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HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 13th March, 1901.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

METROPOLITAN ELECTRIC SUPPLY BILL.

WEST SURREY WATER BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolution reported from the Committee, "That, in the case of the Scarborough Electric Tramways Petition, the Standing Orders ought not to be dispensed with."

Report to lie upon the Table.

PETITIONS.

BEER BILL.

Petitions in favour, from North Oxfordshire; Charlbury; and West Lindsey; to lie upon the Table.

COLVILE, MAJOR GENERAL SIR HENRY.

Petition from South Derbyshire, for inquiry into his case; to lie upon the Table.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (HIGHER GRADE AND EVENING CONTINUATION SCHOOLS).

Petitions for alteration of Law, from Gloucester; West Hartlepool; Edmonton; Swindon; and Kidderminster; to lie upon the Table.

POOR LAW OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1896.

Petitions for alteration of Law, from Edmonton; and Newton-in-Makerfield; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Farnworth; Leeds; Wetherby; Wimborne; Sheffield (twelve); Herne Hill; North Kensington; Dunoon; Notting Hill; Pontypool; Southampton; Liverpool; Congregational Union of Scotland; Colne (seven); Saundersfoot; Willenhall; Middon; Amble; Nottingham; Blaenavon; Shotts; Buckhaven; Edinburgh; Allenby; Plaistow; London; Motherwell; York (three); Chelmsford; Aberdeen; West Kent; Dunscore; Sidcup; Hartlepool; Caistor; Walthamstow; Camelon; Grangemouth; Watford; Rotherham; Greasbro'; Barrow-in-Furness; and Whitehaven; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Ellon; Greenock (three); Blair Athol; Broughty Ferry; Kilbarchan; Forfar; Methlick; Moffat; Leslie; and Dunscore; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVY (VICTUALLING YARD MANUFACTURING ACCOUNTS 1899&#x2013;1900).

Annual Accounts presented, of the Cost of Manufacturing, Provisions, Victualling Stores, etc., at the Home Victualling Yards and Malta Yard for 1899&#x2013;1900, etc., with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 82.]

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (GREAT BRITAIN).

Copy presented, of Forty-fourth Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Reformatory

and Industrial Schools for 1900. Part I. List of Schools and Detailed Reports  
[by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

St. Cross Hospital, Winchester.; Return relative thereto [ordered 11th March; Sir  
Walter Foster]

CONGESTED DISTRICTS (IRELAND) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. FLYNN (Cork Co., N.): Mr. Speaker, the Bill which I have the honour to  
introduce is not in the strict sense a party Bill, nor is it a purely political  
measure, because it is asked for and demanded by the overwhelming bulk of the  
Irish people. We might reasonably expect for this measure support from all sides  
of the House, seeing that its main  
object and aim is to improve the condition of a people temperate, thrifty,  
industrious, and moral, who have been reduced to an appalling condition of  
poverty, verging on starvation, by circumstances of an artificial character, and  
in the main the results of the inhuman methods adopted in the past. The Bill  
refers to what are called the Congested Districts, and is to deal with a  
condition of things caused by historical crises which inflicted immense  
grievances on the people of the nation, who were driven from the good land to  
the bogs and barren rock. History furnishes only too many examples of the  
inhuman methods by which this was done, but I will only refer to two. In the  
county of Galway we have an instance of a man named Pollock, who purchased  
20,000 acres, and the 12,000 human beings living upon that property he looked  
upon as encumbrances, and drove them out without mercy. Solvency was no  
safeguard; those who could pay were driven off with those who could not, and  
their homes were rased to the ground to make way for sheep. [The hon. Member  
also cited a similar case in county Donegal.] The historical crises and acts of  
landlords such as those to which I have referred have brought about a condition  
of things appalling in the extreme. In introducing this Bill I have no desire to  
criticise or find fault with the administration of the present Congested  
Districts Board; I shall confine myself entirely to explaining the scope of the  
Bill and the need of legislation.

In the first place, this Bill proposes to extend the area of the congested  
districts, to enlarge the jurisdiction of the Board, to make the Board more  
representative of the people, and to arm it with powers of compulsory purchase.  
We do not intend to interfere with the duties of the Congested Districts Board  
in the useful work in which they are engaged, except that we desire to see, if  
the Government is sufficiently generous to endow it with the necessary money, a  
Congested Districts Board sufficiently large to carry out wider functions. The  
first clause of the Bill gives power to the Lord Lieutenant, on the  
recommendation of the county council, to declare a county or part of a county a  
congested district, and it repeals Subsections 1 and 2 of Section 36 of the  
Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1891, because they would be unnecessary on the  
passing of this Bill. The second clause  
provides for an elective element on the Board. The Board at present is large and

numerous enough, but it is entirely nominated by the Lord Lieutenant, and it contains no representative of the people; and now that we have under the new Local Government Act county councils in active operation, and local self-government has had some trial in, Ireland, and has been found on the whole to work very successfully, we think we should have some representation on this Board. The men elected by the districts would be men of some business ability, and would know the needs of the particular districts which they represented far better than the nominated members of the Board. From West Cork, Kerry, and many parts of those districts which are said to be congested, complaints are coming in that their claims are neglected, and that they do not get a fair share of the operation of this Board. And there is another reason also for an elective representation. Of the £74,000 which is the annual income of the Board at present, between two-thirds and three-fourths is derived from an Irish source, it comes from an Irish fund and is Irish money, and therefore Irishmen, should have some voice in its expenditure. Enlargements of the holdings of the tenants is, of course, one of the most important functions of the Congested Districts Board. I find from the Reports of the Board examples of estates that have been purchased, which must convince the House and the country that in order to bring about any improvement at all in the condition of these people, anything resembling agricultural prosperity, there must be an enlargement of the small holdings in the congested districts. On one acreage of 460 acres there are no less than ninety-five tenants, and at the same time an adjoining grazing tenant had a holding of 350 acres. All over these districts there are large numbers of people huddled together, trying to wrest a livelihood from bog and rock, whilst in the immediate vicinity there are large blocks of rich grazing land, on which the people, look with a hungry eye, and which if divided up among the people would give these people some degree of prosperity, and enable them to live in some degree of comfort.

Another clause; and this is perhaps the crux of the Bill; is the arming, I the Board with compulsory powers, and it is to be regretted that the hon. and learned Member for East Down, who on a former occasion gave his consent to such a proposition, should now find it consistent with his public duty to oppose this Bill. The Board have on more than one occasion in their Reports expressed themselves in favour of compulsory powers, and they embodied that in a resolution which they sent to the Lord Lieutenant. In their Report of 1894 they said;

"During the months now under review we have made inquiries as to various estates advertised or offered for sale, and subsequently negotiations were entered into for the purchase of the lands; It may, however, be stated that we have not so far been able to obtain any of these estates at a price sufficiently low to enable us to carry out a scheme for migration or enlargement of holdings, without incurring a risk of heavy loss to our funds."

And in 1895 they said;

"There is a probability that the Board may become purchasers of one or more of these estates, but additional funds and enlarged powers are desirable if anything is to be done on a large scale towards giving effect to what may be

generally called the migration clauses of the Congested Districts Act," and they adopted the following resolution;

"That the Congested Districts Board is in possession, through their inspectors, that there are large tracts of land that could be used to enlarge the holdings of small occupiers and promote schemes of migration in congested districts. The Board are, however, of opinion that it will be impossible for them to give due effect to this important part of their work unless more funds are placed at their disposal, and compulsory powers given to them to acquire such lands at their just value."

There is nothing of the Irish agitation about that; it is a Report arrived at after due consideration of all the facts of the case by the Congested Districts Board. Later on they follow that up by a Report in language not quite so emphatic, but equally strong, for they say in their Report of 1896;

"Further, we are conducting negotiations for the purchase of some other estates, but the extent to which we can buy is affected not only by the amount of money at our disposal for the carrying out of the re-applotment and improvement of holdings, but also by the readiness of owners of property to meet our views on reasonable terms."

And in 1899 they say;

"Of course, in those cases where we have purchased additional land; a grazing farm, for example; and are thus enabled to considerably increase the size of all the old holdings, it is a comparatively easy matter to satisfy the tenants, but where; and this must occur in many cases; very little land can be added to the existing holdings the problem becomes a difficult one."

Now I claim the Chief Secretary as a supporter of this clause, because he has said, in connection with compulsory purchase for all Ireland, that the League had plagiarised the policy of the Tory party. Well, if it was for the good of Ireland we do not care who was the author of the policy, and we will not dispute with him whether the League plagiarised the policy of the Government or whether the Government plagiarised the policy of the League. So long as we are agreed that it is desirable there need be no controversy; but we do claim the Chief Secretary as an advocate and warm friend of the clause for compulsory purchase, at all events in these congested districts. In many parts of the west of Ireland there are large grazing holdings contiguous to these small plots. Many of them are holdings on eleven months tenancy, and surely, when the eleven months comes to an end, the landlord has full and free possession, and there can be no difficulty in purchasing large numbers of them; and when the landlord is unreasonable it is surely desirable that compulsory powers should be exercised just as they are put in force in municipalities.

This question is not so very difficult as it seems, and can be settled if grappled with by statesmen in a comprehensive manner. It is an urgent question. I do not know whether there could be any sight more depressing than to drive through these congested districts and to see large tracts of rich, fertile land covered with sheep and cattle, while the peasants are compelled to eke out an existence on the rocky, barren mountains or in the bogs and swamps. I trust the

Government will give a sympathetic answer. This is not a party question, and I appeal to the House to pass the Second Reading of the Bill.

DR. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.) said as one who had taken a very special interest in this question he rose with great pleasure to second the motion for the Second Reading of this Bill. He should like to explain, for the benefit of hon. Members who did not understand, what a congested district was. The population of the congested districts amounted to 549,516, and the area in statute acres was 3,700,000. A congested district was one where more than 20 per cent. of the population of an electoral division of a county lived in a locality the rateable value of which was less than 30s. per head of the population. The rateable value per head of the population of the congested districts was as follows. In Mayo it was only 18s. 3d., and in one part of the county it was only 14s. 10d. In Galway the rateable value was 17s. 10d., and in one electoral division it was as low as 7s. 10d. In Donegal the rateable value was 18s.; in Leitrim, £;1 6s. 8d.; in Sligo, £;1 5s. 5d.; in Roscommon, £;1 2s. 9d.; in Kerry, £;1 1s. 7d., and in one district it was only 6s. 9d.; in Cork, £;1 3s. 7d. In other words, the highest valuation was £;1 6s. 8d. Now, what was the lowest valuation in England? He put a question to the President of the Board of Agriculture the other day upon this subject, and he was told that the lowest valuation in England per head was £;2 1s. 6d. The number of agricultural holdings in Mayo was 33,218, of which half were under £;4 rateable value, and the mean valuation of which was £;8. In Galway there are 32,108 holdings, of which 14,189 were under £;4 valuation, and with a mean valuation of £;13. In Donegal there were 28,595 holdings, 14,568 under £;4 valuation, and the mean valuation of which was £;9. In Leitrim there were 13,314 agricultural holdings, of which 3,638 were under £;4 valuation, and the mean valuation of which was £;9. How were these poor farmers, who were really only agricultural labourers, to compete with Canada, the Argentine, and Denmark, especially as produce could be brought to the London market from these countries at a cheaper rate than from Connaught? He claimed in support of this Bill the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh, who told him when he introduced this Bill as a private Member's Bill in 1897, that if he could persuade his friend the late, Colonel Waring to accept compulsory purchase he (Colonel Saunderson) would gladly support it. He also claimed the support of the hon. Member for East Down, who backed his (Dr. Ambrose's) Bill in 1897. And he claimed the support of the present Solicitor General for England, from whom he had a letter in. His possession in which lie said that, while heartily approving of the Bill of 1897, he regretted that he could not persuade the late Colonel Waring to accept compulsory purchase, and that, being the landlords' advocate, he was sorry he could not support it on that account.

It might be asked why did the promoters of this Bill ask for a compulsory purchase clause? They asked for it for the purpose of relieving the perennial distress of the congested districts. They might be told there was no perennial distress. Well, they had it on the authority of the late Chief Secretary that the people of the west of Ireland live in a state of chronic starvation. Without

touching upon the famine of 1846&#x2013;7, the question of distress was brought before the House from 1831 to 1898 in twenty-seven different years. And in, nearly all cases was it confined to the seaboard counties. We had a famine in 1879&#x2013;80, and the amount spent on the relief of such, famine in 1880 from such sources as the Duchess of Marlborough's fund, the Dublin Mansion House fund, the American and Canadian fund, and the Land League funds was over £;624,000. And the following Acts were recently passed by this House for the relief of distress: (1) The, Relief of Distress (Ireland) Act. 1880, under which £;750,000 were borrowed from the Irish Church Fund for the relief of distress; (2) The Relief of Distress (Ireland) Amendment Act. 1880, under which the sum of £;1,500,000 was borrowed from the Irish Church Fund for the same purpose, the, £;750,000 not being sufficient; (3) the, Seed Supply (Ireland) Act, 1880, to enable boards of guardians to borrow money to supply seed potatoes and seed oats to needy tenants; (4) the Relief of Distressed Unions (Ireland) Act, 1883, which consisted in borrowing not more than £;50,000 from the Land Commission for the purpose of relieving distress; (5) and, finally, there was Mr. Gerald Balfour's Relief Act of 1898. The Government had tried their hands at emigration, and although it might have been thought that a wise Minister would have considered it more profitable to pass Acts to prevent emigration, Acts were passed in this House to assist emigration from Ireland in the following years::1838, 1847, 1849, 1882, 1883, and 1898.

Another reason why they asked for compulsory purchase was because the Congested Districts Board passed resolutions in 1895, 1897, and in 1898 asking for compulsory powers in order the more speedily to enable them to enlarge the holdings in the congested districts. He would like to give the House an idea of the receipts and expenditure of some typical families living in congested districts as taken from the Congested Districts Board Report::

I.

Receipts and expenditure of a family in comparatively good circumstances, the receipts being derived from agriculture and fishing;

Receipts.

Expenditure.

£;48

3s.

4d.

£;37

2s.

0d.

Home produce consumed by family is valued at about £;10, leaving about £;1 1s.

4d. for old age;

II.

Receipts and expenditure of a family in very poor circumstances, the receipts being derived from agriculture and fishing;

Receipts.

Expenditure.

£;9

16

0d.

£;10

19s.

0d

Home produce consumed by family is valued at £;12 to £;17, leaving nothing for old age

III.

Receipts and expenditure of a family in ordinary circumstances the receipts being derived from agriculture and home industries;

Receipts.

Expenditure.

£;27

4s.

4d

£;30

9s.

1d.

Home produce consumed by the family is valued at £;5 10s. to £;10, leaving nothing for old age.

IV.

Receipts and expenditure of a family in ordinary circumstances, the receipts being derived from agriculture, fishing, and home industries;

Receipts.

Expenditure.

£;41

0s.

0d.

£;42

15s.

0d.

Home produce consumed by the family valued at £;12 to £;20, leaving nothing for old age.

V.

Receipts and expenditure of a family in ordinary circumstances, the receipts being derived from agriculture and from earnings as migratory labourers;

Receipts.

Expenditure.

£;33

14s.

0d.

£;32

11s.

0d.

Home produce consumed by the family valued at about £;15, leaving nothing for old age.

VI.

Receipts and expenditure of a family in poor circumstances, the receipts being derived from agriculture and from earnings as migratory labourers;

Receipts.

Expenditure.

£;17

10s.

0d.

£;17

8s.

6d.

Home produce consumed by the family, valued at about £;10, leaving no provision for old age.

VII.

Receipts and expenditure of a family in ordinary circumstances, the receipts being derived from agriculture and home industries;

Receipts.

Expenditure.

£;38

19s.

6d.

£;41

0s.

5d.

Home produce consumed by the family valued at about £;10, leaving nothing for old age.

VIII.

Receipts and expenditure of a family in the poorest possible circumstances, the receipts being derived altogether from agriculture;

Receipts.

Expenditure.

£;32

0s.

0d.

£;29

2s.

6d.

Home produce consumed by the family valued at about £;12, leaving nothing for old age.

IX.

Receipts and expenditure of a family in the poorest possible circumstances, the receipts being derived from agriculture and labour in the locality;

Receipts.

Expenditure.

£;8

3s.



0d.

£;11

9s.

0d.

Home produce consumed by the family valued at about £;6, leaving no provision for old age.

Now, he should like to show why the whole of the province of Connaught should be scheduled as a congested district. The poor law valuation per head of the population for the whole province was £;1 18s. 4d., only slightly in excess of the 38s. per head limit. Therefore, he maintained that the whole province of Connaught ought to be scheduled as a congested district. But, in addition, he gave the following reasons, as showing the extreme poverty of Connaught, in support of his argument that the whole province is entitled to be scheduled as a congested district.

The population of Connaught in 1898 was 724,774, and the average number of persons daily in the workhouse was 4,107; that is to say, that one in 170 of the population of the province was an inmate of the workhouse every day during the year 1898. The number of persons relieved during the year ended 29th September, 1898, indoor, was 36,545, and outdoor, 49,735, making a total of 86,280. In other words, one-eighth of the population of Connaught were in receipt of outdoor relief in 1898.

Now, it might be asked how these people in the congested districts lived. He would tell the House. They lived on the money sent them by their children from America and Australia. He would Home produce consumed by the family valued give one further reason in support of claim for compulsory purchase powers by quoting the words of a man whose name would carry weight, he felt sure, in this House. Here were his words::

"I must say from all accounts and from my own observation that the state of our fellow-countrymen in these parts of Ireland is worse than that of any other people in the world; let alone Europe. I believe that these people are made as we are; that they are patient beyond belief; but, at the same time, broken-spirited and desperate, living on the verge of starvation in places in which we would not keep our cattle. The Bulgarians, Anatolians, Chinese, and Indians are better off than many of them are. I am not well off; but I would offer Lord So-and-so or his agent £;1,000 if either of them would live one week in one of these poor devils' places, and feed as these poor people do."

These are the words of the late General Gordon. For all these reasons, therefore, he trusted the Government would look favourably on this Bill. They had a golden opportunity now. He asked the House to send to the relatives and friends in the west of Ireland of the Irish soldiers who fell in South Africa, and whose bones are now bleaching on the veldt, a message that the dawn of the new century should not be without hope for them, but should on the contrary be the harbinger of better and brighter days.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

\*MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) said he was certain that every member of the House, no matter on which side he sat, would cordially agree with the hon. Gentleman

who had just sat down that any proposals of the character which were embodied in the Bill or which dealt with the general question of relief of distress in the west or any other part of Ireland, ought to receive the sympathetic attention of the House, and though he was unable on the present occasion to give his assent to this Bill, it was not because either he himself or anybody else on the Ministerial side of the House had previously turned a deaf ear or given unwilling aid to the proposals which had been passed in Parliament for the purpose of relieving such distress as existed. His objection to the Bill was that it practically upset the whole of the machinery which was created by his right hon. friend the First Lord of the Treasury for the purpose of carrying out his projects for the relief of the congested districts.

He believed himself that the benefit which was due to the creation of the Congested Districts Board had principally flowed because the administration had been in the hands of a Board which was not elective. He dared say that that was not a very popular view to put before the House of Commons, but it must be recollected that the Board was in the position of a trustee administering a large sum of money given to it by the nation for the purpose of relieving distress in certain districts in Ireland. There was hardly one of these districts which did not look upon itself as being in a more distressful condition than the others. There was hardly one district in which the Board operated in any of the counties; Kerry, Mayo, Galway; in which the inhabitants would not like to see the whole of the £74,000 spent in their own particular district. There was no doubt that all sorts of plans for spending money which the Congested Districts Board had at its disposal had been brought before the Board, and, if the Board had been elected by the popular voice, as suggested by the Bill, he very much feared that many unsound projects would have been encouraged. A large proportion of the public money administered by the Board would have been administered in a way which would not have relieved the real necessities of the case, which would not have made any substantial foundation for the future of agriculture, and which would have been thrown away in obedience to the demands made by the popular voice, which, after all, looked for the immediate expenditure of public money as the best way to meet the duties of the moment, without any regard to whether the objects upon which that public money was spent were of a beneficial character. He thought the First Lord of the Treasury was quite right in narrowing the number of persons composing the Board to the smallest possible dimensions. There naturally had been complaints from various parts of the congested districts that their wants had not been attended to. But he did not think that any criticism which had been directed against the general work of the Board had been based on any sound foundation. The last Report of the Board showed that its annual expenditure had risen from £41,000 to £66,000, and he believed that in the near future it would have an income of something like £74,000 to administer. The Bill proposed to introduce an elective element, to be composed of representatives of the county councils within the extended area of the Congested Districts Board. They did not know that the representatives of the county councils would have any special knowledge of the work to be done, or any very great administrative capacity. [An

HON. MEMBER: How do you know? Name one.] He might name the county council of Mayo as one which had not shown particular ability in regard to agricultural matters.

An HON. MEMBER: They will do better than the grand juries, at any rate.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): I rise to order. I am bound to say that the Local Government Board have given the Mayo County Council an excellent testimonial.

\*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order; That is not a point of order.

\*MR. MACARTNEY said he did not propose to go into any particular cases, but what he wanted to do was to lay down the general principle that when they had what was practically a large public trust to be administered, involving an expenditure of £75,000 yearly, with work to be carried on in different localities, it was clear that the work would be much better done and the proposals considered in a far more impartial spirit by a Board which had little local connection and was subject to no local influence. For the House to alter the character impressed on the Congested Districts Board by the First Lord of the Treasury when he created it; a character which had enabled it to carry on its work with very considerable success; would be one of the most mischievous actions ever proposed by any legislature with regard to a body intended to permanently benefit the Irish congested districts. There was one other provision of the Bill to which he had a strong objection and that was, the proposed extension of the congested districts area. No figures had been put before the House to justify the inclusion of counties like Sligo, Roscommon, and Donegal. Was it not perfectly absurd to include the whole of such a county as Donegal?

MR. FLYNN: We leave it to the discretion of the Lord Lieutenant, acting on the recommendation of the county council.

\*MR. MACARTNEY said there was nothing about discretion in that part of the Bill. It certainly did say that the Lord Lieutenant might, if he desired, include certain other counties, and personally he had no objection to the Lord Lieutenant doing so, on the advice of the Congested Districts Board. But his point was that the proposal to at once schedule Donegal and Roscommon in the congested districts area materially weakened the arguments which had been advanced in support of the Bill.

Another great objection he had to the measure was that it increased the powers given under the Act of 1896 to the Land Commission to advance money for the purchase of holdings. As he understood it, this Bill would enable the Congested Districts Board to swallow up every farthing of money now provided for the purchase of holdings generally in Ireland, and to apply it solely to purchases in the scheduled counties. As a representative of Ulster he had the strongest objection to the attempt to secure the whole of the money for the purchase of land in certain districts in the west, and nothing would induce him to give his consent to a Bill containing such a provision. He trusted that the House would not permit the Land Purchase Fund thus to be dealt with by a side wind. Until they heard what the proposals of the Government were for increasing the sum now set free for land purchase, he, for one, could not consent to a Bill of that description passing the House. The sum which had been already spent on land purchase in the congested districts up to the last year was something like

£300,000. The Congested Districts Board had dealt with some six or seven estates, and he trusted that the difficulties which had recently arisen in connection with the purchase of the Dillon estate would soon disappear. But it seemed to him that very great risk would be run if the Congested District Board, as reconstructed by the Bill, were placed in a position to carry out compulsory purchase all over the eight counties named in the schedule, and were endowed with the power of applying all the money now in the hands of the Land Purchase Commissioners for that purpose. They knew very well that there were authorities in the west of Ireland who had taken upon themselves the responsibility of openly declaring that at any time it suited their purpose, for political reasons, they would not only encourage, but would actually advise the purchasing tenants to repudiate their liability. [Cries of "No, no."] Well, it was on record. [Cries of "Name."] The hon. Member for East Mayo had said as much in that House.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I do not think that the right hon. Gentleman should make that statement without quoting the words. I believe they are quite different from those he now uses. The hon. Member for East Mayo is not present, and it is not fair that words should be quoted in this loose way.

\*MR. MACARTNEY said he did not wish to press unfairly upon any Member not in the House. Had he thought there was any doubt on the point, he would have provided himself with a volume of Hansard. Still, he was only giving the effect of the hon. Member's words on his own mind, and he certainly was under the impression that in the Second Reading debate on the Land Purchase Bill of 1891 the hon. Member for East Mayo indicated that it was quite within his power and discretion, if he chose at any time, to advise the purchasing tenants to repudiate their liability. His argument was, "How could the British Government hope to recover instalments against the will of a united body of occupiers of land?" He certainly could not see that any arguments had been advanced to justify the proposed inroad upon the money provided by Parliament for land purchase in Ireland generally. Up to the present sufficient funds had been placed at the disposal of the Congested Districts Board for the purpose of carrying out what was, after all, an experimental system of land purchase. The system adopted by the Board differed in many respects from land purchase in other parts of Ireland, because the Board had been empowered not only to buy estates from landlords and re-sell them to the tenants, but also to devote considerable sums of money to improving the condition of the property, and to assist the purchasing tenants. These tenants consequently had been placed by legislation in a far better position than was enjoyed by other tenants in Ireland, and, while he was glad to see the success which had attended that legislation, he certainly was not prepared to assent to the passing of a Bill of that character when he reflected that in many portions of Tyrone, of Fermanagh, and of Antrim there were districts in which the tenants were not nearly so well off as the great majority of those in the congested districts. [Cries of "Oh, oh";] He made that statement deliberately. [An HON. MEMBER: What; do you know about it?] He had been; in a good many congested districts, and had watched the work of the Congested Districts Board,

and he was perfectly convinced of the accuracy of his statement. The climate in the districts to which he was referring was colder than on the west coast, and, although they heard a good deal of lamentation about the wild-ness of the west coast, anybody who had had an opportunity; as he had had; of comparing the isolated tracts in Ulster with the congested districts area would agree that the tenants there were quite as badly off as those on the western sea-board.

DR. AMBROSE: That is not borne out by the Local Government Board Reports.

\*MR. MACARTNEY said it was his opinion, at any rate, and anyone who, like himself, had driven through the particular districts of which he was speaking would appreciate the difference between the western seaboard and the exposed parts of Tyrone and North Antrim.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Put a tax on the Gulf Stream.

\*MR. MACARTNEY said allusion had been made to the opposition of the landlords, but he could not see how the landlords of any part of Ireland could be interested in opposing the passing of this Bill. He opposed it because, in the first place, it altered the constitution of the Congested Districts Board to such a degree and in such a manner as to deprive that Board of its power and authority to effectually carry out the duties entrusted to it by Parliament. Secondly, he opposed it because it made an inroad on the funds provided by the State for land purchase in Ireland generally, an inroad which had not been justified by any arguments put before the House, and he for one could not consent to a fund intended for the whole of Ireland being used solely for compulsory purchase in the congested areas. In the third place he saw no reason whatever for the inclusion of the whole of the counties scheduled in the Bill in the congested districts area

He did not deny that there might be some portions of Ireland which might very well be added to the area already under the supervision of the Bill, and no doubt the Chief Secretary, if he had not the power of adding them, would apply to Parliament for it in due time. While he trusted that the House would always give a sympathetic hearing to proposals emanating from any quarter for remedying distress either on the west coast or in any other part of Ireland, he did urge it not to pass this Bill on the grounds which he had stated. He therefore begged to move that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

MR. MOORE (Antrim, N), in seconding the Amendment, said that hon. Members on both sides of the House, whether they approved of the Bill or not, ought at least to be grateful to the hon. Member who had brought it forward, because he had afforded them another opportunity of discussing a really important Irish subject. The importance of the subject was shown by the fact that the new Chief Secretary, when he first took up his duties, paid a personal visit to the congested districts, in order to examine into the working of the Board. It was now ten years since the Board was first instituted, and it was well that they should have an opportunity of reviewing its work. It would be remembered that the Board was empowered to pursue three direct methods for the purpose of diminishing the distress in the districts placed under its control. In the first place it was instructed to develop the sea fisheries, and it was very gratifying to know that so successful had its work been in that direction that in a period

of three months twenty-three boats, at a place on the coast of Donegal, had been enabled to earn £7,000, while the Midland and Great Western Company of Ireland in one season carried no less than 23,000 tons of fish from the western seaboard. Then, again, the Board's action in connection with cottage industries had been equally satisfactory, although perhaps public attention had not been very much centred upon it.

Now, this Bill proposed to give the Board further powers on the third and most important side; the agricultural side; of its work. He did not wish to repeat anything said by the last speaker, but he was bound to say that, in his opinion, it was desirable that

the collection of districts which formed the unit in the Act of 1891 should continue to be the unit. In every county almost there was a belt of fertile land, however poor the remainder might be. While the Bill proposed to increase the area under the control of the Congested Districts Board, it did not propose to increase its income. The Act of 1891 was not sufficiently elastic, and he thought it was desirable that the Congested Districts Board should be enabled to segregate the congested districts, and that instead of insisting that 20 per cent. of the entire population of a county should live in a congested area before the Act could be put into operation, they should take as the unit electoral divisions with a minimum population of 10,000. In the northern counties there were considerable town populations which had to be brought into the computation, and that he suggested was not desirable. Hon. Members opposite would, he was sure, acquit him of any suggestion of political prejudice or bigotry in that matter, because the very people whose cause he was pleading were their co-religionists. He had never looked to them for any political support, but he did contend that, in common fairness, the Nationalists of Antrim should share benefits equally with those of Galway whenever there was a Government grant to be distributed. At present, everything seemed to go to the west coast.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Not at all. Look at Ardglass.

MR. MOORE said he was not denying that the people of the west coast were poor. All he was contending was that the money should be equally divided.

MR. T. M. HEALY: What about Ardglass?

MR. MOORE: That is in county Down. What he wanted to point out was that while of the Government grant, given in 1887, for the development of Irish fisheries, county Clare got £11,000, Galway £28,000, and Mayo £30,000, Antrim only received £1,000. He wished to lay down the proposition that it was a mistake to assume that the entire destitution and poverty of Ireland was concentrated on the seaboard of Galway. Let them look at his own Division, where, in the Glen district, they would find a population settled on small patches of land tilled with primitive and unskilled methods, where the cattle and sheep had deteriorated in breeding and decreased in numbers, and where the people led most comfortless and cheerless lives. They were huddled up together, and no one bothered their heads about them. Their more prosperous neighbours in the county of Antrim, who farmed the lowlands, did not feel bound to contribute to their relief any more than did the people who farmed the rich lands in the west deem it their duty to assist their poorer brethren in the congested areas. They

constituted, in fact, an almost forgotten race. It was objected, when the Act of 1891 was passed, that it would be very unsatisfactory to have what might be called sporadic congested districts scattered throughout the country. He could quite understand the difficulty and expense which might be entailed on the Congested Districts Board by having one patch to deal with in Antrim, another in Derry, and others in Kerry and Galway. But owing to what had happened in the last ten years, that difficulty had been diminished. They now had an Agricultural Board with its staff of inspectors in nearly every county, and surely there would be no difficulty in placing congested areas under the supervision of those inspectors. The Congested Districts Board might well be allowed to utilise the staff of the Agricultural Board for its own purposes. Next he came to the question of the elective constitution of the Board. He understood that the proposal contained in the Bill was defended on the ground that the people who paid were entitled to representation, That was all very well if the people did contribute to the funds which the Board expended. In this case they did not.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): They are taxed.

MR. MOORE: Certainly; but if that were the argument it would follow that the County Council of Antrim would have as much right to a seat on the Congested Districts Board as the County Council of Galway. What he wanted to point out was that there was no direct local contribution to the fund which the Congested Districts Board had to administer, and if they were to have local representation on the Board, then certainly every council in Ireland should have the right to send a representative. They ought to be very careful before they accepted any proposal which would make the Board too unwieldy. He had never heard any suggestion from any part of Ireland that the Board did not do its work well, and he therefore hoped this proposal to alter its constitution would not be pressed. It might fairly be considered by the Chief Secretary, however, how far local committees or temporary commissions might assist the Board in its work.

There was only one other matter to which he wished to refer, and that was the proposal for the compulsory taking of land. It was perfectly true that he was a strong advocate of the principle of compulsory purchase. But he held that that principle was applicable only to the case of dual ownership, and he did not understand that the proposal of this Bill suggested there was any dual ownership in respect of the lands to be dealt with. The Congested Districts Board was in the same position as an ordinary individual seeking to acquire adjoining land. There was no question of terminating a partnership, and therefore the Board, when seeking to secure possession of land by legal force, should be compelled to pay for it on the scale which ordinarily obtained in such cases. He thought he had sufficiently shadowed to the House the reasons which led him to support his right hon. friend the Member for South Antrim in his motion for the rejection of the measure. He could only add his hope that, later on in the debate, they would receive from the Chief Secretary some assurance that in the near future he would afford them practical evidence of his sympathy with the difficulties which admittedly existed.

Amendment proposed;

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'";(Mr. Macartney).

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

\*MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: I rise to support the Bill which has been introduced by the hon. Member for North Cork, and in doing so I may be permitted to express my regret that the Government have neglected to introduce a measure of such vital importance to so many people in Ireland, and have thereby ignored the wants of a very considerable portion of those who

are best entitled to their consideration; I mean the poor and oppressed in the congested districts. I have at the same time to express my dissatisfaction at the conduct of two hon. Members who represent agricultural constituencies in Ireland, who moved and seconded the rejection of this Bill. I wish also to refer to some observations made by the right hon. Member for South Antrim, who had spoken with admiration of the monument which the First Lord of the Treasury had raised for himself in Ireland in the shape of the Congested Districts Board. The right hon. Member viewed that monument from a long distance, he has not looked at it from the point of view of one who, like myself, has lived in the west of Ireland. I have had ten years experience of the working of that Board, and have come to the conclusion that if it be a monument it was built on a bad foundation. No man who has any acquaintance with the everyday affairs of the world but will say that if a machine in daily use is not found to work in accordance with the intentions of the owner or inventor, it is overhauled, or a new one substituted for it. I say that the same principle should apply to the Congested Districts Board. Speaking for my constituents in the West of Ireland who are affected by the operation of the Congested Districts Act, and who would be affected by the passage of this Bill into law, I say that they are not anxious for the rejection of the Bill. The attitude of the right hon. Member for South Antrim reminds me of the seed in the Gospel which fell among barren soil or among thorns. It was strange indeed to find hon. Members representing constituencies mainly made up of farmers in one part of Ireland opposing a Bill brought in by Members representing farmers in another part of Ireland. I would remind the right hon. Member for South Antrim, who supports compulsory purchase, that he is, in opposing this Bill, neglecting the interests of his constituents. As a native of the county of Mayo, I give the right hon. Member's statement about the Mayo County Council a flat contradiction, for within the last few weeks the secretary for the county council of that county received a, most flattering letter from the Local Government Board as to the way in which the business of county council is conducted.

This Bill, brought in by the hon. Member for North Cork, will enable the Congested Districts Board to extend the sphere of its operations. That Board was established by Act of Parliament in the year 1891, and was empowered to take such steps as they think proper to improve the congested districts in connection with agricultural development, forestry, breeding of live stock and poultry, the sale of potatoes and seed oats, the amalgamation of small holdings, migration, emigration, fishing, and matters subservient to fishing, weaving and spinning,



and any other suitable industries. It is not my intention on this occasion to refer to any of these subjects, with the exception of the amalgamation of small holdings and migration. The figures made use of by the hon. Members for North Cork and West Mayo will give hon. Members a ready method of understanding the reasons why discontent prevails in many parts of Ireland, and why a great cry has been raised against a land system which compels so many thousands of our people to live on such wretched holdings, while in most instances there are within sight thousands of acres of excellent land given over to the feeding of cattle and sheep at a loss to most of the graziers who hold them. To any man in this House who professes to know anything about the means necessary to be obtained in order to live, it must be a source of curiosity to know how an average family of six can eke out an existence on £;4 worth of land.

Unfortunately in many instances families have to live on a great deal less. Perhaps when I try to illustrate to this House the way poor people have to do it, hon. Gentlemen opposite, instead of opposing this measure and howling us down because we endeavour to expose the grievances of our people, will be filled with feelings of surprise that we have submitted so long and so patiently to that condition of things. Some days ago I heard the Chief Secretary for Ireland remark that a certain class of tenant in Ireland, those paying an average of £;3 a year as rent, were happy because they had little more than twopence a day to pay for lodging and land. Well, there might be some reason in the remark if it could be shown that, in addition to giving even a pauper's fare to the family, a farthing a day could be saved. I will prove to this House that, putting everything together, more than a shilling a day cannot be taken out of a £;4 holding, and out of this small sum the landlord, who neither toils nor spins, must indeed get close on 3d. of it, and leave an average family of six to live as best they can, so far as he is concerned, on the balance of 9d. Surely the right hon. Gentleman cannot say that they have a luxurious time of it. I have not gone to Blue-books for my information; I have not taken railway trips in a saloon carriage at the rate of sixty miles an hour; but I have arrived at my conclusion, and based my knowledge on an experience gained by having lived among these people during the greater part of my life. I am the son of a tenant farmer in county Mayo. I am proud to say. I know what it is to dig with a spade, and to follow the plough, and I sympathise with these people in their sufferings, and would, if necessary, share their joys if any came to them once in a generation.

I take the case of an average £;4 holder, who is supposed to be much better off than a £;2 or £;3 holder, and I can defy contradiction when I say that the receipts of such a man for a year amount to as follows; Butter, £;4; cattle, £;5; pigs, £;5; sheep, £;2; eggs and poultry, £;2 10s., making a total of £;18 10s. What is his expenditure? Rent, £;4; taxes, £;12s. 6d. clothing, £;6; meal and flour. £;8; groceries, £;3 7s. 6d.; sundries, £;3; young pigs. £;1. or a total of £;20 10s.; without saying anything about a small saving for old age. This is equivalent to a deficit of £;8 which must be found elsewhere in order to live. Where does the farmer turn to in order to get that £;8? He has no relief in his immediate surroundings; but when the 21st or 22nd June comes round he bids

farewell to his wife and children, begs or borrows 13s. or 14s. to carry him across the Irish Channel to the harvest fields of England, there for six months to remain a slave to English task-masters to get the means of subsistence for his wife and family. The poor harvestman who is thus compelled to go to England is not burdened with

much of the world's goods in the shape of trappings, as it only too often happens that he can tie up all that he uses for the season in a cotton handkerchief or other small piece of cloth. It is very easy for the Chief Secretary to say that that man has only twopence a day to pay for lodging and land, but it is a very hard matter to get that twopence a day. It is easy indeed for hon. Members who have incomes of from £5,000 to £10,000 a year, and have perhaps a fat salary of £5,000 in addition, to look with contempt on these poor farmers in the west of Ireland. Hon. Members do not know the needs of these poor people, or they would not turn a deaf ear to the demands of those whom they send here to expose their grievances. Perhaps a time may come when we shall get a sympathetic word from the Treasury bench and the concession of that to which we are entitled, namely, the right to live, if not in luxury, at least in independence and comfort in our native land.

The intentions of Parliament were no doubt fairly good in passing the Act which brought into existence the Congested Districts Board, but, like all other Acts of Parliament passed by this House for the benefit of the Irish people, it is surrounded by such an amount of red tape and useless ceremony, causing such delay in its administration, as to render it almost useless to the class of people it was intended to serve. Everybody who has any knowledge whatever of the conditions of things as they exist in the province of Connaught and in Donegal, Kerry, and parts of Cork, must admit that until such time as this Board is empowered to get the land for the people who are desirous of obtaining it, and until they get to the root of the trouble by obtaining compulsorily the thousands of acres of land lying waste at the doors of these unfortunate people who are squatted on small patches of worn-out bog, moor, and marsh, there can be no peace or contentment for Ireland. My hon. friend the Member for North Cork quoted in the course of his speech a very remarkable portion of a report made by the Congested Districts Board. I forget whether he mentioned the fact that that report was signed by no less a personage than the President of the Board of Trade, who I was then Chief Secretary, but who, like

many of his predecessors in that office, got sick of the job. That right hon. Gentleman saw the real state of affairs during his tenure of office, and gave expression to what I consider a manly opinion, if he had only the courage of his convictions, and exercised the influence he possesses by putting an Act on the Statute Book which would enable that Board to carry out its good intentions.

There is an old saying in Ireland; I suppose it is also current in England; that "It's better late than never"; and even now I would appeal to him to use that influence which the members of his family undoubtedly possess with the Government of the day and get them to pass into law the very modest Bill now before the House. It may be of some interest to hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House who have no conception of the extraordinary delays in administering

any law in Ireland that would be of use to the people for whose benefit it was intended, that during the first year of its existence this Board did not purchase a single acre of land. In its second year the Mount Bellew estate, county Galway, consisting of 1,200 acres, was purchased at £7,600. The third year they paid £5,000 for Clare Island, only after they received a guarantee from the illustrious Archbishop of Trani and Mr. William O'Brien that they would be responsible for the payment of the instalments of the purchase money during the first seven years. Another year passed by, and one more estate, Carna, county Galway, of 1,321 acres, was purchased at a cost of £5,345. The following year another small slice the Thompson estate, of 1,319 acres, in county Galway; was purchased at £1,250, which represented something like 18s. or 19s. an acre. How could you expect that people planted on that land for generations could be in a position of independence, or experience many comforts? I say that these figures may not be very comforting to hon. Gentlemen, but they are no less true, and we know that facts are stubborn things. These figures in themselves prove that we are unable to give a testimonial to the efficiency of the Congested Districts Board. Then the next year was spent in completing the purchase of the Carrowcannon estate, in county Donegal. This is comprised of 93 acres. The purchase money being £820, or twenty years purchase. It is only fair to state that of this sum the tenants paid four years purchase, so anxious were they to get the land. At last we are coming to a point where the Board seemed to be doing a little business, as in the year ending 31st March, 1899, they awoke to their senses, and purchased the following estates: Rockfield, near Clifden, county Galway, having an area of 414 acres, at £1,850; Port Royal estate, county Mayo, covering an area of 5,230 acres, at a cost of £10,500; the Leetch estate, county Mayo, consisting of 538 acres, at a cost of £2,160; Knockaunakill estate, county Mayo; Ballymacragh, county Mayo, 372 acres; portion of the O'Donnell estate, county Mayo; the O'Reilly-Dease estate, county Mayo, consisting of 2,581 acres which were purchased for £347; the Digby estate, county Mayo, 6,835 acres, at £2,000; the Higgins estate, county Mayo, 274 acres, at £2,633; the Dillon estate, county Mayo, the largest of all, consisting of upwards of 30,000 acres, at something like £250,000. Even at the rate of purchase during that year, it will take a very long time before the very vexed question on the western seaboard of Ireland can be satisfactorily settled. I maintain that if the present Bill were to become law it would do a great deal in the desired direction. It would do a great deal in the way of smoothing the troubled waters in the most agitated parts of the country, and I have no doubt would tend towards the promotion of better feeling between the two nations. As will be seen by what I have stated about the purchase of lands in Ireland by the Congested Districts Board, all or nearly all, has been purchased in the county of Mayo, and in parts of the county where there is not the necessary room for improvement in the condition of the people commensurate with the expenditure involved. I do not complain because the purchases made so far have been chiefly confined to my native county. On the contrary, I should be glad if the whole county were in the hands of the Congested Districts Board to-morrow. What I do

complain of is that they have made purchases in such places as the Barony of Erris, where the land is of such a terribly bad nature that it would give a hare the heartburn to scamper over it, and where there are no grazing tracks within the area purchased by which the holding could be in any way enlarged. I would wish to know why the Congested Districts Board during all these years did not turn their attention to the fertile plains of Mayo, the excellent ranches around Ballinrobe; or I might go even further, and ask why they do not go into the county of Roscommon, where I may say there are hundreds of square miles of grazing lands, perhaps the best in the world, which remind you more of the prairies in the Western States in America than a portion of the province of Connaught. It was stated by the right hon. Member for South Antrim that Roscommon is not congested, but I say the bogs and marshes are congested where the people, in old days, were hunted to act as fence-holders for the landlord, and where they have never enjoyed human rights, where they were driven into the last ditch, by evicting landlordism, and where I trust they will hold on until in the near future they may lie enabled to come out and enjoy the land of which their fathers were robbed, but which God and nature intended for their use and benefit. In these places there is ample room for carrying out the great task before the Congested Districts Board, and consequently I appeal in the most earnest and solemn manner to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to use his influence with the Government to have the whole province of Connaught scheduled, by which means alone any effective work can be carried out within a reasonable limit of time. According to the official reports, the first five years of the Board's existence were spent in doing little or nothing, and, with the exception of Lord Dillon's estate, the remainder of the time has been spent on a few jobs in the county of Mayo.

Perhaps the Chief Secretary thought he was doing very good and useful work by going to the west of Ireland and visiting a few half-starved localities on the seaboard, where the people live among rocks and earn something by fishing, and where there is no earthly room for improvement in the way of enlarging the wretched holdings upon which they are squatted, and no chance of ever emerging from the poverty in which they are steeped. I noticed that the right hon. Gentleman was in Connemara, and that he met some persons there who did not mention a word about the only remedy for the existing evil, the buying up of the ranches and planting the cottier tenants on medium-sized holdings on which they might find the means of subsistence. I did not hear that anyone had told him a single word about the case of James Vallely, who got two months imprisonment for doing nothing but trying to carry out the recommendations of the immediate predecessor of the present Chief Secretary, or that the right hon. Gentleman made any stay in or near Letterfrack, where I understand there are a number of grazing farmers, and a very large number of persons living in congested villages around there, huddled together in worse conditions than beasts. Neither did I hear that he drove over the prairies of Kilmeena and Killmaclassas, between Westport and Newport, although he took the train on to Achill. I may be permitted to tell the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland that if he wants to know anything about the condition of the people

in Connaught he must make up his mind that he will never learn much while he remains in a saloon railway carriage going, at sixty miles an hour, or while he drives along the main roads, where, according to the natural order of things, the bulk of the people are extremely comfortable compared with the unfortunate creatures who have to eke out an existence away from the paths trodden by officials whenever they trouble themselves to visit the country which they profess to govern.

I want to call the attention of the Government to another matter; namely, the method by which the money is at present advanced by the Land Commission. At present the Congested Districts Board must make the purchase, arrange all the preliminaries, carry on the previous work of transferring leases, which often takes years to get over, and, if there are any holdings on the rundale system, the lands must be striped before any money can be got from the Board. In the meantime, the Congested Districts Board must advance all the money out of the limited amount at its disposal

What I think should be done is to place the Board in such a position that it could call on the Land Commission at once for an advance that would cover any arrangement into which they might have entered with the owners or occupiers of land in Ireland. The existing system is cumbrous, tedious, and I might say almost useless, and in my judgment the red tape of the Government prevents the Board from doing a great deal of useful work. Of course, it will be always open to them to spend portions of their own money in the way of fencing, building, and draining, and instead of being hampered, as they are at present, they should be encouraged to proceed with the work which I believe that body was formed to carry out. From time to time I have heard the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland giving answers to questions in this House which would lead one to think that the purchase of other large estates in Mayo and other parts within the scheduled area would have been completed before now but for the methods, the tedious methods, adopted by the Government in advancing the money for the Dillon estate. I say, if that is the case, the Government are entirely to blame. They should know where the clog is in the machinery, and make every reasonable effort to remove the clog, so that the machinery may run as smoothly as if was intended to do. It was a very laudable thing to purchase the Dillon estate and put an end, no doubt, to a good deal of the discontent and the terrible condition of affairs which existed on that estate; but that is no reason why steps should not be taken to purchase the estates of Lord Sligo, where the conditions of slavery exist as much as on the Dillon estate, and where there are thousands of unfortunate people who would welcome any means of emancipation from the lash of tyrannical landlordism.

I will not, on this the first occasion I have had the honour of addressing the House, trouble it with many more observations; but the right hon. Gentleman who thought he was doing the right thing in moving the rejection of the Bill objected to popular representation on the Congested Districts Board. That right hon. Gentleman supported Local Government in Ireland, which was carried on by popularly elected boards, and I think he is thoroughly inconsistent in opposing the proposal to make the Congested

Districts Board a partially elected body. The right hon. Gentleman argued that because there was no direct taxation for the money dispensed by the Congested Districts Board, there was no justification for making it an elective body. But the people paid indirect as well as direct taxes, and there was more reason to have popular representatives on a Board which dispensed money obtained by indirect taxation than on a Board supported by direct taxation. As an Irishman holding, no doubt, very advanced views on this subject, but voicing also the feelings of my constituents, I would say to the Chief Secretary that in his hands lies the reined for the evils that exist in the congested area in the west of Ireland. When the right hon. Gentleman was appointed Chief Secretary there were many people in Ireland who believed that that appointment was directed by the hand of fate, and that the right hon. Gentleman would be able to carry out, by constitutional methods, the ambitions that were centred in his noble and never-to-be-forgotten and illustrious ancestor who laid down his life for Ireland. I would appeal to the light hon. Gentleman to forget for the moment that he is an Englishman, and to look back 100 years to the connection between that enlightened ancestor of his and the poor people of Ireland. Whether it be to my credit or otherwise. I confess I was one of those who believed his appointment would lead to good results, and therefore I listened with pain and disappointment to him when in answer to the hon. Member for Tyrone he used the word "Never" in relation to the redress of our grievances.

If the Government may not find it convenient to adopt this Bill, let them, bring in one of their own. I am not desirous of giving hon. Members around me all the honour and glory of carrying the Bill. I beseech hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House, the old men, not to look upon this as a revolutionary or political measure, but one only intended to do justice to the people of Ireland. There are men on those benches.

opposite who will never sit in another Parliament, it requires no prophetic instinct to ascertain that fact. I would appeal to those who no doubt have served their country faithfully and well to think for a moment that this is the last Parliament they will ever adorn, and that there can be no prouder boast which they can make to their children's children than that, towards the close of their long life, they had assisted in making of Ireland, not an enemy hut a real friend, by extending to her just laws, which removed the grievances of the Irish people and made Ireland governed as is England. I appeal to another class, the new men, the young men who have got into Parliament for the first time in the scramble of the last General Election. They too may be full of ambitions, they may desire to improve the condition of England, as we desire to improve the condition of Ireland. I appreciate a man who, from patriotic motives, fights strenuously for his country, whether he lie an Englishman or Irishman. I appeal to those young men, filled with noble ambitions and a desire to perform good work, to do justice to Ireland, and I trust that these appeals will have effect on all quarters of the House. I thank hon. Members for their kind indulgence, and would conclude by saying that it is my firm belief that hon. Members who are desirous of serving England as well as Ireland should support this Bill.

MR. RENTOUL (Down, E.) said that four years ago he put his name to the back of a

similar Bill. Before doing so he had gone as thoroughly into the subject as it was possible for him to do and after looking at all points of view he had no hesitation in backing the Bill. Since then he had seen no reason to change his opinion, and so proposed to support the measure before the House. There had been no fault to find with the work done by the Congested Districts Board, which had done its work well and conscientiously; and the Bill was brought in to extend the usefulness and increase the power of a Board which was admitted to be a good one. He could see no objections to the principle of a Bill which had that object in view. The Bill contemplated widening the powers of the Board in four particulars: first, it desired to extend the area over which the Board exerted its power; secondly, to remove the [restrictions in the exercise of powers at present vested in the Board; thirdly it proposed to give a partially representative character to the Board; and, fourthly, to give it compulsory powers which seemed to be necessary in various parts of the country, in order that the Board might work with satisfaction. No one seemed to have taken objection to the two first clauses of the Bill except in the case of extension, where certain counties had been scheduled, that the Congested Districts Act could not be applied to the whole of the county. That was true in the case of county Donegal, because what is known as the Parliamentary district of East Donegal was one of the best districts of Ulster; but other districts of Donegal were admittedly among the poorest and worst of the congested districts of Ireland. Was it a reason, because a small section of county Donegal was prosperous from all points of view, why all the rest of the county should be excluded from the operation of the Act? In his opinion some change should be made in the schedule, so that certain parts of a county might be excluded. If it were not excluded could it be conceived that the representative on the Board from Donegal would apply for the operation of the Act to East Donegal? Would he not as the representative of the whole county, see that the money applied to Donegal was applied to those portions of the county where it was needed. If that argument were applied in its entirety, there was no county which could not be excluded from the operation of the Act for there was no county in Ireland in which there were not parts outside the definition of the words "congested districts." The Board having been beneficial in its work, he could see no reason for not extending its operations.

The third clause, which dealt with the partially elective power of the Board, he liked best of all. It was not intended by the Bill to constitute an elective body entirely, but only a partially elective body, the other half being nominated by the Lord Lieutenant.

It had been argued that if there was an elective representation each representative would endeavour to secure all the money for his own county; but even if he did he would be only one and the other representatives would not allow it. Objection had been taken that the people elected to this Board might have no knowledge of the districts for which they were elected. That was a position he could not follow, because such gentlemen, as for instance, the chairman of the County Council of Donegal, knew every inch of the county from end to end. It would be from the county councils and other bodies that the

representatives would be drawn, and he believed that, generally speaking, there was not a man on a county council of Ireland who was not familiar with the county which he represented. He thought the elective proposal in the Bill would work extremely well.

With regard to the fourth clause, which proposed to confer compulsory powers on the Board, he could see no possible objection to it. He thought, if this Bill were carried, it would be a very useful step, because compulsory powers could not be used all at once. £125,000,000 could not lie spent at a greater rate than £25,000,000 a year; and it would only mean that the work would be carried out on a wider and broader scale than it was at present. The Bill was brought forward by the Irish representatives and not by the Government. The evils which it sought to deal with had not occurred in a moment. The Bill was not a sudden idea, but something that had been brought forward several times in the last five years.

He thought the Bill was reasonable in every point of view, and though hon. Members had endeavoured to point out what they considered the fatal defects of the Bill, he might say it was always easy to show other people how much more clever we were than they in drafting a Bill. He saw no serious defect in the Bill at all, and any defect that might be pointed out at this stage of the Second Reading could be put right in the Committee stage. It had been stated the money would be better applied if there was no local influence brought to bear on the Board. The Bill now under consideration guarded against the Board being subject to local influence. It was said that it would abolish the limits placed on the Land Commission in connection with the making of advances to the poor, and that the whole of the money under the control of the Commission might be handed over to the Congested Districts Board and applied to those eight counties to the exclusion of all the other counties. There was no body in the world that might not do insane and idiotic things, and so it might be that all the money at the disposal of the Land Commission might be given to a single county, but they knew that men were likely to act as sensible men in regard to a matter of this kind. It did not seem to him that there was the slightest danger in that particular direction.

He should be very glad if the Chief Secretary could see his way to accept this Bill, subject to such changes and improvements as might be made in Committee. He could see no reason whatever why the Chief Secretary should not agree to give the Bill a Second Reading. A great number of Gentlemen who would vote had not been in the House to hear the arguments. That, of course, applied to every Bill that came before the House, and he did not wish to make a point of it. The bulk of the Members would be naturally and readily guided by the advice that came from the Government benches.

MR. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.): I think I need not intervene for more than three or four minutes in the debate, because I know that a great number of friends below the gangway are anxious to express the views of their constituents on this important Bill. The reason I rise at all is that I stand somewhat in the position of an independent Irish Member in this House. I am on the one hand beyond the reach of the whip and the leader of the party below the gangway, and



I am beyond the crack of the whip of the Treasury Bench. In that independent position I wish to state why I mean to vote for the Second Reading of this Bill, and join most heartily with the hon. and learned Member who has just sat down in his appeal to the Chief Secretary and to the Attorney General to see their way, if possible, to give a Second Reading to the measure.

I have listened with the greatest attention to the able speech of the hon. Members for West and South Mayo. The Member for South Mayo, I think, gave most accurate information to the House, based on careful statistical research, and the result of that must impress every fair-minded man who heard his speech that something must be done to relieve the miserable condition of a great proportion of the inhabitants of Ireland; the miserable condition of the tenants who occupy farms valued at £4 or under. It is in the interest of the whole of the United Kingdom, it is in the interest of the Empire, that every measure should be adopted which will prevent the disgrace the condition of Ireland, in respect of a great proportion of its inhabitants, reflects upon this great country. This Bill I regard as a small instalment in that direction, and for that reason I support it. The principles involved in the Bill when put briefly are three. The first principle is that we should extend if possible the powers of the existing Congested Districts Board. We are, not pledged to the particular details of the Bill as printed in that respect. It has been criticised not unfairly by, I think, the right hon. Member for South Antrim in that regard, but the principle is to extend the powers of the present Congested Districts Board, and to extend the area of its operations, and it is not at all necessary to adhere servility to the particular schedule attached to the Bill, and to hold that the whole of the different counties mentioned in the schedule should be under the operation of the Board. I have experience of the counties of Kerry and Leitrim, and I know the poverty and destitution existing there. The greater portion of those counties would, no doubt, properly come within the sphere of the Congested Districts Board. That I regard as a matter of detail, and it will be no excuse to hon. Members opposite, who hold another view, for refusing to support this reasonable demand on the part of what I may say is certainly three-fourths of the Irish people, to give them this concession. The objection to that principle does not rest on any solid ground, because it is a matter that can be set right at once in Committee.

The next principle is to empower the Congested Districts Board to exercise compulsory purchase. I am not going into the great principle involved in compulsory purchase. It would not be in order to do so now, but it is one of the questions that must be dealt with, and dealt with speedily, either in this session or an early session. I am now confining myself to the application of that principle to the Congested Districts Board. It has been argued by my hon. and learned friend the Member for North Antrim that it would be absurd to apply this system of compulsory purchase to the Congested Districts Board, because, although he is in favour, as I understood his argument, of compulsory purchase for the purpose of getting rid of dual ownership, he objects to compulsory purchase if exercised by a board which admittedly has the confidence of the country like the Congested Districts Board. Surely the principle of compulsory purchase, which applies to

the acquisition of property by public bodies like municipalities, or companies like railway combines, may very well be applied and exercised by a board like the Congested Districts Board, and if the right hon. Gentleman opposite wishes to apply some machinery whereby the amount of the purchase money would be ascertained by the verdict of a jury, I am very sure that Gentlemen on this side of the House would not ultimately object to that arrangement. But I am not assuming that now, because it is sufficient for me to say that the principle of compulsory purchase is a sound one, and that it ought to be applied. Passages have been read from the Reports of the Congested Districts Board by some of my friends below the gangway, and these passages show that the Board itself is in favour of having this power, and that it has admitted that the absence of this power has prevented the full benefit of the Act being taken advantage of. Why then will English and Scotch Members who are impartial and fair-minded hesitate to give a Second Reading to the Bill, in order to have it fully discussed and debated in Committee and hedged round by any sensible conditions they may consider necessary?

The third principle is that there ought to be added to the present Congested Districts Board the representative element. I am all in favour of that principle. There is no doubt that it is an excellent Board. There are members on it in whom the Irish people as a race have the utmost confidence. I might mention the Right Rev. Dr. O'Donnell, who commands, perhaps, more than any other individual the confidence of the entire Irish race. I might mention another gentleman whose acquaintance I have the honour of possessing, a well-known philanthropist in Dublin, and a man of great commercial position; I mean Charles Kennedy. There is also Mr. Wrench. But I would like to add the representative element for another reason. My idea is that one of the evils we have to struggle with in Ireland, and one of the causes of the grievances of Ireland being perpetually brought up and paraded, and necessarily paraded, before this House of Commons, is the existence of so many purely nominated boards; gentlemen nominated by the Ministry of the time, irresponsible to the taxpayers, and out of sympathy with the wishes and aspirations of the people.

I will illustrate what I say. At present friction exists between the Local Government Board and the County Councils, but if there was a representative Local Government Board the Act by which the county councils were created would work more favourably for the country. It might be that instead of every county council having the nomination of one member of the Board, what may be called an association of county councils should have the power of selecting some six or ten to represent the county councils generally on the Board. I merely throw out that as a possible means of getting rid of the objection. If you had thirty-two or thirty-three additional members the Board would become too cumbrous and difficult to work. I came to the House prepared to support the Bill, and I have been relieved from the necessity of troubling the House with statistics by the statistical ability of the Member for South Mayo, if I had had any doubt about supporting the Bill, that would have been removed by the touching and eloquent appeal of another Member from Mayo, on whose appearance I congratulate

the present Parliament. I say, after in experience in and out of Parliament for a great number of years, and having heard many speakers, I have rarely heard a speech of truer eloquence and with a, higher rime than that of the hon. Member. It was free from all affectation, and spoken from the heart, and showed on behalf of the Irish people the wrongs of that much-wronged race.

\*MR. DUCKY (Dublin University) said he earnestly hoped that the Government would not allow the Congested Districts Board to be dragged into the vortex of politics. It was absolutely certain that that would be the result if the representative principle were largely introduced into it. He ventured to say that the Congested Districts Board, as at present constituted, was one of the most efficient bodies ever set up to alleviate the condition of that class of the Irish people who were most seriously suffering. Nothing that was done for Ireland in the course of the last Parliament was so beneficial as the measure which considerably increased the revenue of that Board, and, in several respects, its functions. He knew it was the custom for hon. Members there and elsewhere to depreciate and decry Castle Boards, but those Boards consisted of men of great ability, who dealt with Irish affairs in a highly impartial spirit, whose single aim was to improve the condition of the people of the country, and he was sure that they were far more truly representative of the best elements of Irish life than any elective body they were likely to have. It would be a great misfortune if they were to introduce the methods and principles of the United Irish League into the administration of the Congested Districts Board. He believed that the House of Commons, whatever else it was, was a very good judge of character, and would be able to decide whether the kind of Members who came over to represent the United Irish League were the class of men from whom an impartial administration of public money and public powers was reasonably to be expected.

\*MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I have listened to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who represents Dublin University, and the answer I should be inclined to give to it is that the best way to cure that which he, and everyone else, deplores is to give a limited representation on the Congested Districts Board to the county councils. It is not by keeping them outside that this mischief is to be undone but by making them responsible and leaving the responsibility upon them. I was in Parliament in 1891 when the Land Purchase Act was passed. It included the provision for the Congested Districts Board. I have never wavered in my opinion that it was one of the best measures this House ever passed. It has done incalculable good to Ireland, and if anybody who knows Ireland doubts it, I ask him to compare the county of Donegal in 1880 with the county of Donegal to-day. The change is in every sense remarkable, especially in the matter of cottage industry. I am not so sure about the other districts, but I am quite certain that Donegal has been materially changed by the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury. There is no reason why we should stop there. Is not that a reason for going forward? I say that the fact that the policy has succeeded is an additional reason why this House should go forward and should not stand still. Let me put the three main provisions of the Bill again. The Bill proposes in the

first place to extend the area under the Congested Districts Board. Of course hon. Members are aware that these areas are on the western coast. They are scheduled, and the Act only applies to those areas. This Bill proposes to lump a certain number of counties and to include those counties in the schedule. I do not say that is right altogether. We have never proceeded in this matter by counties before. I do not see why we should proceed by counties now but nobody will deny that there are districts outside the schedule that properly ought to be included, and, whilst I am not prepared to say that we ought to add the counties enumerated in this schedule, I am prepared to say that there are parts of some counties which ought to be scheduled. That is a matter for consideration by the Committee of this House, and not for the debate on the Second Reading of the Bill. Who that knows Donegal would say that the barony of Raphoe ought to be scheduled as a congested district, and should receive the advantages designed specially for the very poor? But that is not a reason for voting against the Bill. It is a reason for examining the Bill in Committee, and critically looking at the facts of each district, excluding those which ought to be excluded and including those which ought to be included.

Let me next take the question of representation. This Bill proposes that a certain number of county councillors should be added to the board. I think the representation sought is too large. Let the House bear in mind that when the provisions were passed establishing the Congested Districts Board the county councils were not in existence. Does anybody doubt that in this democratic House of Commons, when the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury was looking about for a body to carry the Act into operation, if the county councils had been in existence that they would not have had their share of representation? I say nobody can doubt it. This House is not going to set up county councils and declare afterwards that they are not entitled to take part in work appertaining to their own counties. [Colonel SAUNDERSON laughed.] My right hon. and gallant friend seems to be amused.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.): Yes, very much.

\*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: My right hon. friend furnishes a good deal of amusement for the House, but I have never found that we have profited very much by his constructive ability. The hilarity and gaiety of Parliament has gained a great deal from my right hon. friend's presence, but never, so far as I remember, has he left the slightest impression on an Act of Parliament I am not prepared to go the length of saying that there ought to be ten county councillors added to this nominated board, but I say that, if you are going to set up a nominated board, the proposal to add some elected members is not an outrageous proposal. Let us take another point. Why should they be added? The Congested Districts Board has often to call in assistance to get over delicate and difficult matters. It may be the enlargement of holdings. Everybody knows how difficult an operation that is in Ireland, and we all know that that prelate whose name has been mentioned here to-day has been brought to use his influence over and over again, and properly, to carry on this beneficent work. Those county councils at all events have the confidence of the people. They are elected by them, they know the districts, and they would be precisely the men to

whom the tenants in difficult operations, where they think themselves aggrieved, would go for help in the bridging over of those difficulties and making things pleasant where they often are not.

Now let me take the third part with reference to compulsory sale. I heard the speech of an Ulster Member to-day. It is all very well to announce your adhesion to compulsory sale in the abstract, but when a Bill is introduced proposing to do it, you see the difference between the advocates of compulsory sale. I ask the House to take cognisance of what kind of district this western district is. I heard the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Antrim state to-day that there were districts in Antrim and Tyrone quite as poverty-stricken as any of those districts. I think the right hon. Gentleman is wrong. But what is the difference? All around these poor districts in Antrim and Tyrone labour abounds. There are rich and well-to-do people near at hand, and the people can get employment. Belfast is within a journey of an hour or two. Can that be said of these western districts? There is no commerce save the public-house. I say it is not fair to hold up these poor districts of Antrim and Tyrone in comparison with the western districts. They are not in the same position. These people in the west are shut up in their desolation, and there is no relief from year's end to year's end. What do you see when you go there? I have been through the congested districts twenty years ago when the English Government took no heed of them, because it was only when my right hon. friend the First Lord of the Treasury was Chief Secretary that the practice was initiated of going to see these districts. Before that these poor people were allowed to perish in their misery, and this House governed them without an idea of what their condition was. I have been there over and over again. I have not travelled along the main roads. I have gone into the hovels of the poor. I have been on Lord Dillon's estate, and I have been on the De Freyne estate. They are a disgrace to any country. The people are often living there in habitations you would not kennel your dogs in. It is one of the most disgraceful things to be seen in civilised Europe. It is indescribable; the poverty, desolation, filth, hunger, and misery. This is within twenty-four hours journey of this House and the richest country in the world. All this has been going on for years and years, and this House never dreamt of it, and the Government of the country never took the slightest notice of it, and until my right hon. friend the First Lord of the Treasury initiated his policy nothing was done to ameliorate the condition of these poor people. What do you see when you drive through these lands? You see rich fertile plains with thousands of sheep upon them. Then what do you come upon? You come upon rocky barren land. There you find hideous hovels which the people have built between the boulders. You find these poor people trying to cultivate the land around these boulders, and to scratch out a miserable existence.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): And you expect us to be loyal.

\*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: What I wish to point out is that the people were once on these fertile plains. Before the famine they were there. I admit that they were there in numbers the land could not support, and I have never doubted what ought to be done. They have been driven off these fertile plains, and sheep have been

placed upon them. What is the remedy for that? It is years since I spoke to my own constituents on the subject. I said that I preferred men to sheep. I said that the Irish people have the right to live on their own land. They have the right to get back possession of the land from which their ancestors were driven. They are willing to pay for it. They are willing to pay more even than the value of the land. I know that there are difficulties connected with it. I know that the grass land is not always contiguous to those wretched holdings now, but I say you can never make the West of Ireland a tolerable place for the people to live in until you make up your mind that the people of the country have a prior right to the sheep of the capitalists, until you make up your mind that these lands must be cleared and cut up and peopled again. You can never do that without compulsion. Where these people are in a position that is appalling there never was a better case for the application of compulsion. Where are we to-day? We

have a Bill before us and I have already said that I do not concur in all its details, but I am willing to examine them in Committee. What is the Government going to do? I have, not the slightest idea. It strikes me from a speech made by my right hon. friend on his return from the west at a banquet in Dublin, that he felt the desolation and misery and poverty of these people. What struck me on reading the speech was that this region has affected the right hon. Gentleman. If the Government have a proposal of their own, which is possible; although from the look of things I do not expect much legislation of any kind; the House on both sides will welcome it. My hon. friends around me can have no satisfaction in the existence of such areas as I have described. They feel it as much as hon. Members opposite deep down in their hearts, and would be quite willing to support the Government in any reasonable method of dealing with it. If they are going to deal with it themselves the least they could do would be to accept formally the Second Heading of this Bill, understanding of course that, pending the introduction of their own measure, this Bill would not go on. It would be an assurance that this question was not going to be hung up. I feel for these people as I feel for no other people in the country. It is a scandal to England that this state of things should be allowed to exist. I have spoken strongly and I feel strongly, and however long I may be in this House I shall never cease to plead for the poor and those who have no helper.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I strongly hope that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary will pay attention to the very earnest and most sensible appeal made to him by the hon. Member for South Tyrone. I believe I am speaking in accord with the views of my hon. friends when I say that the proposal which the hon. Gentleman has just made is one which we on these benches accept; namely, that if the Government would allow this Bill to pass the Second Reading and thereby pledge themselves to its principle and its principle only, and if they would accompany that by the statement that they are determined and ready to deal with this question, we should make no attempt to proceed with this Bill until we hear what they propose to do. I hope that this day may be regarded as a great day for Ireland. The debate up to a certain part has gone upon lines which afford to the

world a spectacle not often presented; that of a practically united Ireland. Indeed, as to the evil with which this Bill proposes to deal we are a united Ireland. The interruption of dissent of the right hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh is to be interpreted, I believe, not as denying the evil, but as against one of the many remedies the Bill proposes to apply; and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin University, while vigorously and eloquently assailing one of the proposals of the Bill, joined in the statement that a deplorable and lamentable state of affairs did exist in certain parts of Ireland.

Now let us see how far we differ. The last speaker has differed largely as to two principles of the Bill, and he has dealt less copiously with another, but still a most important, principle of the measure. Upon that point, the extension of the meaning of "congested district," I earnestly look to the Chief Secretary for his full support. There are certain existing definitions which practically make the congested districts a very small portion not merely of all Ireland, but of the poverty stricken parts. I have only to refer in confirmation of my statement to a recent utterance of the Chief Secretary, that in his opinion, beyond, outside, and entirely unconnected with the congested districts, there is a large mass of small, squalid, poverty-stricken patches in Ireland. That being so you must apply the definition and the remedy of congested districts to a larger area than is covered by the existing definition. How does this work out in practice? In a congested district the population must have a valuation of under 30s., and the unit of the congested district is the electoral district. The result of the definition is that you have an electoral district where the population as a whole is not under the 30s. valuation, but where there is a considerable portion quite as poor as or even poorer than the people in the so-called congested district, and yet in consequence of this narrow definition the Chief Secretary is practically precluded under the existing law from giving relief even to the poorer portion, because the whole district does not come under the definition. Furthermore, you have side by side with an electoral district which is a congested district another district in which a portion of the people are as poor as those in the congested district, but in which a considerable portion of the district is not poor, in the sense that it has rich grazing lands. But under the existing law the Chief Secretary is prevented from applying to this other electoral district the remedy which ought to lie to his hand. There is this extraordinary and almost incredible state of affairs; on one side of the road the squalor of an over-populated patch, and on the other the unpopulated rich grazing district, but you must not transfer the people from the one side of the road to the other. This evil is brought out very clearly in a district in Donegal. The total valuation is £5,154; of that valuation £1,275 are in the hands of landlords and in tin; non-resident land; £500 are in grass farms, and £48 are in bogs and woods; while the tenants proportion is £3,330, including the buildings. Here you have side by side not merely in the same county or parish, but on the same estate, the untenanted and unoccupied land of the landlord and the over-populated land of the small tenant. Yet, will it be believed, that under the existing law the Chief Secretary has no

means or power of dealing with such a case as that? It is outside the congested district, and therefore they cannot do what any rational man would do, namely, take possession by purchase and compensation of the grass lands and transfer the people not to a long distance, but merely from one portion to another of the same estate. To show how overcrowded this small estate is I may say there are 2,583 people thereon. Another case is the Bagot estate in county Roscommon. There again there is overpopulation on one portion of the estate and grass lands on the other. The Chief Secretary can adopt only one method, and that is a wrong one. He can purchase the estate, and distribute it to people brought from another district, but not to the people of the same estate. That conclusively proves that so far as

the definition is concerned, the law is certainly defective.

With regard to the question of compulsory purchase the House is in a very remarkable position. Practically every Irish Member, with the exception of the right hon. Member for North Armagh and the representatives from Belfast, are pledged to the principle of compulsory purchase. The hon. Member for South Tyrone has had some animated controversy with hon. Gentlemen opposite as to the manner in which they have carried out their pledge.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: No, I have not. I have had no controversy whatever with the hon. Gentlemen. I took their election pledges for what they were worth, and it was in the whole of them.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I should have called that perhaps consensus of opinion rather than criticism of views. But, whatever the definition is, the fact remains that for the most part hon. Gentlemen opposite from Ireland are pledged to the principle of compulsory purchase. In all seriousness, I ask, how can it possibly be consistent to be in favour of compulsory purchase as to the whole of Ireland, and against it as to the particular cases to which I am referring? I can understand an Ulster Member saying, "I will not vote for compulsory purchase if by so doing I am voting on a motion of want of confidence in the Government which I support." But that is not the question here. This is a private Bill, and every Member of the House can vote in favour of the measure and at the same time have all or no confidence in the Government. Therefore, I am utterly unable to understand how a Member can be in favour of compulsory purchase as a general principle in Ireland, and yet against it as applied to congested districts. If there was ever a case in which the principle was unassailable it is in the case of congested districts. The need is greater there than anywhere. Nobody will deny that.

With regard to most of the Bill, we have the universal assent of the Members from Ireland. The hon. and learned Member for East Down is going to vote for the Second Reading, and so also is the hon. Member for South Tyrone, reserving full liberty

of action as to the details of the measure in Committee. Whatever may be said the one way or the other, every Member who votes for the Second Reading retains full liberty with regard to criticism of details in Committee.

Now I come to the point of representation, and I am sorry the right hon.

Gentleman the Member for Dublin University adopted the tone he thought proper to



do. In consequence of one of the clauses of the Bill he adopted an attitude of almost ferocious hostility to the measure as a whole, and he justified his action on the ground that in regard to a particular school in County Kerry an alleged injustice was done by the county council under the influence of the United Irish League. I do not profess to be acquainted with all the particulars of the case, but I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that there is another side to the question, and my hon. friends here are strongly of opinion that if that side were presented to the House it would be seen that there was no cause for complaint. But even admitting the grievance, would that seriously affect the question we are discussing? A mere bit of village gossip of that kind is unworthy of being regarded in connection with such a subject. The county councils are in existence; they were brought into being by a Conservative and Unionist Government; that Government must have thought the country was ready and fit for such institutions. Surely then we must take them with their general features and their errors, if there be errors. But not only are these bodies in existence, representation on public bodies by the county councils is also in existence. The predecessor of the present Chief Secretary established public boards dealing with matters in some respects as important as those which come under the survey of the Congested Districts Board, and on those boards he allowed, without any dissent from hon. Gentlemen opposite, a certain element of popular and county council representation in addition to the official element. I would make the same appeal to the Chief Secretary as was made by the hon. Member for South Tyrone. There is nothing the right hon. Gentleman could do for Ireland or which he regarded for the good of Ireland that he would not do with a light, joyous, and glad heart. I do not believe we ever had a man in his position in Ireland with better intentions and a more generous sympathy. I do not deny that he has the limitations of his position. He is no more the master of his political circumstances or party than other Ministers have been or will be. But we are now on non-party ground. We are dealing with a question which to a large extent is outside the region of the fierce conflicting passions of race, creed, and class. On such a question the right hon. Gentleman ought to be perfectly at home and perfectly free. I hope by his attitude to-day he will give an earnest to the people of Ireland of his intentions when he gets on the free ground of social reform in Ireland, where party considerations no longer bind his lips or chain his limbs, and that he will accept the principle of the Bill here put forward.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The hon. Member concluded his speech with a personal appeal to myself, and he referred to similar appeals which have been made in the course of this debate. He was good enough to credit me with sympathy towards Ireland. Yes; and I hold that such sympathy should go without saying; and for my part, I do not care to adopt perforce an attitude of sympathetic inactivity. When I cannot act I must ask the House to take my sympathy for granted, even when inactivity is enforced. And may I without offence, remind hon. Members from Ireland that, although to-day we have had a most interesting and instructive debate upon Ireland, opportunities for such debates are limited and postponed if the time of the House is largely taken up

with perhaps undue discussion of other affairs. [Oh, oh.] Wherever the fault may lie, so long as there is no opportunity for administrative or legislative activity upon my part, I prefer to wait until such opportunity falls to my lot. What Ireland needs, in my opinion, is not so much sympathy as the application of a businesslike spirit to real material needs on the part of those who by a turn of fortune are charged with the administration of affairs.

The hon. Member argued most forcibly for a change in the definition of a congested districts county. He reminded the House that I had stated that elsewhere and outside the congested districts there are many poor squalid holdings which are not good starting places for any honourable or useful career. That is quite true. But I must make this observation. That definition of a congested districts county was framed, rightly or wrongly, ten years ago, upon the proportion of such holdings in any one county to the whole county. Where in one county 20 per cent. of the population are so congested, that portion of Ireland is to be separately treated, and although I am not concerned to say that the last word was said in 1891, still I do think the House will appreciate the principle underlying that definition, namely, that where the bad parts of Ireland; the residuum estates as they are sometimes called; were only a comparatively small part of a great area, that area should carry that incumbrance and not come for public money or to this House for exceptional legislation. Does not the hon. Member see that the very argument to which he alludes illustrates the great complexity of the problem? The authors of this Bill are mainly bent on helping these congested districts by extending purchase. They are thinking of that more than of helping the congested districts by using the funds of the Board for encouraging industry, for relief works, or other philanthropic efforts. Does not the hon. Member see that the Bill and his argument lead us up to this difficulty, that the authors of the Bill are asking us to schedule wide areas in order to conduct land purchase for the advantage of using rich land for the benefit of poor land? If you pursue that attitude, what then becomes of the credit and the funds of the Board which are also allocated by Parliament in order to relieve the congested districts which are unable to help themselves? I venture to say that, although we are invited in all good faith to take up this Bill, it needs a great deal of careful consideration. What is our present position in Ireland? Our position in Ireland at this present moment is illustrated by this volume which I hold in my hand, containing in a handy and compendious form the Acts passed in recent years by Parliament for the purpose of solving or approaching the solution of the Irish land question. Those Acts number forty-one, thirty-seven of which have been passed in the last twenty years.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: And the question is still unsolved.

MR. WYNDHAM: The question before the House is not whether a forty second Act is needed, but whether this forty-second Act is precisely the measure which is called for by the circumstances of the case; frankly, I do not think it is. I believe that if we passed this Bill on a Wednesday afternoon we should be only erecting another tombstone over another good intention. I admit that the intention of the authors of this Bill is a good one, although I take grievous

exception to some of the methods they have adopted for giving effect to that intention. I think that their intention, viz., to accelerate and to extend purchase in the poorer parts of Ireland and to sell to the tenant-purchasers holdings upon which they can live a decent life is a good one, and I do not propose at the outset to deal in purely destructive criticism of detail, nor indeed, to concentrate the whole of my observations upon the attempt to introduce compulsory principles into our ordinary land purchase system in Ireland. Either of those courses would be open to me, but for the moment I set them on one side. I hold as strongly as any one who has spoken that this subject is an important one. It is important to Ireland, and it is important to the Empire. It is bad for Ireland and bad for the Empire that so many of His Majesty's subjects should live in these districts so close to the head and the heart of the Empire under material conditions which preclude them from developing into citizens comparable in vitality and self-reliance to the citizens of other countries and other empires who are our competitors in the strenuous rivalry of industry and commerce. It is because of the importance of the subject that I venture to ask the House to bear with me if I attempt to illustrate a very dry matter, viz., some of those technicalities and complexities with which we are face to face.

You cannot judge of this or any other Bill for land purchase in Ireland unless you take into account the very elaborate system which it is intended to modify and amend. The Act of 1891; the principal Act as it is sometimes called; introduced by my right hon. friend the First Lord of the Treasury, set up a comprehensive and continuous system of voluntary purchase in Ireland, based and secured; and I think this is sometimes forgotten in this country; exclusively upon Irish assets, but (and no doubt this was indispensable) confirmed by the use of the credit of the United Kingdom, and allocated as far as it would go to the different counties in Ireland, so that they should have equal opportunities for purchase. It has been said in the course of this debate that if we pass this Bill it would be possible to spend the whole of the 33 millions available in the congested districts. I do not think it would be so, but if it were so that in itself would condemn the Bill. How could we ask Ulster to stand by while we were exhausting what, so far as the law now stands, is the extreme limit to which it is possible to conduct purchase in Ireland? This system is based on Irish assets; upon a very intricate and elaborate guarantee fund built up with great ingenuity by the First Lord of the Treasury. I will not trouble the House by reciting all the different assets in that fund, but they are ranked one behind another to the number of ten or twelve. The upshot is that a certain amount of money is due to Ireland every year, and since for the purpose of purchase we lend money through the Land Commission at 4 per cent., the total amount available is just one-twenty-fifth, no more and no less, of the whole of those sums which are due to Ireland. Also under the Act of 1891 it was laid down that certain parts of Ireland, namely, the congested districts, should be cut off and dealt with for all purposes as if they were separate counties, each with its own share and no more of this total available security upon which this complicated financial transaction rests and must rest. But there was this difficulty. In

respect of the congested districts one and a half millions sterling of the Church Temporalities Fund was set aside and ear-marked for their benefit, and the interest upon that is at the disposal of the Congested Districts Board. But that amount of money also exists as a separate part of the guarantee fund for the congested districts. I hope I am not wearying the House, but I really do not think we can legislate upon these matters unless we appreciate what has been done in the past. That was done by the Government in 1891 because they felt, as the authors of this Bill feel, that the need for land purchase in congested districts and similar parts of Ireland and the difficulties of purchase were greater than in other parts.

Let me illustrate this. I do not profess to have the same knowledge of these districts as hon. Gentlemen from Ireland, but I try to get all the knowledge I can. Take Galway. There is a great estate there upon which the Land Commission will not advance a single shilling. There is great difficulty there; indeed, purchase under the ordinary Act cannot proceed. Take another sample from county Kerry. I have examined six unions in Kerry; I found that 462 occupiers were holding 10,696 detached plots, and that, whilst they held and cultivated that, they had access to 103,876 acres in common. Under the existing Act you cannot take that into account in making your sale. You have to sell to the occupying tenants and chance whether the owners you set up will derive any real benefit from the vast areas of common lands. If you go from Kerry to Mayo and Roscommon you find the problem is even harder, because there very often there is no common land. There you find that those who might be purchasers have not access to the great untenanted lands. Those are the two great difficulties; bad holdings which you ought not to sell to anybody, because they are not worth buying, and the untenanted lands which are not accessible under the Land Purchase Acts. That is why the First Lord of the Treasury and the Unionist Government of 1891 introduced the Congested Districts Board as an outside administrative body with funds to its credit and with authority based upon the confidence which it commands from both landlord and tenant. Act after Act was passed to give it greater authority and power. The hon. Member who in the debate made a most eloquent maiden speech criticised the Congested Districts Board because in the earlier years of its existence it did not proceed very rapidly with the policy of land purchase. That is quite true; but that again warns us how necessary it is to proceed with great care in legislation. This original Act did not give the Board sufficient power to proceed, and it was not until this Act had been amended by the Acts of 1894 and 1896 and even by the Act of 1899 that the Congested Districts Board was in a position to proceed with land purchase upon the only lines which are likely to be successful in congested districts, namely, by buying an estate from the landlord for a fair price voluntarily; I believe that essential; and then re-settling it and re-selling it to the tenants, also voluntarily, for what they think it is worth their while to give. I invite the attention of the House to that power of the Congested Districts Board conferred only recently by those three Acts, because it is that power and that power alone which enables the Congested Districts Board to deal with the two difficulties of the bad holdings on the one hand, and the

untenanted lauds on the other.

Shall we help the Board if we pass this Bill? Not at all. The whole of that power which the Board have now is limited by the interest of 2½ per cent. upon the one and a half million of Church money which is at their disposal. That is the only fund at their disposal for the purpose, and no provision in this Bill will increase that fund. Therefore the Bill is really quite inoperative, as I believe. It will not give the Board another shilling for this purpose, and the Board is using every shilling at its disposal. It is true that under the Act of 1899 this interior credit, if I may so call it, of one and a half million which the Board can use for land purchase, is also divided in fair shares between the different congested district counties. There is a provision in the Bill for altering that. Yes, but under the Act of 1899 the Treasury has reserved to itself a discretion, by which they can allow the Board to continue such purchases in any congested district county if any reasonable cause can be shown for doing so. Take, for an example, Mayo on the map. Mayo on the map, congested and uncongested together, is entitled roughly to £1,270,000 for purchase. Of that about £800,000 is due to congested Mayo. Of that, £264,000 represents this credit which the Board can use for purchasing from the landlords and resettling and selling again. It is of the highest importance that that operation should be rapidly done. Yes, but this Bill will not help them. Take the Dillon estate. The Board bought the Dillon estate; no compulsion is needed; it is done. [An HON. MEMBER: How will you get the Clanricarde estate?] We are not getting on with the Dillon estate, because difficulties have arisen, and compulsion will not solve those difficulties. They are difficulties in respect of title, and in connection with the second inspection by the Land Commission. I must not dwell upon this matter, as it is sub judice, and will be decided in a few days, but I feel bound to say here, as I should certainly say if I could go across and give evidence, that I have great confidence in the experience and impartiality of the Chief Land Inspector of the Congested Districts Board, Mr. Doran, and that his schemes of land settlement are a very good guarantee for any money which is advanced.

I feel I owe an apology to the House for explaining the position as it is now, but before I come to the Bill I should like the House to consider how well the system has worked so far as it has gone. We are indebted to the hon. Member who introduced the Bill for the opportunity of thinking over a subject upon which the Government intend to legislate. [An HON. MEMBER: This session?] That depends upon a great many people other than the Government. Consider the success which has attended voluntary purchase, in so far as the security of its operations is affected by these Acts. Under the Ashbourne Act 25,280 persons have purchased land. In May of last year only 181 persons were in arrear at all; it is not a case of making default. That is seven men in every thousand. The sums advanced amount to £194,000, and the total amount in arrear at all, after years of experiment, is £1,152. Under the Acts of 1891 and 1894 22,229 persons purchased land, and the total number of persons in arrear with their instalments last May was 44; not one in 500 was late. The sum involved under those Acts is £136,000, and only £238 was

in arrear, not one halfpenny in the pound. I take this opportunity of giving those figures, although I do not disguise the fact that I am opposed to this Bill. This measure will, however, give us the opportunity of turning our attention back to the question of land purchase, and I think those are figures we may very well revolve in our minds.

Turning to the clauses of the Bill, Clause 1 would schedule ten whole counties as congested district counties and would repeal the old definition. I do not dismiss that suggestion in its entirety. I think that after ten years experience there is a case for revising an artificial and conventional definition such as was embodied in the Act of 1891, and I also consider that after passing the Local Government Act and the Act establishing the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction something is to be said for arriving at more convenient areas. I am not, however, prepared to accept anything in the nature of so sweeping a change as that suggested in the schedule of the Bill. I go further, and say that although it is reasonable to consider some modification, or to see whether there is a case for some modification of the congested areas, I think it would be most inopportune to attempt it until further progress has been made in co-ordinating the operations of the Congested Districts Board with the new Department; many inconveniences might arise through having three bodies all trying to solve the same problems with separate staffs. Before I attempt to consider seriously a Bill of this nature I think the Government should be allowed time to see whether some more effective co-ordination cannot be arrived at. Respecting Sub-section 2 of Clause 1, to a certain extent it is possible for the Congested Districts Board to operate outside the scheduled areas. But I am prepared to consider whether some Amendment of the law in that direction is needed.

It is to Clause 2 that I take the greatest exception. It is rather odd that every speaker in the debate should say the Congested Districts Board is the one body which commands general approval, and then propose to completely revolutionise its constitution. The Board at present represents all the parties involved, they work with complete unanimity, and I fail to see how it will improve the Board in respect to purchase if you bring in the representatives of ten counties. To have ten councillors returned for three years, deciding whether to negotiate with this or that landlord, and all trying to push purchase in their own particular county, is not advisable. They might decide to spend the whole of their income upon piers or minor industries. As the Member for North Antrim has pointed out, the Board is a trustee of public money allocated to a certain purpose. Therefore they are not elected, although they are representative. They represent all the parties involved. The Government is represented, and that is rather important; the landlords and the tenants are represented, and the Land Commission is represented, and this also is rather important, because the Land Commission is the body we have to go to in order to get the loan. Will any hon. Member seriously say that you can improve upon a Board which, in respect of land purchase, consists of five or six members representing all the parties involved, by bringing in ten more councillors in order to help them in their negotiations? I dismiss that as not being a

practical proposal.

As to the third clause, hon. Members know that I object to compulsory purchase on principle. But apart from that, in this case it would add to expense and to delay. My right hon. friend the Secretary for War complained the other day of the high prices he had to pay in Ireland under compulsory powers. If you have compulsory powers you must pay a compulsory price for the article, and that would lead to great delay. As matters are now, you have to arrive at a bargain with the landlord, and, so far as purchase by the Board is concerned, the thing was done. There has been no difficulty in respect to purchase from the landlord. There is this amount of legitimate compulsion, which exists in this and all other transactions of life, that people who let their opportunities slip by have to surrender those opportunities to those who are prepared to take them. In the congested districts there are so many landlords who are ready to sell and so many tenants who are ready to buy that all the Board's money is exhausted. Compulsion, therefore, will not add to our work. Where landlords are ready to sell and tenants are ready to give a fair price; and that is far more widely the case than hon. Members may suppose; where the tenants are ready to accept the scheme of instalments suggested for the benefit of them all; and, above all, where tenants refrain from those illegitimate methods which shake the faith on which all those transactions must rest; there is no difficulty in carrying on voluntary purchase in congested districts in Ireland.

MR. FLYNN asked if the Chief Secretary was aware of the resolution which the Board passed in 1895 and in 1897 regarding the use of the word "compulsory."

MR. WYNDHAM: I was not a member of the Board in 1895, but my answer would be that the Acts have given the Board power which enables them to make a fair offer to the landlord. I pass now to Clause 4 of the Bill. The disadvantage of having an elected Board would be in regard to purchasing estates, for if you want to buy an estate it is not a good plan to make that fact known to the owner, or to discuss it in this House. Clause 4 would break down the limit of the advance, but, as a Government, we have no great objection to that, for under the powers of the Act of 1899 the Treasury can dispense with that, and I may tell hon.

Members from Ireland that we are in frequent communication with the Treasury, and the Treasury is most anxious to co-operate and to facilitate the operations of the Board in that direction. Clause 5, which relates to the advance of purchase money to be made immediately, I find it rather difficult to understand.

It says;

"Where the Board have agreed to purchase land, or have acquired land under this Act, the Land Commission shall advance the purchase money to the Board."

That has been taken to mean that the Land Commission is bound to advance money to one county at the expense of the other county. If it does mean that, I am quite sure that it ought to be rejected, but under any circumstances the clause is quite inoperative.

I must apologise to the House for having taken up so much of its time with very dry matter, but I thought the occasion was one which might be turned to good account. I am as anxious as any Irish hon. Member to accelerate the pace and increase the volume of land purchase in Ireland. We wish to create a settled

peasant proprietary there on a sound footing. There are, I know, many difficulties in the way, and undoubtedly any such efforts will demand the time and attention of this House. Any such efforts would be rendered abortive by the application of any illegitimate pressure to make people surrender their land. When such pressure goes beyond the law it becomes a crime, but it is always a blunder, and the Congested Districts Board cannot make itself an accessory to that. That will not help land purchase in any way, even if any Department could assist in that direction. I have said all I have got to say upon this Bill. I know the intentions of the authors are good intentions, and I trust that means may be found to give effect to some of these proposals. But inasmuch as Clauses 1, 4 and 5 are unnecessary, inoperative or inopportune at a time when the Government has undertaken to amend the Land Purchase Acts; and as Clauses 2 and 3 make purchase compulsory, it is, in my opinion, inadmissible, and I must ask the House to vote against the Bill.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman has accused the Irish Members of wasting the time of the House, and thus giving the Government no opportunity of carrying into effect those good intentions with which we are told their breasts are filled. When the Chief Secretary was asked whether those good intentions would fructify this session the right hon. Gentleman could only shake his head and say he could give no answer upon that point.

MR. WYNDHAM: I said that depended on others.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Yes, everything in Ireland depends on others. We get rulers in Ireland who have no power. That reminds me of Grattan's Parliament before Grattan, when all Irish Bills had to be passed over to England. What have we to-day? We have an Irish Bill brought in connected with the congested districts of Ireland, and a preconceived notion is come to by the British Privy Council. Without having heard a word of the arguments, and without a single Cabinet Minister taking his place upon the bench, they instruct the right hon. Gentleman beforehand to kill the Bill irrespective of any argument that may be adduced in its favour. That is the method by which we are governed, and "it depends on others. In other words, the condition of Ireland depends not upon the Irish Secretary, but upon the state of mind of the Colonial Secretary free from the Transvaal.

MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member must not misrepresent me. I did not allude to members of the Cabinet, but to Members of the House. When I said that it depended on others I referred to the progress of business in this House. If there is no time for legislation, of course it is useless to bring in legislation.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I cannot see how taking up the time of the House after twelve o'clock can affect the legislation of the Government, and chucking out hon. Members by policemen is not stopping legislation. You have been feeding the dog with a bit of his own tail. We are told if we are good boys we shall have some sugar candy in the case of the Congested Districts Board. The right hon. Gentleman held up a volume of the Land Acts, and said practically, "Behold the concentrated benevolence of England." I wonder what size of a volume the Coercion Acts passed for Ireland would make. Why, the right hon. Gentleman could



not lift them up with his two hands. The whole of those forty-one measures had been passed within the last twenty years, but who was to be thanked for their passing? There was one of those measures connected with the land which was known as Deasy's Act. It was a measure consisting of some eighty clauses which were run through this House without Amendment or debate, also through the House of Lords, and there was not a single representative to raise his voice on behalf of the tenant. If you turn to the schedule of the Act you will find that it repeals something like seventy Acts passed in the English Parliament mostly for the protection of the tenants. Before the passing of Deasy's Act there was some trouble in evicting tenants in Ireland, but that Act swept away all protection for the tenants. Between 1860 and 1870 we had one Act passed by Mr. Gladstone, and another in 1881. People are in the habit of sneering at Mr. Gladstone's Act of 1881, but I say, "Peace be to his ashes," because, but for him, not one single one of those forty measures would ever have been placed upon the Statute-book. Defective and deplorable as some of Mr. Gladstone's Acts may have been in their working, they are the root and foundation of whatever good land legislation has been passed from that day to this for Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman suggests that our scheme is a failure because we could not have any more money to distribute under the Act, but where are we to get money from? The fundamental rule of this House is that no private Member who is not a Privy Councillor or a Minister of the Crown can propose additions to the taxation of the country. If we had that power do you not think that we should exercise it, and do you not think that we should have provided for £10,000,000 or £15,000,000 in this Bill? I should be astonished at my own moderation if I did not include the whole cost of the Transvaal War. We do not give a single fraction to the Congested Districts Board by this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman forgets that the Land Commission has recently issued notices by advertisement in the Irish papers, and there is at least one county to which no more money can be advanced for land purchase, and the county is one of the richest in Ireland, namely Wexford. Is that not a terrible condemnation of the administration of this benevolent Congested Districts Board? I have before denounced that word "Congested" as blasphemy. It should not be called the Congested Districts Board but the "Cromwell" Districts Board. In 1885 we tried to do something for these glens of Antrim, but what did the Irish administration of the day do? If the glens of Antrim had been left politically alone they would have been able to return a Nationalist Member, but you cut them into two; one into North Antrim, and the other Mid Antrim; and so they really have no representation here at all. The right hon. Gentleman said that there was nobody to speak for the glens of Antrim in this House. I, for my part was glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman quote the figures which he did, and he must not suppose for a moment that we do not recognise, so far as he is personally concerned, that it is his powerlessness and not his will that is in question. I was glad to hear him say that of the £10,000,000 advanced under the Ashbourne Acts there was only a couple of thousand pounds in arrear, and a similar slate of things under the Act of 1881. But what is the advantage of that to us when the right hon. Gentleman, instead

of availing himself of this extraordinary proof of the probity of the Irish tenant, says that he can do nothing further on this question, because our attention is taken up by foreign matters? I am glad that the Irish tenants have at last got a vindicator in the British Treasury, which was the last quarter we should have expected it. We have been told that the Irish tenants were a dishonest and a profligate lot, but now when you are able to apply the test of official Returns you find that out of some £15,000,000 or £20,000,000 advanced to Irish tenants for land purchase there is only some £3,000 in arrear from one end of the country to the other.

The right hon. Gentleman has outlined one scheme which he says gives an indication of an improvement in the machinery of the Congested Districts Board. He says that they have arranged facilities for improving the breed of horses in Ireland. My opinion is that by teaching the Irish farmer and assisting him to breed hackney horses you are producing something which will not be a very marketable asset. It is the ex-

perience of all men who have had anything to do with horses that you do not get so much spirit and stamina in the hackney horses as you do in the old Irish breed. Therefore the only thing that can really be put to the credit of the Congested Districts Board is that they have destroyed the old stamina of Irish horses by introducing the hackney stallion. If the right hon. Gentleman intends to bring in a Bill he should state that fact to the House to night. I do not think there is on the part of Irish Members any intention whatever to obstruct any real beneficent measure, or any other public business which would have the effect of benefitting Ireland. But we are now in the month of March, and the Government have not yet tabled their measures for the session. We know nothing about their Bills. Let them say to us that if they get a fair amount of time to consider the business they will push on this Bill. Then they might give us a chance of improving it, and in that case we should be in a position to do business with them. We have been promised some beneficent measures, but why do the Government not table their measures? It is a mere farce simply to say that we shall prevent the Government bringing in such Bills, and it is very much like the suggestion that Irishmen are standing in their own light by this system of intimidation and illegality. I remain a firm believer in that illegality, because without it the Irish would never have got anything. It may be that the twentieth century is bringing the dawn of commonsense on the brains of English statesmen, and they are beginning to see that you can only deal with human beings as you can with any other breed of animals, by seeing what their pedigree is. If the history of Ireland has been all one way for 700 years, it is hard to ask me now to believe that the tiger has changed his stripes and the leopard his spots, and it is an extremely doubtful suggestion. The right hon. gentleman knows that some of these districts are a source of turmoil and agrarian crime, and let him give them some scintilla of a ray of hope. It is useless to say that Ulster does not benefit, for there are many other counties which will not benefit by this Bill, including my own constituency of Waterford. Our sympathies and consciences are not limited to the areas of the Congested Districts Board. If there is misery existing on the Western seaboard,

it affects us just as much as misery on the other side. I am very sorry that this argument has been introduced, because hon. Gentlemen opposite will remember that when the improvement of a certain harbour came forward, we winked the other eye. We knew it was in the county of Down, but we gave it a railway and a pier for the benefit of the congested districts. We took up a similar attitude with regard to other districts. And we are just as sympathetic, irrespective of our religion and pedigree, with the misery of other counties as we are with the people in the west country. We are anxious to see  
AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.

Crean, Eugene

Jones, David Brynm'r (Swansea

Abraham, William (Rhondda)

Cullinan, J.

Jones, William (Carnarvonshire

Allan, William (Gateshead)

Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)

Jordon, Jeremiah

Allen, Charles P (Glouc., Stroud

Delany, William

Joyce, Michael

Ambrose, Robert

Dewar, John A.(Inverness-sh.)

Kearley, Hudson E.

Ashton, Thomas Gair

Doogan, P. C.

Kennedy, Patrick James

Asquith, Rt. Hn Herbert Henry

Duffy, William J.

Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth

Barlow, John Kmmott

Duncan, James H.

Kitson, Sir James

Barry, E. (Cork, S.)

Dunn, Sir William

Labouchere, Henry

Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)

Elibank, Master of

Lambert, George

Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.

Emmott, Alfred

Langley, Ratty

Bell, Richard

Farquharson, Dr. Robert

Layland-Barratt, Francis

Blake, Edward

Farrell, James Patrick  
Leamy, Edmund  
Boland, John  
Fenwick, Charles  
Leng, Sir John  
Bolton, Thomas Dolling  
Ffrench, Peter  
Levy, Maurice  
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.  
Field, William  
Lewis, John Herbert  
Brigg, John  
Flavin, Michael Joseph  
Lloyd-George, David  
Broadhurst, Henry  
Flynn, James Christopher  
Lough, Thomas  
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson  
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)  
Lundon, W.  
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James  
Furness, Sir Christopher  
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.  
Burke, E. Haviland-  
Gilhooly, James  
M'Dermott, Patrick  
Burns, John  
Grant, Corrie  
M'Govern, T.  
Burt, Thomas  
Haldane, Richard Burdon  
M'Hugh, Patrick A.  
Buxton, Sydney Charles  
Hammond, John  
M'Kenna, Reginald  
Caine, William Sproston  
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)  
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin  
Caldwell, James  
Harmsworth, R. Leicester  
Mellor, Rt. Hon. John William  
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)  
Harwood, George  
Mooney, John J.  
Carew, James Laurence  
Hayden, John Patrick

Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)  
 Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton  
 Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-  
 Morley, Charles (Breconshire)  
 Causton, Richard Knight  
 Healy, Timothy Michael  
 Morley, Rt. Hn. John (Montrose)  
 Cawley, Frederick  
 Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.  
 Moulton, John Fletcher  
 Clancy, John Joseph  
 Holland, William Henry  
 Murnaghan, George  
 Cogan, Denis J.  
 Hope, John Deans (Fife, W.)  
 Murphy, J.  
 Colville, John  
 Jacoby, James Alfred  
 Nannetti, Joseph P.  
 Condon, Thomas Joseph  
 Jameson, Major J. Eustace  
 Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)  
 Craig, Robert Hunter  
 Joicey, Sir James  
 Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)  
 Ireland prosperous as a whole, and I am sorry indeed to see the right, hon.  
 Gentleman; when this Bill is put forward by us as a measure which we only ask him  
 to take as a symbol of our good intentions; take his first opportunity as Irish  
 Secretary, to ask the House to vote against what he practically admits is an  
 abstract resolution, and he has done this without giving any promise on behalf  
 of the Government that this refusal will be accompanied by any definite reform  
 of this great and growing evil.  
 Question put.  
 The House divided:; Ayes, 163; Noes. 250. (Division List No. 64.)  
 Norton, Capt. Cecil William  
 Priestley, Arthur  
 Tennant, Harold John  
 O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)  
 Reckitt Harold James  
 Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)  
 O'Brien, Kendal (Tipper'ry Mid)  
 Reddy, M.  
 Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)  
 O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)  
 Redmond, John (E. Waterford)  
 Tully, Jasper

O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)  
Redmond, William (Clare)  
Wallace, Robert  
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)  
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries  
Walton, John L. (Leeds, S.)  
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)  
Rentoul, James Alexander  
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)  
O'Dowd, John  
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)  
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan  
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)  
Roche, John  
Weir, James Calloway  
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon N.  
Russell, T. W.  
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)  
O'Malley, William  
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)  
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer  
O'Mara, James  
Scott Chas, Prestwich (Leigh)  
Wilson, Fred W.(Norfolk Mid.)  
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.  
Sinclair, Capt. Jn. (Forfarshire  
Woodhouse, Sir J T (Huddersf'd  
O'Shee, James John  
Smith, H.C (North' mb Tynesde  
Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)  
Palmer, George Wm. (Reading)  
Soames, Arthur Wellesley  
Yoxall, James Henry  
Partington, Oswald  
Soares, Ernest J.  
Pickard, Benjamin  
Spear, John Ward  
TELLERS FOR THE AYES;Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.  
Pirie, Duncan V.  
Stevenson, Francis S.  
Power, Patrick Joseph  
Sullivan, Donal  
Price, Robert John  
Taylor, Theodore Cooke  
NOES.  
Acland Hood, Capt. Sir Alex, F.

Compton, Lord Alwyne  
Hall, Edward Marshall  
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte  
Cook, Frederick Lucas  
Halsey, Thomas Frederick  
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel  
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)  
Hambro, Charles Eric  
Aird, Sir John  
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)  
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G.(Mid'x  
Allhusen, Augustus Hy. Eden  
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge  
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nd'rry  
Anson, Sir William Reynell  
Cranborne, Viscount  
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Rbt. Wm.  
Anstruther, H. T.  
Cripps, Charles Alfred  
Hare, Thomas Leigh  
Archdale, Edward Mervyn  
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)  
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)  
Arkwright, John Stanhope  
Cust, Henry John C.  
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.  
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.  
Dalkeith, Earl of  
Haslett, Sir James Horner  
Arrol, Sir William  
Davies, Sir Horatio D (Chatham  
Hay, Hon. Claude George  
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John  
Dickinson, Robert Edmond  
Heath, James (Staffords N. W.  
Dickson, Charles Scott  
Helder, Augustus  
Bagot, Capt. Josceline Fitz Roy  
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.  
Higginbottom, S. W.  
Bailey James (Walworth)  
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-  
Hoare, Edw Brodie (Hampstead  
Bain, Colonel James Robert  
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon  
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset, E.

Baird, John George Alexander  
Dorington, Sir John Edward  
Hope, J. F. (Shef'ld, Brightside  
Balcarres, Lord  
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-  
Hornby, Sir William Henry  
Baldwin, Alfred  
Doxford, Sir William Theodore  
Horner, Frederick William  
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r  
Duke, Henry Edward  
Hoult, Joseph  
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds  
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin  
Howard, Cap. J (Kent, Faversh.  
Balfour, Maj K.R (Christchurch)  
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart  
Howard, J. (Midd., Tattenham  
Banbury, Frederick George  
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton  
Hozier, Hon. James Henry C.  
Barry, Sir Francis T.(Windsor)  
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas  
Jackson, Rt Hn. Wm. Lawies  
Bartley, Geroge C.T.  
Faber, Geroge Dension  
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick  
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)  
Fardell, Sir. T. George  
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton  
Bignold, Arthur  
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward  
Johnston, William (Belfast)  
Bigwood, James  
Fergasson, Rt. Hn. Sir J (Mane'r)  
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)  
Bill, Charles  
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne  
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.  
Blandell, Colonel Henry  
Fisher, William Hayes  
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T. (Denbigh  
Boseawen, Arthur Griffith  
Fitz Gerald, Sir Robert Penrose  
Kenyon, James (Lanes., Bury)  
Bonlnois, Edmund



Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon  
Kenyon Slaney, Col. W. (Salop.  
Bonsfield, William Robert  
Flannery, Sir Fortescue  
Keswick, William  
Bowles, Capt. H.F.(Middlesex  
Flower, Ernest  
Kimber, Henry  
Forster, Henry William  
Knowles, Lees  
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John  
Garlit, William  
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.  
Brown, Alexander H. (Shropsh.  
Bull, William James  
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick  
Law, Andrew Bonar  
Bullard, sir Harry  
Gordon, Hn. J. E (Elgin & Nairn)  
Lawrence, William F.  
Burdett Courts, W.  
Gordon, Maj Evans (Trll'ml'ts  
Lawson, John Grant  
Gore, Hon. F. S. Ormsby-  
Lecky, Rt. Hn. Wm. Edw. H.  
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)  
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon  
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage  
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)  
Goulding, Edward Alfred  
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie  
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J (Birm.  
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)  
Leighton, Stanley  
Chamberlain, J Auston (Worc'r  
Green, Walford D. (Wednesb'ry  
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.  
Charrington, Spencer  
Greene, Sir E. W. (Bury St. Ed.  
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.  
Coddington, Sir William  
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)  
Long, Col. Charles W. Evesham  
Coghill, Douglas Harry  
Greeton John  
Long, Rt Hn. Walter(Bristol, S.

Cohen, Benjamin Louis  
Greville, Hon. Ronald  
Lonsdale, John Browlee  
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse  
Groves, James Crimble  
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)  
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready  
Gunter, Colonel  
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)  
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Whole  
Guthrie, Walter Murray  
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)  
Macdona, John Cumming  
Parkes, Ebenezer  
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)  
Maconochie, A. W.  
Peel, Hn. Wm Robert Wellesley  
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)  
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)  
Penn, John  
Stone, Sir Benjamin  
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W  
Percy, Earl  
Stroyan, John  
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)  
Pilkington, Richard  
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley  
Majendie, James A. H.  
Platt-Higgins, Frederick  
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier  
Malcolm, Ian  
Plummer, Walter R.  
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)  
Manners, Lord Cecil  
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp  
Thorburn, Sir Walter  
Maple, Sir John Blundell  
Pretymann, Ernest George  
Thornton, Percy M.  
Martin, Richard Biddulph  
Pryce-Jones, Lt. Col. Edward  
Tollemache, Henry James  
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H E(Wigt'n  
Purvis, Robert  
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray  
Maxwell, W. J. H.(Dumfriessh.

Pym, C. Guy  
Tritton, Charles Ernest  
Melville, Beresford Valentine  
Quilter, Sir Cuthbert  
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward  
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.  
Randles, John S.  
Valentia, Viscount  
Middlemore, John Throgmor'n  
Rankin, Sir James  
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.  
Mildmay, Francis Bingham  
Ratcliffe, R. F.  
Wanklyn, James Leslie  
Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir F. C.  
Remnant, James Farquharson  
Warr, Augustus Frederick  
Milton, Viscount  
Renshaw, Charles Bine  
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney  
Milward, Colonel Victor  
Renwick, George  
Welby, Lt-Col. A.C.E (Taunton  
Molesworth, Sir Lewis  
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Charles T.  
Wharton, Rt. Hn. John Lloyd  
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)  
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)  
Whiteley, H. (Ashton u. Lyne  
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy  
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.  
Whitmore, Charles Algernon  
More, R. J. (Shropshire)  
Ropner, Colonel Robert  
Willox, Sir John Archibald  
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)  
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-  
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)  
Morrison, James Archibald  
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alex.  
Wilson, John (Glasgow)  
Morton, Arthur H.A.(Deptford  
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)  
Wilson, J.W.(Worcestersh, N.)  
Mount, William Arthur  
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert

Wrightson, Sir Thomas  
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.  
Saunderson, Rt. Hn. Col. E.J.  
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George  
Murray, Rt Hn A Graham (Bute  
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)  
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong  
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)  
Seely, Charles H. (Lincoln)  
Young, Commander (Berks, E.)  
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)  
Sharpe, William Edward T.  
Myers, William Henry  
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES; Mr. Macartney and Mr. William Moore.

Nicol, Donald Ninian  
Smith, Hon. W.F.D. (Strand)  
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens  
Stanley, Hon. A. (Ormskirk)  
ULSTER CUSTOM BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham): I object.

MR. T. M. HEALY: May I ask if the hon. Member is objecting on behalf of the Government?

MR. BANBURY: I am objecting on my own behalf.

Second Reading deferred till tomorrow.

EDUCATION (LOCAL AUTHORITIES).

Bill for making better provision for the promotion by local authorities of education other than elementary education; and for other purposes, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Mr. Flower, Colonel Williams, Sir Francis Powell, Mr. Bill, and Mr. Lawrence.

EDUCATION (LOCAL AUTHORITIES) BILL.

"For making better provision for the promotion by local authorities of education other than elementary education;

and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 18th April, and to be printed. [Bill 96.]

POLICE SUPERANNUATION (SCOT- LAND) BILL.

The Select Committee on the Police Superannuation (Scotland) Bill was nominominated of, The Lord Advocate, Mr. George Brown, Mr. Caldwell, Mr. Colville, Earl of Dalkeith, Mr. J. A. Dewar, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Maxwell, Sir Lewis M'Iver, Mr. Nicol, Mr. Parker Smith, Sir John Stirling-Maxwell, Mr. Stopford-Sackville, Mr. Tennant, and Mr. John Wilson (Falkirk).

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.; (Sir William Walrond.)

## PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.

Second Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Adjourned at a quarter before Six of the clock,

## HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday. 14th March, 1901.

## PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

### RHYL BRIDGE BILL. (By ORDER.)

Order for Second Beading read, and, discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

### GAS LIGHT AND COKE COMPANY BILL. (By ORDER.)

Order for Second Beading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. LOUGH (Islington. W.) said this Bill was one which was familiar to the last Parliament. It dealt with the great London monopoly, with regard to which very serious complaint was made by those who suffered from it. Not only had London local authorities, but Parliament itself had had to investigate the affairs of this company. A Committee of that House in 1899 made certain recommendations which were to be carried out before any more capital was to be granted, and yet none of those recommendations had been carried out in the Bill now before them, although they had been accepted by the South Metropolitan Company. The Gas Light and Coke Company, although it had the best area in the world for selling gas, charged 3s. 5d. per 1,000 feet of gas, as against 2s. 8d. charged by the South Metropolitan Company, and each extra penny represented a charge of £;80.000 a year on the people of London. Thus a single company, by this extra charge, levied a tax of three-quarters of a million sterling on the residents of a portion of the Metropolis-He proposed to move the rejection of the Bill, and although it might be suggested it was necessary to pass it in order to enable the company to get the capital they required to carry on their undertaking, he thought he would be able to prove that there was no immediate necessity for this Bill at all. The Bill sought to find further capital for the company, which only required £;200,000 of capital each year to carry on its undertaking. But the last balance-sheet, published three months ago, showed there was a balance of nearly £;700,000 to the company's credit. Therefore it clearly had enough capital to enable it to go on for two or three-years. Again, the company had got the permission of that House to issue £;280,000 of capital;a permission of which it had not yet availed itself. Moreover, a Bill had recently passed through the House, one of whose objects was to enable this company to sell to the South Metropolitan Company a large area which it had on the south side of the river. This transaction could be completed in a moment, and it would put the Gas Light and Cote Company in possession of £;900,000 of capital without incurring any additional charge for interest whatever. Therefore it was plain that the company could get the money it required without pressing through this Bill. The company had circulated among lion. Members a Paper in favour of the Bill which, he was sorry to saw was a very disingenuous document, ft was said, in the first place, that a similar Bill had been read a second time two years ago, but it did not add that it was rejected by a Committee of the House of

Lords. Moreover, the Bill of last year was rejected by a Committee of the House of Commons. Net now they were asked to put the authorities of London to the trouble of again opposing a Bill which was precisely the same in essential matters. This Bill was opposed by the Corporation of the City of London, by the London County Council, and by all the local authorities in the area affected. They were unanimous in asking the House not to pass the Bill until the company, in accordance with the recommendations of Parliament, had put its house in order. It was almost incredible that a private trading company should prove itself so recalcitrant, and so utterly disregard the opinions arrived at by the House after most careful deliberation. The Gas Light and Coke Company had given the House more trouble than any other private trading company in the country. As an instance of the hardship occasioned by the high price charged for gas he would like to point to the penny-in-the-slot meters, of which there were now some 200,000 in London, and for which, under the regime of this company, the poor had to pay on the average £2 16s. a year. If gas were supplied by the company at a fair price, as it was on the south side of the river, there would be a saving to these poor people of between 10s. and 18s. a year, which would constitute a very important addition to the fund for feeding and clothing the children. All classes of the community in London were vitally affected by this Bill, and he therefore asked the House to reject it.

MR. ALBAN GIBBS (City of London) seconded the motion for the rejection of the Bill. He was, he said, happy for once to find himself in complete agreement with the hon. Member opposite, and with the action of the County Council. The only attempt in the Bill to meet the recommendations of that House was in the redemption clause, and he was sure the House would agree that that clause was utterly perfunctory and insufficient. The Committee recommended that before any further power was given to the company to issue fresh capital, the sliding scale should lie reduced. But the company had made no effort whatever to do that, and he therefore hoped that the House, without troubling a Select Committee for the third time, would reject the Bill.

Amendment proposed;

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"; (Mr. Lough.)

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

Mr. CRIPPS (Lancashire, Stretford) urged that, as a matter of business, there was no reason why this Bill should not be read a second time, in order that it might be properly discussed by a Committee upstairs. It was undoubtedly the fact that the company wanted fresh capital, and it was in the interest of all parties that that capital should be raised in the most inexpensive way. The reason why two years ago a Bill was thrown out by a Committee of the House of Lords was because the time was inopportune, for Sir James Rankin's Committee had not then issued its

Report. The second Bill was thrown out because its terms were not in accordance with the recommendations of Sir James Rankin's Committee. Last year power was asked to issue two and a half millions of capital, but in this Bill the capital asked for had been reduced to a million, in order to comply with the

recommendations of Sir James Rankin's Committee. It was the intention of the company also to comply with the recommendations of that Committee in regard to the redemption clause, and the Committee upstairs could see that that was done. The question as to slot meters could likewise be more effectively dealt with by a Committee upstairs. What reason was there why this Bill should not have its Second Reading? Full opportunities would be given of discussing all these objections before an impartial tribunal in the Committee upstairs. He thought that on these grounds ordinary business principles ought to be extended to the present case, and he hoped the House would adopt the Second Reading.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) thought this measure was one of the most impudent proposals he had heard for many years. This question had already been before Committees of this House and the other House, who had made recommendations upon the subject, and yet this was identically the same Bill, and contained exactly those provisions which both this and the other House had decided against. The hon. Member for Stretford contended that this was a different Bill, but in the circular issued by the company they did not themselves claim that more than one out of five of the recommendations of the Committees had been carried out. It was said that the company were now asking for a capital of £1,000,000 instead of the £2,500,000 previously applied for. But it was quite obvious that under the proposals of the company the money would last them for a much longer period than that which had been stated. Under the Bill passed by this House they were going to sell to the South Metropolitan Gas Company a portion of their area for something like £1,000,000, and with this sum and the amount provided for in the Bill they would then be able to defy the House of Commons for a long time to come. Again, the company had picked out of the five recommendations made by the Committee only those which were of the least importance to the general public, and after doing this they claimed that they had complied with the Committee's recommendations. The Committee had come to the conclusion not only that this company was badly managed, but that it ought not to have special powers without complying with those recommendations, and until they were inserted in the Bill he hoped the House of Commons would refuse to pass it.

MR. CRAY (West Ham, N.) said he desired to join in the opposition to this Bill. Having regard to the nature of the measure, he thought they ought not to allow the local authorities to be involved in the cost of attending before the Committee upstairs. The local authorities had already borne the expense twice, and he suggested that it would be most unbusinesslike to throw that cost upon them again. In those parts where this company had to compete with the South Metropolitan Gas Company they charged a lower rate, but when they had disposed of their South London property they would be free to charge the higher rate to their consumers in those districts. His constituents saw no reason why the ordinary consumers should be made to pay for mismanagement. The Committee which had been alluded to recommended that whenever another Bill was brought forward by this company it should contain a clause fixing the price to be charged for gas. But this Bill did not contain a clause. It was ridiculous for the company to come to the House and ask them to pass a Bill against the wishes of all the

local authorities. He hoped the House would decide to protect the consumer, and not show such a tender interest for some of these monopolies. If the ratepayers of Loudon knew the nature of this Bill they would be up in arms against it, and he hoped the House would teach this company a lesson, and throw out the Bill by a large majority.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) pointed out that the City Corporation, the County Council, and all the local authorities were unanimous in their chorus of condemnation in regard to this Bill. The hon. and learned Member for Stretford said that as a matter of business this Bill should be allowed to pass its Second Reading and be sent upstairs, but they had had so much of the Gas Light and Coke Company's legislative proposals that they were getting tired of them in their attenuated form. He objected to discussing skeleton Bills which had been rejected by Committees of the House of Commons and the House of Lords, and until this company brought in their proposals in such a way that they could be accepted on matters of principle he was not disposed to allow the time of the House to be wasted. Already this company had put the local authorities to an expenditure of something between £7,000 and £10,000, which was utterly unjustifiable. What did the South Metropolitan Gas Company do when they asked for legislation. They came forward with a whole, a full, and a good Bill, and they put all those proposals which the hon. Member for Stretford wished to be discussed upstairs into the Bill itself. In this way the local authorities had a chance of considering them fully, and the company were frank about it. The Gas Light and Coke Company, however, did no such thing. At the present time this company was charging the consumer 3s. 5d. per 1000 feet for gas, which was 9d. per thousand more than the company on the south side whose Bill had been passed this year. He believed that that difference in price was inexcusable and indefensible, and he contended that with efficient management that extra charge of 9d. could be reduced to 4d. or 5d. The manager of the South Metropolitan Gas Company made no secret of it. for he had stated that if this House compelled all the gas companies to amalgamate under his management. 2s. 8d. per thousand feet would be the uniform price all over London. At present the Gas Light and Coke Company charge 3s. 5d., the South Metropolitan Gas Company 2s. 8d., the Crystal Palace Company 2s. 10d., the Wandsworth and Putney Company 2s. 4d., or 11d. less than this wealthy company which was introducing this Bill. He appealed to the House not to put up with these extortions, and he asked hon. Members to reject this Bill because the local authorities were unanimous against it. He believed that the House of Commons had made up its mind that this company should not be allowed to continue to impose these exorbitant rates upon the consumers of gas.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.) said that the constituency he represented had been the victim of these extortionate charges for a long time. The question involved was nothing less than the authority of the House of Commons itself. It was subversive of the authority of the House of Commons that a private company should be encouraged to ignore and disregard the representations of a Select Committee. He was not there to advocate all the recommendations of the Select



Committee. It was quite possible that the House of Commons itself might find some of them could not be given effect to. He would remind the House what this company had done. They first introduced a Bill when the inquiry by the Select Committee was going on. Then they introduced a Bill ignoring altogether the recommendations of the Committee, and now, forsooth, they had the face to come before a Committee of the House obeying those recommendations of the Committee which were of least value to the consumers, and disregarding every other one. That system of dealing was not becoming on the part of a private company, and he hoped that the House would, by rejecting the Bill, tell the company that they would not be treated in that way.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central) said the matter they were considering had been before two Private Bill Committees, in two successive years; one a Committee of the House of Lords, and the other a Committee of the House of Commons. The Committee of the House of Commons had in distinct and emphatic terms objected to the Bill on the ground that the company had not given effect to the recommendations of the Select Committee of 1899. The Bill now before the House was substantially the same as the one of 1899 and 1900. Notwithstanding what had been said by the hon. and learned Member for Stretford, he failed to see that the company had complied with the Committee's recommendations, and he was sorry to say that he was forced very reluctantly to ask the House not to read the Bill a second time.

MR. CRIPPS said that, having regard to the opinions expressed in the House, he was authorised on behalf of the promoters, to ask leave to withdraw the Bill.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill withdrawn.

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY BILL. (By ORDER.)

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate, on Amendment to Question [12th March], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

And which Amendment was;

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"; (Mr. Bell.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.

Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.

Holland, William Henry

Abraham, William (Rhondda)

Dickson, Charles Scott

Hope, J.F. (Sheffield, Brightside

Allan, William (Gateshead)

Donelan, Captain A.

Hope, John Deans (Fife West

Ashton, Thomas Gair

Doogan, P. C.

Horniman, Frederick John

Barry, E. (Cork, S.)

Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)  
Jacoby, James Alfred  
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)  
Duffy, William J.  
Jameson, Major J. Eustace  
Blake, Edward  
Duncan, James II.  
Jones, David B. (Swansea)  
Boland, John  
Elibank, Master of  
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)  
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.  
Emmott, Alfred  
Jordon, Jeremiah  
Broadhurst, Henry  
Esmonde, Sir Thomas  
Joyce Michael  
Brown, George M. (Derbyshire)  
Evans, Sir Francis H (Maidst'ne  
Kearley, Hudson E.  
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James  
Farquharson, Dr. Robert  
Kennedy, Patrick James  
Burke, E. Haviland  
Farrell, James Patrick  
Kinloch, Sir John Geo. Smyth  
Burns, John  
Fenwick, Charles  
Layland-Barratt, Francis  
Burt, Thomas  
Efrench, Peter  
Leamy, Edmund  
Buxton, Sydney Charles  
Field, William  
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accringt on  
Caine, William Sproston  
Flannery, Sir Fortescue  
Leng, Sir John  
Caldwell, James  
Flavin, Michael Joseph  
Lewis, John Herbert  
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)  
Flynn, James Christopher  
Lough, Thomas  
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.  
Foster, Sir Walter (DerbyCo.)

Lundon, W.  
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton  
Gilhooly, James  
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.  
Causton, Richard Knight  
Gordon, Maj Evans-(T'rHmlets  
M'Govern, T.  
Cawley, Frederick  
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton  
M 'Hugh, Patrick A.  
Clancy, John Joseph  
Hammond, John  
M'Kenna, Reginald  
Condon, Thomas Joseph  
Harcourt, Rt. Hn. Sir William  
Markham, Arthur Basil  
Crean, Eugene  
Hardie, J Keir(Merthyr Tydvil  
Mellor, Rt. Hon. John Wm.  
Cremer, William Randal  
Harwood, George  
Mooney, John J.  
C'rombie, John William  
Hay, Hon. Claude George  
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)  
Cullman, J.  
Hayden, John Patrick  
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)  
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)  
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-  
Murnaghan, George  
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan  
Healy, Timothy Michael  
Murphy, J.  
Delany, William  
Heaton, John Henniker  
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)

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

MR. PENN (Lewisham) said it might facilitate matters if he made a short statement as to what the promoters were prepared to do. They were willing to introduce after Clause 27 the words, "It shall not be compulsory upon any servant of the company to become a member of the society." Those words were similar to words introduced in the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Act of 1897, and in the Great Northern Railway Act of the same year. He trusted that the Amendment would satisfy the House.

MR. BELL (Derby) said he was glad that the hon. Member for Lewisham had seen his

way clear to meet the suggestion he had made, but he certainly could not accept the Amendment now without further consideration, and he therefore moved the adjournment of the Debate.

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

The House divided:;Ayes, 151: Noes, 160. (Division List No. 65.)

Norton, Capt. Cecil William

Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward

Thomas, David Alf. (Merthyr

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

Reckitt, Harold James

Thomas, F. Freeman- (Hastings

O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Md

Reddy. M.

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

O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)

Redmond, John E. (Waterford)

Tomkinson, James

O'Connor, James (Wicklow W.

Redmond, William (Clare)

Trevelyan, Charles Philips

O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)

Roche, John

Tully, Jasper

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

Russell, T. W.

Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)

O'Dowd, John

Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)

Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.

O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)

Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert

Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan

O'Kelly, James (Rose'mmon, N

Scott, Chas. Prestwich (Leigh)

Weir, James Galloway

O'Malley, William

Shipman, Dr. John G.

Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)

O'Mara, James

Sinclair, Louis (Romford)

Whittaker, Thomas Palmer

O'Shaughnessy, P. J.

Soares, Ernest J.

Wodehouse, Hn. Armine (Essex

O'Shee, James John

Stevenson, Francis S.

Woodhouse, Sir J T (Huddersf' d  
Palmer, George Wm.(Reading  
Strachey, Edward  
Young, Samuel (('avail, East)  
Partington, Oswald  
Sullivan, Donal  
Paulton, James Mellor  
Taylor, Theodore Cooke  
TELLERS FOR; THE AYES;  
Philipps, John Wynford  
Tennant, Harold John  
Mr. Bell and Sir Charles Dilke.  
Pirie, Duncan V.  
Thomas, Abel(Carmarthen,E.)  
Priestley, Arthur  
Thomas, Alfred(Glamorgan, E.  
NOES.  
Acland-Hood,Capt. Sir Alex. F.  
FitzGerald, Sir R. Penrose-  
Middlemore, John Throgmort'n  
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte  
Furness, Sir Christopher  
Mildmay, Francis Bingham  
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel  
Garfit, William  
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)  
Aird, Sir John  
Gibbs,HnA.G.H.(CityofLond.  
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy  
Allsopp, Hon. George  
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary(St. Albans)  
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)  
Anson, Sir William Reynell  
Gordon, Hn. J. E.(Elgin& Nairn  
More, Robert J. (Shropshire)  
Archdale, Edward Mervyn  
Goulding, Edward Alfred  
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow  
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis  
Graham, Henry Robert  
Morris, Hon. Martin Henry F.  
Bailey, James (Walworth)  
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)  
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford  
Bain, Colonel James Robert  
Greville, Hon. Ronald

Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.  
Baldwin, Alfred  
Hanbury, Rt. Hon Robert Wm.  
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)  
Balfour, Rt. Hn Gerald W(Leeds  
Hare, Thomas Leigh  
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)  
Balfour,Maj.K.R.(C'hristch'ch  
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.  
Myers, William Henry  
Banbury, Fredk. George  
Haslett, Sir James Horner  
Nicol, Donald Ninian  
Bartley, George C. T.  
Heath, James(Staffords.,N.W.  
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens  
Beach. Rt. Hn. W. W. B. (Hants  
Hoare,EdwBrodie(Hampstead  
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)  
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.  
Hobhouse, Henry (Somerset,E.  
Parker, Gilbert  
Bignold, Arthur  
Hornby, Sir William Henry  
Parkes, Ebenezer  
Bill, Charles  
Horner, Frederick William  
Pease, Sir Joseph W. (Durham  
Blundell, Colonel Henry  
Hoult, Joseph  
Penn, John  
Boulnois, Edmund  
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil  
Percy, Earl  
Bowles, T.Gibson(King'sLynn  
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick  
Pilkington, Richard  
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John  
Johnston, William (Belfast)  
Plummer, Walter R.  
Brookfield, Colonel Montagu  
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)  
Purvis, Robert  
Billiard, Sir Harry  
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T.(Denbigh  
Randles, John S.

Cautley, Henry Strother  
Kenyon, James (Lanes., Bury)  
Rankin, Sir James  
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lanes.)  
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W(Salop.  
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne  
Cavendish, V.C.W(Derbyshire  
Kimber, Henry  
Ratcliffe, R. F.  
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)  
Kitson, Sir James  
Reid, James (Greenock)  
Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J.(Birm.  
Knowles, Lees  
Remnant, James Farquharson  
Chamberlain, J Austen(Worc'r  
Laurie, Lieut.-General  
Rentoul, James Alexander  
Chapman, Edward  
Law, Andrew Bonar  
Renwick, George  
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.  
Lawrence, William F.  
Ridley,Hn M.W(Stalybridge)  
Coddington, Sir William  
Lee,Capt.A H(Hants.Fareham  
Ritchie,RtHnChas.Thompson  
Cohen, Benjamin Louis  
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage  
Ropner, Colonel Robert  
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse  
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie  
Sharpe, William Edward T.  
Colomb,SirJohnCharlesReady  
Leighton, Stanley  
Simeon, Sir Barrington  
Colston, Chas. Edw. H.Athole  
Leveson-Gower,FrederickN.S.  
Smith,AbelH.(Hertford, East)  
Cripps, Charles Alfred  
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.  
Smith,HC(North'mb.Tynesie  
Cross Herb.Shepherd (Bolton)  
Long, Col. Charles W (Evesham  
Smith,. James Parker(Lanarks)  
Dalkeith, Karl of

Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.)  
 Spear, John Ward  
 Dewar, T. R. (T'r H' mlets, S, Geo.  
 Lowther, C. (Cumb, Eskdale)  
 Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset  
 Dickson-Poynder, Sir J. P.  
 Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent  
 Stanley, Lord (Lanes.)  
 Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-  
 Lowther, Rt. Hn. JW (Cum. Penr  
 Stone, Sir Benjamin  
 Dimsdale, Sir J. Cockfield  
 Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft  
 Thorburn, Sir Walter  
 Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore  
 Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsm'th)  
 Tritton, Charles Ernest  
 Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin  
 Macartney, lit. Hn. W. G. E.  
 Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward  
 Fellowes, Hon. A. Edward  
 Malcolm, Ian  
 Valentia, Viscount  
 Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r  
 Maple. Sir John Blundell  
 Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.  
 Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne  
 Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriessh.  
 Warde, Lieut. -Col. C. E.  
 Fisher, William Hayes  
 Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.  
 Warr, Augustus Frederick  
 Wason, John C. (Orkney)  
 Willox, Sir John Archibald  
 TELLERS FOR THE NOES;  
 Welby, Lt.-Col. ACE (Tannton  
 Wilson, John (Glasgow)  
 Mr. Renshaw and Mr. Wilson-Todd.  
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon  
 Young, Commander (Berks, E.)  
 Williams, Col. R. (Dorset)  
 Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.  
 Main Question again proposed.  
 MR. JOHN BURNS suggested that when railway directors desired to promote Bills  
 such as the one under discussion, which, in spite of all that was said to the  
 contrary, did interfere with the liberty of the subject, and prevented free and



unfettered combination on the part of the employees, they should in future consult the hon. Member for Derby, who had just as much right to speak for railway men as a railway director had to place his name on the back of a railway Bill. The original clause made it obligatory upon the men to join the company's benefit society, but under the new clause the membership was to be optional. He, however, knew what "optional" railway funds meant. In the event of a member too closely examining the details; actuarial position and so on; he would soon find his occupation gone. He instanced the case of a man in the employment of the London and North-Western Railway Company who, having protested against the provident fund, was called upon by a superior official to give an explanation of what it was he objected to. The man lost his employment.

Colonel LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): Can the hon. Member give me the name of that employe?

MR. JOHN BURNS: No, I decline to do that, and I have as much right to refuse the name as the War Office has to refuse the names of generals, but I may say I did not mention the Great Eastern Railway. Proceeding, the hon. Member said he objected to railway funds altogether, on the very simple ground that the men did not get the same amount of benefit for their money as they would obtain from an ordinary friendly society, supervised by the Registrar of Friendly Societies and under legislative safeguards and conditions. Railway service was more dangerous than many other spheres of employment, and it stood to reason that with only 8,000 or 9,000 members

to meet that greater risk the benefit could not be so large as in the case of a society with perhaps half a million members. There was another objection to it. He did not believe that these railway funds were promoted either for philanthropic or benevolent purposes. Take the case of a Great Eastern Railway platelayer getting sixteen shillings per week. That man would have to contribute to an accident fund and also to a burial fund out of his very limited wages.

This Bill also proposed an orphan fund to compete with the better fund provided by the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants. Out of such limited wages no man should be compelled against his will to contribute to three or four funds, (1) because he did not get value for his money, and (2) because he ought to be free to transfer his labour where he could get the most profitable employment without sustaining the loss of parting with all his past contributions. In these railway funds the men did not get full value for their money; they interfered with freedom of promotion, and also prevented a man getting that continuous investment which was possessed by every member of a friendly society. Take, for example, the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, the Odd-fellows, or the Hearts of Oak. Suppose a platelayer belonged to any of these societies, his investment was continuous; whereas, as a member of this fund, if he worked at Liverpool Street station and was transferred to the North Western Railway he would lose all he had paid in. What was more, supposing he was a patriotic platelayer, and went out to South Africa, in response to the Government request for men, to join the railway pioneer corps in order to rebuild the lines from Kimberley to Bulawayo which the Boers had destroyed, the moment he went on board ship at the dock he would lose all the benefits of his membership of this

society. Why did not the Great Eastern Railway Company employ the staff engaged on these peddling schemes of sick funds, accident funds, burial funds, and orphan funds; in improving the passenger traffic at Liverpool Street, and the general administration of the railway? In 1899 the House of Commons appointed a Committee to inquire into the working of shop clubs and railway funds, and the spirit and letter of the operation of these were adversely criticised by that Committee. It might be said that that criticism had been got rid of by the Great Eastern directors by the concessions which they had made. Nothing of the sort. The most objectionable condition was still retained, and he hoped that the directors would make a further concession. Why ask the men to contribute to no fewer than four funds? The reason was that this was an insidious device to divert the railway workmen's subscriptions from their trades unions, which protected them from long hours and short wages, and gave them better friendly society benefits than the Great Eastern Railway Company possibly could, and to render it impossible for these men to remain in their trade unions. If a workman was paying 10d. a week to these four schemes, and had only 16s. a week wages, it was obvious that he could not go on paying 5d. a week to his trade union. The wife would come along and say, "Tom, I wish you had wages enough for both the trade union and the railway societies, but you have not"; and over the tea-table Tom would reply, "What am I to do?" Jane, the wife, would say, "You had better choose the side on which your bread is buttered. If you do not do so, foreman this or superintendent that may probably carry it to the right or wrong quarter, and if you do not belong to the company's funds you will lie spotted, your promotion will be cheeked, and ultimately you will lose your employment." And so the poor man would give in. The object of this scheme, therefore, was to hit the trade unions, to kill the freedom of the men, and to assist the directors who had not the capacity to get on good terms with their employees on account of some imaginary strike that was to come off. It was not for the House of Commons to play the game of the railway directors, but to uphold the liberty of the workmen.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR reminded the House that on the last occasion on which this Bill had been discussed objection was taken to the provident funds clause, and the adjournment of the debate was moved in order to give the directors of the Great Eastern Railway Company, the promoters, an opportunity of amending the clause. Now the hon. Member for Lewisham, on behalf of the company, expressed his willingness to amend the clause as follows: "It shall not be compulsory upon any servant of the company to become a member of the society." Nothing could be more clear or satisfactory than that. He was bound to say he did not think the speech of the hon. Member for Battersea had any reference to the question now before the House. He could not help thinking that that hon. Member had come down to the House primed with a speech on the suspicion that the directors would not give way. But they had given way, and the hon. Member for Battersea was not willing to forego the opportunity of making his prepared speech. The clause in its original form was not objectionable in any respect, but in its amended form it conceded everything that had been asked, and there was no reason why the Second Reading of the Bill should not be taken.

MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire) thought that the concession made by the hon. Member for Lewisham was probably useful. He would be the last to deny it, but he thought that it would have been only courteous had the hon. Gentleman come to hon. Members on that side of the House who took an interest in the subject and asked them whether the Amendment met their views or not. Would it not be wise, if it were possible, for the promoters to reconsider their determination, and give the opponents of the Bill an opportunity of considering how the operation of these words would affect their case? It was an extremely important Bill, and the House would remember how questions such as these were fought out day after day when the Compensation Bill was before the House. He thought it was only reasonable that the House should allow the debate to be adjourned for a day or two.

\*The SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon) said it was not usual to make

any arrangement with any person to discuss a form of words to be introduced into a Bill. The usual procedure was to discuss the form when the Bill got into Committee, which practice had been followed by the hon. Member for Lewisham. The right hon. Member for Fife had asked the hon. Member whether the promoters would be prepared to insert words to make it clear that the clause was not compulsory. Now the hon. Member came to give in the House the undertaking for which he had been asked in the House. If it could be shown to the Committee upstairs that the words did not carry out the undertaking, the hon. Member would be prepared to consider other words.

\*MR. BELL desired to make an explanation. In the course of his opposition to the Bill he had received resolutions from different centres of the Great Eastern Railway Company's district opposing the Bill, first in regard to the question of compulsion, and secondly because it was an effort of the directorate to deprive the employees of benefit for injuries. That was an injustice, and he could not accept anything while that clause was allowed to remain.

MR. CAINE (Cornwall, Camborne) was of opinion that it was not only a question of people being compelled to join the society, there were other questions, such as the control by the men and the right to withdraw, neither of which points had been touched by the Amendment.

\*SIR FORTESCUE FLANNERY (Yorkshire, Shipley) was of opinion that nothing would be lost by an adjournment being granted. On the contrary, he thought there would be a great saving of time if the debate were adjourned, that an amicable settlement might be arrived at as to the words to be introduced into the Bill at a later stage. He did not agree with the President of the Board of Trade that these words would have an effect on the foremen throughout the railway system. The foremen would still select men for promotion, and the fact that a man had not joined the society would have an effect as to his selection or non-selection by the foreman. It was a far

more important measure than many Members thought, and he hoped, for the sake of the peaceful settlement of the interests concerned, that the hon. Member would see his way to adjourning the debate. It did not seem to him that there would be any loss of dignity on the part of his hon. friend the Member for Lewisham in

agreeing to such a course. The Bill had many features of extraordinary public value, independently of the clause in dispute.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD hoped his hon. friend would not accept the suggestion which had just been made. The hon. Members for Battersea and Derby were not content with this Bill when it was obligatory, they were not content with it when it was not obligatory; and he would like to know what concession on the part of any railway company would ever make them contented, unless it exactly coincided with their own political and social views. Not content with general charges, the hon. Member for Battersea made a further charge against the London and North Western Railway Company, a company with which he himself was connected. The hon. Member made a very serious charge against that company, but refused to give the name of the man.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I will give it at once; it is Robert White, wagon examiner, of the London and North Western Railway, who, after twenty-one years service, was dismissed and forfeited all his benefits except 16s. 6d.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: I should be very sorry to accept that statement as being correct until I have had an opportunity of checking it. [Opposition cries of "Oh," and "Withdraw."] I have nothing to withdraw.

\*MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. and gallant Member had said that he considered that the hon. Member for Battersea had wilfully made a misstatement, of course he would have to withdraw the expression, and would do so, I am sure; but what he said was, I understand, that he does not accept the statement made as being a true version of the facts.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I do not object; I regard it as a directorial contradiction, and we know how they come.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD said it was perfectly clear that the hon. Members for Battersea and Derby objected to the railway companies having any benefit societies. The hon. Members objected to such societies running counter to their own.

\*SIR JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle) said the point on which the debate turned was the principle whether a man should or should not be compelled to join the society. The actual words had to be brought up in Committee on the Bill, as on the principle the House was agreed. The Home Secretary had already pointed out that the form of the Amendment could not be brought up on the Second Reading of the Bill. He might say that many years ago in a similar case similar words were accepted, and those words were discussed and agreed to by everybody interested before the Bill in question reached the Committee stage. This Bill contained a great many things advantageous to the districts through which the Great Eastern Railway passed, and the Bill need not now be detained in its Second Reading stage. If the proposals promised were not found in the Bill when it went into its subsequent stages the Bill would have a very rough time in the House.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs), who spoke amid great interruption and cries of "Divide;" said it was all very well for railway directors earning their fees in the House to attempt to prevent free discussion, but so far as he was concerned they would not succeed. It was very unfortunate that the promoters would not accept the suggestions which had been offered. It was

unfortunate an adjournment had not been granted. The speeches delivered showed that there was a greater difference than was supposed by the President of the Board of Trade. The concession was not a real one, hon. Gentleman having whittled away the whole of the concession as it was represented by the right hon. Gentleman the

Home Secretary. The hon. Member in charge of the Bill said he would be willing to introduce a clause which should have the effect of eliminating compulsion, and he would read the words to the House, but nobody without taking the words down and considering them carefully could possibly say they were sufficient for the purpose. They would be asked were they going to reject this Bill, which might involve large considerations, which had been threshed out in Committee, and for which there had been all this expenditure, simply because they could not accept these words in regard to one particular clause. The promoters knew, and the President of the Board of Trade knew also, that this was the only real opportunity they would have of discussing these words. The matter had been discussed in regard to other companies. Two specific points had been put to the promoters. One was, were they willing that the men should control this fund; the other, were they going to permit men to withdraw their savings if they were dismissed from the employment of the company? That constituted the key to the whole situation, and if the promoters did not give to the House some assurance upon those two points, he hoped every opportunity would be taken of opposing the Bill.

\*THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, Cumberland, Penrith) said he would appeal to the House not to take upon itself at this stage the functions of a Committee. He humbly submitted that this was not the time to discuss the point; the time to do that was when the Bill was in Committee. If they were, going on in that way, it was obvious that on the Second Reading of measures they would be occupying time on matters which ought to be taken up by the Committee, which was the proper body to go into the drafting of Clause 27. If the House would give the Bill a Second Reading and allow it to go to a Committee, he would take an early opportunity of getting his hon. friend the Member for Lewisham to meet him in his room, and he would invite the hon. Member for Derby, and they would consider together whether those words carried out the intentions in the minds

of the two hon. Members who had spoken. He thought that a few moments conversation would achieve all that was desired, but supposing the consultation proved unsuccessful, the Committee would still have an opportunity of drafting such words as they thought suitable, and after that occasion, if the Bill came back to the House in a form not acceptable to the hon. Member for Derby, there would yet be an opportunity on the Report stage for the hon. Member to suggest any other words. He thought that was an offer which his hon. friend the Member for Lewisham would be willing to accept.

MR. PENN: I am willing to adopt that course.

SIR JOHN BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich) said that, as a rule, upon Committees upstairs there was no one to represent the public, because each party represented their personal and pecuniary interests. Under such circumstances, it

was very difficult to protect the public interests. The House was asked, in spite of what had been said by the hon. Member for Lewisham, to allow this company to compel their men to contribute to a fund in which it was a condition, no matter how many years a man paid into it, that he should sacrifice the whole when he left the employment of the company. They ought not to consent to give a clause to a railway company to enforce such a condition as that. He heartily welcomed the interposition of the Chairman of Committees.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) thought he ought to have an opportunity of putting a point which no one had yet put. There had been considerable friction between the men employed and the company, and that friction had been so great at times that there had been danger of a strike occurring. A strike on the Great Eastern Railway would be the means of the dislocation of a great part of the labour of London, because a large number of workmen were brought up to London by that line. The danger of a strike which this clause might produce would at once be seen, and he hoped the House would be very careful not to permit the company to have such a power.

\*MR. BELL said the suggestion made by the Chairman of Committees was certainly a point in advance of what the promoter of the Bill had said. He was prepared to accept the right hon. Gentleman's suggestion, provided the conference took place before the notice he had down for an Instruction to the Committee was reached. The conditions laid down in his previous statement were that the clause should be withdrawn for the present session, so that the employees might make arrangements of their own.

\*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: I am quite willing to do that.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool Scotland) asked if the right hon. Gentleman meant by his proposal that if the Second Reading was allowed to pass a conference would then take place between the representatives of the railway company and the hon. Members alluded to in order to see if some agreement could be arrived at?

\*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: I am quite willing to give such an undertaking.

\*MR. SPEAKER: As the hon. Member for Derby speaks of moving his Instruction afterwards, it is only fair that I should tell him that I do not think I should be justified in allowing the hon. Member to move his Instruction, for it would be asking the House to debate over again the exact question raised by him on the Second Reading.

\*MR. BELL: I am much obliged to you. Mr. Speaker, for the interpretation you have given.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.) asked if that ruling applied also to the Committee.

\*MR. SPEAKER: Not at all. This point has already been the subject of discussion.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) said it was within his knowledge that a considerable number of Members

were prepared to vote for the Second Reading if Clause 27 were deleted. The effect of the Speaker's ruling would be that the Second Reading would be got with the clause in the Bill, and no opportunity would be given for taking it out.

\*MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member withdraw his Amendment?

MR. BELL: I understand that I can raise the question on the Report stage. On that understanding I beg leave to withdraw my Amendment.

Main Question put, and agreed to.; Bill read a second time, and committed.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee to insert the following clause:;

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

NORTH BRITISH RAILWAY BILL.

Mr. BELL said the objection he had to the North British Railway Bill was not a very strong one. He had had a short conference with the promoters, and had expressed the objections of the employees to one of the clauses. Under this clause the company sought to employ police on the same lines as the county and borough police. The privileges which railway police had had for some years past had been largely abused as against railway servants, who had been assaulted and wrongfully arrested upon suspicion, and wrongful searches of their houses had often been made. He thought the instances of this kind which had been brought before the public lately were a good reason why they should have some expression of opinion from the representative of the company. The railway servants objected to the police having power to follow and arrest any person who had departed from any railway station. He begged to move his Instruction.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee to strike out sub-section (3) in Clause 45 of the North British Railway Bill.;" (Mr. Bell.)

THE EARL OF DALKEITH (Roxburghshire) assured the hon. Member for Derby that it was not the intention of the directors of the North British Railway that their employees should be harassed unnecessarily by such proceedings, but he was not quite sure that this clause made very much difference in regard to their position. This clause had been introduced to enable them to follow luggage thieves rather than for matters of that kind, and a similar clause had already been introduced into nine other railway Bills. The clause had been considered by the Home Office, and the form which had been adopted was based on the model clause which was generally enforced. It was the last wish of the directors to harass their men or accuse them unjustly, but if there was anything of that kind in this clause, they might discuss it in Committee upstairs. He thought it would be most injudicious, and contrary to the practice of the House, to adopt Instructions of this kind at the present stage. He hoped the hon. Member would not press his Instruction, because it would, if passed, fetter the discretion of the Committee very much in dealing with this question.

MR. BELL: I beg leave to withdraw my motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP D).

The CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS informed the House that the Committee on Group D of Private Bills not being appointed to meet until Thursday next, the parties opposing the Heckmondwike Gas (Transfer) Bill, which was set down for consideration on the first day of the meeting of the Committee, had appeared

before, him and proved that the evidence of Arthur Frederick Goodson, Secretary to the Heckmondwike Gas Company, Gas Works, Heckmondwike, was essential to their case, and that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House.

Ordered, That the said Arthur Frederick Goodson do attend the Committee on Group D of Private Bills on Thursday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.:(The Chairman of Ways and Means.)

#### PETITIONS.

#### ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (HIGHER GRADE AND EVENING CONTINUATION SCHOOLS).

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

#### INHABITED HOUSE DUTY AND INCOME TAX.

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

#### PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE.

Petitions for extension to women, from Bolton; and Longforgan; to lie upon the Table.

#### SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

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

#### SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Cleator Moor; Wark on Tyne; Gateshead (two); Otley; Cuckfield; Longcote and Fernham; Nigg; Holme Eden; Birmingham (three); Lincoln (one); Tow Law; Abersychan; Edinburgh (four); Dulverton; Teesdale; Sheffield (three); Norton; Carlisle (three); Chorley; Govan; New Whittington; York (two); Hull; Tarvin; and Barrow in Furness; to lie upon the Table.

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

Petitions in favour, from Wick and Pulteneytown; Hamilton; Nigg; Cambusnethan; Dunfermline; Tomintoul; Liberton; Loanhead; Duffus; Edinburgh; Rattray; Wishaw; Dingwall; Newton Stewart; Gardenstown; Alloa; New Muchart; Dumfries; and Keith; to lie upon the Table.

#### SOVEREIGN'S OATH ON ACCESSION BILL.

Petitions against, from Alva; Dunfermline; and Cowdenbeath; to lie upon the Table.

#### RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

#### ST. CROSS HOSPITAL, WINCHESTER.

Return [presented 13th March] to be printed. [No. 83.]

#### CHURCH ESTATES COMMISSION.

Copy presented, of Fiftieth Report from the Church Estates Commissioners for the year preceding 1st March, 1901 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

#### SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 7th January, 1901, granting a retired allowance to Mr. E. A. de Wiele, Admiralty Writer, under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

#### LUNACY (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Rules for the Engineer and the Plumber of the Inverness District Asylum [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

#### IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).

Copy presented, of Return of Proceedings during the month of November, 1900 [by



Command]; to lie upon the Table.

#### BANKRUPTCY COURTS (IRELAND).

Annual Returns presented, of the Official Assignees of the Court of Bankruptcy in Ireland and the Local Courts, Belfast and Cork, for the year 1900 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

#### BOARD OF EDUCATION (CODE 1901).

Copy presented, of Code of Regulations, for Day Schools, with Schedules and Appendices, by the Board of Education, [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

#### ARMY.

Copy presented, of Memorandum of Field Marshal Viscount Wolseley and of Memoranda thereon [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

#### PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Controverted Elections.;Further Return, Copy of Minutes of Evidence and Judgment in the Cockermouth Election Trial [ordered 22nd February; Mr. Attorney General].

#### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) OFFICIALS.

Return ordered, "showing the names, dates of appointments, and emoluments of all Officials transferred by virtue of the provisions of The Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, to County, District Councils, or Boards of Guardians, with the salaries of every such official as fixed by these bodies, or as determined by the Local Government Board; the increases in the poundage rates consequent upon the operation of these provisions of the Act where the salaries were increased; the amount proposed to be paid by these bodies to any such official by way of compensation or retiring allowance, and the amount determined by the Treasury on appeal to be payable.";(Mr. Wyndham.)

#### WINES IMPORTED.

Return ordered, "showing the quantity of Wines, at the various degrees of strength, which were imported into the United Kingdom in 1900 from Spain, Portugal, Madeira, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Australasia, and other countries (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 155, of Session 1900).";(Mr. T. R. Dewar.)

#### CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS.

Mr. Speaker informed the House that he had received from the Judges for the time being on the rota for the trial of Election Petitions the following Certificate and Report relating to the Election for the Cockermouth Division of the County of Cumberland;;

#### COCKERMOUTH ELECTION PETITION.

In the High Court of Justice, King's Bench Division.

The Parliamentary Elections Act, 1868.

The Corrupt and Illegal Practices Prevention Acts, 1854 to 1895.

To the Right Honourable the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Election for the Cockermouth Division of the County of Cumberland, holden on the 4th day of October, 1900.

In the matter of an Election Petition for the said Division presented to the High Court of Justice on the 19th day of November, 1900.

John Armstrong, James Hardaker Brooks-bank, Benjamin Brown, James Beck, William Cooper, and Barwise Henderson, Petitioners, and John Scurrah Randles,

Respondent.

We, Sir Charles John Darling, Knight, and Sir Arthur Moseley Channell, Knight, Judges of the High Court of Justice, and two of the Judges on the rota for the time being for the trial of Election Petitions in England and Wales, do hereby, in pursuance of the said Acts, certify that, upon the 26th, 27th, and 28th days of February, 1901, we duly held a Court at the Mission Hall, Duke Street, Workington, for the trial of and did try the said Election Petition between the said Petitioners and the said Respondent.

And in further pursuance of the said Acts we report that at the conclusion of the said trial we determined that the Respondent, being the Member whose Election and return were complained of in the said Petition, was duly elected and returned, and that his Election was not void, and we do hereby certify such our determination to you.

And whereas charges were made in the said Petition that various illegal practices therein specified had been committed in reference to the said Election by the Respondent and his agents, we, in further pursuance of the said Acts, report as follows:;

- (a) That no illegal practice was proved to have been committed in reference to the said Election by or with the knowledge and consent of the Respondent.
- (b) That no persons were proved to have been guilty of any illegal practices other than the acts or omissions set out in paragraph (e) hereof.
- (c) That there is no reason to believe that illegal practices extensively prevailed at the said Election.
- (d) That the Respondent was not proved to have been guilty by his agents of any illegal practice other than the acts or omissions set out in paragraph (e) hereof.
- (e) That certain of the acts or omissions alleged in the said Petition to be illegal practices as having been committed by the Election agent, sub-agents, or other agents of the Respondent, in contravention of the 20th and 33rd sections of the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Prevention Act, 1883, namely; (1) the use of a room on licensed premises as a committee room, and (2) the return of the Election expenses of the Respondent at the said Election by his Election agent not being in all particulars in accordance with the form provided by the said Act, arose from inadvertence or from some other reasonable cause of a like nature, and did not arise from any want of good faith, and under such circumstances it seemed just to the Court that the said Respondent, his Election agent, sub-agents, or other agents should not be subject to any of the consequences under the said Act of the said acts or omissions, and the Court therefore made an order pursuant to the 23rd section of the said Act allowing the said acts or omissions to be exceptions from the provisions of the said Act which might otherwise have made them or any of them an illegal practice or practices.
- (f) That the other illegal practices alleged in the said Petition were not proved or were disproved.

A Copy of the evidence and of our judgment herein taken by the deputies of the shorthand writer of the House of Commons accompanies this our Certificate.

CHARLES DARLING.

A. M. CHANNELL.

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR;MR. ADRIAN HOFMEYR'S MISSION.

MR. PIERCE (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state who was responsible for sending Mr. Adrian Hofmeyr to Pretoria; what were the actual terms of his engagement there; and what salary did he receive; whether the fact that he had been suspended from the Dutch Church for immorality was known to those who appointed him, and why care was not exercised in making inquiry before accepting Mr. Hofmeyr's services, and if in future the antecedents of those employed by the Government in South Africa will be impartially inquired into; and whether he is aware that statements made publicly by Mr. Hofmeyr when lecturing in England during the General Election as to his treatment at the hands of the Boers were characterised by General Baden-Powell as a fabrication.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I telegraphed the substance of the first two paragraphs of the hon. Member's question to Sir A. Milner, and have received the following reply;

"Lord Kitchener asked me to send Mr. Hofmeyr to Pretoria if I thought that he would be of use, and as I did think so I sent him then and there. No employment was specified; I simply told him that I wanted him to place his services entirely at Lord Kitchener's disposal, and that I could not say for how long or short a time he might be wanted, but that while employed he would be paid at the rate of £50 per month plus actual travelling expenses. I take sole responsibility for this arrangement; was not aware, and I am not now aware, he was suspended for immorality. I was aware that there had been some scandal about him two years ago and that he had quitted post of Dutch Reformed minister at Wynberg."

As to the third paragraph, I have no information. I have already informed the hon. Gentleman that Mr. Hofmeyr was not employed by Lord Kitchener.

NAVAL BRIGADE DESPATCHES.

SIR J. FERGUSON (Manchester, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will lay upon the Table the despatches in regard to the Naval Brigade in South Africa which were published in the London Gazette of the 12th instant.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): There will be no objection to laying these Papers if the right hon. Gentleman will move for them.

COLONIAL TROOPS;STATISTICS.

\*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is possible to state the number of men sent to South Africa by the Dominion of Canada, the colony of New Zealand, and each of the six Australian colonies respectively, and the number in each case who have completed their service and returned to their colonies; also the number in the case of each of these colonies now serving in South Africa.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The figures are too numerous to read out to the House, but I will lay them on the Table, as

far as it is possible to give them.

#### PENSIONS FOR SOLDIERS' WIDOWS AND ORPHANS.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can now state the particulars of the pensions proposed to be given to the widows and orphans of those who have lost their lives in the South African Campaign.

Mr. BRODRICK: The actual conditions on which grants will be given are not quite settled; but I may inform the hon. Member that so far as the Government are concerned the rates of pension and compassionate allowance to widows and children of non-commissioned officers and men, killed in action or dying of wounds or disease contracted on active service, will be as follows;

Class.

Widows.

Each child.

s.

d.

s.

d.

l.

Q. M.-Sergeant

10

0

2

0

II.

Col.-Sergeant

9

0

2

0

III.

Sergeant

7

6

2

0

IV.

Corporal

6

0

1

6

V.

Privates

5

0

1

# BOER PRISONERS; PLACES OF CUSTODY.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Indian Government are making plans and estimates for the location of batches of 1,000 Boers at Dehra, Pachmarhi, and other places; and, if so, whether the Boers will be imprisoned in those districts.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): Yes, Sir; arrangements are under consideration to locate Boer prisoners in India, in case the present available places of detention become overcrowded.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: Are these Dutchmen to be imprisoned in India?

LORD G. HAMILTON: They will be detained under the same condition as the other Boer prisoners.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether places are being prepared for the reception of Boer prisoners in India; whether, if so, the prisoners to be removed there are now at Ceylon, or whether the Government are contemplating sending any more out of South Africa; and whether, if the latter is the case, they will consider the possibility of sending them to our Australasian colonies in preference to India or Ceylon, both for climatic reasons and in order to increase the opportunities of friendly contact between the two races.

MR. BRODRICK: All the questions mentioned by the hon. Member will be considered before any step is taken. It is not proposed to move any of the prisoners who have already been deported.

# COURTS-MARTIAL; STATISTICS OF IMPRISONMENT.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state the number of soldiers sent back from South Africa in custody; how many are now undergoing sentence in Great Britain, and in what prisons; how many soldiers are undergoing sentence in South Africa, and in what prisons; and would he have any objection to give a Return of the number of offenders in each regiment, and the nature of the offences, and the character of the courts-martial.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): It would take a very long time and much labour to obtain the detailed information required. It is quite impossible to throw on the staff in South Africa the labour of making a variety of detailed Returns unless for some urgent public purpose.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the noble Lord say how many soldiers have been sent back in custody from South Africa, and what prisons they are now confined in? It is a question which affects the liberty of these men, and we are entitled to look into it.

[No answer was given.]

MR. T. M. HEALY: Surely I am entitled to an answer.

LORD STANLEY: I am afraid I cannot give the hon. Member the information he requires. It would involve an enormous amount of work to collect it, whether in England or in South Africa. The staffs in both places are very much overworked, and I hope that hon. Members will not press for any of these Returns as long as

the war is going on.

MR. T. M. HEALY: But is not the liberty of these men in question?

\*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order&#x0021;

CIVIL SURGEONS AND NURSES;WAR GRATUITY.

SIR ANDREW AGNEW (Edinburgh, S.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether the civil surgeons and nursing sisters employed in tending the sick and wounded in

South Africa will be entitled to the same war gratuity as those connected with the Army.

LORD STANLEY: Civil surgeons, civil veterinary surgeons, and nursing sisters are employed under a definite contract as to pay, and are not entitled to any war gratuity.

SOUTH AFRICAN COLD STORAGE COMPANY'S CONTRACT.

MR. FIELD (Dublin. St. Patrick's): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the South African Cold Storage Company contracted for the supply of fresh meat for the troops in the field at 11d. per pound for each pound of dead meat actually handed over; whether, notwithstanding that the conditions of the contract provided for the supply of cattle and sheep to accompany the troops with drovers and other necessary arrangements for the care of live animals, this part of the contract was not complied with, three-fourths of the supply being frozen or refrigerated meat; whether he is aware that the same firm at the same time was supplying frozen meat for the troops at Cape Town and to the Admiralty for transports at 5&#x00BE;d. per pound; and whether precautions have been taken to ensure that the terms of the contract shall be carried out.

LORD STANLEY: I must refer the hon. Member to my reply to a similar question put on Tuesday, the 12th instant, by the hon. Member for the Flint District.\* I may add that this contract expired in February, 1900.

WELSH HOSPITAL IN SOUTH AFRICA.

MR. G. T. KENYON (Denbigh): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the assent of the subscribers to the fund for the Welsh Hospital in South Africa to its absorption in another hospital was asked for or obtained, and whether he is aware that a considerable amount of the money originally subscribed still remains unexpended.

LORD STANLEY: The absorption was arranged by the authorities in South Africa in communication with

\*See page 1328 of this volume.

those in charge of the hospital there. I am not aware of the details of that arrangement, or of the conditions on which it was made; nor do I know the position of the funds. Lord Kitchener has given instructions that full information as to the circumstances of the absorption shall be reported.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District): May I ask the noble Lord whether the gentleman to whom he alluded on Tuesday last was authorised to speak only for the executive committee? Has the general secretary expressed satisfaction at, or acquiescence in, the action of the military authorities?

LORD STANLEY: The gentleman I referred to represented the executive committee. I

thought, wrongly, it seems, that he represented the views of the whole committee. I do not exactly know what are the objections now being raised, but if the hon. Member will see me privately I shall be most happy to give the matter my attention.

IMPERIAL YEOMANRY RECRUITS; RIDING AND SHOOTING TESTS.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, before accepting the application of anyone to serve in the Imperial Yeomanry or other mounted force enrolled to proceed to South Africa, each applicant is tested in riding and shooting; and whether all are refused who cannot show their efficiency in these requirements.

LORD STANLEY: Yes, Sir.

MR. BARTLEY: Where are the men who come up to the offices in Victoria Street tried in these matters?

LORD STANLEY: I cannot say.

YEOMANRY CAVALRY TRAININGS.

COLONEL WARDE (Kent, Medway): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it has been decided to order a training of Yeomanry Cavalry this year; and, if so, on what conditions.

MR. BRODRICK: The Yeomanry will certainly train this year. An Army Order on the subject will shortly be published.

RESERVE OFFICERS.

Sir J. FERGUSSON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is intended to appoint to the garrison battalions any reserve officers who have served during the late emergency, and who are recommended by their commanding officers; and whether the employment by the War Office of officers no longer on the active list may include officers of any arm or only ex-Staff officers.

MR. BRODRICK: The reply to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. In reply to the second paragraph, officers of any arm may be employed, but will be selected according to their suitability for the duty for which they are required. A preference will be given to officers otherwise eligible who may have been disabled in the war.

WAR OFFICE; LORD WOLSELEY'S MEMORANDUM TO LORD SALISBURY.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the Memorandum addressed to the Prime Minister by Lord Wolseley, enumerating his duties as Commander-in-Chief; and all correspondence of an official character between him, when Commander-in-Chief, and the late Secretary of State for War, in respect to the military operations that might become necessary in the event of war in South Africa.

MR. BRODRICK: The question of laying before Parliament the letter addressed by Lord Wolseley to the Prime Minister is one for their consideration. I am not aware of any correspondence between the late Commander-in-Chief and the late Secretary of State for War on this subject, and it would be quite contrary to usage to lay the departmental minutes which pass daily between officials on all the current business of a Department before Parliament.

FORT OF INCHKEITH GUNS.

MR. JOHN HOPE (Fifeshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if

the guns on the fort of Inchkeith are muzzle or breech loaders; if the latter, are they of the newest quick-

firing pattern; also whether, for the protection of the Forth, he will consider the advisability of placing batteries on the Bass Rock and May Island.

LORD STANLEY: It has been explained to the House on previous occasions that it is not considered expedient to give information in regard to the details of the various armaments. I may, however, state that the guns on Fort Inchkeith are all breechloaders.

WELSH MILITARY HEADQUARTERS.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the inconvenience arising from the present distribution of Welsh counties for purposes of military command, whereby the military headquarters for North Wales are located at Chester, whilst the headquarters for South Wales, together with Montgomeryshire and Monmouthshire, are located at Plymouth; and whether, in view of the advantages in matters of recruiting and training which would accrue, he will consider the advisability of establishing one military command for the Principality.

LORD STANLEY: I am not aware of any inconvenience arising from the present distribution of Welsh counties for purposes of military command. Further, it is not at all likely that the troops quartered in Wales will amount to a whole army corps, and it will therefore be necessary to allot the troops there either to form part of one or more of the six future army corps already notified.

MARK IV. BULLETS.

MR. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state how much compensation has been paid to contractors in connection with the withdrawal of Mark IV. Cartridges; how many Mark IV. bullets have been broken up; and how many Mark IV. bullets still remain in stock.

LORD STANLEY: £6,568 16s. 7d. has been paid to the contractors. About 400,000 million bullets were broken up, and about 250,000 are still in hand.

MR. HERBERT LEWIS: Were these Dumdum bullets?

LORD STANLEY: No, Sir.

MR. HERBERT LEWIS: Why were they broken up?

LORD STANLEY: If the hon. Member will put the question down, I will endeavour to answer it.

MEDICAL ATTENDANCE FOR SOLDIERS' WIVES.

MR. ARCHDALE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the wives and families of soldiers, embodied militia, or reservists, serving with their corps, are only entitled to free medical attendance when residing within reach of an officer of army medical corps or of civil practitioner engaged at military contract rates; and, if so, will he say who is to pay for medical attendance for those who live outside that distance and are too poor to pay for themselves.

LORD STANLEY: It has been explained to the House before that it is not possible to provide medical attendance for those residing at a distance from military headquarters.

SOLDIERS' UNCLAIMED BALANCES.



MR. KEARLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can give the respective annual amounts of soldiers' unclaimed balances for the last six years that are ascertainable, and how have these been disposed of.

LORD STANLEY: The figures for the last six years of which the accounts have been closed are as follows:;1892&#x2013;3, £;1,268; 1893&#x2013;4, £;1,418; 1894&#x2013;5, £;2,979; 1895&#x2013;6, £;3,238; 1896&#x2013;7, £;1,036; 1897&#x2013;8, £;1,813. The balances for the first two years have been transferred to the Patriotic Fund. The remainder are invested pending transfer at the expiration of the statutory period of advertisement.

DECEASED OFFICERS' BAGGAGE.

MR. HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in administering the estates of officers who have died on active service, it has been the practice of the War Office to delay payment of moneys due to their estates, or to demand a guarantee in respect thereof before payment, on account of the cost of carriage home of the deceased officers' baggage; and, if so, whether he will take measures to abolish a regulation which has caused much hardship to those dependent upon the proceeds of the deceased officers' estates.

LORD STANLEY: There has been no delay of payment arising from cost of conveyance of baggage home. Owing to a number of claims against officers for conveyance of excess baggage in South Africa, arrangements were made for retaining a balance of £;5 from the estates of officers to meet any such claim. This arrangement ceased last December, and all cases have, so far as I am aware, been settled.

DEAD SOLDIERS' CLOTHING.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): I beg to ask the Financia, Secretary to the War Office whether he is aware that clothes of men dying in South Africa from enteric fever are returned to this country often in a dirty state; and whether, in consequence of the danger of infection, now increased by the prevalence of plague in Cape Colony, he will order that the kits of soldiers dying of disease shall be thoroughly disinfected before being returned to this country, or destroyed, and proper compensation made to their relatives.

LORD STANLEY: No clothing of men dying in South Africa is returned to the Clothing Department at home and nothing is known of any having been sent home privately. In accordance with the Regimental Debts Act the personal effects, except special articles left by will, belonging to a soldier dying on active services are sold by auction on the spot. Special cautionary instructions as to the spread of infection have been sent out.

LONDON VOLUNTEERS;RIFLE RANGES.

COLONEL LONG (Worcestershire, Evesham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state what steps it is proposed to take to insure the London Volunteers having satisfactory facilities, as far as ranges near at hand are concerned, for rifle practice and for becoming efficient shots.

MR. BRODRICK: The ranges at Bisley and Staines provide for a large number of the corps, and I had hoped that with the assistance of the London County Council an excellent range could have been obtained for those corps whose headquarters are in the east of the Metropolis. The representatives of the Volunteers, however,

refused to accept the arrangement if the Loudon County Council participated therein. I have no other scheme at present under consideration.

#### ILFORD RIFLE RANGE.

COLONEL LONG: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the acknowledged excellency in shooting arrived at in Switzerland by practising on short ranges, and the fact that a range near the headquarters of a rifle corps can be much more extensively used and consequently be much more valuable than one at a considerable distance, he will have a fresh inquiry held to see whether the Ilford Range, which has been used so long with perfect safety, cannot, even if doubtful for long ranges, be made a safety range up to some 400 yards.

LORD STANLEY: This question has been very carefully considered and the Secretary of State is not advised to reopen it. The military authorities hold that it is impossible to adapt the Ilford Range to meet the musketry requirements now imposed upon the Volunteers.

#### NON-ALCOHOLIC REFRESHMENTS FOR TRAVELLING SOLDIERS AND SAILORS.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any, and, if any, how many railway companies besides the Great Eastern have arranged to supply soldiers, reservists, and sailors in uniform with non-alcoholic refreshments at railway station bars at a reduced price; and will he state what steps have been taken to acquaint the men of this concession.

LORD STANLEY: Communications on this subject have been made to all the principal railway companies. As soon as the arrangements which are in progress have been completed they will be made known.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): Will the noble Lord inquire as to the indifferent quality and high prices of the provisions before forcing them down the throats of the men?

MR. WEIR: And will he take steps to inform the men of the concession made in their favour?

LORD STANLEY: It is of no use acquainting them of the fact until the concession has actually been granted by more than one railway company.

#### PATRICK M'NAMARA'S PENSION.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the case of Patrick M'Namara, of Sixmile-bridge, county Clare, who was formerly a soldier in the 14th Regiment, and served for one year and two months in the Crimea, and twenty-three years in the English Army; whether he is aware that M'Namara is only in receipt of a pension of 4s. 8d. per week, out of which he has to pay rent and support a family that he is now weak from old age, and has to depend for medical assistance and nourishment on the ratepayers; and that the Limerick Board of Guardians and the police of his district have recommended the War Office to increase his allowance; and whether, having regard to all the circumstances, arrangements will be made to give this old soldier a sufficient amount to keep him from want and suffering.

LORD STANLEY: The amount of this man's pension is as stated, but it is not possible under the regulations applicable to his case to grant him any increase. He was not in possession of any good conduct badges when discharged, and his

character while in the Army was bad.

#### QUEEN VICTORIA'S FUNERAL;1ST SEAFORTH VOLUNTEERS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the company of 1st Seaforth Volunteers who, in response to an invitation from the War Office, left Dingwall soon after noon on Friday, 1st February, for the purpose of taking part in the ceremonies at the Queen's funeral, found on their arrival at King's Cross at 5.30 on Saturday morning that there was no one to direct them, and that no provision had been made for their arrival, with the result that it was only by accident, and through the courtesy of the commanding officer of a Metropolitan Volunteer corps, that they obtained food late in the afternoon prior to their return to Dingwall by the 5.30 p.m. train, arriving at the latter place Sunday forenoon; and will he state who is responsible for this neglect, which caused discomfort and dissatisfaction.

LORD STANLEY: An officer was detailed as station staff officer at King's Cross on the 2nd February, and the detachment was duly directed on their arrival in the morning to the King's Cross goods shed, where ample accommodation and food were provided. No neglect is attributable to anyone.

MR. WEIR: Is the noble Lord aware that as soon as the men entered the goods shed they were ordered out by the railway company? I have it on the best authority that that was the case. Is the noble Lord aware that the men had neither food nor drink provided for them? I beg to give notice that I shall take the earliest possible opportunity of drawing attention to the gross neglect of which these men were the victims.

#### NEW NAVAL BARRACKS AT PORTSEA

Mr. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the Board have yet come to a decision upon the case of the men employed by Messrs. Lovett, the contractors, on the new naval barracks works at Portsea, who received no allowance for enforced loss of work on the occasion of the funeral of Her late Majesty, when the Government employees engaged upon the same work suffered no loss of pay.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: A decision has not yet been arrive at, but will very shortly be given, and I shall then be happy to communicate it to my hon. friend.

#### DEPTFORD VICTUALLING YARD LIGHTING.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been drawn to the arrangements for lighting at Deptford Victualling Yard, where men have been working overtime during the past eighteen months loading and unloading ships and barges by candle lamps and gaslight, as a result of which several slight accidents have occurred, and one man recently broke his leg; and whether seeing that on either side of the yard, both at the Foreign Cattle Market and Brighton Railway Company Dock, electric light is used, he will take steps for the introduction of that light into the yard.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: During the last eighteen months only nine accidents;one of them severe;have occurred in connection with the loading or unloading of vessels at Deptford, and none of them are attributable to defective lighting. They are only the ordinary cases of spraining and slight contusions inseparable from

wharf duty. The case referred to, where a man broke his leg, occurred through his slipping from a frozen plank in the frosty weather. The wharves are lighted by Siemens' patent gas lamps, and in order to facilitate the work of loading or unloading, candle lamps are placed on board the craft. Fewer accidents have occurred by night than by day.

CAPTAIN NORTON: Does the hon. Gentleman deny that the gas lighting in this yard is defective?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I think it is adequate for all purposes.

ILLEGAL TRAWLING NEAR ABERDEEN; THE "JACKAL."

MR. PIRIE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, having regard to the fact that the "Jackal" is the gunboat more directly charged with the duty of preventing illegal trawling in the close vicinity of Aberdeen, he can state where she is at present, how often during the months of December, January, and February, respectively, this boat has been berthed in Aberdeen Harbour, and on how many of such occasions she has taken tip her moorings inside the dock gates of the harbour; what is the number of officers on board her, and since when has the present officer in charge of her held the appointment.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: His Majesty's ship "Jackal" is stationed on the coast of Scotland for the protection of the fisheries generally, and is not directly or exclusively charged with such duties in the vicinity of Aberdeen only. She was at Aberdeen under repair up to the 19th December last (another gunboat doing her duty). She left on the date named for fishery duty, and has not since been in Aberdeen Harbour. From the 1st January she has been employed in the waters of the Hebrides. The commanding officer of the "Jackal" is Lieut.-Commander James C. Tancred, the date of whose appointment is 10th February, 1899.

ABYSSINIAN FRONTIER DISPUTE.

\*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State, for Foreign Affairs whether any agreement with the Negus has yet been signed with regard to the delimitation of the Abyssinian frontier; and whether any arrangement has been come to for joint action against a common enemy on the frontier.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) (for Lord CRANBORNE): No agreement has yet been signed with regard to the Abyssinian frontier, but negotiations are now proceeding between King Menelek and His Majesty's agent and Consul General at Adis Abeba on the subject. King Menelek last year invited the co-operation of His Majesty's Government in suppressing a fanatical Mollah who has for some time past been disturbing the peace among the tribes on the borders of the British Protectorate of Somaliland and the Abyssinian dominions. His Majesty's Government have instructed their officers to arrange for such, co-operation in the event of a forward movement against the Mollah becoming necessary. This is, however, only a temporary arrangement for a special purpose.

CHINA;RUSSIA AND MANCHURIA.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government have made any proposals to the United States Government in reference to the action of Russia in Manchuria; and, if so, whether he will state the nature of these proposals.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (for Lord CRAN-BORNE): His Majesty's Government are in constant communication with the Powers concerned on every phase of the Chinese question, but it would be contrary to the public interest to enter into particulars at the present moment.

NICARAGUA CANAL; HAY-PAUNCEFOTE TREATY.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if any steps are being taken to revive the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (for Lord CRAN-BORNE): The Hay-Pauncefote Convention has lapsed, the time for ratification having expired. No steps are being taken by His Majesty's Government to revive the Convention, but they would be ready to consider in a friendly way any proposals made for that object by the Government of the United States.

SOMALILAND OPERATIONS.

MR. C. P. SCOTT (Lancashire, Leigh): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when he will issue to Members Papers on British East Africa and on the recent operations in Somaliland.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Papers are being prepared and will be laid as soon as it is possible to include in them certain fuller reports on the recent operations in Jubaland which we expect shortly to receive.

WEST AFRICA; COST OF WARLIKE OPERATIONS.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what has been the total expenditure on warlike operations from 1895 to 1900, inclusive,

in connection with the Colonies or hinterlands of Gambia, Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast, Lagos, and the Niger, respectively; and what has been the total cost of the West African Field Force up to date.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The only expenditure on warlike operations separately recorded, apart from the cost of the various constabulary forces in the years 1895 to 1900, is that of £44,625 for the extra cost thrown upon Sierra Leone in respect of the operations in 1897 and 1898 and that of £195,893 for the Gold Coast, the greater part of which is the cost of the Ashanti expedition of 1895 and 1896. The cost of the recent Ashanti War is not yet ascertained, but will probably come to about £400,000. The total cost of the West African Frontier Force up to date has averaged about £180,000 per annum for the last four years.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Will the hon. Member give the cost for each separate year?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I will endeavour to get the figures.

WEST AFRICA; GOLD-MINING OPERATIONS.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has observed that various companies have been formed to work gold reefs in parts of Western Africa within the dominions of His Majesty; whether the law which vests in the State all gold discovered in the United Kingdom holds good in these West African dominions; whether such companies pay a tax upon the gold that they extract from the soil; and, if so, what is the amount; and whether any steps are being taken to ensure that no natives shall be employed in these mines without their assent being obtained, their full comprehension of any contract

into which they may enter being brought home to them, and security against their ill-treatment being provided.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am advised that the law of England as to gold mines does not apply to the Cold Coast. Under the law of the Cold Coast, companies formed to work gold mines will pay a special tax of 5 per cent. per annum on their net profits. The law of the Gold Coast appears to provide sufficiently for the protection of persons employed in mining as at present carried on.

RHODESIA;NATIVE LABOUR.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it has been brought to his notice that certain black men inhabiting East Africa were induced by the Chartered Company of South Africa to enter into a contract to be transported to Rhodesia and to work in the mines there, and that on reaching Lorenzo Marques they declined to proceed further; whether he can state what was the nature of the contract; whether the black men understood its stipulations; whether the Chartered Company of South Africa obtained the permission of His Majesty's Government to enter into it, and its provisions; and whether any supervision in regard to its conditions was exercised by British officials; and what has become of these black men.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I will answer this question in the absence of the noble Lord the Member for Rochester. The journey of the agents of the British South Africa Company to engage labourers in North-East Africa was undertaken with the consent of His Majesty's Government. As to this particular case, we are informed that a number of natives belonging to Jibuti in French territory came overland to Zeyla in British Somaliland, having been engaged as labourers for Rhodesia by one of these agents. Application was made by him to the Customs superintendent for permission to embark them, but this was only granted upon a promise by the agent that he would take them to Berbera, so that the Consul General might be satisfied before sanctioning their embarkation. This, however, for some reason as yet unexplained, the agent failed to do. On reaching Beira they became alarmed and refused to go any further, and a struggle took place, in which one native lost his life. The Portuguese authorities ordered an inquiry, the result of which we are awaiting; and a full explanation has been called for from the British South Africa Company. We have every reason to believe that the natives in their alarm were labouring under a misapprehension, but we are not aware of the terms of the contract, which presumably was made under French jurisdiction.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Will a copy of the contract lie laid on the Table?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will put any further question down.

PRESS COMMENTS ON PENDING TRIALS.

\*MR. MARSHALL HALL (Lancashire, Southport): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will introduce a short Bill making it a misdemeanour punishable on conviction by fine or imprisonment, or both, for any person to publish in the press or in any public manner whatsoever any comment upon any criminal charge or accusation made against any individual whilst the hearing or determination of such charge or accusation is pending either before a

Court of Summary Jurisdiction or before a Court of Record.

\*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): Comment in the press upon a criminal charge whilst the hearing is pending cannot, in my opinion, be too strongly condemned. I am now considering with the law officers whether the law as it stands is not sufficiently strong to deal with such cases as that referred to in the question.

PRESS INTERVIEWS WITH WITNESSES ON PENDING TRIALS.

MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General whether his attention has been drawn to a practice adopted by representatives of some of the press of seeking interviews with persons who have been called, or who are about to be called, as witnesses in matters pending before the courts of justice, and of publishing the statements and answers to questions given by such persons; whether he has observed that these statements and answers have afterwards been used in court to discredit the sworn testimony of the persons from whom they were obtained; and whether he is prepared to take measures, by legislation if necessary, to put a stop to the practice referred to, and to any interference whatever with witnesses, as being calculated to impede the course of justice.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs): My attention has been called to the fact referred to in the question. The practice mentioned in the first paragraph is a most objectionable one, and might, under certain circumstances, bring those concerned within the reach of the criminal law as it stands. The whole subject is under consideration.&#x2020;

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY AND LEE SAVING ARRANGEMENTS.

SIR R. PENROSE FITZGERALD (Cambridge): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Admiralty authorities have decided to put up wireless telegraphy stations at Dover, Culver Cliff, Portland Bill, Rame Head, Scilly, and other places; and whether he can now hold out hopes that this system will be adopted without delay for life-saving purposes.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I am informed that certain stations are being erected by the Admiralty along the coast to test the value of wireless telegraphy. I regret that I am not in a position to say more on the subject at present.

P. AND O. STEAMERS;ACCOMMODATION FOR LASCARS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any steps have yet been taken to require the Peninsular and Oriental Steamship Company to provide lascars employed on their vessels with accommodation equivalent to that to which European crews are entitled;namely, 72 cubic feet of space

&#x2020;Reference may be made to The Parliamentary Debates, First Series, Vol. vi., page 902. In 1806, Mr. Serjeant Rest had obtained leave to bring in a Bill "to prevent the publication of ex parte evidence against persons accused of felonies and other crimes previous to trial." He explains the grounds on which he considered such a measure necessary, and his reasons for deciding, against his personal judgment, not to proceed with the Bill.:[Ed.]

per man; and, in view of a statement made by the late President of the Board of Trade, can it be stated whether any action has yet been taken against the

company by way of a test case to show whether or not the company has committed an infringement of the Merchant Shipping Act in providing lascars with less space than above indicated; and, if not, will he say when action will be taken.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that the matter to which the hon. Member referred had not been lost sight of. The Peninsular and Oriental Company have taken steps by a petition of right, which has been filed, to obtain an authoritative legal decision on the points that have arisen with regard to lascar crew space. An answer to this petition has been prepared by counsel, but I am not able to say definitely when the case will come on for hearing.

AVOCH CHANNEL BUOYS.

MR. WHIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Northern Lighthouse Commissioners are yet in a position to state when they will be prepared to place lights on the five buoys which indicate the channel off Avoch, Ross-shire.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I understand that the lighting of the Avoch Buoys was not included by the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses in the Estimates for the coming year, in consequence of the many more important works required on different parts of the coast, but that the matter will not be overlooked.

RAILWAY COMPANIES' BICYCLE RATES.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the railway companies continue to refuse to reduce the charges imposed on cyclists for the conveyance of bicycles, in spite of the recommendations of the Board of Trade and the views expressed by its late President to a deputation on the 11th of May last; and whether he will now introduce the legislation to which the late President of the Board then made reference.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am not aware of any general reduction of charge adopted by the railway companies. I do not think my right hon. friend promised, legislation on this subject, and I am not prepared to introduce such legislation.

MR. LOUGH: Has the right hon. Gentleman seen the answer of his predecessor?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Yes, Sir.

IRON AND STEEL IMPORTS.

MR. CAINE (Cornwall, Camborne): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will extend the information with regard to iron and steel imports in the monthly Trade and Navigation Returns, by showing the imports of bar and angle iron, and unwrought steel, separated into the various countries from which more than 100 tons has been imported, as shown under the other heads of pig and puddled iron; and also give similar extensions under the various heads of iron and steel manufactures and machinery.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The form of the monthly Trade and Navigation Returns cannot be changed during the course of the year without great inconvenience, but the hon. Member's suggestion will be referred to the Committee on the Revision of Trade Accounts which meets next autumn. Meanwhile it is possible for any person interested to obtain the information referred to in the question from the various monthly supplements to the London Bills of Entry issued by the Customs



Department.

MR. CAINE: In view of the great interest felt in this matter up and down the country, cannot the Board of Trade give this information?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: It would be very inconvenient now to change the form. Anyone requiring the information can obtain it from the monthly supplement to the London Bills of Entry.

#### PONTEFRACT LOCOMOTIVE EXPLOSION.

MR. BELL (Derby): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to the explosion of a locomotive while running a mineral train near Pontefract, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway on the night of

the 11th instant, by which two men, the driver and fireman, were killed; can he state the number of the same type of locomotive possessed by the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company, and their steam pressure; and whether he will order an inspection to be made of all that class of locomotives on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Board of Trade have ordered an inquiry into this accident. I am not at present prepared to make any further statement with regard to the matter.

#### HYDE PARK CORNER CARRIAGE WAY.

\*MR. MARSHALL HALL: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether, during the session of Parliament, the carriage way between Hyde Park Corner and the Marble Arch and Victoria Gate can be kept open until 1 a.m. instead of being closed at midnight as at present.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): I am sorry that I do not see my way to adopt the suggestion of my hon. and learned friend.

#### MEMBERS' LOCKERS.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether, seeing that there are at present a number of Members who cannot get lockers, he will take steps to remove that inconvenience by providing such accommodation as soon as possible.

MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: I hope it may be found possible, to provide the additional accommodation suggested by the hon. Member.

#### THE PYX CHAPEL.

MR. G. T. KENYON: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if he can state by whose authority the custody of the Pyx Chapel has been transferred from the Board of Trade to the Office of Works; what is the object gained by the transfer; and whether he can give any assurance that the chapel will not be submitted to any process of restoration, or improved away altogether, as was the case with the Rolls Chapel.

MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: The transfer of the Pyx Chapel was made by leave of the President of the Board of Trade, with the approval of the First Lord of the Treasury. The object is to place the chapel in charge of the authority who has already the care of the Chapter House adjoining, and whose function it is to maintain buildings of national interest. The chapel will not be submitted to any

process of restoration.

**RICHMOND PARK.**

**MR. SKEWES-COX** (Surrey, Kingston): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if he will direct that attention be paid to the complaints made by the Kingston Municipal Society of the broken glass at present scattered about Richmond Park, and take steps to prevent as far as possible the practice of picnic parties leaving empty bottles and other litter in the park to the danger of ordinary visitors.

**MR. AKERS DOUGLAS:** The matter referred to by my hon. friend has received attention. All that I can do to suitably and effectively prevent the nuisance complained of is already being done.

**TRAPP (CARMARTHENSHIRE) NATIONAL SCHOOL.**

**MR. ABEL THOMAS** (Carmarthenshire, E.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether his attention has been called to the resolution passed at the last meeting of the Llandilo Urban District School Board with reference to the condition of the Trapp (Carmarthenshire) National School; whether he is aware that one master is in sole charge of the entire school, in which there are infants and children from the first to the sixth standard, who are taught in one and the same room; that owing to the condition of the school the average attendance during the last few months has diminished by nearly thirty per cent., and that some of these children have to walk a distance of four miles to go to another school; whether complaints have been received by the Committee of Education of this school for the last seven years; and whether he will state what he proposes to do in the matter.

**THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION** (Sir J. GIRST, Cambridge University): As far as I have been able to inquire since the question was put down, no resolution has been received; there is at the school one master for some thirty-two children; there are two rooms. I have no information as to the diminution of average attendance in the last few months, nor as to the distance of other schools. No complaints, so far as I know, have been received; but I will make further inquiry.

**BOARD SCHOOL SITES IN EAST LONDON;REHOUSING.**

**MR. THOMAS DEWAR** (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he is aware that the London School Board have scheduled, for the purpose of erecting additional board schools, three sites in Barnsley Street, St. George's-in-the-East, and Arbour Square and Bromley Street, Stepney, comprising some of the best class of property in one of the most congested districts in London; and whether, seeing that the conversion of these sites into board schools will unhouse upwards of 300 people for whom no provision for rehousing has been made, he will commend to the consideration of the London School Board the necessity of finding other sites than those scheduled, which will not accentuate to so great an extent the housing problem in East London.

**SIR J. GORST:** The Inspector of the Board of Education is about to inquire into this question of sites.

**Major GORDON** (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the

Committee of Council on Education whether he can give the approximate number of school places at present required in St. George's, East, and Stepney Divisions of Tower Hamlets; whether he has information showing that the demand for such places is sufficient to justify the proposed destruction of house property in these neighbourhoods; whether he is aware that vacant sites and slum areas are available in the immediate vicinity; and whether the School Board can be compelled to utilise them.

SIR. GORST: I have already said that this matter is being inquired into.

HIGHER ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS; WEST HAM SCHOOLS BOARD.

Mr. GRAY (West Ham, N.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he is aware that on 3rd March, 1900, the School Board for the County Borough of West Ham asked for approval of arrangements for a higher grade school; that the Board of Education replied on 27th April requesting that the application should be renewed at a later date; that the application was renewed on 15th June, and the Board of Education wrote on 2nd August asking whether they understood the application to be for a higher grade or higher elementary school; whether he is aware that, in view of this suggestion, the West Ham Board asked on 28th September for approval for a higher elementary school in Harold road, and that, up to 7th March, 1901, no approval had been given; whether he can give the reasons for this delay of over twelve months; and, whether he will now facilitate the efforts of the West Ham School Board in their attempt to provide at least one higher elementary school in a town of 300,000 people.

SIR J. GORST: The West Ham School Board did not apply for the recognition of a higher elementary school at Harold Road until September 28th, and has not yet provided the information necessary to enable the Board of Education to come to a decision on their application. Further information was asked for by the Board of Education on October 18th. The answer to this inquiry was not received until January 28th, and the information it contained was still inadequate. A further communication has already been sent to the School Board.

HIGHER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL MINUTE.

\*SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the Minute of the Board establishing higher elementary schools without

amendments will form part of and be published with the Education Code which will shortly be laid upon the Table.

Sir J. GORST: The answer is in the affirmative.

IRISH GEOLOGICAL SURVEY.

MR. ARCHDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the full amount in proportion to acreage is expended in Ireland upon geological survey as is in England and Wales; if not, would he consider the advisability of expending the balance in preparing soil maps for the benefit of farmers and agriculturists in general.

Sir J. GORST: The expenditure of the geological survey does not depend on acreage at all. The Vote of Parliament is spent on the survey of the United Kingdom as a whole, and no balance is available for any other purpose.

#### FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE IN SUFFOLK.

MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he is aware that the petty sessional division of Stowmarket has been closed as an infected area; and whether he will take immediate steps to have the restrictions removed, seeing that there has been no outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease within a radius of ten miles of the said division.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): The Stowmarket, Boxford, and parts of the Melford and Thingoe Petty Sessional Divisions were on February 27th added to the district originally scheduled because outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease had occurred in the west of Ipswich, and within six miles of the boundaries of those of the Stowmarket division. I fully realise the loss and inconvenience which the necessity of arresting the spread of the disease must entail upon a scheduled district, and though it would be premature to assume that the outbreak has been entirely suppressed, a case having occurred at Bradford as recently as March 7th. the outlook has, no doubt, improved, and I hope to be in a position soon to further modify the restrictions.

#### BUTTER ADULTERATION IN LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can state how many samples of butter have been taken by inspectors under the Sale of Food and Drugs Act, 1889, for the purpose of public analysis in Liverpool and Manchester respectively during the year 1900; also the number taken by inspectors during the same period in each of the towns of Cheshire having a population of 20,000 and upwards.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GRANT LAWSON, Yorkshire, W.R. Thirsk): The Returns received by the Local Government Board do not relate to the number of samples taken, but to the number analysed. The number of samples of butter submitted for analysis last year was as follows:;Liverpool, 39; Manchester. 149; Birkenhead, 33; Stockport, 8; Chester, 6; Macclesfield, 3; Hyde. 17; Stalybridge, 5. There are two or three other places in the county of Chester with populations of over 20,000, but for these there are no separate Returns of samples analysed.

#### SALE OF DRUGS ACT, 1899.

MR. JOYCE: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he can state what steps have been taken by the Local Government Board or the Board of Agriculture, under Section 3, Subsection (2) of the Sale of Drugs Act, 1899, to enforce the Act in places where the local authorities have failed to execute its provisions.

MR. GRANT LAWSON: The Local Government Board have not hitherto had occasion to take action under the sub-section referred to. I may explain that the Act came into operation on the 1st January, 1900, and that the Returns as to the proceedings taken by local authorities last year are only now coming in. As regards any action on the part of the Board of Agriculture, the question should be addressed to my right hon. friend the President of that Department.

#### DIVIDED MAGISTERIAL BENCHES.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General when a bench of

magistrates in England happens to be evenly divided in opinion as to whether a case should be returned for trial or not, if he can state what action is usually taken; and if the case is brought up for consideration at a future session.

SIR ROBERT FLNLAY: I have made inquiries, but have been unable to hear of any English case in which there has been an equal division of opinion as to committal for trial. I am therefore unable to make any statement as to any usual practice in such an event, but think it very probable that if there should be a final difference of opinion, the case might be brought up for consideration on a future occasion.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): Can the hon. Member say why the views of paid magistrates should carry more weight than those of unpaid magistrates?

\*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order&#x0021;

TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION WITH SCOTLAND.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that the commercial and manufacturing interests in Scotland complain of the frequent interruptions and in some cases the total collapse, of the telegraph service during the storms of the past winter, causing loss, and placing them at a disadvantage compared with their competitors on the Continent, and especially in Germany, where such interruptions are now, through the adoption of the underground system of telegraphy, unknown; whether he can state the relative length of underground telegraph lines in this country and in Germany; and whether it is proposed to extend the underground system from Birmingham to the north of England and Scotland, which have both suffered so much from the interruption of telegraphic communication during the last two winters.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): The

answer to the first part of the hon. Member's question is in the affirmative; but he is under a misapprehension in supposing that interruptions are unknown in Germany. On the 12th instant, the day when his question appeared on the Paper, eleven out of the twenty-two wires between this country and Germany were interrupted, and in no case was the interruption in this country. According to the latest statistics in the Postmaster General's possession, the length of underground line in Germany was about 3,940 miles, while in the United Kingdom there were at the same date 1,080 miles. The mileage of underground wire on the other hand was 26,750 for Germany and 10,600 for the United Kingdom. The Postmaster General proposes during the ensuing financial year to begin the construction of two additional sections of underground line to the North.

MARRIAGE GRATUITIES FOR POST OFFICE CLERKS.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, if he can state what amount is provided for marriage gratuities to young ladies in the post offices and in the telegraph offices of the United Kingdom for 1901&#x2013;2; will he explain why it is proposed to give £1,000 less this year than last year for marriage presents or gratuities to the ladies of the telegraph department; and is it estimated that there will be fewer marriages.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The amounts provided for marriage gratuities in the Estimates for 1901&#x2013;2 are as follows: postal, £;4,250; telegraph, £;6,500. The reason why a reduced amount is provided for the telegraph service is that in the last two years there has been a falling-off in the expenditure, and the full amount voted by Parliament has not been required.

#### ENNISKILLEN POSTAL STAFF.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that, on 4th August, 1900, the Postmaster General stated that the male staff were suffering inconvenience in the discharge of their duties and that remedial measures were in progress; and whether, seeing that since that period the male staff has been reduced and the female staff increased, and that such alterations have worsened the duties and attendances of the male staff, steps will be taken to revise the arrangements with a view towards improvement.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: If the hon. Member refers to the Enniskillen office, it is not the case that the number of the permanent male staff has been reduced under the revision carried out in January last. The object of that revision was to readjust the attendances so as to admit of the staff having the proper interval of nine hours rest from duty, and this improvement has been effected. The services of a man employed temporarily previous to the revision were dispensed with, as it was found that an addition to the male staff was not justified, and that an increase of one in the permanent female staff would suffice. The number of men employed at Enniskillen is already somewhat above the average for an office of this class, and it is only on account of the early morning duties that the proportion of women employed has not been further increased.

#### ACHNASHEEN (ROSS-SHIRE) POST OFFICE.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, having regard to the fact that the people residing in the neighbourhood of Achnasheen, Ross-shire, have no office at which they can obtain money orders or cash postal orders nearer than Kinlochewe, which is distant ten miles, will he consider the expediency of arranging for the transaction of money order and savings bank business at Achnasheen post office.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The question of extending money order and savings bank business to the post office at Achnasheen, Ross-shire, is under the consideration of the Postmaster General, and he hopes that it will be found practicable to make the extension without requiring a money guarantee.

#### WHITTLESEA POST OFFICE.

MR. BRAND (Cambridgeshire, Wisbech): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether any steps have been decided in regard to premises for a new post office at Whittlesea.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No decision has yet been arrived at in regard to a new post office at Whittlesea. Inquiry for suitable premises is still going on.

#### SCILLY ISLANDS.

MR. TAYLOR (Lancashire, Radcliffe): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Scilly Islands have been eased; and, if so, can he state the amount

of the rental and the date of the termination of the lease.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: It is understood that the Scilly Islands have been leased at various times and for varying periods, but the particulars are not known to the Treasury, as Treasury sanction is not required for the leases.

PENNY POSTAGE STAMP COLOUR.

MR. TAYLOR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether, seeing that the colour of the halfpenny postage stamp has been lately altered from red to green, to bring it into conformity with the colour of the corresponding values of other countries in the Postal Union, he will take steps to change the present colour of the penny postage stamp back again to its original colour of red now adopted by other countries in the Postal Union as that of their stamps of corresponding value.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Although the Postmaster General sees certain advantages in uniformity of colour for stamps approximately the same value throughout the Postal Union, he does not think those advantages great enough to override all other considerations. As stated in reply to a question asked in this House by the hon. Member for Canterbury on the 11th instant, the Postmaster General is not satisfied that any sufficient reason exists for altering the colour of the penny stamp as suggested.

CONTINENTAL MAILS.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that the afternoon mail train is frequently detained at Dover in consequence of the late arrival of the steam packet either from Calais or Ostend; and whether, with the view of saving a detention of mails and passengers at Dover, he will suggest to the South Eastern and Chatham Railway Company that the mails and passengers by the Ostend and Calais steamers should always be conveyed from Dover to London by the same railway route, so that each of the two trains shall leave Dover as soon as possible after the arrival of the steamer whose mails and passengers they would by this arrangement convey.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Of the two trains from Dover which run in connection with the day mail packets from the Continent, one only, that going via, Ashford, is under the control of the Postmaster General. He does not consider that special expense would be warranted in order to obtain control over the other train going via Chatham. Whenever it happens that the packet from Calais is late, the mail train via Ashford is detained until the arrival of that packet, which carries very heavy and important mails. When the Belgian packet, bringing much smaller mails, is late, the train in question waits only a short time for it. It is understood that the railway company detain the train going via Chatham in the same way as the mail train, and with this arrangement the Postmaster General has no power to interfere.

APPLECROSS (ROSS-SHIRE) ROADS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Congested Districts Board have yet considered the expediency of providing funds for the construction of a road or footpath on the north coast of the parish of Applecross, Ross-shire; and, if not, will the matter receive the consideration of the Board.

\*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): I am informed by the Congested Districts Board that they have already granted 75 per cent, of the £;130 required to complete the path round the north, coast of Applecross.

MR. WEIR: Will the right hon. Gentleman use his influence to secure a further grant?

\*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I cannot do anything now.

SCOTTISH CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state the number of acres of land purchased by the Congested Districts Board for Scotland since the establishment of the Board, and the total sum of purchase money paid.

\*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I have to state in reply to the hon. Member that the Congested Districts Board have made purchases of considerable areas of land for new settlements in two different parts of the congested area. Information as to these will duly appear in the Report of the Board for the year to 31st March next. Other negotiations are in contemplation, and it is inexpedient to give further information until the Report of the Board is in the hands of hon.

Members.

MR. WEIR: Seeing that last session-the issue of the Report was delayed several months, will the right hon. Gentleman take care that this year it is placed in the hands of Members earlier?

\*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am quite aware of the inconvenience caused' by the delay last session. We have reason to hope it will not occur again.

TELEGRAPHIC ARRANGEMENTS AT SHAWBOST, STORNOWAY.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, in view of the fact that the Postmaster General has stated that he is prepared to establish a telegraph office at Shawbost, Stornoway, under a guarantee of £;27 per annum, and seeing that the Barvas Parish Council have signified their intention to guarantee half that amount, will the Congested Districts Board consider the expediency of providing the remaining half of the required guarantees

\*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am informed by the Congested Districts Board that the Barvas Parish Council have not yet approached them on the subjects referred to by the hon. Member, when they do so their proposal will be duly considered.

GLASGOW SMALL-POX EPIDEMIC.

MR. JOHN CAMPBELL (Armagh. S.): I. beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he can state the number of cases of small-pox and tin number of deaths from that epidemic in Glasgow up to date.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgeton): I am informed by the Local Government Board for Scotland that from 22nd February, the date on which information was last supplied, in reply to the hon. Member, up to the 11th instant there have been;312 cases of small-pox and thirty-two deaths have occurred.

MR. BARTLEY: Can the hon. Gentleman say how many of the persons attacked were vaccinated?

MR. SCOTT DICKSON: I am afraid not.

SOLWAY FIRTH FISHERIES.



\*MR. CLAUDE LOWTHER (Cumberland, Eskdale): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can explain why no notice has been taken of the Report of the Royal Commission of 1895 on the Fisheries of the Solway Firth, recommending the purchase of the Scottish stake nets, and the establishment of uniform legislation on both sides of the estuary: and whether he can state if it is necessary to await a confirmation of that recommendation before taking steps to redress a grievance which is inflicting hardships on the Cumberland fishermen.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As a Royal Commission is now sitting, it seems inexpedient to come to any decision as to further legislation until they have reported.

\*MR. CLAUDE LOWTHER asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether he was aware that this Royal Commission

had finished sitting, and whether he could inform him when the Commissioners were likely to make public their Report.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said that rested entirely with the Commission. He would inquire, if notice were given of the question.

LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN NORTH DUBLIN.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Comity, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to a resolution passed by the North Dublin District Council, at its meeting on the 6th inst., in which it is stated that it still takes two years to carry out a scheme for the erection of labourers' cottages; and whether he will take into consideration the advisability of proposing further legislation with a view to shortening and cheapening the procedure to be adopted in the administration of the Labourers Acts in Ireland.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM. Dover): In some instances an interval of two years has elapsed between the commencement of proceedings under the Labourers Acts and building operations. The time taken depends to a great extent on the dimensions and nature of the schemes, which are frequently submitted by local authorities in an incomplete and imperfect manner, necessitating lengthy correspondence with the promoters. The Act of 1896 simplified and expedited the procedure, so far as it was considered expedient to do so.

MR. CLANCY: Will the right hon. Gentleman propose further legislation in the direction suggested?

MR. WYNDHAM: As at present advised. I think the Act of 1896 sufficiently meets the case.

DISMISSAL OF MULLOUGH POLICE OFFICERS.

MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Police-sergeant Sheridan and Constable Mahony, of Mullough Police Station, have been dismissed the service for

placing boycotting notices in the pocket of a man named Ryan and subsequently arresting him; and what steps do His Majesty's Government propose to take to safeguard the public against such practices on the part of the police.

MR. WYNDHAM: Sergeant Sheridan and Constable Mahony arrested on the 1st January at Mullough, county Clare, a man named John Ryan, alleging that they had

observed him in the act of posting a threatening notice, and that subsequently they had discovered two other threatening notices in his pockets. He was brought before the resident magistrate at Miltown Malbay on the following morning and remanded from time to time until the 26th January, when he was discharged from custody on the ground that the evidence would not have secured a conviction. No other course could properly have been taken when the evidence brought forward was, in the opinion of the Crown, untrustworthy. These police officers were not discharged for placing the notices in the man's pocket. They were discharged for supporting a charge by evidence of a character so unsatisfactory and conflicting as to render their further retention in the force undesirable in the interests of the public.

MAJOR JAMESON: Is there any intention of prosecuting these two constables for illegal arrest?

MR. WYNDHAM: No, Sir. In their case, as in the case of Ryan, the Crown do not believe a conviction could be obtained. The evidence goes to show that though apparently the officers acted in collusion with regard to the man arrested, it was not sufficient to justify a prosecution.

MAJOR JAMESON: Will the Government grant a Select Committee to investigate this case, as was done in the case of Sergeant Malony of Limerick?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must give notice of that.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Is it customary to forthwith dismiss police officers simply because their evidence is untrustworthy? In view of the suspicion, which the right hon. Gentleman

has admitted exists, that this case was concocted by the police, will he order a public inquiry into the whole circumstances?

MR. WYNDHAM: I think there is no need for that. I repeat that in the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown the evidence is not sufficiently strong to justify a prosecution, but the conduct of the men was of such a character as we should not expect from officers in the discharge of their duty.

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): Were these two officers Roman Catholics?

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): If the two policemen were innocent, why were they dismissed from the force?

\*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order; The matter cannot be thus debated across the floor of the House.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Cannot you give them a command at Gibraltar?

\*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order;

BOARDING OUT PAUPER CHILDREN IN IRELAND.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state in how many poor law unions in Ireland the principle of boarding out the children has been adopted; and whether, in view of the spread of the system, he is prepared to appoint female inspectors as is the case in England.

The following question also appeared on the Paper::

MR. JOHN CAMPBELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, seeing that about 100 unions have adopted the boarding-out system, he will endeavour to have lady inspectors appointed to superintend and advise on

the working of that system.

MR. WYNDHAM: Children are boarded out in 124 unions in Ireland; the number of children boarded out is about 2,000. The appointment of a female inspector, or inspectors, will be considered.

#### IRISH REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that there are over 5,000 girls in the reformatory and industrial schools in Ireland, and whether the question of appointing female inspectors in connection with these institutions has been considered.

MR. WYNDHAM: The question of appointing a female assistant inspector of reformatory and industrial schools in Ireland was considered by my predecessor in 1899, when it was decided that the sphere of work in which a female assistant might be engaged was too limited, and that the services of a male assistant would be more advantageous to the Department. I am not aware that a female assistant is employed in connection with these schools in this country.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that there are more girls in Irish schools than in similar institutions in England? If we are permitted to discuss the action of the executive, I certainly shall raise this question.

#### VALUATION IN IRISH COUNTY BOROUGHES.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the rule that is applied to the land in Ireland that the valuation should not be increased could be also applied to the county boroughs in respect to the new valuation, and whether, seeing that the gross valuation of Belfast city has been increased by 25 per cent., there is any reason, why such tenements should not be reduced by that amount, so that the Imperial taxation would not be increased.

MR. WYNDHAM: Section 05 of the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, provides that land in county boroughs is to be valued in the same manner as houses. It cannot, therefore, be valued under the old Valuation Acts, which contained no provision for revising its value. There is no power under the Valuation Acts to reduce the valuation below the statutory basis.

#### VALUATION OF BELFAST LICENSED PREMISES.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in regard to the valuation of licensed premises in Belfast, the value of the licence is assessed, and whether those premises are valued on the same basis as other business and private premises.

MR. WYNDHAM: Licensed premises in Belfast are now valued on the same basis as other business houses, with a sum representing the annual value of the licence added.

#### TYPHUS FEVER IN THE ARRAN ISLES.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that typhus fever has broken out in the Arran Isles, county Galway; whether complaints were made to the Local Government Board concerning the unsanitary state of the isles so long ago as last August; and whether the medical inspector of the Board entirely neglected his duties in not visiting the isles until about ten days ago, and whether he will cause an

inquiry to be made into the conduct of this officer.

MR. WYXDHAM: The first and second paragraphs are a repetition of inquiries put to me by the same hon. Member and answered on the 28th ultimo. I also stated that the duty of taking steps to prevent outbreaks of fever devolves upon the local authority and not upon the medical inspector of the Local Government Board. That gentleman visits the Arran Islands as often as his other duties throughout the province of Connaught permit, and I am not aware that there is anything in his conduct calling for inquiry as suggested.

MR. DUFFY: But why did the inspector fail to visit the island until ten days ago?

MR. WYXDHAM: The duty devolved not on the inspector, but on the local authorities.

MILLINGAR LUNATIC ASYLUM CAPITATION GRANT.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the amount paid for capitation in relief of rates for the service of Mullingar District Lunatic Asylum for the year ending 31st March. 1901; can he state how much of this sum was credited to the county Longford; and is he aware that serious complaint is made in county Longford of the taxation consequent upon the present management of the Mullingar Asylum.

MR. WYNDHAM: The amount paid for capitation grant in relief of rates for the service of this asylum for the year ending the 31st March. 1901, was £;8.137 16s. 8d. Of this amount the sum of £;2,045 8s. 3d. was credited to the county Longford. The management of the asylum is vested by the Local Government Act. 1898, in a joint committee comprising representatives from the three counties forming the asylum district; namely, Longford, Meath, and Westmeath. No specific complaints have reached Government on the subject of the management of the asylum.

OVOCA (CO, WICKLOW) EVICTION.

\*MR. COGAN (Wicklow. E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the police who assisted the sheriff at the eviction of a man named Foley, of Ovoca, county Wicklow, on the 4th instant, entered the house with revolvers presented at the tenant, who refused to leave, and threatened to shoot him if he resisted; that the only officer in charge of the police was a sergeant: that they made a prisoner of Foley and a man who was in the house with him: and that these two men are now in gaol on a charge of resisting the sheriff: and whether a sergeant of police has any power to order the use of firearms on such an occasion unless in the presence of a magistrate, and then not until the Riot Act has first been read.

MR. WYNDHAM: The sergeant entered the house with a revolver in his hand, but he did not present it at anyone or make use of threats. Three constables were present in charge of the sergeant. Foley and another occupant of the house resisted the sub-sheriff in the execution of his duty and attempted to strike that officer, as well as the sergeant, with a wooden pole. The two men were arrested; Foley has been remanded in custody, and the other man has been admitted to bail. A sergeant of police has power to order the use of firearms if

in his judgment the necessity for such a course arises, even though a magistrate he not present and the Riot Act be not read. The Riot Act is a public caution and adds nothing to the powers of a peace officer.

#### RICHMOND DISTRICT ASYLUM.

MR. CLANCY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the views expressed by the Richmond District Asylum Committee in favour of the boarding out of certain pauper lunatics; and whether he will take steps to carry out the recommendations of the committee.

MR. WYNDHAM: Legislation would be necessary to give effect to the recommendations of the committee. The matter is now engaging the consideration of Government.

#### DOUGLAS NATIONAL SCHOOL.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the teacher of Douglas National School, Roll No. 12,875, District 54, sent early in January an order for books to the Board's stores, and has since got no reply; and that the manager of the school, who wrote more than three weeks since, complaining of the matter, has not yet got a reply; and whether, seeing that on 19th February a second order was sent from the same and no reply has yet been sent, steps will be taken to place this department on a businesslike footing.

MR. WYNDHAM: An order for books was received from this school on the 14th January, and the books were forwarded on the 17th January. Both the teacher and the manager were at

once advised by post of the transmission of the books. A second order was received on the 20th February and the goods were forwarded on the 2nd instant.

If there has been any delay (in the delivery of the goods, or letters of advice) the responsibility does not rest with the Commissioners' Department.

#### BELTUEBET TO BALLYHAISE RAILWAY.

MR. M'GOVERN (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the railway from Belturbet to Ballyhaise is a separate railway or part of the Great Northern Railway of Ireland; is he aware that the Grand Jury of the county of Cavan, before this railway was constructed, gave a guarantee of 1 per cent, to the Great Northern Railway Company on the cost of construction; and, seeing that the ratepayers of the barony of Lower Loughtee are still paying this guarantee, although the Great Northern Railway Company is paying a dividend of 6 per cent, to its shareholders, will the Board of Trade hold an inquiry as to the right of this company being paid this guarantee any longer.

MR. WYNDHAM: At my right hon. friend's request I will reply to this question. The railway is part of the Great Northern system. The barony does not guarantee 4 per cent, on cost of construction, but only £340 towards any deficiency there may be in any one year after charging the accounts of the branch line with 4 per cent, interest on £30,000, the estimated capital and cost of working. For the year ended June, 1900, the receipts fell short of providing the working expenses and interest to the extent of £1,480, towards which the barony contributed £340, leaving a net loss to the Great Northern Company of £1,140.

#### ENNISKILLEN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL.

MR. M'GOVERN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, on the division of the Fermanagh Royal School Endowment, the first chairman of the Roman Catholic Local Board of Education gave a written undertaking, dated the 20th October. 1886, to spend half the Roman Catholic portion of the endowment in maintaining an intermediate school in Enniskillen; that, on the 3rd January, 1900, the present chairman of the Roman Catholic Local Board of Education, in a written statement to the Commissioners of Education, also undertook to have an intermediate school established in Enniskillen; and that, notwithstanding these undertakings, no steps have yet been taken to establish such a school: whether he is aware that the Fermanagh Roman Catholic Board, while alleging that they have no longer any power under a scheme of the 22nd May, 1891, to establish a new school, have opposed a petition of the Roman Catholics of county Fermanagh, to the Commissioners of Education, to have the scheme so altered as to provide for such a school at Enniskillen, and advised the Commissioners not to advise any alteration; and whether the Commissioners of Education will now recommend that the scheme of 22nd May. 1891, be so modified as to compel the Roman Catholic Local Board to carry out the undertakings referred to.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Commissioners of Education have no knowledge of any undertaking such as that mentioned in the first part of the question. But in January, 1900, a written statement was submitted to the Commissioners embodying a proposal of the Chairman of the Fermanagh Roman Catholic Board of Education to the effect that a guarantee fund would be locally raised with a view to the allocation of a fair share of the endowment to an intermediate school to be established in Enniskillen. So far as the Commissioners are aware that proposal was not accepted. The Fermanagh Board has no longer any power, under the scheme of 1891, to establish a new school. It has asked the Commissioners not to advise the alteration of the scheme. In answer to the third paragraph, the Commissioners in January of last year arrived at the conclusion that there were no grounds for applying to the Board of Charitable Donations and Bequests to make any change in the scheme.

#### POOR LAW SUPERANNUATION (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. MURNAGHAN (Tyrone, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Poor Law Officers' Association in Ireland have circulated amongst Members of this House a document containing the statement that the contributions proposed in the Poor Law Superannuation (Ireland) Bill will establish a fund sufficient to superannuate union officials, thereby relieving the rate-payers of all cost in the matter; that the correctness of such statement is denied, and the assertion made that the passage of the Bill would increase the rates; will he obtain expert opinion in respect to the financial proposals of the Bill, and give Members of Parliament from Ireland an opportunity to know approximately before the Bill comes on for Second Reading its probable effect on local rates: and inasmuch as the matter is of interest to the administrators of the poor law system, he will

ask the Local Government Board to invite the opinion of boards of guardians throughout Ireland in respect to the proposals of the Poor Law Superannuation (Ireland) Bill.

MR. WYNDHAM: It is impossible to estimate the effect of the, Bill on local rates, since I cannot judge how far existing officers would be likely to take advantage of its provisions. I see no objection to inviting the opinions of Boards of Guardians on the provisions of the Bill.

MR. MURNAGHAN: Will the right hon. Gentleman give directions for obtaining those opinions?

MR. WYNDHAM: Yes.

IRISH UNIONS; MEDICINE CONTRACTS.

MR. MURNAGHAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Local Government Board recently submitted to the boards of guardians in Ireland a tender form for medicine contracts containing a provision to compel boards of guardians to return all empties or pay full value of same, the Local Government Board at the same time refusing to contribute from the grant in aid a proportionate share of the cost in connection with the proposed arrangement; and inasmuch as the present custom relieves boards of guardians of responsibility in the matter, will he suggest to the central authority the desirability of omitting from the tender form the provision referred to.

MR. WYNDHAM: The provision referred to was inserted in the form of tender in consequence of the negligence of union officials in returning empties. The arrangement appears to be an equitable one.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: Why do the Board take such interest in these contractors?

MR. T. M. HEALY: Because they are Protestants and Freemasons.

MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member misconceives the object. It is to get the best medicines at the lowest price.

MR. MURNAGHAN: Has any complaint been made of the quality of the medicines?

MR. WYNDHAM: I understand there- were complaints as to some

LAND SALES IN COUNTY WEXFORD.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Wexford, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that arrangements have been come to for the sale to the occupying tenants of a number of holdings in county Wexford, in addition to those already sold to the tenants in that county; and whether, seeing that the proposed sales cannot now be carried out owing to the lack of money for the purposes of the Land Purchase (Ireland) Acts, he will make arrangements for the advancement of £500,000 for the purchase of holdings in county Wexford immediately.

MR. WYNDHAM: The answer to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. As already stated by me, no advances under the Land Purchase Acts can be made in the county Wexford pending the result of an investigation which has been ordered for the purpose of ascertaining whether the limit of advances of guaranteed land stock fixed by the Act of 1891 has been reached in the county.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Can the right hon. Gentleman give us any idea when the result will be made known?

MR. WYNDHAM: I hope in ten days or a fortnight.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Do the Land Commission make inquiry before they issue, the notice that the limit of advances has been reached?

MR. WYNDHAM was understood to reply that the limit was laid down in a Return issued in 1891.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: And is one result of the Board's action the stoppage of voluntary purchases?

MR. WYNDHAM: No, Sir; they are not stopped.

IRISH MODEL SCHOOLS.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: On behalf (if the hon. Member for North Wexford, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will consider the advisability of handing over the model schools in Ireland to their respective county authorities for the purpose of technical instruction.

MR. WYNDHAM: This matter was recently considered by the Commissioners of National Education, who did not feel themselves prepared to take any action in regard to it at present.

WEXFORD COUNTY OFFICIALS' SALARIES.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Wexford, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is the intention of the Local Government Board for Ireland to hold an inquiry at Wexford with a view to the increasing of the salaries of certain county officials in respect of whom the previous action of the Local Government Board has been set aside at the instance of the county Wexford County Council by the Court of Appeal in Ireland; and if, in view of the importance of the case, he will see that the proposed local inquiry is not held until the judgments in the Court of Appeal and the affidavits on both sides have been printed and circulated as a Parliamentary Return, and that the inquiry is conducted in open court; and whether in view of the expense to which the ratepayers of county Wexford have been already put in upholding their rights in this matter, he will cause the expense of the proposed inquiry to be defrayed out of the funds at the disposal of the Local Government Board.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Local Government Board propose to hold a public inquiry at Wexford in connection with the salaries of certain officials in the county, and have asked the county council to state whether the 2nd April would be a convenient date on which to open the inquiry. The judgments of the Court of Appeal have been sent to the judges for revision before laying them on the Table of the House, and as the judges are at present on circuit some little delay may unavoidably occur before the judgments are returned. If it is possible to have them printed and circulated before the 2nd April, this will be done; but if not the Local Government Board would be prepared, with the concurrence of the county council, to postpone the holding of the inquiry. In answer to the second paragraph, where the Local Government Board hold a local inquiry it is mandatory on the council, under Article 32 (3) of the Schedule to the Application of Enactments Order, 1898, to defray the costs incurred in relation to the inquiry.

MR. BOYLE (Donegal, W.): Will the right hon. Gentleman grant an inquiry to other



count councils?

MR. BOYLE: In cases where the salaries have been increased?

MR. WYNDHAM: The cost will fall on the county councils.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: But in view of the peculiar circumstances attending the Wexford case, will the Local Government Board see that this county council shall not be put to further cost?

MR. WYNDHAM: I will consider that. I do not know if it is possible.

COUNTY DOWN POLICE.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the only Roman Catholic constable in county Down advanced within twelve

months to the rank of acting-sergeant occupied a secretarial position in the office of the county inspector; and whether, as the proportion of promotions of non-Catholic constables has been six to one in a county in which Roman Catholic constables outnumber those of all other denominations, he will undertake that future recommendations for promotion in that county will be scrutinised so as to ensure that the religion of which the majority of the Royal Irish Constabulary are adherents will not be a barrier to preferment.

MR. WYNDHAM: Recommendations for promotion in the constabulary do not come before me, but I am assured by the Inspector General that such promotions are strictly governed by considerations of merit and not of religion

LIMERICK LAND COMMISSION SITTINGS.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether; his attention has been called to a resolution of the Kilmallock Rural District Council in reference to the decisions of the Chief Land Commission recently sitting in Limerick, raising the rents fixed by the Sub-Commission in 40 per cent, of the cases tried before them; and, if so, whether he will take steps to legislate in the matter, as indicated by this rural district council, during the present session.

MR. WYNDHAM: The number of fair rent appeals heard by the commissioners at their recent sitting in Limerick was ninety-six. Of these the rents fixed by the sub-commissioners were raised in fifty-three cases, and reduced or affirmed in forty-one. In two cases judgment was reserved. The answer to the last paragraph is in the negative.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: Did the Chief Commission raise the rents fixed by the Sub-Commission?

\*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order.

ROXBOROUGH ROAD SCHOOL.

MR. JOYCE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Roxborough Road schools were built, I with the exception of a sum of £50, by, the ratepayers of the city and county of Limerick, nine-tenths of whom are Roman Catholics, and that the premises are vested in the Commissioners of Education in Ireland by Act of Parliament, with an express prohibition against selling or letting them; and, in view of the fact that the town council of Limerick by unanimous resolution protested against the uses to which these premises are now applied, will he state what steps he

proposes to take in this matter.

MR. WYNDHAM: The cost of building the Roxborough Road schools was £1,672, of which the sum of £1,640 was presented by the grand juries of the county of Limerick and of the county of the city of Limerick. The premises are vested by statute in the Commissioners of Education in Ireland, to be held as part of the demesne belonging to the Diocesan Free School of the dioceses of Limerick, Killaloe, and Kilfenora inalienably, and not to be let or disposed of to any other use whatever. I have no information on the proportions of the religious denominations of the ratepayers of the city and county of Limerick. The town council by resolution dated 2nd September, 1897, protested against the uses to which the premises were applied. The Commissioners have acted under the law as administered by the Court of Chancery in reference 'to the management of trust property by trustees. The Government do not propose to take any action in the matter.

GORTIN SCHOOLS, COUNTY TYRONE.

MR. MURNAGHAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that there, is disappointment at the delay in completing the new schools in Gortin, county Tyrone, will he explain the cause of delay and take steps to have them finished as soon as possible.

MR. WYNDHAM: I am informed that these schools are practically complete and ready for the reception of pupils. The erection of the buildings was carried out by a contractor employed by the manager, and the responsibility for any delay in their construction does not attach to the Commissioners of National Education.

OMAGH RURAL DISTRICT RATES.

MR. MURNAGHAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the local rates for the year 1901 in the Omagh Rural District of Tyrone are 30 per cent, higher than in 1897, on which the agricultural grant is based; can he say how much of this increase is necessitated by compliance with orders of the Local Government Board; and, as the additional burden is placed on the occupying tenants, the poorest class in the community, will he take into consideration the necessity of increasing the agricultural grant to an amount corresponding to half the increase since 1 lie standard year.

MR. WYNDHAM: The rates in this district for the current year show an increase of about 16 per cent, on the rates in the standard year. This increase is, I believe, of a temporary character; it was not caused by the Local Government Board, but is chiefly due to the payment of election expenses, and the expenditure generally incurred in bringing the Act of 1898 into operation. The Local Government Board anticipate that the new rates about to be made will show a considerable reduction (compared with rates for the current year), not only in Omagh but throughout Ireland.

MR. MURNAGHAN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the new rate to which I desire to call attention is at least 35 per cent, over the standard rate, it being 4s. 3d. as compared with 2s. 11d?

MR. WYNDHAM: I have taken that into account.

#### PORTUMNA RAILWAY.

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. B. C. Moloy stated to the Roscrea Board of Guardians that he had received a promise from the Government to increase the grant towards the re-

equipment of the portumna line from £12,000 to £18,000; and whether he will take steps to secure this grant being made.

MR. WYNDHAM: The reply to the first paragraph is in the negative; no such undertaking was given by the Government.

SMALL HOUSES ACQUISITION ACT. MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he would be willing to introduce an Amendment to the Small Houses Acquisition Act, Clause 2, subsection (c), that the title to the ownership is one which an ordinary mortgagee would be willing to accept, and insert the word purchaser instead of mortgagee, and also modify Registration Clause 7 by removing the personal liability of the registrar, and the limit of time reduced to twelve years as under the Conveyancing Act.

MR. WYNDHAM: have already informed the hon. Member that this Act, which became law in August, 1899, has been in operation in Ireland for so limited a time as to offer insufficient grounds for considering the question of further legislation. When the Government are in a position to form an opinion as to how far it would be desirable or possible, by legislation, to modify the machinery of the Act the suggestions of the hon. Member will be considered.

#### IRISH WORKHOUSE TEACHERS.

MR. JOHN CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the national teachers in Irish workhouses labour under inequalities with their professional brethren in the matter of salary, promotion, compensation, and superannuation: and whether he will consider these grievances with a view to their redress.

MR. WYNDHAM: Teachers in workhouse schools are officers of the Board of Guardians, by whom they are appointed, and who fix their salaries with the approval of the Local Government Board. It is also competent to the guardians to grant to them, at their discretion, superannuation allowances. Workhouse teachers will be eligible for promotion under the new system of gradation with the general body of national teachers, but such promotion will not give them any right to increased remuneration unless the guardians with the approval of the Local Government Board think fit to grant such an increase.

#### WESTMEATH COUNTY COURTHOUSE

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Westmeath County Council has deputed to a committee its powers under The Agricultural and Technical Instruction Act (Ireland), 1899, which committee is known as the Westmeath Agricultural and Technical Instruction Society, and for the greater part consists of members of the county council, its place of meeting having been in the county courthouse; whether he is aware that, on Thursday, the 28th February last, the sub-sheriff had the doors of the council chamber locked against the committee and refused admission to the members on the ground that the room had

been cleaned for the Grand. jury for the following day; whether a committee appointed under an Act of Parliament, and recognised by the Agricultural Department, was right in regarding itself as a committee of the county council, and as such entitled to the use of the, courthouse when there was no interference with the administration of justice: and whether any steps will be taken to prevent a repetition of this exercise of the high sheriff's power of control over the courthouses, for the maintenance of which the ratepayers have to pay.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry. N.): I am aware that the county council has deputed its powers in the manner suggested to the committee named in the question. The committee was right in regarding itself as in effect a committee of the county council. The custody of the courthouse is, however, vested in the sheriff. The primary purpose for which that building is erected and maintained is the administration of justice. The right of the county council, or its committees, to the use of any portion of the courthouse for the execution of their duties is subsidiary to that purpose. The high sheriff was not only entitled, but bound to take such steps as in his judgment appeared necessary in order to prepare the courthouse for the discharge of the business of the assizes, and that is the action complained of. The reply to the last paragraph is, therefore, in the negative.

MR. J. P. PARRELL: At whose cost was the courthouse erected?

MR. ATKINSON: At the cost of the ratepayers.

MR. HAYDEN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the grand jury were only to meet, the following day. Does it take twenty four hours to prepare the room for their reception?

MR. ATKINSON: I am not aware of that, but it was the duty of the high sheriff to see that the room was duly prepared for the assizes,

MR. FLAVIN: Then are the county council compelled to give up the courthouse notwithstanding they want it for the transaction of their business?

[No answer was returned.]

MAYOR OF WATERFORD AND THE COMMISSION OF ASSIZES.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether his attention has been called to the provisions in the great Charter of Charles I. to the City of Waterford, whereby it is secured to the mayor, sheriffs, and citizens of the county of the I city, for the time being, that no other person; may he assigned to inquire into, hear, and determine, or to deliver the verdict, or to discuss or order any other thing within the said city, except one or more justices of the fine bench or the other, or the Master of the Rolls, or one or more Barons of the Exchequer of the Kingdom of Ireland, and that any such commissions, writs, precepts, or mandates made otherwise or to other persons shall be void and of no effect; and whether, under these circumstances, he will give directions that the mayor of the city be, in future included in the Commissions of Assize.

MR. ATKINSON: My attention has been called to the Charter referred to, the passage from which is set out in the question with substantial accuracy. In the year 1887 the then Law Officers of the Crown in Ireland expressed the opinion

that the privileges conferred by the Charter on the Mayor of Waterford were taken away by the thirty-second section of the Judicature (Ireland) Act, 1877, leaving the Crown free to omit the name of the mayor from the Commission of Assize. I concur in that opinion. The reply to the second part of the question is therefore in the negative.

MR. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that Lord Crewe, when Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, had the Mayor of Waterford reinstated in the Commission?

MR. ATKINSON: I do not see how that in any way arises out of the question on the Paper.

TULLAMORE ASSIZES; INSUFFICIENT BUSINESS; LARCENY OF QUINLAN'S ASS.

MR. REDDY (King's County, Birr): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the case of the larceny of Quinlan's ass, which was the only case to go before the grand jury at Tullamore assizes, and to the remarks of Mr. Justice Johnston in respect of the amount of expenses incurred; and will he direct the repayment of the expenses which fell on the ratepayers.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): At the same time, may I ask Mr. Attorney General for Ireland whether it has been brought to his notice that the calendar at the last King's County assizes consisted of only one criminal case, in which the grand jury found no bill, and that Mr. Justice Johnston stated that the case was a matter for civil action; and whether he will inform the House what official was responsible for sending the case forward to the assizes.

MR. ATKINSON: At the request of my right hon. friend, I will reply to these two questions together. My attention has been called to the reports published in the daily press of the remarks of Mr. Justice Johnston on the occasion referred to. I cannot say whether the report is accurate or not. I do not find any observation of the learned Judge as to a civil action such as is mentioned in the question. The magistrates at petty sessions returned the accused for trial to the assizes for larceny. The depositions disclosed a strong prima facie case for investigation by that grand jury. My colleague the Solicitor General for Ireland most properly, in my opinion, on the 18th February, 1901, in the ordinary course, directed the prosecution to be taken up by the Crown. The expenses of this, like those of all other cases taken in charge by the Crown, are paid by the Imperial Exchequer.

MR. REDDY: Is it not true that Mr. Justice Johnston censured the Crown Solicitor for bringing forward the case; and that he said he brought it on the express direction of the Attorney General, who the judge said ought to pay the costs?

MR. ATKINSON: I do not think the learned judge said anything of the kind.

MR. FLAVIN: Can the right hon. Gentleman say what was the age of Quinlan's ass?

MR. ROCHE: I desire to know if the right hon. Gentleman will act on the suggestion of the learned judge, namely, that when Quinlan's ass pays the debt of nature it shall be stuffed and kept carefully in the museum at Dublin?

ENNIS INTIMIDATION CASES.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Messrs. Lynch and McInerney have been summoned

to appear at the Ennis Petty Sessions on a charge of intimidation arising out of the question of direct labour by the Clare County Council, and whether, in view of the change recommended in the law (under which these prosecutions have been taken) by the Lord Chief Justice of Ireland, he will order these proceedings against

Messrs. Lynch and M'Inerney to be withdrawn.

MR. ATKINSON: At the request of my right hon. friend I will reply to this question. The proceedings will not be further prosecuted,

BALLYBOGHILL POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS.

MR. CLANCY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that the morning delivery of letters at Ballyboghil and Damastoun, a journey of scarcely two hours by road from Dublin, takes place at present about 12 noon; and whether there is any possibility of improving the postal service in that part of the county of Dublin.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The mails are due at the places named at 10.5 a.m. and 10.15 a.m. respectively, and the morning deliveries commence soon after those hours. In both cases the deliveries include the letters received in Dublin in the morning by the night mails from England. The cost of the postal services in both districts considerably exceeds the revenue from the correspondence, and the Postmaster General regrets that in the circumstances he would not be justified in incurring additional expenditure in either case, with the view of affording an improved postal service.

MR. CLANCY: Then are we to understand that the public convenience is made dependent on the question whether or not the service will prove remunerative?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: That is one of the circumstances which have to be weighed in considering whether postal facilities shall be extended in any particular place. There are of course other circumstances to be taken into account.

GOODS RATES ON IRISH RAILWAYS.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any complaints have recently been made to him of the railway rates on the Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland; whether he is aware that goods for rural parts of Ireland can be got cheaper from America direct to the ports of Sligo and Galway than per cross-channel steamer from Liverpool, and thence by rail; and whether he proposes to introduce any legislation to cheapen the cost of appeals to the Railway Commissioners.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No complaints of the rates of this railway appear to have been received recently, but the Board of Trade will always be happy to consider specific complaints made in pursuance of Section 31 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888. The answer to the last paragraph of the question is in the negative.

IRISH TEACHERS' QUALIFICATIONS FOR ENGLISH SCHOOLS.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education if he can explain why Irish teachers trained for two years and certificated in second class are not recognised as certificated in England, while English teachers untrained but certificated in second class are recognised

as certificated in Ireland, and are the examinations practically alike.

SIR J. GORST: The Irish system of examination and classification of teachers differs, I am told, materially from the English. The principle of the Board of Education is to recognise all Irish teachers who possess professional qualifications which are in their judgment equivalent to those required from teachers in England. I am not acquainted with the grounds on which the Education authorities in Ireland recognise English teachers.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman look into the matter? The examination papers seem to be pretty much alike.

SIR J. GORST: Yes, I will see if the qualifications required of Irish teachers are higher than those of English teachers, I have been told it is not so.

HUSH NATIONAL GALLERY.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Wexford, I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if in view of the fact that large sums of money have been granted by Parliament under exceptional circumstances to buy pictures for the English National Gallery, while no money has ever been similarly granted to buy pictures for the Irish National Gallery, he will take the necessary steps to secure the Jan Vermeer, now being exhibited by Messrs. Forbes and Paterson in New Bond Street, for the Irish National Gallery.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think it would be desirable to alter the present system of contribution to the Irish National Gallery. It is perfectly true that there has been a change such as the hon. Member suggests in connection with the English National Gallery, but that is consequent on and connected with a proceeding by which the annual sum given to the English National Gallery has been cut down by half.

LAW OF CONTEMPT OF COURT.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that, so far back as 24th October, 1882, the late Mr. Gladstone, then Prime Minister, declared that the Government had it in contemplation to submit at a very early period a measure dealing with the alteration of the present law of contempt of court; and whether, as no such measure has since that date been introduced, His Majesty's Government "will now propose legislation on the subject.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Some method of dealing with contempt of court is necessary but I do not know that any satisfactory change in the present law has been suggested. The hon. and learned Gentleman must have made some mistake at to the date of Mr. Gladstone's statement, as I cannot trace the reference.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I will send the reference to the right hon. Gentleman.\*

\*See The Parliamentary Debates [Third Series], Vol. cclxxiv., page 36.

THE KING'S ACCESSION OATH.

MR. PIRIE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, with reference to the Oath taken by the Sovereign on accession to maintain and to preserve the Act of Security in the Treaty of Union between Scotland and England, which Act is declared to be a fundamental and essential condition of that Treaty in all time coming whether, in view of the fact of this Act having been infringed by the abolition of theological tests for professors in secular classes in Scottish

Universities, it is the intention of the Government to so change the Oath that it shall no longer be obligatory for the Sovereign to swear that he will maintain those tests which have been already abolished by Act of Parliament.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am advised that no change in the Oath is rendered necessary under the circumstances suggested in the question.

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

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As the hon. Member is aware, the proceedings in connection with this Committee originate in another place, and I am not at this moment in a position to make any statement on the subject.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I wish to ask the Leader of the House what will be the business of the House next week.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It must partly depend on the business to-morrow (Friday) and the progress made with the discussion on question: connected with the Army Estimate. I hope the House will make rapid progress, for the time when all the question of Supply must be concluded is rapidly approaching. I hope hon. Gentlemen will consent, in the case of the Army Estimates, to the Speaker leaving the Chair and giving the Government Votes A and I without delay. I am sure that the questions raised by the Secretary for War in his statement are of the greatest gravity and importance, and I shall feel it my duty to find later on such opportunities as may be necessary for adequate discussion of those far-reaching proposals.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.) I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state on what date it is proposed to move Mr. Speaker out of the Chair for the purpose of discussing the Navy Estimates.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: This question should be addressed to the First Lord of the Treasury.

THE CIVIL LIST COMMITTEE- PUBLICATION OF CONFIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS.

COLONEL KENYON SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury a question of which I have given him private notice; namely, Whether his attention has been called to the statement published in The Times to-day, purporting to give a full account of the proceedings of and the papers submitted to the Civil List Committee at their meeting yesterday: whether those proceedings and papers were not strictly confidential; and, if so, whether he can tell the House from what source such information has been obtained.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My attention has been called to this incident. I regard it as in the highest degree deplorable and discreditable to the channel through which this communication was given to the public press.

MR. T. M. HEALY: As this is a purely English Committee, will the right hon. Gentleman consider the desirability of making it a purely Irish Committee?

MR. PIRIE: I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he intends to take any steps to discover the channel through which this communication got to The Times, or to take any steps against the paper for publishing it?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I have no machinery at my disposal for carrying



out the investigation Which the hon Gentleman suggests.

MR. BARTLEY: May I ask whether the document was not marked "private and confidential," and whether a similar private and confidential document was not published a short time ago; the Report of the Telephone Committee; in the same journal?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe I am right in saying that copies of the document which has been made public were marked "private and confidential." They were strictly limited in number, and were given only, as I understand, to members of the Committee.

\*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Will the right right hon. Gentleman take similar steps to those taken in the case of a confidential scheme which got into a newspaper a good many years ago, which led by a careful examination of misprints to fixing the responsibility and to the printing contract being taken away from the firm?

MR. LDMIND ROBERTSON (Dundee): Will the right hon. Gentleman consult the law officers as to whether the Official Secrets Act does not apply?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Perhaps the hon. and learned Member will put a question himself to the law officers, and give notice of it on the Paper.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill intituled, "An Act for the regulation of the burning of human remains, and to enable Burial Authorities to establish crematoria." Cremation Bill [Lords.]

IRELAND; CONDUCT OF POLICE IN COUNTY CLARE.

MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.): I rise to move the adjournment of the House to call attention to a matter of urgent and definite public importance, namely, the arrest and imprisonment of John Ryan, of Mullough, county Clare, on a false charge in reference to which a police sergeant and constable have been dismissed the service of the Royal Irish Constabulary.

\*MR. SPEAKER: That does not appear to me to be other than an ordinary case of police, court jurisdiction, and I do not think I can submit the motion

MR. JOHN REDMOND: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I cannot go into the question as to whether any policemen were dismissed for trumping up a case against this man Ryan, but I would ask whether the interpretation you yourself have placed upon the rule as to motions for adjournment is not that the urgency and importance of the matter brought forward should be left to the decision of the House?

\*MR. SPEAKER: There must be some prima facie, ground for me to submit the motion to the House. It is usual in cases where there is any doubt to submit the point to me first, so that I may have an opportunity of considering it.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: My hon. friend will postpone his motion till tomorrow. In the meantime, I hope he will not be disqualified from submitting it to your judgment.

SUPPLY (ARMY ESTIMATES).

Older read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [12th March]. "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Question again proposed.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): The Estimates which are to be

submitted when we go into Committee are of exceptional importance, and I think it would not be too much to say that the discussion of them may be almost characterised as momentous. I am confirmed in that opinion by the fact that the hon. Member for Great Yarmouth, speaking with the authority of one whose letters are admitted to the columns of *The Times*, the other day invited me and my hon. friends to speak now or for ever be silent. The hon. and gallant Gentleman is perfectly right. This is an occasion on which we are bound to take exception, if we see it right to do so, to these great Estimates.

Now, last year the excess of the normal Estimates of the year over the preceding year ran to five millions; on this occasion they only, if I may use that word, amount to three and a half millions. In previous years of the present Government's administration they have built up the ordinary Estimates of the Army from eighteen millions to the figure at which they now stand; namely, twenty nine millions. The Secretary for War said with great truth that we had become inured to these huge figures. We have been accustomed to them and do not realise what they are. It may be asked why, seeing that the actual increase is not so great as the increase last year, we did not make our protest last year. For that I think I can give two or three very excellent reasons. There are considerable differences between our position this year and last year. Last year our criticism was overborne by the fact of the emergencies which existed. I am not speaking at all of war expenditure. There has been no impediment placed upon any expenditure for the purposes of the war in order to bring it as soon as possible to a satisfactory and triumphant conclusion. I am speaking only of the normal Estimates. Last year we could not with a calm mind discuss the increase in the Estimates, because we were overborne by the consciousness of a great emergency, and the proposals of the Government were, by their own admission, of the nature of shifts and expedients to meet that emergency. The House, therefore, exercised great reserve, and many of us who had something to say held our peace. Now we are free from that necessity. I am not going to say that the war is over, or is on the eve of being over, but the great emergency, at all events, is over for the present. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Essex the other day referred to one of two of the proposals which have been carried out by way of increasing the military strength of this country, and I think he very properly raised a smile, almost, on the face of everyone who listened to him when he spoke of the Reserve battalions; the stout elderly gentlemen of whom they are composed; and when he described the process- which has been going on quite recently of hurrying on board ship at Southampton horseless and saddleless Yeomanry, who may be anything in the world, but are certainly not Yeomen.

Following the example of the lion, and gallant Gentleman. I think we may feel ourselves more free than we were to discuss some of these matters, but it is my intention in this debate to avoid as much as possible questions of detail, and to confine myself to the larger questions of military policy which have arisen. Another thing which makes a difference between this year and last year is this; that this year's proposal has been announced as a great epoch-making reform. It has been heralded by receiving a prominent place in the gracious

Speech from the Throne, it was heralded before that by a good many speeches at the time of the General Election; that General Election, which will be an inexhaustible topic, for all those who wish to understand the methods of the present Government. It is an object-lesson which we are not likely soon to forget. Success does not always justify the methods that are used to obtain it. We were told that if the country would only place confidence in the right hon. Gentleman opposite there, would be a permanent solution of the great military problem. Does any one see an element of finality or permanence in the proposals that are now brought forward? It is true that the right hon. Gentleman has only been three or four months in office, but as we are all aware he is perhaps more familiar than any other individual among us with all questions of military policy, and the accident of his having been engaged in another department for a year or two does not prevent him from being in all respects most excellently qualified to deal with the problem. His principal adviser, the Commander-in-Chief, has, however, only been in office for a few months. We have the most intense admiration for and gratitude to Lord Roberts, and there is probably no man at the present moment to whose opinion on ordinary military subjects the country would be more willing to bow. At the same time, I must make this observation; that I think Lord Roberts's name and fame are a little too largely invoked. There is a rule of this House prohibiting hon. Members from introducing into debate the name of the Sovereign; I almost think, sometimes, that we ought to extend that rule to include the Commander-in-Chief. Even Lord Roberts's great services and career ought not to dazzle us and blind us to such obvious mistakes, if they exist. I am aware that occasions may arise when the opinion of a leading military expert may be quoted in substantiation of that which a Minister states in this House. I remember one occasion when I adopted that course myself; but the judgment which I quoted from my principal military authority was scouted as of no effect whatever. Here it is a little worse, because the authority of the Commander-in-Chief is constantly being brought in, and I venture to say it is neither fair to Lord Roberts himself, nor is it altogether proper in relation to Parliament. We must remember this, that the Commander-in-Chief has passed nearly the whole of his military life in India, in what I may call dealing with the finished article. He is an immense authority on everything connected with the use of troops; but, from the necessity of the case, he has had as yet no experience, no individual personal knowledge, if the peculiar difficulties that are found in this country in furnishing the raw material out of which the finished article is made, the precise force we have to maintain, the social and local susceptibilities we have to consider, and the sensitive market from which that raw material is drawn. All these matters an officer, however distinguished, who has been all his career in India can have no acquaintance with. Lord Roberts has just come home from a great command, where he has greatly added not only to his fame, but also to his knowledge of the British Army. But I think that if we are to be guided by what we call the lessons of the war great caution must be used. The conditions of this war are in many respects most exceptional; exceptional in the demands made upon us. exceptional in the nature of the warfare. Where else are we likely to be called

upon to light, not an army, but a whole population, with all the manhood of the people skilled in the use of horse and rifle and well found in both? Where shall we find a country at all similar to the scene of operations? We shall therefore incur risk of being warped and vitiated in our whole military system if we frame it to meet a series of repetitions of this war in South Africa. There are, of course,

numbers of lessons to be drawn, and no one is more capable of suggesting them to the right hon. Gentleman than the present Commander-in-Chief; I mean in regard to the efficiency of our weapons, in regard to our mobilisation and transport arrangements, the character of our equipment, and the training of officers and men. On those and kindred subjects Lord Roberts can very rightly advise us, but we must not proceed on the supposition that any future war will be similar to this one, and I think we should do well to look with suspicion on any proposal that bears a trace of that error.

Another circumstance gives special importance to these Estimates. It is this; that this is a new departure; this is a new declaration of policy. In the first place, the Government proposes to add an army corps to the scheme of the Army, and that army corps is destined not to the domestic defence of these islands, but to be sent abroad. And, in the second place, the right hon.

Gentleman took up an ominous attitude with regard to compulsory service, because he let us see plainly that, although he objects to compulsion, yet, if voluntary recruiting fails to furnish the men required for his scheme and if the scheme therefore comes into conflict with the right hon. Gentleman's objections, it will not be the scheme that will be made to yield, it will be his objections.

There is much shaking of the head now over the possibility of the exhaustion of our military recruiting resources. By and by there will be much shrugging of shoulders when we are told that that eventuality has actually occurred. This has been plainly indicated by the right hon. Gentleman, and it marks a totally new departure from anything that has gone before. I take exception to the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman and of the Government on both grounds I hold that no adequate justification has been offered for this new army corps, and I hold that conscription in any form will not be endured by our people, and ought not to be imposed upon them; and, further, if it were imposed, it is inapplicable to the peculiar military requirements of our Empire. What reason does the right hon. Gentleman offer for

this new army corps for foreign service? He discards the idea that a wise foreign policy may keep us out of trouble. Our neighbours, he says, have an eye to our wealth; the goodwill and forbearance of foreign Powers are a mere quicksand to the right hon. Gentleman. And he says this, remember, on behalf of his Majesty's Government. I am quoting his own words. There are two continents besides Africa in which he says we have great "commitments"; great interests to defend. I should like to have a little more information about this; and then he speaks of European "entanglements." Entanglements is not a nice word. The last time we heard of it was at Ladysmith, and it arose in some degree, at any rate, on that occasion from a rash promise made by the Imperial Government, and it is the same Government now which again speaks of entanglements. The right hon.

Gentleman says;

"We cannot suppose that, if ever we should unhappily become entangled in European complications, we could fulfil our engagements to our allies by limiting our operations solely to the action of our Fleet, keeping our soldiers in barracks at home."

What is all this cloudy talk about entanglements and commitments and allies? We have a right to know before any of this money is voted. Here is a great additional burden proposed to be put upon the taxpayers, and as a matter of fairness to the taxpayers they ought to be informed. If we do not ask for this now we shall be told afterwards that we were consenting parties. This air of "I could an' if I would" say something will not do in a matter so grave I believe that either such hints are serious, and in that case they should be made more explicit, or they are mere mischievous trifling. Some readjustment of the units of the Army is a trifle, neither here nor there, but these indications of Imperial necessities are momentous. Indeed, if I were to guess at what is indicated when we hear of one continent after another where we have great commitments, it is not three but thirteen army corps that would be required. Let me say this. As we are here within four walls and nothing can get outside, we can afford to talk with perfect frankness and sincerity. What is an army corps in this country? Sir the expression "army corps" is like the great word Mesopotamia ;it is a blessed Word. It deludes the earnest and it imposes oil the simple. But in this case "army corps" has another feature. In this country an army corps is a pure fiction. It is convenient for purposes of administration; it is a useful thing;to use the regular phrase;to work up to, but it has no other value. No army corps was ever put on board ship to leave this country, and I doubt if it ever will be.

\*SIR HERBERT MAXWELL (Wigton): We have sent out six to South Africa and we had two at Waterloo.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: In the form of an army corps? The right hon. Gentleman says with perfect truth that during this war we have, sent out to South Africa the equivalent of six army corps, but not a single army corps constituted as such. In other countries it is quite different. In Continental countries the army corps has a reality it can never have here. There it is localised and stereotyped: and, as they have no drafts and no reliefs to send to foreign garrisons, it can be maintained rigidly, and, when the necessity comes, marched off to the front. Let the House never forget this;ours is necessarily what I should call a fluid Army. The units must be interchangeable and elastic. The composition of the force which leaves this country will have to be adjusted to the necessities of the particular climate of the country and campaign in which it will be employed. That is not so in the case of Germany or France, where the army corps have to march over the frontier into a country homogeneous with their own and in all particulars familiar to them. Therefore the alarming proposal is not the creation of a new army corps, which has no terrors for me, knowing the nature of the word; it is not the mere fact that some military units are in future to be known by another name; the alarming thing is the recognition shown here of some great military purpose. But the right hon. Gentleman did not

stop there He quoted the saying, I think, of Lord Palmerston, "We are not a military nation, but a fighting people." I think he attributed it to Lord Palmerston.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): I have since been told it was Mr. Gladstone who said "We are not a military people," and Mr. Disraeli replied, "But we are a martial race."

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The right hon. Gentleman then went on to say; "We may be a fighting race, but it is only by accident that we are a military nation; we have to consider how we can turn that accident into a permanent fact." Therefore it is not only entanglements and commitments that we have before us, but a transformation of the national character. I venture to say this is running counter to the whole genius and traditions of our people. Our position in the world has been made and is held by commerce and peace and amity; it must be maintained in the same manner, and not by the stirring up of the military spirit. Moreover, if ever there was a moment less desirable than another when the energies of our people should be diverted into a military channel, it is now, when it will require all the energy and enterprise of our people to maintain our predominant and pre-eminent position in the industry of the world. What is the true military policy for this country which has been pursued by all wise statesmen of the past? In the first place it should be a complete defence of our shores. There is the Navy, of course, everybody knows that, but behind the Navy there must be an adequate Army for home defence. For this purpose nothing will be grudged, no demand will be refused. Therefore, the first thing is to increase the efficiency of the defensive force. It by no means follows that you must increase its number. I am not sure that in some parts of it a little pruning away of numbers would not be advantageous, provided the remainder was increased greatly in efficiency. In that case, I should be glad to support anything the Government proposes for such a purpose as that, admitting that we have been found rather deficient

in proper provision in this respect, as the last few months may be said to have shown. The second thing we have to do is to provide adequate garrisons for the Empire where they are required. The right hon. Gentleman makes two proposals in regard to this. In the first place he speaks of twelve battalions being a sufficient garrison for South Africa. I should be very glad to be able to take so hopeful a view. If twelve battalions are sufficient for that purpose it will show that our policy of settlement after the war had been based on the proper and wise foundation. But I think it is rather a sanguine proceeding deliberately to speak of twelve battalions as the normal military force for South Africa.

Then he proposes to hand over from the Army to the Navy certain coaling stations. I am one of those who, looking at the matter mainly from the point of view I have been most accustomed to; namely, the interests of the Army; have often expressed adhesion to that policy. But the Navy almost to a man are in deadly opposition to it, and I do think the right hon. Gentleman had no right to come here and speak of that as a feature of his scheme when he tells us at the same time, that the Admiralty has not yet agreed to it. I was taught in the earliest days of my public official life that the last thing you should do was to support

your own Department by compromising another. If, for instance, a Minister thinks that something should be done and the Treasury imposes obstacles, he should never ;is it allowable to use the word "round"? [laughter];he should never "round" upon the Treasury by exposing that tact, but should accept t he responsibility and be loyal to the other Departments. But I cannot say that in this matter the right hon. Gentleman has acted up to that high standard The last point in sound military policy is that we must have a sufficient force, properly equipped to reinforce our garrisons, and for any emergency wherever an expeditionary force is required. This is the point, undoubtedly, upon which opinions will most differ as to the strength of the force which it is desirable to maintain for these purposes; but all I say is this, on what possible ground should you In this matter base yourself upon (he experiences of this exceptional Boer war? Why should you expect to have such a demand made upon us again as has been made during the last two years? The proper thing to do is to avoid the necessity of sending large forces abroad; to trust more to judicious diplomacy; and I am bound to say that for the last five or six years we have seen one occasion after another where that course has not been followed. Now I come to the great question which is really the crux of the whole matter. The right hon. Gentleman proposes to raise a certain force in skeleton. How is that force to be maintained? How is he to secure that recruits will be forth coming for it? I am rather surprised that there was very little said on this subject in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. I am rather surprised that the right hon. Gentleman gave, us no information whatever as to the number of recruits required for the several branches of the service. Surely he must have thought it out and fortified himself with an actuarial calculation as to the recruits. That should present no difficulty to bun because my experience leads me to believe that actuarial calculations can be made to prove almost anything. Let us have next an actuarial calculation of the number of recruits. There is no difficulty whatever in procuring plenty of recruits in time of war. The enterprising spirit is rife enough then to induce men to go to the front, and we will always obtain them. It is the listless, dull, anxious, irksome duties of the soldier in time of peace which fail to attract. I do not think there is any Member of the House or any man outside the House who has devoted much attention to this subject who does not see that the whole of our future system depends upon the possibility of obtaining recruits. What, then are we to do? If the scheme of your Army is too great for your resources, then you have two things that you can do;pursue a less aggressive policy abroad and at the same time offer greater attractions to recruits. But do not flatter yourselves that you have safe ultimate resource the application of compulsory service. I am not going I to recite the well-known arguments against compulsory service upon the grounds of political right and social convenience. Nor will I dwell upon the strain on the industrial resources of the country which would necessarily conic from the employment of it, because that strain is not easily assessed in figures. I take a. much less ambitious view. Putting aside all questions either of principle or convenience, I ask is a compulsory system practicable in this country? In the first place it is

inapplicable to the whole portion of our Army stationed in foreign peace camps. The German force in China is composed entirely of volunteers; not a single man is there because he is a conscript. There may be some justification for taking a man away from his home and family and occupation and making him serve in some barracks in order that he may be trained into an effective defender of his country. That we can understand. But you can never send such a man to the plains of India, or the veldt of South Africa, or even to the Rock of Gibraltar, in time of peace. You can do it for home defence only, and that brings me to the proposal that there should be a ballot for the Militia. Those who talk-about a ballot for the Militia should read up the history of the subject and they will see what happened in regard to it in past years. We have only to look up the text-books to see its anomalies and its inequalities, and the difficulties necessarily placed by it in the way of recruiting for the Regular foreign going Army. The system has been tried and abandoned. I am speaking, of course, of the Militia ballot; that is to say the system of taking one man and leaving another. One man is to be chosen by some process of luck, and he is to be made to serve, while his neighbour escapees. Perhaps the man who is taken away is the very man who does not want to go, and perhaps the man who is left behind is the very man who would like to go. The old way was that you allowed the man chosen to purchase a substitute. That is where the system came into conflict with the recruiting for the Regular Army. I ask can anything be more grossly unfair than the system of purchasing substitutes? How is the; poor man, to whom it is just as great a hardship; perhaps greater; as to the well-to-do man to be taken away, to purchase a substitute, while his richer neighbour is well able to do so? There must be universal Compulsory service if you have it at all.

Let us think for a moment what compulsory service means. The first objection to universal military service is that it would give you a vastly larger number of soldiers than you could possibly require or employ. We are not in the position of Continental nations. Continental nations, whether it be Switzerland, Austria, Germany, or any other, are surrounded by other nations with huge armies, who could in the case of war be hurled across the frontier; an almost interminable crowd of armed men. Therefore each of these countries must put every man. It can possibly lay hands upon into the ranks. But we are in a different position altogether. We have the sea; and our command of the sea depends upon our Navy. If the Navy is destroyed, what then? I will not pursue that further. No defensive army you could ever have could save you from disaster. But supposing the Fleet is inveigled away to the West Indies, or somewhere else, as in the old days, or supposing it meets with some disaster so that the shores of the country are left practically undefended for some days. Why, skilled soldiers and sailors will tell you exactly the number of men who could be landed upon our shores in these circumstances, and they will proceed further to tell you the smallest number of men that you must have to deal with those who are landed, so that there is a limit to the number of soldiers you can profitably employ in these circumstances; and if you have a great mob of untrained men, or even of efficiently trained men, they would only be treading on each other's heels and



would not be required for a purpose of that nature; the purpose of defence. Therefore, on all grounds, it seems to me that if you look quietly at it you will see that the system of conscription is totally inapplicable, as well as politically intolerable, in this country; and in so far as, not so much the proposals of the Government as the hints and indications of the right hon. Gentleman pointed to such a future policy, I must say that I will reject it and abjure it in advance.

The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State is postponing the thorny question of the constitution of the War Office. The War Office has a curious effect upon some minds. For instance, the hon. and gallant Member for the Chelmsford Division of Essex attributes every evil thing to the War Office. I should like to ask him whom does he mean by the War Office? You must have a War Office of some sort. What is the particular habitat of the ogre the hon. and gallant Gentleman finds in Pall Mall? There are three elements in the War Office. There are distinguished officers and their subordinates, there are a number of civilians, and there are a few political officials. Which of these elements is objectionable? The soldiers are presumably the best that can be found in the Army. They are men who have come to the front, and I will say boldly that for the last ten or twenty years you will not find anywhere men more qualified for their positions than the soldiers who have held high posts in the War Office. How they arrange their duties among themselves is a question which may be postponed to a more convenient season, especially as, I believe, it is going to be threshed out, or, to borrow a word from the hon. and gallant Member for the Chelmsford Division, washed out tomorrow in another place.

Now I come to the civilians. I have often heard it said. What chance has the Army when the whole thing is governed by a pack of civilians at the War Office? But it is an odd thing that it has always been so. There has always been a large number of civilians employed in the administration, and especially in the financial business, of the War Office. It was so in the Duke of Wellington's time, and he has held in passages which have come down to us that it is the proper constitutional system. It has always been considered desirable; and I put this very strongly to the House; that the Secretary of State should have a number of men trained and experienced in their duties, which are in no sense military duties, but, at the same time, independent of prejudices and inclinations of a military kind, and ready to point out when occasion offers any encroachment on the civil rights of the people. It is not only a question of good administration. There

is also a constitutional question in it. and although the right hon. Gentleman seems to be setting himself to diminish the influence of civilians in the War Office, I venture to say that that is a departure from the old constitutional system which satisfied the Duke of Wellington, and which, having satisfied him, may very well satisfy those who come after him. Those clerks in the War Office do not take notice of any military duties; they deal with military subjects it is true, but only the civil aspects of them. In this war, so far as I have observed or been informed, nothing but admiration is deserved by the civilian branches of the War Office for the manner in which all the purchases of supplies

and stores and everything else that was required have been conducted. Some, indeed, among them ought, I think, to be placed on a higher pedestal. Some of them obtain great experience and knowledge of military subjects, quite as great as any distinguished military officer can have.

The right hon. Gentleman referred, very justly, to the reforms introduced and carried out by Lord Cardwell, and, being a survival of that effort, I thank him on behalf of the memory of my friend Lord Cardwell for the way in which he spoke of his work. But those reforms were not allowed to sleep in the meanwhile. They were sympathetically developed by the father of the noble Lord opposite, the present Lord Derby, and by Mr. Stanhope, and I would mention especially that Mr. Childers was the author of that territorial connection of the Auxiliary Forces which, I believe, has, almost more than anything else, created the zeal and enthusiasm which we have seen in this country during the past year or two. It is to them that we owe what has been done; the sending of this great force to South Africa. There is now leaving the War Office at the close of his career a civilian clerk. Sir Ralph Knox, to whom, perhaps more than any one man, the institution and success of that whole scheme of reform is due. I remember seeing a paper written by him in the early days of 1870, before the scheme had ever been considered by the higher authorities within the War Office, itself, in which he marked down, with a nicety and exactness which is perfectly marvellous, all the ramifications of the proposals and everything connected with this great scheme of localisation and organisation for adding to the efficiency of the Army. That was done by a civilian clerk. Now I come to the political officers. What about them? I would suggest to the hon. Member for the Chelmsford Division that he should direct his sarcasms against the political officers instead of denouncing that abstract entity the War Office, which may mean anybody or nobody, and apply his epithets to the Minister who undoubtedly is responsible, and who, as we know, is not one to refuse responsibility; and here, at all events, in the House of Commons, the Minister must lie made answerable. For my part, while reserving any detailed criticism of the plan now unfolded, I must announce my dissent from it on the broad grounds that it indicates a departure from the prudent policy formerly pursued, and the introduction of a military spirit and military system which would fatally alter the character of our nation and Empire.

\*COLONEL WARDE (Kent, Medway) said he wished to make a few remarks on that branch of the military forces in which, for the time being, he was more intimately connected. He meant the yeomanry cavalry. He should be doing scant justice to that force if he did not frankly acknowledge the considerate and consistent support it had received from the War minister for some years past, sometimes when it was very much underrated by the country. He could only suppose that the Yeomanry cavalry had always done its work so modestly that the country had not realised their value. He would remind hon. Members of what happened last year. In the beginning of last year it was suddenly discovered that the war could not be carried through successfully without a large force of mounted infantry. The Government offered a very modest sum to the officers of the Yeomanry, and they provided for the country a force of 12,000 men fully

equipped. He need not remind the House of the services that were rendered by that force. He congratulated his right hon. friend the secretary of state for war on the speech he made expounding the alterations which were proposed in the organisation of the Army. It was true that there was no reference in it to the absurd system of brigading two regiments together in order to make one adjutant do the work of both, and thereby effect an economy of staff. The right hon. Gentleman did not say whether an annual course of musketry was to be included in the training, or what, if any, place the Yeomanry were to have in the army corps now being brought into existence. These, although perhaps important questions, were more or less matters of detail.

The question that must most affect the future of the force was its divorce from that branch of the service with which it had been hitherto connected; namely, the cavalry. The first recommendation of the Committee of Yeomanry Officers, the formation of which his right hon. friend had himself asked for, was that the force should continue to be called the Yeomanry Cavalry or the Imperial Yeomanry Cavalry. In the first statement of the right hon. Gentleman made with regard to this new force, he utterly ignored the first recommendation made by the committee. In the opinion of the hon. and gallant Member, "the was more I experience of the South African War" was a hobby that was being ridden to death. No doubt we had a great deal to learn from the South African War. We had never in the history of the Empire had to conduct such a war before, in a country devoid of enclosures, where the rifleman's range was only limited by the power of the eye, and in an atmosphere where the eye could discern objects double the distance possible in a European climate. They might never have to conduct such a campaign again. The Yeomanry had never been called upon to take part in a campaign abroad before, and might never be again. It might be that at some future period we might find ourselves at war with a European Power, and the country might be denuded of cavalry altogether, and in that event the Yeomanry would be our only cavalry reserve. A distinguished officer some years ago stated that if the country was at war, and one ship laden with grain was captured by the enemy, the panic would be so great in the City that bread would go up in price 500

per cent. In such a case it was possible that the Yeomanry might be called upon to suppress bread riots. Of what avail would a rifle be then? In his humble opinion the best weapon that could be used for such a purpose was the sword. Cavalry could always be converted into mounted infantry, but mounted infantry could not be converted into even indifferent cavalry. The experience of the war had proved this. Most of the cavalry regiments that had gone to South Africa had been armed with rifles instead of lances, but he doubted whether any War Minister or Commander-in-Chief would ever admit that we could do away with cavalry on all occasions. There was no other cavalry reserve except the Yeomanry, and it would be a mistaken policy to divorce it from that branch of the service. The country did not realise how valuable the Yeomanry were, but from his experience he felt confident that if they were out for six months in the year, that force would be able to march round most regiments of Regulars. It would be found that the Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa had been used more for

cavalry than mounted infantry purpose. At any rate, the Yeomanry had now established a claim on the country; they had vindicated their existence; and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War was not going to desert them. He earnestly urged the right hon. Gentleman to inquire carefully before committing himself to a policy which, in the opinion of a great many experienced Yeomen, would go far to destroy a force which, in the present war, had so fully earned the gratitude and approval of the Empire at large.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.) : No one could have listened to the lucid and comprehensive statement of the Secretary of State for War with greater interest than I did for two reasons. In the first place, to all Service Members and Army reformers it was interesting to find that almost every suggestion which we have been for years past offering to the War Office, and which have been rejected with scorn, have now been tenderly embraced by the Secretary of State. In the next place, I was much interested to

notice the skilful manner in which he concocted what I may call the new military organisation "soup." It reminded me of our own Gaelic neighbours, who are so skilful in the culinary art, who when they are short of provisions make a soup which consists of fried onions, milk, hot water, and certain condiments, but meat is altogether absent. So it is with the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman. The basis of his scheme is wanting. He cannot bring his scheme to a successful conclusion without dealing with the question of recruiting. He told us he was about to ask the House for £88,000,000, of which £29,000,000 were practically the Army Estimates for the year, thus showing that upon the present war as much within £9,000,000 has been spent as upon the great Crimean War. But although this great Imperial Army, and this great charge is due to a great war undertaken for Imperial purposes, not one hint is foreshadowed that any call would be made, either for men or money upon any other portion of the Empire, but the whole cost is to be borne by these islands in the home seas.

In speaking of the future of the Army he asked. Is it in strength and character capable of fulfilling its proper functions? To that he gave no reply, although over and over again we have pointed out that the defensive forces of the Empire were not adequate for the purpose. After a well-deserved eulogy of Lord Cardwell's scheme, he said that that scheme gave us now 100,000 Regulars in South Africa. But Lord Cardwell's scheme was never carried out. After it had been in operation for a short time there was a sort of semi-return to the long service system. What has this combination of the two schemes produced? We may have 150,000 in South Africa, but we have not three army corps. It was a mob of 150,000 men we sent to South Africa. Then the right hon. Gentleman said; "I have over and over again endeavoured to persuade the House that it is necessary for us to organise our forces on the principle of being able to send two army corps abroad."

He attempts to cast the blame on the House. Why this House has never denied the right hon. Gentleman or his predecessor anything he asked for the Army, On the contrary, the Service

Members appealed to his predecessor over and over again to increase the artillery and the number of trained horses with the troops, in order that we

might have two complete army corps to send to South Africa. Therefore no blame whatever is to be attached to the House of Commons.

The scheme goes on to provide for 155,000 Regulars in this country, and 115,000 Regulars to garrison India and our dependencies beyond the seas. I feel confident that neither the right hon. Gentleman nor any other man who has had experience of these matters believes for a moment he will be able to provide sufficient recruits during the next few years according to the scheme, and with the advantages laid down, seeing that some 15,000 men are at present serving in India, beyond their time, and that recruiting is almost certain to fall. Towards the close of the Crimean War we paid as much as £20 per man for recruits, and we are now employing what I may call emergency men at five shillings a day to do duty which the trained cavalry soldier is obliged to do for a little over one-fifth of that amount. The right hon. Gentleman was good enough to admit that the artillery was insufficient. What greater condemnation of those who sit on the Treasury Bench could there be than that admission, seeing that year after year the deficiency has been pointed out? Furthermore, we are told that a much larger body of mounted troops is required. These are the very two points which the sixty or seventy military Members of this House brought to the notice of the right hon. Gentleman. If sixty or seventy Members interested in, say, the textile trade were to have brought before the Government the fact that certain reforms were necessary in that industry, would they have been treated with the scorn and contempt with which we have been treated? I think we are justified in making it clear that we did our duty, and we are in no way responsible for the terrible fiasco of this war.

The right hon. Gentleman referred to the great success of recruiting during the past year. He stated there was an increase of 46,000 men in the Militia, He used the word "men," but for the most part they were boys and weaklings.

Of those 46,000 not one-fourth would be fit even to garrison India, let alone to go to fight in South Africa, let alone to the 10,000 Yeomanry, but they were obtained under great pressure, and in consequence of the war. He spoke also of 56,000 additional Volunteers, and the grand total is made up to 140,000. But at what cost were those men procured? A great deal of this £88,000,000 was paid to procure them; and in order that he may have a sufficient supply in the future, what are the advantages held out? Instead of sleeping in a barrack room the recruit is to sleep in a cubicle; he is to have a little less sentry-go, but not one farthing more pay. Seeing that recruits are usually drawn from pretty much the same class, is it likely that these inducements will enable the right hon.

Gentleman to obtain sufficient recruits for an extra army corps for foreign service in addition to those necessary for the 115,000 troops we are obliged to keep beyond the seas? The right hon. Gentleman said he would be pusillanimous if he did not make further proposals to the House in the event of recruiting not being a success. I was about to say that the right hon. Gentleman was inclined to be somewhat dishonest in placing this scheme before the House, because he must know from the statistics at his disposal that he cannot by any possibility obtain the men to make his scheme a success? The Militia alone gives 14,000 recruits, or one-third of the total number, to the Line. That being so, and if

he is going to increase the Militia by 50,000, how can the right hon. Gentleman suppose that he is going to recruit enough for the Militia on the one hand, and for the Line on the other, seeing that he offers no special incentive for men to join? He says the Army is to be no longer a paper force. I am disposed to think that a very large proportion will be a paper force, for, in addition to the matters I have stated, discharges have been suspended for eighteen months, and there will be something like 30,000 men going out of the Army at the close of this year. Inducements will be held out to them to remain, but those inducements will not be sufficient. Referring to the army corps,' the right hon. Gentleman said. "This is an organisation which cannot be called an organisation at all." That is precisely what we have been saying for many years past; and I am disposed to think that the organisation of the future, although it may be slightly better, will be practically of very much the same character. These army corps, with the exception, perhaps, of the one at Aldershot, will be patched-up army corps. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the stores being massed for each army corps in the army corps district. It must have occurred to him that vast barracks and buildings will be necessary, and that there will be an immense initial cost for transport, lie has therefore not been frank with us in placing these Estimates before the House, and leading people to believe that £;2,000,000 will be the entire cost. If the scheme is carried out in its entirety, and the force is not to be a paper force, it will cost nearer £;10,000,000 than £;2,000,000.

Then I go to the employment of Militia and Volunteers, and here we have a case of the largest force being the least efficient. The fourth, fifth, and sixth army corps are to be mainly composed of Militia and volunteers. When the glamour of the war is over, the majority of those who find it irksome to serve in the Militia or Volunteers, having to undergo a more severe training and to have a heavier strain placed upon them, will begin to ask why they should take this undue share in the defences of the country unless they are to obtain some corresponding advantage. If those corresponding advantages are given it will increase out of all proportion the demand which the right hon. Gentleman makes upon the taxpayers of the country. How are the Volunteers and Militia to be trained, and where are the officers to be found? A certain proportion will be drawn from the Regular Army, but tin' Regular Army is not only to be kept up to the present standard, but there are to be three army corps instead of two. Then the Volunteers are to be given field guns. If the Commander-in-Chief is going to rely upon field guns worked by Volunteers for the defence of the country in case of naval mishap, those who are to work the guns must receive a very much higher training than Volunteers at present receive.

To go to the question of the eight reserve regiments which it is proposed to form, consisting of men of fourteen or, in some cases, twelve years regular service, I understand that existing reserve regiments are to be drawn on in order to encourage some of the men to volunteer for the proposed new battalions. When the late finder Secretary of State proposed embodying these men and said he expected to get between 45,000 and 50,000 men, I was bold enough to say he would not obtain half that number of efficient men. A matter of fact, he obtained

about 23,000, and I venture to think that three out of every four were men who, although fitted for one year's home service, were certainly not fitted to do even garrison service in the Mediterranean. If these garrison regiments are formed, probably not more than one-eighth, or one-fourth as the maximum, provided that the medical officer is not too strict, can be drawn from the reserve battalions. Therefore they must be drawn from the Regular Army, notwithstanding the fact that we are to increase the Army by one whole army corps. The army produced will be a stage army. The same men will be paraded over and over again. The incentive to the men to continue their service is 6d. per day, with 1s. 6d. as an old age pension at sixty-five years of age. No more ridiculous proposal was ever put forward. Very few men drawn from the working classes, especially old soldiers who have seen foreign service, reach the age of sixty-five, and they will not give you a "thank you" for such a pension offer. At present a man can serve for twenty-one years, leaving the service at the average age of forty, and obtain at once a pension of 1s. 1d. per day, so that the new offer is no incentive at all.

As regards the substitution of five battalions to garrison certain stations in the tropics. I gladly admit that that is a very sensible proposal. I infer from the right hon. Gentleman's remarks, however, that the whole cost will fall on the Home Exchequer, but I do not know whether the necessary sum is included in the Estimates. When we come to the coaling stations we find a strange state of affairs. I always understood that the fixed principle of our policy was that the Navy was our first line of defence, and that the greater part of the Army was required only for the defence of India and our other dependencies, the remainder to be, as it were, a feeder to the other, and that we relied to a great extent on our Volunteer forces for the defence of the Empire in case of mishap to the Navy. But here, in order to bolster up our Army, the system of robbing Peter to pay Paul is again adopted, and by this scheme we are going to render our Navy less effective. We are told the First Lord of the Admiralty has not yet seen his way to give a final decision. I should think not. He very naturally wishes to keep the first line of defence in the best possible condition, and if he is to take over the coaling stations he must furnish the equivalent of five battalions of Marines, as I do not suppose the right hon. Gentleman meant that the Admiralty should use bluejackets for this purpose. The Marines are, without exception, the finest force in the country, they are picked men, but they are also very highly paid men. I wish to know whether the cost of those men is borne by the Army or by the Navy. If by the Army, the sum put down by the right hon. Gentleman must be increased, while if it is by the Navy then a greater sum must be demanded by the Navy. In either case it is the same to the unfortunate taxpayer.

With regard to distribution, I have only this one remark to make about those twelve battalions. They must be the same as the men we send out to India. Where are these seasoned old soldiers to come from, and what are the inducements held out to both non-commissioned officers and men to take a turn at this, after service in South Africa? I have dealt with the Militia problem, but I omitted to point out that no incentive is given to the Militiaman, although the right hon.

Gentleman has undertaken to make this scheme perfect, and add 150,000 men in the Militia. To do this, he will be obliged to raise straight away 80,000 men. As a rule they are 30,000 men short, and the right hon. Gentleman requires 50,000 more, and I am at a loss to see where they are to be got from, inasmuch as they are to receive only an extra 3d. per day and £3 a year as an incentive to join. I think that will not be sufficient to induce the large number of men he requires to conic forward for the Militia. The Militia Reserve are to receive 4d. a day and £6 a year, but that Reserve cannot be drawn upon like the late Militia Reserve was drawn upon, because it is only to be liable for home service. The Militiamen who have done ten years service and Linemen who have done fourteen years service with the Reserve are to form the new Militia Reserve, and they have to do fourteen days musketry. It is extremely unlikely that, when a man has done ten years in the Militia and has probably married and settled down, he would be willing to spend fourteen days every year at musketry. Now I come to the Yeomanry. It is proposed to raise 35,000 Yeomanry, of whom some 10,000 are supposed to exist already. I hope it will not be thought that because I am an old cavalry officer I wish in any way to disparage the Yeomanry, but what I say is that we have always been given to understand ;and all the great Continental nations agree in this;that the minimum time required to make an effective infantry soldier in the case of a highly cultured man is one year. When you get a man of a lower grade it takes two years, but it has always been held that it takes a much longer time to make an effective cavalry soldier. If the only cavalry we are to have to defend these shore's are to be Yeomanry, I ask whether that is not a, bogus mounted force so far as these three army corps are concerned? If one division of foreign cavalry were landed upon these shores and juttet against these 35,000 half-made cavalry soldiers, I believe that the foreign division would sweep them all away. Therefore, I say that it is deluding the country to lead people to believe that 35,000 Yeomanry will be anything like an effective mounted force for these three army corps. They are to serve eighteen days, fourteen of which will lie obligatory, and the privates are to receive 5s. a day. That will be rather an expensive price to pay for these doubtful Yeomen, because no one believes that the right hon. Gentleman will get men of the real Yeoman class. You will no doubt get a number of the better class young men who now serve in the Volunteers. This new force, will he highly popular, but highly inefficient. I notice that the Government are about to provide horses. They will obtain men who, for the most part, are unaccustomed to horses, and the fact that the horses with which these men are supplied will be horses of which they know nothing will render the difficulties of the officers who have to train them very great indeed.

Now I come to one of my complaints of the whole system. This war has conclusively shown that the mounted man, as compared with the dismounted man, is of the highest advantage, more especially in the face of modern weapons? discharged at such a distance that the infantry man rarely sees the man to whom he is opposed. I think that one of the main defects in the scheme is the inadequate provision of mounted forces. It has been one of the main defects in



the late war, as will be seen from the Report published by the Intelligence Department. Referring to South Africa, that Report says;

"It is of all countries perhaps the most dangerous in the world for infantry to operate in without a screen of mounted troops in their front and on their flanks."

Although we advocated that in this war over and over again, our Army was sent out to South Africa without sufficient mounted men. At Graspan, Modder River, and Magersfontein our infantry were mown down, and a famous Scotch Brigade was sacrificed because they were led into traps which they would never have been led into had they possessed a sufficient force of cavalry scouts. It has been said by the Leader of the Opposition that we must not draw our deductions from the South African campaign. With that I entirely agree, because if we did it would be argued that the soldier of the future was a little man on a little horse with a long rifle and a big spade, and that troops of no other calibre were required. I do not suppose that we shall ever be drawn into a great Continental war in which we shall have to put such a vast army into the field, because in such a war in which we may be engaged the Navy will do the bulk of the work, and the only thing the Army would have to do would be to send a sufficient force abroad to act as a threat to our opponents by seizing some of their colonial possessions.

Therefore we should only require a limited force, but it would have to be of the highest character, and if we happened to be operating in any portion of northern Europe, north of the Pyrenees and the Alps, it would be imperatively necessary to cover that territory not with Yeomanry, but with thoroughly trained and skilled cavalry. It was conclusively proved in the war of 1870 that the whole success of the German troops lay in the fact that they had a thoroughly effective cavalry, properly trained to cover the advance of the army.

As regards the Volunteer reforms, I notice that they are to receive 5s. a day, and that we are to have 225 battalions, necessitating an increase of 57,000 men, and that they are to do duty for thirteen days. Now, after taking what I call the cream of the Volunteers for Yeomanry purposes; and the incentive offered will bring about that result; is it to be supposed that you will be able to fill up that gap of 35,000 men and at the same time get fresh men to the tune of 57,000? What about the employers of labour? It has, perhaps, not dawned upon the right hon. Gentleman that when he begins to put the pressure on these Volunteers, to give them the necessary training, the conditions under which they serve will be that each man when he finds the undertaking to be, irksome will have nothing to do but to pay a small fine, put on his civilian clothes, and walk off. The scheme resembles a fairy tale. I shall be told, probably, that we have a large number of trained men of different categories in South Africa, and that we have, these men to draw upon. Out of the sweepings left from South Africa you may have a number of men, but I think that the vast number of the men fighting out there will take the earliest opportunity of returning to civilian life.

I now come to a point upon which most Service Members feel very strongly; namely, the question of the artillery. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War admits its weakness, but shelters himself behind the Commander-

in-Chief. He is made to say with reference to our artillery;

"It has accuracy, it has moderate weight behind the teams, all of which are important elements in artillery."

He goes on to say;

"The open country and clear atmosphere in South Africa have shown that as regards range and power an improvement is necessary. That has to a certain extent been effected during the war by the provision of slow-burning cubes. As regards rapidity of fire some improvement is certainly necessary, and the matter is now under consideration."

Therefore this artillery of ours is defective in range, in power, and in rapidity of fire. If this is so, then I ask what on earth is it good for? I often think with what qualms in his heart the present Commander-in-Chief made this admission, when we reflect that the loss of his gallant son was due to the fact that the range of our artillery was defective. We have pointed out before the fact that our artillery was defective in range, and that a neighbouring nation had the very guns which we desired. But what was done? The Financial Secretary told us that he was about to spend some £200,000 in order to make what I will call some gimcrack arrangement in connection with the laying of the gun and the carriage in order that we might fire a little more rapidly. On the occasion of the battle of Colenso, what was the officer in charge of the guns to do under the circumstances? Why, he was bound to do what the whole course of his training had taught him. He had either to remain in the rear, subject to the fire of the enemy's guns, or else thrust his guns right under the rifle fire of the Boers. He did what every British officer was bound to do, and now the unfortunate Commander-in-Chief who lost his only son in this way actually tries to whitewash the Government.

MR. BRODRICK: The remarks which the hon. Member is making are totally unjustified by the facts.

CAPTAIN NORTON: The right hon. Gentleman says the remarks I am making are totally unjustified by the facts, I am amazed. I say that our guns were defective in range, and had nothing like the range of the Boer guns.

AN HON. MEMBER: Is the hon. Member speaking of guns of position or field guns?

CAPTAIN NORTON: I am speaking of field guns. The hon. Member must know that we had no guns of position in South Africa until we drew on the Navy. Reference is made here to out-Horse Artillery guns, and the report says: "Our Horse Artillery guns need improvement in several respects." Now I come to the question of the training of officers. What is to be done is that professional acquirements must rank first. If the intention is to do away with the social status of the British officer, seeing that it is the fact that it is the social status that causes him to desire to be an officer; if you sweep that away, I have strong doubts as to whether you will get a sufficient number of officers, and you certainly will not get the right class of men unless you are prepared to pay them adequately for their services. What is the incentive to be given to the British officer in order to induce him to devote himself to his profession, and how does it compare with other professions where many prizes are to be gained? Prizes are very few indeed in the British Army. The incentive offered is that

the officer is to be allowed to buy his uniform at cost price from the Government establishments; but I have yet to learn that the expense connected with, uniform, even in the most expensive cavalry regiments, is a very large item in an officer's expenditure. The right hon. Gentleman said that the Government would shrink from no difficulties-and from no criticism. You are offering to the British officer the sum of 36s. 9d. per week, if you were to go into my constituency amongst the printers you would not get a single printer to work for 36s. 9d. per week, for he draws 40s. per week. And while you offer the British officer this immense sum, you put forward as an incentive that he will be able to buy his uniform at a cheaper rate, and you think that is sufficient to attract to the ranks of the officers of the Army a class of men who will be prepared to give themselves up to professional duties, and who, if they were to seek employment in other learned professions, would get at least ten times as much money.

The right hon. Gentleman finished up with the question of cost, and he put the entire cost of this bogus scheme at something like £;2,000,000. As I have said before, my contention is that it will cost £;10,000,000, because you have to include transport, reforms in the Army Medical and the Army Veterinary Departments, the building of barracks, and the establishment of training grounds, without which the troops will be absolutely useless. I suppose no hon. Gentleman here will contend for one moment that the recent South African War has been a success. When we carry our minds back to those terrible days in December, 1899, I ask whether there is a single man in this House or in the country who did not feel himself covered with shame when he read of those great disasters; and even at the present moment what must be our feelings when we reflect that we have now got the equivalent of six army corps in South Africa, and that all this effort was necessary in order to subdue two petty Republics whose total population was not equal to one large London parish? I say that military men in this country are covered with shame, because we have nothing to show in this war except that all our men and officers have behaved with unparalleled bravery; but so far as the management of the Army is concerned we have all condemned it. We were not able to land in South Africa two complete army corps in proper fighting form, and we have had to keep drafting an afterwards all sorts and conditions of troops who were a drag upon the transport, and who were not really fighting men. When we get these training grounds and a sufficient number of guns for the six army corps, and the garrison guns for the defence of our ports, then I say that the amount of money required will be more like £;10,000,000 than £;2,000,000, and that is what the country has to face. It is for the country to consider whether they are going to allow a similar state of things to occur if ever we are drawn into other entanglements. The whole scheme resembles the well-known story of the Irish tourist in the train running on a single line. When the train stopped at a station the man called out, "Has the So-and-so express passed yet?" The reply was, "How should I know?" And then the guard said to the driver, "Drive on, Patsy; in God's name we will chance it."

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present. House counted,

and forty Members being found present;

MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge) said he did not claim to treat this matter as an expert in military matters. He was not an old soldier, nor had he had the advantage of the experience of some lion. Members who had served in South Africa during the last year, but as a civilian who had had the honour of serving in a garrison as a Militiaman on a station abroad, he would like to say a few words upon the subject of the very important scheme which had been submitted to the House by the Secretary of State for War. The right hon. Member for Stirling Burghs objected to the scheme because it went too far, but the only objection which he could see was that it did not go far enough. The right hon. Gentleman was terribly afraid of adding an army corps to those troops who were to be ready at a moment's notice to go abroad. His objection was that there were not three or four army corps to be added instead of one. We had learned by the South African War the absolute necessity of this country having a large force ready to embark at a few moment's notice for service abroad. As the Empire has grown so enormously during the last twenty years, so the Army must grow *pari passu*, with the Empire. The Empire had entirely outgrown the Army, and a scheme involving an increase £3,000,000 on the normal expenditure of for the purpose of organising an army corps to go abroad was, in his opinion, much too moderate a scheme. The right hon. Gentleman spoke very strongly upon this subject because compulsion had been hinted at; for his part, he would welcome any scheme of limited compulsion that would give recruits to the Army. He congratulated his right hon. friend the Secretary of State on the scheme which he had submitted, but he was doubtful whether he would get the recruits to fill the ranks of the Army. At the present moment, no doubt, the war fever was high and recruiting was brisk, but in the future, when the war fever had disappeared, where were the recruits

to come from? There were only two alternatives; either to increase the pay of the soldier and the officer at a cost of something like £10,000,000 a year to the country, or to introduce a scheme of limited conscription. Some such change, in his opinion, was absolutely necessary, because we had reached the limit of recruiting, and had been compelled to enlist what were termed specials, who were men under the ordinary standard. In 1898 we enlisted no less than 34 per cent, of specials as against 18 per cent, in 1886. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stirling Burghs entered into a long tirade against conscription, which was rather useless, because his right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War had not proposed conscription. He was sorry he did not; the country now would tolerate it, and whether it liked it or not it would have to come to it in the end. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of having conscripts and sending them abroad. What we ought to have was an Army enlisted on the voluntary system, and some scheme of home defence by means of some large extension, of the Militia, and that was a thing we should have to come to if we were to have the very moderate scheme which had been brought before the House. His right hon. friend had not proposed any compulsory system. He had said, let us give the voluntary system a chance, and as he had done that, we must be grateful for the reform he had initiated.

There were two things which the country was in great earnestness about at the present moment. One was a widespread opinion that our Army, excellent as were the men who composed it, splendid as were the officers who commanded it, was not run on business lines. The country wished to see it run in a more businesslike manner. As a nation of, perhaps, the most businesslike people in the world, there was something very unbusinesslike in our Army; and the unbusinesslike methods upon which it was run did a great deal of harm, and if the Army was to be put on a businesslike footing we should have to begin reforming the head and reform the War Office itself. Was there anything more unbusinesslike in the world

than the pay sheets with which the officers had to make themselves conversant? He was reading a short time ago in The Times of a very curious arrangement of the Army Pay Department. A regiment had been engaged in the Orange Free State, and the officers had been sleeping out in the open on the veldt. Now it was well known that any officer who lived under canvas was entitled to field service allowance, but when these officers applied to the authorities for their field service allowance they were told they were not entitled as they had not been sleeping under canvas. His right hon. friend had alluded to the fact that the training in the Army was not up to date. He quite agreed that there had been too much barrack drill, too much ceremonial. According to one Army Order, the first thing that a soldier had to learn was the sword exercise, and yet the same week that that order was issued a paragraph appeared in the papers to the effect that the General Commanding in South Africa had prohibited the sword ever being used at all. Our present system of training was not suitable for troops in the field. Under the scheme of training provided in the Kings regulations, one month in the year only was devoted to field training and two periods of a fortnight devoted to musketry exercise.

MR. BRODRICK: That has all been altered now.

MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN said he was glad to hear that statement from his right hon. friend and hoped that it was part of the scheme before the House. Musketry practice under the present system commenced at 200 yards, and at 200 yards it was carried out standing. He asked who would stand up 200 yards from an entrenched enemy. His view was that soldiers should be trained to do their duty in the field, and he suggested that a simple Manœuvres Act should be passed so that in every year a large tract of country might be taken and the soldiers go anywhere. He believed if that were done and adequate compensation given to the farmers of the country taken, they would be perfectly willing for the manœuvres to take place over their land, and so far as the landlords and sporting tenants were concerned he was perfectly sure they would not stand in the way of allowing soldiers to go over the land in order that by so doing the Army might be perfected for the field. He understood that the Militia was to receive better treatment in the future than it had in the past. He hoped this was so, for the Militia had proved itself to be as useful a force as any in the Army, though it had been neglected in the past. The idea of a Militia Reserve was simply ridiculous, seeing that it only consisted of a number of men who, having taken the bounty, were willing to take the risk

of being called out. He expressed his entire approval of the abolition of that Reserve and the creation of Royal garrison regiments. He cordially supported the scheme, which he thought would be to the benefit of the Army.

\*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I think the importance of discussing this question cannot be exaggerated. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War said the other night that he had made proposals such as never had been made and which he hoped never will be made again. The first part of that statement was unquestionably true. Whether the latter part rests in hope only I know not. At the rate at which our Estimates increase I fear that that hope may be disappointed. We are asked to-day to Vote Estimates for £;88,000,000, a thing. I believe, that has never been asked in this country, or any other country, before. But this history of the growth of our Estimates is comparatively recent. I think that this Administration, in the course of five years, has increased the normal Estimates of the Army and Navy by £;25,000,000; they stood at £;35,000,000 in the year 1895, and to-day they are £;60,000,000. That is a matter which I think deserves the attention of the House of Commons. The industry and labour spent in this country in cultivating the war spirit, partly by responsible Members and greatly by the press, give us little hope that we shall enter soon upon a different course. These Estimates are, of course, largely with reference to the war in South Africa. The right hon. Gentleman told us that five

years ago he apologised, in his own person, for normal military Estimates that amounted to eighteen millions. To-day they are twenty-nine millions; a growth of eleven millions in the normal military Estimates of this country. Is there any reasonable probability that these Estimates have reached high-water mark? On the contrary, I consider that there is a prospect of indefinite increase. The Estimates are vague and uncertain. They depend to a great degree upon the price which you are going to pay for these voluntary recruits. In the future I suppose the Government will come forward, as they come forward to-day, and speak, with contempt almost, of these miserable Estimates as they do of those of three or four years ago.

That is the commencement of the speech of the Secretary for War. He concluded with a scheme which he described as involving a military force of 650,000 men. The conclusion was as formidable as the commencement of his speech, he says that the Estimates of 1896; that is, his first Estimates; of eighteen millions, were received with perturbation, and the Estimates of to-day are accepted with relief. I cannot say that that is exactly the sentiment with which these Estimates inspired me, and the appearance of the Secretary for War in the character of a relieving officer is certainly a curious part for him to have assumed. We have not yet come to the Budget under which these Estimates will have to be paid for, and I doubt very much whether the sentiments of the taxpayers of this country will be sentiments of relief when they see the consequences of the Estimates laid on the Table. I do not propose to go into details. I should be quite incompetent if I were to attempt to do so. But I do ask to examine what is far more important than any details, and that is the spirit and the policy on which these Estimates are founded. The Secretary of

State invited us to look at the large and increasing figures of the War Estimates under our normal military equipment. Yes, Sir, I accept his invitation, and what is the policy that underlies it? A memorable saying of Mr. Disraeli's was that expenditure depends on policy; and the secret of the present expenditure is to be found in the policy by which it is inspired. It is that part

of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman which is most important, and in my opinion, to use the phrase of the right hon. Gentleman by my side, the most momentous, because I look not so much at the figures; they are the figures of to-day; but I look at the policy which is declared in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, speaking for the Government, as I understand, for he would never have been so rash or so indiscreet as to indicate that policy if it was not the policy of the Government as a whole. What is that policy? Hitherto our armaments have been on a comparatively moderate scale, because I think it may be said on the whole, certainly in the nineteenth century, that the policy of English statesmen has been a policy of peace. Under the favourable auspices of peace we have achieved in this country an unexampled prosperity in the health and wealth of this people. At the commencement of the last century we had a people depressed by the consequences of a great war; this was followed by a long peace, by a great development of prosperity, and has been crowned by a contented people. That has been the policy of the nineteenth century, interrupted only by the fatuous episode of the Crimean War. What is going to be the policy of England in the twentieth century? I confess that to have the twentieth century inaugurated by such Estimates as these gives us little hope that this is the policy to be pursued in the future.

Let us see how far we can divine the policy of the Government from the statements of the Secretary of State. It is something very different from that which we have been accustomed to hear from responsible Governments, certainly during the last fifty years. I cannot say that I see in what is called "the new diplomacy" omens of peace. They are omens of a different description. They do not breathe the spirit of "peace on earth and good will towards men." They are inspired rather in the language of a poet of our time, "War with a thousand battles and shaking a hundred thrones"; thrones which, I may observe, are, from time to time, treated to occasional menace. You may pay the lip service of hypocrisy to the cause of peace at The Hague and then proceed to illustrate it by the object-lesson of arming 250,000 men in South Africa. It is those who have the most acquaintance with war who are the most willing to cultivate the arts of peace. That happened to the Tory Government which was in power after the great war in 1815; and it is a well-known fact, constantly quoted, that the lowest Army Estimates ever known in this country were the Army Estimates of the Administration of the Duke of Wellington. Why was that? It was because the consequences of war were alive in the minds of the people who had suffered from the consequences of war, who had seen the people distressed and starved, and trade ruined. The result was that you had a new epoch of economy and of peace. The British people had learned what the consequences of war were, and the people to-day have yet to learn the

consequences which this war will in its outcome bring upon them. There was another thing learnt from that great war, and it was the lesson that England, above all things ;and this has been what I may call the traditional policy of her statesmen;was to avoid as much as possible European complications, and alliances, holy or otherwise, were to be strictly abjured. These may be described as the leading principles of the peace policy of almost the whole of the 19th century. What is indicated;what is more than indicated ; I say revealed;in the speech of the Secretary for War in bringing forward these Estimates? He felt that these Estimates were so enormous that it was necessary to put forward emphatically principles of the policy that should justify the enormity of the sum that was I demanded. I am not, in spite of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, without hope that the bitter experiences of this war while it was waged, and, I fear, still more the experiences which will be found in the peace which is to follow it, will inspire a soberer sentiment in the people of this country, and that the time will come when the melodies of the music-halls and the Mafeking mobs will not be regarded as the true exponents of English statesmanship. I hope that may be the case, and then at all events, the experience of this war will not have been suffered in vain.

Nothing could be more false than the pretence that great armaments are a security for peace. Were the great armaments of Germany and of France in 1870 a security for peace? Every man knows that they were the main things that provoked the war, because each of the parties relied on the victories their armaments would secure for them. Do not let us therefore be told that great armaments procure peace. There is nothing so easy as to manufacture inevitable wars. We have seen that process very recently; and in the eyes of the nations who make wars all wars appear to them to be just and necessary, and they only want the means of carrying them out to make them think that they are politic. Therefore do not let us pretend that these great armaments are any security for peace. As King John said:

"How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds  
Makes ill deeds done."

That is as true of armaments as anything can be. I know how unpatriotic is the protest of a preference for peace. I know that war is considered the only true badge of patriotism to-day. [No.] The hon. Member who says "No" cannot read his daily newspaper. I do believe that we are standing to-day in a situation when the nation at large will recognise that after all there are some advantages in peace. [Ministerial cheers.] Yes, I mean a peace that is a real peace.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington. N.): Not a Majuba peace.

\*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The Majuba peace kept peace. [Several voices on the Ministerial side: "And made war"; "You made war."] It was not the people who made the peace of Majuba who made this war. But I will not enter in to that controversy now. I will follow the lead of the Secretary for War, and pursue as closely as I can his argument and his defence of the Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman said that there was no time when the Army was weaker than between 1860 and 1870. I mentioned just now that the lowest Estimates known in this country were the Estimates of the Duke of Wellington. It is quite true that the



Estimates were moderate between 1860 and 1870. That was the period immediately succeeding the

Crimean War. The British Parliament, British statesmen, and the British nation were determined after the conclusion of the Crimean War that, peace being made, there should not be a war establishment. Was that the doctrine of the despised Manchester school? ["Hear, hear" from the Ministerial side.] I was waiting to hear an illustration of the knowledge of the history of that period possessed by some hon. Gentlemen opposite. I will tell you who the author of that policy was; the main and principal author. It was one whom I am sure you will respect. Mr. Disraeli in 1857 on the Budget of that time stated his intention of moving resolutions against the continuance of war taxes in time of peace. I will only quote one sentence, but it is worthy the consideration of the House, He said; "If these resolutions are carried we shall witness some beneficial changes in the financial system of the country. I think we shall give a great impetus to salutary economy, and shall in the most significant manner express our opinion that it is not at present advisable that England should become what is called a great military nation."

I will call attention presently to the doctrine of the Secretary of State upon that subject, but I think that is a very valuable sentence, and I recommend that it should be hung up in letters of gold in the habitations of the Primrose League. I think it might be useful if it was inscribed on the wreaths which about Budget time will be laid on the statue in Parliament square. That would be extremely valuable to the taxpayers of this country. The right hon. Gentleman. I was glad to hear, passed a deserved eulogium, as did Lord Wolseley, on Lord Cardwell. I had the honour of entering Parliament as a colleague of Lord Cardwell in the representation of Oxford, and I am glad to ;

"See nations slowly wise and meanly just  
To buried merit raise the tardy bust."

It has taken thirty years for people to recognise a great Army reform, which was at the same, time a well-considered and an economical reform, because the creation of the Reserve by Lord Cardwell was a peace measure. It did not provide for keeping on foot a large armed force ready to be launched on the Continent at a moment's notice. At that time the Estimates

were some £;16,000,000 or £;17,000,000. What is the policy of these Estimates of £;29,000,000? The Secretary of State has told us extremely frankly, and I would like to revert to the sentence to which my right hon. friend referred. He said; "I hear it sometimes boasted that we are by nature a fighting race. I can only say that may be so, but it is only by accident that we are a military nation. Now we have to consider how we can turn that accident into a permanent opportunity."

That sentence I remember very well. It was Lord Palmerston's, but he did not use it as if he desired that this should be a military nation. He said that we are a fighting people, but not a military nation. That is not the view of the Secretary of State. He desires that we should be a military nation; and found his opportunity, he says, in the accident which has made us a military nation; that happy and glorious war we are now waging, and he hopes that

fortunate accident will give us the happy opportunity of becoming a military nation. That is the revelation of the meaning of these Estimates and of their magnitude. They are intended to convert England, which has never yet been so throughout its history, in the ordinary sense of the word, into a great military nation. That is the first thing: and of that I venture to say that, so far as I can, I protest against this revolution in the policy of this country; against this attempt to convert England into a great military nation. That is the exact opposite of all that has hitherto been desired by the succession of British statesmen who have deserved the confidence of this country.

The Government look forward to the conclusion of the war as an opportunity for increasing our military forces and turning this into a military nation. As I have shown, the policy of Mr. Disraeli was when a war was concluded, to reduce establishments, and not to increase them. Other nations, no doubt, in peace have been, and are, compelled to keep up vast armies, but why is that? It is because they have great vulnerable frontiers, and these frontiers must be constantly defended by their arms. But our frontier is the sea. [Cheers and Ministerial cries of "No."] Is the lion. Member who sits below the gangway not aware that England is an island?

COLONEL BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye): The British Empire is not an island.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport): India is not an island.

\*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I may put a further question; Are hon. Gentlemen not aware that a frontier is that which surrounds a country? When you put these two things together I do not think my proposition;

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): The right hon. Gentleman seems to be individualising me. I would ask him; Is he aware that the land frontiers of the Empire are greater than the diameter of the earth?

\*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I should say that the greater part of the Empire has the sea for a frontier. I might mention a small portion of the Empire which is called Australia. That, I think, has the sea for a frontier, and a great part of India is bounded by the sea. I will say, if he will allow me to say so, that, after all, the great defence of our frontier is the Fleet, and that the Fleet should be made sufficient for the necessary defence of our frontier at whatever cost has always been my doctrine; and it is because the greater part of the frontier of our Empire is the sea, and that its defence is the Fleet, that we are not called upon to maintain great military forces in the sense that Continental countries are called upon to maintain them. That is a reasonable proposition.

Then, Sir, I want to point out another principle which underlies the speech of the Secretary of State. He warns us that we are not to build up our military policy on the quicksands of the good will and forbearance of foreign powers. Yes, but it is a new feature in modern statesmanship that on every occasion the Government thinks it necessary to come forward and warn us that we are the best hated people in the world. If an individual had to make such a confession some people might think that he himself had something to do with his being hated, and it is by the authors of this new diplomacy that we are constantly told that we are the best hated.

people in the world. It certainly was not necessary in this country in former times to make that disagreeable announcement. On the contrary, it has been the habit in Speeches from the Throne to inform us that we were on the best possible terms with the other nations of the world. It has been left for this Government to make it the favourite theme of their policy that they cannot count upon the goodwill of other nations.

This confession that we have contracted the odium of mankind is brought forward as one of the topics; I might call it one of the principles; which is to justify these increased Estimates. And it is quite true. You cannot expect goodwill when you cultivate a blatant jingoism which is regarded as the true badge of patriotism, and which defies and insults your neighbours. [No, no.] That is not a policy, or one likely to secure the goodwill of other nations. The Secretary for War told us truly that "a wise foreign policy may keep us out of foreign enterprises and entanglements" I should have thought that such a policy would mitigate the universal hatred with which it is said we are regarded. But as we are asked to arm against this universal hatred I can only draw the conclusion that in the mind of the right hon. Gentleman the foreign policy of the Government has not been a wise one, because if it were it would have kept us out of these difficulties and dangers. Here, again, we see the natural outcome of the new diplomacy. It leads to enormously increased armaments. But I come to a still more serious matter. I hope I am dealing accurately with the statements of the right hon. Gentleman. I have taken great care to verify them, because they are of the deepest importance as regards the future of this country. The right hon. Gentleman, having told us that we were compelled to send the equivalent of six army corps to South Africa, passed at once to another very significant requirement. I beg to be excused if I again read a passage which my right hon. friend has already quoted, because I think we ought to have a most definite statement from the Government upon this subject, which, I venture to say, will have most serious consequences

throughout the world. The right hon. Gentleman said;

"Africa is not the only continent on which we have great commitments."

I suppose the right hon. Gentleman knows what "commitments" means. I do not. It is not an English word I wanted to understand what that word "commitments" meant I consulted many dictionaries and I could not find that "commitment" was a word ever used for anything but committing a man to prison. But at last I found a dictionary of a more modern character, and discovered in it the word "commitments." The authority quoted for it was the money article of the Daily Telegraph on 10th October, 1877. and it is said to mean "engagements." Now I know what it means. I understand it belongs to the jargon of the Stock Exchange. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say that we had commitments and interests on two other continents besides Africa, which we were bound to defend. Asia, no doubt, is one of the continents. I understand that, as we have there India and also China. But I do not know what these great commitments are on the other continent. I do not suppose you are going to send six army corps against the United States. It remains, therefore, that there are European commitments upon which we are to arm as a military nation. That is a very important matter, upon

which we ought to hear a great deal more from the Government. I cannot conceive that this is a bugbear invented by the right hon. Gentleman only for the occasion. I imagine it must be the declaration of the Cabinet as the ground for proposing this gigantic Army plan and these enormous Army Estimates.

The right hon. Gentleman went on to say;

"No man in this House will be so bold as to say that in any circumstances we can keep ourselves free from European entanglements."

So the "commitments" end in "European entanglements" Further;

"Nor can we suppose, if we ever become unhappily entangled with a European country, that we can limit our enterprises solely to the extent of our own possessions."

Therefore it is to be "commitments" and "entanglements," and they are not to be in defence solely of our own possessions. Then what are they to be in defence of? Then he goes on to say;

"It stands to reason that if we have allies"

;mark the word "allies," because that is very important; it does not say whether it is a triple alliance or a dual alliance;

"if we have allies none of them will be prepared to turn out every man they can muster and allow us to rest at home. We ought"

;mark these words; they are the conclusion of the argument;

"to have ready at any moment three army corps to send abroad;practically 120,000 men."

Is that for the purpose of satisfying European allies? The "enterprises not limited to the extent of our own possessions."

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): Treaties.

\*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: That is just what I am asking. Have you made these treaties? You are to have 120,000 men ready for the purpose of alliances;let us know what these alliances are. I rejoice at the frankness of the Secretary for War, endorsed by the ardour of the Member for Oldham. But I venture to say that 120,000 men are about as inadequate for the performance of that task as the 10,000 men you sent to conquer the Boers. One hundred and twenty thousand? Why, you wanted 250,000 to fight the Boers, and if you are going to join in the great military combinations of Europe, I venture to say that co-operation is quite as dangerous as opposition. We have now Estimates for £;88,000,000. But if you go in for a policy of this kind you may have to present Estimates twice or three times £;88,000,000. That is why it is necessary at this stage of the debate, before we go into details, that we should know what is the policy upon which the Government are proceeding which leads to Estimates such as those which are laid on the Table of the House. Can there be anything more dangerous or more childish than the proposal to keep ready 120,000 men in order to launch them at any moment upon the Continent so as to satisfy your allies? We know very well that allies make it a condition of their alliance that you shall keep a certain number of men always ready for their purpose, and I think you will find that they will require you to keep a great many more than 120,000 men always ready. When your 120,000 men who are to be always ready to be launched on the Continent fail you, or want to be

reinforced, what have you got? You send your three army corps, and you have got your three home army corps, but what do they consist of? That is exactly what we do not understand. It is to be a sort of omnium gatherum medley, a fortuitous concourse of voluntary atoms. What are these three army corps for your home defence to consist of when your first three army corps to satisfy your European commitments have proved insufficient? I venture to quote again an authority which I hope will have the respect of hon. Members opposite. It is a passage from the speech of Mr. Disraeli at the close of the Crimean War. He said; "I am not in favour of any new and still mysterious military system"; he must have foreseen this very plan;

"great, I am afraid, beyond proportion, and of which we have heard it said that it could at any time in ten days land an army on the Continent."

Do you agree at all with the opinion or the policy of Lord Beaconsfield? Here is his emphatic condemnation of the very plan which is now before the House. When we are on this question of alliances, I would remind the House that we had this doctrine first in a speech at Leicester not long ago. Alliances were solemnly propounded; they were then proposed, but they were received with a chilling attitude and declined with thanks. But you may be more successful in the future; and the new diplomacy may come down and say, "Well, at last my proposals for alliances have been accepted, and here they are, and we have got 120,000 men ready to launch on the Continent at any moment." It is with these resources as a new-born military nation, and under the auspices of this diplomacy, that we are going to enter into competition with the great military States of Europe. That is a policy I understand: but it is a policy to which I, for one and I hope everyone who sits on this side of the House, will offer a determined and constant resistance. I do not know, you have never told us, how many Regulars you expect to get. You have got these 120,000 men always ready to start on to the Continent but how many more have you got in your home army corps? There is to be a small number of them, apparently in the three home army corps, but besides that there is to be a great number of Volunteers, of Militia of Imperial Yeomanry, and so forth: but we have never been told what the proportions of these are, so little has this plan been developed.

MR. BRODRICK: I gave all the figures.

\*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I beg pardon. I must have missed them. But I do not pretend to go into these different military figures. I am endeavouring to examine the policy, and not to argue upon the figures or military details. But whatever the figures are the right hon. Gentleman has very little faith in his voluntary recruits. He says;

"We have added to our regular forces in the last three or four years 50,000 men. We have, I think,"

;this is most important;

"under existing conditions almost reached the limit of our recruiting power."

He "thinks," and I think he thinks rightly. The only resource he has are a few battalions from the garrisons, and they are to come home, and then some elderly gentlemen are to volunteer to occupy all the unhealthy, disagreeable parts of

the world. That is the only cure for the failure of the recruiting power of this country. I want to know when you say, after all your experience, that you are going to garrison South Africa with twelve battalions, what the exact figure is of Baden-Powell's police, and at what you estimate the cost of that force? If there are 10,000 men, as we have been told, at £250 apiece, as you have informed us, that amounts to £2,500,000 more; and if there are 15,000 men, as has been said, and as seems more likely in a territory more which you have to add to your Estimates. That must appear upon some Estimate, or are they for the present to be paid by the gold miners in the Transvaal? I expect not. For their 5s. a day and all found they would like to have some better security than that; namely, the British Treasury.

The right hon. Gentleman says that 140,000 men have come forward voluntarily in the course of this war. That is a thing we must all be proud of, and of the spirit that has been shown. But that has been under, to use the right hon. Gentleman's own words, "the influence of the war fever." He does not feel confident that he will always be able to keep up the war fever. Indeed, I think he is rather of the opinion that the thermometer is already sinking and that before long it may perhaps be pronounced to be sub-normal, and when that time arrives he does not seem to have the same confidence in the number of his voluntary recruits. I applaud the frankness with which the right hon. Gentleman has developed his policy in support of this scheme. He will not, he says; and this is perhaps the most important point of all; "win cheap cheers by a proud declaration of adhesion to the voluntary system." I know the gallantry of the right hon. Gentleman; he will never "win cheap cheers by a proud declaration of adhesion to the voluntary system." but I do not know what the price of the cheers will be for conscription. At what figure will they be quoted when the war fever has evaporated? I should venture to predict that they will be very cheap cheers. He has declared his very slight adhesion to the voluntary system. He says his adhesion to the voluntary system is strictly limited.

MR. BRODRICK: Strictly limited by what?

\*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Strictly limited by his own opinion of what he is likely to do.

MR. BRODRICK: It depends upon our having sufficient defence at home.

\*SIR WILLIAM HARCOUET: Strictly limited by the necessity of having 650,000 men, at a cost of twenty-nine millions sterling, or whatever the cost may be. He asks us to fix the minimum,

I suppose, at 650,000 men, or he would not have asked for it, and he estimates the cost at twenty-nine millions sterling. How much it may turn out to cost when the war fever has collapsed, how much a day his Volunteers will require, he does not know and nobody knows. But he says that, if the war fever collapses and the recruiting and volunteering fall off, the Government "would be pusillanimous if they did not make further proposals. They will exhaust every means before they come forward with that proposal." I should be sorry to see the right hon.

Gentleman pusillanimous. It does not belong to his character at all. I should say of him, *C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre*. But when he says he

will exhaust every other means, I think before he comes to that he will have exhausted His Majesty's Government. He will find that the confidence of the country has collapsed also, as well as the war fever, and that their adhesion to his conscribing aspirations are also very strictly limited. I think that that will probably be the final result of the policy thus revealed.

Now, this jumble of a scheme that has been laid before us, concocted, as the right hon. Gentleman tells us in four months of office, with the assistance during only two months of the Commander-in-Chief, is not what the country has expected as a great scheme of Army reform. What they looked for was something very different from this precipitate project flung upon the Table of Parliament to fulfil the pledges of a precipitated election. That is not what we want, or what the nation requires. We require a deliberately conceived and carefully worked out scheme of Army reform. My right hon. friend says. How is it possible that Lord Roberts, who has been Commander-in-Chief for two months, has had time? The right hon. Gentleman, in apologising for the time he had been able to bestow upon the scheme, said, and it was quite true, that he was pressed with many other occupations, in this House and elsewhere. I say that this scheme bears upon its face all the marks of haste and of an undigested conception. It is a business which requires far more time than the right hon. Gentleman or the Commander-in-Chief has been able to bestow upon it. I do not find fault with either of them, but I do not know whether the Government themselves appreciate all the bearings of this scheme. I am sure if they do nobody else does. But in his peroration the right hon. Gentleman said that his extraordinary scheme is to be lasting monument to the memory of the thousands of gallant men who have fallen and suffered in this ill-omened war. Well, I confess that I foresee in South Africa consequences of this war which will be more deplorable even than the conflict itself. That you have acquired and maintained this great Empire by voluntary arms has been a proud tradition, a proof of your greatness and your strength, and if the outcome of the war shall be that it has inflicted upon the British nation the curse, of conscription, then I say that the monument that this measure will erect will be a monument not of your glory, but of your decay.

THE FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): My right hon. friend near me has been the mark for a great many shafts hurled at him by two very important Gentlemen upon that bench; the present Leader of the Opposition and the late Leader of the Opposition. They have combined their forces, and have made an attack on the same lines against my right hon. friend and his scheme. Yet, on the whole, I think my right hon. friend may take comfort from the speech to which he has just listened. After all, the authority to whom the right hon. Gentleman opposite chiefly appealed was the late Lord Beaconsfield, and of the quotations from Lord Beaconsfield, which he gave us in considerable quantity, the date. I think, of the most recent was forty years ago, and, probably, of the less recent of them about fifty years ago. I think it is possible that in forty or fifty years some Radical gentleman upon that side of the House may look to my right hon. friend and quote his speech also upon Army reform, as the right hon. Gentleman has quoted the leader of the party to

which he is opposed. The right hon. Gentleman is now apparently exactly where Lord Beaconsfield was before the German army reached its present perfection, before the war between Germany and Austria, before the war between Germany and France,

before the war between Russia and Turkey, before the war between China and Japan. The state of mind of the right hon. Gentleman in regard to military matters is exactly where it was before all the great developments of military power. And that is what it is to belong to the party of progress; I have not much to agree with in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, but there is one part of his speech which I do heartily agree with. I certainly do think that the growth of the Estimates is a very serious matter. The increasing magnitude of the burden thrown upon us by our responsibilities is not a pleasant fact; but it is a fact that we have not attempted to disguise, a fact that flows directly from responsibilities cast upon us through no aggressive spirit of ours, through no corrupt or vulgar ambition on our part, but by the general movement of the world's history, and not the least by the growth of great military and naval Powers, which have magnified their forces by both land and sea to a degree never contemplated by our forefathers, and necessarily have imposed on us obligations which, however onerous, are not to be disregarded, and which would become very serious indeed if we repudiated them. The right hon. Gentlemen opposite occupied great parts of their respective speeches in telling us how large a space might be filled, how great an effect might be produced by the efforts of diplomacy as a substitute for military power. But, Sir, diplomacy never was a substitute for military power. What diplomacy can do, what diplomacy has done, and what I hope it constantly will do is to prevent the use of military power, to prevent the actual clash of opposing forces, the fatal collision of nations in arms. That diplomacy may do. But the idea that, by dexterous language, soft words, and smooth promises you can make up for a strong army and effective navy is a fantastic suggestion which history has shown to be ludicrous in the extreme, and which, if any nation adopted it as a permanent policy, would certainly land that nation in final ruin and calamity. Of course, it is possible by rash and unthinking diplomacy to land your country in complications and difficulties.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): Birmingham diplomacy.

MR. A.J. BALFOUR: Who doubts that? Who has ever doubted it? It is a lesson written large on the pages of history, and, indeed, it does not require history to tell us that must be so. But where is the nation that has found successful substitutes for brave soldiers and expert sailors in soft speeches and cunning diplomacy? The right hon. Gentleman objects to the "new diplomacy"; but, whatever be the merits of the new diplomacy, at all events it has never, any more than the old diplomacy, claimed to be a substitute for well-disciplined armies and well-equipped fleets. The real question before us is not the almost childish problem how we may substitute diplomacy for military preparations; but whether the military preparations suggested by my right hon. friend are or are not sufficient for our needs; whether they are or are not calculated to maintain their object. The right hon. Gentleman objected to the word "commitments." He



and the right hon. Gentleman near him, the Leader of the Opposition, appeared to think that in the phrase used by the Secretary for War lurked some obscure indication of new obligations, new and secret obligations, entered into by His Majesty's Government, which would carry in their train as the necessary and logical consequence a great increase in our military force. That is all fancy, all that is illusion; there is no foundation for it whatever. But we know we have great colonies and dependencies to defend, we know that some of these colonies and dependencies are in contiguity with the possessions of great Powers, and that possibly; I hope it may never be, but it may possibly be; the neighbouring Powers may be at war, or threaten war with us.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: What colony?

MR. A.J. BALFOUR: It is simply a geographical question. Anybody who gets out a map can see where our colonies lie and their geographical relation to the colonies of other Powers. This is a responsibility that will be denied by no man. It will not be denied by the right hon. Gentleman.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The Secretary for War put forward the defence of our colonies as a separate

reason. He also said we had commitments on the Continent as well.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I quite understand the right hon. Gentleman's interruption, and will leave that part of my subject, for I understand he does not dwell on our defensive responsibilities, our obviously defensive responsibilities; he bases his attack on my right hon. friend on the supposed obligation to deal with quarrels not immediately our own. There are treaties in existence, not made by us or by our immediate predecessors, but which are still binding; and who can say, in the changes and chances of mortality, in the moving kaleidoscope of European politics, how soon we may not be called upon to fulfil our treaty obligations? Not secret obligations, but obligations which are there on the face of all the text books, with which the right hon. Gentleman is as well acquainted as I am myself. It is conceivable, and it is, I presume, a contingency which my right hon. friend had in view, that if Britain were attacked, even if Britain had to fight a defensive war, she might have allies in that defensive war. The right hon. Gentleman, though he repudiates any special military knowledge, must be well aware that if we had allies in such a war they would properly expect our assistance in operations which, although in ultimate intention defensive, might be immediately offensive. Are we to render ourselves absolutely helpless in any case to give assistance by any military power of ours?

But I frankly admit that though this is an important consideration, it is not the main or governing consideration in the policy which my right hon. friend has put forward. I do not think that this contingency, which I have mentioned as possible, is in any sense probable, but though not probable, it is one that we, should not forget. But let us just consider what it is that has brought down upon my right hon. friend the charge of this military ambition; the accusation that he is encouraging the military spirit; that he is attempting to create a huge, hitherto new, and unthought of force, a force which none of our predecessors ever contemplated.

The right hon. Gentleman could not have followed my right hon. friend's figures.

Anybody looking at those figures would see that whether it be or be not well contrived; and I think it is admirably contrived; the great effect of the scheme is not to increase the absolute number of our troops, but to make that number efficient for the purpose for which they exist. I understand that the right hon. Gentleman has no objection to the existing number of our Regular troops. That number is not increased by my right hon. friend, except for the garrison regiments. The right hon. Gentleman does not object to the present number of Reserves. That is not increased. I do not suppose he objects to the number of Militia which, according to the law, we ought to have. That number is not increased. It is perfectly true that we ought to have 150,000, and that we have now only 100,000. I do not think the right hon. Gentleman will consider it a very aggressive scheme to raise the 100,000 to the 150,000. There are 250,000 Volunteers in the scheme. That is not an increase; and the only increase in the present numbers are the 10,000 garrison veterans, and the increased numbers of the Yeomanry; 25,000 more Yeomanry. Is it credible that on such an increase as that, we should have such accusations hurled at our heads? What the right hon. Gentlemen oppose object to, is not the numbers of our troops, but their efficiency. We shall have, when this scheme passes, 680,000 men. We have now over 600,000, and it is that increase apparently which frightens the right hon. Gentlemen. They appear to lay it down as an axiom that, whatever else the British Army is to be, it is not to be an organised and efficient army. The Leader of the Opposition in the speech he made early this afternoon, told us that it was nonsense to talk about army corps, that an army corps was a convenient ideal to be nominally worked up to, but that there was no such thing in the British Army as an organised army corps, in the sense that there is in the German, French, and Russian armies. I think that is very true. But the object of my right hon. friend is to produce army corps; that is the object he has in view. He does not think that we ought to remain in the huddle-muddle condition defended by the right hon. Gentlemen opposite. He does not think our army corps are to be mere miscellaneous and unorganised forces of men. The essence of this scheme is that the army corps with which we have got to deal, shall be army corps in reality as well as in name; army corps with their proper complement of generals, officers, and staff; army corps with their proper complement of cavalry; army corps with their proper complement of artillery; army corps organised as military units which can meet the invader, if invasion we have to fear, without being re-embodied by combination with other half army corps, strong regiments, casual military elements, before they form an organised and united force. That is the object of my right hon. friend. That is the object which right hon. Gentlemen opposite think we ought not to try for. I cannot agree with them. Where this country is chiefly at fault is not so much in the number of its troops as in their organisation, and it is not so much the number of troops that my right hon. friend proposes to add to, as the organisation which he proposes to perfect and complete.

What has the right hon. Gentleman got to say on the other side? I listened with amazement to the attack of the right hon. Gentleman on my right hon. friend. I

think it was at the end of his speech that the Leader of the Opposition talked about the General Election and all the interesting lessons which the General Election taught, and all the morals which could be drawn from the speeches made at the General Election and all the unforgettable lessons which the General Election instils into us and our children and grandchildren. I think that one of the topics which next to ardent enthusiasm for the war filled the speeches of hon. Gentlemen opposite, and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, was equal ardour for Army reform. I remember being very severely taken to task by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife because I said in the course of the election cam-

paign that the party opposite, so far as I remembered, had hardly contrived to produce the smallest beginning of Army reform for more than a generation; indeed, not since Lord Cardwell's great change in 1870. I remember the Member for East Fife, though I do not think he mentioned any great change either in the number, discipline, or equipment of the troops, did say that during their tenure of office the Duke of Cambridge had resigned, and another Commander-in-Chief had been appointed. That was the contribution which he pointed out. I venture to say that even before the war we had endeavoured, both by augmenting the numbers and in other ways, to improve the condition of the British Army. We were laughed at. Now what do we see? These gentlemen here, dressed high for the war whilst the election was going on, are now talking about the temperature of the war fever sinking to a sub-normal point.

These gentlemen who talked so glibly about Army reform, their capacity to carry it out, our incapacity to carry it out, have nothing to say about my right hon. friend's system, either in its outline or detail, except that it encourages the military spirit. This is surely playing with a great problem. Everybody admits that the task of the War Minister in this country, who has got to deal necessarily with a voluntary Army, who has got to find troops for innumerable foreign stations, many of them very unhealthy, is one of extraordinary difficulty and perplexity; a problem such as is not presented to any foreign statesman, whether French, German, Russian, or Italian. My right hon. friend has made a serious attempt to deal with the difficulties of that problem. I do not think that any critic of the Government will doubt that; but in attempting to do so under exceptional difficulties, how is he met? On one night he is attacked because he attempts to raise the efficiency of the British officer, because he refuses to promote those whose inefficiency has been demonstrated, He is attacked on the next night, forsooth, because he has not put off his Army reform for another year, because he has inflated the military spirit. I can hardly extract from the cloudy fumes of the oratory of the right hon. Gentlemen what is the essential accusation they bring against my right hon. friend; but if my right hon. friend's scheme is carried out, as I earnestly trust it will be, he will at all events have used to the utmost the forces we have at our disposal, he will have organised for the defence of our fortresses those materials useful for little else, but most useful for that purpose, He will have freed for operations in the field troops who are now used and in part wasted in fortress work. He will have organised these army corps, not for wanton

aggression, but for home defence, He will have made the best of all the military elements at his disposal; and though he is attacked now, as military reformers have before been attacked, though he is made the target for the criticisms of right hon. Gentlemen who a few months ago, speaking in the country, were such ardent Army reformers, and a few months hence will probably be such ardent financial reformers, though he has incurred hostility, my firm belief is that the time will come when he will be pointed to, as some of the greatest of his predecessors have been, as one who has inaugurated a new era in the British Army, who has made that Army efficient for all possible purposes of home defence, and probably purposes of foreign war, and who by so doing has done more than even the most dexterous diplomacy can hope to do to secure that peace which is our first interest, and which never can be secured unless we have the respect of those Powers which are our friends, in some respects our rivals, and which might under certain circumstances be our enemies. If my right hon. friend has contributed in this way, as I think he has, to the cause of peace, if he has done something material to put our Army upon an organised and firm footing, then I think he will rank not only as a great Army reformer, but as one of the greatest and most effective friends of peace which this country has ever produced.

\*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire. Forest of Dean) said that if those Members of the House who had advocated Army reform were able to recognise in the scheme of the Secretary of State for War that which the Leader of the House had claimed for it the right hon. Gentleman would find in them warm defenders, instead of critics of that scheme. While he agreed that the country had been invited by many hon. Members of both sides of the House to consider Army reform as the main question which was to be discussed in the House in the present session, he confessed he could not, criticising, he hoped honestly, the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman, find in it the elements of hope for the great reform of the British Army in the future which they had been led to expect in the past. The right hon. Gentleman who had just resumed his seat had himself shown one of the greatest blots of principle on the scheme. He had claimed for the scheme that there was in it; at first he had said no increase, and then had modified his words and said only a small increase in our forces. That was one of the attacks which he made upon the scheme. The increase of expenditure had been enormous. As the right hon. Gentleman tin Member for West Monmouth had pointed out in his speech just previously, although the normal peace expenditure had grown rapidly from £18,000,000 to, what was now called £29,000,000, but what in reality was £31,000,000, with loan money, to which there must be added the enormous expenditure of India, and of the Civil Service Estimates in relief of the Army; in spite of the gigantic expenditure which was continually increasing there had been no appreciable increase in the normal peace Army of the country. As one who considered that a mobile and effective force was of more value and more importance to the country for the efficiency of Imperial defence than mere numbers, he failed to see in the present scheme, as he had failed to see in previous scheme, marked as they were by great increase of expenditure, that increase in the number and efficiency of the mobile Army of this country which

they had been led to expect. The right hon. Gentleman then quoted the numbers of our normal forces, and had spoken of the 600,000 men that we had already, and of the 650,000 that we might have under the scheme. We had 1,000,000 of one sort or another in the land forces of the Empire. The one charge which he had always made against the system, and which ought still to be made against the scheme, was that the Government had not made a small effective mobile Army out of the enormous number of men for which the country paid.

The First Lord of the Treasury had claimed for the Secretary of State for War that that right hon. Gentleman had created real army corps, He desired to show the House how little those army corps would stand the test. Where were the cavalry for the army corps? The right hon. Gentleman had not increased the cavalry by a single man. The right hon. Gentleman had a scheme for the gradual increase of the Yeomanry which he might or might not obtain, but they were not cavalry. The right hon. Gentleman did not increase the cavalry by a single man. He denied that there was regular cavalry for three army corps, let alone the six army corps which were claimed as a reality under the scheme. When the right hon. Gentleman spoke of these army corps, composed partly of Regulars, partly of Volunteers, and partly of Militia brought from all parts of the country, he was speaking of men who might take their discharge at any moment.

MR. BRODRICK: Not at all.

\*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Yes, the Volunteers could demand their discharge at a moment's notice, and to serve under any other conditions would do away with the volunteer service. That showed how ill thought out the scheme was which the Leader of the House and the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War had endeavoured to persuade the House was a reality. He recollected some years ago a scheme which provided eight army corps, which practically never existed, although for some years the regiments supposed to compose them figured in the Army list. After a time they became such a laughing stock that they were withdrawn from the Army list He confessed so far as they had gone at present he had not gathered from the Secretary of State for War or the Leader of the House any facts which led him to suppose that the three army corps mentioned in the scheme would be any more a reality than the eight army corps which everybody had so laughed at. He agreed with the Leader of the House that many gentlemen on both sides had shown what the right hon. Gentlemen called an ardour for army reform, and he was very glad they had done so. The noble Lord the Member for Bedfordshire had told the House that in South Africa he had learnt one thing, which was that in all those years that he had listened to the debates on Army reform in that House it was the reformers who had been right and the Government who had been wrong. The reformers now saw the Minister for War was;in all but the chief point;a convert to their views. He believed it was a fact that the most ferocious of the inquisitors in the old days of the Spanish Inquisition were the Cardinals, secretly of the ancient Hebrew faith, yet they had retained their Jewish religion through all the time of the Inquisition. What those who had pressed for Army reform now learnt from the Secretary of State was that during the ten years he had been connected with

the War Office, and had ridiculed the reformers, he had agreed in secret with most of the reforms put forward.

He was not at this moment speaking of the details of the scheme, but of the principle, and any detail to which he should allude he should allude to very briefly, and merely as an illustration, but he should have to allude to some details, and that would make it unnecessary for him to speak again upon the subject in Committee. The first point in the speech of the Secretary of State for War on which he would dwell was one upon which the right hon. Gentleman had been unjust alike not only to the reformers but to the House itself. With regard to the man&#x0153;uvres the right hon. Gentleman had said the Government were going to do that which they ought to have done in the past, and have annual man&#x0153;uvres and test the troops in all parts of the country. Why had they not done it in the past? The right hon. Gentleman said they had not done it before because the House of Commons prevented them, "All our proposals," he said, "with regard to man&#x0153;uvres were cut down by the House of Commons." He would not deal with the contention in detail, he would simply quote the speech of the right

hon. Gentleman on the Man&#x0153;uvres Bill to disprove it, Deputation after deputation had waited upon him to press the Bill.

MR. BRODRICK: I know that the right hon. Gentleman almost alone supported me.

\*SIR CHARLES DILKE: On July 8th. 1897, the right hon. Gentleman said the Bill was brought forward at that late period of the session in consequence of the very strong encouragement which the Government had received from all quarters of the House, and he added that there had been indications of support "from almost every quarter" of the House. In fact, the opposition to the Bill was confined to a few Members of the House. It was an attack made upon the House of Commons. There were a few Members who were opposed to the Bill, but they were a very small minority of the House, and the pressure that was brought to bear upon the Government to bring forward and to pass the Bill was a pressure from all sides of the House. Another matter also; one, perhaps, of detail; also one to which he would briefly allude, one which was attracting a great deal of attention in the country, was that the right hon. Gentleman said the chief of the lessons of the war which the Government had learnt concerned the equipment of the Army with guns. He spoke of the necessity of adopting heavy guns for the Army; a matter which the reformers had pressed upon the House, but what was more important, he spoke of quick-firing guns, and he defended the gun supplied to the Army, which he said was accounted the "best field-gun in Europe" by experts "three or four years ago." No doubt that was said to the Government by one of their experts. But field guns of the old type were out of date, and the Government had been warned repeatedly by the House before the war had begun that we should have quick-firing guns, but what happened? In the ordinary sense our Army had not a single quick-firing gun in the country. The two systems of quick-firing guns which had now been adopted by the Government had been refused when the reformers brought the matter before

the House on the "21st of April, and then again in June, 1899. The Government admitted that they had not a single quick-firing gun, but that they were

experimenting in the matter. In that detail the right hon. Gentleman misled the House. The policy with regard to guns now adopted by the Government had been arrived at by the Government after the commencement of the war, from which they had learnt at last a lesson, and was a policy which had been pressed by the military reformers of the House several years ago. The principal staff officer of Sir Redvers Buller's force in Natal, who had previously been long in the Intelligence Department, had written of the war in South Africa that our guns in South Africa had "never been matched against quick-firing field guns of the latest type." The Secretary of State had adopted all the accessories of his scheme from the views put forward by military reformers in this House. He had even withdrawn the Guards from Gibraltar, and he had one so, so far as could be made out, on the ground that Gibraltar had contracted in size and that there was now less room there for the evolutions of the Guards than previously. He had also adopted the views of the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite with regard to handing Sierra Leone and other stations over to the fleet, as he himself had said, against the opinion of the Admiralty, and he had thereby caused that unpleasant feeling between the two Departments, which had almost become a public scandal during the last few days.

But, continued Sir Charles Dilke, these are small matters compared with the much larger matters in which the right hon. Gentleman has very greatly changed his views, without, however, adopting a solid system which would give a good foundation to the future military institutions of the country. One of the lessons of the war which almost every officer who has returned home has impressed upon us is the need for mounted infantry as apart from our cavalry. The right hon. Gentleman has spoken of that need. Almost every officer who has spoken or written about the war has assumed that our present scheme for mounted infantry would be put an end

to; that the best men would not be picked out of the infantry battalions, but that separate mounted infantry battalions would be established. I believe it was the universal opinion throughout the Army and the country that one of the reforms the Government would institute would be the creation of mounted infantry battalions. There is not a word about that in the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman, and when he says that it is necessary that we should be provided with a much larger body of mounted troops, I ask where are they to be found in the Estimates. There is nothing but the suggestion that the Yeomanry will be increased, but the Yeomanry are not a force available for foreign service or for India, or for any use outside these shores. They are a hypothetical force as to the future of which we know nothing at all.

There are many other points in the scheme on which the country has been profoundly disappointed. It had been almost universally accepted after the experience we have had of Colonial mounted infantry in this war that there would be some sketch, however faint, of the future constitution of an Imperial mounted infantry throughout the Empire. I know it is said that these suggestions should come from the Colonies, but they have come. You would not be forcing any such scheme on the colonies, but you would only be accepting an invitation already made. Suggestions have been already made by Canada and Australia, and in New

Zealand a definite scheme has been proposed by the Government, and the country will be disappointed that no reference has been made to that scheme by the Secretary of War.

MR. BRODRICK: I made a distinct reference to it.

\*SIR CHARLES DILKE: The point on which reformers in this House have always insisted, and the necessity for which has been terribly shown in the early stages of this war, is that we should not wait for war to make these preparations, but that an arrangement with the Colonies should be made in time of profound peace so that it might be in working order when war broke out, and not

have to be made much too late to render all the assistance it would have rendered in the earlier stages of a war.

I will not dwell on the adoption by the right hon. Gentleman of the views of reformers in this House with reference to transport and the Army Medical Department. I remember debate after debate in which hon. Members called for the reorganisation of the Army Medical Department, and I think it is unjust that the responsibility should now be thrown on the House of Commons for having rejected Government proposals which were never made. I will not even dwell on the great change in the training of the Army for war referred to by the right hon.

Gentleman, and which implies a severe censure on the War Office of the past. The words of the Secretary of State for War were grave words. They went as far as the words which have been used in public by a distinguished officer who has the confidence of the present Commander-in-Chief, and who served as Adjutant-General to the Commander-in-Chief in India. He used these very serious words;

"There is no disguising the fact that the troops sent out from England to South Africa were not properly instructed in the duties required from soldiers in war."

What a terrible condemnation of the War Office of the past that the Secretary of State should be obliged to admit that our soldiers; although only a small Army, which were we told would be more efficient than the conscript armies of foreign countries, both because of its voluntary system and its manageableness; are less efficient and less trained than the armies of other countries. I understood the Secretary of State to admit that. At all events the words he used I with regard to changes in the future were so strong that they appeared to me to carry that condemnation. The Secretary of State has theoretically adopted the views of reformers in this House, and, taking almost the words of the Service Members' memorandum circulated last year, he tells us that in the past we have had scratch corps and improvised staffs, but that in future we are to have corps trained in peace by the officers who are to command them in war, and that they are to be provided with peace staffs. He has applied these words not only to the three army corps for foreign service, but also to the three mixed army corps, which I agree with the hon. Member who has spoken are nebulous corps, because their constitution is of such a mixed description that it cannot be satisfactory. It is my belief that it will lead, in the event of war, to their being broken up again and not employed in the manner now contemplated. I believe that in the event of war you would pick out from these corps the regular troops,



and that therefore they would have no real existence.

The right hon. Gentleman has explained that besides these army corps there will be left at home more than half a million of men prepared for defence, I confess I am one of those who hold that the command of the seas is the defence of this country. I agree with my right hon. friend the Member for West Monmouthshire (Sir W. Harcourt) that this House will cheer-fully vote whatever money is necessary to maintain that command, which is our real defence. I believe that the British Army exists mainly as a really efficient army for the reinforcement of the Indian garrison, and, if necessary, as the rudiment of that army which, in the event of a great war, would be necessary to secure peace by means of a counter-stroke at the possessions of our enemy. I attach more importance to the smaller portion of the Army which is organised for the purpose of offence than to this enormous horde of men with rifles for home defence. Those men are mainly composed of Militia and Volunteers. I listened in vain in the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman for that reform of the Militia which I did expect. There was a plan for the creation of a Militia Reserves, but that is not the kind of reform we expected. There is a great deficiency of officers which applies not only to the Militia but still more to the Volunteers. There is nothing in the scheme to remedy that deficiency, and I cannot see how they are to be provided. And yet what can be the value of these picked and special detachments of Volunteers, to be put into an army corps, unless you have efficient and sufficient officers to command them.

In reply to an interruption of mine with reference to the training of these officers, the right hon. Gentleman said that the matter was under consideration. I confess I cannot see that we have in this scheme that great measure of army reform which was promised at the last election. The right hon. Gentleman has, it is true, adopted the language and many of the measures proposed to him by reformers in this House. But when he went to the root of the subject I find a great falling off. He paid lip service to the Cardwell system and spoke in high terms of it, but when he came to the substance of his scheme there was again a large increase in the long service portion of the Army, which is entirely opposed to the Cardwell system, whereas there was no corresponding increase in the short service portion of the Army. That is a side of the subject which I fear I cannot develop to-night.

The most important part of the whole question is, how are you going to make up the number of troops which are supposed to exist after the present war, depleted as the Army will be? The Leader of the Opposition said we had no statistical calculations before us. This is a point on which, at all events, calculations should have been given us. We know that there are three years drafts required for India at the end of this war, instead of one ordinary draft. There is also an enormous deficiency under many other heads which will have to be made up. How are you going to make it up? When the right hon. Gentleman talks of the Cardwell system he must remember that it has been greatly altered by both sides of the House in consequence of the difficulties always existing in the case of India, and which are increased now, and will be much greater at the conclusion of the war. The original idea was a short service system, but it was soon found that

that would not suit India. Then we proposed five year, then six years, and ultimately seven, and eight years for men discharged in India In 1883 a Government of which I was a member, and in which the Leader of the Opposition was Secretary to the Admiralty, was obliged to give the men the option of staying up to twelve years, and giving them advantages for doing so. That was a complete

departure from the Cardwell system. The principle of the Cardwell system is sound, namely, that the Army could be extended for war, but it was not applicable to India. The right hon. Gentleman dealt with that matter the other day, but not, I think, very plainly. He pays lip service to the Cardwell system, but he is getting all his old soldiers to stay behind, which is an absolute reversal of that system. He is extending the long service portion of the Army in this way, although he is not making any corresponding attempt to deal with the short service portion. Then again, there was an almost universal belief throughout the country that some attempt would be made to increase the pay of the private soldier. I believe every candidate at the general election on both sides was in favour of increasing the private soldiers pay, and I believe also the taxpayers are in favour of it. The subject is, however, merely referred to by the right hon. Gentleman, who tells us that it would be useless to increase the pay of the private soldier unless we made it something like double the present pay. Have you tried? I see nothing myself pointing at all in that direction. Have you tried even that elasticity of conditions of service which many think so desirable? What did your Inspector General of Recruiting tell you two years ago? He said you had never given the three years system a fair chance. The right hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well the views of the present Commander-in-Chief on this subject, and the views of reformers in this House, and yet he says that the only question is, "Are we to have a separate army for India or not?" No one in this House has ever for a generation proposed a separate army for India. But what we have proposed is elasticity in the conditions of service, which would make recruiting far more easy than it is at present. The right hon. Gentleman has not told us what is the opinion of Lord Roberts on the subject of the conditions of army service.

It being midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

SUPPLY [1ST MARCH].

Resolutions reported::

CIVIL SERVICE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1900&#x2013;1901.

Class I.

1. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £35,200, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1901, in respect of sundry Public Buildings in Great Britain, not provided for on other Votes."
2. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £13,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1901, for Rates and Contributions in lieu of Rates, etc., in respect of Government Property."

3. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £7,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1901, for payments under the Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, 1883, and the Light Railways (Ireland) Act, 1889."

Class II.

4. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £6,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1901, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs."

5. "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £7,200 be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1901, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies."

6. "That a sum, not exceeding £1,015, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1901, for the

Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Lord Privy Seal."

Resolutions read a second time.

First Resolution::

MR. TULLY (Leitrim, S.) said they had now been dealing with Supplementary Estimates for several nights, and no further information had been given them. The Estimates had been prepared in a very loose way, for even in regard to fixed charges like rent and insurance an extra, £5,500 was required. Although the Imperial Institute and the London University was not in the nature of a museum or a picture gallery they were, now proposing to spend nearly £10,000 upon it. There was, however, an item of £2,000 for the Intelligence Department of the War Office to which he did not object, for he thought they needed to spend more money on that Department. He did not know why all this extra expenditure on regard to electric lighting should have been incurred, because there never was a time when greater economy should have been practised in all Government departments. He did not think sufficient reasons had been given to justify the voting of this large sum of £35,000, and he begged to move a reduction of the Vote by £100.

Amendment proposed;

"To leave out '£35,200,' and insert '£35,100' instead thereof.";(Mr. Tully.)

Question proposed, "That £35,200 stand part of the Resolution."

MR. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.) said that when this Vote, was before the Committee Member after Member on this side of the House rose and complained of the way in which the Estimates were brought before the House. Before that money was voted he should like to have full details given to the House. He was of opinion that most of this expenditure ought to have been foreseen. There was £3,000 set down in connection with the Latent Office, and although £20,000 was spent there last year they were now asked for £3,000 more. The First Commissioner of Works had told them that

by carrying out this work they would save £750 a year, but he could not understand how he made this out, and he should like the matter cleared up. He

found that there was a sum of £3,125 for the adaptation of Hertford House for the Wallace Collection, but that was on the top of a previous expenditure of £160,000. He represented a poor constituency, and objected to that expenditure for a London show. Then there was the item "Furniture," £1,325, which was an increase of 50 per cent, over the previous year. He could not understand how the expenditure for furniture should have gone up to such an enormous extent. It was an item that ought to be stationary. Then there was an increase of £3,400 on household articles, which surely warranted some explanation, as did also the increase of £950 on the Die and Medal Department of the Royal Mint. He hoped his friends would look carefully into these increases of expenditure, and that they would have some support from both sides of the House in putting pressure on the Government to reduce expenditure. [Laughter.] Hon. Gentlemen laughed, but the public would not laugh when they saw the Budget, and when hon. Gentlemen went down to their constituencies after the Budget their constituents would not laugh. Every penny ought to be turned over two or three times before being spent, instead of these thousands of pounds being thrown away.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) said the House owed a debt of gratitude to the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, because he had given information to hon. Members which they did not have when these Estimates were last considered. When the Supplementary Estimates were being discussed in Committee last, a high financial authority on the opposite side of the House pointed out that the system of Supplementary Estimates was going from bad to worse, entirely owing to the fact that the Estimates were not properly criticised, and that the Treasury had got into a reckless method of keeping their accounts. For example, there was an increase of £5,500 for rents, insurance, and tithe-rent charges. Now, if there was one item which was supposed to be stationary it was rent. If the rents had gone up, why was that so? They ought to have some information on that point. He had some knowledge of insurance matters, and he was not aware that premium rates had gone up. Again, in all departments tithe-rent charges had gone down; and why should they have gone up in this case? He complained that they got no details from the Government under any of these heads. An hon. and frugal Gentleman from Scotland criticised in a few and pointed remarks some of the subjects under A, relating to new works, alterations, additions, and purchases, and asked for explanations, but none had been forthcoming. In regard to the Wallace Collection, why was it that £3,125 had been spent in addition to the previous £160,000 for converting one of the finest mansions in London and fitting it up for the storage of that collection? He believed it was impossible to over-estimate the value of that collection, but it was quite unreasonable to ask the poor taxpayers in Dublin or Cork to pay for what they would never have a chance of seeing. He thought hon. Members above the gangway had not applied their minds to Supplementary Estimates during the present session or in previous sessions. Anyone acquainted with structural alterations would not believe that £163,000 could have been spent in Hertford House in making ready that mansion for the priceless collection it now contained. If any hon. Member got a plan of the mansion as it formerly existed, it would be impossible for him to conceive how that enormous sum of money had

been spent. Then they were asked for £10,000 for the Imperial Institute for the purposes of the London University, and yet the House was too niggardly to grant even £1,000 to Queen's Colleges in Ireland, to provide proper instruction for clinical students. No adequate explanation had been given of that Supplementary Estimate. The Imperial Institute; that precious monument of Imperial imbecility; had never, not even in its amusements, been able to compete with a twopenny-halfpenny circus, and could not compete with private enterprise such as was displayed at Earl's Court in any one particular. Yet they were now asked to vote £10,000 more, sub silentio, for that Institute. They would not pass it in silence, but would comment on such expenditure, especially in such times. With reference to the £2,000 spent on Winchester House, he would not object if it were for the purpose of improving the Intelligence branch of the War Office or the Foreign Office, but after what had occurred during the last year and a half, not one penny should he spent on the Intelligence Department. He thought hon. Members were justified in reiterating their protest against the large and progressive increases asked for in the Supplementary Estimates without any adequate explanation regarding them being given.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): I shall reply, as shortly as I can, to the various criticisms which have been addressed to me by hon. Members. The hon. Member for South Kilkenny asked me to explain why details in the Estimates had been given in full so far as Sub-head A was concerned, but not as regards other sub-heads, and he stated that in the Supplementary Estimates for last year details were given in full. I stated the other night that it has always been the practice to give details only of new services in the Supplementary Estimates, but I do not intend to pass over the criticism of the hon. Member, and will endeavour to give him the fullest explanation I can. First of all the hon. Member asked me with regard to the Census buildings. In connection with that the Supplementary Estimate now asked for could not have been fore-seen when the original Estimate was framed. That Estimate was prepared in October, 1899, and of course we knew then that the Census would be taken this year, but the Census Bill had not even been passed. After the original Estimate was framed we were asked by the Registrar General for further accommodation, first of all for an increased staff, which was necessary for the collection of the further details required, and for the greater expedition which was generally desired, and also because it had been decided to establish a female staff, for whom separate accommodation was necessary. Then a complaint was made by the Medical Officer of the Local Government Board with regard to the sanitation and ventilation of these buildings, and Professor Corfield, one of the best authorities on sanitation and ventilation, visited the buildings, and a further sum of money was required to carry out the improvements he suggested. It would therefore have been impossible for the Department to have foreseen this additional expenditure as long ago as October, 1899.

LORD HUGH CECIL (Greenwich): Divide, divide&#x0021;

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I wish to ask whether the noble Lord the son of the

Prime Minister is entitled to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman? Because you are the Prime Minister's son you have no right to interrupt.

\*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has no right to address personally any member of the House.

MR. T. M. HEALY: He has no right to interrupt us either. Send for your police and turn him out. [Cries of "Police; Police; Police;"]

\*MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Gentleman does not keep more order I shall have to call on him to leave the House.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Very well, Sir, go on. You will not call on him, though, to go out. We will stand no nonsense from him.

MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: The next hon. Gentleman asked me to explain the amount required for the Patent Office extension. I must appeal to my hon. friends to allow me to explain. It is quite impossible for me to address the House while they are speaking. The hon. Member said that this was not a, pressing expenditure. It is not an excess over the, original Estimate at all, being within the total sum asked for. But if we had not pressed forward this payment we should not have been able so soon to provide accommodation for the library at the Patent Office, and would have had to continue a payment of £700 a year for a temporary building. The lease of the building expires in 1904. Fortunately there is a

break in it, and if we now avail ourselves of that, we shall be enabled to save £700 during the next three years. I think that is a reason why urgency can be pleaded. Another hon. Member asked me a question with reference to some of the items on page 8. One of them refers to the rentals of new buildings which have been taken within the current year for the further accommodation required by the War Office in consequence of the expeditions which have been sent out to South Africa, the recruiting of the Yeomanry, and various other duties entailing an increased staff. A large proportion of the charge for light and fuel is in respect of these new offices. The hon. Member has asked me about the charges in connection with the Wallace collection. The original charge was £125,000, and that included the purchase of the freehold, the purchase of the lease, and the cost for the very large buildings which were added at the rear. This sum of £3,125 was for furniture to equip the buildings for opening to the public, and after all it is a very small sum, I think, to pay for furnishing the buildings in return for the munificent bequest which we have received.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) said the right hon. Gentleman had met them in a conciliatory spirit, and had shown his desire to meet every objection that had been raised. If the criticisms from the Irish benches were always met in the same spirit it would be more satisfactory. After the explanation which had been given he would recommend his hon. friend not to further discuss the Vote, but allow it to pass.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Resolution agreed to.

Second Resolution:;

MR. T. M. HEALY called attention to the fact that merely upon Government property alone in Ireland, in consequence of the passing of the Local Government Act, the

sum of £3,000 had come as an additional charge on the ratepayers. It must be remembered that the charge was fixed by the Government themselves, and that 'they had no power to assess the amount which ought to be borne by the Government rateably, with regard to the other buildings existing in the country, and they had constantly to meet the outcry against the small amount the Government had to pay. To what was this additional charge of £3,000 due? It was due to the profligate system of advancing salaries by the Local Government Board. Nobody in the country was a bit better off except the officials. There was not a soul throughout the thirty-two counties, from the Nationalist county in the south to the Orange county in the north, better off. They had advanced the salaries from crossing sweeper up to the secretary of the county council. When Ireland was not better off and better cared for, why was it that the peasant in his sheeling should have to pay this additional charge? If the right hon. Gentleman could show that a single road was better kept he should be slow to offer criticism in respect of this sum, but they knew that not a single shilling of this amount went to any local credit, except into the pockets of the worthless class who had been maintained by the grand jury system in the country. How could they defend it? Was it not money entirely thrown away because of action which the supreme court of appeal had condemned as illegal? The High Court had declared that every one of the sealed orders issued had been illegal. Why should the Government bring this additional charge on the ratepayers of the country, having regard to the fact that the Estimate was prepared when it was assumed there was some legality in the charges, and that they should not be blotted out? Some Members might be of opinion that it was the desire of the Irish party to obstruct the business of the House. There was no such intention, and he resented the attacks which had been made upon them by some of the scions of nobility opposite. Their only desire was to criticise the Estimates in so far as they had a bearing on the ordinary daily life of the people of Ireland.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): I scarcely think that the hon. and learned Member

can expect me to follow him into a detailed examination of the Irish Local Government Act. I scarcely think that I should be in order if I attempted to do so. We have agreed to a payment in lieu of votes equivalent to the amount which would be charged if the property were not in the occupation of the Crown. We have accepted that principle, and it is certainly a principle which we have no reason to be very fond of, because it means a charge on the Imperial Exchequer. The money so taken from the Imperial Exchequer goes in relief of the local rates, and it is a little discouraging that a Vote of this character should be open to the very bitter criticism which the hon. and learned Member opposite has levelled against it. This additional sum is needed because the rates have risen.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Why have they risen?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: It must be perfectly obvious to the House that over the local rates we have no control. We have promised to pay our fair proportion of what those rates are. It is the new local authority which has raised the rates.

MR. T. M. HEALY: No.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The new local authority has raised the rates. [No.] It

is not a matter which we can check, and if it were true that the whole of the increases were due, as the hon. and learned Member suggests, to salaries in connection with the Local Government Board, it would still be not a matter over which the Treasury had any control. But I do not think there is any foundation for that assumption. In any case the whole of this is a charge which falls on the Treasury automatically in consequence of the rise in rates, and unless we are to break our agreement; which is one beneficial to the ratepayers; I am bound to ask the House to pass this Vote.

MR. MURNAGHAN (Tyrone, Mid) complained that the Irish contribution was out of all proportion to the amount it should be. The contribution to the English rates was about one hundred times as much as that to the Irish rates.

Moreover, the increase in rates in Ireland was 8 per cent., while in England it was no more than one per cent. That in itself showed that the rates in Ireland were growing beyond all reason, and seeing that in the rich country of England £;1 was felt no more than 1s. in Ireland, the gentlemen of England should show more consideration towards the Irish people in this matter.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) agreed that this matter could and ought to be discussed on the Local Government Board Vote. The Local Government Board in Ireland had treated the local authorities with the utmost contempt, and the House ought certainly to have some assurance that such conduct would be stopped.

MR. T. M. HEALY said the hon. Member for East Waterford had suggested, and he agreed, that this question should be remitted to a future occasion.

Resolution agreed to.

Third Resolution::

MR. T. M. HEALY understood the Government were carrying on in Donegal and elsewhere very considerable works, but the mode in which those works had been conducted was not satisfactory. It was also understood that the Government had already suggested that the gentleman chiefly responsible should retire from the service. With that decision he had not the slightest fault to find, but would the Secretary to the Treasury state how much the Government expected to pay in respect of extras, and who was to replace the gentleman responsible for the blunderings which had caused the extra demands? Was it to be a another Scotsman?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he was unable to state the name of the successor to the gentleman referred to, as he had not yet been appointed. The Vote under consideration, however, had nothing to do with the gentleman the hon. and learned Member had in mind, but was for repayments to the county council and local bodies in respect of a portion of the guarantees. He would look into the points raised, but for the moment he had not the figures by him.

Resolution agreed to.

Further Consideration of remaining Resolutions deferred till To-morrow.

HOUSE OF COMMONS ACCOMMODATION.

Select Committee appointed to consider whether any, and what, arrangements can be made to improve the accommodation provided for the general use of Members of this House.

Ordered, That the Committee have, power to send for persons, papers, and records.



Ordered, That Five be the quorum.; (Sir William Walrond.)

#### PRESENCE OF THE SOVEREIGN IN PARLIAMENT.

Resolved, That it is expedient that a Select Committee be appointed to join with a Committee of the Lords to consider the accommodation available in the House of Lords when the Sovereign is personally present in Parliament, and the advisability of substituting Westminster Hall on such an occasion for the House of Lords.

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to acquaint them therewith; (Sir William Walrond.)

Adjourned at a quarter after One of the clock.

#### APPENDIX I.

Memorandum of the Secretary of State relating to the Army Estimates for 1901&#x2013;1902.

The total of the Army Estimates for 1901&#x2013;02 amounts to £;87,915,000, while the number of men to be voted is 450,000.

The following table shows the comparison with the figures for the current year;; 1900&#x2013;01.

1901&#x2013;02.

Vote A

430,000

450,000

£;

£;

Votes 1&#x2013;16

88,999,400 (including Supplementary Estimates).

87,915,000

As regards Vote A (men), 220,000 may be regarded as forming the permanent establishment of the Army, the balance being temporary additions due to the war in South Africa and operations in China.

The £;87,915,000 is accounted for as follows;;

£;

(a.) Permanent additions voted in 1900&#x2013;01 and earlier years, including automatic increases

25,451,000

(b.) Permanent additions to be voted 1901&#x2013;02

1,912,000

(c.) Temporary increases

2,322,000

(d.) War services

58,230,000

(a.) Permanent additions voted in 1900&#x2013;01 and automatic increases.

£;

As shown at page 6 of Army Estimates, 1900&#x2013;01, the total for normal services and permanent additions amounted to

23,702,700

The estimates for 1901&#x2013;02 have also to allow for;

(1.) Complete provision for new forces raised in 1900&#x2013;01

655,000

(2.) Contribution payable to India towards the cost of Aden, as well as the transport of troops to and from India

230,000

(3.) Rise in prices of stores and fuel

350,000

(4.) Growth of Volunteer force

180,000

(5.) Hutting for troops at home, and annuities for repayment of loans for works

280,000

(6.) Miscellaneous

53,300

Total

25,451,000

(b.) Permanent additions to be voted, 1901&#x2013;02

£;1,912,000.

These include;

(a.) The formation of "garrison" battalions for service on the Mediterranean and other non-tropical stations abroad.

(b.) Measures affecting the Militia, Yeomanry and Volunteers.

(c.) Provision of Staff for Army-Corps, and reorganisation of Army Medical services.

(d.) Extension of system of registration of horses and transport required on mobilisation.

(e.) New system of clothing throughout the Army.

The above measures, and others affecting Army reorganisation, will be fully dealt with on the introduction of the Army estimates, so I refrain from explaining them in detail in the present memorandum.

(c.) Temporary increases

£;2,322,000

This represents the further instalment for the rearmament of our fortresses and for stores, to which allusion was made in the memorandum accompanying the Army Estimates for 1900&#x2013;01.

(d.) War services

£;58,230,000.

The provision under this head is based on the assumption that for the first 4 months of the new financial year the field force in South Africa will be maintained at full strength, and that a gradual diminution will subsequently take place.

Provision is made for the transport home of the troops, and the gratuities payable on demobilization, as well as the special war gratuity, which, though voted in the present financial year, will not, owing to the prolongation of the war, be paid to any large extent until 1901&#x2013;02.

The explanations of the increases on the different Votes are as follows;;

This vote shows a net increase, £;3,207,500, of which £;2,239,000 is due to war,

and £968,500 to "normal" services.

The latter head covers;

(a) The pay, &c, of the new "garrison" battalions already referred to.

(b.) Two additional Indian native battalions for service at Singapore and Hong Kong,

(c.) The further provision required for various increases voted in

1900&#x2013;01.

(d.) The contribution to Indian revenues referred to in paragraph (a.) (2) on the preceding page, as explained in the papers recently laid before Parliament.

The increase on this vote amounts to £183,000, of which £58,700 is for war, and £124,900 for permanent additions. The bulk of the latter increase is for the "Reorganisation of the Army Medical Services," to which reference has been made.

Net increase £374,000. The provision for war services show a decrease of £40,000, while the increase for permanent services amounts to £411,000. This is mainly accounted for;

(a.) By a new system of consolidated bounties, estimated cost, £150,000.

(b.) By the formation of a new Militia Reserve, for which £250,000 is provided.

(c.) By the issue to Militia non-commissioned officers and men of the same rates of pay and extra-duty pay as are given to similar ranks in the Regulars, at a cost of £12,000.

There is a net increase of £231,000 on this vote, but the increase as compared with the normal is £300,000, which is to provide for a considerable addition to the number of the force, and an extended period of training, accompanied by higher rates of allowances.

This vote shows an apparent decrease of £500,000, but there is in reality an increase of £330,000, as compared with the ordinary provision for this force. The large growth of the Volunteer Force necessitates the provision for increased capitation and camp allowances, while a considerable sum, £150,000, has also been taken for the extended training of a certain number of battalions of Infantry and batteries of Artillery.

This vote shows a decrease of £3,823,000, which arises entirely on war services. Money is taken in this vote for the transport of the troops to be brought away from South Africa. The only service requiring special mention is the additional provision under Subhead D of £100,000, for registration of horses and transport to be available for military purposes in time of emergency.

There is a net increase on this vote of £582,000, which is mainly due to the permanent additions to the Army already referred to. Provision is also made for the grant of the messing allowance to Militiamen during their annual training.

The increase on the normal vote is £180,000, which is accounted for by the initial cost of the new system of clothing about to be adopted throughout the Army (including the Militia).

The increase for normal services amounts to £2,600,000, of this sum £2,322,000 is due to the further instalment required for accelerating the rearmament of fortresses at home and abroad, while the balance is required to meet a general rise in the price of stores.

As compared with the normal vote for 1900 this vote, apart from war services, shows an increase of £283,300, being due to the provision of hutting for troops at home, and to increased annuities for the repayment of loans for works.

There is nothing that calls for special mention in the case of these two votes, as, apart from war services, there is no change from the amounts taken in the current year's estimates.

Apart from war services this vote shows an increase of £5,000, which arises on Subhead A, and is mainly due to the appointment of an additional Officer as Inspector-General of Recruiting, as well as a Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General for recruiting, to an increase in the pay of the Commander-in-Chief, and to an addition to the number of Officers attached temporarily for various staff duties.

The net increase of £518,500 on these votes is due to charges in connection with the War. The only service calling for special notice is the provision, under Subhead K of Vote 15, of a sum of £56,000 to cover the grant of pensions from the 1st April next to the widows and children of non-commissioned officers and men who have died as the result of active operations. The scheme is now being formulated under the direction of the Treasury.

ST. JOHN BRODRICK.

28th February, 1901.

## APPENDIX II

### PUBLIC BILLS

#### DEALT WITH IN VOLUME XC.

Those marked thus \* are Government Bills. The figures in parentheses in the last column relate to the page in this volume. "[H.L.]" following the title indicates that the Bill originated in the Lords.

#### (A.) HOUSE OF LORDS.

Title of Bill.

Brought in by

Progress.

\*Berwickshire County Town [H.L.]

Lord Balfour

(Read 1a 21 Feb., preceding Volume, page 649); Read 2a 12 Mar. (1278)

\*County Courts (Ireland) [H.L.]

Lord Ashbourne

Read 1a 11 Mar. (1141)

Cremation [H.L.]

Lord Monkswell

Read 2a 7 Mar. (768); Committee, Report, 11 Mar. (1141); Read 3a 12 Mar. (1279)

Habitual Drunkards [H.L.]

Bishop of Winchester

Read 2a 14 Mar. (1510)

Licensing Sessions [H.L.]

Bishop of Winchester

Read 2a 14 Mar. (1499)

Light Load Line [H.L.]  
Lord Muskerry  
Second Reading, 4 Mar. (298) [Put off for six months]  
Oath against Roman Catholic Doctrines Repeal [H.L.]  
Lord Braye  
Read 1a 11 Mar. (1141)  
\*Prisons (Scotland) [H.L.]  
Lord, Balfour  
Read 1a 5 Mar. (511)  
Public Libraries [H.L.]  
Lord Windsor  
Read 1a 7 Mar. (768)  
Shops (Early Closing) [H.L.]  
Lord Avebury  
Read 1a 11 Mar. (1141)  
(B.) HOUSE OF COMMONS.  
Title of Bill.  
Brought in by.  
Progress.  
Borough Funds Acts (1872) Amendment (London)  
Captain Jessel  
Read 1o 1 Mar. (209)  
\*Burial Grounds (Scotland)  
The Lord Advocate  
Read 1o 7 Mar. (844)  
Burial Places (Exemption from Rates) (Scotland)  
Mr. Shaw-Stewart  
Read 1o 8 Mar. (1051)  
Title of Bill.  
Brought in by  
Progress.  
Cheap Trains  
Captain Norton  
Read 1o 1 Mar. (209)  
Compensation for Damage to Crops, etc.  
Mr. Hudson  
Read 2o 6 Mar. (737); Com. 7 Mar. (992)  
Congested Districts (Ireland)  
Mr. Flynn  
Second Reading 13 Mar. (1448) [put off for Six Months].  
Education (Local Authorities)  
Mr. Henry Hobhouse  
Read 1o 13 Mar. (1495)  
Employers' Liability Extension  
Mr. Sinclair  
Read 1o 5 Mar. (590)

Factory and Workshop Act (1878) Amendment  
Mr. Harwood  
Read 1o 5 Mar. (590)  
Hospitals (Exemption from Rates)  
Mr. L. Walton  
Read 1o 1 Mar. (210)  
Industrial Schools Acts Amendment  
Dr. Macnamara  
Read 1o 12 Mar.(1355)  
Licensing Acts Amendment (Scotland)  
Mr. Colville  
Read 1o 1 Mar. (210)  
Lights on Vehicles  
Sir R. Mowbray  
Read 1o 5 Mar. (590)  
Liquor Traffic Local Veto  
Mr. Caine  
Read 1o 1 Mar. (209)  
Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland)  
Mr. Craig  
Read 1o 1 Mar. (209)  
Mines (Eight Hours)  
Mr. Yoxall  
Com., 28 Feb. (167)  
Parliamentary Elections (Mariners' Votes)  
Mr. Macdona  
Read 1o 5 Mar. (591)  
Police Superannuation (Scotland)  
Mr. John Wilson (Falkirk)  
Read 2o 6 Mar. (704)  
Rivers Pollution Prevention  
Sir F. Powell  
Read 1o 5 Mar. (590)  
Sovereign's Oath on Accession  
Mr. W. Redmond  
Read 1o 12 Mar.(1355)  
Sunday Closing (Wales) Act (188]) Amendment  
Mr. Herbert Roberts  
Read 1o 5 Mar. (591)  
Trade Marks  
Mr. Fletcher  
Read 1o 1 Mar. (210)  
\*Trout Fishing Annual Close Time (Scotland)  
The Lord Advocate.  
Read 1o 7 Mar. (843)  
Ulster Custom

Mr. William Moore  
Second Reading 13 Mar. (1495) (Deferred)  
University of Wales (Graduates)  
Mr. Brynmor Jones  
Read 1o 6 Mar. (763)  
Water Companies (Liability for Storage of Water)

Mr. Sinclair  
Read 1o 5 Mar. (589)

#### APPENDIX III.

#### HOUSE OF COMMONS. SESSION 1901.

LIST OF RULES, ORDERS, &c, which have been presented during the Session, and are required by Statute to lie for an appointed number of Days upon the Table of the House.

[Continuation of List given in preceding Volume.]

Title of Paper.

Date from which the Period runs.

Period to lie upon the Table.

Prisons (Scotland),;Copy of Rule made by the Secretary for Scotland, under The Prisons (Scotland) Act, 1877, appointing the Police Cells at Haddington to be a legal Prison for the detention of untried prisoners for a period not exceeding fourteen days before or during trial, and of convicted prisoners for a period not exceeding seven days from the date of of conviction [40 and 41 Vic., c. 53, s. 58]

28 February

40 days

Prisons (Scotland) Dietaries,;Copy of Rules made by the Secretary for Scotland, under The Prisons (Scotland) Act, 1877, establishing new rates of Dietaries for the several classes of prisoners [40 and 41 Vic., c. 53, s. 58]

28 February

40 Days

Local Registration of Title (Ireland) Act, 1891, and Small Dwellings Acquisition Act, 1899 (Rules), Copy of Rules made by the Judge nominated as an additional Land Judge for the purposes of The Local Registration of Tithe (Ireland) Act, 1891, with the approval of the Lord Chancellor [54 and 55 Vic., c. 66, s. 94 (4)]

28 February

40 days

Factory and Workshop Acts (Particulars of Piece Work Wages) (Pen Making),;Copy of Order of the Secretary of State, dated 12th duly, 1900, applying with modifications the provisions of section 40 of The Factory and Workshop Act. 1895, to Factories and Workshops in which is carried on the making of Pens [41 Vic., c. 16, s. 65 (3)]

7 March

40 days

Education (Scotland) (Code, 1901),;Copy of Code of Regulations for Day Schools by the Lords of the Committee of the Privy Council on Education in Scotland [35

and 36 Vic., c. 62, s. 67]

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One month

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[AUTHORISED EDITION].

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Q. Mr. Pirie; A. Mr. A. G. Murray, Mar. 11, 1166; Q.Mr. Pirie; A. Mr. Arnold-  
Forster, Mar. 14, 1556.

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Annual Statistical Report Presented, Feb. 28, 3.

Abyssinia

Anglo-Abyssinian Expedition against the Mad Mullah in Northern Somali-land

Q. Sir C. Dilke; A. Mr. Brodrick, Mar. 14, 1557.

Frontier Delimitation, Negotiations between King Menelik and H.M. Government,  
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Q. Sir C. Dilke; A. Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mar. 14, 1557.

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