

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL. Tuesday, 24th September, 1901. First Readings - Third Reading - Exportation of Arms Bill-Mortgages of Land Bill-Promissory Oaths Bill. The Hon. the SPEAKER took the chair at half-past two o'clock. PRAYERS. FIRST READINGS. Charitable Gifts Bill, Trustee Bill. THIRD READING.

Education Boards Election Bill. EXPORTATION OF ARMS BILL. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .- This Bill is one that is necessary for the purpose of the security of the Empire and its many dependencies, that New Zealand shall not in any shape or form be used as a depot for providing arms for other countries.

The Imperial Government has expressed a desire that such a Bill should be passed, and therefore I think this Council will be quite pleased to fall in with the Home Government's views. It is a very simple Bill, and merely states that, - "The Governor may, by Proclamation, from time to time prohibit the exportation to any country or place therein named of all or any of the following articles, namely : Arms, ammunition, military and naval stores, and any article which in the opinion of the Governor is capable of being converted into or made useful in increasing the quantity of arms, ammunition, or military or naval stores.

"Such Proclamation may be made whenever in the opinion of the Governor it is expedient in order to prevent the articles specified therein being used against His Majesty's subjects or forces, or against any forces engaged or which may be engaged in military or naval operations in co-operation with His Majesty's forces." I move the second reading of the Bill. The Hon. Mr. JENNINGS .- So as to prevent the possible exportation of something coming under the Schedule of this Bill, I would like to draw the attention of the Minister, so that he might bring the matter under the attention of the Defence Department, to two

turret towers now rusting on the banks of the Waikato River, near Mercer. They have a

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very important bearing on the early history of the colony ; and I think something more meritorious is due these turrets than rusting away. These turret towers were used in the early sixties on board the steamer "Pioneer," running the blockade between Mercer and Ngaruawahia. They are spattered with bullet marks ; and I think it would be a graceful thing for the Defence Department to refurbish these towers and present one to Auckland City, to be placed in Albert Park; and the other might be placed in the Parliamentary Grounds here. These turrets are some of the few links connecting the present with the early and troublous times of this colony. It is only proper that they should be preserved, and placed amongst the

other mementoes of the early times, that they might be an object-lesson to those who come after us. The Hon. Mr. PINKERTON .- I have one objection to what my honourable friend has just said. We want to forget as soon as we can our early feud with the Native race, and the sooner we become fast friends and forget the past, the better. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .- In reply to what the Hon. Mr. Jennings said, I do not see exactly where his remarks apply to this Bill. They are quite apart from the purpose of the measure, and I do not think this Bill is a proper place to deal with that matter at all. There is no proposal to send these turret towers to Samoa, or South Africa ; so it is hardly harmonious with the intention of the Bill. Bill read the second time. MORTGAGES OF LAND BILL. ' The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .-- This is a Bill which, although it is a layman's Bill, and may be regarded with a certain amount of doubt as to whether it has any practical value, still, at the same time, it has run the gauntlet of revision from a very specialised Committee- the Joint Statutes Revision Committee - on more than one occasion. It has there had the attention of very many lawyers, and, whatever was the form in which it was presented to the Committee, we have it now in a workable form. Some lawyers, I know, doubt the advisability of providing another form of cheap mortgage, contending that the forms already in existence are quite sufficient. But I can assure the Council since the Bill has been in the hands of the Legislature this session I have been approached by several persons, representing individuals and companies, who assure me that this legalised form of cheap mortgage will in many ways meet what is felt to be a public requirement. The Bill was brought in originally by a private member some years ago. Since then it has been revised by the Statutes Revision Committee, and this year has been taken up by the Government, who think it is a step in the right direction, in order to put in the hands of private persons an opportunity of doing for themselves what they would have to pay for if they prefer to engage a lawyer. The Hon. Mr. BOWEN .- This Bill, as my Hon. Mr. Jennings honourable friend has said, did come before the Joint Statutes Revision Committee last year, and the Committee made a recommendation that it should not proceed further, after taking evidence. This year, I am sorry to say, I was away when the Bill went through that Committee. It came down here with some amendments proposed, and was withdrawn in consequence of a similar, or, practically, the same Bill having passed the other House. It is a question whether it is advisable to make it very easy to give mortgages at a minute's notice, and without careful consideration. There is every facility under the Land Transfer Act to mortgage land with very little expense, and we have always looked forward in this country-without forcing people to bring their land under the Act-to the time when there shall be only one system of land transfer, and that it should be a simple one and cheap. and facilitating search for title. Now, is it advisable, when this process is gradually going on, and when a large proportion of landed property in the country has been brought under the Land Transfer Act-is it advisable to introduce a third system of mortgage, dealing with the land-an intermittent system, and one which I now venture to say will tend to complicate titles ? This Bill appears to me, at least on the face of it, to get rid of some of the precautions guaranteed by the other Act. I am afraid myself it would tend to what we may call "over the bar" arrangements being made in a hurry between man and man, when one wants money, and the other is prepared to lend it for a consideration. I do not say that this will necessarily be the result of the Bill, but it will tend that way. There is one thing I think ought to be done, and that is to get the opinion of the Registrar-General of Lands as to the effect the provisions of this Bill would have on our present land-transfer system. I do not mean that his opinion should necessarily be final, but it is advisable that a man who had so large an experience in the working of the Land Transfer Act should appear before a Committee to tell us whether the present proposals would create complications, and whether the measure would be an obstacle to our arriving at one system of land tenure and transfer. I do not know what his opinion on the whole question would be ; but, like many others, I think it advisable that he should give us his advice. Earlier in the session, as Chairman of the Committee, I asked him whether he could do so-either by sending me a memorandum to lay before the Committee, or by He said that he giving

evidence before it. would be glad to give the Committee any information in his power, if he was called as a witness. I mentioned this to the honourable gentleman who took the chair in my absence, and I believe the question was brought before the Committee; but they chose to go on with the Bill. I think this Bill-which is identical with the one dropped-should be referred to the Statutes Revision Committee, with a view of getting the opinion of the Registrar-General on it. It can do no harm. It is not a case in

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which we should be in a hurry. The Bill may affect interests seriously, and may interfere with the simplification of the land-tenure of the colony. I thought last year it was not such a Bill as ought to be brought forward by a private member. It is now taken up by the Government. But, at the same time, I do not think there is any reason why the opinion of an officer who has had to deal specially with this question ought not to be laid before the Committee and the Council. I shall move, therefore, after the second reading, That the Bill be referred to the Joint Statutes Revision Committee, specially with the view of taking the opinion of the Registrar-General on the subject. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .- I do not wish the Council to be asked to pass the Bill without having an opportunity of getting the evidence of experts and authorities on its merits; but I think it would be more appropriate to send it to our own Statutes Revision Committee-not the Joint Committee-because the other House has already expressed its opinion by passing the Bill. Bill read the second time. The Hon. Mr. BOWEN .- Sir, I move now, That the Bill be referred to the Statutes Revision Committee, with the view of getting the evidence of the Registrar of Lands on the subject. Motion agreed to. ' PROMISSORY OATHS BILL. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .- Sir, this is a Bill which it has been found necessary to introduce. It deals with two questions : Firstly, there is the question of the position of Justices of the Peace. When a Justice receives a new commission owing to the cancellation of an old commission, and his name appears in a new one, the question is, Should he take a new oath of office? Hitherto the practice has been that he does not take a new oath, and I believe that, the practice having been continued in good faith, and nothing to the contrary being expressed anywhere, the oath has either been not deemed necessary, or is unnecessary from a strictly legal point of view. But, as the question has cropped up, and as it is desirable to place these matters in a perfectly distinct and intelligible form, it is thought desirable to absolutely state that it is not necessary for a Justice of the Peace, on his name appearing in a new Commission, to take a fresh oath of office. Then, the third clause of the Bill refers to the matter of taking fresh oaths of allegiance to the Sovereign for the time being, in the event of a demise in the Crown. Unfortunately this year, on the first day of this session, Parliament was obliged to be asked to take that oath of allegiance. There is no law to say it had to be done. The Governor expressed his opinion that it was desirable and expedient, and it was following in the footsteps of the Mother Parliament in the Old Country, and of other Parliaments throughout the British dominions. It is thought desirable, though, that the question should be so expressed in a law until, at any rate, next week, and he would statute, and therefore it is that clause 3 appears in the measure. I beg to move the second reading of the Bill. Bill read the second time. The Council adjourned at twenty minutes past three o'clock p.m. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. Tuesday, 24th September, 1901. Serjeant-at-Arms-Wednesday Sitings-Supply. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER took the chair at half-past two o'clock. PRAYERS. # SERJEANT-AT-ARMS. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) asked the Premier, What steps the Government intend to take with regard to the appointment of Serjeant-at-Arms ? He understood that Mr. Speaker was unavoidably absent ; but he felt sure members would like to know what steps the Government proposed to take with regard to the matter. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) might say that this matter was under consideration. Perhaps economy might be practised in this case. He did not see why they should pay £200, probably for a month's work. It was just possible they might study economy. At all events, until he had an opportunity of consulting Mr. Speaker, the Government would take no action. Mr. T. MACKENZIE asked if the appointment of Serjeant-at-Arms was not in the hands of

the Speaker ? Mr. SEDDON said the appointment was with the Government. The recommendation was with Mr. Speaker. That was the position. He might say that communications between Mr. Speaker and the Premier had been passing relative to this question. WEDNESDAY SITTINGS. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) moved, That for the remainder of the session Government business take precedence on Wednesdays. He felt sure that this motion would be received with acclamation by honourable members. Hon. MEMBERS. - Oh, no. Mr. SEDDON said, The fact was they had now arrived at that period of the session when it was not unreasonable that the Government should take Wednesdays for Government business. The Government were not going to unnecessarily press business : they had come to the conclusion that patience was a virtue, as members seemed inclined to stop there till Christmas. And it might also be said that the Government-unless they took Wednesdays-desired to prolong the business of the session. As an earnest that the Government did not wish to prolong the session unduly, he moved this resolution. Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa) hoped the Premier would not take away private members'

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give his reasons for that. . There had been several adjournments of the House, owing to certain sad circumstances which had recently occurred, and they had been promised that the private members' work would not be interfered with in consequence of that. Then, on two occasions a debate had overlapped the private members' day, and they were distinctly promised by the Premier that private members' business would not suffer in consequence. Now, just at this particular time, when they were to have the private members' day taken away, he thought it was only due to private members to point out that, through no fault of their own, they had been deprived of the opportunity of getting through their business earlier in the session. For example, at the time of the death of Sir John McKenzie, a Bill of his own was on the top of the Order Paper, and was to come on on the following Thursday, but in consequence of that death it was put on one side, and disappeared to the bottom of the Order Paper. He withdrew the Bill, reintroduced it, and had it placed on the Order Paper again, and to-morrow it was really the first Bill to be considered. There was first the consideration of the report on Mr. Pirani's Bill, and then his (Mr. Hornsby's) Bill would come on, and he might say that as he had telegrams and letters from all over the colony with regard to it, and more especially with regard to the flour-mill trust of this colony, he thought members ought to be afforded an opportunity of discussing that matter on the second reading of the Bill. There was also the question of tied houses which was agitating the minds of a great many people, and he had had letters from Auckland, Christchurch, and Wellington, dealing with that subject, and impressing on him the necessity for doing all he possibly could to get the House to go into this particular question. It was a burning question in Auckland, as it was here in Wellington, and in other parts of the colony. He thought it was hardly fair that the private members' day should be taken away just at this particular juncture. He, for one, would not oppose the resolution if the Premier would take into consideration the promise he had made to members, and he hoped the right honourable gentleman would see his way clear not to take private members' day away until to-morrow week. Mr. T. MACKENZIE (Waihemo) hoped the Premier would not give way on this question. The honourable member who had just sat down had called the attention of the House to something that it was quite impossible for him to succeed in achieving. He had introduced to the House a Bill that was utterly and absolutely unworkable in its character, and if the time of the country was taken up in discussing his impossible theories in order to please the honourable gentleman and to alarm industry, then it was time that members went home altogether. When the honourable gentleman last year introduced his Bill to deal with meat-freezing companies, did he desire that it should become law ? Mr. HORNSBY. - Certainly. Mr. Hornsby Mr. T. MACKENZIE said the honourable gentleman knew in his heart that his whole object was attained in gaining notoriety, which he hoped to achieve on the opportunity of the first reading of that Bill, by making a speech upon it, a most unusual thing at that stage of a measure; and, to his (Mr. Mackenzie's) mind, it was a matter for great

regret that members did not have the opportunity of replying to the statements the honourable gentleman then made on that first speech with regard to the industries of the colony, when it would have been shown how absurd his legislative attempts were. If the industries of the colony were to be threatened in this manner they would not find men of stability to embark in these enterprises, or to come into the colony. They must be given some guarantee of permanence. Mr. HORNSBY rose to a point of order. Was the honourable member in order in discussing the provisions of that particular Bill? Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER did not think the honourable gentleman had got so far as that. Mr. T. MACKENZIE said the honourable member was super-sensitive. He had alluded to the necessity of discussing and passing this Bill, and if he (Mr. Hornsby) opened the discussion he could not object to another member throwing some common-sense light on the subject. The honourable gentleman spoke of discussing the merits of the Bill. Why, his Bill had no merits, and therefore it was no use wasting the time of the House upon it. He supported the Premier's motion, so that they might get on with the real business of the country. Mr. FOWLDS (Auckland City) said the people throughout the country were most anxious that the Cycle Boards Bill should pass this session, and that end might be attained if private members' day were not taken away this week. He had arranged to meet every objection that had been raised so far to the Bill; and if the Premier stood true to his promise to give another day to private members, the Cycle Bill would be passed into law. Mr. WITHEFORD (Auckland City) asked whether, if the resolution were passed, the Government would promise to take up the Cycle Bill in their own hands. Mr. G. J. SMITH (Christchurch City) thought they ought to have some assurance from the Premier that, in the event of Wednesday being taken from private members, they would place Mr. Carncross's Libel Bill on the top of the Order Paper. There was a greater demand for that measure than there was for the Limitation of Profits Bill or the Cycle Bill; and if the House was going to take away private members' day he thought it was unfair that the Libel Bill should not have an opportunity of becoming law. He therefore asked the Premier if he would make provision for the Libel Bill being considered at an early date. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) said that on top of the Order Paper for to-morrow was the School Attendance Bill. It stood at its last stage in the House. If an opportunity were given to pass it on at once to the Council

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there would be no necessity for proceeding with the similar Government Bill before that Chamber. He therefore thought the Premier should take the opportunity of putting this School Attendance Bill through its remaining stage in the House, as it was absolutely necessary they should have a measure of this character on the statute-book this session. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) said, As the object of the motion was to save the time of the House, he would vote for it. But there ought to be appended the condition that the Government should not themselves introduce Bills which were not intended to be passed, and which could not possibly be passed this session. One of these Bills was the Licensing Bill, which the right honourable gentleman had announced his intention of introducing this session. He (Mr. Fisher) had made it his business to inquire who asked for this Bill --- who wanted it. He found that the total abstinence party did not want it. He was confirmed in that view by the honourable member for Wellington City (Mr. Atkinson) and the honourable member for Christchurch City (Mr. J. G. Smith). The brewing interest did not want it, and he would like to be told who did want it. It would be far better to let the licensing question alone. There was sufficient machinery in the existing law to carry out all that was intended by the Legislature, and all that was necessary was to call the attention of the police to the dereliction of duty on their part. If the honourable member for Wairarapa wished the tied-houses question dealt with effectively, that could be easily done. The Premier said the other day that he had evidence to the effect that the tied-houses sections in the existing Act had been evaded. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER said the honourable member could not refer to past debates. Mr. FISHER would advise the honourable member for Wairarapa, if he wished to deal with the tied-house question, to introduce the provisions of a Bill which he

(Mr. Fisher) had introduced some years ago, and he undertook to say that there was no brewer or brewery company in the colony that would be able to evade that measure. In fact, he would advise the Government to avail themselves of the clauses of his Tied-houses Bill if they wished to deal with the question effectively. The introduction of Bills which had no possible chance of passing was unfair to those members who had complained of the non-observance of the Standing Orders, which demanded that questions should be answered, and that unopposed motions should be taken from day to day. Now, there were unopposed motions on the Order Paper, in regard to which he was in a position to say there could be no possible objection. Whether the Government refused to allow those unopposed motions to be taken from some little feeling of pique or not, he could not say ; but, even if there was objection taken, why not take the motions as opposed, and use the time of the House in debating those questions which were of interest to members and to the public in general, instead of wasting the time on those VOL. CXVIII .- 43. Bills which, in the case of one or two at least, he undertook to say they should not pass. He did not care whether they were proposed by the Premier or the Government, or anybody else. An Hon. MEMBER .- Oh ! Mr. FISHER said that was the only method of speech which appeared to be understood. If he voted for this motion, he hoped the time taken from private members would be usefully employed by the Government in pushing on legislation that had some chance of passing. Mr. SEDDON said, When moving his motion, he naturally expected that the fathers of some of the Bills that would have to be destroyed would object; but he was rather surprised at the honourable member for Wairarapa object- ing, seeing that he himself had deliberately executed his own little Bill the other day, ask- ing that it be struck off the Order Paper. How- ever, the honourable member was aware that the Government intended to proceed with a Bill dealing in a different way with the same question, and he therefore would have an opportunity of speaking on the question. regarded the Cycle Boards Bill, he had been assured by its promoter that there would be no objection to it; but the other evening he found there was considerable debate, and progress was reported, and that there was considerable objec- tion, more particularly in the country districts. If the House was prepared to pass it without wasting time over it- An Hon. MEMBER. - It will take a long time to get that through. Mr. SEDDON .- Just so. He believed there was strong objection to it in certain quarters. He was always prepared to give effect to the general wishes of the people; but if there were a number of members who objected to a mea- sure of this sort, and it was still retained on the Order Paper, he would be accused of par- tiality, and of preventing the Government business from progressing. He believed the cycles had come to stay, and there was no doubt they were a great public convenience ; but, like all other legislation of a progressive and experimental character, members would have to be very careful in regard to it or there would be trouble. The experience the honour- able gentleman had gained during the debate on his Bill would enable him to introduce several amendments, and make provision to meet the objections that had been raised, and he would be glad to see the Bill passed through the House in a perfected form at some future time. As to the Libel Bill, he thought that such a Bill should be passed. After what had occurred in the House a few days before, in respect to the Press of the colony, and after what had been said by the honourable member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher), he almost felt inclined to take up and support the Bill of the honourable mem- ber for the Taieri. A little more of that, and his sense of justice and fair-play would call upon him to do something in the way of amending our libel legislation. It had been practically proved recently that there was no criminal libel in regard to publication in book or pamphlet form, and the law in that respect for the safety

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Then, as regards Bills of a debatable character, he would like to know what measures could be introduced that would not be debatable? He did not know of any Bill-either the Licensing Bill or any other Bill -to which some objec- tion could not be taken. There were none on the Order Paper that he knew of at the pre- sent time. With regard to the Licensing Act Amendment Bill, it was well known he took a line of

his own ; it was neither those connected with "the trade," as it was termed, nor the Prohibitionists that influenced the Govern- ment in . respect to this matter. The fact was, the law was defective, and members know that just as well as he did, and the sooner they removed the defects in the law the better for all concerned. If introducing a small Bill of a technical character to remedy existing defects was to excite opposition, he could not help that ; it would be his duty to persevere and to endeavour to get the laws as perfect as possible. One serious blot above all others at the present time was the dropping of licenses in one part of an electorate and taking them up in another. A case had come before him recently where an attempt was being made to remove a license that was forty miles from town, in a country district, to a town, and that a town where the votes of the people had been in favour of no increase in the number of licenses. If they allowed that sort of thing they would allow what was not right or just. If he brought in a Bill to try and stop that, and the majority of the House would not allow that to proceed, they must take the responsibility, but he was determined to do his duty. His honour- able friend Mr. Fisher, in mentioning those who desired licensing legislation, had forgotten to mention the name of Mr. Tunbridge. He (Mr. Seddon) thought that gentleman ought to be able to advise the Government with respect to the working of the laws and the difficulty in carrying them out. Mr. FISHER .- He says you are responsible for the increase of drunkenness in this country. Mr. SEDDON said he could only deny this impeachment. If making the country pro- sperous had tended to increase the consumption of alcoholic liquors, then, of course, he had had something to do with it. And, whilst he re- gretted that people should when in bettered conditions spend some of their substance that way, still he must persevere in making the colony prosperous. He thought what they would have to do in the House was to appoint a censor, not only with respect to Government Bills, but with respect to private members' Bills, and he did not know any one who could fill that position better than the honourable member for Wellington City, Mr. Fisher. An Hon. MEMBER .- What about the School Attendance Bill ? Mr. SEDDON said, As far as he knew, a Bill had just passed the Council which was to come to the House, and the House had just passed a Bill to go to the Council. He would look at the two Bills, and would see which they could Mr. Seddon passed the most speedily he would select. The House divided on the question, "That the motion be agreed to." AYES, 37. Rhodes Allen, J. Hall-Jones Russell, W. R. Bennet Heke Buddo Seddon Houston Smith, G. J. Lang Carncross Carroll Lethbridge Stevens Thomson, J. W. Colvin Massey McGowan Ward Duncan Field Mackenzie, T. Willis Witheford. Mckenzie, R. Fisher Mills Fraser, W. Monk Tellers. Gilfedder Allen, E. G. Morrison Graham Flatman. Parata Hall NOES, 13. Pirani. Hardy Atkinson Haselden Barclay Tellers. Bollard Hogg Fowlds Hutcheson Collins Hornsby. Lawry Ell Majority for, 24. Motion agreed to. SUPPLY. CLASS II .- COLONIAL SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT. Messengers and Office-keepers, £4,937. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) said, He noticed that under the head of " Office-keeper, Auck- land," £255 was expended, and that this year £314 was required. Perhaps the Minister would explain what made up the difference ? Sir J. G. WARD (Colonial Secretary) said the present office-keeper had had an increase in his salary, which was covered by this item. bringing the salary up to \$200. Since then he had been transferred to Wellington, and what- ever salary was fixed for the new officer would be a matter for the Administration. Mr. MASSEY wished to know if the vacancy had been filled in Auckland ? Sir J. G. WARD said, Not yet. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) would like to ask if the whole of the eighteen messengers for whom provision was made were in the big buildings ? Sir J. G. WARD said they were not all in the big buildings. The number would include some messengers now in Parliamentary Build- ings attached to Ministers. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) wished to know where provision was made for the mes- senger in the Government Life Insurance Buildings ? Sir J. G. WARD said, In the Government Life Insurance estimates, at the end of the estimates. Mr. BARCLAY (Dunedin City) would like to know where the office was which was covered by the vote : "Dunedin-Office-keeper, \$110; Office-cleaner, £104 ; and Watchman, £45." Sir J. G. WARD might tell the honourable member that the messengers were generally

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ment, although they might belong to other departments. Mr. HOGG (Masterton) wished to know how it came that this vote was about £650 more than the vote of last year. Sir J. G. WARD said, Because the wages of messengers had been raised 1s. per day. Vote, £4,937 agreed to. Electoral Department, £1,600. Mr. BOLLARD (Eden) would like to ask the intention of the Minister in regard to the Registrar of Electors at Auckland. Last year the Minister promised to hold an inquiry, and the Right Hon. the Premier also promised a deputation in Auckland to hold an inquiry into this officer's conduct. This officer was Registrar for the City of Auckland, Eden, Manukau, and Parramatta. Notwithstanding the promise made by both Ministers, so far as he knew no inquiry had been held, except that the Registrar was in Wellington and gave some explanation to Ministers, and they appeared to be quite satisfied. He wanted to know how long the notorious scandal in regard to this officer was going to be perpetuated. On the 23rd October, 1899, the main roll for the electorate of Eden appeared, and a large number of old residents, who had never changed their address nor asked to be removed, were found to be struck off the roll. As soon as the main roll appeared these people immediately filled up claims and sent them for the supplementary roll, which appeared on the 4th December, the election taking place on the 6th. To the great surprise of hundreds of people their names were not on the roll, although the Registrar had sent out his officers—the police—and they had reported that the claims were genuine. The total number of names on the Eden roll was 5,706, and of that number 4,510 voted, and consequently the 1,196 who did not vote would have their names struck off the roll. Now, on the 5th March a new roll was compiled for the licensing election, and, notwithstanding that 4,510 voted at the general election, the roll came out with 3,808 names; so that 702 people who voted three months previously were struck off the roll. The nominations for the licensing election took place on the 13th March, on the roll of 3,808; but on the 20th March another roll appeared—only a day before the election, although it was dated the 17th—with 841 more names on it. Would any one say that 841 people had registered in the meantime? He challenged the Minister to produce the claims of the people to vote. The rolls spoke for themselves. If the Minister could conscientiously say that this was not rigging the roll, then he (Mr. Bollard) did not know what to say about it. It was well known the way this man manipulated the rolls. It was a public scandal in Auckland. This officer had lost the confidence of the Auckland people, and therefore the Government ought to remove him. He knew that this man was a pet officer, and that they were anxious to keep him in the Government employ; but let the Government give him some other employment, and let the matters rest. If this officer could produce rolls or claims to justify his action, then he (Mr. Bollard) would admit that he had made statements that were incorrect. He hoped the Minister would give an assurance that something would be done with regard to this matter. Sir J. G. WARD said this question was brought up last session, and after the House rose the officer referred to was sent for, and he brought the claims to enrolment to Wellington in order that it might be ascertained whether or not there was justification for the charges which had been levelled against him across the floor of the House. After that investigation was made by a responsible officer, it was found that the Registrar had upon the face of the documents justification for the action he had taken, and that he had not transgressed the law by his refusal to allow certain people to be enrolled. There was, no doubt, amongst some persons a strong feeling against this officer, but the papers showed that he was justified in the action he had taken. While it was the duty of the Government to see that officers properly discharged their duties, it was also the duty of the Government to see that officers were fairly treated. He (Sir J. G. Ward) said that he stated at the Auckland City Hall, in the presence of a large number of the public, that the Government would offer every facility to any one who felt that he had a grievance against the Registrar to proceed against him under the law. As far as the Government could judge at present there was nothing to justify or warrant the Government taking the course suggested by the honourable member. This officer was no more to him than any other officer; but he would not agree,

under pressure, to do what he believed to be an injustice to any one. He might state, further, that, if certain cases were proceeded with under the law, it was probable that revelations would be made which would rather astonish some people. He was referring to some things which had been attempted to be done, and which this officer had stopped. If the matter was proceeded with, information would be furnished - judging by what he had seen - which was certainly an eye-opener to him, and which he believed would be an eye-opener to others. For it to be supposed for a moment that this man was acting for a particular interest was quite a fallacy. It would have made no difference in the election at Auckland whether Mr. King was Registrar or not. The honourable member should not ask the Government to do an unfair thing, when the opportunity was open to him or any one else to proceed against the officer in a Court of law, and the whole of the documentary evidence was available for them. Mr. PIRANI said the Government promised an inquiry. Sir J. G. WARD said the Government did make a preliminary inquiry, and found there was not sufficient evidence to sustain any charge. But they had afforded every facility for any individual person to prosecute this officer in the ordinary way, and no steps what-

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stances he would not be a party to dismiss this officer when nothing was proved against him. Mr. FOWLDS (Auckland City) did not think the action of the Government had been just either to the people of Auckland, to the man concerned, or their own reputation in the matter. At the time of the general election there was a widespread feeling of dissatisfaction amongst the people of Auckland in regard to this officer's performance of his duties, and he believed there was some cause for this dissatisfaction. The point was this : after the election a deputation waited on the Premier placing certain facts before him, and he gave an unequivocal promise that an inquiry would be held. Later on, a public meeting was held, and resolutions were passed demanding that a public inquiry should be held. These were sent on to the Government, and representations were made to him (Mr. Fowlds) on the matter, and both publicly on the floor of the House and privately he had the assurance of the Colonial Secretary that an inquiry would be held. It was all very well for the honourable gentleman to say facilities were offered to enable these people to take action ; but the position was this, these people had what they considered satisfactory evidence on which to take action, and they wanted to take action, but on the strength of the promise of the Government on the floor of the House they were deterred from taking action until it was too late. Mr. SEDDON said it was not too late. Mr. FOWLDS said it was too late ; and if the honourable gentleman did not know the law he ought to look it up. The time had passed within which the people could move in the matter. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) said, As his name had been brought into the question, he might say that he did distinctly promise that an inquiry should be made. But he was not the man to lay a charge against a public officer, and particularly against one who was a statutory officer, working under an Act the same as a Magistrate, without first making sure that there was good ground for taking action. That was the correct course. Members forgot that in the performance of the duties of Registrar the officer was a statutory officer, and as such must accept the sole responsibility of his actions ; it was not the responsibility of the Government at all. He was liable to those persons who were justly aggrieved or injured ; and before they could deal with an officer holding that position they must make sure there was sufficient evidence to warrant them in taking the extreme step. In this case, before anything was done, this officer was called upon by the Colonial Secretary, who went into the whole matter. It was found that there was no breach of faith whatever, and, as a result of the preliminary inquiry that took place, not only did this officer justify everything he had done, but the evidence went to show that, if fault was to be found, it was that he had been more than fair and had erred in a direction quite contrary to what members opposite alleged. Sir J. G. Ward went, certain men left Auckland very hurriedly. And, as the result of this officer doing his duty was probably to make these men leave Auckland hurriedly, was it right that he should be pilloried on the floor of the House and subjected to inquiry? If that sort of treatment was to be

meted out, where were they going to get men to do their duty fearlessly ? It would be impossible to get them. While an officer held a position under the Government, it was the duty of the Government to support him. If there was found to be sufficient grounds to warrant an inquiry, then let an inquiry be held. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) said, " Inconsistency, thy name is Seddon!" The Premier had told members that he had no more right to interfere with this officer than to interfere with a Magistrate ; and yet on the quiet the Premier had actually brought this officer down to Wellington with his papers, and had held a little private inquiry of his own. If a public inquiry was held, and all parties concerned were allowed to appear, they would be sure that what went on would be fair and above-board ; but if the Government was going to bring a statutory officer before them and make him answer to them, and not to the public, there would be an end of it. Mr. SEDDON asked, Who was to lay the charge against this officer ? Mr. PIRANI said, If the Premier appointed somebody to hold an inquiry there would be fifty charges made. Letters had been published in the papers over the signatures of the writers making charges against this officer, and apparently the manner in which this man was carrying out his duties had become a crying scandal. The Premier had spoken of people being obliged to leave the colony in order to escape the consequences of something they had done in connection with the Auckland electoral rolls. If there was any one in the House who made vague irresponsible charges it was the Premier himself. In this case the Premier had no grounds whatever for his assertion. There were bona fide instances where this officer had shuffled and humbugged people until it was too late to get on the roll at all, and he believed he had done this, if the term was permissible, out of pure devilment. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) said, as to the statement of the Premier that certain people had had to leave the colony : if people had broken the law let them have the whole thing out, and let the people concerned take the consequences. The House had had the assurance of the Premier and Colonial Secretary that there would be an inquiry in connection with the conduct of the office of Registrar of Electors for the Auckland City and suburbs, but such inquiry had not yet been held. Instead of that Mr. John King was brought down to Wellington, and he made an explanation which was considered by the Government to be quite satisfactory. It was not satisfactory, however, to the people of Auckland and suburbs. At the last election there were hundreds of names which should have been placed on the roll

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which were not so placed, and there were hundreds of names struck off which should have been allowed to remain. He would give one instance: Here was a man who gave his name, and who said, - "I signed a claim. Mr. King witnessed same. Finding I was not on main roll, I called at Mr. King's office. He said he had no time to talk to me. I then filled in another form. This was witnessed by a Mr. Mason. I then received a letter from Mr. King, and answered it by return of post. Still I was not on the roll. I went to the Magistrate's Court, also to Mr. Toles, Crown Prosecutor, but could get no redress. I tried all I knew, but could not get my vote." Even now, two years after the election, they could find men who would go before & Magistrate and give evidence such as he had already quoted. All they asked for was an inquiry. The people of Auckland had lost confidence in Mr. John King, and nothing would satisfy them except to see him removed from the position he held or a full inquiry into the circumstances. Sir J. G. WARD (Colonial Secretary) was afraid the honourable member would find that there were people in his district who tried to get on the Auckland roll who were not entitled to do so, and that was one of the things the officer in question appeared to be blamed for. Last session he (Sir J. G. Ward) made this statement : that "he would endeavour to have such trouble as had arisen in the past remedied in the future, and he would undertake to have any direct complaints concerning this particular case investigated." In the recess Mr. Fowlds sent in the following telegram :- " I am asked by those who lodged complaint against Registrar of Electors to inquire when the promised inquiry will take place. They are getting impatient, and wondering whether they will be compelled themselves to take the matter into Court .- GEORGE FOWLDS." He

replied to that on the 12th November, from Wellington :- " Re electoral roll for Auckland- City, Par- nell, Manukau, and Eden : I have given direc- tions for an official examination to be made into the whole of the rejected applications for enrolment. As soon as this has been made, and a report furnished to me, I shall decide what course to adopt. - J. G. WARD." When in Auckland he made the following statement at a public meeting :- " Coming to the question of electoral reform, he believed that there were some greatly in- terested in this reform in Auckland. (A voice : ' You are a long time getting that inquiry.')

The Government had to do to all men that which was just and right. In the House of Representatives the condition of affairs at the last general election had been referred to, and it had been decided that an inquiry should be held. The whole of the papers were sent to Wellington, to be looked over by the ap- pointed officers. In the City of Auckland the total rejections had been 4,921. He would read them one or two of the reports of the police officers in connection with the claims investi- gated -- they had all been investigated so far. From those reports, the Government were not prepared to do an injustice to a statutory officer, but they were prepared to remove every obstacle and give every one an oppor- tunity to take proceedings against that officer. The Government found that there had been an attempt to put Chinamen on the roll, and large numbers of dead men; men who had never been in the colony, and men stated to be living in certain streets who did not live there at all. And the police reports backed that up. So far as the responsible officer was concerned, so far as the Government could judge, it had taken place all over the colony. There were a certain number of people who ought to have been on the rolls, and who were left off. But it ap- peared from the correspondence that the officer in question was doing his duty, and that only, in refusing to allow them to go on the roll. (Here Mr. Ward read a couple of police reports relative to bogus claims.) All he could say was that the whole of the correspondence was there, available for those who wished to go into the matter, and the Government would give them every facility in taking proceedings. But they had no right, no matter who the man might be, to make a general charge. If they had a charge, let them make it specifically, and take proceedings against the officer concerned. (Hear, hear, and applause.)"

An Hon. MEMBER .- They were all 4.0. Government supporters. Sir J. G. WARD said, That was not the case. On that occasion there were a number of very strong supporters of the Opposition pre- sent ; and one of them, particularly, was so amazed at the way the meeting had backed him up that he retired immediately afterwards. He wanted to tell the House what further had occurred. A deputation had waited upon him, and he had told them that no objection would be raised to proceedings on the ground of time. An Hon. MEMBER .-- That would not have been allowed by the Magistrate. Sir J. G. WARD said, Surely, if both sides agreed that the point should not be raised, the case could proceed. While this officer was being ruthlessly condemned, it transpired that he had had to take proceedings against two gentlemen who were canvassing for a particular organization in Auckland, and in both cases he was successful. Those cases were reported at great length in the local papers. Mr. FOWLDS asked, What about the charges referred to in my telegram ? Sir J. G. WARD replied that there was no charge whatever made in the telegram. The people had been given an opportunity of taking the matter into Court and had failed to do so. Mr. LAWRY (Parnell) said that this was simply a political squabble. The honourable gentleman who was in charge of the estimates had made it perfectly clear. Before his address to the electors of Auckland, at the meeting alluded to, the honourable gentleman was going to be scorched by the friends of the Opposition ;

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but directly the meeting was held it appeared | open to prosecution, Who would be likely to be as clear as noonday that he was perfectly right, and that his opponents were absolutely wrong. He knew as much of the matter as the honour- able member for Franklin did ; but he did not go about manufacturing grievances, and the result was that few complaints had been made to him. He had seldom seen the Returning Officer during the whole course of the election, but he had told him that his life was being

pestered out of him by members of the Opposition asking him to put bogus names on the roll. As the Colonial Treasurer had clearly put it, if this officer had violated the law there was a redress at law; but they had simply taken the opportunity to air their grievances on the floor of the House, knowing that the officer had no opportunity there of refuting the statements made. He believed it was not yet too late for an inquiry, if it could be shown that an inquiry was necessary, though for his part he did not believe there was any need for an inquiry. Mr. WITHEFORD (Auckland City) said that, as several of his colleagues for the City of Auckland had adversely criticized the Registrar, it was but right that he should say something upon the question. In his opinion, the matter had been grossly exaggerated. The honourable member for Auckland City (Mr. Fowlds) had said there ought to be an inquiry; but there had been an inquiry, for he had held one himself. Some of his constituents had gone to him in trouble, and said they were not able to vote for him, because, although they were old residents, their names had been struck off the roll. As he sympathized with these people, he went to Mr. King and made inquiries concerning them, as he was determined to bring the matter before the Government. His investigation into the matter, however, showed that the mistake lay entirely with the people who had complained, for it was apparent that they had changed their residence and had not notified the Returning Officer of the fact, or neglected to take other necessary steps. He was himself one of the oldest residents in Auckland, and yet found that he was not on the roll, but when he investigated the matter he found that the Returning Officer had simply been carrying out the law of the land, and the consequence was that he had himself been struck off the roll. He did not say the Registrar never made a mistake; any man might make mistakes. Mr. WILLIS (Wanganui) wished to draw attention to a matter which, apparently a very small one, was nevertheless one of real importance—namely, in regard to the pencils used at elections. His attention had been called to this matter over and over again, and he had been asked to make representations on the subject. Instead of blue or red soft pencils hard carpenters' pencils were used, with the result that the marks made were illegible. This might have important consequences in such an election as that at Patea, where a majority of only one occurred. Mr. BOLLARD (Eden) said, in regard to what had been said as to the Registrar in question being a statutory officer, and therefore Mr. Lawry the prosecutor? Why had not Government appointed a Stipendiary Magistrate to hold an inquiry? He undertook to say the rolls would speak for themselves without calling any witnesses, and he challenged the Minister to hold an inquiry. Seven hundred and two who had voted were struck off the roll, the larger majority being persons who never changed their residence, and they were reinstated on the supplementary roll after nomination-day. If this officer were retained in office there would be trouble at the next general election, as his very name stank in the nostrils of the people of Auckland. Mr. CARNCROSS (Taieri) did not know who this officer was, nor did he hold any brief for him, but this accident of voters being struck off the roll although they had voted occurred all over the colony, and it occurred in this way: The Sub-Returning Officers, in ticking off the names after an election, merely made a tick against the name, instead of drawing the pencil right through the name; and when the whole roll came before the Returning Officer for revision there was often a doubt as to which name the mark was opposite. There was no intention to do wrong in the matter. The Returning Officers should be instructed to do as the law provided—to draw the pencil through the name, instead of making a tick against it. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) pointed out that, though in Wellington they had admittedly the most careful, conscientious officer in the colony, against whom no political bias could be imputed, the same mistake occurred here. Mr. HUTCHESON (Wellington City) would be obliged if the Colonial Secretary would give details of the vote of £100 for "contingencies." It had been promised to the House that the details would be given of all these votes. Sir J. G. WARD said the amount was chiefly for rents for the offices of the Registrars. Instead of "contingencies" being voted in a large sum, the items were now divided up among the different departments, and this was one of them. Mr. ATKINSON (Wellington City) wished to point out that the

explanation of the member for Taieri could not account for one single case of the seven hundred to which the member for Eden had referred. The explanation was this : If they had half a dozen John Joneses on the roll, and three did not vote, there was a chance that any of the three who did vote might have the tick attributed to them instead of to the defaulters. The result might be that three John Joneses who did vote would get notice that they did not vote, and that their names were struck off. There would, however, only be three persons who would get the notice, although not the right three; and that at once cut away the possibility of the explanation given by the member for Taieri. The totals given by the member for Eden were that 1,196 ought to have been struck off and 1,898 were actually struck off ; so that it could not be said that this was the ordinary cause of mistakes, as between persons of similar name, or adjacent
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names on the roll. That theory would not account for two names being struck off when only one was entitled to go, and therefore left the whole of the surplus of 702 names unexplained. There must therefore be some other explanation. The Minister had said that the Government " invited prosecution," but that was not exactly the tone of the honourable gentleman when the estimates were before the House last session. And seeing that there was at least \$5,000 of libel on Mr. King in the Auckland papers if the wholesale charges made were false, it was surely for him to have instituted proceedings. The Government might properly have said to him, " Sue and clear your character or go." He (Mr. Atkinson) urged that the only investigation that would be satisfactory would be a public investigation, to which the Press would be admitted, and where anybody might be represented by counsel. He did not know what the investigation was that the Minister invited. Sir J. G. WARD said the Government could not make a charge against the officer. Mr. ATKINSON said, No ; but they could have made a public investigation and invited people to come along to give evidence. It would have been possible to have appointed, say, the Auckland Stipendiary Magistrate. Such a commission would not have been expensive, and the procedure would have been simple. Mr. King might be innocent of the charges made against him, but the Government had not taken the course to clear him if he was innocent. Would the Minister say what was the nature of the inquiry held when Mr. King was examined and his papers investigated ? Mr. King might have proved ex parte, as the Premier's speech suggested, that many claims were properly rejected, but that proved nothing. That he had rejected a thousand properly did not show that he had not rejected another thousand improperly. He would like to ask the Minister whether either Messrs. Watson, Challis, or Mrs. Reeves, whose cases were mentioned by the honourable member for Franklin last year, and were in Hansard, were asked to go face to face with Mr. King to substantiate the specific charges that had been made. Mr. G. J. SMITH (Christchurch City) said he was not in the House last year when this matter was discussed, but, from what he had heard that afternoon, there seemed to be good grounds for an inquiry. The matter, however, was two years old ; and if the member for Eden still thought that an inquiry should be held, why did he not move to have the vote reduced, and so bring the matter to an issue, instead of wasting the time of the Committee in this way. What Mr. Fisher said of the Returning Officer in Wellington might be said of most of the Returning Officers of the colony. Taken as a whole, he thought they enjoyed the confidence of the electors throughout the various districts. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) said that last year an item was reduced by £1, with a specific instruction to the Minister to do a certain thing. Mr. G. J. SMITH asked if the Minister did it. Mr. PIRANI said, Certainly not. The only way to deal with a matter of this sort, where the Minister would not do anything, was to year by year record their protest against it, and place it in Hansard. He desired to draw the attention of the Minister to another matter. The law provided that one person should not hold the two positions of Returning Officer and Registration Officer. He would like to know why Palmerston North had been allowed to be an exception to that law. He thought it was necessary the two offices should be separated, and that the official who had carried out the duties should be formally appointed. He would ask the Minister to make a note of it, so that the

appointment of a Registration Officer would be made before the rush of the work set it next year. Sir J. G. WARD said he did not propose to discuss the Auckland matter further than to say, with regard to the two cases mentioned by Mr. Atkinson, that he was informed they were inquired into, and the Registrar of Electors gave a sufficient answer in both cases. Mr. ATKINSON .- Were the objectors present? Sir J. G. WARD said, No. It was absurd to suppose that, in the case of every charge made against a member of the public service, the Government were going to accept the charge made by an outsider in order to inquire into it. He might with equal force have asked that the Registrar of Electors and Returning Officer in his district should have been dismissed because many names were not on the roll that could have been on, and names were off the roll that should not have been off. What would members think of him if he asked that this officer should be dismissed because he was politically opposed to him? The electors of Awarua would be ashamed of their representative if he did such a thing. As head of the department he had to be just. They had gone into this matter which had been referred to, and there was found to be nothing to justify the charges; yet they were asked to proceed against that man without any charge at all being made against him. An Hon. MEMBER .- There are lots of charges. Sir J. G. WARD .- If the honourable member for Eden wanted the House to believe all his charges, why did he not spend a ten-pound note in prosecuting Mr. King? He would be very glad to look into the matter referred to by the member for Palmerston. It was not intended that anything contrary to the Act should be allowed to continue. Mr. LAWRY (Parnell) said he believed the very grave mistakes which he admitted had been made in Auckland were largely attributable to the fact that the Registrar of Electors for Auckland had twice as much work imposed on him as any man should have. This officer had to deal with the old-age pensions work as well. He thought the Hon. the Minister should lay it down as a principle that it was quite enough for one Registrar to register the electors of one electorate; and he took it that the whole solution of the difficulty, so far as

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appoint a Returning Officer to deal with the City of Auckland electorate alone, and let suburban electorates have their own Registrars. He also thought, as was pointed out by the honourable member for Palmerston, we should separate Returning Officers from Registrars of Electors. Sir J. G. WARD said that was the law now. Mr. LAWRY said, Then give effect to the law. Mr. HASELDEN (Patea) wished to draw attention to the vote "For payment of Registrars who do not hold other appointments in the Civil Service." At the Patea election the Postmaster was also the Returning Officer, and he did not think that was right. If he had been returned by the vote of the Returning Officer as the Premier had incorrectly stated - it might have been a very serious thing for that officer, because there was an impression abroad that the Returning Officer dared not give his casting-vote in favour of an Opposition candidate. the Hon. the Minister could see his way to appoint an outsider, independent of the Government service, he thought it would be a very great advantage. He should also like to know how the vote "Contingencies, £100," was expended. Was that spent in moving co-operative labourers about the district at election-time? Sir J. G. WARD .- Certainly not. Mr. HASELDEN asked, What was that charged to? Sir J. G. WARD said it would be found in the Labour estimates. Mr. HASELDEN said, At any rate, the Minister admitted that those labourers were shifted about the country at election times. Sir J. G. WARD said he did nothing of the kind; he simply replied to the honourable member's question as to where the charges for co-operative labourers were to be found. Mr. HASELDEN also wished to point out that names could be placed on the roll up to the date the writs were issued, and in this way five hundred names were put on the Patea roll the day before the writ was issued, when there was no opportunity to challenge them. If there had been that opportunity, he was sure that three hundred out of the five hundred names would have been struck off the roll. He suggested that the rolls should close fourteen days before the writs were issued, to give an opportunity for challenging. There was also another point: Co-operative labourers

complained that it was known exactly how they voted, or it could be known, because the votes were taken in a tent in the camp. They asked that the ballot-boxes should be carried away to Hunterville or Patca and their votes mixed with the other votes and then counted. The Premier twitted him the other night with having got in by one vote, and that he represented one man. He seemed to forget that when Mr. Heslop was supposed to be returned by one vote he (the Premier) called it a glorious victory, and sent out congratulatory telegrams by the score. Mr. Lawry been looking up the speech of the Hon. the Minister in charge of the estimates, when he addressed the people of Auckland City a few months ago, and the Minister, among other things, told them, "In the City of Auckland the total rejections had been 4,921." Did the Minister mean to say that none of those persons had a legal claim to be put on the roll? In all probability some thousands of them had a legal right to be on the roll, and if they had been on the roll perhaps the election would have turned out differently. In consequence of what took place at the last election, the people of Auckland felt that the business in the office of the Registrar of Electors was not conducted on proper lines. The member for Parnell had stated that the Registrar in question had too much to do. That officer was the Registrar of Electors for Auckland City, for Eden, Manukau, and Parnell, and he was also Deputy Registrar of Old-age Pensions. He hoped the suggestion of the honourable member would be given effect to—that the offices would be separated, and that there would be a separate Registrar of Electors for Auckland City, which was quite enough for one man to attend to. If an inquiry was not held the people would naturally come to the conclusion that there was something wrong in connection with the whole business. Sir J. G. WARD said what occurred in Auckland was this: Perhaps a dozen people went round with rolls, and it not unfrequently occurred that in many instances they got the same person to make separate applications for enrolment. Of course, the Registrar in such a case would accept one application and reject the others. That would account for many of the applications being rejected. It was possible, of course, that some names may have been improperly struck off; but there were no doubt many applications for enrolment which should not have been entertained. With regard to the statement of the member for Patea, he (Sir J. G. Ward) would defy any member to show where a Government officer had been afraid to exercise the right he possessed as an elector. Mr. PIRANI.—I can give you one instance. Sir J. G. WARD.—Who is it? Mr. PIRANI.—I will give the name to the honourable gentleman afterwards. Sir J. G. WARD said he would be very glad to hear it. With respect to the statement made by the member for Patea, he would undertake to say that the Government would change the Returning Officer in that particular district. It was a very improper position that a Government officer should have a charge of that character made against him. It was certainly unjust to him, and the officer ought to be removed, and he (Sir J. G. Ward) would be very glad to see the cause of that complaint removed. With regard to the statement of the member for Franklin, as to an independent Registrar of Electors being appointed for every district, he would say this—An Hon. MEMBER.—What will it cost? Sir J. G. WARD said, You could not get four or five men to do the work of one man for the

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same money. He might mention that the Registrar of Electors for Invercargill also acted as Registrar for Awarua. He was prepared to look into the question and see whether any Registrar of Electors had more work to do than he could properly discharge. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) said that members on both sides of the House had made certain statements with regard to what had taken place in connection with the registration of electors in Auckland at the last election. The Minister would have saved time if he had agreed to a proper inquiry being held. He did not look on what had taken place as being a proper inquiry. In fact, it was no inquiry. There were specific charges made in this case, and one of those charges, to his mind, was quite sufficient to justify the whole of the debate which had taken place that afternoon. It was the case where a man said that he went to the Registrar, signed an application for enrolment in his presence, had the application witnessed by the Registrar, and then his name did not appear on the roll.

The Minister ought to have fulfilled the promise which had been given to have a proper inquiry held. As had been said by members on both sides of the House, there was evidently a universal feeling about this matter, and it was worth while that a proper inquiry should be held. Above all things, it was necessary that the electors should have confidence in the officer who registered their claims to be voters. If they did not feel such confidence, then our electoral institutions were starting on a wrong basis. Surely if the officer was not to blame he had nothing to fear from the public inquiry. If he came out of such an inquiry justified in his actions, then the agitation in Auckland would cease, and those who thought they had any grievance would no doubt also be quietened. So long as the Minister refused this demand for a public inquiry the agitation must continue, and that feeling between the Registrar and the people must continue. It was no use talking about the right of people to take action against the officer themselves, as the law forbade that, as the time within which action could have been taken had passed by. Mr. ELL (Christchurch City) said, When this matter was last before the House the impression left on the minds of members was that the Minister would have an inquiry set up into the charges. Now, no opportunity had been afforded the people making the charges of bringing forward evidence in support of their allegations. Therefore no satisfactory inquiry had been held. Vote, £1,600 agreed to. Audit Office, £6,129. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) asked for particulars of the £218 which had been expended on "Contingencies." Sir J. G. WARD said the items under this head were as follows :- £ s. d. 6 11 Cleaning 3 .. 14 19 Overtime 8 Rent 44 15 0 s. d. 5 2 10 Sundries .. Telephone subscription 26 11 10 Travelling - allowance and 92 12 9 expenses Typewriting machines and 26 18 0 accessories 1. £217 11 4 Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa) wished an explanation of the item, "Audit Officer in London (also \$250 charged to Agent-General's vote), £200." Did that mean that the same gentleman was the Accountant and the Auditor? Sir J. G. WARD said a portion of this officer's salary was received in connection with the Agent-General's Department, and the other portion was paid to him as an officer of the Audit Department in London. An Hon. MEMBER .- He audits his own accounts, then? Sir J. G. WARD. - The Agent-General's accounts. Vote, £6,129, agreed to. Registrar-General's Department, £23,270. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) said there was a clerk named George Augustus Schoch employed in the Registrar-General's Department for the past four years at the rate of 10s. a day. Four years ago the man became bankrupt, and his discharge was granted on the condition that he should pay 10s. in the pound on the debts he owed. He owed £182 12s., there being no assets in the estate. Schoch, in Court, consented to the order in writing, undertaking to pay his creditors 10s. in the pound. He has since been employed for four years at \$190 per annum. Upon the Official Assignee applying to him to pay he declined to do so, but referred that officer to Mr. Seddon. What had Mr. Seddon to do with the matter? Why should this man have the privilege of referring to Mr. Seddon? The Premier very properly declined to interfere, but the Official Assignee was balked in all his attempts to recover anything from this man. He wanted to know whether this man could not be compelled to pay something out of his salary toward meeting his debts. Sir J. G. WARD knew nothing of the circumstances referred to; but, as a general principle, he thought the Government ought not to be asked to interfere between people and their private creditors. They had to see that they acted honestly and discharged their duties properly. On the face of it the case appeared to be an unsatisfactory one; but, unless the House said the Government were not to employ people who did not pay their debts, he did not see how the Government could interfere. Mr. FISHER said the honourable gentleman did not appear to understand the position. His certificate of discharge was obtained by Schoch on the condition imposed by the Court, of his paying 10s. in the pound. It was not merely a case of a Civil servant owing money to some other person. If nothing was done, what were this man's creditors to do?

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Mr. MONK (Waitemata) considered that, in the interests of the public service, notice should be taken of

such cases. There should be no flagrant instances of dishonesty practised by persons in the Government service without the Minister taking cognisance of it. The public could not have confidence in the service of persons who were known to be dishonest. Sir J. G. WARD said the point put by the honourable member was quite a different matter. There were thousands of employes in the service of the colony, and it was for the officer immediately over the employe to see that he conducted himself in a way that would not reflect discredit upon himself or the service, or do anything that would leave a black mark against the service. But if the Government were to interfere for every person who came along, and asked that pressure should be brought to bear upon an officer unless he paid a particular account, there would be no comfort in the service and no peace for the Ministers. He might say he did not know anything about this particular case. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) said that, as to the facts, no person in the land could upset the truth and the perfect accuracy of everything he had said. Mr. HUTCHESON (Wellington City) said there were a number of men who, when on the verge of foundering, had obtained Government employment, but who could never hope on the wages they received to pay their back debts. He knew the extreme adversity that had dogged this man's feet for years, and it would be like drawing blood from a stone to attempt to make him do what was suggested. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) said he did not want to prolong the debate, but as his name had been brought into it by the honourable member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher), he might say that, like his colleague, he knew nothing about it. The man referred to was a temporary clerk, and if temporary employment was given to any one the Government could not be asked to interfere for creditors. If the Judge had made an order on a man who was getting 10s. a day, and who had a wife and a number of children, and was himself in ill-health, still he did not see why his (Mr. Seddon's) name should be brought in. If the order was made, and not carried out, the man was still an undischarged bankrupt. Of course, if they said that no undischarged bankrupt should have Government employment they had a direct issue; but he (Mr. Seddon) must refuse to be put in the position of a debt collector. Mr. FISHER said that this man had been continually employed by the Government for four years. Was that temporary employment? Could a man who had been receiving £190 a year for that time be termed necessitous? If the honourable gentleman would not make inquiry, he would ask him, at any rate, to see that so long as this man was in the Registrar-General's Department he should confine himself to doing his work there, and that he should not be allowed to comment through the newspapers upon the conduct of public men. Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) asked whether much of the work connected with the preparation of the census returns had been injured by the recent fire? Sir J. G. WARD said no serious damage had been done; the census would be complete. Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) 7.30. asked the Minister to give the items of "Contingencies, £236." Sir J. G. WARD said the items were as follows :- £ s. d. Rent of offices for Registrar, Wellington 80 0 0 Clerical assistance (Cooke, Buckeridge, and De 85 10 0 Bakker Cleaning offices of Registrar 34 2 .. Telephones 0 8 0 .. Legal advice 0 5 5 .. Fuel for Registrars 5 4 4 Cabinet-making and painting 4 13 6 .. Advertising 3 6 2 .. Books and periodicals 1 14 0 1 17 Copying-bath and cloths .. Sundries (freight, cartage, lighting, gladstone bag, 6 11 &c.) .. 6 £236 0 0 Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) wished to ask the Minister a question in regard to vaccination. By an Act of the previous year, parents who had not had their children vaccinated, and who had conscientious objections to vaccination, were allowed a certain time within which to apply for exemption. Unfortunately, there were a large number of parents living in the back blocks who had not had their children vaccinated, having conscientious objections to it, but, owing to living in out-of-the-way places, they had not been able to get the exemption certificates within the time allowed. He had received communications from parents who were really not aware it was possible to get these certificates until it was too late, and they wished now to know if the Minister would, in special cases, extend the time for the application for the certificate of exemption. Sir J. G. WARD said if he could legally comply with the request, he would do so. Mr. PIRANI remarked that it would have to be done by an amending law. Sir J.

G. WARD said, Well, he had an amendment of the Public Health Act under consideration at the present time. At any rate, he considered the people the honourable member referred to were entitled to consideration, and he would comply with the request if he possibly could. Mr. HUTCHESON (Wellington City) asked the name of the Registrar of Births, et cetera. and Vaccination Inspector in Wellington. Sir J. G. WARD said it was Mr. Mansfield. Mr. HUTCHESON asked if £225 was all the salary he received.

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Sir J. G. WARD said Mr. Mansfield got an additional sum by fees in connection with the Vaccination Department. Mr. HUTCHESON said, As far as he knew, Mr. Mansfield was a highly qualified officer, and it had occurred to him that £225 was not sufficient salary for him, but there was no item on the estimates to show where the additional salary came in. Sir J. G. WARD said Mr. Mansfield received fees in connection with the Vaccination Department in addition to his salary of £225. Those fees varied in amount each year, and therefore it was not possible to state any amount on the estimates. Vote, £23,270, agreed to. Agent-General's Department, £4,600. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) wished the Minister to give the House some information with regard to the position of the Agent-General. They had been given to understand he was first appointed for a term of three years, and that since then he had been appointed from year to year. If so, it was not a particularly satisfactory position either for the Agent-General or for the colony. He noticed, however, by that evening's Post that the English correspondent of the paper stated that in all probability the Hon. Mr. Cadman would be appointed to the position of Agent-General. He would like the Government to say whether it was intended to make any change in regard to this particular matter. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) said there was no intention to make any change. The arrangement with the Agent-General was that six months' notice should be given in case a change were desired; and the Government, so far as the Agent-General was concerned, had not heard that he was dissatisfied with his position. The Government, on the other hand, were quite satisfied with the Agent-General. Of course, he (Mr. Seddon) could not be held responsible for what appeared in the paper. Mr. MONK (Waitimata) called attention to the great increase in the salary of the Agent-General. There was also this to be considered : that the number of cables he had sent out to the colony containing war news had cost a considerable sum, and many of the messages contained suggestions or insinuations that were distinctly against the interests of the British. One of the cablegrams stated that the enemy had only 25,000 men in the field, when there was at least three times that number. The conduct of the Agent-General, indeed, had gone far to incite hostility against the British Government. His cablegrams were constantly suggesting disparaging conditions between the Boers and the British as against the latter, and, under all the circumstances, he (Mr. Monk) considered £1,250 was quite sufficient for his salary. On every occasion the Agent-General had flaunted his views before the Empire. He announced himself a member of an association having for its object the undermining of the British Constitution ; he had even named one of his children "Fabia," as an indication of his concurrence in its objects. Mr. SEDDON stated that the attack of the member for Waitemata was quite unwarranted. He did not wish to detract from the merit of those who had previously held the office of Agent-General, but he would say that the colony was worthily and well represented at the present time. In respect to the number of Boers in the field, what Mr. Reeves said at the time had since been borne out by facts. There might have been a doubt in respect to a question of the kind, but the official notification that came to hand some time afterwards proved that what he had said was correct. Since then, however, other information had come to light that led one to believe the Boers were much more numerous than was at first supposed. As to his salary, it had to be remembered that there were heavy calls on the Agent-General—calls that former Agents-General were not called upon to meet. Members had only to remember the great number of people who were now in the habit of calling at the office of the Agent-General in London, and if the position was to be properly maintained the salary was certainly not too much. Mr. G. J. SMITH (Christchurch City) wished to enter a protest against the

attack made on the Agent-General by the member for Waitemata. From personal experience he could say that the Agent-General was kindness itself ; and so far as representing the colony was concerned, he had represented it in a manner in no way inferior to any previous Agent-General. He did not think, so far as the Agent-General's salary was concerned, that it was one penny too much. He was not speaking now of the Hon. Mr. Reeves, but of the Agent-General for New Zealand. He did hope that in discussing this matter the honourable member for Waitemata would not bring in the personal element, because he could assure the honourable gentleman that the present Agent-General was thoroughly posted up in matters concerning the colony, and was doing good work for the colony in London, and was in every way a very good representative. Mr. ELL (Christchurch City) regretted very much that the honourable member for Waitemata had given expression to the views he had. He believed the Agent-General was worthily representing New Zealand. With regard to his views on social and radical questions, he (Mr. Ell) was glad the Agent-General had the courage of his convictions, and that, although in a very high position, he was prepared to throw in his lot with the workers in the Old Country. As for his care of colonists, he (Mr. Ell) had had occasion, a short time ago, to give a letter of introduction to a young lad in poor circumstances, who went home to study electrical engineering; and the Agent-General had gone to a great deal of trouble on his behalf, and had written to him (Mr. Ell) saying he was glad to have been in a position to help the lad into a good position in the Old Country. Mr. MONK (Waitemata) said, What he objected to was that the Government had proclaimed that increases of salaries had only been given under necessity, whereas in this instance he said there was no necessity. He thought the

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coming any one holding that position, and it was not until this matter had been brought up by himself that these costly cablegrams had ceased to be sent to the colony. He said that a man occupying the position of Agent-General should be conspicuously loyal to the Empire at all times. He claimed that in many respects the colony had been very badly represented by the Agent-General. Mr. BUDDO (Kaiapoi) would like to point out to the member for Waitemata that at the particular time when the Hon. W. P. Reeves wrote that particular telegram, even the British War Office did not understand the position in South Africa. Was it likely that the representative of this colony, who was in close touch with the War Office at Home, would hold different opinions? He could not possibly allow the idea to go forth that the Agent-General had neglected his duty. He could tell many instances where this gentleman had done excellent work for the local bodies, because it was not generally understood that not only was he Agent-General for the colony, but he also acted for the local bodies who had any orders for machinery in the Old Country. The Lyttelton Harbour Board had largely benefited by the foresight of the Agent-General, who, when the dredge " Manchester " was sent out, insured the machinery apart from the hull, and that was the means of the Board recovering £4,300 from the underwriters. Their matters were attended to regularly by the Agent-General, who had done valuable service for the local bodies. He said the Agent-General was just as loyal as any one else in the colony, and at the time referred to he felt that the Agent-General had been somewhat misled by the information practically given out by the War Office. Mr. HOGG (Masterton) said there was no more loyal man in the British Empire than the man who had been assailed by the honourable member for Waitemata, and he ventured to say that had the Agent-General been sitting in his accustomed place in the House the honourable member for Waitemata would not have levelled such charges against him. The colony at the present time was represented by a real live Agent-General, who was able to hold his own on the platform or in the Press, and who, when New Zealand had been assailed time and again, had done extremely valuable service. The salary of £1,500 was by no means unreasonable, considering the valuable work he was continually doing for the colony. He was told that, no matter who visited England from the colony, the Agent-General received him courteously and tendered him the best advice, and gave him every assistance in his power. That was not the state of affairs that existed a

few years ago, when only the select few were looked after. So far as the charges brought against the Agent-General were concerned, what he despatched in his cablegrams was both reliable and accurate. The Agent-General had never identified himself with either one extreme or the other ; he was neither pro-Boer nor jingo, and he was satisfied the honourable gentleman Mr. Monk without a particle of evidence to sustain his charges. Mr. T. MACKENZIE (Waihemo) said he had listened with very great pain to the statement of the honourable member for Waitemata. He might say that no men ever fought harder in this House than Mr. W. P. Reeves and himself, and therefore in what he was about to say he was not talking with any party or personal bias in his favour. He had three years' close personal contact with Mr. Reeves in London as Agent-General, and he said at once his previous salary was insufficient for the work he was doing there. It was all very well for the honourable gentleman to make his statements, when he lived on his farm at Auckland, where £500 would go as far as £1,500 at Home. The position of this colony was not properly sustained by the salary previously given. It was not sufficient to keep ordinary expenditure going, let alone have a surplus to return the fetes and banquets the honourable gentleman alluded to; and no man occupying Mr. Reeves's position could be constantly fêted without returning these kindnesses. The Agent-General must not be under any obligation to any person, and giving a man no more than £1,250 to represent the colony at Home put him under the obligations he should not be under. Then, the honourable gentleman said the Agent-General was disloyal at heart. The honourable gentleman had no right to make that unjust and untrue statement, simply because the Agent-General did not go down on his knees and pander to the extreme jingo feeling prevalent at the time. The Agent-General's figures, when afterwards properly tested, were found to be more accurate than those supplied at that time. The honourable member also stated that he did not represent this colony efficiently-that the interests of this colony were not properly represented at his hands. You could not always have a man familiar with every interest in the colony. He could say that Mr. W. P. Reeves, take him all round, had done the work of Agent-General well, and where he was not familiar with a question he took the utmost trouble to get the most reliable and up-to-date information upon such question from those who were best fitted to give it, so that he might the better be able to represent the interests of this country. It was unworthy of some speakers to cast reflections upon previous occupants of the office of Agent-General. One loud-voiced democrat, the member for Masterton, had stated that the previous Agents-General were unapproachable, unless you happened to be connected with Club life, clearly pointing to the previous occupant of the office, Sir Dillon Bell. He (Mr. T. Mackenzie) had heard it stated that Sir Dillon Bell was unapproachable ; but he thought that one of the reasons why that gentleman did not figure so largely, perhaps, in the papers was because he did not take any trouble to make himself popular with the Press, and, therefore, his invaluable work and doings were not made so prominent as those of successive Agents-General. However, he (Mr. T. Mackenzie) would say that there had been no more kindly gentleman who had occupied the position of Agent-General than Sir Francis Dillon Bell, and any one who went to him was sure to receive his utmost assistance. One honourable member said that Mr. Reeves surpassed all previous Agents-General. He (Mr. T. Mackenzie) would say that no Agent-General during his occupancy of the office held anything like the position which Sir Dillon Bell occupied. Sir Dillon Bell was regarded in all quarters as the Premier Agent-General of the Australasian Colonies in the Old Country, and no one ever surpassed him in that office. His influence was enormous with the Home Office, and he was everywhere regarded with the highest respect. He (Mr. T. Mackenzie) thought that this colony had never paid him that tribute which ought to have been paid to him. He ought to have been appointed to the Legislative Council when he returned to the colony, and his valuable experience secured to New Zealand. Instead of that, he was barely received by any one when he landed on the wharf, and the Government was unrepresented ; and that after giving twelve years of most

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distinguished service to his country. Mr. ELL said the Agent-Generalship should not carry that position. Mr. T. MACKENZIE said, Listen to this novice to political life saying Sir F. D. Bell should not get a position in the Legislative Council ! No man had had a more distinguished career. Almost every position in public life were enjoyed by him; and, when they considered the utter absence of claim to seats in the Legislative Council of many men who had been so appointed, and saw such men passed over as the late Sir F. D. Bell, it filled him with disgust with our Government, and our public institutions. He wished to be as economical as any member of the House, but he did not consider the salaries now paid to many of the officers in the Agent-General's office were sufficient for the work done ; although Mr. Cameron's salary had been increased, and although the Auditor's salary had been increased by £50, he considered it ought to have been increased by £100, because no more capable officer was to be found than Mr. Palliser, and he was inadequately remunerated. The cost of living in London was much greater than the cost of living here. If the colony was to be represented as it ought to be, they ought to pay their representatives salaries equivalent to the responsibilities of the various offices. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) said they had just been treated to the old, old story, of men being called upon to occupy high positions at salaries too low for those positions. The member for Waihemo told the House that the present Agent-General received much too little salary for the high office he had been called upon to occupy. Mr. Reeves knew all about that before he took the position. He broke his neck, so to speak, to get it-he climbed over every consideration in his haste to get the position, and then, when he got it, there was the usual clamour for more salary. Mr. SEDDON .- The Hon. Mr. Reeves did nothing of the kind. He hoped the honourable member would be just. It did not come from him, it was done voluntarily by the Cabinet. Mr. FISHER said he did not care one way or the other ; but there was one thing he did care for, and that was this : it had been said that the present Premier when he left New Zealand was going to England to fill the position of Agent-General. The present Premier was going to do nothing of the kind. That position was altogether too small for the present Premier. But coupled with that statement there was another statement-namely, that Mr. Reeves was going to come back here to occupy the position of Premier. Well, he hoped Mr. Reeves's head would not ache until he occupied the position of Premier of New Zealand : but such a probability was not beyond that modest young man's expectations. The member for Masterton referred to Mr. Reeves moving in the best society in London. He (Mr. Fisher) had nothing to say against Mr. Reeves. He might mix with the best or the worst society-that had nothing to do with him (Mr. Fisher). But in this country Mr. Reeves was an out-and-out democrat, until he got through the back-door into the Wellington Club and joined the best society in Wellington ; and there were reasons for that which perhaps the member for Waihemo knew. He might point out, however, that this democrat par excellence, who denounced every landowner in the country as a social pest, and who called Sir George Grey "an irreconcilable foe to settlement "-Mr. Reeves himself owned five thousand acres in this colony. However, he might say in conclusion that he had no objection to Mr. Reeves retaining his position as Agent-General, so long as he did not come back to this colony in the expectation of filling the office of Premier. Mr. WITHEFORD (Auckland City) said he supposed he had seen as much of the Agent-General's Office in London as any member present, and he could testify that this colony had been very worthily represented by both Sir Westby Percival and Mr. W. P. Reeves. He had seen the work they had done in London, and the only complaint he had to make against our present Agent-General was a complaint which he had made against the present Government-namely, that he reflected the sentiments of the Government in regard to literature and politics, but he did not think he represented our industry and commerce to the extent it should be represented. What we really wanted in London was a business-man like his friend the member for Waihemo, or his friend the member for Waitemata ; and what they really wanted was to get a better price in England for the products of the colony-to get as much British capital as possible for our produce, and introduced into our goldfields and other enterprises. Then, the

honourable member for Christchurch City (Mr. Ell) - whom he admired for his conscientious advocacy of what

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General as acting well in regard to social and radical questions, and the honourable member stated that Mr. Reeves had secured to a Christ-church lad a position in a mercantile house in the Old Country. What we wanted was a Government and a representative who would have our lads and those of London introduced into industrial and mercantile positions in this colony. He thought the able men who formed the Government of this country should lay down a policy of industrial progress, and endeavour to find avenues of labour for the lads and men of this country. He recognised the services to the colony which had been performed by the Agent-General, but he wanted also that the question of £ s. d. should be studied, and that our commercial interests should be closely attended to. He trusted that the salary of the Agent-General would be retained at £1,500 a year. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) said the question of the salary had been settled twelve months ago. The Agent-General had never asked for an increase at all ; it had come voluntarily from the Government, and was fully indorsed by members and the people of the country. Considering the increase of business in connection with that office, he really did not think £1,500 was commensurate with the work done. He deprecated bringing on to the floor of the House the private business arrangements of the Agent-General, who was not there to reply to anything that might be said against him. He undertook to say that if ever Mr. Reeves thought fit to return to New Zealand he would be welcomed back by the people of the colony. Mr. ELL (Christchurch City) said he had not intended to cast the slightest reflection upon Sir Dillon Bell. He was only speaking on the question of the granting of titles generally. Mr. WILLIS (Wanganui) considered that in one particular work alone the Agent-General had earned his salary, and that was in his reply to attacks which were from time to time made on the financial position of the colony, for which the members of the Opposition were not altogether guiltless. Mr. COLLINS (Christchurch City) considered the colony had had no better Agent-General than Mr. Reeves, and he was sorry to hear members endeavouring to defame the character of an absent politician. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) asked for a list of the items coming under the head of "Contingencies, £331," expended last year. Sir J. G. WARD .- The "Contingencies" for the Agent-General's Department were :- 8. d. 4 8 Furniture, &c. 29 Legal expenses 4 6 6 . . Office cleaning 36 15 8 88 Overtime 0 0 . . . Petty cash 65 8 10 . . 20 Postages 7 6 Telegrams, &c. 13 10 8 Travelling .expenses 4 17 0 .. Mr. Withetord Typewriting 41 7 1 .. Sundries 26 16 5 . . 4 344 19 0 Recoveries : postage, &c. 13 10 £331 9 4 Vote £4,600 agreed to. Printing and Stationery Department, £23,175. Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa) wished to call the attention of the Minister to the startling increase of £5 given to the forewoman of the girls' room-an increase of from £115 to £120. It was enough to ruin the country ! There were considerable increases in salaries in different departments; yet the forewoman of the girls' room had received the "prodeegious" increase of £5! How did the Minister arrive at the conclusion that the forewoman was entitled to only £5 increase ? Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) said that on the first item he made reference to a little volume printed at the Government Printing Office. He did not want to go into details about it, but if the Minister did not remember what was said he would repeat it for his benefit. There was also the question of type-setting machines in the Government Printing Office. For himself, he could see that a saving of \$8,000 a year could be made in this one department, by the use of the monotype. It was an extraordinary thing, if a saving to that extent could be made, that the Government did not take steps to make it. There was, no doubt, something in the sentimental idea which had been expressed by the Premier-that it was not desired to throw a number of men out of work. It had to be remembered, however, that most of the men who were given work were casual workers, and their employment for a few months in the year really created a large amount of casual labour that was not beneficial to the colony. If machines were employed, these casual labourers would have to find an outlet in some other direction.

and if they drifted out of the trade altogether it would be a benefit not only to the trade but to the taxpayer. Mr. HALL . JONES (Minister for Public Works) thought it would be admitted that it would have been unwise to have got lino- types last year, because there were improved machines at work now that could be obtained at a third of the cost of the linotypes, and it was possible that in the future still greater improvements would be made in type-setting machines. For himself, he had not had an opportunity of seeing the work of the monotypes. He had been informed that some of them were in the colony, and it was his intention to look into the matter and inquire into their worth. Of course, it had to be remembered that a machine would not do all the work that was required in the Printing Office. No doubt the introduction of machines was a question the colony would sooner or later have to face. but until they had found out what was the best machine it was wise to be careful in making changes. He thought the colony had gained

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year. Regarding the question of increased expenditure, which was referred to by the member for Palmerston on the first item, he wished to say the expenditure was not so great as was supposed. The credits in 1891 amounted to £10,818, and last year to £21,329. It was easy to see how the difference had been brought about : the credits had increased on account of the work of the different departments having increased. Another matter the member for Palmerston had referred to was the book which it was alleged had been destroyed. Well, the honourable member was altogether misinformed in that matter. The books were not destroyed. He (Mr. Hall-Jones) had been so informed by the Government Printer. Mr. WILLIS (Wanganui) could not agree with the Minister on what he had said about the type-setting machines. Now that the mono- types had come in and had been tested, and had been proved to be serviceable machines, did the Minister still protest against their use ? So greatly was he impressed with the utility of the machine that he was ordering one himself. If monotypes were ordered for the Government Printing Office their cost would be saved in less than two years. At present about .£15,000 was paid annually for type-setting, and #6,000 or £8,000 of that amount would be saved by the use of the monotypes ; yet the Minister coolly said they were saving money, because they were putting off getting machines. He held it was clearly the duty of the Government to make a start. If they were frightened to get many machines, let them get only a few and test them. Practical men who understood the subject would agree with him that a large saving could be made to the colony. Mr. HALL - JONES said the position was this: If the Government had purchased lino- types last year for £700 apiece, and could get monotypes this year for £250 apiece, nothing had been lost by the delay; on the contrary, the colony had saved money. He had not yet met any one who had seen the monotypes at work. Of course, he wished to obtain all information possible about them, and it was a question for consideration whether, if the necessary information came to hand, provision should be made on the supplementary estimates or not. Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa) moved, That the vote be reduced by £1, as an indication to the Minister in charge of the department that he had not dealt fairly in the case of the fore- woman of the girls' room. If a woman was placed in a responsible position she had a right to be properly paid for her work. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) did not wish to imitate the Minister and go back to 1890 for a comparison for the present printing vote ; he would only go back two years and draw attention to the enormous increase in the gross vote. Two years ago the gross vote was \$42,176, and the net £26,463. Last year the gross amount spent was £50,704. Now, he wanted some information as to whether an item like this book about the Premier's trip to the vote. He thought, at the very lowest estimate, the 2,500 copies of the book would cost £200, and he would like to know whether that was charged under the credits or whether it came directly under the printing vote. He would also like to know from the Minister whether, as Minister in charge of the Government Printing Office, he had authorised the printing of this book. He said it was an improper use of the power of Ministers to print accounts of their own private peregrinations at the Govern- ment

expense. It had been published that the cost of that trip was something like £1,100. Well, there was an item of £1,100 on the Marine vote in connection with the trip, and something like £592 in another portion of the estimates, making, with this £200 for the book, nearly £1,900, and Goodness knew how much more which they knew nothing about. Mr. HALL-JONES said that any sales from this work would be amongst the credits. A large number of islands had been attached to New Zealand, and he quite expected the honourable member would have congratulated the Government for printing a work that would enable the people of the colony to get some information about these islands. The honourable member said the work cost £200, and he thought that was a very cheap way of educating the people as to what these islands produced, their population, and any other information about them. It was an educational work, and a work which was appreciated by those who had read it. Mr. PIRANI would like to ask the Minister whether this was charged under the printing vote. Mr. HALL-JONES said, Yes; under the general printing vote. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) was very glad the subject of this book had been referred to by the honourable member for Palmerston, because there was no doubt that, whether it was included in this vote or not, it would have to be paid for by the people of the colony. He wished to say he thought it a most useless, unnecessary, and wasteful expenditure. Of what value was the book, and what information did it contain? He noticed it contained a number of complimentary references to the Premier, and a large number of his pictures; but, except as an advertising medium for the Premier, it was not of the very slightest value. He would like to quote one passage in regard to the Premier's visit, where he said, - "The King was the owner of a fine portrait of Her Majesty the Empress of India, and he was very delighted when promised by our Premier a large photograph of himself (Mr. Seddon) to act as a companion picture." That was the sort of stuff the taxpayers of this colony were called upon to pay for. Mr. SEDDON said the photograph had been so much appreciated that not one of them had been sent back, but on the contrary had been retained with pleasure, and caused an interest in the Islands. Mr. MASSEY asked, What was the use of

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Postal Department to the cost of carrying it back to Wellington. He knew it would not be of the slightest use to propose reducing the total vote as a protest against this sort of thing, because such a motion would not be carried, but he took this opportunity of recording his protest against it. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) said he did not know why the honourable member for Palmerston had such a strong objection to the visit of the Premier to these islands and the publication of this book. It was the member for Palmerston who told the House that the engagement of Mr. Tunbridge at Jubilee time more than paid this colony for all the expenses of the Premier's visit to England. Was this book not sufficient solace, for this reason: that the Premier when he embarked on this voyage was in a very feeble state of health, and when he returned was quite restored to his usual vigour. But he was sorry to say, although the Premier derived so much benefit from that visit to the Islands, he felt himself compelled, at a meeting held in Wellington on the 17th March, to say that "he felt he was becoming an old man, and at times tired of the cares and worries of official life." It seemed that the trip to the Islands had not had a very lasting effect. However, the pleasures and incidents of the voyage were detailed and placed in historic form in that book, and went down to posterity as the visit of the King of New Zealand to the many kings of the cannibal islands. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) had not intended to allude to the contents of this book, but, as the Hon. the Minister for Public Works had stated there was a great deal of useful information in it, he would like to point out that certainly there was some truth in the statement of the Minister, because, for instance, what more useful information could be desired in an official publication than this: - "There was only one very small buggy available, so Mr. Seddon mounted his pony, which, although not apparently built to carry 20 stone, did its noble best, and the pride of carrying a real live Premier into the presence of a king gave it prodigious strength, for it performed the feat without turning a hair or rendering necessary

a prosecution for cruelty to animals. Had the pony been given, like Balaam's ass, the power of speech, it would not have corroborated the poet, who said, 'How sad it is to say farewell !' Why, Mark Twain was not in it compared with that book. The passages of unconscious humour from beginning to end of the book were enough to make a cat laugh. He wondered that the author had not put his name on the outside, although he was told that in the first edition the author's name was there. They were told by the Minister that the first edition had not been destroyed, and that the department would be recouped for the expenditure by the sale of the work. Now, he would guarantee that if the Minister would offer copies of the first edition for sale in the shops of this town they would fetch very good prices. Mr. Massey the cost of the country as part of the official printing of the colony. He did not wonder that the expenses of administration in very many departments were going up by leaps and bounds. The expense of this department compared with 1898 had increased something like £12,000. This year the cost of printing would be very much higher than proposed, although there was a larger amount on the estimates, because there had been a much larger expenditure-and that was probably justifiable-in connection with the Royal visit. It seemed to him that this department was growing at such a rate that, unless members took the matter into their serious consideration and stopped this enormous expenditure, a suggestion made by the Premier in the Financial Statement with respect to the reduction of salaries might arise. He might say, in conclusion, he thought something should be done in regard to this expenditure, which was growing at such a rate, and, as he had pointed out, upon such extravagant and useless work. Mr. HALL-JONES said the net expenditure in 1890 was £23,700, and the net vote proposed for this year was £23,175, thus showing that although the work had so largely increased, yet Parliament was asked to vote a less sum than was voted ten years ago. In 1890 the railway work amounted to 8,670,000 copies, and last year to fourteen million copies ; for the Post Office sixteen million copies in 1890, and thirty-four million copies were printed last year. The total number of copies for 1890 was thirty-one millions, and for 1900 sixty-one millions. There had been an abnormal amount of work done for the Railway Department last year, and for the Postal Department the amount of work done was larger than had ever been done for that department before. This year, perhaps, the amount of work would not be so large. That largely accounted for the increased expenditure of last year. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) said that in 1890 the credits were £8,500 and the total vote was £32,200, as compared with this year of £50,704, so that actually there was nearly double the amount in printing. Mr. HALL-JONES .- How are you going to get over the large increase of work turned out for the Postal and Railway Departments, the vote asked for being only £23,175 ? Mr. PIRANI said the Minister must not think that members were a lot of children. In referring to the millions of copies of works printed for the Postal Department the Minister included telegraph-forms. But it was not in connection with the printing done for other departments that he made any complaint at all. He would say this: that if the printing absolutely necessary for the State was only done, and if up-to-date machinery was employed, instead of the gross cost of the department being £50,000 it could be reduced to £30,000. Mr. HALL-JONES said he only wanted £23,000. Mr. PIRANI said, Well, instead of the net cost being £23,000 it could be reduced to

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ment office printed the tickets for the Railway Department because they had special machinery for doing so, and because it would not pay private firms to purchase that machinery on the chance of getting these tickets to print ; but he ventured to say that, generally speaking, the district railway printing was done cheaper than it was done at the Government Printing Office. He felt certain that if up-to-date machinery were obtained, and if the Government Printer were allowed to put his department in a thoroughly efficient state in that respect, there would be a great saving in this department. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) hoped the Hon. the Minister in charge of the Government Printing Office would not rush into the purchase of either the linotype or the monotype He did not know whether these machines. machines were

suitable for turning out work of very wide measure—say, thirty "ems." H ■ assumed that in this matter they would be guided by the Government Printer. Newspaper-work done by these machines in this colony was to be taken as a guide, he certainly did not think it would be regarded as satisfactory by any competent printer. It could not be regarded as first-class work. He would recommend the Government not to hurry the Government Printer, but to allow him to exercise his judgment in this manner. Mr. WILLIS (Wanganui) said the question was whether the matter would be left to the Government Printer. If it were left to him, he (Mr. Willis) would be satisfied, because he believed from that gentleman's experience he knew perfectly well what was the best course to adopt. With regard to the linotype and monotype machines, there was only a certain class of work that required the wide measure referred to by the honourable member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher), but there was a vast quantity of other work which had to be done with a narrow measure. These machines had been adopted all over the world, it was time that the Government considered whether they should not be introduced into the Government Printing Office. If the Government Printer was given a free hand, his opinion was that it would not be long before these machines were introduced into the Government Printing Office. With reference to the statement that good work could not be done by machinery, he had seen book-work done on the linotype machines the excellence of which had surprised him. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) said it must be remembered that the linotype in the private printing-offices had displaced a large number of men, and that had led to a considerable amount of distress. Now, the course he considered should be taken was not to suddenly displace a large body of men, but to gradually draft them away. Mr. WILLIS.—That is what I advocate. Mr. SEDDON said that was what the Government intended to do. The Government had been placing some of those thrown out of VOL. CXVIII.—44. employment for others, and if the matter were left to the Government they would do what was in the best interests of all concerned. As to the criticism on his travels in the South Sea Islands, he was looking forward to the time—and it would certainly come—when members would not ridicule his visit to the South Sea Islands, but would admit that the inclusion of the islands which had resulted therefrom was a great benefit to the colony. Mr. HUTCHESON (Wellington City) had very grave doubts as to any benefit accruing to the colony from the possession of a few little atolls eighteen hundred miles distant; but what he protested against was the Premier charging the people of New Zealand for the publication of an advertisement for his own vainglory. He would not have alluded to this publication at all but for the fact that the Premier had charged the people of New Zealand for it. Here was an extract from the book he alluded to:—"The vessel rolled, but the headlong plunging ceased; the motion became only a heaving, twisting lurch, instead of a series of crashes, and the direct pummelling by Neptune was over. It was about time. One of the male passengers was asked soon after we turned whether he could eat anything yet, and replied that he had just had 'a good feed of seidlitz powder'—quite light and æsthetic diet." It must be exceedingly interesting to posterity to know how much depended on "a good feed of seidlitz powder," and would go a long way towards securing a "Greater New Zealand." But that was only one example of the lavish use the honourable gentleman made of the people's money. They had also the MeKeague incident. Mr. HALL-JONES said that had nothing to do with the Printing Department. Mr. HUTCHESON said the amount involved was paid for by the taxpayers of New Zealand. Then, there was the book entitled "Old Marlborough." Of course, the Government Printer did not do that, but the work came out with the imprimatur of the Government Printer upon it, and in all probability they would see a vote for the amount brought down on the When honourable supplementary estimates. Members saw how this department had been abused, it made them wonder where it was going to stop. Let them take as an instance those slobbering posters issued in connection with the visit of the Duke of York. If he could get one member to divide the House with him he would take an opportunity, by moving a resolution, of expressing his disapproval of the abuse of the people's rights in connection with the publication of such things simply to satisfy the vainglory and the desire for

self-advertisement of the Premier and his colleagues. If they wanted to advertise themselves, by all means let them pay for it. Mr. HALL- JONES said the book " Old Marlborough " was not printed in the Govern- ment Printing Office ; the McKeague's book was not printed there ; nor did he believe that any of the illuminated cards in connection with

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that office. Amendment negatived. Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) asked for the items included in the sum of £223 expended under head of " Contingencies " last year. Mr. HALL-JONES said the contingencies for the year 1900-1901 were as follows :- £ 8 18 Medical fees, accidents in workrooms Post and Telegraph Department, 46 17 telephones and repairs .. Engraving blocks 79 13 Cleaning windows, and removing 38 19 rubbish, &c. . Postages 26 18 Cable messages .. 6 18 Lands and Survey Department 1 12 Labour Department, fees 2 . . Repairing hand-cart 3 12 Cutting stamp plates, and sharpen- ing saws 1 Sundries 6 .. £223 0 0 Mr. HUTCHESON (Wellington City) moved to report progress. Motion negatived. Vote, £23,175, agreed to. Public Health Department, £12,784. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) thought the Minis- ter might give the House some information about this department. In the foot-note it was said that the money asked for was provided last year under the " Miscellaneous services " vote. That might be so, but the only sum asked for last year was £3,000, of which £511 was ex- pended. This year a sum of £12,784 was asked for, and he had no doubt that every penny would be required. Of course, the setting-up of the department was the outcome of the passing of the Public Health Act of last year. How- ever that might be, he wished to say he had his doubts as to whether the people of the colony would get full value for the money it was pro- posed to expend under this heading. Sir J. G. WARD said, When the House passed the Public Health Act last year honour- able members fully comprehended what they were doing. They were establishing in the colony a system that was intended to be for the general protection of the people against the inroad of bad health or imported diseases. Another object that was aimed at was the prevention of troublous diseases within the colony itself. He believed the Public Health Department of the colony had already saved hundreds of thousands of pounds to New Zea- land. He was sure members would admit that when they remembered what had taken place in New South Wales as a result of the invasion of the bubonic plague there. As a matter of fact, they had not recovered from it yet, and up to date that country had lost enormously through it. New Zealand had exerted vigilance in the matter, largely due to the efforts of the Public Health Officers, and, as a result, the disease had not appeared in the colony, except Mr. Hall Jones bers were not agreed whether it was actually there or not. Now, he wished to tell the House that in the Auckland District Dr. McGili had been appointed to the position of District Health Officer. He had a diploma of public health. Dr. De Lisle had been appointed in Napier, subject to his obtaining a diploma of public health, and finding a substitute to act d. 8. in his absence. In the Wellington Provincial 6 District Dr. Valintine had been appointed, and in Otago Dr. Ogston. Those were all the 2 appointments that had been made as permanent 0 District Health Officers. When he said " per- manent " he meant that they were all subject 0 to a month's notice in the event of their ser- 0 vices not being required. In the other districts 4 the department had made the following acting 6 appointments, namely: Dr. Symes, Canter- 2 0 bury, £150 per annum; Dr. Anderson, Blen 0 heim, \$50; Dr. Roberts, Nelson, £100; Dr. C. Morice, Westland, £150. Dr. Morice would 6 4 take up his duties within the next month or so. 5 0 In addition there was a Native Public Health Officer, Dr. Pomare, at a salary of \$300 per annum. He might say that the work that had been done by the Native doctor, who was able to speak with the Natives in their own tongue, had been very good indeed, and was calculated to do a great amount of good to the Native population of the colony. He would like to point out that in these Public Health estimates there were included several large items that had been taken over from other departments. There were "Inspection of vessels, £1,600," and " Vac- cination, £1,500," which had both been taken over. There was a sum of £3,100 in the vote that was simply transferred from other depart- ments. Mr.

MASSEY (Franklin) asked for the details of the "Contingencies," amounting to \$2,600. Sir J. G. WARD said the details were as follows :- Fumigating vessels, &c. 200 Bacteriological incubators 60 .. Serum 405 .. Microscopes .. 150 .. Travelling-expenses of all officers, including Chief Health Officer and Sanitary Inspectors . 1,000 Bacteriologist 150 .. Analyst 100 .. Office rent 200 . Miscellaneous 350 . . . £2,615 The Public Health estimates in Victoria amounted to nearly four times the sum asked for in New Zealand. He might state that about ninety letters a day were going out of the Public Health Department at present, and these were very largely replying and sending out generally information on health matters to public bodies and the people generally. So far it had proved itself to be a very useful department. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) said, He did not mind what number of Health Officers

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Health Department was; he objected to no- thing in the direction of the cure of disease, but he did object to the setting-up of another disease. One could not visit a railway-station or a post-office throughout the country without being confronted by one of these awful placards dealing with disease. It seemed impossible to turn a street-corner without falling foul of a microbe or getting hold of a handful of bacillus. He thought the daubing of these placards all over the country would lead people to believe this was the most unhealthy country in the world, whereas he was under the impres- sion that New Zealand was the healthiest country in the world. He thought the Govern- ment were running the Health Department to death. He asked the honourable gentleman if he could not see his way to pull these pla- cards down, or at least to put no more up. Mr. BUDDO (Kaiapoi) said he could not help thinking they were running riot a little in the matter of extraordinary diseases in this colony. Somehow or other people seemed to forget that the circumstances of climate and other conditions were different in New South Wales to this colony. It was true there was a supposed case of bubonic plague in Auckland, although this was not admitted by Auckland members, and, owing to the alarming report, this expenditure was about to be incurred. He did not wish it to be understood that it was not necessary to conserve the public health, but he questioned very much whether the ap- pointment of district officers was going to meet the object in view. He thought it would have suited the intention of the Health Act much better to have a visiting staff, and that a visit every quarter to each of the large cities and boroughs would be much more effective. He considered that resident Medical Inspectors were apt to become associated with the district in which they were stationed, and better service might be expected from Inspectors who made periodical visits. The cost to the colony was increased by some £9,000 by this proposal, and departments had a habit of growing, so the colony expected full value for the money spent. He was aware that the passing of the Public Health Act necessitated some expenditure if the health of the people was to be safeguarded, but he saw no reason for panic measures, as he very much doubted if it was possible for eastern epidemics, such as the bubonic plague, to make progress in the latitude of New Zealand. Mr. COLLINS (Christchurch City) would like to ask the Minister if some of the informa tion which he said was being sent out daily by the Public Health Department, and which, no doubt, contained the researches of the medical men and experts connected with that depart- ment, could not be made public, because it seemed to him that if this were done the Department of Health could be continuously doing good work, while at the same time acting in a manner likely to prevent the spread of disease. He imagined that this department could do as was done by the Stock and Agri- cultural Department : issue health leaflets, tion than that sent out at present by request. Personally, he did not take exception to the money spent in this Health Department. He thought the colony never did better work than when it determined to set up this department. Sir J. G. WARD said he quite agreed with the member for Christchurch City as to the desirability of giving publicity to information in regard to health matters, and he was sure the honourable member would be gratified to know that health circulars had been sent all over the colony upon the disease of consump- tion, and also in connection with the feeding of infant children. In dealing with this de- partment the honourable member

for Kaiapoi wanted to realise what was going on in other countries. In this colony they were dealing with tuberculosis very extensively and firmly. Now, on the Continent and in England there were over a million deaths from consumption per annum, and there were many cases in the colony to his own personal knowledge. The Health Department was now dealing with this very serious disease, and, he believed, was coping with it successfully in many instances. Mr. BUDDO .- Why not spend the money on a sanatorium ? Sir J. G. WARD said the Government proposed to erect a consumptive sanatorium before very long. The honourable member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher) must realise that some time ago a number of countries were declared to be affected ; there were Honolulu and Capetown and one of the Australian Colonies. A number of people were coming from those countries here. and it was very desirable that some information should be given to the public to call attention to this very fell disease, and, though these placards might be distasteful to our own people, yet there was good reason for them. Now, with regard to Mr. Parata, who had been inspecting the Native settlements in the North Island chiefly, he might say that it required a Native to whom instruction had been imparted to give directions to the Native people, to prevent them, perhaps, creating or spreading diseases or sickness. In the first instance the Government put on two or three Native Inspectors : there was one in the Wanganui district, and Mr. Parata was appointed to go over a more extended district, and from the reports that had come to hand, he had done an immense amount of good. They required Inspectors in addition to the ordinary doctors. No doctor could overtake the work with forty or fifty thousand Natives. No one could deny that it would be a good thing to prevent deaths amongst the Natives in the way he had stated if that could be done by an expenditure of a few hundred pounds. The desire of the Government had been to make the work as effective as possible. An Hon. MEMBER .- Have you any power over the Natives ? Sir J. G. WARD said the Health Department could only give directions and instructions. The Maoris had their Councils under the Maori Councils Act.

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would be the effect with regard to the objection of the honourable member for Kaiapoi to the appointment of a Medical Officer of Health at \$500 per year. The effect would be this : that instead of the charge coming on the local bodies out of rates, it would come out of consolidated revenue, because the local body, when they found that the Government were providing these Health Officers, would not provide any Local Health Officer- they would simply come on the central department to do all the work that they should do. He was very glad to see that the Government were stronger in sympathy with the suggestion that provision should be made for taking steps to prevent the spread of consumption, and he (Mr. Ell) took some small amount of credit with regard to that matter. He believed it would be the means of relieving many a home of a considerable amount of anxiety, and might obviate many a young man or young woman dying at an early age, where, if their parents had the means to send them to establishments properly equipped, these young people might be saved to their families ; but on account of the high charges which were made by private institutions which provided curative treatment, which had been proved to be the only successful treatment, these young persons were prevented from going to such institutions. He might state that he inquired on account of a young person in Christchurch, and he found that the charge of a private hospital of this character was four guineas a week, and it could be readily understood that no poor family could afford to pay that amount. He knew of a case, and the member for Lyttelton also knew of it, where a young man, who was at death's door, fortunately had the means to go to Colorado, in the United States, and he had come back completely restored to health. When he went away the doctors absolutely gave up all hope of his recovery, yet he had come back to the colony completely restored to health, and might live on to a good old age. That was one instance of what could be done. There were eight Sanitary Inspectors, and he would like to ask the Minister what the duties of these Inspectors were. Mr. LAURENSEN (Lyttelton) said he noticed that there were six District

Health Officers at \$500 each. He wished to draw the attention of the Minister to the fact that, whereas the other Health Officers received £500 per year, the officer at Christchurch only received \$150. Sir J. G. WARD .- He is allowed private practice. The others are not. Mr. LAURENSEN would like further information with respect to the distribution of leaflets in connection with the preservation of the health of infants. Mr. WITHEFORD (Auckland City) said, In order that the Health Department should be carried on efficiently, there was no doubt they must have the necessary money ; but they all knew this : that the value of any service in a department was, after all, judged by the standard of results ; and when the Auckland members have been done out of " Unauthorised expenditure, where the air was so sweet and where the entire energy of the Health Department could not find a single case of plague-and when members came to Wellington they found in the Parliament Buildings a most vitiated atmosphere. Those buildings covered half an acre of land, and underneath the building there were accumulated large quantities of musty papers and numbers of decomposed rats. This was an important department, and they had very distinguished men in charge of it. He thought that these gentlemen might start nearer home, and report upon the insanitary condition of the Parliament Buildings. Something should be done to prevent the horrible stench which came into the Chamber and lobbies from the passage near the telegraph-office. Sir J. G. WARD said the duties of the Inspectors would be to examine houses and drain-pipes and premises generally, so as to insure that there was no connection between the drains or sewers and any part of the dwellinghouses. In reply to the honourable member for Lyttelton, he might say that the circulars referred to were being left at the post-offices and railway offices in bundles, and they would also be sent to the local bodies for circulation. In addition to those circulars relating to consumption, there was now in print a leaflet dealing with enteric fever, rules for the selection of sites, and for the pumping of water in country places. It had been found that ordinary pumps had been put down in the ground where there were sewers intersecting. There were also leaflets regarding scarlet fever, and one or two other matters which had been mentioned, such as the feeding of infant children. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccanton) said, in connection with the disparity between the salaries paid to Dr. Symes, at Christchurch, and the other District Health Officers that had been appointed, it was certainly true that Dr. Symes was allowed private practice, but he would like to point out that Dr. Symes had done much good work in connection with the department. Recently he was called upon to make an inspection of the district round about Waimate on account of some cases of illness having occurred there. He believed he spent about eighteen days in the locality studying up matters in connection with the sanitary state of the district. He believed Dr. Symes to be a very conscientious and painstaking officer. Now, his idea was that the Public Health Act had not been administered during the past year in the spirit in which it was passed last session. Sir J. G. WARD .- You do not know what has been done. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL said it was only within the last few weeks that the District Health Officer had been appointed, and the Sanitary Inspectors had not yet been appointed. Mr. HALL-JONES .- We could not do it without a vote. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL said it could easily

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ture." This Act was passed as a whip or spur over the local bodies who failed to do their work. When a thorough inspection of the colony was made for the first time, during the bubonic plague scare, it was discovered that the colony was in a horrible condition so far as sanitation was concerned, and, if these matters were left in the hands of the local authorities, he believed in another twelve months things would be just as bad as ever. He thought the Government, through their Inspectors, should insist on the work being done, and, if necessary, the local authorities should be charged with the cost. He was the last one to advocate economy in connection with the Public Health Department. Mr. HOGG (Masterton) thought that, properly administered, this was one of the most useful departments of the State ; but during the past year there had been very little result of a beneficial character from the establishment of such a

department. Possibly that might be due to the fact that the machinery had not yet been brought into operation. During the past few months there had been epidemics raging throughout the colony. There had been typhoid fever, scarlet fever, measles, and what was called influenza, but which he believed was really malaria, introduced into the colony from South Africa by the Fifth Contingent. He thought if the Health Department was properly administered such diseases could be kept out of the colony ; and the people had a right to know what this plague called "influenza " really was. There were thousands of men and women suffering from that disease, and he had only quite recently sent to the Premier a letter he had received from a member of the Fifth Contingent stating that he had had this disease twice since he had returned to New Zealand. He would like to know if the department was going to do its duty. This was a fine progressive country, and there was everything to conduce to the health of the people ; but, if a department of the kind was to be maintained, the officers should try not only to stamp out disease, but to prevent it finding its way into the colony at all. Mr. TANNER (Avon) said the Public Health Act was passed last year in fulfilment of a long-standing want, and he recognised that in bringing the measure into operation the Government must experience a great deal of difficulty. They should, of course, be allowed time. He must say, however, that up to the present the state of the public health in the colony was such as to call for the most serious attention of the department, and to need the greatest wisdom and knowledge on the part of the Ministry in making the appointment of capable and competent men. With regard to the appointment of Dr. Symes in Christchurch, he held when the Act was passed that the Government would do well to give the appointments to men who were absolutely free of all private practice. He believed any system that allowed a practitioner to engage in private practice while at the same time he was called on to perform public functions would be hampered in its operation and unsatisfactory in its results. He did not know Dr. Symes, but he wished to tell the House this fact : Twelve or eighteen months ago, when the bubonic plague scare was rampant in the colony, and when every local authority was receiving circulars urging them to make efforts to preserve the public health, it was resolved by the Woolston Borough Council, of which he (Mr. Tanner) was then a member, to institute an independent inquiry into the sanitary state of the borough. This was done, and he (Mr. Tanner) was appointed to receive the Inspector's reports, and to draw up from them a report for publication. The nature of the reports that reached him from the Inspector was really such as to necessitate some very careful toning-down; and had the naked truth been published it would have created nothing short of a horror in the community. In the reports there was one property mentioned, tenanted by Chinamen, that took the palm for its insanitary state, and the details were the most revolting, he thought, that had ever been penned by a Sanitary Inspector. He was unwilling to trust to the gossip of the Council table as to the name of the owner of the property, and he therefore ascertained the name of the owner from the rate roll, and the owner of that property was Dr. Symes. An Hon. MEMBER. - He was not responsible for his tenant, was he ? Mr. TANNER said the owner should be made primarily responsible, and it was no use looking to tenants who were Chinamen to keep premises in a condition that would please Europeans. He would like to say, too, that the rental derived from this property was perhaps the largest obtained from any property in the locality, and Dr. Symes at that time was holding the position of Health Officer in Christchurch for the Government. He would like to add that his attempt to assist in the work of cleaning the borough met with its due reward at the hands of the burgesses, for at the next election he was "fired out " of the Council. Sir J. G. WARD said he had been interested in listening to the speeches of the honourable member for Riccarton and the honourable member for Masterton, but he would like to say at once that neither of those honourable members had any knowledge of what had been done by the department or they would not have made the statements they did. He would deal first of all with the member for Masterton. That honourable gentleman did not appear to be aware that some months ago Masterton had a visitation of diphtheria. It was the Public Health Department that stepped in on that

occasion and closed the school, and employed a local doctor to make an examination of the houses and to put the law into operation, with the view of preventing the fell disease from spreading, whereby much good was done. Then, shortly after the close of the last session the Chief Health Officer (Dr. Mason) visited every part of the colony. It was necessary that he should do so, to inquire into certain matters, so that the Act might be properly carried out. Four Health Officers were

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appointed. Dr. Symes was appointed temporarily at Christchurch. He had been engaged for a long time before he was appointed temporarily, and had given effect, as far as possible, to the requirements of the district under the direction of the Chief Health Officer. The local bodies of the colony were also asked to co-operate with the department, and he had no doubt that they had done a great deal, together with the department, in stamping out many evils. From the reports obtained by the Health Department, and from the information medical men throughout the colony had obtained, it was evident that malaria was not known to the residents of New Zealand at all. It was only found in men who had returned from South Africa. Now, in Masterton they had measles and influenza long before the Health Department was established. Mr. HOGG said it was malaria. Sir J. G. WARD said medical men stated it was not malaria. However, he fully recognised, as he was sure the majority of the House did, that this department was a very important one, and he fully recognised that the officers must be highly qualified, and must be kept clear of local influences and local pressure. They had had evidence of the valuable work that had already been done by this department, and the department had been ceaseless since June last in its activity in assisting the local bodies and people in different portions of the colony in health matters. Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa) hoped the Minister would not take it that any members who spoke on this important subject were desirous of reflecting in any way on him or the officers he had appointed. They were only anxious that the greatest benefit that could be derived would accrue to the people of the colony from this department. So far as the district he represented was concerned, they had one visit from Dr. Valentine, who just looked round and then went away. This officer had not come back, although they had at present an outbreak of sickness at Carterton which almost amounted to an epidemic. They were all very anxious to have the benefit of the Health Department, for the reason that the local bodies could not or would not do the work. It was no use the Public Health Department imploring public bodies to join hands with them, because they would not do it, as local influences were too great. He was quite convinced, after reading the newspapers of the colony, that they were drifting back very rapidly into the condition in which they were found to be when the plague scare was on. The only way to cope with the difficulty and danger that threatened was to have the whole matter of health control administered by the department. Mr. WITHEFORD (Auckland City) wished to make a personal explanation. The honourable member for Avon had said he would not speak in the tone of the honourable member for Auckland City. He wished to assure the honourable gentleman that he was speaking with perfect earnestness when he drew attention to the state of the atmosphere in this portion of the Sir J. G. Ward House. He did not hesitate to say that on ordinary occasions, when the House was anything like full, the atmosphere in this portion of the Chamber was sickening and disgusting. He would continue to draw attention to this matter until it was remedied, and he hoped it would be remedied. Mr. HUTCHESON (Wellington City) was really surprised that the Hon. the Minister paid so much attention and went to so much trouble to confute the statements of the honourable member for Masterton. Now, the honourable member for Auckland City (Mr. Witheford) told members all about the beautiful climate of Auckland, and about its being the healthiest place in New Zealand—quite regardless of statistics. The honourable member did not tell the House that any sign of the plague was ever there, and it seemed to him the honourable member protested too much. However, he had no desire to excite any discussion as to the relative sanitary qualities of any part of the colony. In regard to the atmosphere of this Chamber, he did not think the trouble lay in the latrines

at all, because there was no evidence of anything offensive there. The trouble was the avenues through which the air was drawn for the supply of the Chamber. Mr. HALL-JONES said the air came direct from Sydney Street. Mr. HUTCHESON said that was a new arrangement, but the fact remained that if any impurity got into the boiler of the heating-apparatus members got the full benefit of it in the chamber. However, coming back to the vote, he was quite satisfied the Hon. the Minister had no need to apologize for this department, or for the officers of the department. The principal feature that recommended itself to him in connection with this department was that it removed from the local governing bodies, and from local influences, the drastic work of the department in regard to condemning insanitary buildings, et cetera. If the right men were appointed as Sanitary Inspectors, he was quite satisfied that, under the control of the Chief Health Officer, this department would do good work, and that it would be a safeguard for the health of the colony. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) said he was sorry that honourable members should, without any knowledge of the working of this department, have passed the reflections on it which they had done. He knew, in connection with local bodies in his district, that Dr. Mason had done really good work, and he doubted whether it was possible to get a better head of the department than the Minister had obtained in Dr. Mason. He only hoped that Dr. Mason would have as free a hand in future as he had had hitherto; and, if so, he felt quite sure that that officer would be able to accomplish very good work for the colony. Mr. ELL (Christchurch City) wished to draw attention to the question of the inspection which was required regularly under the Act. He was sorry to say that he thought it was only too true that some districts were drifting into the same neglected state that they were in

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before the plague scare. He knew of districts in which there had been no inspection since that scare. Surely the fact of this neglect of regular inspection should prove to members that the central authority should be clothed with the power which had been given to it. Looking at the size of the districts, it was impossible for the Health Officer to do all the work he had in hand unless he had the heartiest support of the district authority. The eight Sanitary Inspectors would be paid out of the consolidated revenue, and it therefore practically amounted to this : that the whole of this work was being shunted on to the shoulders of the general taxpayers of the colony. With regard to the Sanitary Inspectors, he suggested when the Bill was under consideration last year that there ought to be some system of examination set up for these Sanitary Inspectors. They should be compelled to hold a certain diploma and pass a certain examination, in which case they would be more fit for their work than they were at present. Then, he might point out that in some districts sanitary inspection was properly carried out, whereas in adjoining districts sanitary inspection was neglected. The central department ought to be clothed with the power of seeing that the different districts discharged their duties properly. Mr. T. MACKENZIE (Waihemo) said the colony had felt that it could not trust the local bodies to carry out the necessary sanitary work, and the Act was passed last year in order that the Government should take the responsibility of seeing that the sanitary conditions were observed in the various districts. He quite approved of the expenditure for this department ; but, whilst he approved of that expenditure, the department must see that the officers did not use their position in the different districts as sinecures. If they were not themselves able to overtake the work, they must have Inspectors to go round and see that the conditions under which the people lived were absolutely healthy. It was evident that local authorities would not do so. There were some towns in the colony that were, before the plague scare, a perfect disgrace to civilisation, and at his reference to Dunedin in that time regarding certain nuisances in the Water of Leith a member of the House rose and said that his remarks ought to be ignored, forgetting that it was at his (Mr. Mackenzie's) instigation that the Government stopped some of the nuisances which had been done away with. Great improvements had been made, and that city would become, he had no doubt, the healthiest and loveliest city in New Zealand. An extended power should also, he thought, be given to this department to deal with offensive

trades which were already established in localities that had become more densely populated. Some of these industries were established years ago, when there was very little population in their neighbourhood ; but these industries had now become offensive to the people in the neighbourhood, and they had become a serious drawback to the people, and especially to the children there. He had one case in his mind where it was absolutely impossible to get expert evidence sufficiently strong to justify the local body in going to the extreme length allowed by the law in connection with these cases. Even if these works happened to be burnt down they could not prevent them being rebuilt and the same industry carried on. He maintained, in connection with offensive industries, that no company or individual had a right by his works to become a public nuisance to a neighbourhood comprising thousands of families. He was quite sure that the department should have these extended powers in order to do the best work. It seemed to him that sufficient care was not taken in the matter of isolation in cases of measles and influenza. Mr. BUDDO (Kaiapoi) wished to ask the Minister what was intended to be done with respect to the eight Sanitary Inspectors. He wanted this department to be a real live department, and that the officers should not simply supply a report to be placed in the blue - books. He thought there should be periodical visits paid by these officers. Vote, £12,784, agreed to. Progress reported. The House adjourned at ten minutes to twelve o'clock p.m. #