premium for suitable horses to travel in certain districts at a low rate, and such a system would be better for this country. He had long held the opinion that the revenue from the totalisator should be applied to some specific purpose, and it could serve no better purpose than providing prizes at the agricultural shows for the encouragement of horse breeding. Mr. SYMES (Egmont) would like some information as to the "Experimental and stud stations, as under-Purchase of land, Kirikiri- roa, £5,520; purchase of stock, buildings, and working-expenses for ditto, £2,000; Wairangi buildings, working-expenses, and purchase of stock, #1,200; Momohaki buildings, working-expenses, and purchase of stock, £2,750." The Momohaki Farm had been in existence for some years and ought to be self-supporting; and they ought also to have some information as regards the Levin Farm. Mr. DUNCAN said the Government were obliged to come to the House to ask for money to purchase stock in any case, and the best use had been made of the money spent. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) pointed out that the Government were importing Shire horses not to be compared with those imported by private individuals; and, if they continued to import such stock in the way they did, it would prevent the commendable private enterprise in this direction that had existed in the past. Mr. DUNCAN said the horses alluded to by the member for Palmerston were from the best breeds. Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) supported the proposition that the Government should give premiums for stallions, and thought it was a sheer waste of money to import the kind of stock which was being imported. He would like to ask the Minister about the credits under section 41 of the Public Revenues Act, £8,840. That should show the fees from inspection of meat at freezing-works and other things, and it would also be fair to include in the credit the sheep-tax. Mr. DUNCAN said the amount included

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clude inspection of freezing - works, for that work had just started. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) asked how much money the department received for the stock on the Levin State Farm when it was taken over. Mr. DUNCAN said no money was paid over. It was only an exchange on paper from one department to another. Mr. MASSEY asked what was meant by the item, "Refund of part quarantine charges on 129 rams. £40." Mr. DUNCAN said that was a refund given on account of these rams, a charge for which had been made for feed; but, as they had been for so long running outside, the owners were given this as a refund. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) asked for an explanation regarding the item, "Compassionate allowance to the widow of the late F. Marshall, \$8." Mr. DUNCAN said Mr. Marshall was a temporary

man in the office, and that amount was the balance of his wages. Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) desired to know something about the item, "Expenses of frozen meat exhibited at Earl's Court, £100." Why did the Government want to exhibit meat there, and not leave it for the meat companies to do? He would move, That the item be reduced by £1. Mr. DUNCAN said the information he had was that the exhibition had been held, and, so far as he could gather, it was in connection with the freezing company and Nelson Brothers. Amendment, to reduce the vote by £1, negatived. Vote, £34,663, agreed to. Mr. PIRANI moved, That progress be reported. The Committee divided. AYES, 15. Allen, J. Russell, G. W. Lang Bollard Massey Smith, G. J. Meredith Collins Tellers. Monk Ell Lethbridge Guinness Rhodes Pirani. Herries NOES, 26. Allen, E. G. Fraser, A. L. D. Mills Bennet Hall O'Meara Hall-Jones Buddo Palmer Carncross Heke Seddon Carroll Hornsby Symes Colvin Kaihau Witheford. McGowan Duncan Tellers. Field McLachlan Arnold Fowlds McNab Laurensen. Majority against, 11. Motion negatived. CLASS XIV .- DEFENCE DEPARTMENT. Defence Department, £11,557. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) asked the Premier who had got the bonuses in connection with the despatch of the contingents. There was an VOL. CXIX .- 28. negatived with the despatch of the contingents. He understood that the men who had done most of the work had been almost entirely overlooked in the matter of bonuses, while, as a rule, those who had done least had the biggest bonuses. It was reported that the Commander of the Forces got a large bonus for the services he rendered in connection with the despatch of the contingents. It was also stated that bonuses varying from £50 down to \$2 were paid to other officers. One man who got £2, he believed, had put in five hundred hours overtime. Personally, he thought this payment of bonuses to any officer without stating it on the estimates was an improper thing. Mr. SEDDON said the bonuses given-he called them extra allowances for extraordinary services-were on one occasion £50 to the Commandant and £50 to the Under-Secretary for Defence. The others ranged from £30, £25, \$20, and £15, and a large number at £10; others at £5, and a large number got £2. Mr. O'Sullivan, of the Stores Department, only got £30, and he thought no one had rendered greater service than he had. The total amount on the list quoted from was £667 for the whole of the contingents-less than £100 for each contingent. Knowing the work the men did, and the strain that was put on the officers downwards to the clerks, the money was well earned. And it was also to be remembered that a large amount of this was paid by the Home Government. More than that, the distribution was fair to all concerned. Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley) moved, That the first item of the expenditure in this department be reduced by £5, as an indication to the Government to take back the Defence estimates and reduce them by the sum of £50,000. Each of the departments of the public service had shown a very large increase, and members found it was no use attempting to reduce the estimates by small sums. There were obvious reasons why members hesitated to vote in the various divisions in the way of reducing the estimates by small sums. He did not move this amendment as a vote of want of confidence in the Government. If the Premier accepted it as such he threw the responsibility on him, and made no apology for it. His desire simply was to reduce this large item of expenditure under the head of " Defence." He was not opposed to a citizen soldiery. He was in favour of encouraging the Volunteering system to the utmost possible extent, and of encouraging our cadets ; and he was likewise in favour of establishing rifle clubs throughout the colony. But he was utterly opposed to a standing army, to a War Office, and to the militarism which the Premier was forcing on this colony, especially during the last three years. He was opposed to this Imperial "jingoism," and hence his determination to reduce this vote. He would quote figures to show how enormously this defence expenditure had increased : In 1891-92 the vote under this head was £77,296; in 1892-93, £69,487 ; in 1893-94, £66,386; in 1894-95, £68,165; in 1895-96, £82,536; in 1898-99, £110,680; in 1899-1900, \$149,120; in 1900-1901, \$287,434; and for 1901 - 1902, £213,250. Honourable members would notice the abnormal rise immediately the Premier returned from

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the Old Country, where he went as an ambassador from this country. On the face of these estimates, a distinct understanding must have been arrived at by the Premier on behalf of the colony with the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, with a view to certain changes in connection with the Defence Forces of this colony. To show how large our defence expenditure was when compared with the other colonies, he might mention that our Permanent Force had grown from 254 men in 1891-92 to its present strength of 490, while the Permanent Force in New South Wales, with a population of 1,132,234, numbered 658; in Victoria, with a population of 1,163,400, 399; in Queensland, 286; South Australia, 41; Western Australia, 43; Tasmania, 30; so that our Permanent Force was in excess of that of any of the neighbouring colonies except New South Wales. The expenditure was one of an absolutely useless character, except in connection with the Volunteer, cadet, and rifle club systems. To go in for an extensive military system was an absolute waste of public money. Mr. SEDDON said the honourable gentleman was not fair as regards the increased expenditure. For instance, he himself had pestered the Government to increase that expenditure by forming the honorary Kaikoura corps into a regular corps, with a capitation grant. It should be recollected that when Colonel Fox left the service the strength of the Volunteers was about five thousand, whereas it was now eighteen thousand. A vote of \$30,000 for capitation was now asked for, and £32,000 had already been paid. If members and the country demanded a Volunteer Force, it was necessary to pay capitation, and it was his duty as Defence Minister to respond to the demand. The honourable member had said that this expense had grown considerably since his (Mr. Seddon's) visit to the Old Country, and said he (Mr. Seddon) must have rubbed shoulders with Mr. Chamberlain. He subsequently referred to the South African war, and perhaps it might be insinuated that he and Mr. Chamberlain had arranged the South African war. He would give some items of the expenditure :- Capitation allowance 30,000 .. Cleaning offices . Daylight parades 1,500 Drill- and boat-sheds 3,500 Efficiency fees for Volunteers 1,500 Forage and house allowances 1,675 Freight, cartage, &c. .. Guards of honour, escorts, &c. Gun-cleaning allowance, field batteries Hire of steamers . . Horses for guns, &c. Labour delivering cargo . . . Miscellaneous stores. . . Mr. Meredith repair, &c. of boats 350 . . Prizes for rifle-shooting, &c. .. 2,500 .. Printing Army List . . 50 Purchase and keep of horses for field batteries .. 1,000 .. Rent of offices, fuel, light, &c. 250 Rent, purchase, repair, &c., of rifle- 5,000 ranges .. Railway-fares for Defence Forces 4,000 .. 160 Repairs to tents, flags, &c. Refund Customs duty, Colonial Ammunition Company 300 ... Repairs to accoutrements, &c. 100 . . Tram- and ferry-tickets for Volunteers 150 Telephone connections 400 Volunteer encampments 6,000 Where was the honourable gentleman going to take a pound off that? He would point out that the rifle clubs only entailed an expenditure of 12s. a man, and he would take them as fast as they came. He was by no means building up a standing army, and would never be in favour of doing so. Then, in regard to the exception taken to the staff, the increase in the staff was entirely owing to the increased number of Volunteers. The expenditure this year was only #213,250, as against £287,434 for last year, and they had not yet returned to the normal condition. The honourable gentleman should point out where he considered the extravagant proposals were on the estimates. The Committee last year, under the advice of the Commandant, recommended the increase of reserves in regard to stores, and these increases had to be met. Then, new guns had been imported, and the Maxims had to be paid for. Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa) agreed that it was necessary to provide Volunteer corps and rifle clubs with the latest available weapon, but he maintained that it was unnecessary to have such an extensive military staff in Wellington. The expenditure on gold lace and cocked hats was altogether out of proportion. and was not necessary. We ought to know by this time that it was not necessary for efficiency and for the purpose of protecting ourselves to go in for an enormous expenditure on what he might term "empty show." All that was necessary for the manipulation of the men who had offered their services to fight at any time was to have a Commandant in Wellington. with a staff of, at the outside, two or three officers. and a clerical staff

of three or four. In each Volunteer district let the commanding officer be an honorary officer, with an allowance for clerical work, and allow the drill-instructor to do that clerical work, with an adjutant in each 30 of the districts of the colony for the working-up of the drills, and that would be a sufficient staff. They could send Home a certain number of men to be trained for artillery purposes, and, with staffs of the kind he had mentioned, the 900 whole of the Volunteer Force of the colony 150 300 could be worked without this huge expenditure. No one would object to the expenditure of even 600 £230,000 for the arming of the colony against 300 invasion, but in these estimates he did not see 50 anything for the upkeep in each of the Volun- 350

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commissariat, or a proper transport. With regard to the increase of the Permanent Militia, he knew the Premier had many difficulties, because so many returned contingenters were trying to get into the Force. As far as Wairarapa boys were concerned, they had gone back to their farms and stations, and he wished the Premier could tell all the able-bodied men to do so. Mr. SEDDON said reference had been made to a salary of £400, Commanding Officer, Wellington. That officer was Colonel Newall, who was next in command to the Commandant. He had fought for us in years gone by in our troubles with the Native race, and had been in the service of the colony for forty years, and he did not think that \$400 a year was too much to give him. The next on the list was Colonel Webb, who was one of the best officers they had, and after twenty-five years' service he got \$325. The next was Colonel Robin, who had been put in charge of the Otago District, and he did not think £300 was too much for that. Then, there was Colonel Davies, who was in charge at Auckland. He was a surveyor by profession, and, moreover, was one of the best of the officers New Zealand had sent to South Africa, and he did not think that he was receiving too much when he got £300, for surely at his profession he could have made more than that. The total salaries for officials paid in Auckland was \$775; in Wellington, £1,076; Nelson, \$300; Canterbury, \$875; and Otago, £1,000. His opinion was that in the past the officers commanding the districts, instead of getting out into the country and doing the drilling had practically been kept at clerical work in the office. His desire had been to have the Defence Force self-contained, to have their own Commandant and every officer of their own training, but that could not be done without sufficient inducement was offered. members tell him that the salaries on the estimates were extravagant? They could not pay less than they were paying at the present time for these services. For years the commanders of the districts had been kept without any increase, while increases had been made in the other departments all round. It would be seen that right along these estimates there had been an increased expenditure, owing to the fact that there was an increased number of Volunteers. Mr. ELL (Christchurch City) admitted that they must have permanent officers in the different districts in order to carry on the Volunteer system with efficiency. That was not complained of; but what was complained of was that the matter of the Head Office staff and Permanent Force was being rather overdone. There was an increase in the chief department of no fewer than nineteen officers, and the Permanent Militia had increased from 328 to 414 in one year, an increase, with the Stores Department, of 119, being nearly 33 per cent. Then, there was a matter of nearly £2,000 a year for sixteen drivers. Where were they to be stationed? Why they should be kept in Wellington, and approved of, the expenditure in connection with rifle clubs and Volunteers; that was reasonable. And it seemed to him it would be better to provide good drill-sheds for the Volunteers, instead of compelling them to collect subscriptions, and granting £1 for £1 on those subscriptions. It was the increase to the head establishment and increase of a permanent force, and consequent increased expense, that he objected to. Mr. SEDDON said there were only six permanent officers and seventeen Volunteers. The estimates showed that this was Permanent Militia and Volunteers. Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley) said the Kai-koura corps had been organized and was in a first-class condition when the wave of militarism passed over the country. It was only right, therefore, that this corps should be

given the same position as any other corps in the country. He approved of the Volunteers as citizen soldiers. That was the only form of militarism he believed in: Then, the Amuri Mounted Rifles was one of the crack corps of the colony, and each man in that corps had contributed, on the average, about £50. He was not going to say what salaries ought to be reduced. It was for the Premier to make the reduction. It was futile for the Premier to say he did not believe in a standing army, when he was creating a War Department and abnormally increasing the expenditure. The expenditure upon rifle clubs, Volunteers, and cadets would make up a total of about £59,741, and, if they allowed £20,000 for the Permanent Force and officers, and #21,000 for ammunition and guns, that would bring the amount up to £100,000, to which sum he would like to see the vote reduced. Every young man who belonged to a mounted corps was put to an expense of about £10 a year, which formed a gift to the colony of about £220,000, all told. Now, no enemy was ever likely to come to the colony to trouble us, and even if they did our Volunteers would be able to cope with them. Therefore there was no necessity for the amount of money that was put down under this head. Mr. G. J. SMITH (Christchurch City) said the honourable member had not indicated where this proposed reduction was to be made, but probably, if the honourable gentleman had done so, he would have indicated the head-quarters staff. Still, that only involved about £4,000. Now, the honourable gentleman's figures about the strength of the Permanent Forces in the other colonies were misleading. He had said nothing at all about the fact that in these other colonies there was a partially paid force, the members of which received about £12 a year, and which was quite distinct from the Permanent Force. New South Wales had a partially paid force of 5,104 men ; Victoria, 3,560; Queensland, 2,945; South Australia, 1,320; West Australia, 1,801 ; while in New Zealand the partially paid force was non-existent. He could not understand why this strong attack should be made on these Defence estimates. References had been made to the Boers, but no

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before the declaration of war. Although they did not turn out in uniform, they had been drilling for years previously. The Volunteers of New Zealand gave to the colony a large amount of their time, and also of their money, because the capitation grant did not nearly pay the cost of running a company. Nearly every company in Christchurch had spent from #200 to \$300 on orderly rooms and equipments for themselves. If the colony did not maintain a permanent force the costly fortifications which had been erected, and the guns with which they were manned, would be useless in a very short time. If they wanted men to give their time in the service of the country they must provide them with efficient instructors, and at the present time there were not enough instructors to do the work. Mr. SEDDON rose to a point of order. According to the Standing Orders the discussion must be confined to the first item. The ACTING.CHAIRMAN said there was no doubt about that. Under the present amendment nothing more could be discussed than the question of reducing the salary of the Under-Secretary of Defence by \$5. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) asked whether the Under-Secretary for Defence had under his control the pay of the men who returned from South Africa; and also whether the officers of the Fourth and Fifth Contingents brought complete pay-sheets signed by each man with the balance owing to him shown ; and whether the details that were now being prepared were in effect copies from those pay-sheets. He wished to know whether this was correct; and, if so, why the men were not paid immediately on their arrival ? Mr. SEDDON said he believed the Under-Secretary for Defence to be one of the most efficient and capable officers in the service. He kept a very strict hand over the £ s. d., which was very necessary. In respect to the contingent accounts, the delay in payment that had occurred was not owing to the department at all. It was quite true the pay-sheets had been made out on board ship, but it was necessary for the Government to comply with the rules of the Audit Department. It was not likely that the officers of the contingents would have been employed in making out new pay-sheets if the Government could have got the payment through. The Under-Secretary assured him that it was impossible to pay the men on the sheets they brought. If

the men had been paid at the Cape there would have been an end to the matter, and he was sorry that had not been done, as he had been very much annoyed to think that the men, on their arrival here, should have had to wait for their money. In point of fact, every account had to be recast, which was due to the system of audit. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) said they were now told that the officers of the Fourth and Fifth Contingents had brought complete pay-sheets ; whereas when the question was brought up Mr. G. J. Smith could not be paid because the amounts owing were not known. He did not believe, himself, that there was any difficulty at all in connection with the audit. He had no desire to reduce the Under-Secretary's salary, but he objected to the way in which the contingents had been treated in this matter. He would ask whether any British money had been brought back from South Africa. Mr. SEDDON said that he found he had been in error when he said that the Fifth Contingent had brought back their pay-sheets. They had not done so. He believed that one of the officers, Captain Jackson, had brought some money with him and had paid most of the men. At any rate, he was informed that it was impossible to work under the accounts brought back with the men. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) wished to know whether each man had signed a pay-sheet showing the balance owing to him; and whether such accounts had to go before the New Zealand Auditor ? Mr. SEDDON might state that the Auditor-General had taken charge of the Imperial money, and was guarding it as jealously as he did the money of the colony. Some of the men had signed their pay-sheets, but he could not say that they all had done so. In respect to the Fourth Contingent, some of the accounts had not yet come back. Mr. LAURENSEN (Lyttelton) said the Under-Secretary was not overpaid. He was one of the best artillery officers they could get, was thoroughly competent, and, during the last two years, he had had four times the ordinary quantity of work thrust upon his shoulders, under which his health had broken down ; and yet, in spite of this, he had carried the work out in a very efficient way. To do what was proposed would be to cast a slight on a very deserving officer. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccarton) had no wish to see the Under-Secretary penalised, and thought that £475 was a low salary compared with other salaries for heads of departments which had been agreed to. At the same time, he agreed with the object for which the member for Ashley moved the amendment, and accordingly was compelled to vote with him. Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley) disclaimed any intention of casting a reflection in any shape or form on the Under-Secretary for Defence. The object of his amendment was to affect the whole of the vote, and not this particular item. The real issue was the reduction of the whole of the Defence vote by \$50,000, and that position was well known to honourable members. The Committee divided on the question, "That the item, ' Under-Secretary for Defence, £475,' be reduced by £5." AYES, 8. Tellers. Hornsby Ell Fowlds Pirani Meredith Hall Thomson, J. W. Russell, G. W.

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Allen, E. G. Duncan McLachlan Allen, J. McNab Field Fraser, A. L. D. O'Meara Arnold Palmer Hall-Jones Barclay Bennet Heke Rhodes Herries Seddon Bollard Kaihau Buddo Symes. Carncross Lang Massey Carroll Tellers. Laurenson McGowan Collins McKenzie, R. Smith, G. J. Colvin Majority against, 23. Amendment negatived. Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa) moved, That the vote £11,557 be reduced by £1,000. He did not desire in any way to interfere with the salary of the Under-Secretary, but he did wish to reduce the headquarters staff. He desired to reiterate that the military establishment ought to be conducted on a much more economical plan. The officers were duplicated and triplicated, and, if the business of the country-so far as the Volunteer Force was concerned - were properly carried on, there was no necessity for much of the expenditure proposed. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccarton) desired to move a prior amendment. He moved, That the item " 13 clerks, \$2,262," be reduced by £1,174, to bring the amount to what it was for the previous year. The capitation proposed was \$30,000 as against £40,000 last year, and if the expenditure was less there was no need for the headquarters staff to be increased. The growth of the clerical staff around the head office of the Defence Department ought to be dealt with.

The head office staff had increased from eighteen last year to thirty-seven for the #cc-zero present year. It was for the Government to justify this large increase. Many of those who had been taken on as casual clerks in the Defence Office were now being absorbed as a permanent part of the staff. Members should reduce these estimates item by item to the amounts shown on last year's estimates. It was for that purpose he moved that this item be reduced by £1,174. Mr. G. J. SMITH (Christchurch City) hoped members would treat this department with a certain amount of generosity. During the past two years a very severe strain had been placed upon it in the despatch of the contingents, and, of course, the ordinary clerical work had got a little behindhand. In addition to that, the large increase in the number of Volunteers rendered necessary an increase of the clerical work. Probably the number of clerks would be decreased as the pressure of work was relaxed. Mr. SEDDON said it was a fair question to raise why there had been an increase of seven clerks in the Defence Office. The answer was the large expenditure that had taken place, and that not only the colonial but the Imperial demands and the Imperial connection made it necessary to keep separate accounts for the pay of the contingents. Then, there had been various abnormal occurrences during the year, all of which had thrown an exceptional amount the visit of the Imperial troops, the visit of the Indian troops, and the Royal visit. The vouchers for the various military camps alone represented an amount of from £20,000 to £25,000. The way in which the clerks in this department had been worked was really a shame. They had been working day and night for weeks and weeks. It was impossible to do the work with less of a staff. This increase of seven clerks would not be permanent. When they got back to normal conditions the number would be reduced. This colony was not justified in working its clerks day and night. The Defence Office had to keep a separate account for each man of the three thousand who were sent to South Africa, and, in addition to that there were eighteen thousand Volunteers. When he told the member for Riccarton of the work these men were doing, he felt sure the honourable gentleman would not press his amendment. There had been an increase of six thousand Volunteers this year. Then, the cadet corps showed another three thousand, and the rifle clubs would probably make another three thousand : the work had, therefore, gone on increasing. The Committee divided on the question, "That the item, ' 13 clerks, £2,262,' be reduced by £1,174." AYES, 7. Monk Tellers. Ell Hall Thomson, J. W. Hornsby Russell, G. W. Meredith NOES, 29. Field McLachlan Allen, E. G. Fraser, A. L. D. Mills Allen, J. Arnold O'Meara Hall-Jones Bennet Palmer Heke Rhodes Bollard Herries Seddon Buddo Kaihau Ward. Laurenson Carroll Tellers. Collins Lawry Colvin Carncross McGowan McKenzie, R. Smith, G. J. Duncan Majority against, 22. Amendment negatived. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccarton) moved to strike out the item, "Staff Officer (also for Artillery duties), \$300." Amendment negatived. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL moved to strike out the item, "8 clerks, £1,311." That was a big increase on last year, and he would like to know why so much clerical assistance had been required. Mr. SEDDON said it was because of the separating of the duties of the Commandant. and was the result of the establishment of the military as separate from the civil organization. Personally, he was satisfied that they would have to go back to the old arrangements, but in the meantime these clerks were kept busy, and must be paid. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) asked for the name of the Mounted Infantry Officer for the South Island, \$300.

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Mr. SEDDON said that no appointment had yet been made. Mr. J. ALLEN asked who was the Assistant Staff Officer ? Mr. SEDDON said there was no appointment at present. Originally they had Major Robin, who used to draw £100 a year for doing that work. Of the Assistant Adjutant-Generals the appointment " A " had not been made ; there was nothing done definitely as regards either the "A " or " B." Mr. BUDDO (Kaiapoi) said that New Zealand could not for years to come be more than a defensive community, and he hoped that New Zealand's motto would always be " Defence, not defiance." He was sorry they were getting a new Commandant here, for he thought they might have provided a colonial officer quite

competent to do all that was required for our colonial Volunteers. By all means let us provide Imperial drill - instructors ; but, if the strength of our Volunteer corps was to be maintained at present numbers, there must be very little of the red tape methods common to Imperial army discipline. There was already evidence of friction between the Defence Department and the Volunteer corps. He suggested that it might be well to centralise the work somewhat in Wellington, doing away with the chief district officer and leaving it in the hands of the District Adjutant, and pay capitation direct to the officers in command of Volunteer corps. The present system of referring everything, of even trifling importance, through the District Department, then to the Commandant, and afterwards to the Minister of Defence, caused unnecessary delay and a feeling that the Volunteer interests were being trifled with. Mr. SEDDON said the work connected with the contingents had put a tremendous amount of additional labour upon the department. Mr. G. J. SMITH (Christchurch City) asked what position Major Owen occupied ? Was he Commandant of the School of Instruction ? Mr. SEDDON .- Yes. Mr. G. J. SMITH .- And Major Smith ? Mr. SEDDON replied that he was at present Assistant Staff Officer, at a salary of \$250. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccarton) said they now had a staff of clerks with the Under-Secretary, and another secretarial department under the Commandant. By their votes they were fastening an enormous military establishment upon the people; but it was not the slightest use to fight these estimates. Mr. MONK (Waitemata) felt there was no use in fighting the estimates; but he must assert that the excessive expenditure in this department was wrong and very reckless. The Premier, in his opinion, was most imprudent, and the day of reckoning would come. Mr. SEDDON said he had worked this department for six years with the Under-Secretary. But the Commandant said if he had to be responsible for the distribution of the stores and the equipment he wanted the full control. Both Colonel Fox and Colonel Penton had told him the same thing. They wanted a staff of their own, and wanted control of the ammunition, the munitions, and the orders, and direct control over the Volunteer staffs outside them. The matter went to the House, and they decided that the two things should be separated. He believed the right thing to do was to give the control to the Commandant ; but the difficulty was to know where to draw the line. In his opinion four clerks would be enough when they got to normal conditions. He hoped there would be a change when they got a new Commandant. In the meantime these eight clerks were kept fully employed, and the Commandant had asked for more \---- clerks, which he (Mr. Seddon) declined. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) asked why the honourable gentleman did not give more power to the officers commanding districts. In his district there was so little power given that a 1 voucher for a threepenny fare had actually to be sent to Wellington before it could be paid. Mr. SEDDON said that was a farce, of course. But the reason was that the permits formerly given for Commanding Officers to 1 grant free passes had been so much abused that the privilege had to be withdrawn. It was now under consideration to allow them to issue permits up to a certain amount. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) asked, If the Commandant was to be in charge, why not put him in charge, instead of having the present dual control ? It was the same in other departments. We did not want a new Commandant at all, but a good transport and intelligence officer. The new Commandant was a cavalry officer, which was about the most unfit class of officer to take charge of colonials. Mr. SEDDON said the department had been \-- to a certain extent disorganized through the visit of the Imperial troops and the Royal visit, et cetera. The Committee divided on the question, " That the item, '8 clerks, £1,311,' be struck out." AYES, 13. Willis. Barclay Hornsby Collins Laurensen Tellers. Eli Monk 1 Pirani Meredith Hall Thomson, J. W. Russell, G. W. Hogg NOES, 33. Allen, E. G. Fraser, A. L. D. McLachlan Gilfedder Allen, J. McNab Mills Arnold Hall-Jones Palmer Hanan Bennet Bollard Heke Rhodes Buddo Kaihau Seddon Lang Carncross Thompson, R. Carroll Lawry Ward. Colvin Massey Tellers. McGowan Napier Duncan Smith, G. J. McKenzie, R. Field Flatman Majority against, 20. Item retained. Mr. G. J. SMITH (Christchurch 7.0. City) understood the intention was to centralise the School of Instruction, and to

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was practically impossible. Mr. SEDDON replied that he considered it would be much cheaper for the officers to go to different parts of the colony, and he intended that the school should go to the four centres. In this matter he was using his own judgment, and which was opposed to the views held by the Commandant. He believed this was the proper course to adopt. The Committee divided on the question, "That the vote of £11,557 be reduced by £1,000." AYES, 14. Russell, G. W. Hanan Arnold Herries Thomson, J. W. Collins Ell Hogg Tellers. Flatman Laurenson Hornsby Pirani Gilfedder Meredith. NOES, 31. Hall Allen, E. G. Mills Palmer Allen, J. Hall-Jones Heke Rhodes Bennet Bollard Seddon Kaihau Buddo Lang Thompson, R. Carncross Ward Lawry Willis. Massey Carroll Colvin McGowan McKenzie, R. Duncan Tellers. Field McLachlan Napier Fraser, A. L. D. McNab Smith, G. J. Majority against, 17. Amendment negated. Vote, £11,557, agreed to. . Permanent Militia and Volunteers, £121,297. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) asked, with reference to the item, "Medical attendance, medicine, &c., £350," whether the Health Officer could attend to the duty now imposed upon him of examining returned troopers from South Africa ; also whether the troopers who became sick shortly after returning to the colony could not get before the Medical Board for examination unless they first got a certificate from an outside medical man. Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa) moved, That the vote be reduced by £20,000. Mr. HANAN (Invercargill) moved that the item, " Officers commanding sub-districts at £100 per annum," be reduced by £1, as an indication that Southland should be constituted a separate Volunteer district. Amendment negated. The Committee divided on the question, "That the vote be reduced by £20,000." AYES, 12. Arnold Thomson, J. W. Hogg Gilfedder Lang Tellers. Hall Monk Hornsby Hanan Pirani Russell, G. W. Herries NOES, 29. Allen, E. G. Carroll Ell Allen, J. Field Collins Colvin Bennet Flatman Buddo Fraser, A. L. D. Duncan Smith, G. J. Heke Mills Thompson, R. Napier Laurenson Willis. Lawry Palmer Tellers. Rhodes Massey Carncross McGowan McNab. Seddon Majority against, 17. Amendment negated. Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) asked for particulars of the two separate items of contingencies that were included in this vote. Mr. SEDDON read out the particulars as follows :- No. 1 List. d. 3 8. Hire of lathe 1 10 0 . . . Washing bedding 6 12 2 . . Chimney-sweeping 3 14 6 . . Linoleum for library, &c. 18 15 0 Repairs to typewriter, ribbons, &c. 6 5 0 Towing s.s. "Ellen Ballance " off slip, targets, &c. 11 16 3 . . Cab- and express-hire 9 0 2 Glass and glazing, &c. 0 3 18 . Fire-range for barracks 12 3 3 Lavatory repairs, &c. 3 6 4 Boiler certificate 10 0 0 Stationery, &c. . . 2 17 3 Chloride of lime, &c. 5 18 11 Timber, &c. 14 17 8 Fittings for rifle-ranges, &c. 5 15 6 Fire-bars 14 2 0 Firewood 8 19 0 Extra working-pay 33 10 6 . . Extra pay, &c. . . 9 6 87 . . Straw for beds . . 0 9 1 . Stove-pipes 30 12 0 . Crane. power, &c. 0 1 1 . . Alterations 18 0 0 Tubing and cartridge bags 6 9 0 10 0 0 Settlement of Burberry's claim Expenses, repairs to guns 1 12 6 . . Total £329 16 4 . . No. 2 List. £ ■. 8. Fidelity guarantee premiums 0 7 10 . . Black for draping arms 0 12 5 . . 1. Repairs to range-finders . . 1 16 6 . . Repairs to telephones . 10 1 . Drafting agreement re Samoa 2 2 0 Stabling, &c. 2 5 0 Medical examination of officers 16 8 9 Marking medals, prize-firing 4 0 0 Hire tents 2 12 11 Removing guns . . 16 2 6 Making cartridge-bags 14 11 1 Compassionate allowance 31 10 0 Brake- and cab-hire 2 10 0 Caretaker, Christchurch Drillshed 18 17 6 Boiler certificates 0 0 2 Cyclostyle, paper, &c. 3 10 0 Ambulance-hire 1 10 0 . Funeral wreath . . 0 15 0 . . . Repairs to brushes 0 1 17 . . Rent of letter-box 0 0 1 12 Repairing conveyance, rifle-range . . 9 6 Mess tins, &c. . . 0 14 5

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0 12 Directory . . . Repairs to harness 1 18 . . . £162 5 9 Total . . Vote, £121,297, agreed to. Stores and magazines, £6,308. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) asked for details of contingencies under this vote. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) asked what was being done with regard to the erection of a defence store in Dunedin ? Mr. SEDDON said his recollection was that this land was ordered to be taken under the Public Works Act. Mr. G. J. SMITH (Christchurch City) asked for particulars with respect to the storing and safe keeping of the magazine rifles. Mr. SEDDON said the Commandant recommended that there should be an officer

to look after these rifles ; but the first thing to be done was to get the buildings up, and that would be dealt with under the public works estimates. Mr. R. THOMPSON (Marsden) asked what was the intention of the Government with respect to giving rifles to cadet corps ? Mr. SEDDON said it was intended to give each cadet corps a certain number of rifles. Vote, \$6,308, agreed to. South African contingents, £30,000. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) desired to know whether the Premier would fulfil his promise to lay on the table the papers connected with the transport of troops by the " Tagus," and also if he would lay on the table other papers asked for by him (Mr. Allen). He intended to place on record the particulars with respect to the men who came by the "Tagus." One man died at sea on the " Tagus " before reaching Albany ; the next was left ill at Albany, and unfortunately died there. Since the boat left Albany, one man died near Stewart Island, of embolism or pneu- monia ; the next died in Port Chalmers Har- bour, of pneumonia ; the next at Geraldine, of inflammation of the lungs: this man went to the Bluff; the next died in Dunedin, of enteric : he was bad on arrival ; the next died at Invercargill, of pneumonia : this man went to the Bluff ; the next died in Dunedin Hospital of abscess of the liver; the next died in Auck- land Hospital, of influenza : this man went to the Bluff ; the next died in Dunedin Hospital of meningitis : this man went to the Bluff. An Hon. MEMBER .- What was his name ? Mr. J. ALLEN said he was prepared to give the name : it was Nelson. An Hon. MEMBER .- That man belonged to the Bluff. Mr. J. ALLEN said, That was so, and he came away from his home because it was so cold. The probabilities were that if the men had come to Auckland, which was a warmer route, they would have arrived in the colony in a better condition to stand the cold of the South than they were ; but, having come by a cold route, they could not stand the extra cold of the Bluff. When the troopers heard at Port Chalmers that they had to go to the Bluff there was nearly a mutiny on board the ship. Mr. Seddon 6 Mr. J. ALLEN repeated that there was nearly 0 a mutiny, and a considerable number of the men, rather than go to the Bluff, evaded orders and remained on the ship, and did not go to the Bluff at all. The newspapers of the day would bear out what he had said. In the Otago Daily Times, of the 12th July, for instance, it was stated,- "In view of the fact that the large majority of the men who have gone to the Bluff are not in the most robust state of health, it is not at all unlikely that on the return to Dunedin a number of them will have to be placed on the sick-list." The same paper also said,- "How true it may be, there is no saying, but it was freely stated about Port Chalmers that the returned men made strenuous efforts to avoid being sent on to the Bluff, and some even went the length of escaping tranship- ment, and so came to the wharf with the ' Tagus.'" Mr. MILLS said that those who were not feeling well were not asked to go. Mr. J. ALLEN said that the orders were that the men were to go, except those who were in the hospital. Those who felt they were too sick to go, no doubt, applied for sick-leave and got it ; but when the general order was to go, it was not likely that all the men would have applied for sick-leave unless they had good reason for it. As to the mutiny, he quoted from another paper, the Evening Star of 12th July, as follows :- " As soon as they heard they were ordered away to the Bluff, the troopers got up a petition to Colonel Davies asking to be allowed to land at Port Chalmers, and this was extensively signed." The Colonel's answer, in effect, was this :- "I am a soldier, you are soldiers ; and we all have to obey orders." What else could the Colonel do ? It was not the Colonel's fault the men went to the Bluff. Later on he (Mr. Allen) would deal with the cases of the men who became sick since they had arrived in New Zealand. Mr. SEDDON (Minister of Defence) said he too had received communications, and he would read them, but he would not read them without giving names, nor would he depend upon extracts from newspapers that were, and always had been, hostile to him. He would read extracts from communications he had received from the officers and men themselves. There was this letter :- " Wellington, 21st September, 1901. " The Right Hon. the Premier, City. " DEAR SIR, -We, members of the Fourth and Fifth Contingents residing in Wellington and district, have read with surprise and indigna- tion of the charge brought against yourself by Mr. Allen, M.H.R. for Bruce. We wish to assure you that, so far as we are aware, there was not a man on board the 'Tagus' who objected to landing at the Bluff because

of his health, and we are satisfied that landing us at Port Chalmers and taking us afterwards to In-
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men's illness. The foundation of most of the sickness was laid in Worcester, where we, particularly the 5th, suffered greatly from exposure to bad weather during our seventeen days there, and on board the 'Tagus' between Capetown and Albany. The weather between Capetown and Albany was very cold and stormy ; but after leaving Albany the weather was fine, and we know of no case of sickness originating between Albany and New Zealand. After arriving in the colony we had every care and comfort, and no man who visited Invercargill suffered in any way for having done so. "H. W. Blake, Corporal, 5th N.Z.R. ; G. Fernandos, Saddler, 5th N.Z.R. ; J. Coffey, 5th N.Z.R. ; D. McGill, Corporal, 5th N.Z.R. ; C. Isherwood, 4th N.Z.R. ; M. J. Collins, Bombardier, 5th N.Z.R. ; Thos. Lucas, 5th N.Z.R. ; A. S. Weir, Sergeant, 5th N.Z.R. ; W. Cator, 5th N.Z.R. ; J. Warren, 5th N.Z.R. ; W. J. Hardham, Farrier-Major, 4th N.Z.R. ; R. N. Harding, 5th N.Z.R. ; J. Wilson, N.Z.R. ; F. Brace, 5th N.Z.R. ; W. J. Mackay, 5th N.Z.R." Those men were mostly from the Wellington District. He had also received the following letter : - "DEAR SIR,-We, the undersigned members of the Fourth and Fifth New Zealand Contingents, have read with astonishment the charge made against yourself by Mr. James Allen, M.H.R. for Bruce. We consider it quite unjustifiable and wholly uncalled for. Most of our constitutions had run down after being so long in the field, and the severe weather experienced during our stay in Worcester caused sickness to break out in the camp. The passage between Capetown and Albany was a very stormy one, and between those two ports most of the sickness occurred. The weather was very cold all over New Zealand when we landed, and we knew of no cases of illness originating through the men being sent to the Bluff, where every arrangement was made for our comfort. " James Millar Nicolson, Captain, 4th N.Z.K. ; John De P. Manson, Lieutenant and Adjutant, 5th N.Z.R. ; Thomas J. Gardiner, Lieutenant, 4th N.Z.R. ; Henry H. Smith, 5th N.Z.R. ; A. C. Johnstone, 5th N.Z.R. ; O. G. Johnston, 4th N.Z.R. ; E. Bone, 4th N.Z.R. ; J. Price, 5th N.Z.R. ; J. L. Haselden, Lieutenant, 5th N.Z.R. ; E. N. Osborne, Private, 4th N.Z.R. ; J. C. Maclean, Corporal, 4th N.Z.R. ; H. J. McDonald, 4th N.Z.R. ; L. J. Murphy, Sergeant-Major, 4th N.Z.R. ; M. J. Luke, 5th N.Z.R. ; H. J. Simpson, 5th N.Z.R. ; E. J. Saunders, 4th N.Z.R. ; J. Wilson, 5th N.Z.R. ; F. Brace, R.Q.M.S., 5th N.Z.R. ; G. W. Ferguson, Lieutenant, 5th N.Z.R. ; A. M. Roberts, Act. Regt. S.M., 4th N.Z.R. ; James Walsh, 5th N.Z.R. ; Reginald Neill Harding; James Coffey, 5th N.Z.R. ; Joan Davidson, 5th N.Z.R. ; M. J. Collins, 5th N.Z.R. ; W. J. Hardham, Farrier - Major 4th N.Z.R. ; R. Wylie, 4th N.Z.R. ; C. F. Jackson, 4th N.Z.R. ; R. Campbell, 5th N.Z.R. ; Corporal. A. Read, 4th N.Z.R. ; G. Fuszard, 4th N.Z.R. ; H. J. Hawkins; E. S. Pettit, 4th N.Z.R. ; No. vate A. McKeller ; No. 1660, Corporal F. Mason ; No. 1106, Private J. Logan ; No. 1102, Private A. Morrison ; No. 1103, Private P. Dawson; No. 1109, Private R. J. McAuley ; No. 1121, Private H. Campbell ; No. 1149, Private J. Gouk; 1657, Bugler McDonald ; J. S. Wilson, 5th N.Z.R. ; W. H. Fletcher, Sergeant-major, 5th N.Z.R. ; George Lawson, 4th N.Z.R. "The Right Hon. the Premier, Wellington." That letter came to him as a welcome surprise after all that had been said in respect to the matter. Naturally he felt very much hurt at what had been said ; and when these men came forward in fairness to him, and he received the letters read, it was very welcome indeed. He had another communication :- "My name is Henry Walter Blake ; I am, or was, a corporal in the Fifth New Zealand Contingent, and returned to this colony by the s.s. 'Tagus,' from the Cape to Albany, and from Albany to Port Chalmers. " We arrived at Worcester (South Africa) about the 25th or 26th of May-I would not be certain which day -- but we arrived about dusk. Of course, we had no tents pitched, and it was arranged by the officers in charge that we should join in with the Fourth Contingent, who were under canvas, but, not liking to disturb them, we slept out that night. It blew the same night a living gale, and by the next morning a good proportion of the tents of the Fourth Contingent were blown down. The rain slackened off again during the day, and we managed to pitch the tents. The next night it blew again, and half the tents were blown down a second time. The water ran down off the hill through the tents, which

were on a slope, and the weather was quite as cold as we found it at Invercargill or Port Chalmers-in fact, we felt the cold more at Worcester than at either of the places mentioned, Invercargill or Port Chalmers. The tents were blown down, except a number which we lowered, and we were simply wet through the whole of that day ; our blankets and everything we had were wet. We had no chance or means of making fires, as we had little or no wood, and we could not get any- thing warm to drink during that day, and we had to be content with water, bread, and meat. Of course, there was a canteen, but you could buy only beer, and when one is wet through one does not care for cold beer. Once again during our stay at Worcester it blew just the same as before, and the tents were again blown down. The wind blew heavily for twenty-four hours, and during most of the time we were wet through. Orders were given that the men were not to go down the town, but a good many of them broke orders and went there ; but even there you could get nothing hot, nor whiskey or anything of the kind, and we had a great job to get a meal at all. The men slept in the wet. They simply had to do it. A majority of the men of the Fifth slept on the ground, and if they did not actually sleep in the water it was running through the tents, which were so many pools of water, as they were, as before

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down the slope and through the tents. "The trouble as to health commenced at Worcester, and I believe what I have stated was the cause of most of that trouble - that and the conditions on board ship. We had very rough weather between the Cape and Albany. I think most of the men had their colds while on board the boat on the way out. I do not think any of the men took cold or any harm at Invercar- gill or Port Chalmers ; between Albany and Port Chalmers we had fairly good weather. Most of the colds developed between the Cape and Albany. I should say that at least 70 per cent. of the men were in the doctor's hands while on board the boat. I know of no addi- tional cases at Port Chalmers. Sergeant Bell was, I think, the first to get ill between Albany and Port Chalmers, and he contracted pneu- monia. He is now all right. I saw him the other day, and I asked him if going south had done him any harm ; and he replied that he did not think so, he was worse while on board than Between Albany and after he had got ashore. Port Chalmers the illness was least, but be- tween the other two ports the weather was bad. The weather was better, and the ship scarcely rolled, between Albany and Port Chalmers. " I do not think there were any protests from the men against going to Port Chalmers ; there was a sort of petition at Port Chalmers ; it was not the cold the men were afraid of, but they wanted to get home quickly. A number of men from other ports did not want to go to Inver- cargill, but to land at once and get home; this also applied to the Christchurch men, who wanted to do the same. "When I read Mr. Allen's charges in the paper I felt as if I would like to be there ; it was a ridiculous thing to say. After they had gone to Invercargill, I think every one of the men were glad they had gone there, they were treated so well by the Southland people ; they were billeted out and suffered no incon- venience, and had good places to stay at, and I am quite certain every man who went to Inver- cargill was glad afterwards that he had done so. I never heard anything to the contrary. All those who went to Invercargill were passed by the doctor, and any one who did not wish to go could stay behind. "I forgot to mention that when we left Wor- cester the time was about one in the morning, and there was a very cold and keen wind blow- ing, and we had to ride in open cars or trucks all the way down to Capetown. There was very little room also - scarcely enough standing room. The distance was something over a hundred miles, and I think we arrived about nine the next morning. Up to the time of our arrival at Worcester all were in fairly good health. I am quite satisfied most of the pneumonia originated in Worcester. As far as I know, none originated after we had left. " We have been well treated all through, and at Invercargill very well treated indeed. As to the men who have died, I know the circum- stances : two died on the steamer; one at his home (Moffatt) ; one had an abscess on the liver ! to the Bluff ; but he was more concerned at Mr. Seddon thing to do with them. McKechnie died at Dunedin of typhoid, so there was only one case which might be put down to cold. I have accounted for

five out of the six deaths, and the cold could certainly have had nothing to do with them either at Port Chalmers or Invercargill. Of course, those men who were not fit to go to the Bluff remained on board the 'Tagus.' "I understood when we got to Albany that we had been instructed to proceed to the Bluff. That was the first instruction after arrival at Albany. In fact, after we left Capetown we thought we should arrive first at the Bluff. We knew there was a difference of opinion between somebody as to whether the destination should be Port Chalmers or Bluff. We understood that, but still we were under the impression it would be the Bluff, and we could not understand why the captain went round Stewart Island instead of through the Strait. It was reported on board that we should land some hours before we actually did so. The captain took the route for Port Chalmers, and did not go through the Strait. He went south of the island-right round it. That was the first we knew practically of the matter. " We landed at Albany on a Saturday afternoon, and did not leave there till the Tuesday night following. We could not understand why we had been kept from Saturday till Tuesday. "I never heard a man complain, or say that he was running any risks. After coming back from Invercargill every man I spoke to was glad that he had gone. The weather during the whole of the time we were down South was beautiful." " HENRY WALTER BLAKE. " 15th October, 1901." Mr. J. ALLEN said he had nothing to say against the Premier's last statements. He was quite prepared to admit that a great deal of sickness did occur at Worcester, and also on the voyage from the Cape to Albany. But that was all the more reason, he submitted, that when the cablegram came from the doctor, through the commanding officer, more notice should have been taken of it, and the men ordered to return by a warmer route, and so have their health conserved. But the Minister did not accept the advice, and made no attempt to get the boat to return by a warmer route. There was not a single case of pneumonia on the ship when she left the Cape. Mr. SEDDON .- I said "the sickness commenced between Albany and the Cape." Mr. J. ALLEN .- The Premier said the pneumonia occurred at Worcester. Mr. SEDDON .- I said "through the hardships experienced at Worcester." Mr. J. ALLEN said the pneumonia developed owing to the cold weather, and in one case, at any rate, it began just after the boat left Albany, and the trooper died before the ship reached Port Chalmers. The right honourable gentleman and some of the writers of these letters said that no sickness occurred owing to the trip

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to the cablegram which came from the doctor, and he said it was a very serious responsibility for the Defence Minister not to accept the doctor's advice, and, not having accepted that advice, the Defence Minister must take the responsibility. He had mentioned some cases of deaths that had occurred after the trip to the Bluff. Now, for the sickness occurring after the journey to the Bluff: There was one case that occurred at the Bluff itself-the man fainted at the Bluff, and was taken next day to the Dunedin Hospital suffering from pneumonia, and was there sick for a long time, although he was glad to say that he had recovered now. Another was brought back from the Bluff, and sent straight into the Dunedin Hospital with pneumonia; another was sent into the hospital at Christchurch immediately on his arrival there with pneumonia; another developed pneumonia on his arrival home in the North Island ; another also developed pneumonia, he thought, but would not be sure, on his arrival home in the North Island ; and another developed pneumonia in Auckland on his arrival there. All these troopers had been to the Bluff. He had some letters from troopers, and he would read one or two of them. One wrote thanking him very much for the stand he had taken in this matter, and said,- "In respect to taking the troopers to Invercargill, my son was one of them. He has since been in the Auckland Hospital suffering from pneumonia. He is now convalescent, but will not be able to work for some time to come ; and should he take another cold it is more than likely he will go into consumption-and this through the men being sent to a very cold place after leaving a very warm one." Another wrote,- " Some of the men not in ship's hospital applied for sick certificates ; could not get them -a few did. Many of them were run down, though not exactly ill, and

consequently went South against their will ; many were unfit, but the order was given, and they must go. Feeling was very strong amongst the men and officers. Some slept on mattresses, others had to go into the hold on straw. Arrived at the Bluff break of day-bitterly cold and hard frost. Landed, and were talked at for an hour; dismissed, and subsequently entrained to Invercargill. Dined there in Drill Hall ; presented with medals on Show Ground. Streets very slushy and wet." An Hon. MEMBER .- Give the name. Mr. J. ALLEN said he would not give the names because he did not wish the men to suffer through giving him this information. Mr. HALL - JONES. - Are they genuine letters ? Mr. ALLEN said, Yes, he would guarantee they were genuine letters. Mr. SEDDON .- Did not Lieutenant Ferguson tell you that it did not affect him, at all events ? Mr. J. ALLEN said, No. Would the Premier like to hear Lieutenant Ferguson's statement ? Mr. J. ALLEN said, Well, he would give it. This was Lieutenant Ferguson's statement :- "No one got special leave or certificate from the doctor to say he was fit to go to the Bluff. No option was given the men-those not in hospital had to go. There was nearly a mutiny on the ship about going. They were transhipped ; some men had to lie on straw; could not say if straw was dry or wet. They felt the cold very much in Dunedin. At the Bluff they landed, fell in, and were marched to some hall, and stood outside for about an hour whilst speeches were made from the balcony ; it was very wet underfoot, and snow was on the ground. After this they were taken to Invercargill - same underfoot, but over the ankles. Ferguson went to the station and fainted. Was billeted in Invercargill for the night. Some had very good billets-some never found their billets. Went by train next day to Dunedin. Lieutenant Ferguson and another went into hospital at once in Dunedin with pneumonia. Another who went to Invercargill, had to be carried to Christchurch Hospital on arrival there." Mr. SEDDON said that statement was not borne out by what Lieutenant Ferguson had said were his replies to queries put to him by Mr. Allen. Lieutenant Ferguson's father was a friend of Mr. Buchanan, and that was how the member for Bruce had got to interview him. The honourable member asked Lieutenant Ferguson to lunch on two occasions, but he declined, stating that he had another engagement. The statement read out by the honourable member was evidently jotted down from memory, and the honourable member had got confused, and had put down to Lieutenant Ferguson things he had never said. Lieutenant Ferguson, as a matter of fact, stated that he himself had suffered from the Worcester hardships or experience, and broke down at Dunedin. So much for that. This was the information the Commandant had had from Lieut .- Colonel Davies on 2nd July :- "Total all ranks New Zealand Contingents six ninety-six. Other New Zealanders, nine. Leave to-day ; expect arrive Dunedin tenth." That was the information on the arrival of the "Tagus " at Albany, and, subsequently, on the same date, the Commandant received the cable to which the honourable member had referred. Communication had since been received through the Agent-General showing that the ship-owners refused to allow the vessel to go to the Bluff, as they knew nothing of the coast. There was never a question raised as to her going to Auckland. It had never been suggested directly or indirectly, and he challenged proof to the contrary. When he received a telegram from Dr. De Lautour stating that the pneumonia was due to overcrowding, he demanded an inquiry. These were his instructions :- "I wish you to furnish me with a full report in respect to the illness of returned troopers by 'Tagus.' The unusual number of cases of illness and deaths that have occurred stated

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overcrowding may have had something to do with matter. It is necessary that I should have detailed reports. You are authorised to What has call in further medical assistance. occurred, in my opinion, points to one of two things, either the men should not have been put on board the steamer at the Cape, or else there are unfavourable conditions in construction with the ship. " R. J. SEDDON." Then he sent the following :- " Colonel Penton, Clinton. " Lieut .- Colonel Brigade Surgeon De Lautour having stated in his telegram that the 'Tagus ' had been overcrowded, and this had bearing on illness of the men, any inquiry to be made should be heard while ' Tagus' is at Port Chalmers and where the Brigade Surgeon is

located. I asked Surgeon to give me report; and it will then be for Captain of 'Tagus' to combat the allegations or otherwise. Not only that, but a number of men who have been on board will be leaving the ship, and you would only have the North Island men to give evidence at Wellington. Where we have had, as in this case, so many deaths and so much illness, it points to one of two things, either men should not have been put on ship at Cape, or else something wrong on board her, and advisable get at facts case, and that as soon as possible. "R. J. SK.DDON." Then, there was a complete backing-down, and he was informed there was nothing wrong. If there had been any blame attached to him (Mr. Seddon), would it not have come out at the inquiry which he ordered, and which ought to have taken place. He also pointed out that exactly the same kind of weather prevailed at Wellington as prevailed at the Bluff for a whole fortnight at that time; and between Cook Strait and the Bluff there was a difference of only 8 degrees in latitude, but the weather at the time was the same. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) said it did not concern him what action the shipowners might have taken in respect to the port at which the vessel should arrive in New Zealand. And, as to the question of the route, all he knew was that there was a warmer route than the one taken, and on the recommendation of the doctor, through the Commanding Officer, that should have been taken. Did the Premier submit the cablegram with respect to the route to any medical man in Wellington, and get his opinion about it? If the Premier did not do so, then the honourable gentleman must take the responsibility. It was as to what occurred between Albany and the Bluff that the main charge was. If the men had come by a warmer route they would have landed in better health. The fact that they came by the cold route kept them in a weak state of health. In Dunedin to-day there are a great number of the men still on the sick-list Mr. SEDDON .- Only two, so I was informed by the Medical Officer's report on Saturday last. Mr. J. ALLEN said it was apparent that when the Premier received the cablegram he Mr. Seddon able gentleman had only thought for a moment he must have seen the seriousness of the representation as to the route, and he must have taken cognizance of it Mr. SEDDON .- When the men arrived at Worcester they were in splendid health. The officer commanding-Colonel Davies-reported from Capetown, on the 14th June, that the men were all well. It was at Worcester that the seeds of the trouble were laid, and between the Cape and Albany that the sickness occurred, and the trouble was caused at Worcester and on the train to Capetown. It was evident that some one had misled the honourable member for Bruce in the first instance. The honourable member had said that he ought to have submitted the cablegram to the Commandant from Colonel Davies to a medical man in Wellington. He might mention that the cablegram was communicated to him by telephone, and he replied that it was then too late to alter the port of arrival in the colony. If the Commandant had thought the matter serious he would have made representations to that effect. The following is a list of the cases of illness on board the "Tagus," reported after the arrival at Port Chalmers : "For your information, I forward names of sick troopers per s.s. 'Tagus' : 1232, Corporal Bell, Wellington, malaria, severe ; 2537, Sergeant W. F. Bell, Marton, pneumonia, severe ; 2365, Private F. W. Forbes, pneumonia, very severe ; 2394, Private J. Nicholas, Auckland, pneumonia, severe ; 2601, Private E. A. Harley, Christchurch, rheumatism, improving; 2630, Saddler W. Murphy, Cheviot, malaria, convalescent; 2533, Sergeant A. W. Webster, Hokitika, malaria, taken ill this day ; 3641, Private N. T. Martin, Dunedin, ill. should go home to friends ; 1108, Sergt .- Major L. Murphy, Invercargill, malaria, taken ill this day ; 1109, Robert McAulay, Portobello, pneumonia, convalescent, discharged home; Mc- Kechnie, Napier, enteric, dangerous (this man was sleeping or semi-comatose, could not get his number) ; 1121, Private H. Campbell, Invercargill, pneumonia, convalescent ; 1015, Private J. P. Heenan, Dunedin, abscess of liver after enteric, very dangerous ; 1359, Lance-Corporal D. Trengrove, Pahiatua, colic, convalescent ; 2613, Private F. Knox, Ashburton, malaria, convalescent ; 2380, Private A. E. Nicholson, Auckland, malaria, convalescent ; 1326, Private R. Rylie, Wellington, pneumonia, convalescent ; 1137, Private J. D. Maloney, Dunedin, convalescent : 1680, Private J. S. Robertson, Kelso, dislocation of shoulder : 2241,

Saddler G. Fernandos, Wellington, jaundice, convalescent ; 2724, Private E. W. S. Peck, Taranaki, pneumonia, convalescent ; 1512, Private J. W. Groves, Wairarapa, bronchitis, convalescent ; 2441, Farrier W. E. Brown, Nelson, pneumonia, convalescent ; 1453, Private H. B. Patton, Auckland, pneumonia, convalescent ; 2687, Private A. W. Johnson, Taranaki, malaria, convalescent ; 1091, Trumpeter W. Cheeseman, Wellington, malaria, taken ill this day ; 1402, Sergeant J. L. Long, <page:461>

Corporal E. Massey, Oamaru, bronchitis and sore throat, convalescent. In addition to above there are several invalids who require watching. Surgeon-Captain Watt remaining in charge of invalids. " HARRY A. DE LAUTOUR, Brigade Surgeon. " Lieut. - Colonel P.M.O., Otago." Members would note the small number of cases of pneumonia. But it should be remembered that the pneumonia commenced on the ship between the Cape and Albany, and the record of the cases of it in the hospital proved that it did not commence between Albany and Port Chalmers. When he received a telegram from Dr. De Lautour to the effect that the overcrowding in the hospital was responsible for the pneumonia, he ordered an inquiry into the matter, and he would like to know what else he could have done? The member for Bruce, however, had made certain charges, and now endeavoured to support them by the class of evidence he had brought forward. He mentioned the case of a man who had died in Auckland. Now, the fact was that that man fell from his horse and died from the injuries he had received, and in that connection he had a letter from Mr. Spragg to show that when the man was in Wellington he was in perfect health. The honourable member had also quoted from newspapers, but he would give no names. Well, he (Mr. Seddon) would read a letter from one of the men who had gone to Sydney. This lad had written to him as follows :- " I see by the New Zealand papers that yourself and Government are blamed in reference to the landing of troops, &c., by the transport 'Tagus,' thereby causing death and sickness which would not have occurred if troops had landed at a warmer port. Now, I was on board the 'Tagus' coming back with the Fifth Contingent, and I can inform you that it made no difference going to the Bluff to land, and the men did not suffer by it, but suffered the extremes before reaching New Zealand. We had to submit to the extremes at Worcester, our mobilising camp for all time-expired men belonging to New Zealand Contingents ; and also coming across from the Cape we had the extreme cold. I am sorry I am not in Wellington, or I would make it a point to give you full particulars and full details of this affair, and prove clearly to all concerned that you are not to blame. I am again returning to the front for active service, but will leave here on the 11th of October by the Aberdeen Line, and will be pleased to give you full particulars. What I refer to is the men sleeping out in the snow at Worcester for several nights after leaving the field, and going under canvas for about three weeks. This is what I call extreme. - I remain, &c., " HENRY NESBITT." Mr. J. ALLEN said he recognised the troopers had had a bad time at Worcester, Mr. SEDDON said the honourable gentleman did not know that the first time he made the charges ; he had found it out since. 'Tagus,' and he was my guest during his stay no difference to his case, because what he wished to say was that, notwithstanding the bad time the men had at Worcester, this trooper said the men were all well when the ship left the Cape. But, as a matter of fact, there were about twenty cases in the hospital when the ship left the Cape, so that the writer of the letter was wrong in his statement. However that might be, it was clear that the men had recovered to a large extent when the ship left the Cape, and, that being so, how could the Premier say that Worcester was the cause of the trouble ? Mr. SEDDON said that the seeds of the trouble were sown at Worcester. Mr. J. ALLEN did not believe that was the case. The fact was that the seeds of the trouble were sown at Beira and other places the men had visited. The Premier was now blaming the overcrowding of the ship for the trouble, but members had not heard what was the nature of the report about overcrowding. From inquiries he had made he found the ship was a splendid one, and that the hospital accommodation was ample; but as soon as the ship came near New Zealand the men went

down five and six a day, and to some extent the hospital may then have been overcrowded, but that fact had nothing to do with the sickness. There was plenty of room to set aside for hospital accommodation if it had been required. Had the medical officer of the "Tagus " reported that there was overcrowding ? Mr. SEDDON said that Dr. De Lautour had reported that the overcrowding was responsible for the pneumonia. Mr. J. ALLEN said that Dr. De Lautour was not the medical officer of the ship. Then, as to the difference of Port Chalmers and the Bluff, he wished to say that Port Chalmers was nearly as bad as the Bluff ; they were both bad places to bring the ship to. The ship ought to have come by a warmer route altogether. Sir J. G. WARD said that in his opening speech the honourable member for Bruce dealt with the question as between the Bluff and Port Chalmers. Mr. J. ALLEN said, No ; he never suggested that the "Tagus " ought to have been brought to Port Chalmers. He always held that the ship should have been sent to Auckland or Wellington. The Premier had fought for the Bluff all the way through, and it was against his wish the ship went to Port Chalmers, and therefore he had no right to take credit for the boat going to Port Chalmers. Mr. SEDDON said this was the letter he had referred to in respect to the illness and death of Trooper Wilkins, with which his name had been connected. It was as follows :- "DEAR SIR,-As there appears to be a mis- apprehension regarding the cause of the death of Trooper Wilkins, Fourth New Zealand Rough- riders, I take the liberty of informing you of " I met Trooper Wilkins on the arrival of the

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in good health and excellent spirits, and expressed himself as much pleased with his visit to Southland and the reception there. More than once he said he was strongly inclined to return to Africa. " After his arrival in Auckland he became engaged to be married, and, though he wrote to me once, and I heard of him several times from others, there was no suggestion that he was in any respect ailing until about a week before his death; when brain trouble set in, which I was then informed was exceedingly dangerous and likely to prove fatal, as unhappily it did. These are facts, and I think it but right that you should know them .- I have, &c., "S. SPRAGG. " To the Right Hon. R. J. Seddon." That was one of the troopers whose death had been laid at his door. Now, here was a cable that His Excellency the Governor received :- "The Governor has received the following telegram from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, dated 8th inst. : 'Referring to your telegrams of 3rd and 4th July, the Admiralty regrets that, after full consideration, they must adhere to previous decision, of which, as I understand, earliest possible intimation was sent to you. Size and character of ' Tagus' as single-screw vessel, and fact that officers are not acquainted with coast and harbour, render it unjustifiable, in opinion of their Lordships, to send her to Bluff.' Not a single word was said about the health of those on board. It was a question between the two parties as to the destination of the steamer-whether Bluff or Port Chalmers- and the owners had their own way, and the "Tagus " went to Port Chalmers, and it was far-fetched now to bring into the question the health of the troopers. They had Lieut .- Colonel Davies's cable that the "Tagus" was leaving Albany on the 1st, and she was kept there until the 4th. Meanwhile these negotiations were proceeding, and the whole trouble was as to whether the "Tagus " should go to the Bluff or Port Chalmers. The question of a more northern port when at Albany never entered the mind of any one on board ; and, in fact, before the men left the front, Lord Kitchener had decided that the boat should go to the Bluff. Then the question was asked, Why the inquiry he had ordered had not gone on? In addition to the telegram he had previously read, he sent this one :- "I cannot understand what objection there can be to an inquiry. Lieut .- Colonel Surgeon De Lautour, in his telegram a day or two ago, said that pneumonia had been caused through overcrowding, and this overcrowding had proved inimical to the health of the troopers. In his telegram this afternoon he repeats that overcrowding, which had led to pneumonia, although he qualified this by saying " unavoidable." The point to be settled is whether it was unavoidable. The fact remains that he reports eleven men sick in bed and thirty-two others reported ill, and, such being Mr. Seddon So far I have had

only to my instructions. your opinion and that of Colonel Davies, but from the men, who are most interested, I have had no representations, and an opportunity should be given them of saying whether or not what has been done is what should have been carried out." Then, he received a communication from Colonel Penton to say that Dr. De Lautour had qualified his statement, and that there had been a misapprehension as to the meaning of the telegram in which he said that the pneumonia was due to overcrowding. He (Mr. Seddon) made a mistake then in not insisting on going on with the inquiry ; but when Lieut .- Colonel Davies and Colonel Penton advised against it, and Dr. De Lautour practically qualified what he had reported, he let the matter go, and he was very sorry for it. Then, he would have had the whole evidence in regard to what happened to the officers and men at Worcester ; and why the Transport Officer reported " all well " on leaving the Cape, while a short time after and between the Cape and Albany there were fifty men daily in the hospital, he could not understand. He did his best, under all the circumstances, and he undertook to say that 95 per cent. of the men would state that going from Albany to Port Chalmers had nothing whatever to do with their troubles at all, and that the Premier had nothing whatever to do with their troubles, but that their troubles arose through going down from a warm interior to Worcester, and lying in the snow and wet for three or four days, followed by a trip in an open truck for over one hundred miles. In proof of this members could take the test of the cases of sickness between the Cape and Albany, and compare it with the cases between Albany and the Bluff, because the sickness diminished between Albany and Port Chalmers. He demanded yesterday a copy of the ship's report from the time she left the Cape to Port Chalmers, but could not get it, because no copy had been kept here. He was very sorry for this, because it would have proved what he had said-that between Albany and Port Chalmers the health of the men improved. He might state that this was the last telegram he had received from Dr. De Lautour :- "1015, Heenan, and 1402, Sergeant J. L. Long, still serious. All other cases in hospitals practically convalescent." He was glad to say there were only two cases remaining. Sir J. G. WARD (Colonial Secretary) said, In regard to the case of Trooper Nelson, who died subsequent to his arrival in the colony, this trooper died in his own home at the Bluff. Mr. J. ALLEN .- You are wrong. Sir J. G. WARD said that the trooper first went to his own home at the Bluff, and afterwards died at Dunedin. But what was the history of the case of Trooper Nelson ? This was the report in connection with his death :- "Trooper Peter Nelson, a member of the Fifth Contingent who returned by the 'Tagus,' died in the Dunedin Hospital at midnight on

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Bluff. Nelson had a very hard experience in the Transvaal. He was seized with malaria at Beira, pleurisy at Buluwayo, and fever at Johannesburg, and thereafter was sent home as an invalid. He has been ailing since his return to the colony. He came up to Dunedin to see about getting to a warmer part of the country, when he was seized with illness and had to go into the hospital. He held on to life for some time, and then collapsed suddenly." And the trooper did not die until the 1st October, or nearly two months after the ship left Albany. In the case of Trooper Moffat, who died at his own home at Invercargill : he had known the Moffat family ever since boyhood, and the whole family had been born at Invercargill. Moffat died at his own home owing to a development of his old trouble in South Africa. Now, one of the strong points urged by the honourable member as a reason why the vessel should not have gone to the Bluff was the difference in the climatic conditions as between Port Chalmers and the Bluff. Here was the official record of the weather on the 10th of July at those two places :-- " Bluff. - West, fresh breeze ; barometer, 29.86 : thermometer, 43; blue sky ; passing clouds. " Port Chalmers .- S.W. fresh breeze ; barometer. 29.80 ; thermometer, 44; blue sky. " 10th July." He also quoted the rainfall returns for the past six years for Dunedin and the Bluff, which showed that for four years out of the six the rainfall had been greater at Dunedin than at the Bluff. He would state also for the information of the honourable member that medical men in Dunedin were in the habit of sending consumptive patients to Stewart Island,

twenty miles further than the Bluff, and it was considered the climate further south was more suited for the treatment of such complaints. The orders from the Transport Officers and from Lord Kitchener before the vessel reached Albany were that the vessel should go to the Bluff, and he would read the following letter sent by the owners of the vessel to the Admiralty after the vessel's arrival at Albany, on the 1st July :- " I am desired to state that ' Tagus' having been ordered to Bluff, the Commander has cabled to the company that such is the case, and that it is a dangerous port for a large single-screw steamer. Under these circumstances I am directed to request that the order may be cancelled, as this company decline the risk." That showed that the directions were that the steamer should go on to the Bluff. The statement contained in the letter was absolutely contrary to fact, as the steamer could have gone into the Bluff with perfect safety. Steamers with larger drawing capacity than the transport regularly went into that port. The misstatements made only served to show how insufficient knowledge led people into seriously misrepresenting the working capacity of a port. The steamer could never have been ordered to Wellington by the New Zealand Government, and it would be much better for the honourable member if, knowing that he had been misinformed, he should get up and admit it. Even if these southern men had come to Wellington they would all have had to go back to the Bluff, or wherever their homes might be. Mr. MILLS (Commissioner of Customs) said, When he went down South to meet these returning troopers he asked the officer in charge if there was any feeling amongst the men against going to the Bluff ; and the reply was that a few of them who had homes in Dunedin and Christchurch would prefer not to go to the Bluff, but that was all. Those who did not feel sufficiently strong were not asked to go on to the Bluff. At Invercargill the troopers were unanimous in expressing their pleasure at visiting the Bluff. As to the question of the weather, when returning by train from Invercargill to Dunedin, he was informed by some of the oldest residents along the line that the cold snap that set in at that time was almost unprecedented. They had not experienced such bitter weather for the last twenty-five years. If the steamer had come to Wellington it would have made no difference, so far as the men were concerned, and a great number of them had to go down South, where they lived. This was the telegram sent by the Premier to Brigade Surgeon De Lautour on the 11th :- " Have forwarded your telegram re sickness troopers on 'Tagus' to Commandant and Colonel Davies, and to Captain . Surgeon Thomas. I do not approve the suggestion re Quarantine Island. It is bleakly situated, not equipped, and the convalescent patients in the majority of the cases would prefer to get to the districts from which they came, and in respect to those from the North Island the climate and surroundings would be favourable to recovery. In the case of the patients confined to bed, those belonging to Otago should go to the Dunedin Hospital, and if there are more than there are beds for in the public hospital the balance should be sent to a private hospital. If there is danger to any patients proceeding to Lyttelton and Wellington. in such case such patients should be removed to hospitals. In this communication I have simply expressed my opinions, and do not instruct, and leave to you and the Surgeon-Captains to do what you think best in the interest of the sufferers. You may, however, take an instruction that no expense is to be spared in doing everything possible and practicable to restore to our returned sons that greatest of God's blessings- good health." With regard to the statement of the member for Bruce, that the Premier had ordered that all the men should go to the Bluff, he would read the following telegram, dated 11th July, from the Premier to Colonel Davies :- "I have asked Commandant to see doctor with contingents, and have told him that any members of troops likely to be detrimentally affected by cold, or who are not sufficiently

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in Dunedin." The Premier also telegraphed to Colonel Penton on the 11th July :- " See doctor with contingents. Any members of contingents likely to be detrimentally affected by cold, or who are not sufficiently strong to go to Bluff, may be allowed to land in Dunedin." Mr. McNAB (Mataura) said he wished to give an emphatic denial to the statement of the honourable member for Bruce that the visit to

the Bluff was responsible for the troopers' deaths. From a return laid on the table of the House, it appeared that from the 17th January down to the time the contingent sailed from South Africa-five months-thirteen men died from enteric, dysentery, and pneumonia. During the four months succeeding the date they left South Africa there were ten deaths. From that it could be seen that the rate of mortality was as high before leaving South Africa as afterwards. The following was the list of deaths from disease after leaving South Africa : - No. Name. Date. Place. Cause. S.s. " Ta- June 26 Ky 1 gus " Fr. . July 4 Meningitis 2 \ Albany S.s. "Ta- July 10 Embolism Ke ... 3 .. gus " S.s. " Ta- July 12 Pneumonia Fo. .. 4 gus ' Inflammation Geraldine July 20 McKa. 5 Dunedin July 23 Enteric McKe. 6 Hospital July 28 M. .. Invercar- Pneumonia .. 7 gill Dunedin Abscess of liver Aug. 8 H. 8 .. Hospital W. Cerebral menin- Auckland Sept. 15 9 gitis Acute meningitis! Dunedin \ Oct. N. 10 .. Hospital\ Only four of the men on that list were ever at the Bluff. One of the men returned to his own home, and was then in perfect health. He was referring to Trooper M. His parents ridiculed the idea that his death was caused by his going to the Bluff. As to the second case, that trooper had suffered from pleurisy, malaria, and fever in South Africa, and he returned to the colony broken down in health. In spite of that he went from Port Chalmers to the Bluff, and lived there nearly two months and a half. His death was caused by acute meningitis, due to privations in South Africa. In regard to the Auckland case, that trooper met with an acci- dent in South Africa, and when he returned to Auckland he was not suffering from the effects of the trip from Port Chalmers to the Bluff. He did not know anything about the fourth case- that of the trooper who died at Geraldine. He (Mr. McNab) visited the "Tagus " at the Bluff, and was informed by the officers that there had Mr. Mills Bluff death nor the Invercargill death nor the Auckland death could have been averted if the vessel had been sent to Auckland. The men would, immediately they landed, have been sent to their own homes, and the circumstances which produced the unfortunate fatalities would have been there to operate all the same. Sir J. G. WARD (Colonial Secretary) said that, when previously interrupted by the time- bell, he was about to say that the Chief Health Officer informed him a few days ago that a number of troopers in the North were suffering from enteric-about twenty, he thought. No honourable member would say that that had any bearing on the "Tagus." It was a fact that showed that the germs of the disease were in the men before they returned to the colony, and that in some cases they reappeared and carried off the sufferers. Cables from South Africa re- vealed the fact that disease was very rampant there, and it was the natural inference that many of the men who had returned to New Zealand, as was the case with many of the men who had returned to Australia, were sub- sequently attacked with the illness. How could it possibly be held that the sending of the steamer to one of the southern ports had caused the illness among the men ? When the bulk of the people viewed the matter impartially they would not for a moment, upon the evidence be- fore the House, level the charge against the Premier that was made against him in the first instance by the member for Bruce. He believed that the colony as a whole would ac- quit the Premier of any such charge. Mr. McNAB (Mataura) wished to refer to one point mentioned by the member for Bruce. From information he had in his possession he found that there were from 90 to 110 men who were left on the "Tagus" at Port Chalmers, on account of having been left on the steamer in the hospital, and for other purposes not con- nected with either illness or being unfit to go to the Bluff. Mr. MILLS (Commissioner of Trade and 1 Customs) produced the certificate of death of Trooper George Wilkins in the Auckland Hospital. The cause of death was stated as spinal meningitis; and that was two months after the man had returned to the colony. He considered that the member for Bruce should withdraw the charge he had made against the Premier, there being not the slightest founda- tion for it. Captain RUSSELL (Hawke's Bay) said the impression which had been conveyed to his mind was that there was no reason why the "Tagus " should have been sent to either Invercargill or Port Chalmers, unless to make a political demonstration. He ventured to assert that if there had not been powerful members repre- senting that part of New Zealand the troops would never have been sent to the most southern portion of

the colony. He thought there had been gross and culpable negligence, although he admitted the right honourable gentleman, nor any man, had recognised how serious the effects of sending these troops to

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the South would prove. Any reasonable Minister should have deduced, from the fact that sickness developed on the ship as soon as she left the Cape and got into the colder latitude, that the men should not be sent to a cold climate. Any reasonable person must have known at once that the fact of transshipping these men from the "Tagus" into a small vessel and sending them down to the Bluff was liable to aggravate their condition of ill-health. He had been told that while these unfortunate men were being harangued at the Bluff a piercing wind was blowing, in addition to the snow and slush lying about, in which they had to stand. That was sufficient in itself to induce illness. It seemed perfectly clear to him that had these men been taken as much care of as we should take care of members of our own family returning under similar circumstances, they would not have been paraded as a peep-show in a southern portion of the colony, nor would the mortality have been so great. He thought, had the Government profited by the lesson of the voyage between the Cape and Albany, they would immediately have taken steps, in the four days between the arrival and departure of the "Tagus" from Albany, to cause the port of arrival to be changed from the South to the North ; or, supposing they could not do that, it would have been perfectly possible, on arrival at Port Chalmers, to divert her to some northern port. He moved the reduction of the vote by £1, to enable the member for Bruce to have an opportunity of replying to two Ministers and the member for Mataura. Mr. SEDDON (Minister of Defence) said there was the proof positive of the Transport Officer, and of the men themselves, that all were in good health when they left the front. How could he know that there was malaria lying dormant in their systems, and that through the hardship at Worcester illness would be developed ? His information from the commanding officer was that the men were first-rate. The question of the health of the contingent never cropped up in the decision as to the port of arrival ; and the decision arrived at was that an opportunity should be given to the people of Southland to give a hearty welcome to their sons and returned troopers. He said it had been done from a much superior and finer feeling than political capital : it was done to give encouragement to the people of Southland, and to recognise and appreciate their efforts in sending men to South Africa, and to give the great majority of the officers and men of the Fourth and Fifth Contingents an opportunity of being, with their comrades, welcomed home by the good people of the South. The Transport Officer, in ignorance of the arrangement made by Lord Kitchener, altered the destination of the "Tagus," not because of the health of the contingents, but because it would be more convenient for the ship; and, when acquainted with the arrangements made for the reception at Southland, the Transport Department sent their orders to Albany. He the information of the Secretary of State for naturally thought the telegram containing the

VOL. CXIX .- 29. recommendation of the doctor was sent simply for the purpose of backing up the wishes of the captain in respect to the route. And he said now it was so. The honourable member for Hawke's Bay had charged the Government with negligence. He (Mr Seddon) had proved that the greatest care was exercised. Immediately he received intimation on the arrival of the "Tagus" at Port Chalmers that there was something wrong he took steps to see that the men were properly attended to. Mr. J. ALLEN had before him the particulars in regard to Nelson's case :- "Nelson got malaria and had a bad attack of pleurisy as well on the campaign. His home was at the Bluff, where he went on arrival of the 'Tagus'; but, finding his health did not improve there, he started to go north, and stopped here (Dunedin), having suffered for some days with headache and slight effects of his former pleurisy. The P.M.O. found him ill at a hotel and put him in a private hospital, where he gradually developed his disease and died therefrom."

The following were the particulars of Wilkins's case :- "Wilkins was injured by a fall from his horse, went to Invercargill; came home to Auckland, and was there about a week when he took a violent attack of influenza. He was attended at his father's home, and the doctor, seeing his case was a very bad one,

removed him to the hospital. When he arrived in the hospital he was unconscious, and passed away without regaining consciousness." He had taken the trouble to get those particulars from Auckland. As it had been stated that the "Tagus" was detained at Albany because of the cablegrams about the alteration of the port of call which had been referred to, he would read the official report of the captain of the ship :- "Arrived at Albany 29th June, and while there enjoyed beautiful weather. Unfortunately for us a good many vessels had called there for coal, so we could not complete our stock nor get all that was needed till the 2nd July (Tuesday). We left Albany on the 2nd (Tuesday), in the evening, and had fine weather until the 8th, when we began to get sleet and hail squalls, with a strong S.W. wind, the ship rolling about a good deal." He would remind the Minister for Railways that the vessel was first ordered to Wellington. Sir J. G. WARD (Minister for Railways) said that originally the Transport Officers had ordered the ship to Wellington without the knowledge of Lord Kitchener ; but before the ship reached Albany the Transport Officers ordered the "Tagus " to the Bluff. To show that the Transport Officers ordered the steamer to the Bluff, he would read the following paragraph from a letter dated the 1st July, from the Admiralty, London, to the Under-Secretary of State, for the Colonial Office :- "I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you, or the Colonies, that a telegram was received

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town on the 22nd ultimo, stating that to meet the request of the New Zealand Government he had ordered the transport 'Tagus,' with Australasians on board, to proceed to Bluff Harbour instead of to Wellington." Mr. A. L. D. FRASER (Napier) said the following were the particulars of the case of Trooper Wilkins as given in the Auckland Herald : Arrived in Dunedin on the 12th July, reached Auckland 19th July, and taken ill on 6th September. Died 15th September. He only took ill on the 6th September, two months after he arrived in Auckland. The death certificate was as follows : " Died 15th September, 1901. Cause of death, cerebro-spinal meningitis." This was the result of an accident in the field, when his horse was shot and rolled upon him. From the above evidence it was manifest that the statements of the honourable member for Bruce (Mr. Allen) that Wilkins' death was accelerated by the "Tagus " visiting Otago and the Bluff, and that he was taken ill a week after his arrival in Auckland, were contrary to fact. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) said that influenza accentuated the injury which caused the death of the trooper at Auckland, Trooper Wilkins. The Colonial Secretary had stated that the Home Transport Department had changed the destination of the "Tagus " from Wellington to the Bluff ; but who influenced the Transport Department to change the destination of the steamer ? Why, the Agent-General, acting on instructions from the Premier. The Transport Department did not do so of their own While he was on this subject he motion. wished to know what pay was granted to members of the contingents who had come back to the colony and got leave of absence before their final discharge. Mr. SEDDON said, in answer to the member for Palmerston, that the rate of wages paid to the men was, for the First, Second, Third, and Fourth, 4s. a day; but when the Fourth and Fifth Contingents were in South Africa they received 5s. per day. Amendment negatived, and vote, £30,000, agreed to. Miscellaneous services, £44,088. Mr. G. J. SMITH (Christchurch City) would like to know from the Minister how the vote, "Gymnasiums for Volunteers, £300," was to be expended, and for what particular companies. Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) would like some information in regard to the large vote of \$8,000 for Volunteer camps of instruction, of which £6,022 had been spent last year. He might say they had already passed, under the head of "Permanent Militia and Volunteers," a vote of £6,000 for Volunteer encampments, of which £6,012 had been spent last year. Did these sums refer to the same camps ? Mr. HOGG (Masterton) would like to ask in reference to the vote "Annual grant for rifle club prizes for shooting, £1,000," whether it had been definitely determined that the rifle meeting in February at Trentham should take : the £2,000 passed in the estimates of the Colony. Sir J. G. Ward in which five Australasian teams would compete for the McGregor Cup, would take place in New Zealand, and it was also probable that a team would be selected for Bisley. It was therefore

very important that a meeting should be held in February. He would like to know whether the department was going to take charge of the meeting and prepare the programme, or if it was proposed to allow the usual 66,000 rounds of ammunition and railway privileges, and intrust the arrangements to the Rifle Association. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) would like to know how the " Allowances to relatives of deceased members of New Zealand contingents, £500," was to be allocated. Mr. SEDDON said he intended to exercise discretion in the many claims that came before him, as he had already done. There had been cases where he considered the immediate necessities demanded some relief being granted, and he had granted the relief. This vote was to meet contingencies which might arise in regard to those who suffered loss owing to the death of troopers. Mr. MASSEY asked, Was it necessary for the relatives of deceased men to show that they had been largely or wholly dependent on the deceased before they got the allowance. Mr. SEDDON said, Yes, they must show necessity. In reply to the member for Christchurch City, he might say this was an open vote of £300, and the principle he should go on in the allocation would be to give assistance to those who had helped themselves in this respect. Mr. BUDDO (Kaiapoi) asked the Minister of Defence, what it was intended to do with the armourer sergeants who were coming out to the colony from England, and for whose passages it was proposed to vote £160? Could not colonial men be engaged to do the work ? Mr. SEDDON said the work was of a purely technical character, and, although the colonial men very easily assimilated knowledge on the subject, it was necessary to have an experienced official to train them. Mr. FIELD (Otaki) asked the Minister whether he was prepared to consider a recommendation that when the new Commandant of the Forces arrived in the colony there should be a revision of the rules governing the formation of rifle clubs. Mr. SEDDON did not agree that such a course was necessary. It was a matter in which he had to use his own common-sense, and it was his intention to popularise the rifle clubs, and to amend the present regulations bearing on the matter. Mr. MONK (Waitemata) wished the Minister to give some details of two items: "Expenses of contingents to Australia in connection with Commonwealth celebrations, \$5,000" -being much more than was expected by the country-and " Entertaining and reception of members of the Imperial contingents, \$1,000"- in the Defence vote, which was in addition to

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of Auckland contributed the whole of the expense of the visit to Auckland of the Imperial troops, with the exception of the beer ordered by the Premier, which was said to be an extra donation from the brewers. Mr. SEDDON said that the principal amounts in the vote of £5,000 were made up of the pay of the men, the steamer-fares, and the cost of the equipment of the men. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) wished to ask a question about the estates of deceased members of contingents. He received a letter the other day from the parent of a young fellow who had died in South Africa, and in that letter it was stated that the Trust Office had deducted a comparatively large sum for commission and other charges from the insurance-money paid on the life of the trooper. He understood that, in regard to all these estates, no charge was to be made for administration. Mr. SEDDON said that was the understanding, but the Public Trustee must do his duty. In any case in which a charge was made by the Public Trust Office, it would be well, he thought, for the House to pass a vote for the amount ; and in that way, while the Public Trustee was allowed to carry out his duty, the amount could be made good. It was simply a case of taking it out of one pocket and putting it into the other. In answer to the honourable member for Masterton, he wished to say that for some years the annual rifle gathering had been under private supervision, and it was the intention of the Government that in the future the gathering should be under the direct supervision of the Defence Department. Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) asked for some information about the item, " Volunteer camps of instruction, £8,000." Were these _ camps distinct from the camps for which £6,000 had already been voted ? Mr. SEDDON said the £6,000 was voted for the camps of instruction under the Commandant, and the other payment was for the ordinary camps of instruction under which each corps

went into the field. Mr. SYMES (Egmont) asked the Minister of Defence if it was true that, as Colonial Treasurer, he was helping the mounted Volunteers of the colony by imposing a duty on imported saddlery. Many of the saddlery equipments now used in the service had to be imported from Home, and, if a duty were to be imposed on imported saddlery, it was, to his mind, a very good way of bursting up the Volunteer system. It would mean that the Volunteers would be compelled to take an inferior article, such as that manufactured in the colony, at a very much higher price. Mr. SEDDON said it was intended to impose the duty after all present orders for saddlery had been completed. At the same time he admitted that there were certain parts of Volunteers' equipment that could not be made in the colony. However, on the other hand he could say that, although some wretched material had been received from one part of the colony, other saddlery had been obtained in Africa. Mr. E. G. ALLEN (Waikouaiti) 3.0. asked if the Minister would take steps to alter the regulations for rifle clubs, so as to do away with the necessity of persons serving three years in Volunteer corps before becoming a member of a rifle club. Mr. SEDDON said he would not do that, for to do so would mean that they would get people joining the rifle clubs and so evading all the drilling, whilst getting all the advantages of the Volunteer service. It would break down the Volunteer movement. That, of course, referred to towns and suburban boroughs. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) asked if the Minister would take steps to have the duty on articles used in connection with the gold-lace factory at Palmerston North removed. At the present time that manufacturer, although turning out an article superior to the imported, could not compete against the imported article, because it came to the Government duty-free. Mr. MASSEY asked for information regarding the item, " Allowances for extra services connected with the despatching of the contingents to South Africa, £800." Mr. SEDDON said he had given the particulars at an earlier hour. Mr. PIRANI said that the Minister had only given one or two items, and he thought full particulars should be given to the House, for it was wrong that the Government should be given the charge of that amount of money to distribute as they chose in the way of bonuses to various officers without letting the House know how the money was spent. Mr. SEDDON said that if he gave a return to the House it would place the officers to whom bonuses were given in an invidious position, and he did not think the House and the country wanted it. The highest amounts given were \$50 to the Commandant and £50 to the Under-Secretary. Mr. ATKINSON (Wellington City) moved, That the item, " Allowances for extra services connected with the despatching of the contingents to South Africa, £800," be reduced by the sum of £5. He moved that as an indication that the Committee required more information from the Minister upon this item. The right honourable gentleman had refused to give the names of some of those officers who had received bonuses, just as though there was a certain amount of shame attached to the receipt of such moneys. He did not see why officers should be ashamed of having received moneys for services rendered. The name of one - Lieut. - Colonel Collins - had been mentioned by the Premier as receiving £30. He was sure that \$300 would not nearly cover the value of that gentleman's services, and no discredit could possibly attach to him by the mention of his name. Yet the Premier had given this name by way of illustrating the unfairness of giving names at all. The fact that other names were suppressed was a sufficient proof that there was something to be ashamed of. The Premier had said, by way of interjec-

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sidered ? Was it consistent with their self-respect to pass these large items blindfold, especially after getting the plainest indication that the Premier had some strong motive for concealment ? The Premier's tactics showed that there was something very improper concealed in this vote. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) asked why the right honourable gentleman had given the Committee the names of certain officers who had received moneys as allowances out of this item, and yet refused to give the whole of the names. Then, again, if the sum of £800 was asked for for services unknown to members of Parliament, why should they not be asked for £2,800, or any larger sum? Where was the authority ? There did not appear

to be any authority here. Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) asked if any- thing more had been spent than the \$667, the details of which the right honourable gentleman had partly given. Mr. SEDDON said he had given all that was on the list supplied, showing what was expended. Mr. HERRIES asked if the £300 the Premier had referred to was included in this £667. Mr. SEDDON .- Yes. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) said, According to the Premier's statement over \$400 of this £800 had been spent, but he (Mr. Pirani) believed that more than £400 had been paid. He thought it only right that the details should be laid on the table, and, in fact, he believed the officers who had received bonuses would be only too glad to have their names made public. He had frequently pointed out that no audit was so satisfactory as the publication of full details of expenditure, and they now had an instance in point. The Premier had managed to get these payments through the Audit, but he was afraid to publish them. The House was denied the right that its expenditure should be laid before them, because the Premier said he did not wish the names of the officers published. The reason why the particulars were denied was because invidious comparisons would be made by officers who did not receive a bonus. He felt sure there was something underneath the Premier's refusal to grant the details of this expenditure, and all sorts of illegal payments might be covered up in it. How did they know that Mr. Edwards, the Seddonian organizer, did not receive a share of this money, or that the expenses of the petitioner in the Patea election case were not paid out of it ? Perhaps the Premier had some peculiar reason for not revealing the names of all the recipients of the moneys in question, otherwise his attitude was irreconcilable. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) said the statement that members were finding fault with the bonuses given, or proposed to be given, was not correct, because they did not know to whom the bonuses had been given, and until they got the information it was impossible to find fault. He considered the House was entitled to the details of the public money. This item was on a par with the details of "contingencies" which had been supplied in regard to every class of the estimates. Mr. SEDDON said he would give the amounts, but did not think it necessary to give the names. Mr. MASSEY did not see why they should not be supplied with the names. He thought they were entitled to the names of the persons to whom this sum of £667 was intended to be given. The Committee divided on the question, "That the item be reduced by £5." AYES, 20. Russell, W. R. Allen, J. Lang Bolland Lethbridge Smith, G. J. Ell Massey Tanner Mackenzie, T. Thomson, J. W. Hardy Herries McNab Teliers. Monk Atkinson Hogg Rhodes Hutcheson Pirani. NOES, 33. Gilfedder Mills Bennet Buddo Graham Napier Hall O'Meara Carncross Carroll Hall-Jones Parata Collins Hornsby Seddon Colvin Thompson, R. Houston Duncan Laurenson Ward Field Witheford. Lawry Fisher McGowan Tellers. Flatman McLachlan Palmer Fowlds Meredith Symes. Fraser, A. L. D. Majority against, 13. Amendment negatived. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) asked how many armourer-sergeants had been imported from England. Mr. SEDDON .- Two, I think. Mr. FISHER asked in what depot the men were placed. Mr. SEDDON thought there was one in Wellington and the other at Auckland. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) asked why it was necessary to import these armourers when in New Zealand there were men well qualified to perform the duties required in connection with such a position. He believed that one of these imported armourers was being placed over the head of Mr. Christie at Mount Cook, when Mr. Christie had really had charge of the armoury there for a number of years. He considered this was a reflection upon Mr. Christie's abilities. Mr. SEDDON said, Taking into consideration the mechanism of some of the guns the department was importing, it was considered necessary to bring out men who were experts in that particular line, and men who had a knowledge of other armaments such as the men we had here could not be expected to have. Mr. ATKINSON (Wellington City) moved, That the item, "Purchase of piano for Fifth New

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that the piano was the gift of the Premier, and Zealand Contingent, £25," be struck out. He did this subject to any explanation he might hear from the Premier. He understood the circumstances were that the Fourth Contingent were supplied with a piano by the Brough Company, and that when the Premier went

on board the steamer of the Fifth Contingent and found them without a piano he decided, out of the generosity of his heart, to give them a piano, on the understanding that somebody else paid for it. It was his present, but somebody else was to "reimburse him for the expenditure," to use the phrase they had applied to the Governor's expenses in connection with the Royal visit. The Premier's statement about it at the farewell lunch to the troopers was that he had given the Fifth Contingent a piano, and "somebody had got to pay for it." In the course of time the More Men Fund Committee was asked officially by the Defence Department to pay \$25 for the piano. and they declined to do so, because there was absolutely no authority to impose that liability on the Committee, and, besides, they did not consider that money held in trust for the widow and the orphan should be so used. He objected, as at present advised, to this \$25 being put on the estimates. There would not have been the slightest difficulty in raising the \$25 if the citizens of Wellington had been approached on the matter. The Premier, whose generosity was always at the cost of other people, had accused them of meanness ; but they had raised nearly \$4,000 for the More Men Fund, and would gladly have raised another £25 if the matter had been properly put before them. Mr. SEDDON said, If there was an item on the estimates for which he took credit it was this £25. He would explain the circumstances. Shortly before the steamer sailed notice was given him that there was no piano on board this boat for the Fifth Contingent, whilst every other contingent had been provided with one. It was too late to make arrangements with the More Men Fund Committee, but he said, under the circumstances, he thought there would be no difficulty in the More Men Fund Committee paying for the piano, or by other arrangement. The Dresden Company considered that quite sufficient warrant on which to risk £25, and the piano was placed on the steamer. He mentioned the matter at the lunch that day, and said jocularly to the Mayor that he supposed the Committee would not object to paying for it. Months passed, and he never heard anything more about it until he heard that the More Men Fund Committee declined to meet the liability. He then told the Defence Department that it was a fair charge to put on the estimates, and, having done what he believed to be right, he did not think the colony would refuse to pay that £25. He said it was a portion of the equipment of the contingent, and that that equipment would not be complete without one. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) would like to ask the Premier what had become of this piano, seeing it had been bought with public money. Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley) said that, inasmuch as it was reported in the southern papers in another paper that it was a gift of a member of the Premier's family, it was as well that it should be made clear that the piano was not a gift of the Premier, but was paid for by the colony. Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) said that it was telegraphed throughout the colony that the Premier had generously given this piano. Mr. SEDDON challenged the honourable member to show him a single paper which stated that. Mr. HERRIES said the Premier took the credit of the statement ; and now the House was asked to pass a vote for it. The general impression throughout the colony was that the Premier had given the piano, and that accounted for the surprise of members at seeing it on the estimates. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) said he did not say that the colony should not pay for the piano, or that it was not a proper charge on the colony, but he did say that this matter had been presented in a most extraordinary and unofficial fashion, and that whatever discussion had arisen the Premier had only himself to blame. If the Premier had presented the piano on behalf of the Government, or put it on " Unauthorised," there would not have been a word said about it. Mr. ATKINSON (Wellington City) said it was perfectly clear that the present was not made either on behalf of the colony or the committee. The Premier had stated that it was not charged to him; but the honourable gentleman was unable to repudiate the statement that he had been universally credited with being the donor of this piano, for which, after applying in vain to the committee, he now asked the country to pay. The Premier had mentioned the Mayor's name, but did not pretend that the Mayor or any other member of the committee had been consulted, though it would not have taken more than a minute or two. Most members appeared to think that the expenditure would have been legitimate if made in a proper way ; but he was not sure

that public money should have been spent in this way, any more than on a banjo, or bagpipes. At any rate, he was quite clear the country should not be asked to thank the generosity of the Premier ; it would be better to have the hat passed round the lobbies and raise the money that way. Mr. SEDDON said he would challenge the honourable member, or any other person, to produce a paper with the statement contained in it that he was the donor of the piano. Mr. LAURENSEN (Lyttelton) said he had looked up the New Zealand Times of the 2nd April, and he found that the Premier was reported to have said that he regretted to find that the Fifth Contingent had not got a piano, and that, as the other contingents had had a piano, he thought they ought to have one as well, and therefore he had taken the liberty of ordering one to be sent on board, and if the Mayor did not pay for it he would have to see what could be done in the way of getting some other people to pay for it.

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Amendment negatived, and vote, £44,088, agreed to. CLASS XII .- WORKING RAILWAYS

DEPARTMENT. Working railways, £1,152,000. 7.30. Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) wished the Minister to make a statement as to whether the new classification scheme and the superannuation scheme were to be proceeded with this session. . Sir J. G. WARD (Minister for Railways) said the Railways Classification Bill and the Super- annuation Bill had received a very great deal of consideration from him for some time past. The difficulty in the way of preparing an amended classification scheme alone was partly due to the large service, and to the large amount of money involved; but he was glad to be able to tell the Committee that next day, or the day following at the latest, he would bring down by Governor's message the Railways Classification Bill, dealing with the whole department. It would make a material alteration that would be for the benefit of the department as a whole. He could not very well state the conditions of the Classification Bill, further than to say that the measure involved an increase in the wages of the staff of about £28,000 a year. It removed a great many anomalies that had existed ; it changed the system of grading officers and the staff generally throughout the colony, and placed them on a better footing altogether. The measure, he thought, was one that would commend itself to members generally; and he had every hope that when the railway employés received the Bill -- and he would have sent it out for their consideration when he brought it down to the House, and if it had been possible to do so he would have done so sooner--they would also be well satisfied. He might also say the Government had agreed to the Super- annuation Bill, which was now on the Order Paper, being introduced, and it would be sent to the railway staff throughout the colony. Under the superannuation scheme as it would be submitted to the House the railway em- ployés themselves had a right to be consulted, inasmuch as it was proposed that they should be contributories to the system. When the scheme was submitted to them he had reason to believe it would commend itself to the staff as a whole. It was, as the name implied, a humane measure, and at the same time it did justice to a large body of men, many of whom were subject to accident, and for whom no provision was made at present, either for themselves or their families, in the event of death. He regretted exceedingly he had not been able to introduce the Classification Bill and the Superannuation Bill before asking members to consider the Railway estimates, but he thought that when the measures were brought before the House honourable members would find themselves in a position to commend both of them. He did not say the measure would be regarded as perfect either by members or by the railway employés, but he believed they would recognise that an honest effort was made to improve their status, and make their conditions better. Mr. BUDDO (Kaiapoi) said there was a vote under the Hurunui-Bluff Section for wages and buildings, and miscellaneous items. He would like to know if the Minister had pro- vided for the renewal of railway-stations in North Canterbury, and especially Kaiapoi and Rangiora, that were at present quite out of date. Sir J. G. WARD said that provision for necessary extensions, both for railway-stations and in connection with other matters pertaining to the railways, would come before the House on the public works estimates. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) wished for some information with regard to

what he might call a purely local matter. A week or two ago he introduced a deputation to the Minister, asking that the Rotorua express should stop at the Township of Tuakau on sale days. All that was asked was that Tuakau should be placed in the same position as other townships at which sales were held, and where the train stopped. It would be a great convenience to the farmers and others who attended the sales. Mr. LAURENSEN (Lyttelton) drew the attention of the Minister to the charges on the Lyttelton-Christchurch line. He quoted the following table to show the charges on the Auckland-Manukau, Picton-Blenheim. Dun- edin-Port Chalmers, and Invercargill-Bluff lines, as compared with the Christchurch- Lyttelton line :-

| | Christchurch- Port Chalmers. | Invercargill- Blenheim. | Auckland- Dunedin- Manukau. | Lyttelton. Picton- Bluff. |
|----------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| d. d. \ | d. d. d. | Foreign coal, per 3.6 | 3:05\ 3.75 | 5.25 |
| 6 ton, per mile | 0.88 | Timber, per 1.14 | 1 1 1 100 ft., per mile | 0.94 |
| Wool, per bale, 1-71 | 0.6 | 1.5 ... per mile | 1 6.87 | 3.94 |
| 5.25 | 3.3 | 7.57 | Grain, per ton, per mile | 9:28 |
| 5.52 | 6 | General mer- 5 | 8:37 | chandise, per ton, per mile |
| Fares, Return- 0:52. | 0.75. | or id. 1:05 | 0.75, or 3d. 0.85 | Second, per mile |
| 1-28 | First, per mile | 0.88 | 1:12 | 1.5 , 1.12 |

In every case the Lyttelton-Christchurch line was at the top of the scale of charges, and yet it was a fact that more traffic went over this line than over any other port line in the colony. It was not right this line should be penalised as against the other lines of the colony. Mr. LANG (Waikato) wished to ask the Minister whether it would be possible to change the time of the Waikato express, and the ordinary train leaving Auckland for Waikato. If the express could be made to leave at half-past nine a.m. and the ordinary train at eight a.m., it would be a great convenience to the public generally,

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more particularly to those people who lived near the smaller stations where the express did not stop. He would also like to ask the honourable gentleman if he could see his way to put on a second daily train from Frankton to Te Awa- mutu. Mr. BOLLARD (Eden) called the attention of the Minister to the heavy charge for conveyance on the railways of sawmill machinery. He quoted the case of the carriage of a band- saw, with working machinery, from Auckland to Taupiri-only seventy miles -- at a total cost of \$42 15s., while the actual charge of the same article from New York to Auckland was £53 10s. It was no encouragement to the saw- millers, who provided no small amount of the traffic on the railways, to have to put up with such excessive charges. Mr. GUINNESS (Grey) asked whether it was absolutely necessary for the Railway Department to continue to import ironbark sleepers from Australia. He was under the impression that the quantity imported was increasing. This was an important matter in view of the high tariff Australia was about to put on our timber, and he hoped the honourable gentleman would in the future adopt a policy of, at any rate, importing the least possible number of sleepers from Australia. He thought we had plenty of timber here which was quite as good as the imported timber. He complained of the strict and rigid inspection of silver-pine sleepers which recently had been started, compared to what was done for years past without any objection. Another matter he wished to call the Minister's attention to was the great dissatisfaction which existed among the railway employees on account of the constitution of the Railway Appeal Board, consisting of three Government officials-namely, a District Judge, and two persons belonging to the Railway service elected by the railway the employees. As at present constituted elected members of the Appeal Board might be under the control of the very officer who had disgraced or suspended the employee who had appealed against his decision. The result was that these elected members of the Board could not be in as independent a position as Judges of such a Court ought to be. He would advise that the railway employees should be given the right to elect two persons entirely independent, and outside the Government service, as members of the Board. Mr. R. THOMPSON (Marsden), referring to the question of the supply of sleepers, would point out that the price offered to settlers for either totara or puriri sleepers was so low that it was impossible for the settlers to supply them. It would be much better for the department to pay a more liberal price to the settlers than to send money out of the colony to import sleepers from Australia. Sir J. G. WARD might first state, in reply to the

member for Franklin, that it was proposed to stop the trains at the stations he had referred to. With regard to the question of railway rates between Lyttelton and Christchurch, it was a mistake to say there was a penal charge upon that line. The tariff upon that and other lines, such as the Onehunga-Auckland line, was arranged in view of competition by sea or land, and it was the duty of the State to, as far as was reasonable, endeavour to get as much business as possible for the railways. He was quite prepared to look into the whole matter of a revision of the tariff; and, though the department could not go on reducing rates for ever, if it was possible to adjust matters to meet the views of business people in the centres referred to, who had to compete with other centres, he would see what could be done. With regard to the train service to Waikato, the whole of the Auckland train services would form the subject of review by the departmental officers very shortly, and though he was advised that at present there did not appear to be sufficient reason for putting on an extra train to Te Awamutu nor could he at the moment say whether the time for the express and goods trains leaving Auckland could be altered -- but he would promise to look into the whole matter of the Auckland service and see what could be done. With regard to the rates for the sawmilling industry, he was quite prepared, when the revision of the tariff was gone into, to look into that special class with a view of making a substantial reduction. As to the importation of ironbark sleepers from Australia, he might say that at present the department could not obtain sufficient hardwood in New Zealand for the railways, although he was most anxious to see New Zealand sleepers used entirely on the railway. Of course, where the lives of people were at stake, with a view of preventing accidents it was necessary to get the best sleepers procurable. As to the price paid for sleepers in the North, referred to by the honourable member for Marsden, the price the department was offering was 3s. 6d. for totara at Whangarei. An Hon. MEMBER. - You cannot supply totara sleepers at 3s. 6d. Sir J. G. WARD said that 4s. 3d. had been offered for puriri sleepers, and the department could not get them, and 4s. was paid for ironbark, and 3s. 6d. for totara, at Whangarei. The department was prepared to take all the sleepers from New Zealand if they could get them. He could assure the honourable member for the Grey that the Government was just as anxious as he was to obtain sleepers in the colony. In regard to the abolition of the Railway Appeal Board, he had had no representations in that direction from the executive of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Employés, and he did not think that a Board which had done so much good throughout the colony should be abolished. Mr. LANG thought the railway freight on coal should be reduced. He wished to bring under the notice of the Minister a matter of great importance to the Auckland Province - he referred to railway freight on slack coal from Huntly to Auckland. The present freight was 6s. per ton, or about the same as that from New South Wales to Auckland. One company alone was throwing away 250 tons per month,

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at Huntly. Mr. BENNET (Tuapeka) said he would like to draw the attention of the Minister for Railways to the high price charged for carriage of wool on the railways, and would instance the Lawrence line. He expected the charges would be the same on all the lines. The wool was carried by the bale a distance of sixty miles, and was charged 5s. 5d. per bale, and, as the bales would not weigh more than 3 cwt. per bale, the cost would be about 30s. to 35s. per ton from Lawrence to Dunedin. The cost was thus more now by the railway than it was by the teams before the railway was made; and the teams carried it at the same price as the railway and took goods back, so that the Railway Department was losing the freight both on the wool and goods. He thought there must be something wrong when the teams were carrying as cheaply as the railways; and as a good deal of the wool had to be carried long distances on teams to the railway, and wool was now only worth about from 3d. to 4d. per pound, it would barely pay the expense of transit to the seaboard, and on that account he hoped the Minister would reduce the cost of freight. Mr. R. MCKENZIE (Motueka) said he did not find fault with the number of sleepers imported last year - namely, 32,000 out of a total of 410,000 used during the year. He considered the number imported

was necessary for use on bridges and curves. But this year he was told the department were importing sleepers wholesale from Australia, and he could assure the Committee there was no necessity whatever for it. There were plenty of timbers in the colony that were suitable, and he suggested that the Minister should use creosoted black-birch, or even black-birch in its natural state. It had the necessary strength and an average durability of from ten to twelve years' life, and was suitable and cheap and procurable in any part of the colony. He thought the scarcity of sleepers complained of by the department was owing to the too rigid inspection that prevailed -at all events, on the West Coast- in regard to silver-pine sleepers. There were stacks of sleepers cut on the West Coast which were suitable, but which the Inspectors would not pass. He thought if the General Manager looked into this question he would see that there were numbers of these sleepers that could be used. He knew that at Totara Flat recently, where many thousands of sleepers had been rejected, a deputation waited on Mr. Hudson, the late Assistant General Manager, about the matter, and as the result most of these were found to be of first-class quality and were passed. Let the department apply the same rigid inspection that it applied to the New Zealand produced sleepers to the imported Australian sleepers, and he ventured to say few, if any of them, would pass, as they were mostly sap and bark. Mr. FLATMAN (Geraldine) thought there should be more shed accommodation provided at country stations. The Minister promised last year that increased shed accommodation Mr. Lang farmers had had to stack their grain outside, thus running the risk of the grain suffering on account of bad weather. He would also like to know the amount expended on Westinghouse brakes, and if there was sufficient plant in hand to fit the whole of the rolling-stock with these brakes. Captain RUSSELL (Hawke's Bay) desired to draw attention to the position of the fellmongery at Wakatu, about eight or nine miles from Napier. At present the railway lost the whole of the traffic from that establishment because the goods could be carried cheaper on wheels than by rail, as the tariff was the same as that from Hastings, five miles away. He would like the Minister to state what was the percentage of every £1,000 which was spent out of capital and out of current expenses for the ordinary expenses, renewals, and the necessary small additions to our railways. It was impossible to say from the accounts how much was expended in maintenance, how much from the ordinary account, and how much in renewals from Capital Account. He maintained that the whole system of our railway accounts required to be recast, and that, as to the railways, instead of earning a nominal 3 per cent., there should, in addition, be at least 2 or 3 per cent. on the capital value expended in repairs, maintenance, renewals of rails, et cetera. Sir J. G. WARD said he could say emphatically that there was no loan-money taken by the Railways Department and expended upon the maintenance of the railway-lines. There was no such thing in the Railways Department as charging to capital what ought to be taken out of revenue. With regard to the Wakatu fellmongery, which was referred to by the honourable member for Hawke's Bay, he desired to say that he would look into the matter. Mr. FOWLDS (Auckland City) said, with regard to the rate charged on coal on the Waikato line from Huntly to Auckland, it was quite as high as that charged to bring coal from Newcastle to Auckland. If the department could see its way to reduce the rate it would greatly tend to stimulate the industry. Then, the cost of bringing slack down from the mine to Auckland was about three and a half times as much as the cost of the slack at the mine. He hoped the Minister would bear this in mind, and have a fair reduction made. Another matter that had been brought to his notice was the delay that took place in connection with the handling of goods at the Auckland Station, and the want of a Goods Agent. On the Hurunui-Bluff line there were two Goods Agents, receiving salaries of \$300 per annum, with house allowance, and it appeared there was no such officer in connection with the Auckland Section or the Wellington-Napier and New Plymouth Section. He hoped a Goods Agent would be appointed at Auckland to meet the requirements of the public there. Sir J. G. WARD said, in reply to the honourable member for Geraldine, that about £70,000 had been spent on the Westinghouse brake. In regard to the carriage of slack coal, referred

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anything could be done, but he would have the matter inquired into. In regard to the honourable member for Tuapeka, the Government recognised that it was most important to reduce the carriage of wool throughout the colony, and he would do so shortly. In regard to the question of sleepers, he said the department could not get the class of sleepers procured from Australia in New Zealand, even at a price equivalent to the cost of getting them from the other side. If such sleepers were available in this colony, all he could say was that no official intimation to that effect had yet reached the department. Mr. FLATMAN (Geraldine) said he had not an answer to his question with respect to the want of efficient shed accommodation for the storage of grain and other perishable produce, which had to be stacked owing to the insufficiency of trucks. Mr. MONK (Waitemata) called attention to the fact that hardwood sleepers had been brought to the colony from Australia at a cost, he understood, of 4s., while puriri could be obtained within our own shores for 4s. 3d. or 4s. 6d. He thought it would be much better to get silver-pine sleepers at 38. 3d. - which, it was claimed, could be got in abundance than to import anything. He had no doubt, however, the puriri sleeper was the best sleeper that could be obtained. He also wished to mention to the Minister that it might be advisable in the colony to follow the plan adopted in Australia of making special provision on the railways for carrying poultry in baskets. He wished, too, to protest against what seemed to be a hardship. A Mrs. Johnston had bought from the Assets Board a piece of land situated alongside the Kaipara Railway-line, the original egress from which was across the railway-line previous to its construction. She bought believing that the right still existed, and she applied for a crossing, to learn that the department required payment for what seemed a right they should not be justified in taking away. Sir J. G. WARD said he had taken a note of the matters the honourable member had referred to. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) referred to the promised revision of the time-tables of the railway service in the Auckland District. He hoped that, at any rate, an alteration would be made on the Auckland-Mercer line, and that the journey of forty-three miles would be accomplished in, say, two hours at the outside. To enable the Minister to reply, he would move, That the vote be reduced by £1. Mr. FIELD (Otaki) asked, with regard to the item, "S. W. Hicks, temporary assistance, \$75," whether the Government had finally decided what provision was to be made for this unfortunate man, who was injured in the Mungaroa accident. He had heard that #1 10s. per week was being paid to him, and desired to know whether that was the allowance finally fixed. Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) hoped the starting a daily express service to Rotorua before the summer began. Sir J. G. WARD said that Hicks was in the same position as he mentioned last year, and was receiving £1 10s. a week. As soon as he was in a fit condition he would be found a suitable position in the service. In reply to the request of the member for Franklin to inquire into the matter of the Mercer train, and have improvements in the time-table effected if they were necessary, what could reasonably be done would be done. Regarding the Rotorua service, if they could develop the tourist traffic by increasing the number of fast trains the Government would be quite prepared to do it. The Government was considering the desirability of running the trains faster, but he could not make any commitment offhand that a daily express would be given. The Committee divided on the question, "That the vote be reduced by £1." AYES, 8. Tellers. Atkinson Monk Herries Russell, W. R. Mackenzie, T. Thomson, J. W. Smith, G. J. Massey NOES, 39. Meredith Arnold Hall-Jones Bennet Hardy Mills Parata Buddo Heke Carroll Rhodes Hogg Russell, G. W. Hornsby Collins Colvin Lang Symes Duncan Laurensen Thompson, R. Field Lawry Ward Fisher Lethbridge Willis Witheford. McGowan Flatman Tellers. McKenzie, R. Fowlds McLachlan Fraser, A. L. D. Fraser, W. O'Meara. McNab Graham Hall Majority against, 31. Amendment negatived, and vote, £1,152,000, agreed to. CLASS XIII. - PUBLIC AND SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND DOMAINS. Public buildings, £20,450. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) asked for the particulars of "Contingencies" under this vote. Mr. HALL-JONES (Minister for Public Works) said the "Contingencies" were as follows :- 8. d. £ 6 Salaries (storekeeper,

&c.) 187 7 .. Wages .. 315 11 11 ... Travelling-expenses 5 0 7 .. Freight 6 5 10 .. 8 11 Coal, gas, and water 32 Supplies, stationery, &c ... 21 3 9 15 16 11 Repairs ... 2 0 Medical fee 2 ... Expenses in connection with de- struction of building by fire at 39 0 0 Napier ... £627 1 10 Vote, £20,450, agreed to. <page:474>

Mr. T. MACKENZIE (Waihemo) asked if the Minister would issue instructions from the Head Office as to the charge to be made by School Committees for the use of school-build- ings in connection with elections. Mr. HALL-JONES said the charge was de- fined by Act-namely, for cleaning and lighting. He would direct the attention of the Minister of Education to the question. Vote, \$25,000, agreed to. Government domains, £1,300. Mr. HALL-JONES said the item of " Con- tingencies " was made up as follows : £ Flower-pots, tools, &c. 35 ... Coal 12 ... Bulbs, plants, and seeds 23 11 .. Freight and rail fares 6 18 .. 38 Wages . Gravel, &c. 12 ... Manures 4 11 1 9 £133 Vote, £1,300, agreed to. CLASS XV .- POLICE DEPARTMENT. Police Department, £121,563. Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) asked for the details of the vote for "Contingencies." Mr. McGOWAN (Minister of Justice) said the amount was made up as follows : - 8\ Ambulance instruction 31 12 .. Assisting police .. 6 13 .. Bicycles, allowance for use of, on 135 police duty. .. Clipping horses .. 0 10 Compensation for damage to uni- forms 5 15 .. Driving and grazing stolen sheep .. 13 17 Exhuming and searching for bodies for inquests 8 0 Greytown Fire Brigade: gratuity for saving police premises 5 .. Insurance on Cheviot property 3 .. Legal expenses re land at Spit leased from Napier Harbour Board 4 17 Long-service medals, engraving of 8 0 Newspapers and advertising 29 12 .. Photographing prisoners* 88 12 Rates on land leased from Napier Harbour Board 5 Rent of office for Inspector of Ex- plosives : police proportion 0 0 5 Repairing damages to trap hired by police, Timaru 8 19 Repairing police wagon, Christ- church 2 Repairing property damaged by pri- soners 3 Repairing typewriters, clocks, and sundry articles 5 11 Rewards for arrest of E. W. N. Hol- loway, charged with theft of 50 ... money (NOTE .- This amount was recovered from the Pubhe Trustee, and credited to Police vote.) £ s. d. no female where stations, searchers are appointed 7 6 0 Telegraph Department, registering 0 10 0 code address .. Washing blankets for lock-ups 11 19 3 £433 5 0 . Special items have been taken for these services in estimates for 1901-2. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) wished to know if the Minister was aware whether Mr. Tunbridge, the Commissioner of Police, had applied for the position of Commissioner of Police in New South Wales. s. d. Mr. McGOWAN said, as far as he knew, that 2 4 was not a fact. 8 10 Mr. FISHER asked if it was a fact that Mr. 0 Tunbridge had applied for the position of Com- 7 missioner of Police in Victoria. 3 8 Mr. McGOWAN said, Not as far as he was 0 4 6 aware. Mr. FISHER asked if it was the intention of the Government to increase Mr. Tunbridge's salary next year. Mr. McGOWAN was not able to say what the Government would do next year. Mr. COLLINS (Christchurch City) asked if Mr. Tunbridge had applied for any position in South Australia, or Queensland, or elsewhere. Mr. McGOWAN was not aware that Mr. Tunbridge had applied for a position anywhere else. d. Vote, £121,563, agreed to. 9 Miscellaneous services, £695. 0 Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccanton) asked the Minister for details of the item, "Expenses 7 3 attending the detection of sly-grog sellers, 0 £541." Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) pointed out 6 that, in addition to the sum of \$541 so ex- 4 pended, £462 was spent in rewards for con- viction in sly-grog cases. He would like to know 0 what parts of the colony had received this money. 0 0 Mr. McGOWAN said the amount had been 7 6 distributed all over the colony. He could not tell from memory the number of people to 0 whom the rewards had gone. In some cases 9 they were given to persons for information 0 supplied, and for time taken up in obtaining 4 that information. Mr. A. L. D. FRASER (Napier) asked in 0 10 what district or districts had the sum of £541 been expended for the detection of sly-grog He did not know that any of the sellers. money had gone to the Napier district. 0 Mr. McGOWAN said the money went to those districts where convictions had been 0 2 obtained, but he could not say whether any convictions had been obtained in the Napier 6 3 district. Mr. R. THOMPSON (Marsden) wished the 0 Minister to explain on what principle persons were rewarded for

securing convictions in sly-grog cases. Mr. McGOWAN said, If a man had given up time to assist the police in obtaining evidence, that man was paid for his services.

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reward unless there was a conviction. Mr. McGOWAN said, if the police obtained the services of a man, that man would be paid ordinary wages for the time he gave. A person who gave information might be paid whether a conviction was obtained or not. Vote, £695, agreed to. CLASS XVI .- DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEY. Department of Lands and Survey, £118,570. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccanton) asked the Minister of Lands when he proposed to fill up the position of Surveyor-General of the colony. It was absolutely necessary that this office should be filled up. That gentleman was one of those who had to constitute the Boundaries Commission for the purpose of adjusting the boundaries of the constituencies consequent upon the census results. Mr. DUNCAN (Minister of Lands) said the matter would receive attention shortly, and in due time the position would be filled. Mr. FIELD (Otaki) wished to know when the vacancy in the Wellington Land Board would be filled. It had been vacant now for two years. Mr. T. MACKENZIE (Waihemo) said that this was a question requiring the serious attention and consideration of the Minister. He was glad the matter had been brought up. The Minister was a fair-minded man, and he was sure the circumstances only required to be clearly laid before him in order that the gross injustice should be removed under which Chief Draughtsmen were placed. In many instances District Surveyors of high standing were selected on account of their recognised abilities for the post, and they accepted these positions because they regarded the appointment as a promotion. Correspondence could be produced to show that this was the case. In many instances the men would much rather have remained in the field than go into the office. Men in the full vigour of youth, twenty-six and twenty-eight years of age, had been brought in to suit the convenience of Government. And what was the position now occupied by these men? They were barred from all promotion by some internal official decree -- there was no regulation to that effect - and now men well qualified, some the very ablest in the service, were receiving less pay than they had five-and-twenty years ago. Men who had done some of the hardest and roughest pioneering work possible were being superseded by officers who were boys at school when they were qualified surveyors. They saw men promoted to the position of Chief Surveyors who were not in the Government service at all when the Chief Draughtsmen were District Surveyors, and some of the Chief Draughtsmen now required to play second fiddle to men who were formerly their subordinates. This was an injustice which must be rectified, and if he judged the feeling of the House aright the Parliament would not be content to see this gross injustice continued much longer. Surely the combined experience office work were the real qualifications for promotion, and not the partial one of only one department. Mr. A. L. D. FRASER (Napier) said there was no question whatever that those members of the Survey Department who did field-work in the seventies were persuaded by the promises of the head of the department to go into the office as Chief Draughtsmen, and when they took that position they were then told that they had forfeited all right to promotion. He asked the Minister to give a decided and unqualified promise that these men would receive favourable consideration and promotion. Captain RUSSELL (Hawke's Bay) hoped that the Minister would deal with the appointment of a Surveyor-General. It was a most important position ; and he would point out that without a Surveyor-General no readjustment of the electoral boundaries could take place, and this was work which would have to be done shortly. He hoped the Minister would immediately set to work to appoint an officer as Surveyor-General. Mr. R. THOMPSON (Marsden) said he wished to indorse the statements in regard to the unfortunate position in which Chief Draughtsmen were now placed. He had been given to understand that there had never been any such regulation in the Survey Department as the Minister had stated. Mr. FIELD (Otaki) said he simply wished to confirm what had previously been said about the injustice under which these Chief Draughtsmen suffered. Mr. MCLACHLAN (Ashburton) said he saw under the Canterbury division that the vote for the

eight draughtsmen was \$75 less this year than last year, and he would like to know if this was because the amount of work had fallen off. He hoped it did not mean that the salaries had been reduced. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccarton) said, in regard to the readjustment of boundaries, that the people of the colony had a right to know at the earliest possible date the boundaries of the new electorates, and also to give time for the rolls to be prepared, and yet here they were without an important officer who was the key to the whole position, and the Government still refused to appoint him. Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) said it appeared to him that the Government had some particular object in not appointing a Surveyor-General. Apparently they did not wish this Representation Commission to be set up. He thought members were entitled to know what the boundaries of their electorates were to be as soon as possible. It was impossible for the present Under-Secretary to carry out his own duties satisfactorily when he was also called upon to fill the office of Surveyor-General. Many of the Acts of Parliament in connection with which the Surveyor-General had special duties to perform were now practically held in abeyance. Mr. DUNCAN (Minister of Lands) agreed that it was necessary that the Surveyor-General

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the new electorates were defined, and he could promise that the law would be complied with and the Surveyor-General appointed at the earliest possible moment. With regard to the question of the Chief Draughtsmen, which had been referred to by several honourable members, he did not think there was any bar to their promotion, though he believed at one time there was a sort of unwritten law that after a man had given up field-work through age or any other cause, and had become a draughtsman, he could not go back to regular survey-work again. However, he did not think it right that their claims should be overlooked on that score. In reply to the honourable member for Ashburton, he could only suppose that the reduction in the amount put down for the Christchurch office was due to the fact that one of the older officers had retired or had been removed, and his position was filled by a junior who naturally would not receive so large a salary. Mr. SYMES (Egmont) noticed that in Taranaki, where surveyors were so urgently needed, the amount put down this year for surveyors was exactly \$100 less than last year. The people there were absolutely unable to get the lands cut up owing to the want of surveyors. Mr. DUNCAN might mention that there were four temporary surveyors employed who did not appear under this item at all. In reply to the member for Otaki, he might say he was having inquiries made, and at an early date would have an appointment made to the Wellington Land Board. Mr. WITHEFORD (Auckland City) noticed that the amount for surveys in the Auckland District was considerably reduced this year. At present there were only six surveyors employed, and, under the circumstances, he did not see how the Government were going to carry out their promise to push on the settlement of the vast areas of valuable waste land in that district as speedily as possible. Mr. DUNCAN said there were no fewer than twelve surveyors in the district referred to by the honourable member for Auckland City (Mr. Witheford). They had done a great deal of work, and in a very short time there would be a considerable area of land available for settlement. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) asked why an officer in the Head Office was allowed to discharge the duties of Secretary of the Board of Surveyors. Mr. DUNCAN said he was informed that the work was not done in official time. Mr. FISHER thought that there was a good deal of unnecessary printing done in connection with the sale of small sections of land. Mr. SYMES (Egmont) asked why the forfeited lease-in-perpetuity sections were not offered to the people who had adjoining sections, instead of being put up for sale for cash. Mr. DUNCAN said that was a question that was largely in the hands of the Land Boards. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccarton) asked for an explanation of the item, "Temporary assistance, \$15,000." Mr. Duncan were taken on temporarily in the offices. Mr. MCLACHLAN (Ashburton) asked who was the Superintendent of Settlements, whose salary it was proposed to raise from £375 to £390. Mr. DUNCAN said the Superintendent of Settlements was Mr. Marsh. Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley) wished to know what were the duties of the Superintendent of

Settlements. He (Mr. Meredith) had in his district some five or six settlements, yet, as far as the Canterbury Land Board was concerned, the Superintendent was an unknown quantity. Mr. DUNCAN said the Superintendent looked after special settlements in different parts of the colony. Mr. MCLACHLAN (Ashburton) regarded the officer as a nuisance, and moved, That the item, " Superintendent of Settlements, £390," be reduced by \$15. The Committee divided on the question, "That the item be reduced by £15." AYES, 6. Tellers. Buddo Meredith McLachlan Symes. Hogg Smith. NOES, 30. Arnold Heke Parata Barclay Kaihau Rhodes Bollard Russell, G. W. Lang Lawry Carncross Seddon Carroll Massey Thompson, R. Colvin McGowan Ward Duncan Mackenzie, T. Witheford. Fisher McKenzie, R. Tellers. Hall McNab Fraser, A. L. D. Mills O'Meara. Hall-Jones Hardy ## Majority against, 24. Amendment negatived. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) asked for details of "Contingencies." Mr. DUNCAN said the principal items were as follows : - s. d. £ Destroying rabbits, Earnsclough .. 1,390 2 11 Run credited to vote in Amounts 371 17 8 error Plans on certificates of title, &c., 351 11 by contract 6 Legal costs 285 8 3 .. Classifications of runs, &c. 179 2 4 150 0 0 Fees to teaching surveyors .. Subscriptions to telephones 134 12 Drawing maps for lithography, by 134 contract 9 00 . Removal of officers 126 0 Freight, cartage, shipping-charges 107 1 Expenses in connection with Canterbury Exhibition 58 13 11 .. 58 Repairs to offices, &c. .. 7 3 .. Insurance premiums 51 13 0 Subscription to newspapers, journals, &c. 39 8 0 .

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Payment for overtime work 38 14 6 Rent of quarters 32 10 0 . . Trigs, standards, &c. 1 28 5 Vote, £118,570, agreed to. Miscellaneous services, £8,560. Mr. SYMES asked, in regard to the vote " Subsidy to doctors in outlying districts, \$400," whether the Minister would give a subsidy of £75 to a medical officer for the Whangamomona district if the settlers found a like amount. Mr. DUNCAN, in reply to the honourable member for Egmont, might say that, as this place was a long way from settlement, it would be a good plan to subsidise a doctor, and he would give his attention to the matter and see what could be done. Mr. MCLACHLAN (Ashburton) moved, That the item, " Arrears of rent remitted, £100," be reduced by #15, as a protest against the delay on the part of the Government in appointing a Surveyor-General. : The Committee divided. AYES, 2. Tellers. McLachlan Meredith. NOES, 28. Parata Arnold Lang Rhodes Lawry Barclay Lethbridge Seddon Carncross Smith, G. J. Massey Duncan Field McGowan Ward Fowlds Mackenzie, T. Witheford. McKenzie, R. Hall McNab Hall-Jones Tellers. Mills Hardy Colvin O'Meara Kaihau Symes. Majority against, 26. Amendment negatived. Mr. MCLACHLAN (Ashburton) moved, That the item, " Fees to members of Waste Lands Boards, £1,500," be reduced by £1, as an indication that members of Waste Lands Boards were insufficiently paid. He thought that the daily allowance of 10s. at present paid to them should be raised to \$1. Mr. T. MACKENZIE (Waihemo) wished, as a prior amendment, to move, That the item be reduced by £2, as a direction to the Government that henceforth no members of the House should be appointed members of Land Boards. Amendment, to reduce the item by £2, agreed to. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) noticed a number of votes for recreation reserves in different parts of the colony. He objected to their being placed on the general estimates, and, as an indication that the Committee disapproved of what was being done to this effect, he moved, That the item, " Subsidy towards purchase of recreation-ground at Thames, \$100," be reduced by £1. Amendment negatived, and vote, £8,560, agreed to. Valuation expenses, £25,591. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) asked for the "Contingencies" under this vote. Mr. MILLS (Minister in Charge of Valuation Department) said the "Contingencies" were as follows :- s. d. Telephone subscriptions 63 10 0 . . Office furniture 93 3 6 Coal and firewood, gas, &c. 41 2 9 Cleaning 58 3 6 Sundry payments 75 15 7 .. £331 15 4 Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley) said there was a strong feeling throughout the colony that the local valuations should again revert to the local bodies. Local bodies complained of the excessive charges of the department. Mr. HALL (Waipawa) said that at the recent Valuation Court of the Waipawa County considerable feeling was aroused on account of the valuers objecting to go into the witness-box to be cross-examined. Mr. G.

J. SMITH (Christchurch City) said he had received a communication from five Borough Councils and seven Road Boards to the following effect : - "That, in the opinion of this conference, the methods adopted by the Government Valuation Department for compiling and revising the valuation-rolls of local authorities are cumbersome and inefficient, and the cost to the local authorities out of proportion to the services rendered, and in excess of the amount for which the local authorities could do all necessary work. That, in the opinion of this conference, the work of compiling and revising the district valuation-rolls should be left to be carried out under the supervision of the local authorities concerned." There had been continuous complaints from the local bodies with respect to the enormous cost of the compilation of these rolls. Mr. MILLS said he had received very few objections from local bodies. The valuers had had a difficult task in making a fair and reasonable valuation of properties. Comparatively speaking, few exceptions were taken to the valuation. He might say that up to the present time 231,905 separate valuations had been made in the colony, and only about a third of the colony had been properly valued. He believed that in two years or so the valuations of the colony would be complete, and after that there would be a material difference to the local bodies in cost. Vote, \$25,591, agreed to. CLASS XVIII .- RATES ON CROWN LANDS. Vote, Rates on Crown lands, £800, agreed to. CLASS XIX .- NEW ZEALAND STATE FORESTS ACCOUNT. Vote, State Forests Branch of the Land and Survey Department, £12,332, agreed to.

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ACCOUNT. Vote, Land for Settlements expenses, £7,000, agreed to. PUBLIC TRUST OFFICE. Chargeable on the Public Trust Office Account, £24,128. Mr. LANG (Waikato) wished to bring under the notice of the Premier the matter of a petition that had come before the Public Petitions A to L Committee from a person who claimed £18 18s. 4d. compensation from the Public Trust Office on account of land being sold by the Acting Public Trustee without giving him (the occupier, who had been in possession for twelve years) the refusal of it, in spite of his distinct promise to do so. The Committee had gone carefully into the matter, and had taken evidence from the Public Trustee, and recommended that the sum claimed should be paid. He understood Cabinet had obtained from the Public Trustee a report to the effect that Mr. Dineen had no legal claim, but the Public Trustee admitted that the department had made a mistake, and that Mr. Dineen had a moral claim. If the Minister could give him an assurance that, under the circumstances, the amount would be put on the supplementary estimates, it would be simply an act of fairness to the claimant. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) said he would go into the matter carefully prior to the supplementary estimates being submitted to the House. The honourable gentleman had made out a good case, but he would have to look further into it. Vote, £24,128, agreed to. GOVERNMENT INSURANCE DEPARTMENT. Vote, chargeable on the Government Insurance Account, \$50,936, agreed to. GOVERNMENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE ACCOUNT. Chargeable on the Government Accident Insurance Account, £3,505. Mr. G. J. SMITH (Christchurch City) wished to know what arrangements had been made for carrying on this department. He would like to know if the Premier had gone into the question of rates. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) said the rates now in force were only tentative. It was intended to work the Accident Insurance Department within the lowest possible limits ; and he was of opinion that the Government Office could be worked lower than any private office. He was satisfied that the rates were too high. The Commissioner no doubt erred on the side of caution ; but, at any rate, it was a prudent course to adopt. Vote, £3,505, agreed to. GOVERNMENT ADVANCES TO SETTLERS. OFFICE. Chargeable to the Government Advances to Settlers Office Management Account, £68,514. Mr. SEDDON said the "Contingencies" were as follows :- Solicitors' costs 4 ... Sundries 278 Telegrams 60 .. Interest refunded 4 Production fees refunded 3 Registration fees 5 .. i £354 Vote, £88,514, agreed to. Progress reported. The House adjourned at half-past one o'clock a.m. (Thursday, 17th). #