

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL. Friday, 11th October, 1901. Third Reading - Maori Antiquities Bill - Money-lenders Bill. The Hon. the SPEAKER took the chair at half-past two o'clock. PRAYERS. THIRD READING. Royal Visit Expenses Bill. MAORI ANTIQUITIES BILL. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .- Sir, I trust that this Bill will commend itself to the Council as one that, perhaps, might have been taken into consideration a few years earlier, because there is no doubt a great many of our relics and antiquities have been taken away from the country, and it is possible that any New-Zealander who really wishes to study Maori art and Maori fauna will have to go to the British Museum and other establishments in Europe to study them satisfactorily. It is nothing new for a country to protect itself in these matters. A century ago the Continent of Europe was overrun by the Emperor Napoleon, who, at the point of the bayonet, took out of each country whatever he thought was most valuable - European metropolis at the cost of the countries which produced these works of art, and to add a false and adventitious value to his supremacy in Paris. I simply quote that as showing to what free-trade or forced trade in curios of the kind may lead to. We have not yet got to such a pitch of cultivation that I have heard that there is any great run on some of our New Zealand pictures. I do not believe we require to protect them yet in this direction ; but I am sure we do require to protect ourselves so as to keep in our country proper representative specimens of the ancient Maori art. which stands by itself, and we certainly ought in this country to have sufficient specimens to enable any one who wants to study the subject to study it in New Zealand, the country of its birth. In this country we have never fallen away from our attachment to and our admiration of our fellow-subjects. We have always felt they were a peculiar race, who had their own merits and their own arts, and those arts in their own line were worthy of admiration ; and the result is that there is no globe-trotter who comes round with money in his pocket who does not want to take away a Maori house or some specimen of old art, which the country ought, at all events, to be consulted about. I am not quite certain whether the Bill goes far enough in that direction. I think the Italian Act absolutely prohibits people from parting with

pictures-they may be family heirlooms -and even although the family may be in the last pinch for want of money-and untold money could be got for some of them ; but, if my memory is correct, the Italian Government absolutely prohibits the sale of these works of art to anybody outside Italy, determined that if any one outside Italy wants to study Italian art they must go to Italy to do it. Therefore we are justified in saying that any one who wants to study Maori art should come and study it in Maoriland. The Bill, as I said before, is perhaps on the considerate side to the purchaser of Maori relics, because the only condition against exportation is that any relic should be first offered to the Government, and that the Government should decline or accept. Well, we all know what Governments are. We all know that Colonial Treasurers sometimes close down their pockets, and the money cannot always be provided to buy these articles when perhaps articles of the kind ought to be purchased. At the same time I would like to differentiate, and assure the Council that on many occasions the present Government has risen to the occasion and secured for the colony very valuable works of Maori art, and I am certain that as long as the present Government is in power the same thing will be done. Of course, other Governments may come into power, and therefore I admit that a Philistine Government, which did not recognise any obligations to posterity and had no reverence for previous history, might possibly not avail itself of the occasion of purchasing some of these relics. I am quite certain that the measure goes in the right direc-

<page>384</page>

I move the second reading of the Bill. The Hon. Mr. TAIAROA .- Sir, I would like to say a few words about the Bill now before the Council. I quite agree with what has fallen from the Minister who has charge of the measure. I think it is a very great pity that it has been left to such a late time before any steps were taken to preserve these relics. . If such a law had been put in force at the time Captain Cook arrived here, or even when the country was first taken over as a Crown colony, a great deal could have been saved. At that time there were a very great many relics and implements and other articles of interest, which have since been taken away to other countries of the world by travellers, and they have collected these in some countries for their own benefit and for the instruction of their people. But I need not say anything about that now. I think we should strive to pass some measure, such as is proposed in this Bill, for the safe keeping of these relics. We should also try and collect what may remain of the articles which were brought over by the Natives in the first canoes in which they landed here. I need not enumerate the canoes, nor need I mention the articles which they brought. There are other things that arrived here before these canoes came-they came by super- . human influence. There were also persons supposed to

be here whom our first Maori ancestors spoke of as being spirits. These people were called Patupaiarehe, and Macro-ero, and Pakepakeha. They were not human, but were superhuman beings. These people, who were spoken of by the ancient Natives as Patupaiarche, were all supposed to be people of fair complexion, and their hair was fair and wavy. When the Europeans first came in their ships the Natives at once came to the conclusion that it was these people come again, and they called the first Europeans spirits, and Patupaiarehe, and Pakepakeha, and it was from that name that the word "pakeha," which they gave to the Europeans, was derived. I hear that the Wellington members all desire to have a building erected in Wellington for the purpose of keeping these antiquities, and it has been suggested that the building should be erected behind the House of Parliament. If this proposal is carried out, I would like to state that the original Maori name of the place where this building stands was "Kaiota," and I would like the place to be so called. It may be said that I come from the South Island, and how is it that I know the name of this place? When I first came to Parliament in the year 1870 I saw Wi Tako and Ihaia Porutu, two of the leading Wellington chiefs, who would be well known to Wellington people. Wi Tako was living at Te Aro, and Ihaia Porutu at Pipitea Point. When I went back from the Parliament one evening they asked me if I had returned from Kaiota. I asked them what they meant by asking me if I had come from Kaiota. They told me that that was the name of this place, and that it was so called because the notice of the Minister of Education, in Hon. Mr. W. C. Walker's food, and were suddenly surprised by the enemy, and had to pick up the food half-cooked and run away with it. That is how I first came to know the name of this spot. As I come from the South Island, I think it is only right, if there is such a building to be erected, that it should be built in the South Island - Waipouamu-the best place, and the place where most of the relics are to be got which the building would contain. I beg to support the Bill, and I may have an amendment to propose when this is in Committee. The Hon. Captain BAILLIE.- It is very interesting to hear the remarks of my honourable friend who has just spoken, and no doubt those remarks will be interesting to the future historian who is seeking for facts of Maori lore. But, with reference to the Bill itself, I think it scarcely goes far enough. I think some provision should be made that in the various large centres of the colony there should be collections of Maori art. Of course, we have museums, and we have certain collections in those museums; and we have also private collectors, such as the late Hon. Mr. Mantell, who was long associated with Maori knowledge, and that gentleman had a very good collection, which, I believe, is now in possession of his son. Then, there is Dr. Hocken, of Dunedin. Some time ago I visited his museum, which, I believe, is almost the most complete museum in the South Pacific in all things relating to the Maoris and to the Pacific Islands. If these relics were procured by the Crown and deposited in some museums in the larger towns they would be very interesting to students of Maori lore. There is one thing which I will mention, and it came to my knowledge during the present sitting of Parliament-in fact, only a few weeks ago. The Rev. Mr. Bennett, a missionary amongst the Maoris in the Taranaki District, told me that a gentleman-a Mr. Skinner, who, I believe, resides in Taranaki-some time ago purchased a Maori relic of greenstone on which was carved a serpent with an eagle's head. He said that the tradition amongst the Maoris was that the design had come from Egypt to Persia and India, and down through the Islands to the Maoris. The Maoris themselves had no idea of what a serpent was before Europeans came here. He said, further, that the statement was that this relic was purchased from a pedlar, who had obtained it from some Maori cemetery; and the tradition amongst the Maoris was that whoever possessed this ornament-which was of greenstone-the eldest of the family of the chief who possessed it always died young, and that had gone on for some seven or eight generations, until the tapu, by some incantation, was destroyed. That was almost unique, because there were only two other specimens known amongst the Maoris. Such a relic as that it would be very desirable that the Government should obtain. Therefore I think the Government should take an opportunity to inquire as to the truth of this I desire to bring this matter under statement.

order that he may see' if something cannot be | done to secure such a specimen of Maori art. The Hon. Mr. SCOTLAND .- It is indeed rather late in the day to bring forward a Bill of this kind. I could only have wished that it had been brought before Parliament years ago. It is almost like shutting the stable-door after the horse has been stolen. Still, I hope, if this Bill becomes law, it will be the means of keep- ing some fine specimens of Maori art within the colony. In Egypt, the Government, years ago, found it necessary to enact a similar law, forbidding the exportation from Egypt of ancient relics. Whether that law has been as operative as it was hoped it would be I cannot say, but there is no doubt that had it not been enacted that wonderful collection of the relics of ancient Egyptian art in the Boulak Museum would have been taken out of the country and dispersed, the various articles composing it finding a resting-place in England, France, Germany, and in other countries. There are carvers even now amongst the Maoris; and it may be asked, Why cannot they reproduce specimens of art equal to those which were turned out by the cutters of ancient times ? Well, the simple reason is this : The Maori carver of ancient days took no account of time. To carve a box or anything else with him was a labour of love. It might take him half his lifetime to fashion a mere, or to turn out a beautiful box to hold feathers. Only compare the Maori work of the present day with that of a hundred years ago ! I remem- ber, when I was at Rotorua, that I was very much struck with the inferiority of the cutters' art of the present day. I saw cutters at work at Rotorua, and I examined their work, but there was a coarseness about it, and it was in every way inferior to the work of the olden times. I have seen Maori boxes almost as fine in their work as the finest lace; and even with the superior tools which they have now they cannot or will not do the work of the olden times. It cannot but be expected that there should be great temptation, when a man has got fine steel implements in his hand, to get over the work as soon as possible. It was not so with the Maoris in former days. I heartily support this Bill, and I hope that even yet it may be the means of keeping many fine old Maori relics in the colony. And I fully agree with what has been said by the Hon. Captain Baillie-that there should be a museum or museums in which these relics should be de- posited. I think a central museum would be best, in which might be deposited the finest relics procurable in the colony, either by pur- chase or otherwise. The Hon. Mr. T. KELLY .- It is almost too late in the day to secure the best specimens of Maori art, and I need hardly remind my honour- able friend the Minister of Education that the best specimens of this art are now to be found in London, but even in this colony at the present time it will probably be found diffi- cult to procure the best of these relics. I know that in many instances Maori curi- osities and antiquities have been destroyed VOL. CXIX .- 24 know that the Maoris very often refuse to sell works of Maori art because of the historic associations connected with them, or because they were tapu. That being the case, I con- sider that the neglect of preserving Maori anti- quities in the past lies largely on the Maoris themselves, or, rather, to their religious cere- monies, their tribal wars, and migratory charac- ter. In the early days in Taranaki we often tried to get relics, but the Maoris would not part with them for any consideration. On one occasion efforts were made to secure the carved adorn- ments of an old canoe and other historic speci- mens of art, but the Maoris insisted on re- taining them ; they would not part with them for money. It was right in accordance with their customs that they might perish by decay or by time, but that they should be transferred to the pakeha for money was not considered to be good form. I think the Bill will do good, because if the relic is a valuable one the Go- vernment will, at any rate, have a chance of purchasing it. It cannot be taken away from the colony without the consent of the Customs authorities; and, that being the position, it will be brought under the notice of the Go- vernment, to whom is given the opportunity of saying whether they wish to secure it or not. Then, the question comes, Will the Go- vernment pay the price the European col- lectors would pay? If not, it would be an injustice to the owner of the relic to confiscate his property in it; and I am afraid we cannot compete with the collectors of London and of Paris and other places. There are people now- adays who sweep the world for antiquities.

The Hon. Mr. Walker told us about the Emperor Napoleon ravaging the cities of Europe for works of art and other treasures. Well, what have the British people themselves done ? Did they not take away priceless specimens of statuary from Greece, and from Assyria, and India, and from Egypt. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .-- They were paid for. The Hon. Mr. T. KELLY .- Oh, very cheaply ; and Greece is now endeavouring to get their art treasures back again. I fear we cannot afford to cast stones even at Napoleon. What has later civilised Governments done in China ? Russia, Germany, and France have simply glutted themselves with the specimens of arts and treasures of China. I am glad to say that England to some extent has refrained. However, I am glad to see that something is now being done in the way of getting some Maori antiquities collected and stored in a central building in Wellington or some other place ; and I believe that if Maori chiefs were appealed to much could be done, -not by way of purchase, but by way of appeal to their patriotic feelings, -to deposit their art treasures there. With regard to the relic at Taranaki, I may say I have heard of it. I am doubtful, however, of its history, because, to begin with, I do not think it is likely that a greenstone relic could have originated in Egypt. I may say I have been struck with some carving I saw-it was repro-

<page>386</page>

logical gods of Upper India, and it was noticeable that the work of this carving and the work of the Maori gods or heroes were very similar. The Maori gods have three fingers only on each hand-a fact for which no one has so far given me an explanation-and it is an interesting fact in that the Indian gods are similarly delineated. It shows that our Maoris may in some way have originally strayed from India, or were in some way connected with that country. Sir, I shall be very glad to support the Bill, and I hope that good may be derived from it. The Hon. Mr. JENNINGS .- Sir, the Maoris have a saying, " What is the use of the body when the man's head is cut off ?" This Bill is somewhat late in the day, but still it is one that will go in the direction of keeping a number of Maori relics from being taken out of the country. A friend of mine in Taranaki, who is a collector of Maori curios, has sent me a catalogue of a collection of no less than 381 Maori curios which were to be sold by auction in England in July of this year. It is rather amusing to read some of the descriptions of these so-called curios. For instance, under antique black heading, this is stated of Lot 171 : "The axe that helped to construct the first sawmill in New Zealand ; had been fifty years under water ; found in a well that had not been emptied during that period." How that article could come under the heading of a Maori curio I do not know. Another, set down as Lot 165, reads : "Object-lesson : Never leave a horse in a paddock with a rope round its neck. This horse got the rope fixed in the shoe, and was not discovered until it was starved to death ; hoof, with rope attached." How that could be called a Maori curio would be a problem. Gruesome details are also given of some of the articles catalogued. For instance, Lot 268 is the mat of the Maori Tuhi, who murdered Miss Dobie at Te Namu. Sir, I welcome the Bill because it will stop to some extent the Maori relics from going out of the country, and also prevent imposition such as this catalogue shows. I was struck a few months ago, when in the neighbourhood of the Mokau River, with the similarity there is between the people of the Celtic races and the Maoris with regard to some of the peculiar traditions and ideas they have of old relics, et cetera. For instance, there is the Atua, which is supposed to have come to New Zealand in the "Tainui." It was afterwards thrown into the Mokau River by the Maoris, as a sort of charm to entice fish. Some white vandal hooked it out of the river; and, as a consequence, there was a good deal of consternation among the Natives. It is stated in the district that during the time this stone god was out of the river the Maoris could not catch a single fish. The Government, I am told, took the matter in hand, and, as a result of their action in the matter, the god was put back in the Mokau, when the Maoris got their supply of fish as usual. Another matter -- one that does not come under this Bill-is this : Three years ago, in Wellington, a large number of Hon. Mr. T. Kelly London and sold here by an auctioneer. Now, I have often been struck with the paucity of books on New Zealand in our public libraries. I hope, if my honourable friend the

Chairman of the Library Committee succeeds in getting the \$500 Watson fine from the Premier, he will be able to persuade the Library Committee to devote some portion of it towards getting books appertaining to New Zealand for the library ; the Parliamentary Library, at any rate, should have a better selection than it has at the present time. The Hon. Mr. JENKINSON .- Sir, one sug- gestion thrown out in connection with this Bill I would like to impress very forcibly upon the Minister, and that is that the building for Maori relics should be erected in Wellington, somewhere adjacent to Parliament House. I trust the Government will not lose sight of that excellent suggestion, despite the wily efforts of the Hon. Mr. Taiaroa to have the building placed in the South Island. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER -Sir, I am pleased that the Council recognise the pro- priety of this Bill, even though it is a little late in the day. The Government recognised that fact. They regret that it is too late to ! prevent certain relics from having gone out of the country, but at the same time there are still 1 plenty in the country to-day that are worth 1 keeping, and worth putting into some central place, but whether in the South Island, where the Hon. Mr. Taiaroa would like to see it, or in the North Island, is a matter for dis- cussion. I am afraid there is no occasion to take so much trouble with regard to the South Island, because Christchurch has a very good Maori museum at the present time, and, if the Hon. Mr. Taiaroa does not think it good enough, he and his Maori friends have only got to hand into it for caretaking some of their heirlooms and family treasures, and I am quite sure the Christchurch Museum authori- ties will only be too happy and too proud to take care of them, and there they will be a credit to the South Island and a pleasure to all who go to see them. The honourable gentle- man rather tried to draw us away at first, be- cause he attempted to take us back to the days of Captain Cook. Well, that was before his time and before mine. Now, we are desiring to get Maori art of the old days properly pre- served, and exhibited, and protected from ex- portation. The Hon. Mr. Scotland has referred to the fact that the Maori art to-day is not quite so good as it used to be. No, it is not. But he will find fault in the same way with the work of a European stonemason or woodcarver. We have not got to-day the patience or the love of the subject which made stonemasons into architects, and out of those architects produced cathedrals which are absolute poems in stone. We have not got the art or the devotion to-day to do that. And, in the same way, the Maori has had put into his hands tools which in an easier way enable him to turn wood into implements or copy the old patterns that have come down from his an-

<page>387</page>

lifelong poem in wood or stone that it was before, and we cannot help it. It is objected against this Bill that it might possibly prevent the continuance of the trade that goes on to- day in Maori carvings, and that go Home in the shape of Maori carved pipes and walking-sticks. They are not Maori art in the true sense of the word, and there is no fear that this trade will be interfered with. As regards New Zealand books that Mr. Jenkinson referred to, I am quite certain the Library Committee are alive to the necessity of procuring all the New Zealand books that come on the market. The previous Librarian omitted no opportunity of adding to our library, and it is hardly necessary to say that more care will be taken in the future than in the past. As to whether the Government could afford to purchase in competition with London buyers, all I can say is that a few years ago there was a bird found in the interior of Otago. It was something of the style of a very large pukako, and the Govern- ment bought it for the Otago Museum, and there it is to-day. We bought it against the London buyers, and we refused to allow that bird to go out of the colony, and we paid a very large sum indeed in order that the bird should be preserved to the colony. It was believed to be the only specimen found in the memory of man, and that bird is now in the Otago Museum. In conclusion, I may say that I am sure the Council will be glad to hear that since the debate began I have been informed by the Native Minister that yesterday, at Papawai, at Mr. Tame Parata's house, on the motion of Mr. Tamahau, the well-known Maori chief, the Wairarapa Natives determined, if this Bill passes, and if a Wellington museum of Maori relics is established, to hand over to the Government the large Maori house at Martin- borough for the museum, in appreciation of what the Government is doing in the

direction of preserving Maori antiquities. Bill read the second time. MONEY-LENDERS BILL. IN COMMITTEE. Clause 3. - Reopening of transactions of money-lenders. The Hon. Mr. A. LEE SMITH moved to insert a new subclause : - "(34.) Where it appears to the Court that any person other than the money-lender has shared in the profits of, or has any beneficiary interest, prospectively or otherwise, in the transaction which the Court holds to be harsh and unconscionable, the Court may cite such person as a party to the case, and may make such judgment in respect to such person as it may deem fit." The Committee divided on the question, "That the subsection as amended be inserted." AYES, 19. Kelly, T. Barnicoat Gourley Bolt Jenkinson Louisson Bonar Jennings McLean Feldwick Pinkerton Jones Scotland Swanson Walker, W. C. Smith, A. L. No, 1. Arkwright. Majority for, 18. Subsection as amended agreed to. Bill reported. The Council adjourned at a quarter past four o'clock p.m. # HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. Friday, 11th October, 1901. First Reading-Third Readings-Railways Classification and Superannuation - Fisheries Encouragement Bill-Education Boards Election Bill-Charitable Institutions Rating Bill-Evidence Further Amendment Bill-Cook and other Islands Government Bill. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER took the chair at half- past two o'clock. PRAYERS. FIRST READING. Hospital and Charitable Aid Boards Bill. THIRD READINGS. Opium Prohibition Bill, Egmont National Park Bill, Cornwall Park Duties Exemption Bill. RAILWAYS CLASSIFICATION AND SUPERANNUATION. Mr. BARCLAY (Dunedin City) asked the Minister for Railways, without notice, as the matter was one of very considerable interest to a large number of members of the House and to a large number of people outside, Whether any decision had yet been come to with respect to the classification and superannuation scheme for the railways. Sir J. G. WARD (Minister for Railways) said the matter was still under consideration. FISHERIES ENCOURAGEMENT BILL. Mr. HALL-JONES (Minister of Marine) .- Sir, this a Bill extending the provisions of the law in regard to the bonus on canned and cured fish exported from the colony. It has been in operation now since 1885 or 1886, having been extended from time to time. This was done some three years ago in the expectation that the industry would be able to run without this bonus. But from information that has come to our knowledge we find that the industry is yet unable to stand alone, and it has been represented by persons interested in the business and by several members of the House that we should continue the bonus for a time, and then let the bonus be gradually tapered off, and that is the main provision of this Bill ; so that by the year 1905-four years hence-there will be no bonus payable, and the industry will, it is expected, then be in a position to support itself. I move the second reading of the Bill.

<page>388</page>

this Bill the Government intend to continue the bonus up to the year 1902, and then, by gradually diminishing, do away with it in three years after that. I think this question has been discussed more than once when the estimates have been going through ; and I understood, if my memory serves me aright, that a promise was made that the bonus would be done away with some time ago. I do not know whether this is so; but, Sir, I would like to know, and I think the Minister ought to have told us, what the exportation of canned and cured fish has been for the last few years. This would give us some evidence as to whether it was worth while continuing the protection of this industry. It may be that it is, but I do not know. And then, Sir, I think the Minister ought to have enlightened us as to the effect the Commonwealth tariff will have on the industry, and whether, with the continuation of the bonus, or with a reduced bonus as suggested, there will be any prospect of a trade with the Australian Commonwealth. As I understand it, there is a considerable tariff proposed on canned and cured fish by the Commonwealth, a tariff that will exclude altogether the importations from New Zealand even under existing conditions, which include the bonus. Now, if the tariff that is proposed to be put on will exclude canned and cured fish from Australian shores, even with the bonus, I would like to know what is the good of reducing this bonus and making it still more difficult to send these commodities to Australian shores. I understand, Sir, that the duty will be

so heavy that we shall not be able to send fish there even under existing conditions. Now, it is a little difficult to find out from the table of the exports what really is the amount of canned and cured fish exported, for it seems to be included with other articles, and one can hardly separate them without some trouble. Apparently the total amount of potted and preserved fish -- and I presume this heading includes the fish referred to -- exported last year was of the value of \$8,819, and 336,004 lb. in quantity. That included fish that was not produced in the colony. That produced in the colony and manufactured in the colony amounted to 278,112 lb., and of that I see that 99,000 lb. was sent to the South Sea Islands. I do not know whether these are part of New Zealand now. A portion of the South Sea Islands is certainly part of New Zealand, and I presume part of this 99,000 lb. went to the Cook Islands. The largest export of potted and preserved fish went to the South Sea Islands, the next largest export was to Western Australia, then after that to New South Wales and Victoria, and then to Natal. What I would like to know from the Minister, in reply, is whether this industry is worth a bonus to preserve it ; and, if it is worth a bonus, and as Victoria and New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, and Tasmania take a very large proportion of the whole export, what the result of the Federal tariff will be to the trade. It seems to me that if the industry to continue the bonus in full. I am only putting it in a speculative way. I do not know but that it may be necessary to continue the bonus to keep the industry alive ; but it ought to be shown clearly to us that the industry, first of all, is worth conserving by paying a bonus for it; and then it ought to be shown that, if we do continue the bonus, that will be sufficient to allow the trade to be carried on, notwithstanding the heavy tariff that has been placed on this particular food product by the Commonwealth. I think the Minister ought to be a little more clear, and put particulars before us with regard to the Bill. It appears to me that the Bill, by reducing the bonus, will kill the industry altogether. I cannot understand how an industry, relying on a bonus so long for its existence, can, under the existing circumstances, be expected to live if the bonus is reduced. I myself should be glad to see the bonus done away with if only. it was clear that the industry is sufficiently on its legs to stand alone. Mr. SEDDON. - It was so arranged last year. Mr. J. ALLEN. - Yes, I am aware of that; but what made me rise to speak is that the conditions this year have altered on account of the tariff the Australian Colonies have put upon it. They were the largest receivers of that food product from us. Taken altogether, they received the largest amount of what we exported, and, if we are still to continue to send this product there, I take it it will need this bonus, and perhaps more than the bonus, to keep the trade alive. Mr. NAPIER (Auckland City) .- I will support this Bill, but I regret that it does not go far enough. The continuance of the bonus is absolutely necessary to assist the development of this industry. It is an industry which is yet in its infancy, but is capable of infinite expansion. As the honourable gentleman who has just sat down has rightly said, it is to the South Sea Islands we must look for an increase in the export trade in canned fish. A great quantity of canned fish goes to Samoa and Fiji. An Hon. MEMBER. -- What fish ? Mr. NAPIER. - Mullet. The imports into Samoa of canned salmon from Canada are considerable, and the German Trading Company there, and also the Australian merchants, practically flood the market with fish that is inferior to the New Zealand mullet. If mullet has only to face fair competition with Canadian salmon, I do not think it has anything to fear in the markets of the world. The canning of mullet now gives employment to a very considerable number of men and youths in the North Island, and I believe, if the Government gave some assistance in the way of supervision to the fishing industry, that this particular trade would be very largely developed. The canning-factories were started originally by colonists who had very little knowledge of the industry, and who were not acquainted with the conditions under which the canning-factories in Canada are worked. If the best information were ob-

<page>389</page>

tained by some department of the State, and supplied to the fishers and canners in the North, I believe it would result in very great advantage to the colony. Sir, I am sorry that the Government have thought fit



to introduce the provision contained in the 2nd subsection of In Committee I shall section 2 of the Bill. oppose that subsection. I think the Govern- ment made a promise that the bonus would be retained for from three to five years, and if that promise were given effect to it would be quite possible for the industry to stand alone after the expiration of that period of time. I cer- tainly do not think its existence ought to be cut short in this summary manner by only getting a t elve-months bonus. The circum- stances have recently entirely changed. We must recognise the effect that the new duties will have upon the export fish trade. I refer to the duties imposed by the Commonwealth. Under the existing circumstances, and consider- ing the altered conditions, I think we ought to amend the Bill so that the bonus should be continued without fixing any specific date for its discontinuance. Fishing is a necessary industry. There is as much wealth in the sea as probably there is in the land of New Zealand, and all the industry wants is a little encourage- ment. I regret that, owing to the pressure of a few people, or societies, not representing any large proportion of the population, an effort should be made by the Government to throttle this growing industry. I hope better and wiser counsels will prevail, and that in Committee we shall see that the honourable gentleman in charge of the Bill will agree to leave simply the 2nd section and expunge subsection (2)-that is, the subsection referring to the diminishing of the scale of the bonus. If that be done I shall give the Bill my cordial support, and I hope the honourable gentleman will see his way to adopt my suggestion. Mr. MONK (Waitemata) .- I am very 3.0. glad the Government have brought down this Bill. The understanding was, when the last Bill was passed, that at the expiration of the period during which it made provision to pay a bonus on the fish exported from the colony, that it would cease. But I think cir- cumstances have arisen which show the neces- sity for continuing the bonus. The question affects a considerable number of people. Mullet has become a very attractive article of diet, and I believe the Australians will find that they will have to pay the duty the Commonwealth tariff is threatening to impose. It has found its way into the Australian market to some extent, but I believe the largest market is in the Sandwich Islands, a very large quantity finding its way to Honolulu. I am not going to jeopardize the passing of the Bill by moving in the direction of having the full amount of the bonus assured for five years ; I would rather trust to the generosity of the Government that in the course of a year or two, when it is found necessary, they will continue the bonus. Fish are not as abundant as one would desire. The localities where mullet are plentiful are the northern rivers. They are not distributed throughout the colony, and the mullet in- dustry of the North has to compete with the large importation of salmon. For my own part, I am surprised that people should eat salmon when they can get mullet. I would rather give 25 per cent. more for mullet than salmon, which, compared to it, I regard as a tasteless fish. If the Minister will accept, with- out delay or difficulty, the amendment proposed by the honourable member for Auckland City (Mr. Napier) I do not think the charge would be very great on the country, and I hope ere long the industry may prove sufficiently re- munerative to prosper without State aid. Major STEWARD (Waitaki) .- I brought up the question of the continuance of the bonus on the export of fish last year at the instance of settlers in the Chatham Islands, where there is a growing industry of this kind and where they are very anxious that the bonus should be con- tinued, because more capital is likely to be ex- pended in the development of the industry. I think, with the honourable member for Auckland City, that it will be quite sufficient if the Bill stops short with the main provision of section 2. We need not concern ourselves for the present as to what is going to happen after 1902. If we were to delete the subsection which relates to succeeding years, we shall have done well enough by fixing the bonus up to 1902. But members will notice a peculiar date in the Bill. The 31st August is not the termination of any financial year. The origin of this is due to the fact, no doubt, that the original Bill is dated 31st August. The House will probably be in session on that date next year, but we may not by that time have had time to deal with the extension of the bonus. I would suggest that "August " be struck out, and " December " substituted. Mr. MILLAR (Dunedin City). - Like the previous speaker, I think if the Bill were to end at the latter part of the 1st clause

I should be in accord with it ; but I regret to see that the Government propose to do away with the bonus. The amount paid during six or seven years has been infinitesimal, and if the Government would give the names of those who have received a bonus it would be seen that they have been almost always new men every year, because, under the original Act, as soon as five hundred pounds' worth has been expended the bonus ceases, and the consequence is that the largest exporters are beyond the bonus. If the bonus is taken away it will injure a great many younger men who have grown up to the trade, because the factories would not have any market to export to. The export of fish is not confined to the North Island, because in Southland and Otago there is a large export of fish. And another new industry that has grown up very lately is the canning of whitebait. I think it is unfair of the Government to propose to stop the bonus when for the last three years they have been paying for a trawler to show where fish are to be found. What was their object in doing this unless to induce people to invest capital in the fishing industry ? I fail to see why it is right to

<page>390</page>

looks at the Agricultural Department-which is practically a bonus -why should we grumble about paying a few pounds in the encouragement of this industry ? The bonus is the means of increasing the employment of a large number of fishermen on the coast, and, no doubt, if the industry goes ahead people will have to go further afield than hitherto. The fishing-grounds are further from the ports than most people believe. I trust the Minister, in Committee, will consent to take out the whole of subsection (2) of clause 2. If that is done the House will, I think, be unanimous in supporting the Bill. Mr.

WITHEFORD (Auckland City) .- I agree with the remarks of those who advocate the continuation of the bonus. It is a very small contribution that is proposed, but it will be a substantial encouragement that will have the effect of firmly establishing the industry. I shall support the Bill, and trust the suggestion in regard to subsection (2) will be carried out. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccanton). - This Bill will be of considerable importance at the present time, because of the fact that Australia has just proposed a tariff which places a serious embargo on a number of the products of this colony. The proposal of the Bill is a mistake in so far as it goes in the direction of wiping out the existing bonus. I shall therefore be disposed to support those members who are determined to move the excision of subsection (2) of clause 2 in Committee. The importance of the fish industry to this colony as a source of wealth has never been appreciated. I think the member for Dunedin City was quite right when he said just now that it was a somewhat anomalous thing that, while the Government have spent money during the last year or so in trawling upon our coast, they should now step in and remove the financial inducement to persons engaged in that industry. I should like to correct the honourable member for Dunedin City (Mr. Millar) in regard to one matter-that is, as to the amount of exports for the purpose of qualifying for the bonus. Clause 8 of the Act of 1885 says that in respect to the first 200 tons exported by each person there is to be the bonus stated, and then, of course, the bonus decreases according to the quantity. It is not the amount stated by the honourable member in the course of his remarks. An Hon. MEMBER .- It ceases altogether at 5,000 tons. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- It ceases at 6,000 tons. I do not know whether that means in one year, or whether it means the total. It may mean the total of the exports according to the time. But what I want to point out is this : that as we have upon our statute-book now this principle of bonus for the purpose of encouraging the canned and cured fish industry, is it not desirable that the Government should meet the altered conditions set up by the Commonwealth tariff by assisting our other producers in the same way and by the same method ? For example, one of the most important is dairying, and that must be backed up by the pig industry ; and what are you going to get for your exports of hams and bacon if they have to meet the duty of 3d. per pound charged on such exports to the natural New Zealand market -I mean in Australia. An Hon. MEMBER .- There is also London. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- Of course, the London market is open to you now. But this is a broad question, which it is

worth while for the Government to look at ; and in the interests of a very large number of producers in the South -those persons who are living now on the potato industry, the onion industry, the oat industry, and industries of that kind-it will be just as desirable that the Government should consider whether a bonus should be given to them upon their industries as it is to maintain the bonus in connection with the fish industry. Mr. T. MACKENZIE (Waihemo) .- In connection with the encouragement of the fishing industry, I should like to bring under the notice of the Minister a matter I consider to be of importance. There is considerable enterprise just now evinced in the southern parts of the colony in the development of fishing. Down at Port Moeraki there are forty boats engaged in fishing, and there are steadily employed in that industry about a hundred men. At present they do not seem to be the special care of any local body, and there are inconveniences they are suffering from, which, I think, the Government might easily do something towards removing. For instance, there is no proper shelter for their boats, and no slip upon which to haul up their boats for repairs and other purposes. The majority of these men are not well off. As a matter of fact, they are much like sailors, living to a great extent from hand to mouth. But the industry is an important one. The Railway Department is deriving a very substantial revenue from the carriage of fish sent north and south. Whether this industry will be materially interfered with by the Federal tariff, of course, remains to be seen. I may mention the fact that an enterprising person, Mr. Hull, has established a small place for freezing there, and I believe he intends to furnish a tug for the purpose of towing the boats to and from the fishing-grounds; but up to the present time very little profit has been derived from the venture. Other enterprising men are also engaged there. I think, therefore, the Ministry might reasonably consider if something could not be done in the direction I have suggested. With reference to the remarks made by the honourable member for Riccarton, as to finding new markets for hams and bacon, I consider there would be some difficulty in finding markets for produce that may be affected by our exclusion from the Australian market. It is a very serious thing for the bacon- and ham-curing establishments in this colony. Of course, there are the South African and the British markets, but the concentration of foods from all parts of the world to the British market is taking place so rapidly that those who think

<page>391</page>

that is not so, and the prices will not afford that remuneration to our producers which, up to the present, they have been enjoying on produce sent to Australia. Of course, that is a matter for the future. There is enterprise here, however, and there is quality, and all that is required is to have our produce got up in such a way as would make it tempting to the British consumer, so that our producers may get a fair share of the markets there. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) .- I hope, Sir, after the expressions of opinion from all sides of the House, and from representatives of all parts of the country, the Government will consent to strike out clause 2 of the amending Bill, so as to retain the bonus for some time to come. As was pointed out by the honourable member for Waitemata and other speakers, this industry gives employment to a large number of people, and brings a considerable sum of money into the country ; and, though its extent is small, it is steadily expanding. I noticed lately in the Auckland papers that quite a number of people are engaged in whitebait-fishing in the Waikato River, and canning the fish, and that large quantities are being sent away. I do not suggest that the bonus should be continued indefinitely, but I think the time has not yet arrived when this industry can stand alone. I am of opinion, therefore, that the Bill should be amended in such a way as to provide for continuing the present bonus for another five years at least. Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley) .- Sir, the fishing industry, though assisted in the shape of bonuses since 1885-sixteen years -- has made no substantial progress. The honourable member who has just sat down has stated that it is a large industry employing a great many hands. I fail to see that such is the case, judging from the export value of the fish sent from this country, as shown by the " Statistics" for 1900. I find, under the head of " Dried, pickled, and salted fish, 7 tons, value £116; potted and preserved

fish, 150 tons ; frozen fish, 436 tons ; and ova of the value of \$207. Total, 583 tons ; value, \$18,849."

Now, while I agree to a bonus in preference to any other form of protective taxation-forasmuch as one can see the end from the beginning -yet at the same time it appears to me we are putting our hands into the pockets of the many and extracting there- from money in order to put money into the pockets of the few. If there is one thing in the Bill I admire more than another, it is the feature of finality. Subsection (3) of clause 2 says, " From and after the last-mentioned date the bonus aforesaid shall altogether cease to be payable." Now, one honourable gentleman referred to the probability of a market in the South Sea Islands. I do not think that market will be very large unless there is a considerable influx of European population. An. Hon. MEMBER .- What about the Na- tives ? Mr. MEREDITH .- They will be able to catch fresh fish in abundance around the coast of their own islands, and it is not likely that much fresh fish at their doors in the surround- ing seas. Indeed, I should not be at all sur- prised to find that, under the form of govern- ment we are about to give the Cook Islands, they will become competitors with us-that they will capture a portion of the world's markets, and in that way enter into competition with us. Mr. BUDDO (Kaiapoi) .- I observe that this Fisheries Encouragement Bill practically limits the operation of the bonuses offered to the fishing industry, so that they may cease al- together in 1905. I should have preferred de- ferring the consideration of this for another year at least, in view of the very great altera- tion that is proposed in the tariff of the Australian Commonwealth. I have an im- pression that we must in the course of the next year or two,-if we are to remain as we are, outside the Commonwealth,-revise our own tariff. The tariff that is proposed for the Commonwealth has been spoken of as a revenue- producing tariff, but I am convinced it is a highly protective tariff, and we must now realise that in the near future it must consider- ably alter the position in regard to the tariff we have now in force in New Zealand. In deal- ing with this matter, I have not the slightest doubt we have to consider the question of ex- pediency a great deal more than the question of principle in taxation. The granting of a bonus is not a healthy way of encouraging an industry; but mere expediency may prompt us to adopt it, and, at any rate, we have the example of France and Germany with respect to the establishment of the sugar-beet industry. Something will have to be done in the direo- tion of protection for the New Zealand produce trade as against the hostile tariff proposed by the Australian Commonwealth. The Govern- ment have recognised that the fishing industry is not giving the results that were anticipated by this bonus system ; but it is proposed to make it self-reliant by slowly reducing the bonus. In view of the proposed protective tariff in Australia, which has put us in a posi- tion that we did not anticipate, I suggest to the Government whether we should not, at least, allow another year to pass before we make any definite change in connection with our fisheries. Mr. SEDDON (Premier). - I hope that in dealing with this Bill we shall not go into the question of the tariff as applied to Australia. I think it will be sufficient for members to know that the Government have the matter now under consideration. Mr. MASSEY .- You have heard expressions of opinion all round. Mr. SEDDON. - I had the same opinions before the situation eventuated, and I ventured the opinion on the floor of the House last ses- sion that I feared the Commonwealth tariff would be less protective than the Victorian, but considerably more than the New South Wales tariff. An Hon. MEMBER .- I believe it is more pro- tective than the Victorian.

<page>392</page>

An Hon. MEMBER .- Take the average. Mr. SEDDON .- No, not taking the average even. I know what I am speaking about. In a matter so important as that, we should be wanting in our duty had we not considered it, and considered particularly its bearing on the producers of the colony of New Zealand as a whole. My own opinion is that this colony will not be injured, although for a short time it might be inconvenienced, and it might suffer some loss ; but ultimately what you will have to do-what, in fact, you are bound to do now -is to seek out other markets for your pro- ducts, because it is only your surplus products that will be taken by Australia, and Australia is going exactly on the lines of this colony by cutting

up her land into small settlements. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER .- The honourable member is going altogether outside the question that is now under the consideration of the House. Mr. SEDDON .- Honourable members have been referring to it, and if it had not been referred to I should not have been on my feet now at all. All I can say is that, in respect to the bonus system, I do not think, myself-if the bonus system versus the opening-up of other markets is to be discussed in this debate-that the bonus system meets the case at all. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- I did not discuss the question of bonuses versus the opening-up of fresh markets. Mr. SEDDON .-- But Mr. Buddo did. I say I do not believe the bonus system is the proper system. I believe, as regards the encouragement of the fishing industry, that although America competes with us in her canned fish, we should have to look for other markets, and the best way is to have arrangements made for vessels to take our products at the lowest possible rates, and give us the facilities that at go on round the coasts of the colony, though present we are denied. not by any means to the extent that might take Mr. TANNER .- Cheapen the expense of place, is undoubted ; but it consists chiefly in transport. securing fresh fish for local consumption, or, in Mr. SEDDON .- That is my view; and it the case of fishermen in the South, for export would be a much better way of encouraging an to the neighbouring colonies in Australia. That industry than by offering bonuses. Of course, no large amount of it is either preserved or you can take it in another way, where it is a canned in a suitable way for export was shown question of encroaching upon your industries- by the figures given in a return for which I and I say the industries of this colony are moved last year. It is a singular commentary very much encroached upon-this industry is on the way with which members usually get encroached upon, and we ought to meet it in acquainted or not acquainted with the returns the direction I have indicated-I do not think laid before the House that several speakers it would be wise for us to commit the colony have regretted the lack of information on the definitely until the matter has received fuller subject, and yet a paper of last year- H .- 15 - consideration. I think we ought to wait until is a return showing the total amount of money we have full particulars before us, and then we paid under "The Fisheries Encouragement can go into the position. I hope in a few days Act, 1885," from its passing down to the 31st to be able to announce to the House what March of last year. It totals \$9,965 for the course the Government intend to take in this fifteen years, and it is a remarkable fact that matter. The outlook seems to be far from nearly the whole of the money that was paid as cheering. That may be so or not. At any bonus on export to fish curers and preservers rate, I recognise the situation as a grave one, went to the Provinces of Otago and Auckland. and we must meet it. The whole of the amount taken by the other Mr. R. THOMPSON (Marsden). - In the provincial districts of the colony amounted to opinions he has just expressed the honour- not more than £650, and the figures are so interesting that I shall make no excuse present time. There is no doubt that the altered condition of the tariff in Australia is at present causing very great anxiety to the producers in this colony ; and, in raising this question of a bonus to the fishing industry, I think it might be as well not to have made an exceptional treatment of this industry, but let it stand over until we are dealing with the whole of the industries, because there is no doubt whatever that the altered condition of the tariff in Australia will compel this House to protect the producers of the colony from the Commonwealth of Australia. It might not be advisable to go into this question this session, but there is no doubt that it will force itself on the attention of the people of the colony and of this House ; and I was pleased indeed to hear the Premier say that he is watching the course of events, and intends making some proposals this session. Mr. TANNER (Avon) .- Under the circumstances, and now that the Premier has given us an intimation that the whole subject will shortly come up for review, not merely with regard to this industry, but with regard to others, I shall support the Bill. Otherwise I should have been inclined to resist the proposal to cancel the small amount of encouragement which has been given to this particular industry. Nevertheless, one is bound to admit candidly that the results of the action of the House in passing the Act of 1885 have been of a very unsatisfactory character, for it has been of very

little advantage to the colony. While some members have spoken in rather 3.30. hopeful terms of the fishing industry, I am afraid they have confused the question of fishing generally with the question of the payment of a bonus on the particular forms of preserved fish. That an amount of fishing does

<page>393</page>

years from the initial payments in 1886 to the 31st March, 1900, the fish preservers, curers, and exporters in the Auckland District received bonuses amounting to £4,103; in the Otago District, £5,152; in the Wellington District, \$238 ; in the Marlborough District, \$61; in the Westland District, \$348; in Southland, \$60 ; and Canterbury does not even figure in the return at all. The amounts paid annually vary considerably—from £271, the minimum, to £1,194 as a maximum ; but they show that the bonus during the last year or two has increased very rapidly. Whether that may be attributed to the canning of whitebait on the west coast of the South Island, or some method of preserving adopted in the South for the fish sent over to Melbourne, is a question which for the moment I am unable to answer ; but, without going into the important question which has been touched on by two or three speakers, I can simply sum up what I have to say in expressing my regret that the operation of the Act has not been more successful than it has been, and, in the circumstances, I believe the Government will be perfectly justified in repealing the bonus at the date specified in the Bill and bringing an unsuccessful policy to a termination. Mr. E. G. ALLEN (Waikouaiti). - Perhaps one of the causes of " The Fisheries Encouragement Act, 1885, not being so successful as the last speaker could wish, is that the bonus has not been given on a larger quantity of cured or canned fish exported. The return which has just been read shows that Otago got about \$5,000 of the total amount of the \$9,000 odd bonus paid. The explanation why Otago received such a large amount is the fact that there the barracouta is very plentiful, and is to Otago the same as the mullet is to Auckland. There are unlimited quantities of barracouta during certain seasons, and while the benefits of this Act was realised—that is, while the bonus of 1d. per pound to each exporter was payable in respect to the first 200 tons of fish exported pretty well the whole of that money was paid in the first few years of the operation of the Act, and then, after the first 200 tons, the bonus for cured fish was reduced to ½d. per pound. Well, that is a very small bonus; but the export of fish would have continued, notwithstanding the smallness of the bonus, but for the tariff which was imposed on our fish exported to Victoria. Melbourne was the great market for the smoked barracouta of Otago. They put on a duty of something like 2d. per pound. Of course, with our ½d., we could not cope against that. Now, I should very much like to see the Government adopt the maximum bonuses paid in 1885. There is no doubt that a very large industry sprung up on account of the encouragement that the Act provided, but the quantity upon which the greater bonus was paid was so small that the industry had not time to get fairly established. The question of the new tariff of the Commonwealth has been referred to by several honourable members, but we must not yet been accepted. I think it is probable it will not pass. There will be very bitter opposition to that tariff in the Federal Parliament, and it is possible it might lead to the defeat of the Federal Government. But there is no doubt that, if they succeed in putting a prohibitive tariff upon our exports, it will be the duty of this Parliament to consider the question of an altered fiscal policy. Mr FISHER (Wellington City) . - Sir, I listened with interest to the speech of the Premier on this question. The honourable gentleman deprecated any allusion to the recently announced Commonwealth tariff, and immediately himself plunged into a brief but very general discussion of the whole question. In the course of his remarks the honourable gentleman was good enough to inform us that he had at some former period told the House what the Commonwealth tariff would be—that it would be made somewhat higher than the New South Wales tariff and somewhat lower than the Victorian tariff. Now, that displayed marvellous penetration. The honourable gentleman, again, said that, in consequence of the introduction of this new tariff, it would be necessary to find new outlets for New Zealand products. I do not know why the honourable gentleman informed us that we should have to cast about for new outlets for New Zealand

products, because in the discussion of the Cook Island Bill a few days ago he informed the member for Franklin that the Cook Islands Group would take all the products that Australia now takes from us. I was surprised also at the allusion of the honourable member for Kaiapoi during this debate to the newly announced Commonwealth tariff. The honourable gentleman said it was hardly anticipated that the Commonwealth would have proposed such a tariff as that. Well, I do not care to ask whether the honourable gentleman is as yet merely at the novitiate stage in politics; but I would like to put this question to him, or any other person in this House or out of it: what else did he expect? New Zealand, in the matter of Australian federation, has adopted, whether rightly or wrongly, for weal or for woe, a policy of isolation. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER. - I must ask the honourable gentleman not to continue a discussion on the Federation question in debating the Fisheries Encouragement Bill. The question of the federation of this colony with Australia has nothing to do with the Bill. Mr. FISHER. - I am merely commenting on some statements made by the Premier during this discussion. Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER. - I allowed that, but I cannot allow it to go any further. Mr. FISHER. - Then, the whole subject of my speech is cut away. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER. - I am very sorry, but the rules of the House compel me to confine the discussion to the Fisheries Encouragement Bill. Mr. FISHER. - That gives me a very one-sided task. This is a Fisheries Bill, and that

<page>394</page>

ever, the honourable gentleman did make a most important announcement in saying that the Government, before very long, would announce what the intention of the Government was relatively to the Commonwealth tariff, and that possibly we might have to stay a month or two longer to discuss that subject. The honourable member for Waikouaiti, Mr. E. G. Allen, also told the House that the tariff had not yet passed. Do you rule that to be out of order, Sir? If I am not to make reference to any of the speeches which have been made upon the second reading of the Bill, I will take it as a great favour if you will tell me what matter I may talk about. The member for Waikouaiti, Mr. Allen, says that the Commonwealth tariff is not yet passed, and that it may not ultimately press so severely upon New Zealand. The Premier has hazarded one opinion; I may hazard another. It is that, whatever alteration may be made in the Commonwealth tariff as outlined in the telegrams received, it may be taken as certain that it will not be altered in its bearing upon New Zealand. Whether the honourable gentleman can make good to the people of New Zealand what they will lose in consequence of the adoption of a policy of isolation, of holding aloof from the Australian Federation, we shall see; but I say there is a distinct loss, which I think the honourable gentleman will not be able to make up either by trade bonuses or in any other way. Mr. HALL JONES (Minister of Marine). - Sir, I little expected when I moved the second reading of this Bill that we would drift into a discussion of the Australian tariff, and much less that honourable members would want to launch forth into the larger question of federation with Australia. An Hon. MEMBER. - Perhaps you did not hear the Premier. Mr. HALL-JONES. - Oh, yes, I heard the Premier; and I think the Premier is to be complimented upon his foresight in predicting that the Australian tariff would be somewhat higher than the tariff of New South Wales and lower than that of Victoria. It is now proved that the Premier's prediction was quite correct. An Hon. MEMBER. - It is quite wrong. Mr. HALL-JONES. - No, it is not wrong. The present proposed Australian tariff, taken as a whole, is under that of Victoria and higher than that of New South Wales, and when we get the details it will be seen that it is so. An Hon. MEMBER. - Yes, 20 per cent. lower. Mr. HALL-JONES. - It may not be 20 per cent. lower-I do not say that, but it is lower. Coming to the matter of the Bill, if we cannot sell our fish to Victoria and New South Wales, surely we can find other markets for them. do not like to hear such pessimistic views expressed as I have heard on this question. I have every confidence the Government and this House are competent to deal with any question that may arise in connection with the Australian tariff, and we can still keep our colony in the proud position it has occupied for so many years. If members will assist the Government Mr.

Fisher mentioned by the honourable member for Avon, the results of the granting of a bonus to this industry have been disappointing. The bonus was first proposed in 1885, and there was then a limit fixed of seven years, and it was expected that upon the expiration of that period the industry would be self-supporting. According to the speeches made at the time, it was expected that at the end of seven years there would be fishing-villages around the coast-that land would be taken up by the fishermen-and that the export trade in fish would be very much larger than it is at the present time. Strange to say, when the first period of seven years expired the amount paid as bonus during the last year of the currency of the Act was less than was paid during the first year. Then it went down to as low as £271 11s. 10d., the highest being the second year after the passing of the Act. An Hon. MEMBER .- That does not represent the industry. Mr. HALL-JONES .- It represents the export trade, and shows the amount paid as bonus. There is, of course, a large local consumption which does not come into account ; but this shows what was paid for the export of fish. When the first seven years expired, the Act was further extended for a term of five years, and then at the end of the five years there was a request to extend it for three years, and again for one year ; and now this year we are in the same position as when the industry first started -- that is, that the industry, I am sorry to say, is not self-supporting. An Hon. MEMBER .- Is there any industry that is self-supporting ? Mr. HALL-JONES .- Yes, I think there is. I would advise honourable members to stick to the Bill, to take the Bill as it is, and to let the fishermen for the next four years know what they are to receive as a bonus. The honourable member for Kaiapoi said that we should postpone the Bill until next year, and leave the matter over till then ; but if we were to do that the effect would be that the fish-exporters would get no bonus for this year, the authority for paying the bonus having expired on the 31st August last, and that is why it is brought on now. It would be unfair to leave the exporters in a state of uncertainty as to what they would receive. I intimated my opinion in 1897 that that should be the last bonus; but it was renewed last year, and now it is proposed to adopt a tapering-off policy, and that, I believe, is the wisest course. We should pay the full bonus for this year, and then gradually diminish it ; but if anything occurs in the meantime it will be for us to reconsider the question. I hope the House will not adopt the suggestion of the honourable member for Auckland City to vote the bonus for one year, and to leave out the remainder of the section. The honourable member for Avon said that Canterbury received no bonus under the Act. I am very pleased to inform him that Canterbury is in the running now. The respective amounts paid up to the 31st August last are

<page>395</page>

as follows : Otago, £5,473 3s. 9d. ; Auckland, £4,536 13s. 6d. ; Westland, £529 2s. ; Wellington, £238 0s. 5d. ; Canterbury, £82; Marlborough, £61 18s. 6d. ; Southland, £60 17s. 2d. : total, £10,981 15s. 4d. Now, I should not be surprised to see Canterbury doing better than Auckland or Otago. The honourable member for Bruce asked what quantity had been exported last year. The quantity exported during the year 1899-1900 was 111 tons 8 cwt. canned fish, on which a bonus of £1,039 15s. 2d. was paid. The export of cured fish amounted to 3 tons 3 cwt. 2 qr. 16lb., entailing a bonus of £7 8s. 6d. During the year 1900-1901 the total export of canned fish amounted to 101 tons 18 cwt. 1 qr. 17lb., on which a bonus of £1,016 11s. 9d. was paid. No salted fish was exported during this period. There was no salt fish exported last year for which a bonus was paid. I hope the House will agree to the provisions of the Bill. The only question that has been debated has been whether it should apply to one year only or whether we should pay the full bonus this year and then taper off. I prefer the latter course. Bill read a second time. EDUCATION BOARDS ELECTION BILL. Mr. HALL - JONES (Minister for Public Works) said the Bill was to remedy an inconvenience in connection with the election of members of Education Boards. The Act of last session provided for the appointment of scrutineers, but made no provision under which they should make a declaration not to disclose what took place. Since the Bill had been introduced his attention had been drawn to the desirability of extending the time between the notice of elections and the



declaration of the poll, some of the voting-papers not coming to hand within the time prescribed in the Act of last year, and when in Committee he would deal with that point. Mr. ELL (Christchurch City) said he had drawn the attention of the House last session to the fact that, while a Bill had been passed entitling individual members of School Committees to vote for members of the Education Board, the Canterbury College Governors were elected by the School Committees as a whole. The position was an absurd one, and he thought that members of School Committees should be given the same privileges in regard to the Canterbury College Board as they possessed in regard to members of Boards of Education. He hoped the Minister would agree to a small amendment being inserted in the Bill making provision to enable this to be done. Mr. HALL JONES hoped no attempt would be made to introduce matter foreign to the Bill, which was one dealing solely with the election of members of Education Boards. The way to meet the point raised by the honourable gentleman would be by an amendment of the Act dealing with the College Governors, and he would promise to look into the matter and see if some such provision could not be made next session. Bill read a second time. CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS RATING BILL. IN COMMITTEE. Section 2 .- Power to remit rates on charitable institutions. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) moved to add the following proviso : " Provided that this section shall not apply to any charitable institution occupying an area of land greater than one acre in extent." Proviso added. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) moved to add to the proviso : "if within a borough, or three acres, if outside the boundaries of a borough." The Committee divided. AYES, 40. Allen, E. G. Hall-Jones Monk Allen, J. Hardy Napier Heke Arnold O'Meara Herries Bennet Palmer Parata Bollard Hogg Hornsby Carncross Russell, W. R. Duncan Lang Seddon Ell Lawry Stevens Field Thomson, J. W. McGowan Ward. McGuire Fisher Mackenzie, T. Fowlds Fraser, A. L. D. McKenzie, R. Tellers. Giffedder McLachlan Massey Mills Pirani. Graham NOES, 7. Tellers. Smith, G. J. Collins Tanner. Budde Laurensen Meredith Russell, G. W. Majority for, 33. Proviso added, and clause as amended agreed to. Bill reported, and read a third time. EVIDENCE FURTHER AMENDMENT BILL. IN COMMITTEE. Mr. NAPIER (Auckland City) moved the addition of the following new clause :- "The provisions of sections six, seven, and eight of 'The Evidence Further Amendment Act, 1895,' shall apply to any person examined under this Act as a witness." New clause negatived. Bill reported, and read a third time. COOK AND OTHER ISLANDS GOVERNMENT BILL. IN COMMITTEE. Clause 2 .- " Subject to the provisions of this Act, the laws in force in the said Islands at the commencement of this Act (including the local laws, customs, and usages of the native inhabitants, in so far as the same are not repugnant to the general principles of humanity) shall continue until other provision is made, and, subject as aforesaid, the statute laws of New Zealand shall not be in force in the said Islands." Mr. SEDDON moved the addition of the following proviso :- "Provided that the Governor, by Order in Council, may from time to time direct that any

<page>396</page>

Amendment agreed to, and clause as amended agreed to. Clause 3 .- " The Governor, by Order in Council, may from time to time direct that any of the laws in force in New Zealand shall be observed in the said Islands, either in whole or with such modifications as in his opinion are expedient for the good government and welfare of the inhabitants." Mr. GUINNESS (Grey) moved to insert, after " shall," the words, "have operation and." Amendment agreed to. Mr. GUINNESS (Grey) moved to insert, after "expedient for the," the words, "peace, order." Amendment agreed to. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) moved to insert, after "New Zealand," the words, "other than the laws relating to the sale of alcoholic liquors." Amendment agreed to. Mr. COLLINS (Christchurch City) moved to call ' Federal Ordinances ' in the case of the strike out the words, "by Order in Council," Federal Council, and ' local Ordinances ' in the for the purpose of inserting " by and with the case of the Island Councils. consent of Parliament." Amendment negatived. to be called the ' Niue Island Council,' consist- Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) moved to insert of not more than nine members, who shall strike out the words "either in whole or with from

time to time be nominated by the Governor on the recommendation of the Resident Commissioner made after consultation with the agreed to. Arikis and inhabitants of the Island." Clause 4 .- "(1.) Subject as aforesaid, the Courts of justice in existence in the said Islands, to strike out the word " shall," before Islands at the commencement of this Act, and the word " continue," with a view of inserting the Judges and officers thereof, and the jurisdiction, practice, and procedure thereof, shall continue until other provision is made : Mr. ATKINSON (Wellington City) moved, "Provided that the jurisdiction of the High Court of the said Islands, to insert, after "In Niue Court shall extend to all the said Islands. Island," the words "hereafter to be known as "(2.) There shall be an appeal from the decisions of the High Court of the said Islands to the Court of Appeal of New Zealand, in such Clause 8 .- "(1.) Subject to this Act, the said cases and subject to such rules and regulations Councils shall have the following powers respectively, that is to say,- by the Governor in Council with the concurrence of any two or more of the Judges of the Supreme Court. "(3.) Appeals to the Supreme Court may be heard and determined at any sitting of the Supreme Court in New Zealand, or, whenever so determined by the Governor in Council, by any Judge of the Supreme Court sitting at "(b.) Each of the Island Councils (other Rarotonga. "(4.) The rules and regulations made under this section may provide, inter alia, that appeals to the Supreme Court may be by way of case stated, with the legal argument (if any) attached thereto in writing, and it shall not be necessary in any such case for the parties to "(c.) The Niue Island Council shall have the appear either personally or by counsel." Mr. NAPIER (Auckland City) moved, in subsection (2), to strike out the following words : "the Governor in Council with the concurrence of." Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley) moved, That progress be reported. "Provided that such Federal and local Ordinances shall have no force or effect until mentioned also negatived. Mr. GUINNESS (Grey) moved to strike out from subsection (3) the words "whenever so determined by the Governor in Council." Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) moved, That the Chairman do leave the chair. Motion to leave the chair negatived, and amendment agreed to. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) moved, after the word " Rarotonga," the addition of the words "on such dates as shall be appointed by the Governor in Council." Words inserted, and clause as amended agreed to. Clause 7 .- "(1.) The Federal Parliament and the Native Councils existing at the commencement of this Act shall continue, but shall hereafter be called the ' Federal Council' and 'Island Councils,' respectively, and the enactments made by them shall hereafter be "(2.) In Niue Island there shall be a Council, Mr. SEDDON (Premier) moved. in subsection (2) same power to make Federal Ordinances for the government and welfare of all the said Islands and the inhabitants thereof as at the commencement of this Act it possessed in respect of the Cook Group ; than the Niue Island Council) shall have the same power to make local Ordinances for the government and welfare of the inhabitants within its jurisdiction as it possessed at the commencement of this Act ; and same power to make local Ordinances for the government and welfare of the inhabitants within its jurisdiction as any other Island Council has in respect of the inhabitants within its jurisdiction :

<page>397</page>

the name and on behalf of His Majesty. "(2.) In the case of any Federal or local Ordinance which, if the same were an Act of the General Assembly, would by law require to be reserved for the signification of His Majesty's assent, such local Ordinance shall not be assented to by the Resident Commissioner, but shall be transmitted by him to the Governor, who shall deal therewith as by law required. "(3.) The Federal Ordinances which at the commencement of this Act were in force in the Cook Group shall be deemed to be in force throughout all the said Islands." Mr. SEDDON (Premier) moved, in subsection (1), (a), to strike out the word " same," before the words "power to make " ; also all the words after "

inhabitants thereof." Amendment agreed to. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) moved, in subsection (1), (b), to strike out the word "same," before the words "power to make " ; also all the words after the word " jurisdiction." Amendment agreed to. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) moved, in subsection (1), (c), to strike out the word " same" ; also all the words after " jurisdiction." Amendment agreed to. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) moved, in the pro- viso, to insert, after the words "Ordinances shall," the words " be transmitted by the Resident Commissioner to the Governor, and shall." Amendment agreed to. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) moved, in the pro- viso, to strike out the words " Resident Commissioner," with a view of inserting the word " Governor." Amendment agreed to. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) moved to strike out subsections (2) and (3). Amendment agreed to. Clause 9 .- " (1.) There shall be paid on all goods imported into the said Islands duties of Customs in accordance with the New Zealand tariff. " (2.) No drawback shall be paid in New Zealand on goods shipped to the said Islands. " (3.) All goods the produce or manufacture of New Zealand, and all goods on which duty has been paid in New Zealand, or which are admitted into New Zealand free of duty, shall be admitted to the said Islands free of duty ; and similarly all goods the produce or manufacture of the said Islands, or on which duty has been paid in the said Islands, shall be admitted to New Zealand free of duty." Mr. SEDDON (Premier) moved the following new subsection :- " The Customs Laws Consolidation Act, 1882,' and all other laws relating to Customs now in force in New Zealand, shall be deemed to be in force in the said Islands." Amendment agreed to. Clause 13 .- " (1.) The Governor may from time to time, by Proclamation, set aside Crown lands within the said Islands to be reserves for the purpose of Imperial or colonial naval or military defence, or any other specified public purpose. evidence that the lands specified therein as Crown lands are in fact Crown lands for the purposes of this Act. "(3.) With respect to reserves for Imperial naval and military defence, the following special provisions shall apply :- "(a.) Upon being satisfied as to who is the proper person or authority in whom any reserve ought to be vested for the Imperial naval or military service of His Majesty, the Governor may, by Proclamation, vest the same in such person or authority and his or their successors in office for an estate in fee-simple, in trust, to hold and use the same for the Imperial naval or military service of His Majesty, as the case may be, according to the tenor of the Proclamation, and for no other purpose. " (b.) Upon being satisfied that any such reserve is no longer required for the purpose for which it is so vested as aforesaid, the Governor may, by Proclamation, revoke the vesting Proclamation, and thereupon the title created by the vesting Proclamation shall be deemed to be divested, and the reserve shall revert to His Majesty as Crown land and be liable to be dealt with accordingly in like manner in all respects as if the vesting Proclamation had never been made : Provided that all works, buildings, and machinery erected on the reserve during the currency of the vesting Proclamation may be removed or otherwise disposed of in such manner as the naval, or, as the case may be, the military, authorities of His Majesty think fit, and within such period after the reversion of the reserve as may be agreed on between the Governor and them. "(4.) All reserves (other than those for Imperial naval or military purposes) shall be held and administered by such persons, in such manner, and subject to such conditions as are from time to time prescribed by the Governor, or any person or authority empowered by the Governor in that behalf." Mr. SEDDON (Premier) moved to strike out " satisfied," with the view of inserting "informed by His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies." Amendment agreed to. Mr. NAPIER (Auckland City) moved the following new clause :- "This Act shall remain in force until ten days after the expiration of the next session of Parliament, and no longer, unless further by Act of the General Assembly extended." New clause agreed to. Bill reported. The House adjourned at five minutes past. twelve o'clock a.m.

<page>398</page>

Forest Gate Estate-Factories Bill. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER took the chair at half- past seven o'clock.

PRAYERS. # FOREST GATE ESTATE. Captain RUSSELL (Hawke's Bay) gave notice to ask the Premier the following question : " If any negotiations were in progress, or pending, relative to the acquisition by the

Crown of the Forest Gate Estate, in Hawke's Bay ? " Mr. SEDDON (Premier) would answer that at once by saying the Government had decided to give the option to the owners, if they thought fit, to retain the land. It was an optional matter with them. The Proclamation would require to be issued within twenty-one days, but the Government had not yet issued it. Captain RUSSELL asked, Under what clause of the Act was there power to act in the direction the Premier had indicated ? Mr. SEDDON said it could only be done by arrangement. If the parties were satisfied to retain what they had, the Government were quite prepared to let them have it, rather than pay the price fixed. Captain RUSSELL asked why the owner of the Hatuma Estate was not allowed the same option. Mr. SEDDON said there was a slight distinction between the Hatuma Estate and this estate. In respect to the Hatuma Estate the Government did not consider, under the whole of the circumstances, it was possible to act as they were doing in regard to this. Captain RUSSELL .- Then, you are making flesh of one and fowl of the other. Mr. SEDDON said there was a distinction, and in this case there was a slight difference. # FACTORIES BILL. On the question, That this Bill be read a third time, Mr. ARNOLD (Dunedin City) said,-I do not think it would be right for me to allow the third reading of this Bill to pass without congratulating the Government upon having carried it successfully through the House, and to touch country," which they have striven to raise, upon one or two questions which are more important will now be heard no longer, and I think they immediately related to the subject. We have had will realise that in the future farmers and three or four different Factories Acts placed on employers will raise the old cry, if any-and the statute-book, but the Act now about to pass I trust it will be very seldom of labour versus its third reading is a consolidating measure, capital. And on this point I wish to point out which also contains the conditions that were this : that only a few weeks ago, at the Employment of Young Persons Compulsory Employers' Association meeting held in this city, Payment of Wages Act, and I am sure that not one of the members stated that the farmers' only honourable members, but the country as a unions in New Zealand were striving to amalgamate whole, will receive this measure with a great mate with the Employers' Association through amount of satisfaction. During the last two out the colony, with the desire of resisting the months there has been a certain amount of labour legislation or the claims of the Labour unrest in the country with regard to labour party. Now, if this be so, members must immediately realise legislation. A great number of people have told immediately realise that, when you have the employment that we have gone far enough, and that we employers organizing both in town and country, should now pause. This unrest, however, has labour must also organize. And, when once you have labour organized and the employers organization thoroughly considered the subject, and who have not realised the position taken by the Government with regard to labour legislation. This unrest has been to a very large extent caused by the Press of the colony, and the employers themselves, who, in my opinion, believed that by causing a false cry they could raise a spirit of antagonism in the country to the present Liberal party which might be of service to them in fourteen months' time. Not only, Sir, has this unrest been created throughout the country, but it has also been felt by the labour organizations themselves, in consequence of the extent to which it has been carried. Workers have asked themselves whether it be a fact, as suggested, that the Government, who recently received their majority from the labouring classes, now had ceased to be their friends, and had determined to look elsewhere for their support. They commenced to ask themselves whether it was a fact that they would have to cease to support, with the enthusiasm they had previously, the party who had served them so well, and who they considered had striven to pass legislation fair and equitable to all concerned. But, Sir, I wish to say this: that if there are any persons outside the Government who deserve credit for the Bill as it stands at the present time it is the members of the Labour Bills Committee, who sat during last session and the present session of Parliament striving to put it into form. It is well known that, with the exception of one or two of the members on our side and of the Opposition, who are thoroughly in sympathy with the labour legislation, the majority of the members on that Committee are labour representatives ; and so the fact

that all that which was objectionable to the farmers, to the freezing-works proprietors, and the dairy proprietors and others has either been removed from this Act or have been put in such a position that they can work under it with satisfaction and success to themselves, is, I think, a complete answer to the criticism which has been shown during the last few months, to the effect that the Labour party and the Government were likely to run labour legislation to such an extent that it would detrimentally affect industries. I think that the cry of "town versus

<page>399</page>

cent. of the votes, and we know how they will be used, and which side is likely to be the most successful. I simply mention these facts to show that it is well that, while the Labour party are striving to treat the other side fairly - that while we are striving only to pass such legislation as is likely to be beneficial to our male workers, to our children, and to our female workers, as affects their health and as affecting their wages, without detrimentally affecting the employers - we should have the co-operation of the country members. I wish to point to one or two statements which have been made recently to show to what extent this criticism has gone. We were told, not many days ago, by a public speaker that, "as it is, the manufacturers are closing down their works and clearing out and leaving the colony; they cannot go on; they must get out of the colony and save a little of their capital from the wreck." Those are the statements made by a public man. And no sooner is a statement like that made than it is wired throughout the length and breadth of New Zealand, and is published in every newspaper, and repeated until the farmers and employers in the country believe that such is the case. Now, I want to disprove this in a few words, because I will not delay the House at length upon this question; but I wish to show this: that the increase of labour or the decrease of labour in the colony during the various years must be an answer to that question. And I find this: that from 1895 to 1896 the number of factory-hands had increased by 2,508, from 1896 to 1897 by 4,531, from 1897 to 1898 by 2,754, from 1898 to 1899 by 5,736, and from 1899 to 1900 by 3,636, and from 1900 to 1901-the end of March last-by 4,522. So that the increase of the employés in the various factories in the towns of the colony during seven years has increased by 79 per cent., and surely that is an answer to those who state that men in the colony are selling up and leaving so as to save the little they still have left from the wreck. Last year there were 4,744 factories in the colony, and the total number of hands employed was 53,460. An Hon. MEMBER.- How many were employed in each factory. Mr. ARNOLD.- It is impossible to say how many were employed in each factory? An Hon. MEMBER.- There were only two or three in some places. Mr. ARNOLD.- Well, it is no argument to say that sometimes there were two and sometimes three. You have the aggregate number and the aggregate increase, and that is quite sufficient argument. If I told the House the number of factories had increased I might be making a statement that would be misleading, but, when I say that the employés have increased in number it matters not whether they are working in twos or threes or whether there are three hundred in each place. Now, here is another statement that was made: A gentleman said,- "It would be a good thing for the colony if idleness with their hands in their pockets, and nothing else in their pockets but their hands. I think that would make them think a little." Sir, if a statement like that had been made ten or twelve years ago we might have understood it, because we know that at that time the policy of the capitalist and of many employers was to strive to make working-men walk about the streets "with their hands in their pockets, and nothing else but their hands in their pockets," when they asked for higher wages and better conditions. But to day we expect something else. Here is another very peculiar thing: A statement like that is taken no notice of whatever by the Press of the colony. Not long ago we had in one of our illustrated papers-a very acceptable paper in this city, and especially among some of the local representatives, who receive a certain amount of notice-we had a full-page picture showing the manufacturers of the colony leaving the shores, each one with his \$500 in his hand, and the working-men saying good-bye to them, and wishing them farewell. How is it we have never had an

illustration in any paper in New Zealand showing the employers sending their men out of the factories, and compelling them to walk about the streets with both hands in their pockets, and nothing in their pockets but their hands, so that ultimately there might be nothing in their stomachs-for that is the argument - and consequently they would be glad to go and take that which is offered to them ? Here is another statement we have not had mentioned in the Press of New Zealand as far as I am aware : A speaker said, - " It would be a good thing for the colony if the working-men were to pack up their traps and leave New Zealand in a body. It would be a good thing for New Zealand, and possibly for them. Their place would be easily filled by Chinamen and Japanese." Why, there is a beautiful little picture for some of these papers. The working-men being turned out of New Zealand, and Chinese and Japanese coming in great steamers such as those we speak of when debating the San Francisco mail-service; but not one word was said about a statement such as that in the Press of New Zealand. As I have previously stated, this Bill is a consolidating measure. It is a measure that has one or two improvements in it that might be very well touched upon, but I will leave that point to others who wish to refer to it. I simply wish to say that there are certain exemptions from the Bill that will be found in the Second Schedule, and that some of these have been placed there with the full consent of the Labour party, in consequence of the contents of subsection (3) of clause 18, which provides that, if an industry whose hours are specified in this Act as forty-eight has a dispute which is brought before the Court of Arbitration, that Court may extend the hours of labour or decrease them. I quite agree that that is a very fair clause, and, with that, none of those who have been exempted from the operation of this Act in regard to the hours of labour can possibly

<page>400</page>

regard to the limitation of overtime, which may be adversely criticized by some, that the hours that are being worked by young people and females-for they are the only ones of whom we have any record-have increased to a very large extent, and from the evidence that has been brought before the Labour Bills Committee, and which no doubt honourable members have read, it has been strictly necessary to limit these hours still further. In 1898 4,342 persons worked 107,516 hours ; but, in 1900, 5,090 persons worked 138,169 hours, and in 1901, 7,247 persons worked as much as 211,725 hours. From the evidence also, as I have previously stated, it is found that this overtime is proving detrimental not only to those who have not employment, but to the health of those who are compelled to work overtime. I was delighted to hear the speeches of some of those who spoke upon this measure a few nights ago, because of the amount of praise bestowed upon the various Factory Inspectors in New Zealand. It must be admitted that the success of the working of this Act depends to a very large extent upon the class of Factory Inspectors we have-by the amount of wisdom that is shown by them ; and when we have members of this House in their places stating that the various Factory Inspectors are working most fairly, so that both the employers and employes are satisfied with their efforts, I think the Government may be complimented on their selection. And it may be a lesson to these Inspectors to continue on the policy they have followed. Mr. HOUSTON (Bay of Islands) .- I cannot let this Bill pass its third reading without making a few remarks. There is a great deal in the Bill I approve of, especially the principle establishing an eight-hours system for a day's work. I have always been in favour of that principle, and I am glad to see it is adopted in this Bill, which is now becoming law. But there are many things that I entirely disagree with in regard to this Bill. The Bill as now under consideration is certainly a great improvement on the Bill as introduced by the Government. I admit this is owing in a great measure to the labours of the Labour Bills Committee in so altering the Bill as to make it more acceptable to the House; but, as a country member, I must raise my protest against certain principles contained in the Bill which affect most injuriously the country districts. I am sorry to say, Sir, in the discussion of this Bill, that a majority of the town members entirely opposed anything that might be considered in the interests of the country districts. I refer more particularly to the members for Auckland City. There were two of the members for Auckland City

who supported the principle that I pointed out would act most injuriously against the country districts. When I proposed an amendment of the Bill to meet that matter those two members voted with the Government for the establishment of a principle which, I say, cannot but act most injuriously to the country districts. The Mr. Arnold with respect to clause 10 of the Bill, whereby those who were conducting small industries in the country could be summoned before the Court and rendered liable to a fine not exceeding £5- for having carried on an industry without being a registered factory. I consider that a most injurious provision. It is one I cannot agree with. There is also the principle established in the Bill that every private house in a country district is a factory. I do not think for a moment that those who compose the Labour Bills Committee, in considering that matter, gave it proper attention, or they would not in the Bill. Any private house where people do their own washing and ironing can be constituted a factory. I say that is a great injustice to the country districts, and, as a country member, I must raise my protest against any Bill containing such a clause and such a principle as that. It is impossible in many country districts to engage the services of washerwomen. In towns it is different altogether. In towns you have factories where people are engaged in this industry, and you have private individuals making a living out of it; but in country districts it is almost utterly impossible to get any one to assist in this work, and the result is that the members of the household have to do it, and if they do it the house becomes a factory.

An Hon. MEMBER .- What section is that in ? Mr. HOUSTON .- You will find it if you look ; it is there. I am not going to point out the section. But the private house of any country member of this Parliament becomes a factory under this Bill. If the members of the household do the washing, whether they are paid for it or not, the house can be constituted a factory. I say that is a gross injustice to the country districts. It is coming to this more and more every day in this House : that it is a question of town versus country; the towns wish to get everything in their own interest, no matter what the effect on the country may be, and it becomes a question of town members against country members.

An Hon. MEMBER .- NO. Mr. HOUSTON. - I say it is, and that we have had an example of it in the Bill under discussion. Of the three Auckland members, two voted against the amendment of this clause ; and I say it has come to this : that it is a question of town versus country, and, as a country member, I must raise my protest against it. I am sorry to have to do it, but I must do it. To say that a private house in a country district is constituted a factory-it is a disgrace to the Parliament of New Zealand to bring in such a measure as this. And not only is that so, but if any unfortunate country storekeeper gets the assistance of any one in his store to work for him his store is constituted a factory. I say, then, I would be wanting in my duty as a country member if I did not protest against this. I say it is a disgrace to impose these conditions on the country districts. I am astonished to find that members of this House

<page>401</page>

am more astonished to find that the members for the City of Auckland, with the exception of one honourable member, voted in favour of this measure. Now, Sir, as I have said in the beginning, I agree with a great deal that is in this Bill. I say it is a great alteration as compared with the Bill when it was first introduced to this House, and I admit that it is creditable to the members of the Labour Bills Committee to have brought down such a measure as they have. At the same time I consider if they did their duty fairly, or if they had considered these matters as they ought to have done, they would have seen that this is a Bill that acts most injuriously to the country districts. The honourable member who spoke last talked about the report having gone abroad that capital had been driven out of the colony owing to the labour laws. I may say that I was told not later than last night of one employer in Wellington who, the last time he went to draw from the bank for the payment of wages, drew out £112, as against the usual allowance of £225. Why? Because he finds that this Bill would act most injuriously against him. That is the result in one case, and it must be the same in other cases. I raise my protest against this Bill, and I hope it will not become law.

Mr. BOLLARD (Eden) .- It was not my intention to have made any remarks on the third reading of

this Bill had it not been for the speech delivered by the honourable member for Dunedin City (Mr. Arnold). In making an electioneering speech on this Bill, as he did, he ought at least to have been fair to honourable members who were opposed to him. He referred to a section of this House who some time ago predicted all sorts of gloomy results to the colony through the labour laws. He then went on to approve of the provisions of the Bill, and he affected to see that some of us who were opposed to the labour laws at first had come round to think they were a good thing after all. It was something to that effect. Now, let us consider what this Bill was like when it first came down to the House; and who was responsible for bringing it down with the objectionable clauses in it? I say it was the Labour party. The honourable gentleman shakes his head, but he knows as well as I do that was admitted to be the case. It was certainly the Labour party who were the means of getting the objectionable clauses put in the Bill. Now, there would have been a conflict if these clauses had been left in the Bill. They would, in fact, have been the cause of an industrial war. The honourable gentleman takes credit to himself for the passing of this Bill. Now, there are two factors that he ought to have given credit to for the passing of this Bill. First, there was the extraordinary pressure brought from the outset by the employers. I suppose there has been no Bill-not, at all events, during my time-that has been before a Committee of this House in respect to which there was so much excitement and agitation and so many people attending the Committee VOL. CXIX .- 83. honourable member and other labour members of this House deserve credit for having modified their views when they came to rub shoulders with members on this side of the House ; and it was in consequence of having modified their views that they are now coming round to something reasonable as compared with what they wanted some years ago. The members of the Labour party, I have no doubt, when they saw the extraordinary pressure from outside in connection with the Bill, had to modify their views ; they saw the effect it would have-that a large number of people would be walking about with both hands in their pockets if the Bill became law as it was first brought down. The Bill now, owing to a few members of the Labour Bills Committee who take reasonable views of labour laws, and are inclined to pass laws that will be to the advantage of both employer and employed, is a workable measure, and the honourable gentleman ought to give credit for this to those who were instrumental in bringing about this state of things. As the Bill came down, the taking-away of overtime would have caused a great deal of trouble. As is well known, many industries, especially in the case of those connected with perishable goods, could not be worked without great extra expense unless overtime was allowed, and we have provided for overtime with increased pay. When the honourable gentleman gives the Labour party credit for the views they put forward, I think he should be fair to men who are more liberal-minded than himself. I am not referring to the labour members in the House, but to the pressure that is admitted to have been brought from outside by the Labour party. It was admitted before the Committee that they were instrumental in inducing the Premier to bring in the objectionable clauses in the Bill. Mr. ARNOLD .- No; one man. Mr. BOLLARD. - Well, is he not president of the Trades and Labour Council? No doubt he was advised as to what evidence he should give in the matter. Then, the honourable gentleman went on to talk about the increase of factories, and the number of hands employed. Well, no wonder there is a large increase in factories and the hands employed in factories when a blacksmith and his boy constitutes a factory. It is altogether a misnomer to make a man and a boy a factory ; there ought to be at least three or four. It is not my intention to detain the House, because the Bill has been before me so much the last three months that I hope I am about seeing the last of it. But there is one thing I would say : I hope the Bill will be so satisfactory to both employer and employed that it will be a long time before there is any occasion to bring another one down. Mr. J. W. THOMSON (Clutha) .- The member for the Bay of Islands said he supported the Bill because it gives legal effect to the eight-hours system, and he went on to say that this is the first time legal effect has been given to eight hours as the time a person shall be re-



tained in the first Bill that was passed regarding labour. It was known as " The Employment of Women and Children Bill." It was introduced in 1873 by Mr. Bradshaw, and for years was known as the "Bradshaw Act." I hold in my hand the statutes of 1873; the 3rd section of the statute is as follows :- "No person shall employ any female at any time between the hours of six in the afternoon and eight in the morning, or for more than eight hours in any one day." In the following year the Act was slightly amended, but not as regards the number of hours of labour. The weak point in the Act was that it did not provide efficient administration. At the same time it was admitted, especially in Dunedin, that the Act did a great deal of good in the way of ameliorating the condition of women in factories, and the women showed their appreciation of the measure by presenting Mr. Bradshaw with handsome presents. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin). - I am sorry, Sir, I was not present when the honourable member for Dunedin City (Mr. Arnold) made his speech on the third reading of this Bill, but I want to say this : that no Bill which has ever come before Parliament received fairer or more reasonable treatment from both sides of the House than did the Bill under discussion. And I congratulate the Labour Bills Committee and the Committee of the whole House on the good work which has been done. The Bill now is a very different and much more reasonable Bill than the Bill which was first introduced, and that is especially the case with regard to part of the new clause formerly numbered 17A, but which is now clause 18, and the exemptions in regard to the industries which handle perish- able goods. But there is still plenty of room for improvement, and I hope the Premier will see that such improvement is made before the Bill goes on to the statute-book. But the great difficulty in connection with Labour Bills is that during the last few years we have had too much unsettling legislation, and people at the present time are afraid to invest their capital in industries where labour is employed, and consequently many of our industries are not so prosperous as they ought to be, nor have we so many of them. Over and over again people have told me they would like to go in for flax-mills or sawmills, or to put their money into other industries ; but they are afraid of our labour laws, and afraid of trouble with the workers, and consequently they put their money into a bank or some other investment. I say it is not a healthy state of affairs, and I think in future we ought to devote our energies to restoring confidence and avoiding friction wherever it is possible to do so. Of course, workers, or the majority of them, do not feel the pinch so long as we are able to employ our surplus labour ; but the time may come, and very possibly will come in the near future, when we shall not be able to employ so many people on co-operative works as we do at the present time ; and in view of that time the people who put their savings into industries Mr. J. W. Thomson think, more encouragement and consideration than has been accorded to them in the last few years. Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) .- Sir, I was. unable to be present when this Bill went through Committee ; but, so far as I can see, there is hardly any objection now to be raised to the Bill. I do not join in the paans of joy which have been sounded in the Government news- papers at having produced this Bill. This Bill seems to me to be simply a consolidating Bill. As far as I can see there is not much that is new in it. It is mainly a consolidation of the Acts that have been for some time in force in this colony. They have been tried and have been found successful. Every one will agree that it is a good thing that factories should be inspected. Every one will agree that sanitation is the first item to be con- sidered in factories, and every one will agree that women and children are not to be subjected to the same labour as adult men. On those points every one will be agreed except the Government. Now, I was pained beyond measure at the Government refusing to allow their own workshops and their own factories to be put in this Bill. Every private employer is, very rightly, to be subjected to this Bill ; every private employer, very rightly, has rules laid down as to the way he uses his employés; and every private employer is to be liable to the visits of the Inspector, and very rightly so. But the Government workshops are to be allowed to sweat their hands and to have their factories in any state of insanitation. I do not say they are so, but no Inspector is to see that they are not. I say, above all

things, the Government factories and Government workshops should be under this Bill the same as any private individual, and it is not credit- able to the Government to always oppose their own factories and their own workshops and their own employé's coming under the labour laws. Mr. HALL .- They come under the classifica- tion. Mr. HERRIES .- What has classification to do with sanitation? It is a most important thing, and yet the Government say they will not be bound by the same laws as the private employers are to be bound by. That is a position no Government should take up, and the people of this colony some day will say- and I believe they have that opinion now-that the Government shall be bound by the same laws as they subject private employers to. I regret that the clause moved by the honourable member for Christchurch City (Mr. Smith) was not accepted by the Government and embodied in the Bill. It is a blot in the Bill not having the Government workshops under the Factories Act. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccarton) .- I do not propose to address the House at any length re- garding this matter, because I think the excel- lence of the Bill may be emphasized from the fact that the one that has been passed is not the one brought in by the Government, but the

<page>403</page>

Bill that was passed by the Labour Bills Com- mittee last year, and which has been revised by them this year. I think that what caused alarm in the country a few weeks ago was the Bill that originated with the Government, and was placed before this House. However, it has been stated that that was by mistake. We do not know yet, it is true, who made the mistake, or how it came to be made ; but the understand- ing given to the Committee by the Premier was this: that he had been misled, having been informed that the Bill, as he introduced it, was the Bill as it was passed last year by the Labour Bills Committee. I think, how- ever, there is a direct responsibility to be ascertained in connection with that Bill. No one would, of course, expect the Right Hon. the Premier, in his capacity as Minister of Labour, to compare line for line with last year's Bill any Bill placed in his hands ; but I think the House has a right to expect the Government to place the responsibility of that misrepresentation upon the proper shoulders, so that the industries of the colony shall not again be shaken and imperilled by persons passing on to the Premier as Government proposals such drastic measures as was the one to which I refer. I did not intend to make a speech upon this Bill, but the somewhat militant speech made by the honourable member for Dunedin City (Mr. Arnold) led me during the time the debate has been proceeding to make one or two com- parisons, and I think I shall be able to interest the House for a few minutes while I say what these are. One of the most surprising things to my mind during the last twelve months has been the remarkable buoyancy of the Customs revenue. Now, Sir, I have had a suspicion for some months past that that buoyancy was not al- together-shall I say? - agenuinething. I do not mean, of course, that the figures were incorrect, but I have had a suspicion that a number of people in this colony were importing what before had been made in the colony, or what one would expect would be made in the colony. And the few figures which I am going to give will, I hope, convince the Government that there is an undue amount of importation going on ; and that, notwithstanding the statement made by the honourable member for Dunedin City (Mr. Arnold) as to the large growth of the number of factories and the progress of the em- ployed in our factories, there is a significance, I think, to be attached to the figures which I shall proceed to lay before this House, which will be, at any rate, enough to make the Go- vernment seriously inquire whether the in- creased imports of these articles can in any form be traced to the labour legislation. I do not think it can be. I do not make the asser- tion. I will now endeavour to state to the House what may be a possible explanation of what is a very remarkable phenomenon in con- nection with the economic condition of this colony. In the ordinary course one would expect that in a country like this, where our manufactures are undoubtedly improving so far as the skill of the operatives is concerned and so far as the capital applied to them is con- cerned, one would expect that, in the ordinary course, the importations of these articles would have decreased, and that our own factories would have shown a larger output.

Now, I cannot say how far the output is larger from our factories, but I will state to the House what the figures are which I have taken out during the last few minutes, comparing the im- portations of these goods, nearly all of which are carrying heavy duties, for 1900, as compared with 1899, and if I went back a few years no doubt the comparison would be stronger. These are the figures :- Table of Imports of some Articles during the Years 1899 and 1900. 1900. 1899. £ £ Apparel and slops, n.o.e. 391,526 449,323 .. Boots and shoes 144,717 186,088 Nos. 0 to 3 1,389 1,484 gummed . . 5,487 7,182 Brass manufactures 6,258 7,960 .. Furniture 32,609 45,331 .. Hosiery .. 88,668 104,858 .. Leather 60,051 70,031 . . Dredging machinery 9,299 74,465 .. Mining machinery 19,726 32,097 .. Saddlery and harness 23,831 28,988 .. Woodenware, 20 per cent. duty .. 9,899 13,673 Woodenware, 15 per cent. duty 13,149 8,200 .. Woollen piece-goods 268,881 301,923 . . Now, I will refer specially to a class 8.30. in which this colony ought to have a very large pre-eminence. It seems a ridiculous thing that we should send wool from this country to, say, the Mother-country, and then reimport it in the manufactured article. What do I find with regard to woollen piece-goods ? In 1899 the value of the imports were £268,881. In 1900 they were £301,923. Now, I do not wish to attach special importance to these figures. They have been compiled at random during the three-quarters of an hour that this debate has been proceeding ; but I venture to say that the list of articles and the importa- tions I have given show an enormous and un- expected increase in one year, and that it will be for us to ask ourselves whether-and if so, how far-these increases are the result of our labour laws and their operation. I am one of those who have always favoured equi- table, just, and honest conditions in con- nection with labour. I believe that no country can be truly great where there is a class who are being sweated by capitalists. I believe that such a state of things is now impossible in this country, and that whatever there was formerly in the nature of sweating has been, by the united force of public opinion on both sides of the historical parties of this country, absolutely squelched. A state of things will never grow up in New Zealand under which there would be anything in the way of sweating as it is known in the larger manufacturing centres of the Old World. So far as the Bill itself, I think it is a good measure. There are one or two points that one might have

<page>404</page>

wished to be different. I think, with a num- ber of my brother members, the Government should come under the operation of the factory laws, just the same as I think they should come under the operations of all other labour laws. However, I understand the Right Hon. the Premier is willing that the ordinary factory Inspectors appointed by the Government shall be instructed to report from time to time upon the factories carried on by the Government. At the same time, manufacturers and other persons who are brought under the operation of the law have a fair right to ask that the Government shall stand equal with them in so far as they are employers of labour. However, I did not rise for the purpose of criticizing the Bill as it was introduced or as it is likely to be passed. I think it is a good consolidating mea- sure, and I think it is a better measure because it is not as introduced by the Government. My chief object in rising was to point out the large increase in the values of the imports of some of the articles that might well be made in the colony. The time will come when we shall have to watch that the increase of importations is not allowed to grow, because it ought to be our object to try to build up a young nation in New Zealand which will not only be an agri- cultural nation, but will also be, as far as is possible, a manufacturing one, where at any rate, we shall manufacture nearly all that is required for the benefit of our own people. Mr. BENNET (Tuapeka) .- I would not have spoken on this Bill had it not been for the re- mark of the honourable member for Dunedin City, who insinuated, if I understood him rightly, that the labour unions and the labourers in the country districts would combine, when they would be strong enough, to force conditions on the country settlers which the latter would be unable to encounter. I can tell the honourable gentleman that, if that is his idea of the matter, he is very much mistaken. Mr. HUTCHESON. - Those were only the words of the Premier. Mr. BENNET. - That was the inference I took from the statement, at all events; but I

can tell the honourable gentleman that if there is one class in this country who are able to protect themselves it is the country settlers, who, while they may not be so numerous in number as the populations in the towns, still can impose conditions under which the town people could not live, if they felt inclined to do so. The honourable member for Riccarton stated that, if the Bill as brought before the House had not been amended by the Labour Bills Committee and by the House, it would have caused a feeling of great unrest in the colony. But, I would ask, what created that unrest ? Was it not the honourable gentleman's own Bill which, I say, did more harm than all the labour measures introduced into this House either this session or any other session. The last time I was in the South the country people were up in arms all over the Island because under that Bill they could not have carried on their operations. That is the sole cause of the whole trouble, and that is the reason why the farmers Mr. G. W. Russell their own protection. And I may say that the farmers would not be the only ones to suffer if that Bill had been allowed to pass, as the farmers would then have to give over grain- growing, and who would be the sufferers then ? These will now come under the Factory Act, and it will completely hamper employers, be- cause they will have to keep extra hands. Had the honourable gentleman's Bill passed as he desired, so that domestic servants would have been compelled to take a half-holiday and leave their places at noon, I would like to know where they were to go to. I suppose there would be nothing else for it but that they would have to walk about the fields until such time as they could return. Now, many of these farmers had contracts for ploughing, and were often prevented by bad weather from get- ting the work done, and during the delay they were paying the men and feeding their horses ; and if they were to be confined to eight hours, and compelled to give a half-holiday every week, how, in the name of Goodness, were they going to carry on the work? That was the Bill the honourable gentleman brought down ; but, still, he tries to throw the responsibility for this un- rest upon the Government and the Labour Bills Committee. I say the country does not care what hours people work in the towns, but the country is determined that it will not be regu- lated by the same rules that apply in the 1 towns, and I hope they will be allowed to carry on their business in the way best suited to their occupation. I would just like to make a remark upon the point raised as to the employment of two workmen constituting a factory. Take the country, and the case of a blacksmith who has got to work all hours in the harvesting. There are often breakages in machinery which have to be repaired. The blacksmiths make their living out of the far- mers, and they have to work to suit the farmers' convenience. Mr. HUTCHESON. - That has been the law for six years. Mr. BENNET .- It may have been the law, but I do not suppose it has been strictly en- forced, because if it had been strictly enforced these people could not have carried on their avocations. If there were two girls in a house dressmaking they would, under the Act, con- stitute a factory. I think all this should be left out, and I am sorry the honourable mem- ber for Dunedin City thought fit to raise any friction between the towns and country districts, which, if followed up, I am satisfied he would be the first to regret his ill-timed speech. Mr. COLLINS (Christchurch City) .- I am almost sorry any debate arose on the third reading of this Bill. It did appear to me to be quite unnecessary, and I should not have spoken at all had it not been for the speech of the honourable member for Riccarton, which speech, I fear, is likely to lead to some misapprehension with regard to what has been done. But I would just remind the House and the honour- able member that we are not discussing the Customs duty nor the tariff revision. I really

duced the question of the increase of goods subject to Customs duties for the year 1900 as compared with 1899. I understand that the honourable gentleman spoke as a friend of the Factories Act, but I can see but little use in a member praising that Act in one breath and then quoting figures which those who read them outside this House will certainly understand as telling against the very legislation the honour- able gentleman has praised. I am willing to admit at once that the honourable gentleman has always been a friend of labour legislation, and I think he can scarcely have gauged the interpretation which, outside

this House, will be placed upon the figures he has quoted to the House. What are we to understand, Sir? He has quoted a considerable increase of the Customs duties on a number of manufactured articles. I take it, the only interpretation which can logically be put upon his speech is that he intended to show that the operation of the labour laws had gradually forced an increase of the imported article as against the manufactured article. If it did not mean that, it meant nothing at all—I mean, nothing in relation to the subject under discussion—for we must remember we are discussing now the Factories Bill. Now, I would ask the honourable gentleman to bear in mind that one might answer, or reply, to his contention by simply asserting that the goods noted by him have simply increased in volume in accordance with other increases—with the general increase: that they have simply increased as other articles imported have increased in proportion to the imports for the preceding year. But there is another reply. It was unfair to quote 1899 and 1900. What possible conclusion could one arrive at by the mere relative proportion of the amount of goods imported during the year 1899 as compared with 1900? The labour laws clearly had been in operation long enough to have quoted the Customs duties for years before these. Had the honourable gentleman shown that since the advent of the labour laws there had been a gradual falling-off in the manufactured article and a gradual and steady increase in the imported article, then he might have done some good; but simply to show that, in a year of unrivalled, unprecedented prosperity, there was a greater amount of imported articles, and as a consequence an increase in the duties paid upon those articles, seems to me to show nothing except the great prosperity of the colony, and, if anything further, that, although the manufacturers had increased and the number of workers also, then with an increase in the manufactures we were unable to supply the demand, and had still to make further demands upon the importer. Now, let us look at one or two of the items quoted. We were told of a certain class of boots—0 to 3's were quoted as rising from £1,389 in 1899 to £1,484 in 1900. But these are not manufactured within the colony. The same applies to gum-boots. They rose from five thousand to seven thousand, but they are not manufactured within the colony. Then, take the case of brass manufactures: if moment he will see that these are not manufactured within the colony either. There are some, of course. But chandeliers, for instance, are not made in the colony, and an immense amount of this class of manufactures has of late been imported into the colony, consequent upon the lighting-up of so many places in our cities with the electric-light, which call for fittings and equipments that are not manufactured within the colony. Never, perhaps, more than last year did building operations in the colony proceed at such a rate, and never before were so many buildings fitted up with the electric-light and other brass-work; and this will account for the unprecedented rise in the Customs duties upon these brass fittings. It was only last year that I asked the Colonial Treasurer to agree to a reduction of the duties on these particular articles, which were coming into the colony in order to be used by our own tradesmen in our manufactures. They were themselves asking for a remission of the duties on this class of goods which were not manufactured in the colony, but which were used in several of our industries. With regard to furniture, the increase is simply a witness to the increased prosperity of the colony. A great deal of this might have been made in the colony. Surely the honourable gentleman will see it is just as much an evidence of the greater purchasing power of the colony, and, certainly, as the figures only range over a period of twelve months, they cannot legitimately be used as telling against our labour legislation. With regard to the hosiery that is imported, it cannot be said that it would have been made in the colony. Nearly every thread of it is imported, and is not manufactured in the colony. I cannot speak with regard to leather. But, certainly, so far as dredging and mining machinery is concerned, this could not be manufactured in the colony at the rate at which it was wanted, and that undoubtedly accounted for the fact that so much was imported. Now, these facts absolutely destroy the honourable gentleman's contention that these figures—for I imply that was the honourable gentleman's contention—tell against the factory legislation. Very well, then: from first to last the honourable gentleman has posed as a friend of

the factory legislation. From first to last he has posed as a friend of the labour legislation. Why does he, with one breath, make it appear that he is a friend of the labour legislation, and then, in the next breath, go on to quote figures which, read outside, would create the impression that our labour legislation drove trade from the colony ? The honourable gentleman blew both hot and cold, and had it not been for that I should not have risen to speak. While I am on my feet, as a member of the Labour Bills Committee, I should like to disabuse members of the impression which may have arisen in the minds of some that the credit for this Bill is due to any particular section of the House. I say with a great deal of pleasure that the Labour Bills

<page>406</page>

both sides of this House, and I can say now, and I say it fearlessly, that those members who came from the Opposition side were as assiduous in their efforts and as indefatigable in their labours as any other members of the Committee ; they certainly did good work-as good as many other members-in bringing the Bill to the shape in which we now have it. I do not think it would be fair to mention names, but the one desire of every member of the Committee was to make the measure such as would be workable, and I believe the Committee did make it so ; it was not such when it first came down to the House. The Labour Bills Committee did not raise any trouble. There was scarcely a member of the Committee spoke throughout the time when the Bill was in Committee in this House; they left the talking to be done by others. There was a tacit agreement amongst us that the Bill was in good shape, and it would be best to get it through the House as speedily as possible in the form in which it was sent down from the Committee. It is quite true others spoke, and moved amendments with the ulterior motive of killing the Bill ; there is no doubt about that. But, if those who worked on the Committee did not participate in the discussion, it was that they might not prolong the debate, but by their silence help the Bill through. There is no need to say more. When witnesses came before the Committee, which they did from every part of the country-it was a great satisfaction to the members of the Committee to note that when they came as representatives of employers, and some of whom represented the greatest industries of the colony, nevertheless they spoke in terms of approval and favour of labour legislation; they spoke in the highest terms of praise of what has been accomplished in the past as the result of the labour legislation that has been placed on the statute-book. I, with others, say how glad I am that this Bill, which, I believe, is a distinct advance -- which will make largely for the benefit of employer and employed - how glad I am it has reached the stage it has, and how sincerely I hope, without any further alteration, it will reach the statute-book. Mr. SYMES (Egmont) .- I rise for the purpose of moving That the Bill be recommitted, for the purpose of adding a proviso which was promised when the Bill passed through Committee. I will confine myself to the proviso, which is to subsection (3) of new clause 20, to this effect : "Provided that, in the case of persons employed in and at bush sawmills engaged solely at logging, breaking down, and sawing rough timber, the overtime shall only be payable for the extended hours worked during the week in excess of the forty-eight hours." Amendment agreed to, and Bill recommitted. # IN COMMITTEE.

Overtime. Clause 20 .- (1.) The prescribed number of working-hours may from time to time be extended, but such extension shall not, in the case of women and young persons, be- Alr. Collins "(b.) More than two days in any week ; or " (c.) More than thirty days in any year ; or "(d.) On any holiday or half-holiday. " (2.) On every such occasion no person shall be employed for more than four hours continuously without having an interval of at least half an hour for rest and refreshment. "(3.) Every person who is employed during such extended hours under this section shall be paid therefor at not less than one-fourth as much again as the ordinary rate : " Provided that when the ordinary rate is by time, and not by piecework, the overtime rate shall not be less than sixpence per hour for those persons whose ordinary wages do not exceed ten shillings a week, and ninepence per hour for all other persons so employed ; and shall be paid at the first regular pay-day thereafter. "(4.) The occupier of a factory shall at all times keep a

record-book, called the " Overtime- book," wherein shall be entered a correct record showing, in the case of each person who is employed during such extended hours under this section, the name of the assistant, and the respective dates and periods of such employment. " (5.) The overtime-book shall at all times be open to the inspection of the Inspector. "(6.) The Inspector may at any time require the occupier to verify the entries in the overtime-book by statutory declaration in such form as may be prescribed by regulations." Mr. SYMES (Egmont) moved, after subsection (3), to insert the following proviso : -

"Provided that, in the case of persons employed in and at bush sawmills engaged solely at logging, breaking down, and sawing rough timber, the overtime shall only be payable for the extended hours worked during the week in excess of forty eight hours." Amendment agreed to, and reported to the House. On the motion, That the Bill be read a third time, Mr. W. FRASER (Wakatipu) said, 9.0. - Sir, I would not have risen to speak on this Bill but for what was said by the honourable member for Christchurch City (Mr. Collins). He took the honourable member for Riccarton to task for a statement he had made about the fact that a number of articles that formerly used to be manufactured in this colony were now imported. First of all, let me ask the honourable gentleman if he is prepared to deny that such is the case. Is he prepared to say that a number of articles that were formerly manufactured here are not imported now, or to deny that it pays the manufacturer better to import them than to make them ? Is there any doubt on this subject ? I am not talking about a particular article, but in a general way. The honourable member for Christchurch City (Mr. Collins) adversely criticized the honourable member for Riccarton for drawing attention to this fact. Now, I desire to point out that the honourable member for Riccarton spoke not against or in

<page>407</page>

was uttering a warning note that we ought to be careful as to the limits to which we should go in regard to this matter. Surely a man who has the courage to utter that warning note is a better friend to the labouring man than the one who always cries "Peace, peace, where there is no peace," and leads people to live in a fool's paradise. I do not consider, nor do I think the honourable member for Riccarton intended, his remark should apply to this particular Bill. I am glad to see the form in which this Bill is about to pass this House. There may be some defects, but, as a whole, I think it is a good Bill. There are businesses in the country districts that are subject to the Act-factories-as referred to by the honourable member for Tuapeka, and any one who has a knowledge of what is required to be done in these country so-called factories knows how hard it will be if they are compelled to comply with the terms of the statute. A farmer comes in, for instance, at night-time with a swingle- tree to be mended. Has he to wait until the morning before he can get it done? The farmer could not wait for that, so the blacksmith lights his fire and does the work at once. Yet by this Act he will break the law if he does so. But, after all, that is merely a side-issue, and I have no doubt that by-and-by the House will do its best to remove these causes of discontent and friction. I rose chiefly, Sir, to say that I was glad to find members having the courage of their opinions, and uttering warning notes when necessary. The member for Riccarton had the courage to do that, and I did not think it becoming in the honourable member for Christchurch City to speak so disparagingly of his colleague from Canterbury. As far as I am concerned, I will support the Bill. Mr. ELL (Christchurch City) .- The honourable member for Eden, I think unintentionally, was unfair to a section of the Labour Bills Committee, because he stated-and I now give him an opportunity of setting himself right-that a section of the Labour Bills Committee were fair-minded and reasonable- Mr. BOLLARD .- No. Mr. ELL .- That was the impression he conveyed, and I am very glad that he has set himself right on that point. I may mention that the Labour Bills Committee went through the Bill very carefully, clause by clause ; and, to show how unanimous we were, we had not a single division. That shows how well and reasonably we all worked together. With respect to what the member for the Bay of Islands said, as to town versus country, I am sorry that any member should attempt to raise such a cry in this House,

because in doing so he is not only doing harm to the towns, but he is doing harm to the country. I am sorry the honourable member is not in his place, but if he were put to the test to name any legislation which benefited the country and which the town members did not support I am sure he could not do so. The town members have always supported legislation for the benefit of the country, and have Votes which have been put on the estimates for the benefit of the country people have always been cordially supported by the town members, and any proposals to improve the lot of the farmers have always been supported by the town members. For instance, I might mention the Agricultural Department, and the Dairy Industry Department : have the town members opposed them ? They have never opposed any of those departments. They have supported the cost of those departments being placed upon the general taxpayers. I am sorry that the honourable member should have been the only one to raise this discordant note in the debate. To show how fairly the country members on the Labour Bills Committee were prepared to act towards the people who are employed in factories, and who chiefly live in the towns, I may mention that the minimum wage was raised to 5s. a week with their hearty concurrence, and provision was made whereby the annual increase of wages should be 2s. per week for persons up to twenty years of age. I simply mention this to show how fair-minded the representatives of the farming community on the Labour Bills Committee were. Another thing was with regard to making the District Health Officer the final Court of appeal in the event of a dispute between the Factory Inspector and the person putting up a building. Then, with regard to alterations of buildings, it was considered to be unfair-and evidence was brought forward to this effect -to charge the occupier, and make him responsible for the whole cost of altering the factory. It was felt that the landlord should be the man who should bear that cost. Another important alteration was made bringing premises in the immediate neighbourhood of a factory under inspection, for the benefit of those employed in the neighbourhood of premises that might perhaps be insanitary. These are simply one or two points-and very important alterations-which were effected when the Bill was before the Labour Bills Committee. If honourable members will compare the Bill as it came down to the House with the Bill as it left the Labour Bills Committee they will be able to judge of the enormous amount of work the Committee got through during the time they had the Bill under consideration. Mr. HOGG (Masterton) .- Sir, I think that very few who contrast the condition of our factories to-day with their condition a few years ago will deny that our labour legislation has been, on the whole, a pronounced success. I believe that, if tested, that would be the verdict of the country to-morrow. It has undoubtedly improved the circumstances of the worker, not merely in the town, but the condition of the unskilled labourer in the country. It has protected him so that he now runs very little risk of losing the price of his labour. In the towns particularly our factory legislation has assisted a class that required protection very much. I refer to the women, and, more especially, to the young girls employed in the factories. I think our factory legislation has been extremely

<page>408</page>

pleased that the Bill we are about to pass goes a step further than the old Act, and provides that, instead of the minimum pay being 4s. a week, it shall be 5s. - a slight advance which, I think, is no more than on all-fours with the improved condition of the people generally. The Bill also makes this necessary provision : that, when girls have been employed for twelve months, instead of allowing them to remain where they are without any increase in wages, or of being turned adrift altogether, they are to receive a reasonable increase from year to year. In that respect it is designed to help, and undoubtedly it will assist, those who require aid. On the other hand, the original Act has helped the employers, because it has protected the considerate and honest employer against the unfair competition of the "sweater " and what is familiarly known as the "nigger-driver." My principal reason for taking part in this debate is to call attention to what may be the results of the efforts of our labour unions if they push things much further than they have been forced already. Through the medium of our conciliation and arbitration law there is



no doubt that wages have been well and adequately protected, but if the protection afforded to wages, combined with certain restrictions that are being placed on trade, should have the effect of diminishing employment, who is likely to suffer, and suffer chiefly? Will it be the employer? No. The capitalist will always find a fair amount of return for his capital. If the manufacturer is handicapped and the importer encouraged, the skilled worker has reason to fear that in the course of time he will be placed among the ranks of the unskilled workers, whose position his presence is not likely to improve. The tendency in that case will be to reduce the value of labour. Such a result is inevitable if you overcrowd the number of unskilled workers in the colony. What necessarily follows? That even the unskilled worker would suffer; and I am not sure but that that is already being experienced. In this city I mingle very often with manufacturers. I believe I know something of the condition of affairs, and I am sorry to say that I am inclined to think there is a good deal in what has been said by the honourable member for Riccarton. I know this positively: that some of our manufacturers and importers—because we have a combination of both carrying on business in this city—have been making arrangements with the foreigner, and are now importing articles that they would be only too glad to manufacture. They say that it pays them better to import these articles from abroad, and pay heavy Customs duties, than to comply with the demands of the trades-unions to limit the number of their apprentices and pay the rate required for adult journeymen. I am not pointing out this because I have any feeling in the matter; I am speaking what I believe to be an absolute fact. I would ask the genuine friends of our artisans to seriously consider whether it is wise that they should so rigidly tie the hands of Mr. Hogg's apprentices, and impose such serious restrictions on our young industries that, in self-defence, the capitalist must import from abroad instead of keeping the labour he could easily obtain well employed in his workshops? I am brought face to face with the fact that some of the large employers in this city, within the last 12 months, have been dispensing with some of their hands. They regret very much that they have been compelled to do so, and they say it is simply because they find they are not able to successfully compete with the importer, because the importer can bring articles into the country and undersell them. I ask if this is a wholesome state of things? I say it is not. I do not wish to say a word in disparagement of trades-unions. They are, no doubt, valuable institutions so long as they do not make a misuse of power. But if we find that they are unduly interfering with the established industries of the colony and reducing the area for skilled workmen in the cities, we must assume that they are not working entirely in the interests of the artisans they are supposed to protect. I think a warning note should be issued. I question whether there is not a good deal of truth in the suggestion brought forward this evening, that the reason why our Customs duties have been going up with leaps and bounds within the last month or two—so much so that the Premier has called attention to the fact—is because we are importing a class of goods that hitherto we were able to manufacture for ourselves—that while importations on the one hand are materially increasing, our manufactures are not making a commensurate amount of progress. Now, what is the case in regard to the woollen industry? We know very well that the price of wool is going down; that, in consequence, settlers are scarcely able to pay their rents in some of the country districts; that all the back-block people will be able to get for their wool will hardly pay for the labour of taking it off the sheep's back and conveying it to market, on account of the state of the roads, and the fact that they have to pack it on horseback. What do they get for it? Between 2d. and 3d. per pound. That is the price they are realising at the present time. Yet, singularly enough, in proportion as wool goes down in value woollen fabrics are going up; not merely the fabrics imported, but the products of our own woollen-mills. Of course, this is a very good thing for the shareholders, who realise good dividends, and are able to improve their machinery. It is well known that the mills are in a very prosperous condition; but at whose cost is this prosperity being brought about? Is it not at the cost of the consumer and the producer? Mr. BOLLARD.—I am glad to see you are coming to your right mind. Mr. HOGG.—I am always in my right mind, but I am

sorry that the honourable gentleman is not invariably in his right mind. Mr. SEDDON .- Is that not a grave reflection on the honourable gentleman Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER. - I understand

<page>409</page>

and that the retort was made in the same sense. Mr. HOGG .- Well, Sir, what I wish to point out is this : We ought to endeavour in every possible way to promote our manufactures and help our manufacturers ; and I would ask the trades-unions and our artisans to refrain from going too far. They have carried things a pretty good length in New Zealand, and I think this is an opportune time to sound a note of warning to them. I believe the time has arrived when they should feel satisfied with their achievements, and hesitate about going further than they have gone. Some of our manufacturers are not able to comply with the demands of the unions. I have been an employer in the country myself, and I know that if I had had to comply with some of the demands of the unions I should have had to shut up my business. Such an effect 88 that is not only going to prejudice the employer, but to terribly prejudice the employé. The state of the labour-market in the country is not what it has been. I was told by an employer to-day that there are a great many men now out of employment. I am very sorry to hear it, because the reverse has been the case during the last two years. Within the last day or two in my own district I have been waited upon by sterling working-men in want of employment, and this afternoon I was told by an employer that he was sorry to say there are a considerable number of men out of employment at the present time. How does that happen ? I do not know that it is because of artisans losing their employment and being driven back upon unskilled labour. I should be sorry if that were the case ; but if manufacturers have to dispense with their hands where are the men to go? They must go to the country, and, if so, employment there will become overcrowded. There is no need to try to keep up an artificial rate of wages in a colony like this where there is so much land ready for settlement. Let the people have access on reasonable terms to the land, and we shall always be able to maintain a fair and reasonable rate of wages for the labourer. With the land available as a regulator or lever, as long as a man has health and strength he has no need to fear that his wages will be brought below what is fair and reasonable. That is why I say the trades-unions ought to pause before they go further than they have gone already. The demands that are being made continually for interference under the Conciliation and Arbitration Act may well be allowed to rest for a season. We have a young country, we have any amount of splendid natural products, and I only regret to find that, instead of their being exported in a manufactured state, we are continuing to send them abroad as raw material, with the natural consequence that our chief staple export-the wool that we send to London-involving millions of money, owing apparently to the rings formed by purchasers and the combinations of manufacturers, is being depressed to a price never say we ought to take steps to protect our producers, and to see that they realise a fair price for their products. I believe that we are capable of doing so-that we have the means within our reach ; and the time seems to me to be rapidly approaching when, instead of sending contingents to Africa to fight for the Empire there, we will require all our contingents within the colony to fight on the side of commerce in a conflict far more important and far more consistent with twentieth century civilisation than the mercenary and barbarous wars which are permanently disfiguring the pages of history, and disgracing the character of the enlightened age in which we live, in other parts of the world. Mr. FLATMAN (Geraldine) .- Sir, I do not wish to occupy the time of the House very long, but I would not like to have this Bill pass its third reading without saying a few words upon it. From some of the speeches made to-night one might be led to conclude that labour required no legislation at all. Now, I think we ought to be fair-minded when we come to this House, and to deal out to every elector his just dues, and for that reason I have always looked upon labour legislation as being necessary. I agree with a great deal that has been said by the last speaker-that is, that the unions should not go too far. Neither should the other side go too far. We want to strike the happy medium and have capital and labour working together. I conclude we do not wish to let one get the upper hand of the

other. Every one should receive consideration. With regard to the first Factories Bill that was circulated, I think it is a pity that that Bill was ever allowed to go out to the country. It certainly created a deal of strong feeling, and it asked for more concessions than the labour representatives themselves were asking for. I do not know upon whom the onus lay for circulating that Bill, but I am very glad to see that it is modified ; and I do not think it will hurt any person in the colony, either employer or employed. What I would like to have seen in the Bill is that not less than three persons should constitute a factory. I believe two is too small. It really interferes with small business people-probably a small country boot-maker or blacksmith, for instance. I would like also to refer to some of the remarks made by the honourable member for Riccarton. By his speech he would lead the House and the country to believe that the Customs duties have increased in consequence of our manufactures falling off. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- No; because the importation increased. Mr. FLATMAN .- Quite so. The honourable gentleman infers, by the tone of his speech, that our manufactures are falling off. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- That they are not growing as fast as they should. Mr. FLATMAN .- Then, the honourable gentleman will admit that our manufactures are growing, in spite of the labour legislation existing.

<page>410</page>

Mr. FLATMAN .- Then, Sir, I would like to quote a few figures to show how they are growing. If we take the figures of the Labour Bureau from March, 1899, to March, 1901, we find that in the engineering trade there were 2,240 persons employed on the 31st March, 1899, and that on the 31st March, 1901, the number had increased to 3,620. In the coachbuilding and blacksmithing trades the increase was from 2,265 to 3,353 in the same period, and the following table will show the increase in some other trades :-

Number of hands employed for the year ending 31st March, 1899.	Number of hands employed for the year ending 31st March, 1901.
Saddle and harness making	778
Tailoring and cloth making	5,128
Hosiery knitting	487
Cabinetmaking, &c.	1,200
Flaxmilling	1,598
Shirt-makers	680
Range-making	917
Woollen-milling	1,528
	1,391

Sir, this table shows that our manufactures are increasing, for all that is being said against our labour legislation. Now, Sir, with regard to the woollen mills, it has been said to-night that the woollen-mill owners have taken advantage by giving farmers too low a price for their wool. That statement should not be made ; because it is the London market that rules the price of wool, as members well know; and it is the British buyers that come here who fix the price of wool in this colony. It cannot be said that our manufactures are not increasing ; and Sir, I do not wish to see labour legislation press more heavily on the employer than is just, nor do I wish to see the labourer take undue advantage of the capitalist. The Labour Bills Committee are to be congratulated on the way in which this Bill is now brought down, and I believe it will be acceptable to the colony as a whole when it is in fair working-order. Mr. BARCLAY (Dunedin City) .- Nothing was further from my intention than to speak on the third reading of this Bill, and I consider it is unfortunate that a debate of this kind has arisen in connection with the third reading of a Bill on which I presume there will be no division, about which there is little or no dispute, and which will pass without any real contest. But some of the speeches have been of such a remarkable character that, if they were allowed to go uncontradicted in Hansard and the Press, something in the nature of a false impression might go abroad. For instance, we have been treated to a speech by the member for Masterton, in which he spoke about the dangerous rate at which the unions were going, and the abnormal and terrifying demands they were making. I thought to myself, is there any evidence - is there anything to show -whether the demands are of such an extraordinary character by comparison with other countries? And it struck me the report of the Federation Commission the report, I find on page 19 the following remarkable paragraph :- " Your Commissioners made inquiries in Australia as to the rates of wages, hours of labour, holidays, conditions of working, and cost of living of artisans and labourers in Australia. It was proved that, so far as rates of wages (except for overtime), hours of labour, holidays, and conditions of working are concerned,

there is generally little difference between skilled artisans in Victoria and New South Wales and those in New Zealand." And, further down, we find it stated :- "The cost of living, food, and clothing is in the main lower in Australia than in New Zealand." Now, there you are! You can see the frightful length to which these unions have gone ! They have actually got up to something like a level with Victoria and New South Wales ! And here is something further : I defy any man to point out any trade in this colony which is regulated by the Arbitration Court under our labour legislation where it can be said that any man is getting more than a decent living-wage-that is, if he have a wife and anything like a family on his hands. Take the boot-makers' trade. These bootmakers get, I suppose, two guineas a week. Some of them may get, perhaps, £2 5s., but that is about the highest, and on that they have to keep a house, a wife, and a family, and also to keep up some kind of respectable appearance. Sir, when the unions have not gone to any greater lengths than these results show, there is mighty little, indeed, to complain of. Nothing is more amusing to me than to hear those gentlemen from the country talk about all the dreadful troubles of the farmer, and of his trials and tribulations, and saying that if the unions go further, or if they propose wages very much higher, the country will be ruined. Why, turn to the report of this Federation Commission, page 720, and you will find a table in the Appendix giving the value of the production for the year of the agricultural and pastoral industries and the manufactures of the various colonies, including New Zealand. You find by this table that in New Zealand the value of the agricultural, pastoral, and dairying industry-the total of the produce for one year-amounts in value to £17,379,000. And how many people are engaged in those industries? There are 106,000. As a matter of fact there are less than that, because the figures 106,000 are the total number engaged in the agricultural, pastoral, dairying, and mineral industries. I think there are about 80,000 engaged in agricultural, pastoral, and dairying work. Look at the result, \$17,379,000 produced in the year : that is to say, \$170 for every single person-even supposing there were 100,000 people - engaged in those industries. Surely, the country industries, being far and away the wealthiest, ought to be the last to complain of decent wages being paid. Then, the honourable member for Wakatipu gave us a dreadful warning note. He says we are crying, " Peace, peace, when there is no peace !" and he goes on to say that the manufacturers would

<page>411</page>

that were now being demanded. Now, wages, I grant, are an important item in the running of a manufactory or business. But what about rent and the enormous expense of advertising ? What about commercial travellers, what about bad debts, and what about the thousand and one other things that hamper a manufacturer ? May be the manufacturer sometimes finds he is not doing particularly well at his manufactory, and he finds it difficult to cut down. He cannot cut down his rent, he cannot cut down advertising, and he cannot cut down the wages. Well, the time may come when there may be a Government sitting on these benches that may step in and say: "You say you cannot carry on that business successfully, and pay the men proper wages and make a profit. Well, we will do it. We will not pay any exorbitant rent, we will not spend money in advertising all over the colony, we will not have to get long credit for the raw material ; we will establish the manufactory, and we will produce a first-class article and employ the men shorter hours and pay them better wages. We will see if we cannot make that factory in New Zealand a success." If the employer says that he cannot carry on, the time may come when the State will step in and say, "Let us try our hands, and see if we cannot do the thing better." If there is an attempt to screw the men down to a life lower than men with self-respect ought to live-if there is an attempt to deprive them of the true value of their labour-it will be found, perhaps, that it is not so much on the working-men themselves that the attempt will recoil, but on the middleman, and on the manufacturer-the man who takes the workers' labour, and makes his wealth by putting a share of it in his pocket, not returning it to the people from whom he gets it. Sir, to a certain extent I regret the turn this debate has taken, but I felt I ought to say a few of the things I have said-just to hint at what I may

hereafter enlarge upon at much greater length -before it concluded, and I trust that the debate will not now be much prolonged. Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley) .- Sir, no doubt the speech we have just listened to from the honourable member for Dunedin City (Mr. Barclay) must be pleasing to those who have not carefully studied the labour question. There was a deal of sentiment and high- falutin' in it, but an entire absence of facts necessary to convince members of this House. A great deal has been said about the work of the Labour Bills Committee, and no doubt that Committee, to whom the Bill was sent for the purpose of considering its provisions, has done good work. But I venture to say that if many other members of this House were members of the same Committee, and had the opportunity of hearing the evidence given before it by experts, they could not have arrived at any other conclusions than those embodied in the Bill now before the House for its third reading. I happened to be present on two or three occasions, and I could not help noticing the large number of manufacturers and labour experts- are carried on in this colony. They gave their evidence in a straightforward, conscientious manner. There was a ring of honesty about the evidence, and the Labour Bills Committee was a jury, and, after hearing the evidence, decided on the various questions on the weight of evidence. It could not be otherwise ; and I was surprised to hear my honourable friend the member for Christchurch City (Mr. Collins) challenge some statements made by the member for Riccarton. Why, Sir, the very speech he made-that the decisions arrived at and amendments made in this Bill by the Labour Bills Committee in consequence of the weight of evidence placed before that Committee by experts - is proof positive that the country has arrived at this stage : that we want no further innovations in our labour legislation. The House has already gone too far in that direction. That is the ultimatum of the country. And therefore I concur in the warning note that has been given to this House to-night by the member for Masterton. He has always been a friend of labour, and I do not know any member of this House who represents a distinctly country constituency who has done more to assist labour legislation than the honourable member. Every country member has done all he could to assist the town members to perfect labour legislation. Now, Sir, in connection with labour legislation the term "workers " is used very frequently, as if it had a general application, whereas it should be used in a restricted sense and have local application. The term "workers," as employed in this Bill, refers to those engaged in the various factories, who work mainly under cover and within buildings. To say that they are the workers in this colony is scarcely a fair statement. Those who work in the country, those who have laid the foundation of our institutions, those who are producing a vast volume of raw material, are surely entitled to consideration as workers. Sir, the forty-eight- hours-a-week principle is embodied in this Bill. I have no objection to that if those workers engaged in factories in the centres of population are satisfied with it ; but I will say this : that the men and women who laid the foundation of this colony-the fathers and mothers of many members in this Chamber-did not stop at forty-eight hours a week. They worked sixty hours a week, and even m'r's and not the I know, as an old resident in the District of Canterbury, that when went on the land they had little means", " had to work hard. Many a small farmer with fifty acres or a hundred acres of land-and the land not always of the best quality-land which required a great deal of labour to be expended on it to make it productive-ploughed all day, and when the horses became tired put them in the stable, and then had his evening meal, and went out, and, with the aid of a lantern when the moon was not shining, worked for several hours putting up sod fences. That was what the early settlers did in this colony, and I say that such settlers are entitled to every consideration and respect. The man who wants

<page>412</page>

not worth his salt. I have been speaking to some of the workers in this city during the past few days, and I complimented them on the success of Labour Day. I sincerely complimented them on the respectable and well-to-do appearance of the men and their families, and that is a sentiment with which every member of this House will agree. We are all pleased to think that the tendency of our laws in this country

has always been in the direction of lifting up-a betterment tendency; but, in speaking to these people, they said to me, "We do not want less than forty eight hours & week ; we are quite satisfied." And any man who stands on the floor of this House and agitates in favour of the workers in our factories having forty-four or forty-five hours a week is no friend to the workers in this colony, and is no friend to our industries. We know, as practical men, that if the relations between capital and labour-between the producer of the raw material and the manufactured article -are strained, the result will be disaster, and that mainly to the factory worker. It is like a sword with two edges. If it strikes capital on the one hand, it strikes labour on the other. Sir, to show that the figures quoted by the member for Riccarton were well considered, I may say I have looked through the blue-books for last year, and, notwithstanding the operation of our labour laws for the past eleven years, and the encouragement given to industries in the shape of high protective tariffs, I find there is a large quantity of goods imported at the present time that should be manufactured in the colony. I am not going to waste the time of the House by quoting figures largely, but I have three sets of figures to submit to honourable members. The value of boots and shoes imported last year, with a 221-per-cent. protective duty, reached £185,617. The value of woollen piece-goods, with a 25-per-cent. tariff, reached £305,598 ; and even blankets, with a 20-per-cent. tariff, reached £10,672. These three items alone amount to \$501,978. The raw material we produce in this colony. The hides are produced and tanned here, and sent to America or to England ; the wool is grown here, and is shipped to America or to England ; and the woollen goods and the boots and shoes are manufactured in Britain and in America. When they come back to us, and we import to the extent I have mentioned. What does that mean ? That we are actually buying boots and shoes and woollen goods made by the artisans in Britain and America. We are finding the money to employ them. Now, having the raw material here, and considering the number of people we have who are ready and willing to avail themselves of employment, why should we not be able to produce those articles and place them on the market to compete with the imported article -yes, imported under a prohibitive tariff. One manufacturer, who gave evidence before the Labour Bills Committee-a Mr. Cole, from Auckland, who is engaged in the boot trade-was asked the question, " How does it come that the Americans Mr. Meredith article, in the shape of boots to what we can produce in New Zealand and place them on the New Zealand market for less than we can produce them?" His answer was, "The Americans have the latest and most improved machinery. For every thousand pairs of boots turned out by New Zealand there are a million pairs turned out in the United States of America. Each man in charge of a machine used in the construction of a boot becomes such an expert that he is able to turn out four or five times the quantity of work in eight hours that a factory-hand could turn out in New Zealand." In other words, to produce a certain quantity of boot-work in America costs 9d., but to produce the same quantity of the same work in New Zealand costs 38. 3d. Now, I say this is a question for this House to consider, and it is a question for the Government: What are we going to do to increase our manufactures in the colony, to find employment for our people, and to maintain a fair day's wage? The Kaiapoi factory at the present time employs one thousand two hundred hands, but the output of that and other woollen factories is to supply local demands. Sir, we can never become a manufacturing nation, we can never make up the raw material into the manufactured article in this colony, unless we are prepared to send that manufactured article into the world's markets. Hence the absurdity of our high Customs protective tariff. It may be asked, How are we to compete with Japan, where the labourers work twelve hours a day and receive from 3d. to 2s. 6d. per day? How are we to compete with the Chinese, who are now getting hold of the secrets of our Leeds, Manchester, and Birmingham industries, and who, on account of their numbers and cheap labour used for the manufacture of these commodities, will place them upon the world's market in the near future? This is a question worthy of the consideration of every member of this House. Now, Sir, it struck me very forcibly that there is something wrong in connection with our industries further than I have already stated. I went down to the wharf at this port a few weeks

ago, and I noticed there a large steamer which had arrived from the United States of America-the "Tomoana," of 10,000 tons. She had a cargo of manufactured goods of great variety. She had on board manufactured iron rails for the Government of New Zealand, and a variety of other manufactures. I estimated that the cargo of 10,000 tons, taking it on an average of #15 per ton, was worth #150,000. Now, if you put \$50,000 down for the raw material, and €100,000 for the enhancement of that raw material by skilled labour, then of that £150,000 worth of manufactured goods introduced into New Zealand, we are paying to the United States of America \$100,000 for the purpose of employing their workers. Sir, labour is a working-man's capital. If a capitalist invests £1,000 in a freehold the law protects him. If the mortgagee is not up to date with his interest the mortgagor has power

<page>413</page>

why should not a labourer skilled in handicraft have his capital protected, and even the right to sell his labour in the highest market? I agree with the honourable member for Masterton in giving a word of warning : in labour legislation we have gone quite far enough, and I would say, let us now have industrial peace and quietness. All this labour legislation is, according to a Judge from Australia who lately visited our colony, on its trial, and in what is known as the experimental stage. I wish to see our industries prosper, and I say we should hesitate to go any further in labour legislation. There is a feeling of unrest in the country. That feeling is justified. But I say that those who are engaged in this House 'in passing labour laws in the interest of those who are connected with our factories should certainly not do anything that will bring about strained relations between capital and labour. We might employ double the number of hands that we are employing at the present time in working up our raw material, and I hope the day is not far distant when we shall have a foreign market for our natural materials worked up into manufactured articles, so as to place it in that form in the world's markets, and to compete with the older countries. That can only be done by modifying our tariff conditions. I am not going to delay the measure further, but I could not sit here and allow the remarks made by honourable members without giving a note of warning, in a friendly manner, to those in whose interests this measure is about to be passed by the House. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) .- Mr. 10.0. Speaker, I have not spoken at any previous stage of this Bill. I have no express inclination to speak to-night, but I think, as representing a working-class constituency-a Liberal constituency-I may be expected to say a few words with regard to it before it finally passes through this House. It is a Bill of great importance as affecting the working-classes of the colony. It is a Bill also of great importance as affecting the manufacturing classes of the colony, employers and employed. It is a Bill, I take it, designed not to introduce any fresh innovations in labour legislation, but rather to perfect the legislation already placed on the statute-book ; and speaking from that point of view-and that point of view only-I think the Labour Bills Committee, to whom the Bill was referred, have rendered valuable service to the colony. Growing discontent was observable in many directions, and not in any one particular direction, in regard to the ultimate stage at which the " advanced " labour legislation of this Parliament was likely to land our industrial and productive pursuits. There was great apprehension on the part of the employers in regard to further oppressive legislation. There was corresponding apprehension on the part of the working-classes that there would be a possible reversal of the labour legislation of the recent past, or a slackening of interest on their behalf by the Government. Certain members of Parliament were direction. I wish to remove an impression, which is attempted to be created in the minds of a portion of the working-classes of the colony, in regard to the action of those members of Parliament who have expressed the view that the aim of the Government should be to temper their future labour legislation with judgment, and with wisdom, and with care. One thing this Bill does : it gives effect to the long-delayed demand that there should be an eight-hours day statutory law in this colony, which many of us advocated long years ago, when many of its present advocates were running about in bibs and frocks. The Bill responds to that demand of the labouring classes, and this Government stands first in the

legislative history of the world, I believe, in giving statutory effect to that great labour ideal. All connected with the introduction and the passing of the Bill-for we may take it as passed-are greatly to be complimented. In its present shape it embodies the wisdom of those who, while supporting the labour proposals of the Government, still urged that, whatever the proposals were, they should be moulded with every prudence and every care. I principally rose to take exception to the statements of persons who have publicly criticized and condemned those members of Parliament who so expressed themselves prior to the introduction of this Bill. On the 3rd October last a mass meeting of unionists, as it was called in the advertisement, was held in the Federal Theatre, Wellington, the objects being (1) to reply to the criticisms on labour legislation ; and (2) to defend the union officials. At that meeting Mr. Naughton, President of the Trades and Labour Council, who occupied the chair, made a most moderate speech. He said the meeting was called " for the purpose of refuting the criticisms of trade-unionism which had recently been made in the Press, at meetings of employers, and by members of Parliament. that it was time to call a halt in labour legislation. . halt in other directions ? It was labour only that was called upon to halt." Mr. D. McLaren followed, also in a very moderate speech. He said, "It was not the unionists who were riding the Conciliation and Arbitration Act to death, and the Premier should have lectured the employers and not the workers." At the conclusion of his speech he proposed, and it was carried,- "That this meeting of trade-unionists of the City of Wellington enters an emphatic protest against the misrepresentations and misleading statements which had appeared in the Press and been given utterance to by certain employers and by members of Parliament respecting the labour laws passed by the Legislature." Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER .- I do not think it is in order for the honourable gentleman to read comments on members' speeches made in this House. Mr. FISHER .- I think you are in error, Sir, in saying that the statements were made in the House only. I think they were made in the

<page>414</page>

that the resolution referred to statements made by members of Parliament outside the House. Mr. DEPUTY - SPEAKER. - I will accept the honourable member's assurance that the members' speeches referred to were made outside this House ; otherwise I cannot allow it. Mr. FISHER .- It is so, Sir, but I will show further on that statements of this nature were made long before Parliament met, and I will also show by whom they were made. At the Labour Day demonstration, held on Wednesday, 9th instant, at the Basin Reserve, Mr. Naughton, President of the Union, who was first to speak, said :- "The object of that demonstration was the attainment of an eight-hours day. . had been said that they should cry a halt in labour legislation. If the request was that they should cry a halt in legislation of the kind he had referred to, and which they were determined to secure, he could give an assurance that to ask that was of no avail." Now, my point is this : I wish it to be noted particularly who it was who was the first to charge the labour unions with "riding the labour laws to death." And who was it ? Mr. McLaren says, " It was not the unionists who were riding the Conciliation and Arbitration Act to death : and the Premier should have lectured the employers, and not the workers." Mr. Naughton says that, "if the request was that they should cry a halt in labour legislation that request would be of no . avail." Mark what follows. See how the Premier changes his position. At the Labour Day demonstration, in answer to the comments which had been made by Mr. Naughton, Mr. McLaren, and other labour representatives upon his statement that the labour unions had been "riding the labour laws to death," Mr. Seddon said, " So far as the working of the machinery of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act was concerned " Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER .- I must ask the honourable member to show how this bears on the Factories Bill ; that refers to the Conciliation and Arbitration Act. Mr. FISHER .- I propose to show that my remarks apply to the whole question of labour legislation, and I submit that comment of this kind, affecting the whole question of labour legislation, is relevant to any discussion on a Factories Bill. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER .- I think not, be-



cause there is another Bill on the Order Paper dealing with that particular question. The honourable gentleman's remarks would be quite in order on the Conciliation and Arbitration Bill, not on the Factories Bill. Mr. FISHER .- Allow me to point out, Sir, that this Bill deals with the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. Subsection (3), clause 18, says :- "Where in any award of the Arbitration Court, whether made before or after the passing of this Act, provision is made for limiting the working-hours in any trade, this section shall in respect to such trade, and so long as such Mr. Fisher subject to the award." And, in the interpretation clause,- "' Arbitration Court ' means the Arbitration Court established under 'The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1900.'" Well, Sir, speaking at the Demonstration Day celebration, Mr. Seddon said :- "So far as the working of the machinery of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act was concerned, there had probably been some ground for complaint. Complaints had been directed against one side. The representatives of employers on the Conciliation Boards had been more to blame than the representatives of the workers." This was what was known as "the turning it process." The Premier was now doing what Mr. McLaren said he should do. He was now "lecturing the employers." And he was doing it well, for he goes on to say,- "There had been no conciliation at all so far as some representatives of the employers on the Boards were concerned. He had been carefully watching what was going on, and he was a plain, blunt man, and said what he knew to be the truth." But which is the truth-what he is saying now or what he said before, about the workers "riding the labour laws to death"? He still goes on,- "As to assertions which had been made that the demands of the workers were excessive, he maintained that it was not too much for men to take steps to improve the position of themselves and their children, to have some hope for the future, and to have some little comfort in their home life. In doing that they were only doing what was right and just, and what they were entitled to do as free men." No living person can dissent from that statement of the Premier, but at the same time it indicates on his part a complete change of front in regard to his statement that the unions were "riding the labour laws to death." It will be seen that my main purpose in rising to speak on the third reading of this Bill is to show who it was who first called for a halt in labour legislation,- who it was who first said. there must be a halt,-so as to enlighten the speakers at the mass meeting and the speakers at the Labour Day demonstration. In criticizing the procession, and the proceedings generally on Labour Day, the New Zealand Times, in a leading article, said :- "One can therefore readily understand the comparative indifference which prevented the proper and due display of unionistic strength in the procession. But in the face of the recent assertion that the labour organizations were in danger of 'riding the labour policy to death' the calmness will have a good effect." If there should be any remaining doubt as to the origin and the authorship of the words that the labour unions were "riding the labour laws to death," I propose to give some further proof. The Wanganui Chronicle of the 16th August, commenting upon the statement of the Premier on this subject, says,-

<page>415</page>

so it may be called, which Mr. Seddon made in the House of Representatives on Wednesday, was of a kind scarcely calculated to restore confidence in those tribunals. The Premier seems to have regretted his outspoken criticism of a few days previously, when he declared that the 'unions were riding the thing to death,' and he is now apparently anxious to placate those to whom his words may have given offence by 'rubbing it in' to the other fellows." Mr. SEDDON .- I do not know, Sir, whether this is to go on or not. The honourable member now is reading a newspaper criticism of what I stated in the House on a Bill this session, or what I am reported to have said. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER .- If the honourable member is doing that he is clearly out of order. Mr. FISHER .- This statement of the Premier was not made during a sitting of the House. Mr. SEDDON .- It says so there. Mr. FISHER .- That is so ; but the Premier made the same statement afterwards. Mr. SEDDON .- You have just quoted what I am alleged to have said in the House. Mr. FISHER .- Very well, I will not further allude to that criticism. Then, the Sydney Telegraph of

the 7th August, in commenting on the statement by the Premier, says :- " Mr. Seddon's decision not to proceed further with labour legislation is one of the most significant events in colonial political history. Probably the applying of a brake happens none too soon for the community to weigh and test the reforming and experimental legislation of which New Zealand had such an abundance, and for the public capacity of assimilation, which was much more limited than some politicians perceived. New Zealand had gone full speed ahead so long in this respect that she may well slow down. There were purely political reasons for the course too." Following upon this comes the Review of Reviews for the 20th October, which says, - " Labour troubles in New Zealand increase in volume and grow more bitter in temper. It is admitted that the Conciliation Act does not conciliate, and the Arbitration Courts are congested with disputes. Mr. Seddon has spoken on the subject with characteristic frankness. He told a deputation of trades-unions at Wellington that he 'deprecated the whole-sale summoning of employers, as there was no necessity for doing so. It was riding the Act to death, and in time both the men and the employers would get sick of it. That was what was going to happen. The employers did not want to be everlastingly in a turmoil. The law was a good law, but of late it had been brought into disrepute. Great care must be taken, or there would be a revulsion of public opinion on the matter.' Later, speaking in Parliament, Mr. Seddon told the House that ' something would have to be done to put an end to the incessant strife prevailing between workmen and employers. He condemned the Conciliation Boards for their unbusinesslike methods, in their personnel and constitution. Parliament,' Mr. Seddon added, 'would probably be asked to do something in the matter this session.' " Will the representatives of labour unions who criticize members of Parliament tell me what they think of that? Well, we have been asked to do something this session, and we have this admirable Bill. But I want to drive that point home: who said the labour unions had been "riding the Act to death "? This statement has got up the backs of the workers, and they calmly turn round and say, " What have these members been saying about us?" and I want the labour representatives to go to the Premier and ask him point-blank what he meant by saying that they were "riding the Act to death." They ask the Premier to protect them ! Well, I intend to protect myself. But these tactics of the Premier are neither new nor novel. On the 21st March, 1896, Mr. Seddon, in receiving a deputation of workers in Wellington, " stated distinctly that the country had had enough of labour legislation for a time, and that, until the Acts already on the statute-book had received a fair trial, it would be inadvisable to proceed further with such experimental legislation." Mr. SEDDON .- Hear, hear. Mr. FISHER .- The honourable gentleman says " hear, hear." Then I have no more to say. I feel now that we are in entire agreement. I agree that that statement is justified by every practical experience. It is justified by the working of the Acts we have passed. We, that is, all of us who are interested in the welfare of the working-classes-we who wish to protect them against themselves, have taken that course which the honourable gentleman himself outlined in 1896, and which he has again outlined in 1901. If the honourable gentleman adheres to those two statements made in those two years-and he cannot depart from them-then I say that he and I on labour questions will be found in entire agreement. I compliment the honourable gentleman on having made both statements ; but I will not depart from them whatever the honourable gentleman may do. I believe that we should not pass any labour legislation of an oppressive character ; that we should rather devote our energies and our intelligence to perfecting those Acts which we have already put on the statute-book, and I hold that those who do so are the best friends of the labouring-classes. This Bill will do that. The Government are entitled to credit for having introduced their labour Bills, and they are entitled to equal but not greater credit than those who have endeavoured to perfect them in their passage through this House. I ask the representatives of labour organizations to be a little more guarded in future in their comments upon the action of members of Parliament who have studied the question of labour legislation much more closely than they possibly could have done, and who know what is best for them. They should remember that we are charged with the duty of weighing both

sides. And if members of the House, as the

<page>416</page>

stand, and as to how the existing legislation is affecting the industries of this country, find that the machinery of the Acts should be eased wherever they produce friction-and that is the proper course for the Legislature to adopt- the unions should rather welcome criticism of that character than hold meetings to protest against it. I do not wish to criticize this Bill in detail. I only hope that its operation will be beneficial to employers and employed. I believe it will be. The member for Ashley has said that persons representing both employers and employes appeared before the Labour Bills Committee, and it stands to the credit of the Government and of the Labour Bills Committee that they have considered as well the interests of the employers as of the employed. If it is the conception of some people that it is the duty of the Legislature or of the Government to push things to such an extreme as to set up and continue a feeling of irritation between the two classes, that is a wrong and a dangerous conception. It is for the Government 11.0. and the Parliament to consider these matters, and, even if they do not go to the extremes desired by the labour organizations, it should be recognised that they know what is best for the people of the country as a whole. I think the Premier was right in making the statements he made, and those who have said legislation should not be pushed to the extreme in this direction will at least receive the credit their intentions deserve. But it was the Premier who said " the labour unions were riding the labour laws to death." Mr. T. MACKENZIE (Waihemo) .- Sir, it is not my intention to say much on this question to-night. The honourable member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher) has said he hopes the Premier will not introduce further legislation dealing with labour matters. Well, the honourable gentleman must know pretty well the Premier will not introduce further legislation dealing with labour matters except in so far as he might consolidate the measures already on the statute-book to make them more workable. I think the Premier has recognised that, so far as the agricultural and the mining population are concerned, they have at last been raised to the point of self-preservation. They have seen combinations going on for years in our cities, having for their object the reduction of the hours of labour, until now men are calling out for less than eight hours a day and labourers are receiving, in many instances, 12s. a day ; and they also recognise the establishment of very considerably increased salaries ; and during the whole of that time the men engaged in agricultural pursuits have not had their hours shortened, nor their wages increased correspondingly, because the industry will not admit of it. It seems to me that almost the entire labour legislation that has been carried on in this country has been promoted in the interests of the cities, and the whole of that labour is contingent upon the success of mining and agriculture, because without the success of these two industries you might sweep Mr. Fisher members for the cities consider that they are the repositories of all that is wise in connection with labour legislation, and, indeed, of all legislation ; and if it is logical at all, if it is right for men in cities to have eight hours a day and to have high wages, why should the men engaged in the agricultural industries not enjoy the same conditions ? But the country cannot stand it. The agricultural labourer and the small farmers-because, after all, nearly all the work is done by the small farmers themselves- are recognising that the cost of the goods they require is increasing year by year, and they are not getting a single cent of increase for the stuff they are producing. We have been told to-night by the member for Dunedin City (Mr. Barclay) that there is still a large fund available out of the results of the selling of agricultural produce for further encroachment, without appreciably reducing the moneys so available. He quoted statistics to show that the agricultural productions of this colony came to £17,379,000. Then, he quoted what the manufacturers produced - £4,650,000. Sir, what becomes of these goods that are manufactured ? Are they exported abroad ? Have they to uphold their reputation in the markets of the world, and hold their own against other competitors? The honourable gentleman knows that is not so. Out of this four and three-quarter millions there is not half a million that goes out and stands its own against other competitors in the

markets of the world. An Hon. MEMBER. - More than that goes abroad. Mr. T. MACKENZIE .- We have the statistics here, and of that £4,650,000 only £378,000 goes abroad. Where does this difference between what is exported of the manufactured goods and what is manufactured go to this sum of £4,272,000? The great bulk of that is used by the agriculturist and the miners of this country, because the great bulk of the people, I am glad to say, still are employed in the backbone industries of the colony-mining and agriculture. But what does that mean? All this increased cost of the protection means increased cost to these people for every article they use, excepting those which are exempt from Customs duties. And all that goes on to what? To increasing the cost of production on the part of miners and agriculturists. We have been told here by city people that our towns increase the prices the farmers receive for their produce. With the exception of some of the most trifling articles, perhaps, such as eggs and vegetables, your town consumers in this country do not influence the price one single farthing. The price of all agricultural produce is gauged by the price it realises at Home, less the cost of putting it there. Why, before our freezing industry became the success it is now, did your population in your cities pay a high price for mutton? No. Sheep were sold at 3s. 6d. each, and they are worth about 14s. now. But that increased cost has not been brought about by people in the

<page>417</page>

works and exported the goods, and stood them on their own merits in the Home market. I say the time has arrived when the farmers and miners are not going to put up with this nonsense any longer in the increased cost by the towns. They have to compete themselves with very keen competition, and, whilst they are quite prepared to see every labourer in the towns get a fair share, yet the settlers and settlers' sons in this country are not prepared to see themselves working for a low rate and see high prices paid for all other forms of labour that happen to be unable to stand export-high prices for goods protected, and high costs for handling all goods received and exported. The price of labour paid to the farmer and miner is entirely contingent on the produce of the agriculturists and miners in the country and the price obtained for it abroad. There is no escaping from the position, and I tell members now the time is coming when all this sort of nonsense has to be faced, and when the labourers in this country shall be paid alike in accordance with their work; because if one section receives a higher pay than another the reduction will still be felt by the poorer-paid man, because it is taken from him to make up the higher wage. Of course, it is maintained that you can still further increase the cost of production without handicapping the men in competition with the world; but let people who have got to sell these goods in other markets see whether they can get a higher price in these markets because we pay higher wages to one section of workers. It is simply impossible. We are told, too, that all the moneys largely expended in this colony are expended in order to assist the country interests. \\_ Why, we had it stated here the other evening that to keep the Government Printing Office going in Wellington we pay \$8,000 more in wages than if we used improved machinery. Could any farmer afford to do that? Does the farmer not pay £20,000 a year stock-tax towards that expenditure? If all our legislation and all our expenditure were in favour of the farmers, do you mean to say we would see such a large protection on industries? What is the result of this protection? Are the industries in the centres of population supplying, so far as they could, what we require? I say a lot of this legislation is strangling the industries, and the consequence is a large increase in the imports of many duty-paying articles-swelling the revenue for the Colonial Treasurer largely; because the industries of this country are not at present supplying them, although it was supposed they would be able to do so. I say that those of us who are here representing agricultural and mining industries mean to speak plainly, and say there shall be no further handicap, and that no special party in this country shall, by extraneous influences, obtain a higher price for their labour and shorter hours than those who are employed in agriculture and mining are receiving. Why, we know in one of the towns that labourers are agitating for 12s. per day. An Hon. MEMBER .- It is perfectly horrible. VOL. CXIX .- 26,

member may treat the matter with levity, but I am not treating it with levity at all. I say, the labourers of the towns are wanting 12s. a day, and many are getting that rate, and if the condition of affairs in the country is such that you can afford it, well and good ; but you should pay the same amount for labour in the country. If the settler could get as much for his time and labour, no exception could be taken, but that is not the case. If you are going to pay 12s. a day for labour in the towns, where the worker can enjoy the comforts of city life, how can you expect the ploughman to work for £1 or £1 5s. a week and found ? Can you expect that inan to be content to work in the country, to work as hard and to keep at it longer hours than the man in the town who gets 12s. a day? Can you expect it ? An Hon. MEMBER .- Certainly not. Mr. T. MACKENZIE .- Then, what is the honourable gentleman's cure ? Mr. BARCLAY .- Pay him more. Mr. T. MACKENZIE .- There you are ; but can the man who employs him afford to pay more ? Will the produce bring a return that will enable him to pay more ? There is the point. If the honourable gentleman understood the economic position of the matter he would know that no such thing could be done -that there is not the value in what they produce for doing it. Is it in butter? Is it in cheese or wool, or in frozen mutton, in oats, or wheat-is there anything in these things which will enable the producer to pay a man 12s. per day in the country for labour ? Mr. BARCLAY .- Look at the figures in your own Federation Report. Mr. T. MACKENZIE .- The honourable gentleman cannot give a distinct reply. He refers to the Federation Report, and what does that show ? It shows that at the present time wheat can be grown in the Argentine at 1s. 7d. per bushel. That is what it shows. The Hon. Major Steward can confirm that, because he was there. They can produce wheat at 1s. 7d. per bushel in the Argentine. An Hon. MEMBER .- Major Steward has not been in the Argentine. Mr. T. MACKENZIE .- No, but he was on the Federation Commission, where that evidence was tendered ; and if the honourable gentleman will read the most recent authorities on competition he will find the same statement. Now, if that is so, do you mean to say that we can grow wheat here in New Zealand and pay 12s. per day for labour? The people in the country have not the State protection which With them the those in the towns enjoy. increased cost of production does not come The out of the pockets of the consumers. honourable member who represents Dunedin City must see that the increased cost would come out of the pockets of the farmers. If you are going to carry on a fair and equitable system you should give the country people the same wages as the people in the town, for they work quite as hard and for longer hours ; but if you increase their wages, then it must come out of

<page>418</page>

and that means that people who employ labour must go out of farming altogether. There is no escape from that position. Sir, I did not rise for the purpose of taking up the time of the House to any great extent to-night. I believe the Bill before the House is a consolidating measure-one to simplify the existing law. I believe that is so, but I say distinctly and emphatically that if the labour legislation is fair it should be extended to the people in the country, and if it cannot be extended to them owing to the returns not being adequate, I say we have no right in this country by any system of legislation to favour any one particular class. Sir J. G. WARD (Colonial Secretary) .- Sir, I do not know why the debate upon the third reading of the Factories Bill should have extended in the direction it appears to have done, judging from the speeches of some honourable members, and particularly from the speech of the last honourable member. Why, Sir, the honourable member has gone into a diversity of matters which, whatever bearing they may have on other subjects, have little or nothing to do with the Bill before the House. But, as the honourable gentleman has advocated and urged some views in regard to this matter which struck me as being singularly inappropriate, I think I should, at all events, say a word or two in connection with the matter. Now, there does appear to be an impression-or, rather, there is an endeavour to create an impression-that at the present time in this country things are in a bad state in their relation to the employers and the workers of the colony, and more particularly in relation to the farmers of the country is

there an attempt made to rouse ill- feeling. Well, I want to point out to honour- able members that which I think every fair- minded person in the country should concede- that if the great mass of the workers in the country were in a bad condition it would be far from satisfactory to the colony as a whole, and that the colony as a whole could not be in a prosperous condition if the great bulk of its people-the workers-were doing badly. Every intelligent Legislative Assembly finds out that in legislating in the interests of the workers it is also legislating in the interests not only of the farmers, but of every other section of the community. There should be no decrying one section of the community in this way. Now, I would point out to the honourable gentleman that one of the theories he put forth is a very unsound one. He urged that the labourers in the country districts should be paid the same rate of wages as is paid to the labourers in the cities, and therefore there would either have to be a lowering of the rates of the labourers in the cities to the level of those ruling in the country, or else an increase of the rates paid in the country up to the level of those that are paid in the cities. Now, the honourable gentleman, I presume, advocates the former course-the lowering of the rates in the cities-because he states that the labourers Mr. T. Mackenzie sequently, instead of the farm labourer being lifted up to the rate paid the labourer in the city, he argues that the rates of the city labourer should come down to the level of the country. I am one of those who believe, in connection with the matter of the \$4.650,000 of money referred to, that the honourable member must recognise that if you have not got a good circulating medium in the to ns, and if by a low rate of wages the purchasing- power of the people is largely diminished, there cannot be that prosperity which exists at pre- sent, and which there should be, and that, if the workers are to be a poorly paid class of people, there must be a lowering of the purchasing- power of the country, and that would greatly affect all classes, farmers included, and also injuriously affect the industries of the country. Now, I do not for a moment urge that we should pay a rate of wages that is beyond the ability of people to pay. It would be impos- sible to continue to do that, as to aim at a rate beyond the power of the people to pay must soon bring about its own remedy. Natural laws would operate, and that result would ensue. An Hon. MEMBER .- That is now the case. Sir J. G. WARD .- In some cases it probably may be, but I say that is partly the result of the scare created in different parts of the colony where they have exaggerated the posi- tion ; and that is not by any means a desirable thing to do, and I affirm that does not reflect the true position of affairs. Take as a com- parison the condition of affairs now with the condition that prevailed not so many years ago. We should probably be told that the agricul- tural classes are not getting so much for their wool as a few years previously. That we all regret, but fluctuations will ever occur. Mr. MONK .-- The prices for our products are not due to this Government or any Govern- ment. Sir J. G. WARD .- I am much obliged to the honourable gentleman, whose store of wisdom, in furnishing me with that important piece of information, has been so generously and so spontaneously drawn upon for my benefit. I was going to point out that some members have alluded to the low values prevailing for some of our staple products, particularly wool. Now. I want to ask honourable members what is the difference in the position of the agricul- turists to-day with what it was not so many years ago, when 6s. and 7s. a bushel was being obtained for wheat, 4s. and 5s. a bushel for barley, 1s. 3d. a pound for hops, and up to 1s. and 1s. 3d. for wool? Why, in those days the rates of freight between here and the Old Country ran up to \$3, £3 10s., and \$4 per ton, and the cost of conveying goods from the in- terior to the seaboard in the majority of cases was probably ten times greater than it is now-I am sure that five times greater would not be a high average. And, in retrospect, when we are endeavouring to judge of the position at the present moment, we ought to contrast the condition of affairs for- merly with their condition to day. And I say,

<page>419</page>

selves and others think that things are very blue, or in some cases very black, they should take the average position of the people in all walks of life in this country to-day, in order to really and fairly judge whether any section of the community is really retrogressing in the way some of our friends indicate. Now,

it has been asked whether the condition of the ploughman is fair as compared with the worker in the cities. The condition of the ploughman, with his £1 or €1 5s. a week, has been compared with that of the worker in the city. There are a large number of workers in the cities who do not average \$1 10s., or even £1 a week. It is the inevitable result of the aggregation of numbers of people that rents are higher in the cities, and the cost of living is higher than in the country ; and, if you institute a comparison between the ploughman, with his £1 or £1 5s. a week, and the worker in the city, the arguments are all in favour of the ploughman with his £1 or £1 5s. His condition is better in every respect. I maintain, with some knowledge of the ploughman class, and the working-class in the cities, that the results at the end of a year will be as good, if not better, to the ploughman than to many of the workmen in the towns. Mr. T.

MACKENZIE .- Then, why do not some of these workers go into the country ? Sir J. G. WARD .- A great many of them do. What I deprecate is the attempt to start this cry of town versus country, and make people run away with the impression that nothing has been done by the representatives of the towns in the House favourable to the farmers, or agriculturists, or pastoralists of the country. The legislation passed during the last ten years, largely assisted by the town representatives in every instance, as far as the agricultural interest goes, has been in the direction of helping to better the condition of the farmer. That is a policy I have ever advocated and supported, and I say it has been very whole-heartedly supported by the representatives of the towns ; and it is only fair that that assistance should be recognised. I do not believe in any attempt to raise anything in the shape of class prejudice, or attempting to have a cry of the workers in the cities doing better than those in the country, because when you come to analyse it there is not very much in it. What ought to be aimed at in this country is to lift all classes of the country up to a higher level than they occupy ; the aim ought to be to afford the opportunity for the workers to lift themselves to a higher position. That ought to be the aim and effort of every public man ; and why there should be an outcry in consequence of a fair rate of wages obtaining in New Zealand I am not able to understand. On the contrary, I believe very sincerely and honestly myself that if we had a low rate of wages it would be very much worse for all classes of the community. There should be a fair rate of wages paid to all classes of workers ; the worker is worthy of his hire, and a fair and reasonable wage paid to all classes of the country is what ought to be the aim do well, and see the workers amongst others better their positions, if it is possible for them to do so. It is all very well to talk about labour in New Zealand receiving a rate of wages beyond what ought to be paid, or beyond what some people consider should be paid, or the circumstances of the country warrant. It is well known to every person that the working-man with an average family has all his time to make the two ends meet. If he is in a casual occupation it is a most difficult matter for him to do so, and many of them in permanent occupations are unable to do it. And when it is admitted by the honourable member for Franklin and other honourable members that this Bill, which has occasioned such an outcry from some members, is a good piece of legislation and a desirable piece of legislation, I have no hesitation in saying that the regulation of factories by this Bill is in the general interests of all classes of the country, and that the Bill itself should be placed on the statute-book. I do not myself quite understand why an effort should be made to endeavour to accentuate the feeling which has been engendered by some people in the country between the agriculturists and pastoralists and the workers in the towns, because that is neither necessary nor desirable. I myself represent a farming constituency, and I am glad to be able to say it is a very prosperous district in every respect, settled by an intelligent and industrious class of people, and I have no doubt whatever that the great bulk of the farmers in my electorate-and, I believe, in other electorates-desire to live and let live. They believe in having a fair return for their own labour, and they are not adverse to extending to men in every walk of life the same advantages that they desire to obtain for themselves. . All they want is what is fair and just between man and man, and that, Sir, is all that I, as their representative, want. Speaking for myself, I have no hesitation in saying that some mistakes have been made in connection with our progressive

legislation in this colony ; and I do not think there is any one who anticipated that there would be no mistakes made in respect to it, because in all things human there must be mistakes, and in legislation of this kind it takes time to discover wherein those mistakes lie. And, in regard to the position of the colony at the present moment, I am very glad to be able to say there is every indication of its continuing to be prosperous, and I believe its future will be prosperous. I did not intend to speak to-night, and I rose more for the purpose of dissenting from the remarks of my honourable friend opposite, not with any object of prolonging this discussion. I wish merely to say, in brief, that I think this factory legislation, which has called for this lengthy debate as the result of the criticism of my honourable friends opposite, has not only not done harm, but that it is most necessary and is in the interests of our country. If the debate has done no other good, it has caused honourable members to reaffirm its desirability.

<page>420</page>

Sir, to make a personal explanation. The honourable gentleman seemed to gather the impression that I wish to lower wages. I have no desire to lower wages, but what I do wish to see is that similar labour in the country and in the towns should receive the same rate, and if the country industry cannot afford to pay town wages, then it is evident that they are kept up artificially, and at the expense of the general consumer. Mr. LAURENSEN (Lyttelton). - Mr. Speaker, it is almost a subject for regret that the member for Dunedin City (Mr. Arnold) should have delivered the speech he delivered to-night, as the Bill might otherwise have gone through without debate at all. I regret very much this discussion has taken place. A Committee, consisting of members representing every shade of opinion in this House, has been occupied for some ten or eleven weeks going through every clause of the Bill now under discussion, and striking out every clause which we thought would be injurious to the farming community, the employer, or the worker, or to any one engaged in spending money and improving the wellbeing of the country-in fact, in doing its very best to make the Bill acceptable to worker and employer alike ; and, in view of the discussion which took place on the second reading and while the Bill was in Committee, it would have been wiser to have allowed the third reading to go through without any discussion. However, the member for Dunedin City (Mr. Arnold) has seen fit to start a discussion, and the discussion has waxed loud and long, and it has travelled over every conceivable subject under the sun. The honourable member for Waihemo has just devoted himself to showing how we were endeavouring to set town against country. I do not think there is a single man in the House who would for an instant attempt such a thing. What does this present Bill provide ? It is simply a focussing-a gathering together of all previous Acts on this subject. The only new clauses that I can remember in the Bill are, first, the clause affirming that a week's work in a factory for an adult man shall be forty- eight hours, and for women and children forty- five hours, and that any one working over that time shall be paid time and a quarter for over- time, and it also limits the amount of over- time. Then, in one or two of the other clauses there is provision for better sanitary arrangements, and it also absolutely prohibits the employment of women and children in certain dangerous trades, which are specified. Now, Sir, those are almost all the new provisions in the Bill. Why, in 1874, twenty-seven years ago, a Factory Bill was passed that provided that women and children in factories should not be allowed to work more than eight hours a day, and should not work . after six o'clock in the evening or before nine o'clock in the morning, that they were to have a half-holiday every Saturday and four full holidays in the year, and that they should be paid for these half-holidays and full holidays. That was twenty-seven years ago. This Fac- efforts ; and no man, except one going in for the veriest claptrap, and trying by false means to raise himself on to some pedestal, would say that this was a setting of the town against the country. The honourable member for Wai- hemo contrasted the farm labourers receiving £1 10s. a week and the labourers in the town getting 10s. a day. I come from a town where the wharf labourers get 10s. a day, and what are the average earnings of those labouring men ? about £1 18s. 6d. per week. One honourable member says they ought to work a full week. That they



would gladly do if they could, but they cannot, because of the intermittent character of the work. If a steamer comes in, and there is not an ample supply of labour, the cry is raised that the men are making a close corporation of the work, and pressure is brought to bear on them to increase the number of men in their union, and the result is that the wages again fall below what is a living wage. Men in the country getting £1 5s. a week and found are infinitely better off than the man in town with intermittent labour at 10s. a day, and the member for Waihemo knows it; and yet he talks as he has been talking about the towns trying to rob the country. He is simply trying to play himself off against the town members for an object. During the recess, if I have time, I shall go into the country, and I shall show the farmers how the facts in this matter really stand; and I am proud to say that some of the most enthusiastic friends we have in favour of advanced legislation are amongst the farming community. They are not all Conservatives, many are as liberal as many of the advanced Liberals in this House, and are as anxious to see that justice is done to the poor man in the town as to see benefits accrue to themselves. But I regret to say that the honourable member for Waihemo is not one of these men. He is trying to use the farmer as a means to climb into power. He is trying to use this Farmers' Union - this resuscitated "National Ass." for political purposes. But during the recess some of us will pull the horse-cover from the Farmers' Union, and we shall see the "National Ass." under it in all its hideous deformity. He quotes the price at which wheat can be grown in the Argentine, and then he tells us that is because of the low wages that are paid. Not at all, it is because of the reasonable price of the land. He also said that sheep used to be sold by the farmers at 3s 6d., and that now they were getting 14s. for them. Who is reaping the benefit? Only one person - the man who owns the land of the country. That enhanced value of the sheep is not added on to the earnings of the farmer, who has got to pay rent, or to the earnings of the country worker, the shearer, and the shepherd, who ought to get a share of it, but on to the unearned increment; and it is the unearned increment that we will get at yet. But that is outside the question that we are dealing with at present. I regret that members who have spoken about this Factories Bill have gone so wide of the mark. Speaking for myself,

<page>421</page>

and, I think, almost every rational town member of this House, I again reiterate that there is no desire on the part of any one of us of the Liberal party to set town against country or country against town. On the contrary, we do not want to loaf on the country, and the honourable member knows it. He knows that the men in the towns are only too glad to get a chance to go into the country. Mr. T. MACKENZIE. - I have corrected the honourable gentleman three times, and yet he continues to misrepresent me. What I said was that the town wants a whole loaf, and that they will only give us a small scone for the country. The honourable gentleman misunderstood me at first, but not afterwards, and said that I stated that the town people wanted to loaf on the country, and he persisted in using those words. Mr. LAURENSEN. - I regret, if I have misrepresented the honourable gentleman, but I wish to call the attention of honourable members representing country districts to this point: The statement has been made that the present Government has been attempting to improve the condition of the town workers at the expense of the people of the country, and that they have been and are neglecting the country, and devoting all their attention to the town. This is not so, and no one knows that better than the men who make these statements. say that there has not been the slightest intention to do so. For instance, this year we are voting £7,700 for the Labour Department, and \$91,000 for the Department of Agriculture. Does that show the slightest wish on the part of the Government, or on the part of town or labour representatives in this House, to interfere with the agricultural interests of this country? No, Sir, we read statistics too much, and we study the political aspects of the country too well, but to realise that if the country is not prosperous neither will the towns be prosperous. In fact, we rely on the country being prosperous for our prosperity. It is the desire of labour and Liberal members that not only should the farmers partake of that

prosperity, but also that the shearers, the ploughmen, and the labourers in the country should partake of it as well ; but we also wish that the men who work in the towns should have fair consideration, and it is only fair consideration for them that we ask for. Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa) .- I want to say a word or two with reference to what fell from the Minister for Railways regarding industries to-day and their condition a few years ago. I should like to take one industry, and that is the bootmaking trade. I can remember twenty years ago, in Invercargill, that men working at the bench on the iron last were paid £3 a week, and that "clickers " were paid £3 10s. a week, and sometimes more ; and that was when there was very little in the shape of duty paid upon the imported article. To-day the duty is something like 22} per cent. on manufactured goods, to protect the bootmaking industry in this colony, and what is the state of matters to-day ? That the operative bootmaker is paid about £1 15s. or £2 a week. An Hon. MEMBER .- The minimum wage is £2 2s. Mr. HORNSBY .- Yes ; I know that £2 2s. is the minimum fixed by the Arbitration Court, and therefore it proves that the position of the operative bootmaker is worse to-day than it was twenty-two years ago. An HON. MEMBER .- That is due to machinery. Mr. HORNSBY .- Well, if it is due to machinery we appear to have been going crab-like, or backwards instead of forwards, because I have always understood the introduction of machinery reduces the cost of production, and that the person who consumes the article produced gets it at a lower price, while wages are raised and the hours of labour are shortened. At all events, that is the position of trades in the Old Country, and certainly so in the case of America. Now, I have shown what protection has done in one particular trade in this colony, and I say it would not have been necessary to have had so much of this labour legislation, so many of these factory laws, introduced into this House and passed into law if we had had free-trade in this colony. My own impression is that the solving of the labour problem here in New Zealand lies in that one thing, and I am astonished that the member for Waihemo, knowing as he does so much about the operation of matters in the trade world, did not touch on the question, because he is more qualified to speak on it than I am. Sir, the position is this : that the great struggle that is coming in this country is the question of "Free-trade versus Protection." We are going to have that battle fought out in this colony, and that will bring about the solution of the present labour difficulty, and we shall then know exactly where we stand, while the people of the country will realise what they have been paying for their whistle during all these years of factory legislation and the imposition of Customs duties through the tariff of the colony. Why, Sir, talking about the condition of tradesmen in this colony, I may take my own trade for example. I can remember the time in this country when a compositor could earn his £4, £5, or £6 a week. What is the position to-day ? It is a very inferior one. And what has brought about the whole difficulty with regard to the position of the "out - of . works" in the trade to which I belong ? To-day in this colony, through the endeavour that is made by the trades-unions, through these Bills that have been passed in this House -- one of which we are passing to-night-what has been the effect on my trade? I will say this: that to day, through the introduction of machinery, we are going to see in this colony hundreds of men turned away from their trade; and not because of the machine itself, not because of any desire on the part of the employer to resist the operation of labour legislation, such as this Bill we are passing to-night, but because of the unfair impositions of the labour organizations of the colony, brought about

<page>422</page>

which have been placed on the statute-book of the colony. And I say that the punishment will fall, not on the employer, not on the man who desires to keep in his employment the men he has there; but because the demand made by the unions on the employer is greater than he can bear, he is compelled to introduce machinery, and turn his men adrift. It is so. I venture to say that if any man in this House will calmly investigate the matter, he will see that what I am stating is absolutely correct in every particular. We have heard a good deal said to-night about the unfairness of the operation of these Acts, in so far as they concern the men working in the country districts. Every time a labour measure is brought before

this House-and it has been so with regard to this Bill-there is a cry goes up from the country settler represented in this House to exempt from the operations of the measure the men in the country districts ; and I think it was a very pertinent question that was put by the member for Waihemo when he asked, " Why should you exempt the country labourer from these Acts ? If it is good for the town operative, it is good for the agricultural labourer "; and he went on to say-and with force-that it is impossible for the farmer to pay enhanced prices, and to have enacted shorter hours of labour for the country worker. It is all very well to say that the man working in the town is the only man who has intermittent labour. Why, Sir, I can tell you that in the country districts-where a man is working on a station or a farm, where he is working at fencing, or ditching, or even at ploughing- he also has intermittent labour, unless he works at a paltry \$1 2s. 6d. per week. That, Sir, is the wage of a skilled ploughman in my district; but, at the same time, it must be remembered that the ploughman has often got a wife living in a little cottage in a neighbouring town, and he has to keep her and a small family, or a large family, as the case may be, and he has to live most of his time by himself in a whare at the station. What is the position of that man so far as comfort is concerned, and what is the life of that man compared with a man who has all the benefits of civilisation in a town, and who gets his £2 to £2 2s. per week ? The man in the towns is very much better off than the countryman in this respect, because the man in the country has to go out and work in all weathers, and has to take a pittance to live upon. I think, if anybody is to blame at all for the spirit that is getting up in this country of town against country, it is the overweening desire on the part of organized labour in the centres to expect too much from the Legislature and too much from the people of this country. I am an old unionist, and I believe in the union of labour for what is fair and right and just ; but I do say this, and I tell the members of this House-there are many of them who know it - that there is a spirit growing up in this colony which will manifest itself sooner or later, and the spirit is this : that they are not going to tolerate this eternal inter- Mr. Hornsby so sure as there is any further attempt made on the part of unions to push this question of labour as they have been pushing it in the past, I can only say that, though we may deprecate and though we may regret the fact of raising town against country, the country will rise against this imposition, and it will do its level best - it will be a great power-to sweep away this evil, which has grown up and become a menace to the prosperity and progress of this country. Mr. SEDDON (Minister of Labour). - Sir, I thought at ten minutes to eight o'clock that the third reading of the Factories Bill would have been an accomplished fact. One speech has provoked many, and here, at twelve o'clock, we are still at the same debate, and we shall have done nothing to-day but simply pass the third reading of the Bill ; and I will undertake to say that 99 per cent. of the members of the House are in favour of it. Sir, it is very pleasing to me to find that there is a consensus of opinion in favour of this measure; it is gladdening to my heart to know that when a measure is submitted to this House in complete form, which is fair in its incidence, and beneficial equally to employers and employed, it has almost the unanimous support of honourable members. Sir, casting back only a few weeks there was quite another opinion prevailing. Then, the Factories Bill and the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Amendment Bill were both measures, if you believed what you read and heard, that were to be rejected ; nay, one of the leading journals said, "Here is an opportunity for the country members to show that they will have no more of this labour legislation -now is the opportunity for the House to reject the Factories Bill." Sir, what a commentary on that to find nearly the whole of the country members and the whole of the town members supporting the measure. Mr. HERRIES .- Because it is not the same Bill. Mr. SEDDON .- I say it is the same Bill, because the article I allude to was written and published after the Bill came down from the Labour Bills Committee, or after it had been passed by the Labour Bills Committee ; so that the honourable member's statement is incorrect. However, there have been brought up during the debate certain statements. Some of them were statements I have made ; others were exaggerations that I have never made ; and as to others, there has been an endeavour to place interpretations upon them

which the facts do not warrant. Now, it is true that on two occasions I have found it necessary, as far as labour legislation and as far as organized labour was concerned, to steady them. And there are times when that should be done, and when it is in the best interests of all concerned that someone should speak out in such a way that there is no misunderstanding the position. One such occasion took place in 1896. At that time, because the representatives of labour had achieved that which was within their reach, there was being demanded more than could be

<page>423</page>

brought ruin on the labour organizations and on the workers of the colony. I then said it was time for us to perfect our labour legislation, and not the time to go too far forward, and that if we did go too far there would be a set-back. . Well, I will say this of the workers of the colony : I have been often surprised to find how much they have been misjudged. There may be a few who would go to extremes-there are always a few who never know when to halt-but I say of the great majority, the great body of the workers of the colony, show them that anything is unreasonable, or against their best interests and the best interests of the colony, and they will proceed no further in that direction. have never known that to fail. And I say that for the man who will show them when they are going wrong they have a greater respect than they would have for the man who would pander to them, and who, for the time being, would go with them and carry them on till the time of reckoning comes, and they find they have gone too far. A man who would do that is the very man they would round on ; they like a man who will tell them plainly what the situation is, and they appreciate him for it. That is my experience of workers in this country, and my experience of workers wherever I have been ever since I was myself an apprentice in a workshop. It is not the man who will always go with them and say everything they wish that they respect. That is not the man they will put in a leading position, because they know-and no one knows better than they do- what is just and what is fair. Now, with regard to the attempt that has been made during the last few nights in this House to set the country against the town, no one regrets that more than I do. I say that bodes no good for either town or country, but that it is against the interests of both. I say we should work together as a whole for the common good. If the country is prosperous you have the reflection of the country in the towns. If the towns, on the other hand, are prosperous, and work is plentiful, and there is an increasing population, you have that increase marked in the country products, and there is no market so good as the market near home and at home. Well, Sir, that is always what I have contended, and I believe it to be sound in every sense of the word. Now, probably there was some little cause for alarm in the country, and I say that that alarm was fanned by people who were not altogether influenced by motives in the best interests of the country. An Hon. MEMBER .- There was good reason for alarm. Mr. SEDDON .- No. I say there was underlying it those who, for political purposes and reasons, were endeavouring to create dissension as between town and country. Now, first of all, I say there was some reason-at least I will give some of the reasons for the alarm in the country. You have the Workers' Compensation for Accidents legislation. There is no doubt, and I say it here, that that is one of the most humane measures that ever we placed on the breadwinner is maimed, that he shall become for the rest of his life a burden upon charity ; or if the breadwinner is killed, that his widow and children. should be pauperised, and that they should at once be thrown upon the charity of the public. Mr. T. MACKENZIE. - The Employers' Liability Acts protected them. Mr. SEDDON .- The Employers' Liability was a sham ; it never did do that. Show me a case where it has been able to do it. The Employers' Liability Acts were for the legal profession. It was there for those who had means ; but as for the unfortunate widow and children, I show me one case where they were provided for under the Employers' Liability Acts. Mr. HUTCHESON .- Not one in a thousand. Mr. SEDDON .- No, not one in a thousand. I say that the Workers' Compensation for Accidents Act was a measure, and will be a measure, that those who passed it will in time to come receive great credit for. I say that it is the industry-it is not the individual at all- it is the industry that is held to be responsible for the

accidents in dangerous employments that are bound to occur ; and, as I say, in its extreme application, what do we find ? We find that the Advances to Settlers Department, as advancers to the country settlers, want cover as mortgagees. Mortgagor, mortgagee, lessee-all to be covered in order to meet contingencies that you would think were almost impossible to arise, but as good security, so this result has been the case. Then, we find, as far as the Advances to Settlers Office is concerned, they must insure with the Government Accident Insurance Department. An Hon. MEMBER. - Is that the mortgagor ? Mr. SEDDON .- The mortgagee. Then, we find in that department they insisted on cover both for mortgagee and mortgagor, whilst in the other insurance departments they only covered the mortgagor. The result 12.0. was 2s. 6d. as against 10s. per cent. This caused considerable friction. I consider, myself, that all that is concerned is the mortgagee. My own opinion is that we went a little too far-further than the Home Act goes. The Home Act allows a mortgage to stand if executed prior to a call made owing to an accident. We put the claim for the worker as against the mortgagee. This is not the case at Home, and the result has been this duplication and covering the mortgagor, mortgagee, and lessee. All this means extra cost. I am of opinion that where there has been an attempt to mortgage, or to get out of the liability of the property as it stood at the time, the interest of the employer is the interest that should be responsible, and a slight amendment in this direction would do away with all friction in the country districts. It is not the question of labour legislation that has caused this trouble : it was the difficulty in respect to casual labour in respect to mortgagee and mortgagor having to be covered. The labour members and town representatives are not to blame. However, it is now better understood, and, with a slight

<page>424</page>

merry as a marriage bell. An Hon. MEMBER .- Bring down a Bill to do that. Mr. SEDDON .- Once you have a Bill you will have a big job. It is not so easy as it looks at the outset. The amount involved is trivial, even supposing there is no alteration in the law at all. It may cost a little more; but the amount involved is so trivial and the benefit is so great, to think that every man can work with the satisfaction of feeling that, in carrying out his occupation, if anything happens he is not going to be thrown on the storekeeper, or if he meets with a fatal accident his wife and family will not be cast on charity. Take the benefits compared with the cost and it is much better for matters to remain as they are. Coming back to the Bill, I may say I take this opportunity of saying that the Labour Bills Committee are entitled to the best thanks of the members for the work they did in connection with the measure. I also say, although the Bill came down, there were two points involved which created considerable alarm, and yet in respect to one or two of those points when the Bill left the Labour Bills Committee, there were contradictory clauses. One clause carried out what I am quite sure now the Labour Bills Committee never intended-that is, in respect to holidays. That, I believe, was a pure inadvertence. Then, in respect to taking out the words "women " or "youth " and putting in the word "person," that was a material alteration which I felt grieved about, because it was done without authority, and it created a feeling which at one time jeopardized the measure. There were one or two other alterations introduced in the Bill, but we must take it that the Law Draftsman, having a legally trained mind, did not consider those alterations quite so serious as they may have appeared to us. However, the Bill as it now stands is one which I think will redound to our credit as a Parliament, and to the credit of our colony. We have here, practically for the first time, passed an Eight Hours Bill. We say now, in this Bill, that forty-eight hours shall be a week's work for all workers under the measure, and they constitute three-fourths of the workers of the colony. An Hon. MEMBER .- It does not include the Government workers. Mr. SEDDON .- It is practically fixed in regard to them. At all events, we have here fixed the forty-eight hours a week, or eight hours a day, and in that I think we are in advance of any other Legislature, except as applied to mines ; because in one of the other colonies there is legislation extending the same advantages to miners. But the same might be said to apply to our

mines. However, there is something better still than that, and it is that we have gone back, so far as women and children are concerned, to the forty-five hours a week. We have gone back to the Act of 1894, and, I am sorry to say, some of the manufacturers, some of those connected with the industries, are still protesting and demanding that women and Mr. Seddon same as men. Sir, it must be admitted that the principle of lengthened hours for women and children was a mistake. It was done inadvertently, and had the effect of the clause been seen at the time it never would have been passed. However, I hope we shall stand by what we have passed now, and that the result will be most beneficial. Now, we have been told that our factory laws and labour laws have detrimentally affected the manufactures of the country and the industries of the country. I emphatically say that the statistics and other information in the possession of the Government prove quite the contrary. First of all, you have in five years the number of factory hands increased from twenty-five thousand to over fifty thousand. That is an increase of 100 per cent. That does not look very much like labour legislation being against the best interests of the industries of the colony. Then, I am told to look at the imports and the Customs returns. Well, I go to my Customs, and what do I find? I find, comparing the year 1900 with 1901, in spirits there has been an increase of £23,000; in cigars, an increase of £5,000; cigarettes, an increase of £4,000; tobacco, an increase of £15,000; sugar, an increase of £4,000; and in parcels-post, an increase of £4,000: a total increase of £49,000. An Hon. MEMBER. - How is the balance made up? Mr. SEDDON. - Under the ad valorem. Now, I come to the tariff raised under ad valorem, and I find that the principal increases are on the luxuries. The lower-priced goods which are used by workers, boots which are used by workers and their wives and children-there is but little increase on them; but when I come to the French and American-to the finer boots-there I find a large increase, showing me clearly that we are not falling back, but that owing to the spending power of the people being materially increased, and to the general prosperity, the principal increase has been upon the higher ad valorem dutiable goods of the better class. Under these circumstances, it cannot reasonably be contended that by the increased volume of these imports there I say is a falling off in our industries. that advisedly to the members of the House. Look at the position of the employers to-day; look at the capital they have at the present time invested in these industries. Take most of these factories at the time there was no labour legislation-a few years ago-and find out the mortgages that then existed and the mortgages that exist to-day. In fact, they are non-existent. Whilst we admit that the condition of the workers is materially improved, contrast that improvement with that of the employers, and I say it is in favour of the employers and capitalists. That, Sir, is the position. I look further, and I say that one of the grandest, one of the best, and one of the noblest works we can be engaged upon is to improve the condition of all. Take the settlers ten years ago. I could go to the very district

<page>425</page>

represented by the member for Egmont, and contrast the condition of those engaged in agricultural pursuits ten years ago and their condition to-day; they are a new people altogether. Mr. HOUSTON. - It was not the Factories Bill did that. Mr. SEDDON. - I say they have all shared in the general prosperity, and a material factor in that has been progressive legislation. There has been an advancement out of the old beaten ruts, and it has been caused and would not otherwise have eventuated had it not been that we had this prosperity. I say we have helped it, and what I wish to bring now, in conclusion, is this. Take the farmer: I say his position has improved. Take his farm: his mortgage has gone in very many cases, his farm has increased in value. I say that, with an increasing population and prosperity, land is bound to go up. In respect to your industries, capital has had very fair interest returned thereupon. Capital so invested has better security to-day with the labour legislation than it had formerly. The condition of affairs is much better now under the terms fixed by the Arbitration Court or fixed between the employers and the men employed, and for a given period, and with the moral force of the whole of the workers of the country,

and, with both working together for the general good. And, although there might be a slight difference in the adjustment, I say that both parties are better off, knowing where they are ; and it is that which in this colony gives confidence that does not exist in the Mother-country or in other countries. We are better off here to-day than they are in any other part of the British Empire ; and if our legislation gives confidence to the employer and to the worker, it is in the interests of both and in the interests of the colony. The employers and employed look to us to pass such laws as will do justice to all. The law now before us is such a law, and I am glad that its reception and its passing has been such that one and all may look back with pleasure thereto. I move the third reading of the Bill. Bill read a third time. The House adjourned at twenty minutes past twelve o'clock a.m.