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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL. Thursday, 7th November, 1901. First Readings-Second Readings-Third Reading- Victoria College-Companies Bill- Death of ise Hon. Mr. Bonar-Library - Factories Bill - Timber Export Bill - Nelson Harbour Paari Bill - Native Land Claims Adjustment sti LAWS Amendment Bill - Manawatu Railway Sale and Purchase and Empowering Ki .: - Public Works Bill-Victoria College Site Bili-
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Reserves and other Lands Sale, Disposal, and Enabling and Public Bodies Empowering Bill-Dunedin City and Suburban Tramways Bill-Public Works Bill-Appropriation Bill- Adjournment. The Hon. the SPEAKER took the chair at eleven o'clock. PRAYERS. # FIRST READINGS. Chatham Islands County Bill, Flax Grading and Export Bill, Mining Bill, Manawatu Rail- way Sale and Purchase Empowering Bill, Nelson Harbour Board Bill, Public Works Bill, Public Health Bill (No. 2), Reserves and other Lands Sale, Disposal, and Enabling and Public Bodies Empowering Bill, Registration of Births Extension Bill, Remuera Waterworks Em- powering Bill, Timber Export Bill, Victoria College Site Bill, Westland and Nelson Coal- fields Administration Bill, Native Land Claims Adjustment and Laws Amendment Bill, Dune- din City and Suburban Tramways Bill. # SECOND READINGS. Chatham Islands County Bill, Flax Grading and Export Bill, Mining Bill, Public Works Bill, Public Health Bill (No. 2), Registration of Births Extension Bill, Remuera Waterworks Empowering Bill, Westland and Nelson Coal- fields Administration Bill. # THIRD READINGS. Chatham Islands County Bill, Flax Grading and Export Bill, Mining Bill, Public Health Bill (No. 2), Registration of Births Extension Bill, Remuera Waterworks Empowering Bill, Westland and Nelson Coalfields Administration Bill. # VICTORIA COLLEGE. The Hon. Mr. REEVES said it was not his intention to take up the time of the Council in moving the resolution standing in his name. There seemed to be very great difficulty in locating the site for this particular institution. The people of Wellington were fighting like Kilkenny cats over it, until at last it came to this : that some steps must be taken in order to locate this very valuable institution in some part of the Cook Strait settlement. It would be within the recollection of honourable mem- bers of the Council that last year he moved a similar resolution, which was carried ; and he thought the good sense and judgment of the Council on this occasion would also support this motion. He, therefore, begged to move the following resolution : That, seeing the Victoria College Board of Governors is unable to obtain a suitable site for the College buildings in or near the City of Wellington, and that the same is apparently unobtainable, it is desirable that the Government assume full control of the matter, and take the necessary steps to enable them to fix a site for the institution in or near the City of Nelson, which, in the opinion of this Council, is the most central so far as the various provincial districts affected are concerned, and in all other respects the most suitable position for its location. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER said, Con- sidering there was now a Bill in process of passing through Parliament dealing with this subject, which, if passed, would certainly de- stroy the preamble of the honourable gentle- man's motion, it would, perhaps, be well to adjourn this matter till to-morrow. He begged to move, That the motion be adjourned till to- morrow. The Hon. Mr. REEVES said he wished to point out to the Hon. the Minister that the Bill of which he spoke had not got the remotest chance of passing through the other House. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .- I cannot say that. The Hon. Mr. REEVES .- I can. The Hon. Mr. JENKINSON said he thought that was rather a rash statement to make. He understood that a Conference had been held, as a result of which the Bill referred to would pass in a very short time. He did not wish to take up the time of the Council, but would point out that the statement that the College Board of Governors was unable to obtain a suitable site for the College was not correct. They were quite able to obtain a suitable site, but what they wanted to do was to obtain the most suit- able site. This was only one

of the honourable gentleman's annual attempts to advertise a little place that was never heard of. It would be quite absurd to locate a university such as the Victoria College University at a place like Nelson, for the expenses incurred by students coming from other parts would be considerable ; and, he understood, it was only possible to get to it in some weather, the bar and the harbour of Nelson being in a very dangerous state. He did not think the honourable gentleman was in earnest in putting such a motion as this on the Order Paper at this stage of the session. He (Mr. Jenkinson) thought it was quite absurd. The Hon. Mr. JONES said he would not object to Nelson having the Victoria College if it were possible to come to some agreement or other ; but, great as was the difficulty of coming to some agreement now as regarded the location of the building in Wellington, the difficulty would be still greater if the question of placing the College at Nelson were raised and debated in Parliament. For instance, some thought that it would be better to have the College at Taranaki, others thought it would be better to have it in Marlborough, and others at Wanganui. All these conflicting interests would be aroused, and the result would be that the matter would never be settled. He believed that, although this struggle had been going on for three or four years now, they were on the eve of having it settled for good and all. The Hon. Mr. T. KELLY did not intend to express any opinion on the resolution at present, but he thought the Minister's request, that the debate be adjourned, was reasonable, and would postpone his remarks to a future occasion. He would vote for the adjournment of the debate.

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motion be adjourned till half - past seven o'clock. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER said he would say half-past seven, and if the Bill dealing with the matter had not come down from another place then, and there was an opportunity of its coming down, the debate could be still further adjourned. Debate adjourned accordingly. # COMPANIES BILL. A message was received from the House of Representatives containing certain amendments in this Bill, in which they asked the concurrence of the Council. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER said he did not see any reason why the Council should not accept these amendments in the Companies Bill. It made the provisions of the Mining Companies Act to apply to all mining companies registered under the Companies Act or any of its amendments. The clauses in question were 32 and 33. The first was that directors had to furnish the half-yearly statement, and the second was that clause 33 enacted that the books of companies were to be open to inspection. He thought they could safely accept these amendments, and moved, That the Council concurred in the amendments made by the House of Representatives. Motion agreed to. DEATH OF THE HON. MR. BONAR. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .- Sir, I beg to state to the Council that information has been received of the death of the Hon. Mr. Bonar. I think it might be suitable to the feelings of the Council if, after expressing the regret which we all feel on this occasion, I should move a motion of adjournment. I beg to move, That the Council adjourn for one hour, out of respect for the honourable gentleman's death. Sir, he was an old member of the Council, as he was appointed in the year 1868, and he had therefore given the best years of his life to the service of his country. In the early days of the West Coast he rapidly rose to first rank among the persons who filled public positions. He was the first chairman of a County Council on the West Coast, and when that district was made a province the confidence of the people was shown by his election as the first Superintendent, a position he held until the abolition of the provinces. I beg to move that the Council adjourn for an hour, out of respect for the late Hon. Mr. Bonar. The Hon. Mr. REEVES .- Sir, in seconding this motion, I feel rather strongly about it. I have known the late honourable gentleman for considerably over forty years. I knew him in Melbourne when he was quite a young man, and when he was employed in a very large firm there-Messrs. Henty and Co. I also knew him on the West Coast, and, although our late departed friend and I never agreed in politics in any form at all, I always found him to be an upright, honest, straightforward man. I can state without hesitation that he

has honest man." The Hon. Mr. T. KELLY .- I would like, on this occasion, to say a few words to the Council. I have known the Hon. Mr. Bonar for the last thirty-five years. I met him first on my way to Melbourne in 1863, and I can truly say that he was one of the best specimens of manhood- full of geniality and good-fellowship. I did not meet him again until the year 1869, when I took my seat in the House of Representatives and found him a member of the Council ; and, from my own knowledge of him, I can conscientiously say that he did good service to the colony in this branch of the Legislature, and therefore I beg to express my regret for the loss of an old colleague. Motion agreed to, and Council adjourned for one hour. # LIBRARY. The Hon. Mr. RIGG brought up the Report of the Library Committee, recommending that members of both Houses of Parliament residing in or within fifteen miles from Wellington be the Committee for the control and management of the Library during the recess. Motion agreed to. # FACTORIES BILL. A message was received from the House of Representatives desiring a Conference on the subject of the amendments of the Legislative Council in this Bill. On the motion of the Hon. Mr. JONES, the Hon. Mr. Bowen, the Hon. Mr. Jenkinson, the Hon. Mr. Jones, the Hon. Mr. W. Kelly, and the Hon. Mr. Pinkerton were appointed Managers on behalf of the Council, and a time and place for the Conference was appointed. Subsequently, The Hon. Mr. JONES brought up the report of the Conference on the Factories Bill, as follows : - "The Managers appointed by the Legislative Council to conduct the Conference upon the Factories Bill have the honour to report that they have met the Managers appointed by the House of Representatives, and they have come to the following agreement, namely : - " In new clause 19A, fine 3, after ' women,' to insert ' over the age of eighteen years.' "In clause 20, subclause (3), to restore the first proviso. " In clause 2, to amend the last paragraph so as to read as follows : 'Boy ' means every male under the age of sixteen years. "The other amendments made by the Council are accepted." He moved that the report be agreed to. The Hon. Mr. RIGG said he merely rose to congratulate the Managers on the very satisfactory result of their labours. He did so for the reason that he was very anxious himself to be on the Conference, not that he wished to go back on anything the Council had done in the way of amending the Bill, but so that he might be in a position to point out to the representatives in another place that the Bill as passed

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law in existence, and that the mere inclusion of woollen-mills in it did not alter what was the existing law. That was the sole desire he had in asking to be present on the Conference. He thought, from what he had learned privately, that the Bill would have a very poor chance of passing, and he was therefore glad to see that the Managers appointed had succeeded in overcoming any difficulty, and he heartily congratulated them on the fact that as a result of their labours there was a very substantial benefit achieved, and an improvement made on the present law. The Hon. Mr. BOLT thought the Council would generally agree that the report was a satisfactory one, and that the Managers had been able to settle what was a very knotty question on a basis which he believed would meet the wishes of both parties. He rose at the present time merely to state that when the Bill was in Committee he received a telegram from the Workers' Union in Kaiapoi, stating that four hundred workers were in favour of the forty-five hours per week. From information he had received, which he believed to be from a reliable source, he made a statement to the effect that there were only a hundred and fifty workers in the mill which would be affected by the forty-five hours' clause, and that, consequently, the telegram was to some extent misleading ; but he had since learned that that statement was incorrect. He found, by communicating with the mills, that there were actually 265 persons affected by this clause. He thought, however, that the Kaiapoi people, as well as those connected with the other woollen-mills in the colony, would be fully satisfied with the result arrived at by the Managers of the Conference. The Hon. Mr. LEE SMITH said the only thing he regretted about the Bill was that the Council had given way on the question that woollen-mills

alone should be affected by this clause. As he had observed before, there were a number of industries in exactly the same position as the woollen-mills, and he did not see why the same consideration should not be given to them as in the case of the woollen- mills. The Hon. Mr. JONES wished to say a few words in order to explain exactly how matters stood now in regard to one or two clauses. The woollen-mills clause, as it was introduced into the Council, applied to boys and women who worked forty-eight hours a week. As the clause was now amended a concession had been made so that only women over eighteen and boys over sixteen could work the forty-eight hours ; boys under sixteen and women under eighteen could work only the forty-five hours. That seemed to him to be a very fair concession, and the advantage of the measure was that in all other factories where young people were engaged, forty-five hours a week only would be worked by them. In all other important re- spects the measure was left as it passed the Council, and he thought that they might con- gratulate themselves that the measure was passing as it stood now, after having had such a stormy passage through the Legislature. He felt that it would be a benefit to all concerned, both employers and workers. Report agreed to. TIMBER EXPORT BILL. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .- Sir, I hope the Council will not look upon this Bill as in any shape or form a Bill which we have brought in by way of reprisal against the Com- monwealth. It is quite unnecessary for us to go in for reprisals, because I think we can stand on our own bottom as well as the Commonwealth. But at the same time we have to protect our own industries, and we do not want timber which has got a world-wide value for certain purposes to be taken from our shores for the propping-up of the sawmilling industry on the other side when we would very much prefer that that timber should go away from us in the condition of sawn timber. ' That is all we want, and we do not ask the Council to pass this Bill through in a form which means that it has absolutely to come into force to-mor- row. All we ask is that power shall be given to the Governor in Council, if necessary, to give effect to this Bill, after we have seen what the Commonwealth Parliament do in re- gard to their tariff, in order to protect our saw- millers. We are perfectly willing to sell them our timber, but we say, "If you want our timber for butter-boxes you must allow us to saw it, and to pay our own men for the work, and you can get it in the shape of butter-box planks, otherwise we shall put this tariff on to it." That is the whole aim and object of the Bill. We do not want any one to look upon it in any shape or form as in the manner of a reprisal. It is simply for our own protection and the protection of our own sawmillers that we ask that Parliament shall allow this duty to be imposed, if necessary, because we do not know yet what the Commonwealth Parliament will do in reference to these duties. All we want is power to put the duty on timber in order to protect our sawmillers, and I therefore beg to move the second reading of this Bill. The Hon. Mr. T. KELLY .- I think this Bill is rather peculiar in its mode of drafting, con- sidering it is a Tariff Bill ; still, I recognise the difficulty the Government is in, and, under the circumstances, I consider they are fully justified in bringing in legislation in this direction-in putting an export duty on log timber. With regard to native raw material being taxed in this direction, I might say it is done all over the world where any country has a practical monopoly of any natural product, and an ex- port duty is levied in order to get a revenue from it, which the consumers of the raw mate- rial pay. This has been done with regard to nitrate of soda, which is a monopoly of Chili ; and also an export duty is put on guano, which is a special product of certain South American States. With regard to this timber duty, it is justifiable in this sense : that we have got the only timber that I know of that is admittedly the best for manufacturing butter-boxes, be-

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is inodorous, while other timbers will not do for the purpose, as they taint the butter. Take kauri, for instance : if butter was put into kauri boxes it would be spoiled in a few weeks. Then, with regard to protecting our own work- men, the duty is put on our sawn and planed timber by the Commonwealth simply to protect their workmen at the cost of New Zealand workers, and I think it is only fair on our part

that we should protect our own workmen in the same way that they wish to do. Therefore I think this Act is fully justified, and I would put the power into the hands of the Government to place an export duty on logs up to 3s. per 100 superficial feet, in order to encourage the shipping of timber in its worked state, and thus extend the demand for manufactured goods, or any reasonable imposition which may be considered necessary, as it is a well-ascertained fact that the butter-makers of Australia must procure New Zealand white-pine to make their butter-boxes for the export trade. Bill read the second and the third time. NELSON HARBOUR BOARD BILL. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER said that the Government had endeavoured last year and this year to assist the Nelson Harbour Board as much as possible, and this Bill had received careful consideration this session at the hands of Parliament. The Nelson Harbour had certain natural features, one being the Boulder Bank, and one of the proposals was that this should be cut through and an entrance made through it. One clause of the Bill prevented the Harbour Board from doing anything with this bank unless the Minister of Marine was satisfied it was a safe thing to do. The proper provisions were inserted to allow the Governor in Council to interfere with any work the Harbour Board was doing if it was considered to interfere with the interests of the harbour. These harbours were some of our biggest assets, and it was in the interest not only of the locality, but of everybody-not only of ourselves and our own shipping, but in the interest of the shipping of the world-that they should be improved and conserved as far as possible. It was therefore quite right that these powers should be inserted, in order to see that the most was made of our harbours, and that the money should not be wasted. He moved the second reading of the Bill. The Hon. Mr. BOWEN wished to know whether there was any member of the Council interested in this matter who could tell them something about it. The Hon. Mr. W. C. SMITH understood the Hon. Colonel Pitt, who was not present, was in favour of the Bill. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER knew he was in favour. The Hon. Mr. BOWEN said it looked like a local Bill, and he certainly wanted to know something about it before he voted for it. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER said it went before the Joint Committee on Bills, and they Hon. Mr. T. Kelly able gentleman call the Chatham Islands Bill a local Bill ? The Hon. Mr. BOWEN said, No ; but in this case it was difficult for members to get any information on the question. There was no evidence taken, and nothing before the Council but the bare words of the Bill. Late as it was, he would like to hear, from some one living in the district who knew, the circumstances of the case. The Hon. Mr. REEVES must confess that, as far as he was personally concerned, he knew nothing whatever about it. It was one of those Bills that might well be sent to a Committee. However, it was a Bill which had come down from another Chamber, where it had been submitted to the usual tests, and he believed the Bill so far was satisfactory. What he took its object to be was that the people of Motueka wanted to be taken out of the Nelson Harbour Board District and have a district of their own. That had been passed through the other House, and he believed that was all that was required. The Hon. Mr. JONES had made some inquiries about this Bill in order that he might be able to vote on it, and he discovered that Motueka was in the original district, but that the money was going to be spent in Nelson, and the Motueka people naturally said, " If you are going to spend all the money in your district we do not want to be rated." So they would be cut out ; and he believed the members for the district were now satisfied with the arrangements made in the Bill. The Hon. Mr. T. KELLY only wished to remark that the Bill was submitted to the Joint Committee on Bills to ascertain whether it was a local or a public Bill. It was brought in by the Government as a public Bill, and some members of the other Chamber raised the question whether it was not a local Bill, and the Deputy-Speaker thereupon referred it to the Joint Committee on Bills to determine that question. It was fully discussed there in the presence of the members belonging to the localities affected, and the Committee finally determined that the Bill was in reality a public Bill, inasmuch as it affected colonial interests with regard to the foreshore and certain Crown lands, and, as the Government approved of the Crown lands being taken for the purposes defined in the Bill, it was deemed by the Committee to be to all

intents and purposes a public Bill. Bill read the second and the third time. NATIVE LAND CLAIMS ADJUSTMENT AND LAWS AMENDMENT BILL. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said it was impossible for him, at that late hour of the night, to explain every one of its clauses. He was informed, however, that there were good and valid reasons for every one of them being passed. He could not say any more, except that he trusted the Council would look upon the matters drafted into the Bill as obligations of the Government for which the Bill was, so 10

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pared to submit a reason for every one of the clauses so far as he could. He begged to move the second reading of the Bill. The Hon. Mr. BOWEN had no desire to put unnecessary difficulties in the way of even this hurried legislation, but they should have full information, especially in the case of Special Powers and Contracts Bills, for this was one of that species. It ought to have been sent to a Committee, considered clause by clause, and understood. It was impossible for anybody to find out without special information what the meaning of all the clauses were; they had to take them blindly on trust. The provisions might be just and necessary, but he was bound to say that he thought the present proceedings a most unfortunate way of doing business. The Hon. Mr. W. KELLY might state that this Bill was carrying out the recommendations of the Native Affairs Committee of the other House, and some of the recommendations of the Native Affairs Committee of the Council as well. He had looked over the Bill and found that many of the clauses had been recommended a number of years ago. He thought, as far as he could see, that there was nothing wrong with them. He had looked over the clauses which he knew something about, and supposed the others were inserted on the recommendation of the Chairman of the other Native Affairs Committee, who had told him (Mr. Kelly) that he had been over the Bill, and that practically all the clauses had been recommended by the Committee. (Mr. Kelly) was personally acquainted with some of the claims, and did not think there was any necessity for much explanation from the honourable gentleman in charge of the Bill. The Hon. Mr. JONES said, As far as he could see, one could only take this Bill entirely on trust. He did not and could not pretend to understand anything at all about it, and he did not think there was sufficient time left, even if the honourable gentleman in charge of the Bill thoroughly understood the clauses, for him to give a proper and sufficient explanation of them; so that he (Mr. Jones) supposed that the only thing the Council could do, if they could not reject the Bill, was to accept it in good faith that it was all right. He was quite prepared to do that under the circumstances. The Hon. Mr. T. KELLY said, In regard to this Bill, the usual course was to send such a Bill to the Native Affairs Committee; but that was impossible now, as it would delay the whole work of the session. The only way in which they could deal with the Bill at the present time was to get an assurance from the Minister in charge that the clauses had been carefully looked over by the officers of the department and by the Minister, and that they ought to be passed. He would like to get an assurance that these clauses had been properly investigated and that they ought to be passed by the Council. The Hon. Mr. TOMOANA wished to say a few words with reference to the Bill now before, to say a great deal on this subject. As the Bill was in English he could not tell exactly what was in it, but he could see the names of the Natives mentioned, and he knew what they referred to. The Bill as a whole, referred to the petitions which had been sent in by the Natives, and which had been dealt with by both branches of Parliament, and he thought it was time some of these matters were settled. The Natives in most cases simply applied to be allowed to have their cases heard in the Native Land Court, and some of these applications had been dragging on before the other Chamber for some ten or twenty years, and they had never yet been settled. He thought they should pass the Bill as it was now. There were a great many reports on petitions which were originally embodied in this Bill, and which should have been left in, but they had been struck out in another place. He himself had a clause in which he was interested, carrying out the report of the

Committee, and the Hon. Mr. Taiaroa had one also. These had been struck out, but they could not help that. They must put up with it for the present. He thought they should pass this Bill without making any amendments in it, because in each case the matter would go before the Judges for investigation. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER desired to say a few words in reply. In the first place, he wished to draw attention to the fact that a great many of these clauses were embodied in a Bill that the Council sent to the Native Affairs Committee in the year 1899. He had got a copy of it in his hand. It originated in the Legislative Council with his own name on the top of it. It was investigated by the Native Affairs Committee, and it contained eighteen clauses, and these were now embodied in the present Bill. The Bill of 1899 never eventuated any further ; the other Chamber did not pass it. It was a fact that during five or six years these Native claims had been accumulating; and he only asked honourable gentlemen to look at the way in which these claims were put forward and the wording of them. There were very few of them which did more than this : to say that a Court might investigate the questions at issue. It would be wasting the time of the Council to read the Bill right through, but he would take a few of the clauses. The 3rd clause said that the Governor might confer on the Court jurisdiction The next to inquire into certain matters. clause provided that the Appellate Court was empowered and directed to deal with any appeal which had been lodged against the decision of the Court in making the partition as if such appeal had been lodged in due time. Clause 5 stated, "The Court is hereby empowered and directed to investigate and decide the claims of certain Natives." Clause 6 said, " It shall be lawful for the Governor, by Order in Council, to appoint a Royal Commission to investigate and decide the claims of Wiremu Karaka te Aho and others " as to a block of land. Clause 7 provided that the

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empowered to rehear and determine who were the Natives, if any, in addition to those named in the original titles, who were entitled to the same land. Clause 8 empowered the Court to inquire into the circumstances under which the Native owners executed transfers of portion of Waitakaruru No. 2 Block, et cetera. None of the clauses, so far as he had read them in the Bill, were clauses which absolutely determined the position of any man's property or interest in anything. They were all intended to enable the proper tribunals to inquire into purchases which had not been finally or satisfactorily settled. Therefore they were not in any way taking away private rights, as some people might seem to think. More than that, as he had said before, eighteen of the clauses the Council had decided two years ago and embodied in a Bill, which had passed the Council after going through careful investigation in the Native Affairs Committee. He therefore asked the Council to read the Bill a second time. Bill read the second and the third time. MANAWATU RAILWAY SALE AND PURCHASE EMPOWERING BILL. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .- Sir, I am quite certain that everybody who has studied the requirements of this part of the North Island must have come to the conclusion that the sooner the Manawatu Railway is purchased by the Government the better, and that this Bill provides for a possible solution of that matter is very much to be taken as an augury of better management. I do not blame the company in this respect, because they have had to study the question of ways and means ; but I am quite certain that a great many things have happened in connection with this railway which would not have been permitted by the management of the Government lines. On the other hand, I believe there were many things that the Government railways might be improved by if the Government were to acquire that railway, and complete what, I think, should be the absolute policy of our colony- namely, that all the railways should be held by the State for the good of the people, and be worked in their interest. I beg to move the second reading of the Bill. Bill read the second and the third time. # PUBLIC WORKS BILL. IN COMMITTEE. Clause 2. - Compensation on widening of street. The Hon. Mr. REEVES moved, That the proviso to this clause be struck out. The Committee divided on the question, " That the words proposed to be omitted

stand part of the clause." AYES, 4. Bolt Jones Bowen Kelly, T. Hon. Mr. W. C. Walker Gourley Swanson Twomey Walker, W. C. Tomoana Reeves Rigg Majority against, 3. Proviso struck out. Bill reported, and read the third time. VICTORIA COLLEGE SITE BILL. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .- Sir, I am sure the Council will be glad to know that an arrangement has been come to by which a very good site indeed has been secured for the Victoria College-a very much better site than that about which so much fuss was made some time ago, because the first thing that would have had to be done would be to go in for a lot of dynamite in order to blow the bricks up. It will be noted that if the trustees can possibly arrange for certain grounds for the Victoria College Council, they will only be required to pay whatever the land is assessed at. The other arrangements are perfectly equal, and there will be no difficulty about them if the two bodies are willing to exchange lands. The first thing is that the Wellington Hospital Trustees, who are, so to speak, interested in the exchange, have to be reimbursed out of the Consolidated Fund for the value of the land. I do not think there is anything else of importance in the Bill that I need mention, except clause 4, which provides that the buildings on the site of the land taken shall be commenced within two years of the passing of the Act. I trust the passing of this Bill will mean that such a sum will be placed on the supplementary estimates passed to-night as will re 3 very good guarantee that the buildings will be commenced, and that all the conditions will be fulfilled. I move the second reading of the Bill. The Hon. Mr. REEVES .- Sir, I wish to say a few words on this Bill. I had a notice of motion in connection with the same thing, but, in deference to the wishes of honourable members, I am not going to bring my motion forward at this late stage of the session. I wish to say this, however : that when we come back here again-if we are spared-we will be so far further forward with this matter than we are now. I am perfectly certain about it : and I may say this : that Wellington is not a proper place for an institution of this kind. For a university you want to get a place away from the turmoil and the influence of a commercial city like this. I say now, as I have said on two or three occasions before, that Wellington is not the place for the Victoria College. There are other places in the university district that are far more adapted to the purpose than Wellington ; and having the university on the top of a range will be neither ornamental nor useful. The Hon. Mr. BOWEN .- I hope that this Bill will lead to a settlement of the question. but I should have been very glad if my honourable friend had been able to guarantee that there will not be another row over the site before it is finally settled. With regard to

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Reeves, I would remind him that the students of the university of New Zealand are not as a rule able to reside at a distance from their homes to get university teaching. No doubt the ideal place for a university college is one where all the students would be resident, and where they would be, as the honourable gentleman suggested, outside of the turmoil of a great town; but it has been found necessary even in the Old Country to found universities at the centres of population, where the students can attend the lectures regularly. It will take a great many years before there are here a number of young people able to devote themselves to university study at a distance from their own homes. For that reason I think it will be necessary for a long time to come to have our universities and colleges at places where there is the largest population near the schools. However, I am glad that some hope is held out for agreeing, in Wellington at least, as to a site for the university. I confess I should like to feel more certain than I do. The Hon. Mr. JONES .- Sir, this Bill says that the Mayor and citizens of the City of Wellington are empowered to do certain things, the Victoria College Council have power to do certain things, and the Wellington Hospital Trustees may do certain things. Well, those things could have been done before without a Bill. The bodies mentioned could have come to a decision to make the exchanges without any Bill, and a Bill could have been introduced afterwards to give effect to their decisions. I would like, however, to ask the honourable gentleman whether he is at liberty to tell us the result of the negotiations which took place be-

tween the Premier and the Victoria College Governors and the City Council. I hope that this Bill means that some definite arrangement was arrived at-that we are not merely passing the Bill in the hope that something may turn up to enable a decision to be come to. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .- I suppose the honourable gentleman refers to the Con- ference held yesterday. Well, I was not pre- sent at the Conference, and do not know what happened, and so cannot be expected to say what took place. I believe, however, there was a modus vivendi arrived at, and I have no doubt if the people of Wellington are sensible-which I admit they often are not-they will assist each other in seeing that the institution thrives in the way similar institutions do in other towns. I am sorry to say the Wellington public is very acrimonious and cantankerous, but the Govern- ment cannot help that. All we want to do is to give them a fair show, and I think this Bill gives them a fair show. If they will only try to act, as most people do, in the best interests of their town, there ought to be no difficulty between these bodies. The Government was asked to empower them to do this, and has done so; and the only body that in any shape or form requires compensation is the Hospital Trustees, and that is specially provided for from the Consolidated Fund on the valuation of the General Assessor. I think, therefore, the whole it will prove satisfactory. Bill read the second and the third time. RESERVES AND OTHER LANDS SALE, DISPOSAL, AND ENABLING AND PUB- LIC BODIES EMPOWERING BILL. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said it was one of those Bills which was periodically necessary. It was a Bill that represented a great many old questions, there not having been a Bill of the kind brought forward for some years. He had very carefully looked into it in Cabinet in the first place, and it had been thoroughly sifted in the other Chamber. Bill read the second and the third time. DUNEDIN CITY AND SUBURBAN TRAM- WAYS BILL. The Hon. Mr. BOLT said, the Bill was for the purpose of granting in a small way a fur- ther extension of the powers given to the Dunedin City Corporation under the City Tramways Act of last year. That Act gave the Corporation power to borrow £200,000 for the purpose of purchasing the property of the Tramways Company and establishing a new system of trams. The purchase had been made by the Corporation for a sum of £43,000. The estimated cost of the new system, together with other expenses, amounted in all to about £192,000, leaving a sum of \$8,000, which might not be sufficient to meet extra expenses anticipated, and this Bill enabled the Corpora- tion to obtain such sum as might be necessary to do so. He moved the second reading of the Bill. Bill read the second and the third time. PUBLIC WORKS BILL. A message was received from the House of Representatives, forwarding the following reasons for disagreeing with the Council's amendments in this Bill :- "1. That the Bill is intended to remedy great loss, inconvenience, and hardship, which is being suffered by numbers of property- owners by reason of the provisions of sec- tion 21 of 'The Public Works Acts Amend- ment Act, 1900'; and also to prevent the unsightly appearance which streets will pre- sent if that section remains unaltered. "2. That the amendments of the Legislative Council, if agreed to, would result in the con- tinuance of the evils above referred to." The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER moved, That the Council doth not insist on its amendments. Motion negatived. The Hon. Mr. REEVES moved, That the Hon. Messrs. Rigg, Gourley, and himself be appointed a Committee to draw up reasons for insisting. Motion agreed to. Subsequently, The Hon. Mr. REEVES brought up the fol- lowing reasons, and moved, That they be agreed to :- "The proviso struck out would, if passed,

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authority in connection with the widening of streets." Motion agreed to. Subsequently, A message was received from the House of Representatives agreeing to the Council's amendments in this Bill. # APPROPRIATION BILL. This Bill was read the first and the second time. On the question, " That the Bill be read the third time," The Hon. Mr. REEVES said, In the supple- mentary estimates there is a sum of £400 odd for the Commissioners going to Australia. Now, I do not for one moment cavil at that. I think it is

quite right that it should be paid, but I want to draw the attention of the Council to a most peculiar thing with regard to Royal Commissioners. A member of Parliament, if appointed to a Royal Commission, receives only £1 per day. A gentleman outside Parliament appointed on a Royal Commission receives £3 3s. a day. I think the thing is simply absurd, and should be rectified. It is absurd to expect a member of Parliament to go about the country on a Royal Commission at £1 per day. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .- I have no difficulty in replying to the honourable gentleman if this is the only criticism he has to direct against the present Appropriation Bill. The Hon. Mr. REEVES .- It is not against it. I am not saying a word against it. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .- I know that ; but the honourable gentleman is reflecting against the scrupulous conscience of Parliament for the past fifteen or twenty years, which has absolutely prevented or hindered their own members from taking positions and giving to the State their proper services on certain occasions. I have always contended, from the first day I entered public life, that the most miserable thing any Parliament can do is to brand its public men with the brand of covetousness. Most countries are only too glad to get the services of these men if they are worthy at all to get them without money and without price. They want them; but New Zealand seems to think that they only want the rich men, who can afford to gallivant about on Commissions, and lose money, if they choose to do so, for the honour and the glory of it. But that is not business. No man in business would do that sort of thing; but it was all brought about, I believe, in a peculiar way. A certain member of Parliament got into trouble about a certain contract, and a Bill was immediately brought in which disqualified for ever afterwards any member of Parliament being appointed to a Royal Commission except at the miserable payment of a guinea a day, although his brother Commissioners may be getting three guineas a day. That has been a great drawback. We have had very important Commissions this year, and I may say the work of some of those Commissions has been exceptionally Hon. Mr. Reeves my own department, the School Teachers' Salaries Commission. We were there face to face with a question which dealt in its utmost intimacy with every part of the colony, with the minds of the Boards, with the minds of the teachers, and with the interests of education generally, which vary in every part of the colony; we set up a Commission which was to go round and gauge all these different opinions, and focus them in such a way that Parliament should be convinced that there was only one way of doing it-namely, by making a colonial scale of salaries. We were extremely fortunate in the gentlemen who occupied seats on that Commission. We had members of Parliament ; we had members and Chairmen of Education Boards; we had School Inspectors, and we had school-teachers-every class was represented, and I do not think there was really a vital interest ignored. Because, while Westland and Greymouth was not strictly represented, we appointed the Secretary from the Westland Education District, and we were exceedingly fortunate in getting so able a young man as Mr. Morten, to whom we owe a great debt for the work which he did. And I am very glad indeed we were able to express to him our recognition of his valuable services. The members of that Commission who were not members of Parliament got three guineas a day. Members of Parliament could only draw £1 a day. That, Sir, is very unfair indeed ; but still that is a fault of Parliament, being so sensitive as to the -I do not know that I should call it the good fame of its members, but I might call it a super-scrupulosity. I think it is a most ignominious brand upon the honour and honesty of every member of Parliament to have such an Act on the statute-book. I have always protested against it. We now come to another Commission -- the Federation Commission. That Commission was of an exceptional nature. It covered a great deal of ground ; it had to travel a great distance, and it had to cross the sea. I happened to meet with a very high authority indeed, and he told me that in his experience it was the only Commission which had never exceeded the original term of its natural life, which shows how well that Commission attended to its duties. It had so many days, weeks and months in which to report, and it brought down its report within the original time set forth in the first Commission, which is a very rare thing indeed, I can assure the Council. That Commission was placed in a very peculiar position. Of course, we

know what happens in New Zealand. There are the disabilities of members of Parliament ; and I trust the Council will consider with me that it would have been very wrong and shortsighted if members of Parliament had not been on that Commission, for we should then have lost the services of the Hon. Mr. Bowen. We should also have lost the services of the Chairman, Colonel Prit. Why should not those gentlemen be recompensed and paid just as well as anybody else ? That Commission travelled across the seas, and they

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Adelaide, and, I think, Brisbane. It is no use minority of one, which was very " hard lines " talking about how they were treated. We all -but still he had no doubt, when there had known with what hospitality representatives of been a little more time for reflection, and if this colony would be treated in every one of he lived to bring the measure forward again, the places I have mentioned ; and were they to some of those who had acted, perhaps, without remain an impecunious and unresponsive body the fullest consideration of the reasons he had of gentlemen, who might be considered not of given for voting for the measure, would alter the highest class? We expect our Commis- their minds. He begged to move, That the sioners, when they go abroad, to live like repro- Council do now adjourn. sentatives, and to be able to pay their way; and I think it was understood that in sending the thanks of this Council were due to the Hon. those gentlemen their expenses in Australia the Minister for the very considerate and able would be considered. I am sure that both way he had conducted the business of the Go- those Commissions - the Teachers' Salaries vernment in the Council. Commission and the Federation Commission - have performed services which the colony ought ment that by stating that, as a rule, he was in to thank them for, and esteem as absolutely accord with the Hon. the Minister. Of course, above money and above price. They have done on one occasion there was a little difference of a valuable service for their country. They have opinion between them, and he humbly sub- mitted he was right on that occasion. How- cleared up ground which some people were almost afraid to touch. In the case of the ever, he hoped they would get on as cordially Federation Commission some people were afraid next session as this one. to touch the question. They thought, if they did, they would tumble down the whole com- was one of those who was not ordinarily sup- mercial condition of the colony, as if it were posed to support the present Government, he built on the top of a pack of cards ; whereas the had very great pleasure in testifying to the Commission went straight to the mark, and courtesy displayed by the honourable gentle- found out what was the position of affairs, and man towards all members of his party, for brought up a very solid report indeed. I am which he was very much obliged. He supported obliged to the Hon. Mr. Reeves for bringing the Minister when he was right, and voted against him when he was wrong ; but he would forward this matter, and I consider that when like to see him a little more Liberal from his members of Parliament-who should be men of known character and experience-are appointed point of view. on Royal Commissions they should be paid as much as any other gentleman. The Hon. Mr. REEVES .- As a matter of (Friday). personal explanation, I gathered from what the Hon. the Minister said that he was under the impression that I was not in favour of reasonable expenses being allowed to the Royal HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. Commissioners. I tried to explain in my few remarks that there was nothing of the kind in my mind, because no one has a greater appreciation of the work done by the First Readinga-Second Reading-Third Reading- Federation Commissioners and the Education Commissioners than I have. I contend they have done their duty well and faithfully, and the paltry sum that has been placed on the estimates to pay them for their extra expenses, to my mind, is not enough. I did not say a word against it, and I only trust the Govern- ment will take steps to further increase the allowances to Royal Commissioners. Bill read the third time. ADJOURNMENT. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER said, At the last stage of this eventful history, which was to ring the curtain down, he only desired to thank

honourable members of the Council for the consideration they had given him in the conduct of the Council's business. He had endeavoured to do his best, and if he had o'clock. given any satisfaction at all in the conduct of the business, it had only been because the members of the Council had been exceedingly generous to him, and had always supported his .endeavours-he would not say his measures, The Hon. Mr. PINKERTON would say that The Hon. Mr. T. KELLY would also supple- The Hon. Mr. PEACOCK said, Although he Motion agreed to. The Council adjourned at three o'clock p.m. Thursday, 7th November, 1901. Primary Education Reserves-A Correction- Reserves and other Lands Sale, Disposal, and Enabling and Public Bodies Empowering Bill- Timber Export Bill-Factories Bill-Nelson Harbour Board Bill-Victoria College Site Bill- Death of the Hon. J. A. Bonar, M.L.C .- Native Land Claims Adjustment and Laws Bill-Re- serves and other Lands Sale, Disposal, and Enabling and Public Bodies Empowering Bill- Midland Railway -- Victoria College Site Bill- Native Land Claims Adjustment and Laws Bill -Reserves and other Lands Sale, Disposal, and Enabling and Public Bodies Empowering Bill- Midland Railway-Manawatu Railway Sale and Purchase Empowering Bill-Public Works Bill- Flax Grading and Export Bill-Victoria College Site Bill-Dunedin City and Suburban Tramways Bill - North of Auckland Railway -Supply - Public Works Bill-Appropriation Bill-Public Works Bill-Business of the Session-Adjournment. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER took the chair at eleven PRAYERS. FIRST READINGS. Light-line Railways Bill, Land Bill.

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Maori Councils Bill. THIRD READING. Maori Councils Bill. PRIMARY EDUCATION RESERVES. On the motion of Mr. DUNCAN (Minister of Lands), it was resolved, That this House approves of the lands proposed to be reserved as endow- ments for primary education, as classified in Paper No. 256 of 1901, being permanently set aside as endowments to primary education. # A CORRECTION. Mr. T. MACKENZIE (Waihemo) asked per- mission to make a correction by way of personal explanation. When he was discussing the meat- export trade some time ago he alluded to classi- fication and standard. His argument was in- tended to show that the Wellington brand stood as high in the North Island as the Eclipse brand did in the South, but in the Hansard report he was made to use the term " faulty grading " instead of "error in description " when referring to a quotation from the Aus- tralian Pastoralists' Review relative to a case of claim. The question of faulty grading was not at all involved in the point he was bringing out, and he could not understand why the term "faulty grading " was reported. It had since been explained to him that the claim to which he alluded was made simply because the mar- ket value of meat had fallen, and it was another instance of the impropriety of the method of assessing adopted in the Old Country. He thought it was only just to the Wellington Meat Export Company that he should make this clear. He could perfectly well understand how the claim came to be made, and, until the present wretched mode of assessing was re- formed, whenever a decline in market oc- curred c.i.f. sales would always be subject to the same injustice, and the prime standard qualities might be declared to be not up to standard, and the reputation of any company might suffer. RESERVES AND OTHER LANDS SALE, DISPOSAL, AND ENABLING, AND PUB- LIC BODIES EMPOWERING BILL. A message was received from His Excellency the Governor transmitting a draft of this Bill, which was referred to Committee of the Whole, agreed to, and reported to the House. On the question, That the resolution be agreed to, Captain RUSSELL (Hawke's Bay) said, Before the question was put he thought it was right that the Premier or some other Minister should assure the House that they would make themselves responsible for the propriety- "honesty " was almost the proper word-of the provisions in the Bill. It was quite im- possible for the House at any time to know that all the numerous alterations, additions, and changes, consequent upon such a Bill as this, were fair and proper. He only raised the ques- tion in its general aspect, that the responsi- Bill such as this, with large powers and great ramifications involved in it. Before the B :. passed

he thought they ought to have the assurance from some particular Minister that the departmental officers had approved the various clauses of the Bill, and were absolutely certain of the propriety of its passing, so that if any misfeasance was discovered after the Bill had passed the responsibility would be taken from the honourable members and placed on the Ministers. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) desired to save most of the clauses of the Bill had been before the House for a very long period, and it was some years since they had had a Bill of this nature. Ministers had carefully gone through every clause in the Bill. Of course, there might be local circumstances which it was impossible for them to know; but most of the clauses were the result of petitions that had been presented to the House, and the Bill gave effect to recommendations made to the Government. In this and every other measure that was introduced by the Government Ministers must accept a certain amount of responsibility. When going through the Bill, if members had a doubt about any clause, or were of opinion that any clause was unjust or impracticable, the Government would not press the passage of any clause that required further consideration. To have a separate Bill for every one of the clauses in this Bill would be an undue loading of the statute-book, and in some instances private members, if they introduced the necessary Bills for the clauses affecting their own district, would have little probability of getting them through. He could only say this, as far as the Government were concerned, that there was nothing in this Bill, so far as Ministers knew, the passage of which would be detrimental to the colony. Resolution agreed to, and Bill read a second time. **TIMBER EXPORT BILL.** Mr. MILLS (Commissioner of Trade and Customs). - Sir, in moving the second reading of this important Bill at this late hour of the session it will be impossible for me to give it the amount of information I would like to [] before the House so that the members can fully understand the position of the timber industry of this colony, and how necessary it is for us to have a judicious conservation of timber at the same time that we carry on a large timber industry. There is no alternative policy question that can be entertained as a thought out by this House than the question of the timber interests of this colony, and I am quite sure that every member must agree that this is one of our largest and most valuable patrimonial assets. The Government have for some time considered it necessary, in the interest of timber conservation, to have a measure passed which will, at any rate, prohibit the raw material leaving this colony to be worked up in other places. During the past month a tentative measure has been passed by the Parliament.

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likely to materially interfere with the timber trade by regulation, and such notice shall be given to the industry of this colony. The Government given not less than twenty-four hours prior to the time therefore called a Conference of the sawmillers' shipment. "(2.) If any such timber is shipped without the men who had the necessary experience we all wish to acquire-and they were unanimous-such notice being given, the master shall be liable that the day had arrived when an export liable to a penalty not exceeding fifty pounds." I intend when in Committee to ask the duty should be placed on the raw material- Committee to make an alteration in subsection- that is, on the round logs that have not passed through the mill, or logs squared with the axe (2) of this clause. I intend to ask the Committee to strike out the word "shall." and or saw. will be well aware that during the short space insert "and agent shall each," and to strike of some fifty years, which is only a small item out of the words "exceeding fifty " and insert in the history of a young nation, a great quantity- "less than ten." In reading it over finally I find that the quantity of our timber has been felled, or burned came to the conclusion that it would not do through bush fires, the forests are being to fix a maximum amount of penalty, for this quickly devastated, and the day is rapidly approaching. We could not possibly tell what might happen. If a large ship called into any of the harbours when we shall find there is very little timber suitable for sawmilling purposes northern ports or bays and loaded up with timber in this colony -- that is, at any rate, timber, the captain might leave the colony, of a certain class. I may say in this connection preferring not to pay any duty, but simply to mention that last year we

exported nearly pay the penalty imposed by the Bill. There- 60,000,000 ft., besides there being a very large fore it was thought advisable that it should read as I have indicated. Clause 4 refers to home consumption. Now, the effect of the temporary measure passed by the Common- the passing of export entries. Clause 5 con- wealth would be, under such a tariff, to take tains provision for making the necessary all the raw material in the form of logs from regulations, and in the last line I intend New Zealand over to Australia and have it to ask the Committee to strike out the words sawn up there, which, no doubt, would be a "exceeding ten " and insert "less than five," so that the minimum amount will be the great injury to our timber industry, and throw out of employment a very large number of our fine, unless under circumstances respecting working-classes. Last year a fairly large im- which the Magistrate, or whoever may ad- port of timber was noted through the Customs, judicate on the matter, considers the offence but it is timber of a different class from what would necessitate a larger penalty. In regard we have here, all hardwood, and it is a matter to the Schedule, we have had great difficulty in of necessity to import it. Honourable mem- arriving at what we wanted to define, because, bers will have seen that a resolution has been as those interested in the trade are aware, it is passed by the Commonwealth Parliament, and difficult to define what is a log, especially when will understand what the result of their deli- you know that a saw has touched it. If you berations mean to the timber industry of the go to a sawmill and find large pieces of sawn timber, some 12 in. by 12 in. or 12 in. by 20 in., colony. I need not detain the House any fur- ther, although, as I have already remarked, the Customhouse officer might naturally say it there are many items of importance I should was a log, while the sawmiller might say it like to have placed on record in reference to this was only part of a log; so that it is difficult to arrive at a proper definition. There is also great industry, because it is one I have always some difficulty in arriving at the definition of felt a personal interest in, and I believe there "fitches." In conversation with those saw- is no greater question that could occupy the millers who attended the Timber Conference attention of this Parliament than the judicious working and conservation of our forests. The I found that there was a division of opinion Bill as introduced is not a very lengthy one. in regard to this matter, while they were In clause 2 it says, - unanimous in asking the Government to bring in a measure to provide an export duty of "The Governor may at any time, by Order in not less than 3s. on the logs. Members Council, cause to be levied, collected, and paid will therefore see the matter is left an open at the Customs to His Majesty, previous to question, to be fixed later on by regula- exportation from New Zealand, the duties upon tions. Some of the northern sawmillers who timber as set forth in the Schedule hereto." had large interests, such as Mr. Gibbons and It was deemed by the Government not to be Mr. Mitchelson, have written saying they advisable at the present time to ask the House think this ought to be done, and the Govern- to fix a certain amount of export duty. It was ment wish to meet them in a reasonable way. considered in the interests of the industry, that At the same time we have to study the effect of as at present the tariff passed by the Australian the Commonwealth tariff, which at present is Commonwealth was merely a tentative measure, almost prohibitive. In the first part of the it would be better to have an elastic Bill in this Schedule, where it says, " Or such higher duty, form. Clause 3 is as follows : - not exceeding 5s. per 100 superficial feet, as the Governor by Order in Council determines," I in- " (1.) The master or agent of every ship in tend to move that that be struck out, and the which it is intended to ship for export timber same proviso as in the second part of the Sche- liable to duty shall give notice to the Collector dule inserted-namely, " Or such lesser duty as or other proper officer of Customs of such in- !

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That would fix the maximum rate. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- Why should the maximum be fixed in one case and not in another ? Mr. MILLS .- It is fixed on logs because all the sawmillers and every one of experience in the timber industry are quite satisfied that the day has arrived when we ought not to let logs

leave the colony to be worked up in Australia, to the detriment of the working-classes. We are satisfied that 3s. on 100 superficial feet will be sufficient for export duty, combined with the heavier freight that is charged on logs. In the latter part of the Schedule, where it states, " Or such lesser duty as the Governor by Order in Council determines," the House will realise why this position is made on a sliding scale, so that we can finally adjust matters to suit the industry of this colony. Captain RUSSELL (Hawke's Bay). - It seems to me there are three great principles involved in the consideration of this Bill. In the first place, as was pointed out by the member for Palmerston last night, the Governor's message is dated one week ago. A great principle first of all presents itself to my mind, that the message has been detained in transit for one week, and the only conception one can have is that it was intentionally delayed, so that those members who, like myself, hold strong opinions on the subject of free-trade and protection should not have the opportunity of discussing the matter as it ought to be discussed. That a Bill involving a great principle should be brought down to the House when everybody is fagged out, and every one shows signs of impatience at any member who speaks at any length, is an infringement of principle to begin with. The second principle, which seems to me to be of very great importance, is whether it is desirable under any circumstances to impose an export duty ; and, though the Minister in addressing himself to the Bill has spoken of the Commonwealth tariff being of such and such a nature, the honourable gentleman knows, and should have called the attention of the House to the fact, that the Commonwealth tariff is in suspense, and that there is really no true Commonwealth tariff at all. Mr. MILLS .- I said so. Captain RUSSELL .- Well, I did not follow the Minister sufficiently closely to know that he had done so; but, at any rate, this Bill smacks of the nature of a retaliatory measure, and, the people of New Zealand being sincerely anxious to enter into reciprocal treaties with Australia, it is dangerous, before the Commonwealth tariff is assured, to place a measure on our statute-book that could only appear intended as a retaliatory measure. But there is another principle which also is of great importance, and probably is of more importance than the other two, and that is that we are departing altogether from the true constitutional principle when we allow that the Governor in Council may from time to time, when he thinks fit, impose a duty on any industry; and not Mr. Mills exactly as he thinks fit. Mr. MILLS .- The maximum and minimum are stated in the Bill. Captain RUSSELL .- Quite so; but within the maximum and minimum the Governor in Council may fix such duties as he pleases. That appears to me to be a principle that is absolutely monstrous. At the present time we have a (Government with distinctive protective proclivities, and they may advise His Excellency to impose the highest possible duties. but next we may have a free-trade Government. who might advise His Excellency to abolish the duty altogether, or to reduce it to the lowest possible amount, and that without any consultation with the people of the colony. There are thus three important principles involved in this Bill, and I think it is wrong, under the circumstances, that it should be brought down, or allowed to proceed. Once more I wish to emphasize the fact that for one whole week the Bill has been held in abeyance ; and if there was any intention of allowing a debate to take place on the Bill and allowing the people of the colony through the Press to know of the provisions of the Bill, it should have been circulated at least a week ago, so as to allow the country to know what policy was being proposed. I am determined to vote against the second reading of the Bill, and in Committee I shall endeavour to get it so amended as will not leave the power in the hands of His Excellency in Council to raise or lower or abolish altogether the duty, a principle which I think is injurious to constitutional government. I may also add that time Minister, in addressing himself to the Bill, alluded to the fact that he had been in communication with the sawmillers throughout the country. That should not weigh with honourable members at all. We are not here to legislate in the interest of sawmillers, or any other industry, but for the welfare of the colony generally. Sir J. G. WARD (Postmaster-General) .- The honourable gentleman complains of the delay in introducing this Bill. If the honourable member and those who think with him would try to realise the situation, and consider what it is that has induced the Government to bring it

back this measure to the very last moment. ; will understand why it is not proposed in this Bill to impose a direct import duty on tin: .. at once, but to have it held in abeyance. The whole reason for the delay in the introduction of the Bill has been that we might ascertain what is to be done by the Federal Government, who, though they announced their tariff - nine weeks ago, have not yet got it into Comm. die in the Federal Parliament. Captain RUSSELL .- It will not be in force for three months. Sir J. G. WARD .- That is all the more reason why we should take the course proposed: i.e. connection with this matter, so that we can decide during the recess if necessary. The timber industry of New Zealand is a very important one. Hundreds of thousands of pounds are invested

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export business in timber to Australia for many years past has been one of considerable importance to that industry; and the sudden blocking-out of our timber from Australia would be of material moment to the sawmill proprietors and their employes, to say nothing of many other industries affected by it, and it would undoubtedly affect a great many men employed in New Zealand. Very well ; supposing that as a result of the representation going on at present in Australia between those largely engaged in the timber industry and the Federal Government, it should be decided to reduce the Australian duty, or not to put on this duty against New Zealand timber at all if we were, now to impose a fixed export duty we should be like a ship at sea without a rudder-we could do nothing but collect the duty. We have held back this Bill in the hope that something would be done in Australia. I have myself had cable correspondence with people in Australia for some weeks past, which correspondence I am not in a position to give publicity to at the present time, but I can say they are working strongly to prevent that duty which has been foreshadowed by the Federal Government being imposed on timber. Therefore it behoves the Government to take such measures as will enable them in, so to speak, an elastic way to meet circumstances that may arise and which at the moment they cannot possibly foresee. The honourable member said it was not desirable to impose an export duty. I quite agree with him in that respect if our industry could be carried on without it ; but we have had the representatives of the sawmilling industry from Auckland to the Bluff meeting in I would urge that the very fact of our asking Wellington and going into the situation, and they have unanimously recommended that an export duty on logs should be imposed by the colony in order to enable them to carry on this important branch of their business. An Hon. MEMBER. - They must take our white-pine. Sir J. G. WARD .- Yes ; but the point is, act of retaliation. I am strongly opposed to Are we going to allow our logs to be sent across to the other side, and the whole of the work in interests of this industry. We ask power to connection with the cutting-up of those logs to pass from this colony, and allow the expenditure of a large sum of money to be taken out of our colony and away from our own workmen, and to pass into the hands of those in another country ? An Hon. MEMBER .- This is making it worse ; the member says that the power of variation it makes the timber dearer. Sir J. G. WARD .- The honourable member a monstrous thing. must see that, if there is an export duty on logs, it will be necessary to saw up the white-pine power to raise or to lower the duty. pine here, and those who purchase the sawn pine will, if Australia does not reduce its duty, have to pay more for it to make up the export duty we put on. That is what we are endeavouring to do. We want, under the altered circumstances, to get this important industry on the best footing possible for the colony ; but at the same time we do not want to drive the industry to Australia, and have our logs cut up there for butter-boxes, instead Now, the honourable member says that this is intended to be some kind of a retaliatory measure. I, for one, should be very sorry to see the country adopt in any shape or form a retaliatory measure against Australia owing to it having brought down a tariff of Customs duties for the Commonwealth against the world. We have yet to see what the destinies of Australia and New Zealand may require to be done in the interests of our respective countries, and, if the Australian statesmen have found it necessary

to adopt a policy of protection on timber, I do not for one moment believe that they have done so, as is suggested by some people, merely as an act of antagonism towards this country. That would be a very undesirable course for them to follow, and anything but statesmanlike, and I do not believe they have done so. I say, in turn, that, respecting this colony, its destiny in many respects is still in the unknown future, and that there may be many requirements of our own that at present we cannot foresee to be considered. I say there are circumstances that may, and probably will, arise which will possibly override the minor considerations of a policy such as this, and that it ought to be the desire of public men both here and in Australia to originate, instead of acts of retaliation, something which will consummate between the countries a bond of union; and our aim, as far as fiscal matters are concerned, should be the reciprocation in respect to articles of export suited to both countries, and that we should do in that respect what is for the benefit of all. That is what I believe should be our object, and that the Governor in Council should have power to impose these duties if necessary shows that we are not desirous of adopting a retaliatory course, and that if we were now to take fright or be alarmed by the action of our friends across the water we should impose an export duty definitely now. That might be said to be an such a course. What we are doing is to impose certain duties if that should become necessary, and if negotiation and conference should show that we must do something to protect that industry. If that, unhappily, should be the only course left to us, then some system of export duty should be adopted. The honour- in the duties from 3s. to 5s., or less than 3s., is Captain RUSSELL. - To leave His Excel- Sir J. G. WARD. - It is not His Excellency the Governor-it is the Governor in Council. The honourable member knows perfectly well that this would only be done by the Governor upon the advice of responsible Ministers, and the responsible Ministers are not going to give effect to that unless it appears to them as responsible Ministers to be desirable. It cannot be said, as was urged by one honourable member, that this is putting into the hands of

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away from the people the liberties which they ought to possess. I say that if the country, under these circumstances, having made provision for possible action during the recess owing to matters which are yet being devised by the Federal Government - I say that, under the circumstances, you can do nothing less in order to meet this situation than to give effect to a proposal of this kind, and leave it to the Governor in Council to act -either to reduce the duty below 3s. per 100 ft., or to increase it beyond 3s., but not over 5s., if that is necessary and desirable, to secure to this country a portion of the business, which I think honourable gentlemen will see is for the well-being of a great industry. That brings me to the last point to which I wish to refer. The honourable gentleman says this has been done without consultation, as far as the people of the colony are concerned. Now, the honourable member will at once admit that, if you want to consult the people of the colony as to what should be done in a fiscal emergency of this character, it will be necessary for a referendum to be submitted to the people; but when we have the members of the House of Representatives met, as they are, when we are in a position to take their judgment and to follow a course such as this, if it seems right when that course has been adopted, I do not think it can really be said that the people of the colony have not been consulted. The representatives of the people have their responsibilities on behalf of their people. And no one can gainsay the fact that the leaders of this industry, the men who are most intimately associated with it, after carefully consulting together, and with a responsible Minister present-no one can say they are not in a position to advise on the situation. My honourable friend the Minister of Customs attended during the Conference, when the situation was put before him by those who naturally desire no improper interference with or injury to the industry. The sawmill-owners, the proprietors of the mills-the men of most experience in this industry-would not have unanimously recommended the adoption of something that would be inimical to

the sawmilling industry and disastrous to the men employed in it, and therefore ruinous so far as the industry itself is concerned. I can assure members of the House that the only reason we have for asking that this power should be taken for the Governor in Council is to insure, under circumstances that are unique and that have yet to be determined after action is taken by the Federal Council, that then a course should be taken one way or the other that will be most in the interests of this colony. I do not think any better way than the one proposed could be suggested ; but if any honourable member has a better way, then. I say, in the interests of the country, we shall be too glad to receive his suggestions. Mr. T.

MACKENZIE (Waihemo) .- I regret I am not able to see the matter in quite the same view as that in which the honourable member has approached it. I feel that at the present time it would be a great mistake on the part of Sir J. G. Ward to take those on the other side. Any of us can see from the discussions that there is much debate as to what should be done, although at the present moment the majority in the Federal Parliament favour a system of protection. But, considering how important it is to us to keep on the friendliest possible terms, I say we should not show even any temporary irritation at what is proposed. I think that is the correct method to follow. If I had time I could enlarge upon the subject, but will not now do so. Mr. MONK (Waitemata). - With previous speakers, I approve of the remarks of the honourable member for Hawke's Bay, Captain Russell. I very much regret that we have not had more notice of the measure being brought down. I am aware that it, was talked of some time ago, but I thought the subject had passed away, and that we were to hear no more about it. From the remarks which have been made on this Bill, one would imagine that the control of the timber business of Australia was in the hands of our sawmillers; whereas the export from New Zealand forms a very important part indeed to us, but a comparatively small part of the timber imports into Australia. This movement seems to me almost too insignificant to call for special attention on the part of the Australian statesmen. I would also remind the honourable gentleman that a very large number of gentlemen in Australia are opposing the duty which is proposed by the Commonwealth, and the important Kauri Timber Company of the North, which is almost entirely owned by gentlemen in Australia. You may depend upon it that what influence can be brought to bear upon the Government there will be brought by those gentlemen as a matter of self-interest. I think we should be very careful how we interfere in the way of introducing any irritating element into this matter. Just pardon me for a moment while I cast my thoughts back as briefly as possible to the manner in which we have treated the promoters of the movement which resulted in the consummation of the Australian Commonwealth at its first inception. They invited us to a Conference, and we sent over our delegates some years ago, and these delegates reported to us that there should be no further participation or sympathy on the part of New Zealand with that great movement. After many years, and after lengthened later and immense trouble, the representatives of the Australian States went before the House of Commons, and there our Agent-General met them in a very discourteous manner. He attempted then to impose interference in a matter that solely belonged to Australia, and with which we had previously declared we had little or no concern or interest. And now, Sir, when they are arranging a tariff that they believe to be for their own welfare, and also after we have had an important Commission traversing the Australian Colonies at great cost to determine whether or not it would be wise for us to join in the Commonwealth movement in Australia-the moment, I say, when they have

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to arrange a tariff for their own convenience we foolishly threaten them with a punitive tariff. I regret the time is so short that I cannot go into the matter fully, but, at any rate, I shall attempt to give members some idea of what I think will be the result of our interference. In the first place, if the Minister of Commerce, the Hon. Mr. Mills, had dealt with this matter aright he would have shown us precisely how the proposed tariff would affect our export in relation to the value of the other timber imported into

Australia, and how far it was necessary for them to take our material. Mr. MILLS .- I would have done so only the time at my disposal was so limited. Mr. MONK .- We would be better off with a few solid figures or statistics of that kind than with what the honourable gentleman told us. Mr. FLATMAN .-. I thought you were in favour of this Bill. Mr. MONK .- No, I am not, because I do not see what the result will be to us. I should like to know whether it is necessary for the people of the Commonwealth to take our white-pine. I believe there are very few, if any, other kinds of timber so suitable for butter-boxes as our kahikatea. It is odourless and tasteless, and these are the two essential qualities in timber that is required for butter-boxes. But I am not satisfied that in the course of time they may not contrive other vessels for the purpose of carrying our butter, or discover means of effacing the odours and flavours of other timbers, and in that case we should suffer severely. Now, with regard to kauri, in the cutting of the timber, if we send it away in fitches, there is no doubt we should have a large quantity of small sizes left on our hands, as by imposing a duty of 3s. on it I admit we should be under considerable difficulty in disposing of it in our own market. I have tested by some figures dealing with this matter from the point of view of the sawmillers in relation to white-pine only. Let us say a log of 1,000 ft. would cost when landed 10s. per 100 ft. in Melbourne; it would cost the miller when sawn up net 17s. per 100 ft., allowing the log to produce 800 ft. Now, in cutting up the timber on the other side they would be burdened with the small stuff, which I do not think would be worth 17s. And they would find a difficulty in getting rid of that, which would raise the price of white boards suitable for butter-boxes to about £1 a hundred. Now, I believe that if we do not impose this duty there will be a larger consumption of white-pine, and the trade will be in favour of this colony. There is a feature that I suppose has occupied the attention of the Cabinet while they have been dealing with this question, and that is to keep in the colony the labour that is engaged in our sawmills. The labour in producing the logs will supply a profit all the same. The milling of the log I have mentioned is only a matter of about 12s. True, it would affect the timber merchants over on the other side, who are taking the logs from us and sawing them up there; and when we supply them with logs under the duty suggested they will have the burden of the small sizes, VOL. CXIX .- 78. and consequently will use less than they do at present. There are important interests in Australia which are very strong both ways, and if we let them alone I think it is likely we may come off better than by interfering at present. For instance, there is the Moreton Bay pine, and the mill-owners producing it would be very strongly in favour of this duty, and no doubt they have brought pressure on the Government to impose the proposed Commonwealth tariff as against our timber. On the other hand, there are very powerful traders in timber who have relations with us, and they are taking very large quantities of our stuff, and importing from Norway and Puget Sound and the limitless resources of Alaska. Of course, they will do all they possibly can to keep the duty down. Let us divest ourselves of the feeling that there is on the part of the Commonwealth an endeavour to punish us. We are only to suffer the natural consequences of the duties they deem requisite for their own interests. Let us divest from our minds the feeling that this is all owing to partiality or preference. The Australian merchants are getting an import of far larger quantities of timber than we should ever send them, and they are met with precisely the same duty, and it would be far better for us not to interfere at all in the matter. They know all we could tell them. They know how far we are punished or otherwise, and I would plead with the Government not to interfere in the matter ; and, if we find it is necessary or to our advantage to impose a duty next Parliament, let us do it with a perfect knowledge of all the conditions in which the question is involved. I plead with the House, having a feeling of sympathy or concern on behalf of New Zealand, to let us defer the consideration of this matter. Then, again, there was a remark made by the Minister as to retarding the destruction of our forests. The Minister may remember that I have fought in the House for the Government to take up this question, and to try and conserve our forests by protecting them from fire, but nothing was done ; and if I owned a forest my effort would be, not only in my own interests, but in the public interests, as quickly as possible to turn it

into cash. Lately we have been favoured with moist summers, but only let us have a droughty season, and the destruction of forest may be enormous. I am sorry to have to say so, but such is the truth. I should like to see the Government take more care and means for the conservation of the remainder of our kauri forests than they are now doing. In regard to conserving the products of our bush lands, I think it is all nonsense. There is one matter I would like to call to the mind of the Hon. the Premier. Does he not remember that many years ago I complained about the Premier imposing a duty on standing timber, and making it to the interests of the bush-owners to get rid of the timber and turn it into cash as quickly as possible. Let them pay only a small royalty to take it out of their forests as soon as the bush has grown into a convenient size for marketable purposes. In

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Canada and Norway every help is given to ! timber men. I hope the Minister will take my suggestion, and wait a few months before he determines how he will act, and I give him the assurance that it will make no difference to New Zealand. Let us not go into the matter definitely till we know how the Commonwealth tariff is going to be finally arranged. Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley) .- I am opposed to this measure, as I consider it inimical to the best interests of the colony. See what Canada has done. It has approached the Commonwealth with the view of bringing about a friendly reciprocal tariff. What has our Government done? Nothing. The Minister for Railways stated just now that one reason for placing a duty of 3s. on balk timber was in order to give additional employment to our people. Sir J. G. WARD .-- I did not say that at all. Mr. MEREDITH .- Well, I understood you to say so ; but it cannot be otherwise. It will increase the cost of timber to the producer. If we propose doing this, why not place an export duty on wheat, so that the whole of the wheat grown in the colony could be converted into flour and exported ? I have eight sawmills in my electorate, and not one owner has approached me on the question of an export duty on balk or any other kind of timber. Permit me to point out that, while we export to Australia timber to the value of about #233,659, we import from Australia timber to the value of nearly \$100,000. We cannot do without Australian hard timber for our wharves, bridges, et cetera, so that in the imposition of an export tariff we are making a rod for our own backs. Mr. HOUSTON (Bay of Islands). - It is not my intention to offer any opposition to the Bill, but there is one question I should like to lay before the Minister and the House in connection with this export duty. I fear there is a danger of inflicting great injury on a large number of persons engaged in this industry. There are a number of men who buy small bushes who have been in the habit of cutting timber for export. The danger is that the larger millowners will obtain a monopoly, through these small people being obliged to sell their balk timber to them, and these large mills would only pay them a price less the export duty. This would throw the whole industry into the hands of the timber companies, to the injury of private individuals. I think it would be well if a clause were introduced preventing the large millowners from exercising this power of monopoly. Mr. BUDDO (Kaiapoi). - It will be my duty to vote against this measure, for the reason that I think it a wrong start towards reciprocity. and our timber industry is so small compared with the produce trade that the advantage gained here will be infinitesimal, and not worth the effort. Perhaps it may be considered by honourable members, because I do not come from a timber-export district, that I should allow other members to discuss this subject ; but I wish to put on record some facts with regard to the price of timber in Australia to prove Mr. Monk that an export duty is not necessary for the success of our timber trade. I am quoting now from a circular issued by a timber merchant in Melbourne, dated the 9th September last- Mr. James Moore. He quotes kauri at per 100 ft. lineal, 5s. 9d. ; Oregon, narrow widths, 9s. 6d. per 100 ft. superficial. Now, Sir, there are even stronger reasons for a duty, as far as this colony is concerned, if we come to consider New Zealand white-pine for shelving and butter-boxes. For butter-boxes the cost in Melbourne is only 11s. 6d. per 100 ft. superficial, as against Alaska pine 17s. per loof. superficial. Honourable members will there. fore see

that there is room for considerate export duty, and still make our timber salcalle in Australia at a substantial increase on what they are at present paying for it. Coming ?? kauri, the same reasons may apply. We have best kauri quoted at 1Ss. 6d. per 100 ft., up to 20s. 6d. for special quality. These are the reasons why the export duty should be put on and still allow competition with American timber. I see no strong reason against it from that point of view. And I consider the demand for our timbers in Australia will continue, notwithstanding the fact that an export duty here obtains. I will, however, read a portion of a letter which I have received from a timber merchant, which gives a reason why an export duty should not be put on. He says, - " I think it would be a mistake to hurry on a protective duty on balt white-pine, as advised by the sawmillers in the North Island. They ought to leave this matter to next session, so as to let the matter settle, and it would then be better known what effect it would have on the timber trade. As far as I know at present, there is not much balt white-pine timber sent to Australia, as it is not suitable in balt for butter boxes, as balt cannot be seasoned on its journey to Australia, as it would be liable to get discoloured, and therefore not likely to be used for that purpose. Again, they are so particular over the quality of it for butter boxes it suits them better to have it cut and seasoned in New Zealand ; and balt timber would be liable to have the resin veins and shakes through them ; and in the end, if they must have New Zealand white-pine, they will have the extra duty they put on to pay themselves." I think these reasons are very much to the point, and show that New Zealand will ultimately be the loser in any reprisals they may make against the Commonwealth tariff. However, as a retaliatory measure, in my opinion .. it is premature. We have no right to take of a position of assuming what is to take place, even though we have the proposal already made for the Australian tariff to differentiate against New Zealand. I do not think that even tentatively we should give the right that is suggested in this measure to the Governor in Council. I feel confident that Australia will want balt timber, notwithstanding the duty : as I think it is not right, in the closing hours of the session, that, almost in a panic, we should propose an export duty as retaliation. An expert

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introduced before in this colony, and rarely in any other British dominion, and I look upon it with suspicion. I think it is unwise, more especially as it would be a strong reason for an effort by those interested to put an export duty on produce the value of which is not governed by any market price in the colony. This is not the way to provide for the cohesion of the Empire, and I am afraid that our traditions with regard to the solidarity of the race will have a poor effect upon those who come after us, if we are to begin by a discriminating and retaliatory tariff. Good trade relations and reciprocal tariffs must bind the colonies closer together. An Hon. MEMBER .- What are they doing with us? Mr. BUDDO. - They have not so far done it, and it is not our duty to anticipate what they may do. I consider the bonds that will bind the Empire in future will be largely those of trade and its advantages ; and the taking up of this retaliatory attitude is not, I think, in the interests of this colony. I do not think it is in the interests of the federation of the whole British Empire, nor in the direction of having an Imperial Zollverein. I will vote against this Bill if a division is called for, and I say that whatever is done ought to be reserved until next session. In the meanwhile we are losing nothing, and yet we are anticipating what may take place, and are giving the Governor in Council power to put on an export duty ; and it seems to me to be but the first part of a policy of retaliation, in which the Commonwealth will have the sympathy of the Imperial authorities, and must win in a tariff war. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin). - Sir, like other #cc-zero speakers, I am sorry that we have not been able to deal with this Bill earlier in the session. A difficulty undoubtedly exists, on account of the provisional tariff which has lately been introduced by the Federal Government, which provides that, so far as sawn and dressed timber is concerned, there will be certain duties imposed upon it, while it is proposed to admit duty free anything in the way of balt timber. Now, everybody knows that we have a

large and valuable trade with Australia in timber, and the effect of what is proposed will undoubtedly be to discourage the trade between this colony and Australia in sawn and dressed timber and to encourage the trade in balk timber. By this means a large amount of labour will be lost to the colony ; and it is to meet that difficulty that I understand the present Bill has been introduced. I do not believe in retaliation, and I must say I do not altogether like the principle of the Bill. I do not at all like the idea of this Parliament handing over its functions to the Governor in Council in the way proposed. But at the same time I want to admit that the amendment the Minister has promised will make the Bill much less objectionable than it is in its present form : and I would suggest that the Minister would go a little further, and that he should make this a temporary measure- I opening the door by which persons connected session of Parliament-that no duty should be collected under this Act after the last day of next session. That would leave the matter to be dealt with next session, and we could then fix the tariff when we know exactly what we are doing with regard to the Federal tariff, which at the present time we do not. I cannot, however, see my way at present to oppose the Bill, seeing that it is recommended by the Conference of sawmillers ; but I hope the Minister will adopt the suggestion I have made, and will introduce a clause in that direction.

Mr. FISHER (Wellington City). - The most admirable feature in this brief discussion is the delicately expressed apprehension that the passing of this Bill may take the people of Australia by surprise. That is very amusing. It was cabled to Australia from New Zealand a month ago that Mr. Seddon -- not the Parliament of New Zealand-that Mr. Seddon intended to put on a duty of 3s. per 100 ft. Mr. SEDDON. - It was said that he had done so. Mr. FISHER. -- The idea of reprisals being effected by New Zealand is a matter of laughter and mirth in Australia. But the honourable gentleman wants this Bill passed so that he may be able to shake it in the face of the people of Australia, and make them laugh a little more. Mr. John Norton, of Sydney, in Truth, speaks of the comedy of little New Zealand, who is in the van in progressive legislation, indulging in reprisals to be effected by this colony, and he asks the people of Australia what does it matter to them "what may be done by the people living in that little mud-patch down in the South Pacific?" Now, the very fact of the passing of this Bill is an impotent threat to the people of Australia. The idea that the eyes of all the people of Australia are directed toward what we may do in this matter is absurd. The fact is, the people of Australia are not thinking of New Zealand at all in the matter, and the statement as to there being reprisals on the part of New Zealand is, as I have said, a matter of If it will laughter throughout Australia. please the honourable gentleman to have this new toy, by all means let him have it. As far as the people of Australia are concerned, they do not care a snap of the finger what we do. We are to Australia what the Cook Islands are to New Zealand. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccanton). - Honourable members, of course, recognise that this is a very important departure from what has hitherto been the policy in New Zealand in connection with exports. For the first time we are asked to affirm the principle of an export duty. Now, in the case of these exports, it appears that it is not from Australia but from the New Zealand sawmillers that pressure comes. We must recognise that, if persons connected with a particular industry are going to be in a position to bring pressure to bear upon the Government to alter the fiscal policy of the colony in a matter like this, you are

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future years. If the time comes when further taxation is required, taking the precedent of this export duty, we may have an export duty on wool, on frozen meat, or on some other article of a similar description. That is one point which I wish to draw attention to. Another point is that the value of the timber exported from the colony in logs is comparatively small. I have before me the export tables for the year 1900, and I find that the total value of hewn timber logs exported was £8,290. On the other hand, the value of the sawn undressed timber exported to Australia amounted to about \$190,000. Now, I gather this measure will not affect the sawn undressed timber at all-only if it be exported in the shape of flitches. I do not know

what size may be laid down in connection with fitches in order to bring them within the four corners of the duty ; but it appears to me, looking at it from the point of view I have stated, that about \$190,000 of the \$240,000 exported of sawn undressed timber will not come within the provisions of the Act. I do not see what is going to be gained by putting a duty on the eight or nine thousand pounds' worth of logs that this Bill is apparently intended to meet. There is another point, and that is this: We hear that the labourers engaged in connection with the sawmills are likely to be thrown out of work. Well, I do not think such a result as that is likely to follow from the Australian tariff. Mr. MEREDITH .- It does not affect the South Island. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- It may not affect the South Island, but I am not speaking from the point of view of any particular part of the colony. But I wish members to understand that this timber duty certainly will not affect the Australian tariff, and, therefore, if we are going to put an export duty on timber for the purpose of conserving the interests of one particular industry, we need not be surprised if an agitation springs up for the imposition of an export duty also on other articles in which a large number of persons are interested. Mr. R. THOMPSON (Marsden) .- I am sorry to say I cannot support this Bill, and I hope the Minister, after hearing the discussion on it, will hold it over until next session. I have received a communication from a sawmiller up north protesting in the strongest language against the passing of this Bill, and had it not been that I have packed up my letters and papers and sent them away, I would take the opportunity of reading it to the House. However, this sawmiller points out that if a duty is put on it will create a huge monopoly for the benefit of the large timber sawmillers of Auckland, and that the small owners of bushes and dealers in timber will be the sufferers. He points out that the real object of this agitation is to create a huge trust or monopoly in the province of Auckland; and I hope the Minister will see the wisdom of considering this matter, and of withdrawing the Bill in the meantime till next session. If, after the Australian tariff is passed, we find it to be Mr. G. W. Russell be dealt with next session, but I think we should be doing a foolish thing if we were to hurriedly push this Bill through. In fact, Sir, we scarcely know what we are doing, and we may be, instead of assisting the timber industry, injuring it very materially for all we know. Certainly, from the letter of this sawmiller, he makes out a very strong case in my opinion, and the effect of it will be, as he says, to injure the settlers who are the owners of timber, and injure the small dealers or traders in timber, and, in fact, it will create a huge monopoly for the benefit of two or three large companies. Under these circumstances, I hope the Minister will hold the Bill over until We should be careful not to next session. anticipate the Federal tariff. Mr. MILLS (Commissioner of Trade and Customs) .- Sir, I shall make it very clear that this Bill was not brought down in any spirit of retaliation whatever. I wish to state that emphatically, because I have on my file a Bill that was drafted nearly three months ago, when Cabinet considered it advisable, in the interest of the better working and conservation of our timber, to have an export duty placed on rough timber. Mr. J. ALLEN .- Will you place a copy of that Bill on the table ? Mr. MILLS .- No; that could do no good. but I will show it to the honourable gentleman if he wishes. As I say, I wish that point re conservation made very clear to the House and to the country. Then, honourable gentlemen will recollect that a tariff was passed by the Federal Parliament, and why ? To denude our forests, and cut the timber in Australia. True, it is only a tentative measure, but it is the law at present ; and I would point out to honourable members that, if you once change the avenues of trade, the results must be very serious. The honourable member for Marsden has just said, Let this Bill stand over for a year, in the interests of a few small settlers: and to that I reply, that in the meantime you will paralyse the industry, and all the raw timber in these logs would be taken from us, and the industry of working them up would be established in another country, while our own sawmillers would be deprived of that trade. If you once allow a change to take place, such as the honourable gentleman referred to, you could never bring that trade back. Therefore I should like placed on record in Hansard what the Australian tariff really means to us. Now this tariff as passed by the Commonwealth is as follows :- Duties. "Architraves, mouldings, and skirtings of s. d. 5 0 any material, per

100 lineal feet .. " Timber, dressed, n.e.i., per 100 superficial feet "Timber, undressed, n.e.i., in sizes of 12 in. by 6 in. (or its equivalent) and = over, per 100 superficial feet "Timber, undressed, n.e.i., in sizes of 7 in. by 24 in. (or its equivalent), and upwards, and less than 12 in.

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by 6 in. (or its equivalent), per 100 superficial feet . 6 1 "Timber, undressed, n.e.i., of sizes less than 7 in. by 2} in. (or its equivalent), per 100 superficial feet 2 6 " Laths, per 1,000 0 5 " Palings, per 1,000 . 0 15 .
" Pickets, dressed, per 100 0 4 . . " Pickets, undressed, per 100 0 2 .. " Shingles, per 1,000 .. 0 3 "
Doors, of wood, 12 in. and over, each .. 6 7 over 1} in. and under 13 in., each 0 5 1} in. and under, each 3 6
I think honourable members will admit at once that these figures are really prohibitive, and we are not considering an altogether new thing. The tariff has been passed, and is the law at the present time in the Commonwealth of Australia. In order to show what the intention and meaning of the Federal Parliament was, I turn over to the exemptions from the tariff, and find the following :- " Logs, not sawn. "New Zealand pine, undressed, of sizes 12 in. by 6 in. (or its equivalent) or over. "Shafts and poles, sawn or bent, but not dressed. " Spars, in the rough. "Spokes, rims, and felloes of hickory, in the rough. " Staves, undressed or roughly dressed, but not shaped. " Veneers." Showing conclusively their policy is to encourage all the work being done in Australia. Well, now, if there is nothing done by this Parliament to counteract the exodus of our raw material, and we allow the logs to be exported, those who are competent to give a safe opinion, and who are engaged in the business, say the effect would be to kill the saw-milling industry in this colony. The Conference of sawmillers which was held here quite recently comprised representatives from all parts of the colony, and they were unanimous in their resolutions. They passed at their meeting the following resolution : - "That this meeting, very largely representing the timber industry in New Zealand, would urge upon the Government the necessity, in the interests of the workers of this country, to place an export duty on all logs, either in the round or squared with axe or saw, of such an amount as will prevent the export of such timber from our shores." And, later on, it was moved that the duty be 3s. per hundred superficial feet. Now, while there may be a few settlers up North who might have to sell their timber to companies, as explained by the honourable member for Marsden, that does not affect the matter on the whole. Mr. R. THOMPSON .- It will kill the small men. Mr. MILLS .- Not at all. There are always those who, when alterations of the tariff are possibly suffer by the change ; but you have to deal with the collective interests of all the saw-millers combined, and I tell the House that since that Conference sat here I have been in constant communication with other sawmillers who were unable to attend, and they were of the same opinion as those who were here and approve of the course that this Bill proposes to take. We wanted to know the mind of all who were interested in this industry, and instead of the South Island not being interested in the business, as was stated by the honourable member for Ashley (Mr. Meredith), why, Sir., he forgets altogether the vast timber interests . that are growing up on the West Coast of the South Island, and in Southland too. There was exported from the West Coast something like 19,000,000ft. of timber last year, and new sawmills are going up, so that it is. likely there will be between 30,000,000 ft. and. 40,000,000 ft. exported next year. Then, there is the White-pine Company down South. All these timber people were in agreement, and a resolution was passed, " That the duty on round or square logs be 3s. per 100 ft." I ask members to say, were the representatives of these large industries competent to give an opinion ? If so-and I believe they were-we are not far astray. They were the proper persons to consult. One northern millowner told me he paid £30,000 a year in wages. He said, " If the Government do not pass a Bill providing for this export duty it means that I am to shut up some of my sawmills, and remove them to the other side, either Sydney or Melbourne. I do not think honourable members will consider this style of encouraging industries in our colony would be either wise or judicious. Mr. J. ALLEN .- Then, it is retaliatory, is it ? Mr. MILLS .- No, certainly not ; but if you

saw some one take a thousand sheep from your paddock without authority, or consulting you in the matter, you would be the first to stop them, and so would any one. Therefore, in the interests of the whole colony, we should do the best we can to encourage these industries and have the timber sawn up into suitable sizes in our own colony before exporting. And when we consider the immense amount of bush that has been wasted, cut, and destroyed in this colony, we must realise that more interest ought to be taken in the matter. I understand from the Public Works Department that the average life of a bridge is only about sixteen years, and the average life of all the wooden buildings in New Zealand is not more than thirty to thirty-five years; and when we consider the growing population of the colony, it means the local consumption of timber must steadily increase year by year, and more interest must be taken in this important question. Therefore I think the measure is a wise one, and I trust it will receive the favourable consideration of the House. The House divided on the question, "That the Bill be read a second time."

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AYES, 35. Hornsby Parata Ilen, J. Rhodes Houston Arnold Lang Seddon Bennet Smith, G. J. Carroll Lawry Lethbridge Steward Duncan Field Symes Massey Tanner McGowan Flatman Fraser, A. L. D. McKenzie, R. Ward Willis. Hall McNab Hall-Jones Tellers. Millar Mills Carncross Heke Gilfedder. Palmer Hogg NOES, 17. Russell, W. R. Graham Atkinson Buddo Thompson, R. Hutcheson Thomson, J. W. Laurensen Collins Mackenzie, T. Tellers. Eli Herries Meredith Fowlds Russell, G. W. Monk. Fraser, W. Majority for, 18. Motion agreed to, and Bill read a second time. IN COMMITTEE. Clause 2 .- " The Governor may at any time by Order in Council cause to be levied, collected," and paid at the Customs to His Majesty, previous to exportation from New Zealand, the duties upon timber as set forth in the Schedule hereto." Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) moved to strike out the words, "The Governor may at any time by Order in Council cause to," with the view of inserting the words, " There shall." The Committee divided on the question, "That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the clause." AYES, 31. #cc-zero Gilfedder Allen, E. G. O'Meara Palmer Arnold Hall-Jones Bennet Hogg Parata Buddo Houston Symes Lawry Carncross Tanner Carroll Thomson, J. W. Massey Colvin Ward. McGowan Mackenzie, T. Duncan Field McNab Tellers. Flatman Meredith Barclay Fraser, A. L. D. Mills Hornsby. NOES. 19. Atkinson Russell, W. R. Hutcheson Collins Lang Smith, G. J. Lethbridge Eli Thompson, R. Fisher Millar Fowlds Monk Tellers. Graham Rhodes Allen, J. Russell, G. W. Herries. Guinness Majority for, 12. Amendment negatived, and clause agreed to. Clause 3 .- "(1.) The master or agent of every ship in which it is intended to ship for export timber liable to duty shall give notice to the Collector or other proper officer of Customs of such intention, in such form as the Commissioner may direct by regulation, and such notice shall be given not less than twenty-four hours prior to shipment. "(2.) If any such timber is shipped without such notice being given, the master shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding fifty pounds." Mr. MILLS (Commissioner of Customs) moved to strike out the word "shall " after "master," in subsection (2), and insert "and agent shall each." Amendment agreed to. Mr. MILLS moved to strike out the words " exceeding fifty " with a view of inserting the words " less than ten." Amendment agreed to, and clause as amended agreed to. Clause 4 .- " Export entries for dutiable timber shipped, containing correct particulars of the number of superficial feet and the amount of duty payable thereon, shall be passed at the Customhouse before the clearance of the ship, and the Collector or other proper officer of Customs shall have power to detain the ship until he is satisfied that the full amount of duty has been paid on such timber." Mr. MILLS moved to insert after the word "Customhouse," the words " and the duty paid." Amendment agreed to, and clause as amended agreed to. Clause 5 .- "The Commissioner of Customs may, by regulations, specify and determine in what manner dutiable timber shall be shipped in order that a true account of the number of superficial feet contained therein shall be obtained by a Customs officer ; and any master of an exporting ship, or other person concerned, who fails to comply with such

regulations shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding ten pounds." Mr. MILLS moved the excision of the words " exceeding ten " with the view of substituting the words "less than five." Amendment agreed, to and clause as amended agreed to. Mr. BUDDO (Kaiapoi) moved the addition of the following new clause : - "This Act shall remain in force until ten days after the last day of the next session of Parliament and no longer." The Committee divided. AYES, 24. Russell, G. W. Allen, J. Guinness Russell, W. R. Hutcheson Atkinson Barclay Lang Symes Collins Tanner Laurenson Thompson. R. Ell Lawry Field Teilers. Massey Fisher Buddo Meredith Fowlds Rhodes Herries. Graham NOES, 24. Allen, E. G. Heke Parata Carncross Hogg Seddon Carroll Hornsby Ward Colvin Willis McGuire Mckenzie, R. Witheford. Duncan Millar Flatman Tellers. Gilfedder Mills Arnold Palmer. Hall O'Meara Hall-Jones

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vote with the "Noes," as this was a policy measure, and he did not think it was the duty of the Chairman to affirm an alteration in the Bill by his casting-vote. New clause negatived. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccarton) moved the addition of the following new clause :- "The exporter of any timber declared dutiable under this Act, or his agent, shall, immediately upon the entry thereof by him, pay any duties which may be payable thereon to the Collector or other proper officer authorised to receive the same." New clause negatived. Mr. BUDDO (Kaiapoi) moved the addition of the following new clause :- "This Act shall be deemed to be repealed on the expiration of three months after the commencement of the next session of Parliament." The Committee divided on the question, " That the new clause be read a second time." AYES, 21. Rhodes Allen, J. Guinness Russell, G. W. Herries Atkinson Russell, W. R. Hutcheson Collins Thompson, R. Ell Lang Fisher Lethbridge Tellers. Buddo Meredith Fowlds Fraser, W. Monk Massey. Graham NOES, 28. Palmer Allen, E. G. Heke Arnold Hogg Symes Hornsby Tanner Carncross Kaihau Ward Carroll Laurenson Colvin Willis Witheford. Lawry Duncan Fraser, A. L. D. McGowan Millar Gilfedder Tellers. Mills Flatman Hall Mckenzie, R. Hall-Jones O'Meara Majority against, 7. Motion for second reading negatived. Schedule. Or such higher superficial feet superficial feet \- 3s. per 100 duty, not exceed- Logs, round ing 5s. per 100 Logs, squared with superficial feet, as 1 axe or saw the Governor by Half-logs Order in Council . . determines. Flitches of any particular kind, or 3s. per 100 Or such lesser duty pieces, of such size as the Governor by Order in Council determines. in Council from \- time to time determines Mr. MILLS (Commissioner of Customs) moved to strike out the words " Or such higher duty, not exceeding 5s. per 100 superficial feet, as the Governor by Order in Council determines," and to insert " Or such lesser duty as the Governor by Order in Council determines." Motion agreed to. Bill reported, and read a third time. Mr. SEDDON (Minister of Labour) brought up the following report of the Conference on this Bill :- "The Managers appointed by the House of Representatives to conduct the Conference upon the Factories Bill have the honour to report that they have met the Managers appointed by the Legislative Council, and they have come to the following agreement, namely :- " In new clause 194, line 3, after ' women' to insert ' over the age of eighteen years.' "In clause 20, subclause (3), to restore the first proviso. " In clause 2, to amend the last paragraph so as to read as follows : 'Boy ' means every male under the age of sixteen years. "The other amendments made by the Council are accepted." On the question, That the report be agreed to, Mr. BUDDO (Kaiapoi) said, So far as he could learn, if the House adopted the recommendation of their Managers, the principal point had been more or less conceded by the Managers for the House. The principal point at issue between the House and another place was the question of the employment of women and youths for more than forty-five hours per week in woollen-factories. That had been the law previous to 1894 in all factories, when exemption was made of woollen-mills. Since then woollen-mills could employ women and young persons for forty-eight hours. This resolution would affect a case filed and decision given by the Conciliation Court in Canterbury District, and now appeal had been made to the Arbitration Court. In this

appeal the question 1 of hours of labour per week came up, and this Bill would to some extent prejudice any application to the Arbitration Court for a reduction of hours of labour. He would be sorry to believe that this Factories Bill could detrimentally affect the woollen industry, which was in a flourishing condition. He was opposed to differentiating between an employé in a clothing factory and those in a woollen-mill, and he believed that the woollen factory worker deserved equal consideration in the Factories Act. He admitted that the Arbitration Court could supersede this legislation if sufficient cause was shown. He was not prepared to vote against the Bill, as it contained some excellent provisions ; but he could not help thinking that this Bill left all questions of a principle in labour legislation aside, when it proposed to discriminate in the hours of labour of employés engaged in different industries of similar class of employment. Motion agreed to. Subsequently, A message was received from the Legislative Council intimating that the report of the Conference on this Bill had been agreed to. NELSON HARBOUR BOARD BILL. IN COMMITTEE. Clause 1 .- Short Title. Amendment by Mr. GRAHAM (Nelson), to

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Clause 4 .- "The Board shall not enter into any contract for the construction of a channel through the Boulder Bank until the tenders for the work have been submitted to and approved by the Minister of Marine." Sir J. G. WARD (Minister for Railways) moved to strike out the word "tenders" and insert "specifications." Amendment agreed to, and clause as amended agreed to. Clause 6 .- " (1.) The Motueka Wharf shall not, after the passing of this Act, be deemed to be vested in the Nelson Harbour Board, but shall be under the control of a Board to be called ' The Motueka Wharf Board,' consisting of the members of the Waimea County for the time being representing the Motueka and Moutere Ridings, and the Mayor of Motueka. "(2.) The Motueka Wharf Board shall have such powers with respect to the Motueka Wharf and its approaches by water as are from time to time conferred upon it by regulations. "(3.) The Governor, after making such inquiry as he thinks fit, may determine what constitutes the assets and liabilities of the said wharf, and may also do or direct to be done whatever is necessary in order that the wharf, its assets and liabilities, may be effectually transferred to the Motueka Wharf Board. "(4.) This section is in substitution for section six of the principal Act, which section is hereby accordingly repealed." Mr. HALL-JONES (Minister of Marine) moved to add the following words to subsection (2) : "which may from time to time be made by the Governor in Council. Amendment agreed to, and clause as amended agreed to. Clause 7 .- " All foreshore and mud - flats within the Motueka Electoral District, between the boundary of the Nelson City Electoral District and the entrance of the Motueka River, are hereby declared to be endowments for the Motueka Wharf, and shall be administered accordingly by the Motueka Wharf Board." Mr. HALL - JONES (Minister of Marine) moved to strike out the words " boundary of the Nelson City Electoral District," and to insert the following words : "the southern boundary-line of Section number ninety - one, Block I., Moutere Survey District." Amendment agreed to, and clause as amended agreed to. Bill reported, and read a third time. VICTORIA COLLEGE SITE BILL. IN COMMITTEE. Clause 1 .- Short Title. Mr. Seddon's amendment, to insert between "The Victoria College Site " and " Act, 1901," the following words : "and Wellington College and Girls' High School and Wellington Hospital Empowering," under consideration. Amendment agreed to, and clause as amended agreed to. Clause 2 .- " (1.) The Wellington City Council Mr. Graham in the First Schedule hereto, in exchange for such part (not exceeding ten acres) of the Wellington College Site Reserve as is agreed on between the Wellington City Council and the Governors of the Wellington College and Girls' High School, but so that the eastern boundary of such part is coincident in whole or in part with the eastern boundary of the said reserve. "(2.) The said Governors are hereby empowered to convey or transfer such last-mentioned land to the Wellington City Council." Mr. HUTCHESON (Wellington City) moved to add the following words after "for such part ": "of the Wellington College Site Reserve as may be agreed

upon between the Wellington City Council and the Governors of the Wellington College and Girls' High School, or for such other land as the Wellington City Council may consider to be of equal value as a public reserve with the land described in the First Schedule hereto." Mr. SEDDON (Premier) moved to insert the words "not being Crown lands " after the words " such other land." Mr. SEDDON moved to report progress. Motion agreed to. Progress reported. DEATH OF THE HON. J. A. BONAR, M.L.C. Mr. SEDDON (Premier). - Sir, I 5.0. rise to propose, That the House do adjourn until half-past seven o'clock this evening, as a mark of respect to the memory of the late Hon. James A. Bonar, M.L.C., who was this day called away to his long home. Death. S.r. I think, has been with us more this session than in any other session in the history of our Parliament. To me the loss of an old friend of thirty-five years' standing, and one who I may say had a great deal to do with introducing me to public life, is a severe blow. The Hon. Mr. Bonar has been connected with Westland and the West Coast as County Chairman, Superintendent, Chairman Harbour Board, Chairman School Commissioners, and colonel of Volunteers, and with almost every movement and work for the development and benefit from its earliest settlement his name has been associated ; and he has taken a leading part as the representative of that part of the colony in the Legislative Council for over thirty years. I say that representation has been to the benefit of the district and in the best interests of the colony. He can ill be spared. This session Westland has lost both its representatives in the Legislative Council-first the Hon. James Kerr, and now the Hon. James A. Bonar- and this double loss will be keenly felt by the people on the West Coast. There are many here who have known him in years past who will bear testimony to his genial kind-heartedness and readiness to help on all occasions. I feel assured one and all will tender their heartfelt sympathy and condolence to his wife and family in their sad bereavement. Captain RUSSELL (Hawke's Bay) .- Sir, I

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years-more almost than I can recall-one of the figures which presents itself to my mind as a member of the Legislature is that of the gentleman whose death we mourn to-day. Sir, I can remember him as a kindly gentleman, a man whom I have met frequently in social life in years gone by, a man long connected with this Legislature, but who probably will be more remembered for the good work he did in the early days when Westland was first separated from the Provincial District of Canterbury. In those days the late Hon. Mr. Bonar was one of the leading men on the West Coast. Ought to see by his untimely death how closely death surrounds us, and how charitable we ought to be in our estimation of one another. Motion agreed to. NATIVE LAND CLAIMS ADJUSTMENT AND LAWS AMENDMENT BILL. Mr. CARROLL (Native Minister) 7.30. moved the committal of this Bill. He would give any explanations required in Committee. Captain RUSSELL (Hawke's Bay) did not intend to occupy much time in addressing himself to the measure. He would like to remind honourable members that, when the question came up that morning on the Reserves and Other Lands Sale, Disposal, and Enabling and Public Bodies Empowering Bill, he told the House he thought Bills of the kind ought to be agreed to solely on the responsibility of Ministers. It was practically impossible for members to understand or really to get to probe all the intricate questions submitted to them, and Ministers, aided by their departmental officers, in bringing in a Bill of the sort, ought to be personally responsible that all the clauses were right and proper-that there was nothing dishonest or immoral in them, and that on Ministers themselves the responsibility ought to rest. He was not referring to this Ministry or any other Ministry, but laying down what he conceived was the only true principle upon which Bills of the sort could be properly passed. It was impossible for Committees to get reliable information on all the questions, and in the Native Affairs Committee this year they had done their very best in going through the Bill to arrive at what was right and what was wrong ; but, although they had done so, he contended it was practically impossible for the Committee to understand the merits of the fifty odd clauses they had to decide upon. What he wished to

do was to draw attention to the character of the alterations and amendments set out in the Bill. Clause 3 allowed an appeal to be heard which was not lodged at the time it ought to have been lodged. That was a proposal to set aside the provisions of the Native Land Court Act of 1894, which set out in clause 84 the methods under which appeals were to be permitted. Those appeals were to be lodged within thirty days, and the Chief Judge had power to extend the time; and, although the Chief Judge could extend the time, the extension shall not exceed three months from the date of such extension." Clauses 5 and 6 and others reopen cases that had already been decided by the Native Land Court, and authorised cancellation of existing orders. Honourable members would see that great power was given. Clause 7 legalised an illegal purchase as regarded the area alienated—that was to say, that under the provisions of "The Native Land Court Act, 1894," it was provided that only a certain area of Native land should be sold to any individual; yet, notwithstanding that, in some instances those who knew they had no right to exceed a certain area had purchased Native land in excess of the prescribed area, and those transactions were now to be validated. There was nothing immoral in the transactions, but they were illegal. Clause 9 proposed to give power to reopen a will case which had been heard before the Native Land Court, from which there was appeal to the Appellate Court, and now under this Bill they were to have another tribunal which was to review the decision of the Appellate Court. Under clause 11 the decision of the Appellate Court was made a decision of the lower Court, to enable further appeals to be made. Under clauses 12, 17, and others it was declared that the final decisions of the Appellate Court were to be void. Clause 93 of "The Native Land Court Act, 1894," reads: "The decision of the Appellate Court shall, as to every question of law and fact, be final and conclusive"; and yet, notwithstanding this provision of "The Native Land Court Act, 1894," they were now going behind the decision of the Appellate Court to set up other tribunals to review the decision of the Appellate Court. Sections 19 and 20 were for the purpose of validating validations. A special Court had been set up to inquire into and settle the whole question of disputed titles in the neighbourhood of Poverty Bay, and the decision of that Court was to be final. They were now asked to give power to validate informal decisions of the Validation Court. Section 32 was an appeal from the Appellate Court to the ownership of land adjudicated upon some years ago, and which land was now being administered by the Public Trustee. Under this Bill seven different Native Land Acts were amended, and the ordinary layman could not possibly know what the state of the law was. The Bill amended the following Acts: "The Native Contracts and Promises Act, 1888," "The Special Powers and Contracts Act, 1886," "The Reserves, Endowments, and Crown and Native Lands Exchange, Sale, Disposal, and Enabling Act, 1898," "The Native Land Court Act, 1894," "The Native Land Laws Amendment Act, 1895," "The Native Townships Act, 1895," and "The Native Land Laws Amendment Act, 1896." The Bill also extended "The Native Land Laws Amendment Act, 1898," and revived part of "The Native Land Act Amendment Act, 1878." He did not want to say he had any reason to believe that any serious injustice was being done, or, indeed,

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What he wanted to draw the attention of the House to was this fact: that, although the members of the Native Affairs Committee had done the very best they could in the short time at their disposal to go through the various clauses, it was impossible for them to ascertain the true merits in any one single case. The evidence tendered was all ex parte, and he for one would take no responsibility upon his shoulders for anything that might be wrong in this Bill. He did not wish to say the Government were behaving wrongly in bringing down this Bill, but he went back to the position with which he started—that there was no clause of the Bill on which members could arrive at a definite or decided opinion, for the facts were such that it was impossible for any one but the departmental officers to give an opinion upon them. There was no doubt, however, about this: that by such a Bill we were undermining the authority of

our own Native Land Courts and Native Appellate Court. Their decisions, which were supposed to be final and conclusive, were liable now to be reviewed, and he knew it for a fact that the Judges of the Native Land Court felt already that the feeling amongst the Natives that by petitioning they could upset final decisions of the Native Land Courts was upsetting their respect for the decisions of the Appellate Court, and that the Natives themselves were losing confidence in those Courts. Under these circumstances, he invited the House to be very careful how it dealt with this Bill, and to lay the responsibility on the Native Minister and the Government, and not throw that responsibility on the Native Affairs Committee, which had not been able to ascertain what the actual position really was. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) said, as far as the Government were concerned, they were bringing forward this Bill because they had been requested to do so, because members had approached them on the subject, and because the parties more particularly interested had petitioned Parliament. The honourable member for Hawke's Bay must take some responsibility, because he had been sitting on the Committee which had been inquiring into many matters covered by this Bill, and upon which the Committee had reported favourably, and the Government, therefore, were now giving effect to the recommendations made. It would be simply an impossibility for the Government to know the full details of every case ; but, as far as they had been able to ascertain the bearing of the results of the proposed legislation, they felt it would remove many cases of injustice. They believed persons had suffered from various causes, and where this was done it was in Parliament, which was the highest Court of the land, in which relief should be given. It was the Court by and under which relief was expected to be given; and, that being the case, this was the only way to do it. These cases had been known for years, and members of the Native race, and also Europeans who were interested, had looked forward with hope, and Captain Russell their circumstances, and they had done so under this Bill ; and, if good cause was shown why any clause should be struck out or altered, the Government would only be too pleased to allow the matter to stand over for further consideration. Mr. ELL (Christchurch City) was not prepared, like the honourable member for Hawke's Bay, to pass the Bill on the understanding that the whole of the responsibility was to be shunted on to the shoulders of the Minister. It was not right for the House to take up that attitude, and it was not fair for the Committee themselves. With regard to the Bill mentioned by the honourable member for Hawke's Bay, the Reserves and Other Lands Sale, Disposal, and Enabling and Public Bodies Empowering Bill, he might say there were fifty-two clauses in that Bill. Now, he came across one very dangerous provision there, relating to a tramway concession in the neighbourhood of Christchurch. On hearing of the facts of the matter he went to the Government, and when he represented the circumstances to them they agreed to strike that clause out. An Hon. MEMBER said the Bill now before the House was a Maori Bill. Mr. ELL was quite aware of this, and had merely given an illustration to show that if they shunted all responsibility on to the shoulders of the Ministry, as the honourable member for Hawke's Bay suggested, they would not be doing their duty ; and to put the responsibility on the Minister was not fair to him. Members should take their share of the responsibility. They were supposed to be more acquainted with the needs of their several localities, and to be more conversant with the particulars of matters brought up in connection with their districts than any Minister could possibly be. His feeling with regard to this Bill was that they should not proceed with it. There were fifty-six clauses in the Bill, and they were within a few hours of the closing of the session, and he did not see how they were to deal with an important Bill amending different Acts relating to land-administration. Mr. HEKE (Northern Maori) said, in respect to the main number of clauses there was really nothing serious, and nothing for the members of the House to take exception to. They were pretty well all based on favourable reports made by the Native Affairs Committee. On the other hand, the only objection was as regards those clauses affecting the individual blocks, the question being as to whether it was a right policy to allow the Native Land Court, or the Native Appellate Court, or a Royal Commissioner, to review these cases over again. In Maori cases he held that the circumstances were so entirely different

from anything else that they were entitled to a further review by the Court. Strong reasons had been adduced before the Native Affairs Committees which caused them to make reports urging the Government that some legislation should be passed for the purpose of giving effect to the prayers of the petitioners. In reference to the clauses amended-

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expressly explained to the Committee by the Chief Judge of the Native Land Court that these amendments were entirely necessary. The amendments in regard to the amendment of the Validation of Titles Act were also entirely necessary, and the Judge of the Validation Court, Judge Batham, explained to the Committee the necessity of those clauses being passed. The validation clauses in the Bill only dealt with questions where doubt had arisen in the minds of the Validation Court as to whether they had any jurisdiction to confirm the decrees made by that Court. There was really nothing very serious in the whole of the clauses. Mr. HOUSTON (Bay of Islands) said this Bill was the result of a considerable amount of deliberation on the part of the Native Affairs Committee in years gone by. There were some clauses which embodied recommendations made to the Government on petitions presented to the House, and he thought it was only a small matter of justice to the Natives who had so persistently brought their grievances to the House in years gone by. On investigation by the Committee it was found absolutely necessary to give some redress to those Natives, and that could only be done by legislation. The various members of the Committee, and himself personally, from his position as Chairman of the Committee, had represented to the Government for the last four or five years that something should be done. It was not a fair thing for the Natives that they should be kept waiting year after year. This Bill contained many clauses rectifying errors which had been committed in the past. The Bill had received the careful attention of the Native Affairs Committee. That Committee had the benefit of the evidence and advice of the Chief Judge of the Native Land Court, the Judge of the Validation Court, and the chief officer of the Native Department, who explained the Bill clause by clause. The Committee saw that some clauses required amendment. The necessary amendments were made, and, after careful consideration, the Bill was reported to the House. He thought it would be only justice if this Bill were allowed to go through. The various clauses could be explained in detail in Committee. Mr. CARROLL (Native Minister) said it was true what the honourable member for Hawke's Bay stated, that the various clauses embodied in this Bill dealt with a variety of cases which had arisen many years ago -- cases affecting judgments given by the Native Land Court, the Native Appellate Court, and also in consequence of reports from the Native Affairs Committee on petitions from the Maoris. It was true that they were asked by these clauses to validate certain imperfect transactions which were left over as a result of investigations in the past by different tribunals. It was true, also, that they were giving effect to the recommendations of the Native Affairs Committee upon certain petitions. It was true, also, that the measure touched upon incomplete performances under the Special Powers. Careful inquiry into each case, however, had been made by the Native Affairs Committee and by Government officers, and everything now in the Bill was justifiable. The explanation of clause 2A was that it was the subject of a petition by the Natives in the North, who, it was stated, lost some of their land as a result of the operations of the old law, which took away their land that was in excess of what they had sold to the Europeans. Those claims were now known as the "old surplus land claims." Formerly the settlers bought land off the Natives, but did not have it surveyed. The selling Natives, who were not always the rightful owners, indicated the boundaries by certain hills and streams, and said, "We will sell that to you, pakeha." A rough deed was drawn up, and the estimated area stated, leaving the survey to make the area definite afterwards. Many Europeans settled upon Native land in that way. The law in force at the time provided that no European could hold more than a certain area of Native land, and if the land purchased from the Natives was in excess of that limit, then anything in excess

went to the Crown, and did not go back to the Natives. This led to many injustices being done to the Natives. The true owners some- times found themselves minus their land, which was given away by a neighbouring tribe to a European ; and whatever was in excess of the limit required by law, instead of being returned to them, went into the hands of the Crown. Clause 2 dealt with one of those cases which the Government thought should be set right. Clause 3 affected a piece of land that was investigated by the Native Affairs Committee, about which it was asked to restore a right of appeal. The Committee reported as follows :- "I am directed to report that, in the opinion of this Committee, petitioners have a just claim for consideration ; and it is recommended that the Government should bring in the necessary legislation to give the relief prayed for." Now, this was against a decision of the Native Land Court. The ground set up was this : that they were not present when the Court investigated the matter and gave judgment thereupon. They showed good reason why they were not present. The Committee had reviewed the evidence of the petitioners, and had come to the conclusion that in all justice a rehearing should be ordered. He might say generally that all these cases were the subject of reports and recommendations from the Native Affairs Committee, and the Government departments had made careful inquiry as to their merits, and, being satisfied, had drawn these clauses to enable the Legislature to give effect to what was required. He would not say any more just now, but would give explanations in Committee upon every clause if questioned by any honourable member. Bill read a second time. IN COMMITTEE. Clause 9 .- Extended time for notice of appeal by Natives in succession to Wahanui Huatere.

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"That the amendments proposed by the Native Affairs Committee be agreed to." AYES, 34. Flatman Millar Allen, E. G. Arnold Gilfedder Palmer Graham Barclay Parata Buddo Russell, G. W. Guinness Carncross Seddon Hall Carroll Hall-Jones Symes Ward Collins Hogg Witheford. Colvin Hornsby Houston Duncan Ell Kaihau Tellers. Field Heke McGowan Fisher Meredith O'Meara. NOES, 17. Lethbridge Smith, G. J. Allen, J. Atkinson Massey Tanner Fowlds McNab Thompson, R. Monk Herries Tellers. Rhodes Hutcheson Fraser, A. L. D. Laurensen Russell, W. R. Lang. Majority for, 17. Amendments agreed to, and clause as amended agreed to. Clause 30 .- Partition of Arapaoanui Block declared void. On the motion of Mr. CARROLL (Native Minister), the second proviso was struck out. Clause 32 .- For hearing by the Native Appellate Court of the investigation of the Poukawa Block. On the motion of Mr. CARROLL (Native Minister), this clause was struck out. Clause 38 .-- Grant of land, Milford Sound, to H. K. Taiaroa authorised. On the motion of Mr. CARROLL (Native Minister), this clause was struck out. Clause 43 .- " Native Land Court Act, 1894," amended. Subsection (a) .- " A will shall not be deemed an alienation within the meaning of subsection ten of section fourteen thereof so as to bar the operation of the said subsection. Any decision of the Court or Appellate Court heretofore given to the contrary is hereby annulled, unless transmission under the will has been registered under the Deeds Registration or Land Transfer Acts, and the interest thereby created has in the meantime been dealt with." Mr. HALL (Waipawa) moved to strike out the words from "Any decision " to the end of the subsection. Amendment agreed to. Mr. ELL (Christchurch City) moved to strike out the clause. The Committee divided on the question, "That the clause be retained." AYES, 32. Allen, J. Duncan Hall-Jones Buddo Field Heke Carncross Herries Fraser, W. Carroll Gilfedder Hogg Collins Graham Hornsby Colvin Hall Lang Russell, W. R. Willis. McGowan Mills Seddon Tellers. Smith, G. J. Fraser, A. L. D. Monk Palmer Thomson, J. W. Houston. NOES, 23. Allen, E. G. Russell, G. W. Kaihau Symes Arnold Laurensen Lethbridge Tanner Atkinson McKenzie, R. Thompson, R. Barclay McNab Witheford. Fisher Tellers. Flatman Meredith Ell Guinness Millar Hutcheson Parata O'Meara. Majority for, 9. Clause as amended agreed to. Bill reported, and read a third time. RESERVES AND OTHER LANDS SALE, DISPOSAL, AND ENABLING AND PUB-

LIC BODIES EMPOWERING BILL .. Mr. DUNCAN (Minister of Lands) moved the second reading of the Bill. When the Bill was in Committee he would give any explanation that might be required of the various clauses. Mr. MILLAR (Dunedin City) merely wished to say there were several clauses in the Bill which he would like some explanation of in Committee. They might be all right, but, on the face of it, there should certainly be some explanation before the House consented to pass them. Bill read a second time. IN COMMITTEE. Clause 7 .- Power to John Elliot to obtain fresh lease of land, Awakino. The Committee divided on the question. "That the clause be retained." AYES, 36. Mills Allen, E. G. Heke Herries Buddo Monk O'Meara Carncross Hogg Parata Hornsby Carroll Rhodes Colvin Houston Kaihau Seddon Duncan Thomson, J. W. Field Lang Fisher Ward Lawry Fraser, W. Willis. Massey Graham Tellers. McGowan McGuire Guinness Symes McKenzie, R. Thompson. R. Hall Hall-Jones NOES, 17. Millar Allen, J. Fowlds Smith, G. J. Arnold Hutcheson Laurenson Tanner. Atkinson Lethbridge Barclay Tellers. Flatman Collins McNab Russell, G. W. Meredith Ell Majority for, 19. Clause retained. Clause 13 .- "Whereas section numbered 125 of suburban section numbered 1, of the Parish of Pukekohe, in the Land District of Auckland. containing four acres three roods twenty-four

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pastoral society's show-ground by warrant published in the Gazette of the twenty-ninth day of November, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-four, and it is no longer suitable for such show-ground : Be it therefore enacted as follows : -- "The said land may be sold, and the proceeds of such sale used to purchase or to assist in purchasing parts of sections numbered 111, 112, 113, and 121 of section numbered 1 of the said parish, and the Governor may grant such land, when so purchased or acquired, for an estate in fee-simple to the Franklin Agricultural and Pastoral Society, incorporated, without power of sale, in trust for use as a show-ground by the said society : Provided, however, that if at any time the Society ceases to exist, or the Governor is of opinion that it is not using the land for the purposes hereby intended, he may resume it, and it shall thereupon become Crown land available for sale or other disposal." Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) moved to strike out the words from "The said land" to the end of the clause, and to insert the following :- "The said land may be sold, and the proceeds of such sale used to purchase or to assist in purchasing parts of sections numbered 111, 112, 113, and 121 of section numbered 1 of the said parish : Provided, however, that, if at any time the society ceases to exist, the Governor may demand the repayment of the amount of the proceeds of the sale of the aforesaid section numbered 125." Amendment agreed to, and clause as amended 32106019788261 agreed to. Clause 32 .- Authorising an investigation into the ownership of Section No. 71, Omaka. Mr. DUNCAN (Minister of Lands) moved to strike out the clause. Motion agreed to, and clause struck out. Clause 36 .- Power to surrender present lease and for grant of new lease, New Brighton Tramway. Mr. TANNER (Avon) moved to strike out the clause. Motion agreed to, and clause struck out. Clause 40 .- Reserve, Waikari Survey District, declared Crown land. Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley) moved to strike out the clause. Motion agreed to, and clause struck out. Clause 41 .- Road-line, Pigeon Bay Survey District, may be closed and sold. Mr. LAURENSEN (Lyttelton) moved to strike out the clause. The Committee divided on the question, "That the clause be retained." AYES, 26. Allen, J. Fraser, A. L. D. Massey McKenzie, R. Fraser, W. Atkinson Hall O'Meara Carncross Heke Russell, G. W. Carroll Colvin Herries Russell, W. R. Hornsby Duncan Symes. Tellers. Field Hutcheson Fisher Lawry Lang Lethbridge Fowlds Rhodes. Allen, E. G. Smith, G. J. Kaihau Arnold McGowan Tanner McNab Thompson, R. Buddo Ward Meredith Collins Millar Willis Flatman Witheford. Mills Graham Guinness Monk Tellers. Hall-Jones Palmer Ell Parata Hogg Laurenson. Houston Seddon Majority against, 2. Motion agreed to, and clause struck out. Clause 49. - Authority to erect cairn in memory of late Sir John McKenzie. Mr. DUNCAN (Minister of Lands) moved to strike out the clause. Motion agreed to, and clause struck out. Clause 52 .- "Whereas Section No. 93,

Tari- ngatura Survey District, Land District of South- land, containing by admeasurement two acres, more or less, is a quarry reserve, but it is not required for such purpose, and as the Wallace County Council desires to deviate the road giving access to such reserve, it is desirable that power to sell such land should be granted : Be it therefore enacted :-- "The reservation of Section No. 93, Taringa- tura Survey District, Southland Land District, as a quarry reserve is hereby cancelled, and the said section may be disposed of as Crown lands freed from any reservation." Mr. SEDDON (Premier) moved to strike out the word "sell," and to insert in lieu thereof the word " lease." Amendment agreed to. Mr. SEDDON moved to strike out the words "disposed of as Crown lands freed from any reservation," and to insert in lieu thereof the word " leased." Amendment agreed to, and clause as amended agreed to. Clause 53 .- Validation Court may inquire into and validate certain dealings. Mr. DUNCAN moved to add the following to subclause (d) : "and the Public Trustee may by counsel oppose such application " ; and also the addition of the following subclauses :- "(g.) In cases where the Public Trustee has granted a lease of any of the said sec- tions, the title shall be issued subject to such lease, which is hereby vali- dated in all respects as if such lease had been granted by the person to Rents whom the title is issued. thereafter accruing from the said lease shall be paid by the lessee to the purchaser, and not to the Public Trustee. "(h.) Where the purchaser has acquired a portion only of any section the title to such portion shall be issued to him subject to any lease then in force over the whole section, and the Vali- dation Court shall assess what por- tions of rents from such lease shall be paid to the purchaser and the Public Trustee respectively.

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fied from all suits, claims, and de- mands by any person in consequence of any injury suffered by any person in consequence of the passing of this Act, or of any order of the Validation Court made under its provisions. " (j.) All lands mentioned in the said Third Schedule, or any portion thereof, which are not found by the Valida- tion Court to have been purchased from the Native owners as aforesaid, or in respect of which any applica- tion shall not have been made as aforesaid within three months after the passing of this Act, shall vest in the Public Trustee in fee-simple under ' The Native Reserves Act, 1882,' and it shall be the duty of the Registrar of the Native Land Court to forward to the District Land Registrar a list of any lands so vesting, and the Dis- trict Land Registrar is hereby em- powered and directed to issue titles to the Public Trustee under ' The Native Reserves Act, 1852,' for all such lands. Such titles shall be issued subject to any leases granted by the Public Trustee." Amendments agreed to. Mr. DUNCAN moved the addition of the following new clause 21A :- New clause 21A .- " All rents derived and to be derived by the Napier Borough Council from the Meeanee and Papakura Domains, situate in the Provincial District of Hawke's Bay, as are not actually from time to time expended under section seven of 'The Public Domains Act, 1881,' may be applied and administered by the said Napier Borough Council upon the improve- ments of the Botanical Gardens and other public gardens and public reserves within the Borough of Napier." Captain RUSSELL (Hawke's Bay) moved to insert, before the words " Borough of Napier," the words "County of Hawke's Bay and." The Committee divided. AYES, 19. Russell, G. W. Hutcheson Atkinson Buddo Russell, W. R. Lethbridge Meredith Carncross Tanner. Monk Fisher Fowlds Palmer Tellers. Fraser, W. Parata Allen, J. Heke Rhodes Massey. NOES, 29. Allen, E. G. Millar Guinness Arnold Mills Hall O'Meara Hall-Jones Barclay Carroll Hogg Seddon Hornsby Collins Smith, G. J. Duncan Lang Ward Ell Laurenson Willis. Field Tellers. Lawry Flatman McKenzie, R. Fraser, A. L. D. Graham McNab Symes. Majority against, 10. Amendment negatived, and clause added. Mr. Duncan following new clauses :- New clause 37 .- "Whereas subsection num- bered 2 of section numbered 3 of the Town of Carterton, containing one acre three roods ten perches, is a portion of a reserve set apart for public buildings and other public purposes on the seventeenth day of February, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three : And whereas it is expedient to change the purpose of the afore said portion of the reserve to

municipal purposes. and grant the same to the Corporation of the Borough of Carterton : Be it therefore enacted as follows :- "(1.) Subsection numbered 2 of section numbered 3, Town of Carterton, containing one acre three roods ten perches. is hereby changed from a reserve for public buildings and other public purposes to a reserve for municipal purposes. " (2.) The Governor may grant in fee-simple. without power of sale, the said subsection numbered 2 of section numbered 3 of the Town of Carterton, to the Corporation of the Borough of Carterton as a reserve for municipal purposes." New clause 38 .- "Whereas Harry Slade, of Mokihinui, coal-miner, was killed in an accident at the Blackball Coal-mine in the year one thousand nine hundred, leaving his widow and four children destitute, and it is desirable that some provision should be made for them : Be it therefore enacted that the Public Trustee may, out of the moneys in his hands to the credit of the Coal-miners' Relief Fund. make such provision for Rose Marion Slade. the widow, and Ralph Slade, Grace Dempster Slade. Elsie Slade, and Leslie George Haywood Slade. the children of the said Harry Slade, as he thinks fit." Mr. DUNCAN moved, in clause 38, That "Minister of Mines and " be inserted before "Public Trustee." Amendment agreed to, and clauses added. Mr. DUNCAN moved the addition of the following new clause :- "Whereas the land described in the Twelfth Schedule hereto is a portion of land vested in the Public Trustee under the provisions of ' The Auckland Hospital Reserves Act, 1892.' for the purposes of and subject to the trusts therein mentioned : " And whereas such land is required for a show-ground for agricultural and pastoral purposes, and it is desirable to set it apart for such purposes and to grant other land in exchange therefor : Be it therefore enacted as follows : - "(1.) The reservation of the land described in the Twelfth Schedule hereto, under and for the purposes of 'The Auckland Hospital Reserves Act, 1892,' is hereby cancelled. and the Governor may grant it for an estate in fee-simple, freed from any mortgage or other charge, but subject to any lease or tenancy then existing over the land, to the Auckland Agricultural and Pastoral Association, with the

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ground for agricultural and pastoral purposes : Provided, however, that if at any time the association ceases to exist, or the Governor is of opinion that it is not using the land for the purposes hereby intended, he may resume it, and it shall thereupon become Crown land, available for sale or other disposal. " (2.) The Public Trustee shall, before such grant is issued, and with the consent of the Minister of Lands, select Crown land in the Auckland Land District open for sale or selection under ' The Land Act, 1892,' of a value equal to the land described in the Twelfth Schedule hereto, and the Governor shall grant such land to the Public Trustee to be held by him on the same trusts and subject to the same conditions as the land described in the said Schedule is held by him at the date of the passing of this Act ; and if the land in such Schedule is subject to any mortgage or other charge, such mortgage or charge shall thereupon apply to the land so selected, and the District Land Registrar shall make such entries against the titles to the lands as the circumstances require, without any fee or charge." Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) moved to strike out the words "open for sale or selection under ' The Land Act, 1892.' " Amendment agreed to, and new clause as amended added to the Bill. On the motion of Mr. DUNCAN new clauses 55 and 56 were agreed to, namely :- "55. Whereas a certificate of title has been issued in error to Susan Hayes for Lot 45 of Section 1, Small Farms, Panmure, containing two acres and a half, the section having been already Crown-granted to Andrew Bourke, and it is desirable that Lot 48 of the same section, containing two acres and a half, should be granted to George Taylor, the last successor in title of the said Andrew Bourke: Be it therefore enacted as follows :- " The Governor may by warrant authorise the District Land Registrar to issue without further payment a certificate of title for Lot 48 to the said George Taylor, in full satisfaction for the Crown grant for Lot 45, and such Crown grant shall thereupon become void. "56. Whereas Section 9, Block VI., Village of Torea, Nelson Land District, containing one acre, more or less, was reserved for purposes of public utility : And whereas there are no unlet sections in

the said village which can be acquired as a site for a church : Be it there- fore enacted as follows :- " The Governor may cancel the reservation of one rood of Section 9, Block VI., in the Village of Torea, Nelson Land District, and may sell or lease the same for a site for a Presbyterian church as if the same had not been permanently reserved." Mr. O'MEARA (Pahiatua) moved, That the following new clause be added to the Bill :- "Whereas the Crown tenants of Allotments Numbers 16, 17, and 18, Block VI., in the Ao- hanga Survey District, became tenants under the mistake that the public road known as the Wai-o-waka Road was wholly situated on the And whereas this road exists on both sides of the stream : Be it therefore enacted as fol- lows : That so much of the said road as exists between the said allotments and such stream is hereby declared closed, and the land thereof is hereby declared to be Crown land." New clause agreed to. Mr. FIELD (Otaki) moved, That the follow- ing new clause be added to the Bill :- "Section twenty of 'The Public Works Act Amendment Act, 1900,' is hereby amended by inserting next after the words 'the road or street so dedicated,' in subsection three thereof, the words 'in such manner and to such extent as may be agreed upon between the owner and the local authority.' "Section twenty-one of 'The Public Works Act Amendment Act, 1900,' is hereby repealed." The Committee divided. AYES, 20. Giffedder Massey Allen, J. Monk Atkinson Guinness Hall Rhodes Barclay Herries Collins Symes. Fisher Tellers. Hutcheson Field Fowlds Lang Fraser, W. Fraser, A. L. D. Lawry NOES, 23. Russell, W. R. Allen, E. G. Hornsby Buddo Seddon Laurensen Thompson, R. Carroll McGowan Ward Duncan Mckenzie, R. Meredith Flatman Willis. Graham Millar Tellers. Ell Hall-Jones Mills Tanner. Hogg O'Meara Majority against, 3. Clause negatived. Mr. W. FRASER (Wakatipu) moved the. addition of the following new clause :- " Whereas Messrs. George Boritt and T. J. Pearce are in possession of sections num- bered 3, 4, 5, 6, and 9, of Block I., Lower Wanaka District, Land District of Otago, con- taining by admeasurement two hundred and twenty-three acres and thirty-nine perches, and which were originally demised to them or their predecessors in title as agricultural leases. under ' The Mines Act, 1877,' or previous Acts granting agricultural leases on goldfields : Be it enacted with respect to each of them that he shall be entitled, on the recommendation of the Land Board, to a Crown grant for the land in his possession as aforesaid without further payment, if and when the aggregate of the payments made by him in respect of rent of such land amounts to the capital value of the land." Clause read a second time, and added to the Bill. Mr. MONK (Waitemata) moved the addition of the following new clause :- " Whereas Mary Ellen Boler, Eliza Ann Boler, Edward Theophilus Boler, and Alfred Storey Boler selected on the eleventh day of ! November, one thousand eight hundred and

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of Tauhoa, situated in Block III., Tauhoa Sur- vey District, Land District of Auckland, con- taining by admeasurement one hundred and twenty-one acres or thereabouts, under the Homestead Regulations of .The Auckland Waste Lands Act, 1874,' which, among other things, provide that selectors must erect a dwellinghouse and must reside personally on the land selected by them for five years from the date of selection : And whereas the per- sons hereinbefore mentioned resided with their parents on lands contiguous to that selected by them, and have not therefore erected a dwellinghouse or resided on the said land ; but, as the conditions of the selection have been otherwise complied with, it is desirable to waive the conditions as to residence and the erection Be it there- of a dwellinghouse on the land : fore enacted as follows :- "The Governor may grant to Mary Ellen Boler, Eliza Ann Boler, Edward Theophilus Boler, and Alfred Storey Boler, or their legal representatives, in fee-simple, section num- bered 92 of the Parish of Tauhoa, situate in Block III., Tauhoa Survey District, Land Dis- trict of Auckland, containing by admeasure- ment one hundred and twenty-one acres or thereabouts." Clause read a second time, and added to the Bill. Mr. TANNER (Avon) moved the addition of the following new clause :- "The lands set apart as a recreation-ground for the inhabitants of the Borough of Lyttelton and the Road District of

Heathcote, as described in the Schedule to 'The Lyttelton and Heathcote Recreation-ground Act, 1877,' are hereby brought under the operation of 'The Public Domains Act, 1881,' and the provisions of that Act shall apply accordingly." Clause read a second time, and added to the Bill. Mr. LAWRY (Parnell) moved the addition of the following new clause :- "Whereas the Auckland Grammar School Board, under section ten of 'The Public Bodies' Powers Act, 1887,' reduced the rent payable by the lessee of the Exchange Hotel in Parnell, and the period of reduction has expired : And whereas it is expedient that such reduction should continue : Be it therefore enacted as follows :- " (1.) The said Board is hereby empowered to reduce or increase the rent of the said hotel from the expiry of the reduction-period as it thinks fit to arrange with the lessee. " (2.) The said Board is also empowered out of its general funds to pay to its members their reasonable travelling- expenses in attending the meetings of the Board, the expenses to be paid according to a scale to be approved by the Governor." Clause read a second time, and added to the Bill. Mr. GRAHAM (Nelson City) moved the following new clause :- Mr. Monk hereto is hereby constituted a road district under 'The Road Boards Act, 1882,' by the name of the 'Croiselles Road District.' and there shall be a Road Board for such district, to consist of six members. "(1.) The Governor shall appoint the day for the first election of the members of the Board, and the day of the first meeting of the Board, and may make all necessary appointments for the preparation of rolls and otherwise for carrying out such election. "(2.) For the first election the Governor shall appoint some fit person to prepare a roll of all persons who, being resident on the land described in the said Schedule, are entitled to vote at any election for a member of the House of Representatives; and any person appearing on such roll shall be deemed to be an elector for the purposes of such first election, and to be eligible for election as a member of the Board. " (3.) The person appointed to prepare the roll shall be the Returning Officer at such first election, and he shall be paid by the Board such remuneration for his services as the Governor shall determine. " (4.) The members elected at such first election shall come into office on their election : but, for the purposes of section thirty-one of 'The Road Boards Act, 1882,' and of section three of 'The Road Boards Act 1882 Amendment Act, 1883,' the time of their election shall count as from the first week in May, one thousand nine hundred and two." Motion for second reading of new clause negatived. Bill reported, and read a third time. # MIDLAND RAILWAY COMPANY. INTERRUPTED DEBATE. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) .- For the purpose of getting the evidence and report printed. I beg to move, That notice of motion No. 4, as follows, be considered :- "That the report of the Public Accounts Committee on the New Zealand Midland Railway Company do lie upon the table, and be referred to the Government ; and the amendment proposed thereto, To omit all the words after the word ' Railway,' and insert the words ' be referred back to the Committee for reconsideration." " Mr. FISHER .- Is any Bill to be founded on the report ? Mr. SEDDON .- It is too late this session. Mr. FISHER .- Then, we may as well put the report in the fire. Mr. SEDDON .- I desire to say that, after the work of the Royal Commission, and after the report of the Public Accounts Committee, we should lay the report upon the table : and it is only just to Mr. Coates and those associated with him, who have been conducting the case on behalf of the debenture-holders. Although the resolution probably may not be entirely satisfactory, I think it will be admitted as far as he and they could promote the interests of the debenture-holders that has been done. Mr. Dalston, on behalf of the share

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position before the Commission and the Committee. Motion agreed to. On the question, That the words proposed to be struck out stand part of the question, Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa) asked, By the passing of the motion do we commit the House to the report ? Mr. SEDDON .- No. Mr. FISHER (Wellington City) .- When the honourable member for Wairarapa is a few years older he will know not to put such an innocent question to the Premier. Mr. Coates and Mr. Dalston, as representing the debenture- holders, have

represented their principals before the Public Accounts Committee in a most able manner. The persons they have represented will not have the least possible complaint in regard to them and their action in this colony. The only complaint that can be urged in the interests of the debenture-holders and share-holders of the company, if any complaint is urged at all, will be that the investigations of the Committee and the report of the Committee were not followed up, as every one who took part in the investigations thought would be the case, by the introduction of a Bill to give effect to the report of the Committee. Although I spoke against the report 12.0. as presented to the House, I was in a minority of one. Every member of the Committee present was against me, and, as the report was carried by that large majority in the Committee, so I believe the report would have been adopted by an equally large majority in the House. I believe the feeling of Parliament was in favour of the introduction and the passing of a Bill to give effect to the recommendations of the Committee. It is not, therefore, the fault of the Committee that a Bill to give effect to that report has not been introduced. All the members of the Committee -I speak subject to correction - believed that the report of the Committee would have been followed by the introduction of a Bill. The Government appears to have taken no step whatever in the matter. We, the members of the Committee, and we, the members of the House, are not in a position to say what the intentions of the Government may be in the matter. The honourable gentleman appears to have reserved to himself the right to say that no Bill shall be introduced, and I think, in taking that course, he is not giving effect to the wishes of Parliament. There may be in certain directions, in the minds of some members of the House, a feeling that the company was entitled to no consideration whatever. I am of that opinion, but I am not in a majority. I am not answerable for the delay in the introduction of the Bill, nor are the members of the Committee. Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa) .- Sir, I have no desire to make any speech. I simply asked a question through you as to whether, by the adoption of this resolution, the House would in any way be committed to the payment to the Midland Railway shareholders and debenture- VOL. CXIX .- 79. commended by the Public Accounts Committee ? That is all I want to know. I want to have a distinct reply to that if I can get it. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccanton). - Sir, when the report of the Public Accounts Committee was brought down the other day I gathered from the tone of the Premier's remarks that the Government were going to bring in a Bill for the settlement of this problem on the lines of the report of the Committee. The right honourable gentleman proposed to pay the amount of \$130,000 in three-per-cent. debentures, and I certainly thought, before the House rose, that this business would be done with and settled once and for all on the lines of the Premier's statement-namely, that the persons interested, whether debenture-holders or share-holders, should be asked to sign a document accepting the amount given by Parliament as a final, absolute, and irrevocable settlement of the whole thing. I am disappointed, after the suggested statement of the Right Hon. the Premier, that no settlement is to be come to, and that next session we shall have to face the whole situation over again. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) .- I do not wish to prolong debate or provoke it, but I must in defence state that, so far as the Government are concerned, the fact of the resolution on the report of the Committee being talked out, the Government never had an opportunity to get the report at all. It was not the fault of the Government that the other day the matter was talked out till half-past five. It was only after the report was laid on the table that the Government could deal with it. Speaking to the amendment to refer the report back to the Public Accounts Committee, I say that would be of no service, because, with the threatened opposition and stonewall, and with the time at our disposal, it will be too late to do anything this session. This I regret, for the Committee was almost unanimous in making the recommendation, Only one member of the Committee, the member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher), was opposed to the report, and yet to-night, strange to say, he appears to find fault with the Government because they had not brought down a Bill, although it is a Bill to which the honourable gentleman is opposed. There is an inconsistency there that I really cannot understand or appreciate. I may say there is a majority of members, I believe, in

favour of an offer being made as recommended by the Committee. Although there is no liability whatever on the part of the colony, yet, considering all the circumstances, I think we ought to be generous, and do something in the way of softening the blow to those who have lost their money. Mr. HORNSBY .- There is a large number of members opposed to that. Mr. SEDDON. - Yes; and, considering the report of the Committee came down two days before the session expired, even supposing it had not been talked out until half past five, and that the Government could have acted upon it, I say the period of the session is too late to

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have done anything. On account of the number of members who have intimated to me that they are opposed to this course, it would have been futile for the Government to have attempted to pass a Bill. I have been told I am not meeting the wishes of Parliament by the member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher), who opposes in toto anything being given to the debenture-holders or the shareholders. I say, in the course taken, I have not been at all treating him with discourtesy. I consider, if the Government this session do nothing, those who have consistently opposed any action in this direction being taken should be the last to raise an objection. However, Sir, the matter would stand over. In the meantime, I do not think anything will occur to prejudice either the position of the colony or the position of shareholders and debenture-holders. I consider the present situation, under all the circumstances, is one that will allow us to approach the matter next session, and to deal with it, as I hope, straightforwardly and in the interests of all concerned. It is one of those matters, I think, which ought to be dealt with and put out of the way, and, unless something arises which would render it unwise to proceed, so far as I am concerned, early next session a Bill will be submitted to give effect to the Committee's recommendation. I may almost say I nearly lost my seat in the Ministry through the Midland Railway. and I have done my best for many years to uphold the honour of the colony and to keep the colony from a very heavy loss. Now that we have arrived at such a position that we can be generous, having vindicated our position, we should show we are not ungenerous or unmindful of what the shareholders and debenture-holders have done and have lost. Taking all the circumstances into consideration, I think it will be admitted the Government is prepared to do what is right, and, instead of being twitted with flaunting the opinion of Parliament, one should be entitled to some little credit for the situation that, I say, has been brought about to a very great extent by the action of the present Government. Amendment negatived, and motion agreed to, "That the report of the Public Accounts Committee do lie on the table, and be referred to the Government." Mr. SEDDON (Premier) moved, That the report, evidence, and minutes of proceedings of the Committee be printed. Motion agreed to. MANAWATU RAILWAY SALE AND PURCHASE EMPOWERING BILL. A message was received from His Excellency the Governor, transmitting a draft of this Bill, and recommending the House to make provision accordingly. On the question. That the message be referred to the Committee of the Whole, Mr. SEDDON (Premier) said, -- Sir, I know the introduction of this Bill is a welcome surprise to honourable members. I was unable to bring it down before. The intention is to give Mr. Seddon the Government an opportunity during the next few months of purchasing the line on the terms stated, on the acceptance of which the Government are prepared to take up the company's debentures, which amount to 460,000. and, in addition, to give 3s. per share for 170,000 shares, which means about \$25,000. the colony in return obtaining the railway, rolling-stock, land, and all assets. I have every reason to hope that ere Parliament meets again the purchase will have been completed. Mr. TANNER (Avon) .- Are you taking over the debenture liability? Mr. SEDDON .- Yes : we take over the debenture liability. Negotiations have been going on for some time, and I have not had the opportunity prior to this to bring down the measure. Indeed. it was only this afternoon that the final revision between the chairman of directors and myself took place. At the same time I think the colony should be congratulated on a pro-

spect of this matter being brought to a successful issue. Motion agreed to. Resolution agreed to, reported to the House and agreed to, and Bill read a first time. On the question, That the Bill be now read a second time, Mr. SEDDON (Premier). - Sir, this Bill is to empower the acquisition of the assets of the Manawatu Railway Company, and the decision has been come to after due consideration. The measure itself is a purely machinery one to enable those negotiations to be completed- completed on lines that I am sure will be approved by honourable members. I consider that to have the company walk out and the Government walk in and take over the railway as a going concern on the terms mentioned in the Bill is fair to the company and the shareholders and in the best interests of the colony. I have little further to say. The question is now for the shareholders to decide. If they like to take the maximum amount we are prepared to offer, it will, of course, be for us to enter into the agreement. If they do not desire it, no harm is done. At the same time I do think it is in the interests of the colony that all lines of railway should belong to the State. At all events, taking into consideration the terms and conditions, and the whole context and the conditions we have under the Bill- conditions that are likely to be successfully accomplished- it will be for all concerned to say that it is a business transaction conducted on business lines, and, if accomplished as provided by the Bill, it will be for the good of the colony, while the company will have no reason to regret the sale. I move the second reading of the Bill. Captain RUSSELL (Hawke's Bay). - Sir, I beg to move, That this Bill be read this day six months. If there is but one honourable member who will tell with me we will hasten a division. I do not propose to speak at any length on the Bill. When I look at the clock I see it is not quite one hour since the Bill was introduced. We have not had time even to

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read it. We are asked now to authorise the expenditure of, in round numbers, a million of money - £951,845 - but honourable members have not been able to devote five minutes' attention to decide whether the expenditure is a wise one. Mr. ATKINSON. - There are only about thirteen clauses. Captain RUSSELL. - Yes; fancy, only thirteen clauses! Can anybody say that the rapid introduction of unintelligible clauses in the several Bills we have had submitted to us to night are creditable to us as a Legislative Assembly? Undoubtedly they are not. Not one member of the House, even the Ministers themselves, have any idea of the effect of the two Bills we passed so rapidly through Committee this evening. It is impossible anybody could know. And does anybody know the effects of this Bill, or understand its provisions? Have they compared the possibilities of purchase under this Bill with the possibilities under "The Railways Construction and Land Act, 1881"? I would ask, Why is the basis of purchase fixed at 30s. per share, when there is in this Chamber at the present moment a quotation of Manawatu Railway Company's shares at 24s.? Is that a right and a proper basis? It may be right; there may be an explanation, but we know nothing about it. The Premier, in introducing the Bill, gave us no information whatsoever. He said, "Here is the Bill, and I think it will prove satisfactory to the colony and to the shareholders." I have no doubt it will be extremely satisfactory to the shareholders, but whether it should be satisfactory to the colony is quite another matter. Now, I desire again to draw attention to the fact that this Bill has not been in our hands more than one hour, and yet we are asked to pass it through all its stages. Last year when the Bill was introduced it was brought in on the 13th October, and read a first and second time on that day and put into Committee, and read a third time on the 17th October. That is to say, in four days we finished the Bill dealing with the question, and then, as now, no member had time to study the subject. I, fortunately, was able to give a short time to the consideration of the Bill, and I prepared a certain number of facts and figures in connection with the railway, and if I had only one hour to spare, to have read through my speech of last year, I should have been able to put the case properly before the House. Under the provisions of "The Railways Construction and Land Act, 1881," the colony has a right to take over the Manawatu Railway at the cost of its construction, less

depreciation, but plus a percentage of 5 per cent. or 10 per cent. Mr. SEDDON .- Ten per cent. Captain RUSSELL .- Five per cent. if the line was taken within a period of fourteen years after its completion, and 10 per cent. if beyond that time. I presume that the period of fourteen years has passed, and therefore we shall have to pay 10 per cent. ; but the depreciation and the 10 per cent. will about balance each other-that is to say, the depreciation of the rolling-stock and the inevitable wear-and-tear would in all probability amount to about 10 per cent. There is to be no premium paid on taking over the railway, and it is simply taken over as a going concern, but at the cost of its construction at the time of its building. According to the figures which I gave last year- and they were fairly accurate, I have very good reason to believe- I made out the actual cost to the colony to be about \$600,000 under the provisions of clause 117 of " The Railways Construction and Land Act, 1881." I may have been wrong by 100,000-let us suppose even \$200,000; but that would only bring the cost of the railway to the colony, if taken under "The Railways Construction and Land Act, 1881," to be \$800,000 at the very outside ; but I believe it would not exceed three-quarters of a million, instead of, in round numbers, the million pounds which we are asked to pay for it under the provisions of this Bill. There is another point which should be alluded to, and that is, we have to take over debentures amounting in value to \$650,000, which have a currency of seven years at 5 per cent. interest. The Premier has told us that in a very short time he hopes to be able to borrow money at 3 per cent. on the London market. Therefore the amount we should have to pay on the debentures as interest in excess of the rate we can borrow at will amount to \$100,000 during their currency, which properly will have to be added to the cost of the purchase of the railway. In all probability we should be able to take over the railway under the existing Act at a cheaper rate than under this proposal. I hope the Minister will explain to the House how it is the Government propose a thirty-shillings share basis for purchase, when the selling value of the shares is about 24s. These are doubts which occur to my mind to urge why we should pause and consider what we are doing before we pass this Bill. But the principle of saying that a Legislative Assembly should debate a question of purchasing a railway at a cost of a million of money without any notice is one we ought not to tolerate. There is no doubt that the negotiations have been completed for several days ; the Premier has been too busy for the last few days to enter into negotiations for the purchase of any railway. The whole scheme has been cut and dried for a fortnight or more, and this Bill has been intentionally kept back. Mr. SEDDON .- No. Captain RUSSELL .- I hold to my opinion that it has been intentionally kept back, and it is forced on the House at an hour when Ministers know we cannot give proper consideration to the subject. On many occasions I have said it is advisable that we should acquire the line, and I still hold that opinion, but it ought to be done on business lines. Would any private person dream of conducting his own business in such a manner ? Of course not. It is monstrous that such a proposition should be put before us. I am so convinced of the impropriety of the proposition that I move, That this Bill be read a second time this day six months.

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The honourable gentleman who has just sat down is fully entitled to his own opinion as to what is the right course to pursue on such an important matter. But I should like to point out that the question of acquiring the line is not a recent one. For years past a number of people have been advocating the acquisition of the railway in the interests of the colony, and during last session statutory authority was given to the Government to enter into negotiations on certain conditions. The honourable gentleman seems to imagine there has been some motive in keeping the Bill back till this evening. That is quite a mistake. The negotiations have been proceeding for some time. It is a matter of history that we were leading up to definite terms in our negotiations when the Financial Statement was ready for delivery. There was a paragraph prepared and in the Statement bearing on it, and, in consequence of the chairman of the

Manawatu directors at the last moment not being in a position to place any proposals before the Government, we had to take out the paragraph before submitting the Statement to the House. I am not disclosing any confidential business when I say that negotiations have been going on between a large body of the shareholders and the directors of the company here, and that some of the directors are opposed to the sale of the line to the colony on the terms submitted. But I believe-or, at least, we are so informed-that the majority of the shareholders in the Old Country, and here also, are desirous of selling the railway at the price we have declined to go beyond-that is. 30s. per share. We only received information this morning from the chairman of the company that he expected he would be in a position to sell the railway to the Government on the basis of 30s. a share, and the Government then felt the House should be apprised, and submitted a Bill at once. More than that we could not do. Now, Sir, the whole point is, Is it a good thing for the colony to acquire that railway on the basis of 30s. per share upon 170,000 shares, or is it preferable to acquire it under the existing law, by which we would have to pay 10 per cent. on the cost of the construction of the railway? What would that amount to? We would have to add 10 per cent. to \$762,751, making \$839,026. Captain RUSSELL .- No. Sir J. G. WARD .- Pardon me, that is so. If you look at the cost of the railway and rolling-stock- Captain RUSSELL .- That is the value, not the cost. Sir J. G. WARD .- It is not the value. It will cost the colony that. The position has been investigated by responsible officers, who went into the whole matter, and, according to the officers who furnished the Government with their report, it would cost the colony many thousands more if we took the railway as provided under the Act than by giving 30s. per share. What the Government desires is to acquire the railway at the lowest possible cost had claimed as being the cost it would cost us \$1,045,288, and that would not include the land, for under the Act the land is exempted. No Government ought to go in for the acquisition of the Manawatu Railway Company piecemeal. Any sale should include land, railway, rolling-stock, and its business. Under the proposals the Government are negotiating. the total cost to the colony will be \$943,000, as against \$1,015,288 if the company's contention was upheld, and without the land ; and if honourable members will look at the schedule of the land they will find that the unsold land amounts to \$51,000, irrespective of the amount due by the purchasers, which comes to another \$51,000. so that we would run the risk of being \$100,000 worse off by acquiring the property under that Act, as advocated by the honourable member. It had been admitted that this great highway to Palmerston should be acquired at a reasonable price to the colony. In the first place the chairman of the company had asked 35s. per share, and afterwards 32s. 6d. per share. That we said was declined by the Government. that the colony would not entertain business at more than 30s. per share, and neither will we. If they do not like to take that they can keep it. We can then run our own line as we think fit, and without having to be everlastingly told we are interfering with the Manawatu Company's business or rates. We want to reduce our rates further, and intend to do so. If we do so now we are told it is not fair to the Manawatu Company, and that we are trying to force them to sell. We are not trying to do anything of the kind. We are prepared to pay what we believe is the fair value, and beyond that we will not go. When they get a fair offer for their property, if they refuse it such arguments as to what we do regarding the lowering of rates on our own lines cannot apply. The honourable member said that a member had had a quotation of 24s. per share. Well, that honourable member should tell all he knows about that quotation. As a matter of fact, the whole trouble has been that the shares in the Manawatu Railway Company have, I understand, for some time past been held by very few people. who have collared all the shares offering, and we are informed that there are not more than 10 per cent. of the shares on the market at the present time; and these shareholders have been standing out to get 35s. per share, and then 32s. 6d. per share. The whole position is this : The responsible officer of the Railway Department, Mr. Hudson, went into the matter in every possible way, and upon the calculations that have been submitted the course proposed now is the best and safest for the colony. Now, the whole question is, Is it a good thing; for the

colony to acquire this railway? If it is a good thing to acquire the railway, is the price of 30s. per share a fair price for the colony to pay to enable us to own and work that rail. way ? An Hon. MEMBER. -- How long have the de- bentures to run ? Sir J. G. WARD. -- About seven years ; and

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it would be a good thing to acquire the rail- way at 30s. per share, though there is no need for us to break our necks to get it. We can do without it very well. On the other hand, if the colony should elect to allow the railway to remain in the hands of the company, you have the people of the North Island, who have been clamouring all along to have the line handed over to the State. While the Government have been negotiating with the view of acquiring the railway we have not been able hitherto to say that we were satisfied that any offer was one we could submit to Parliament as a fair proposal ; and now, when we have what we believe to be, and are satisfied is, a fair basis upon which to accept it, the honourable gentleman says the matter should be allowed to stand over. Captain RUSSELL .- I said we ought to have had more time to consider it. Sir J. G. WARD .- We have never been in a position to submit anything definite until to- day. It is only to-day that the chairman of directors has put us in the position of being able to introduce this Bill. The clause which we have prepared, and which is printed in the Bill, was in the Budget until the very day the Budget was introduced, and it was only with- drawn at the last moment before the Budget was submitted to the House, as we could not get the chairman to affirm the proposal ; other- wise honourable members would have had ample time to debate it to their heart's con- tent. The matter is an important one to the colony, and, now that we have an opportunity of acquiring it, the Government consider it their duty, even at this late hour of the session, to place the matter fully and fairly before the House. I have briefly stated the position. I, of course, know the difficulties in the way of going into all the details at short notice, but it has been quite unavoidable. I hope honour- able members will, after due consideration, make up their minds either to pass the mea- sure or to negative it, and by their action decide whether the line is to become part of the State system or not. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) .- I quite agree, Sir, with the Hon. the Minister for Railways that it is necessary that the colony should purchase this railway; but what one objects to is that a Bill of this nature should be brought down when the House is about to break up in five or six hours. It is quite impossible for any man at a moment's notice to discover from the clauses of this Bill whether the proposed arrangement is a fair one or not, or whether the arrangement provided for under the Act of 1881 is a better one. I cannot say, and I defy any one except the honourable member for Hawke's Bay, who has gone carefully into the Act of 1881, to say which is the better arrangement with only an hour's notice. I submit it is better for us at this late stage to postpone the Bill to next year in order to have time to justify us in taking on our own shoulders our own responsibilities, for it is a responsibility to every member of this House. We should know what we are doing in | close on a million of money. The Minister for Railways has said that the proposals in the Act of 1881 would not be as favourable as these. He may be right-I do not say he is not-but certainly his speech is wrong, for he led the House to believe that the cost of the railway, as assessed under the Act of 1881, was the cost of construction without any depreciation. That was wrong. Sir J. G. WARD .- I did not say so. Mr. J. ALLEN .- The honourable gentleman did not say it in words, but his speech was so plain that every honourable member could see he meant it. He estimated the cost of the. railway at £950,000. Captain RUSSELL .- And he did not allude. to the interest-charges. Mr. J. ALLEN .- That is so. The honour- able gentleman alluded to the cost of the rail- way at £950,000, and added 10 per cent. to that, and said the railway would cost over a million under the Act of 1881. Sir J. G. WARD .- So it would. Mr. J. ALLEN .- Nonsense. Sir J. G. WARD .- I can show you the whole thing worked out by responsible officers. Mr. J. ALLEN .- I do not care how it is worked out. The Act of 1881 specifically pro- vides for depreciation. In clause 117 of "The Railways Construction and Land Act, 1881." it says, "The arbitrators shall also take into consideration the

depreciation in the permanent-way, plant, and rolling-stock, buildings, and other works of the railway." One can get at the value of the railway, less depreciation, in the schedule to the Bill, and it comes to \$761,000. Now, add 10 per cent. to that. Sir J. G. WARD. - You are quite wrong. Mr. J. ALLEN. - I cannot say whether I am right or wrong. I can only take the facts as they appear in the schedule, which purports to be the assets of the Manawatu Railway, according to their own estimation, and they have got a value of £761,000. Ten per cent. on that is another £76,000, and the value, according to that estimation, is £830,000, and we are proposing to give £951,000. Sir J. G. WARD. - You are entirely wrong. Mr. SEDDON. - There is \$100,000 for land. Mr. J. ALLEN. - Does the Bill include the land? Mr. SEDDON. - Yes. Mr. J. ALLEN. - I do not see it; and I say that we ought to have time to consider, in an important Bill like this, whether it does include the land or not. I do not know whether the Bill includes and takes over the other assets, such as railway stores, and sundry debtors and cash balances. Mr. SEDDON. - Yes, everything, you will find on the paper. Mr. J. ALLEN. - All I can say is, it does not provide for anything so far as I can see. Mr. BARCLAY. - What about the reserve of £76,000? Mr. J. ALLEN. - Yes; but it is not here in the schedule, which purports to be a statement of the assets of the company. There is another

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rect statement of the assets of the company? Nobody is able to prove it. It has not been before the Public Accounts Committee or any other Committee of the House, and we cannot tell whether it is correct or not. The member for Dunedin City (Mr. Barclay) says there is a reserve fund of \$76,000, which is not shown here at all in the statement of assets. Well, I say, to ask us to legislate in a way like this, dealing with a million of the colony's money, Seems to be the very height of absurdity, and I cannot understand why we should be asked to do it at this late hour. The Premier says he could not bring it down before, but the newspapers have been teeming for some time past, at any rate, with what purports to be the fact that the Premier was willing to offer 30s. a share. If the Premier had that in his mind, why did he not bring this Bill down at an earlier stage, and then we would have been in a position to authorise negotiations with the Manawatu Railway Company? Mr. FISHER. - What is the use of asking why, unless you can get them in a vice? Mr. J. ALLEN. - The only way to get him in a vice is to say that the Bill shall not go through. I shall have to thoroughly discuss it, and understand what every single clause means. I would like to ask if any commission is to be paid. Mr. SEDDON. - No. Mr. J. ALLEN. - None whatever? Mr. SEDDON. - No. Mr. ATKINSON. - Who to? Mr. J. ALLEN. - I do not know. But it does seem to me that the basis of the calculation is made upon this statement of the assets, and that the statement of the assets is incorrect. And if that is so, then the whole Bill may be on a false foundation. I cannot understand why members can consent to passing legislation of this kind, and I do submit there can be no harm, having got to this stage of the session, in waiting another six months-at any rate, until the early part of next session. We shall be meeting again in about six months' time or a little more, and if the Right Hon. the Premier is going to the Coronation we may be meeting in three or four months; but, at the very latest, we shall be meeting in seven months' time. Now, what harm can there be in delaying the negotiations-in fact, the negotiations may go on, but what harm can there be in delaying an Act authorising the actual purchase for another six or seven months? The negotiations could then be completed and laid before us, and we should have an opportunity of going thoroughly into the matter, and seeing whether the colony is advised to go in for this at a fair price or not. Under the existing conditions it is impossible to say whether what is offered is fair or not. do not know at what price the shares are in the market, but the honourable member for Hawke's Bay said 24s. But how are we to know that? We ought to have time to find out what is the value of the shares. If the Mr. J. Allen buying "a pig in a poke." Sir J. G. WARD. - I did not make the statement that I do not know. I said that not 10 per cent. of the shares are upon the market. Mr. J. ALLEN. - The honourable gentleman - a short time ago, across the floor of the House, said he did not know; and, if he does not

know the market price of the shares, how can he say that 30s. is a fair price ? Mr. SEDDON .- Contrast this arrangement with the present Act. Mr. J. ALLEN .- I say, we cannot contrast it. I have tried in the few minutes I have had the Bill in my hand ; but we have not the de. tails, and cannot contrast it. Mr. SEDDON .- We have had them com- pared. Mr. J. ALLEN .- It may be satisfactory to you, but not to the members of the House ; and it is not right for us to accept even a Minister's statement that this is correct. We ought to prove it to ourselves. When dealing with such a huge amount of money, I do not think it is right that we should be asked to decide within a few moments. This Bill ought to have been on the table of the House some days ago. Sir J. G. WARD .- We had not the au- thority. Mr. J. ALLEN .- What authority have you now that you had not a month ago ? Mr. FISHER .- It will not be necessary for him soon to bring it here at all : he will do it himself. Mr. J. ALLEN .- Of course, he may do many things himself, and may do this as he does with the estimates - get the authority of Parliament after he has done it. That is one way of doing these things ; but I submit there can be no great harm if the Bill is allowed to go over till next session, and until we have an opportunity of looking into the matter. I do not feel inclined to vote for the second reading. for I may be voting entirely wrong. We have had no opportunity of looking into the thing in such a manner as to satisfy ourselves whether it is right or wrong. For instance. here is clause 6, in which is stated the basis of the agreement. I cannot tell whether that is a satisfactory basis or not. Then, clause 6 says,- "The values specified in the Schedule herete. which have been represented by the company to be the correct values of the correspond- ing assets as on the thirtieth day of August. one thousand nine hundred and one, shall be deemed to form the basis of the agreement for sale and purchase, and the purchase-money shall be computed and the rights of the parties under the agreement shall be regulated accord- ingly." Apart altogether from that basis of agree- ment, I suppose what led to the directors of I the company intimating to the Premier that they were prepared to consider the agreement is that an additional \$16,845 is to be paid by way of purchase-money. The colony is to take that liability upon itself.

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-company are opposed to the sale. Mr. J. ALLEN .- We are told now that the directors of the company are opposed to the sale. Well, where is the agreement ? It seems to me the thing is wholly wrong, and I hope members will delay consideration of the Bill till next session. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccarton). - Sir, this Bill is so important that it appears to me it is the duty of the House to carefully scrutinise its provisions. In the first place, we are asked to take a responsibility on the part of the colony of about a million of money in con- nection with the purchase of the railway. I admit the importance of this piece of railway to the North Island system, but I am not pre- pared at this hour of the morning, and in the very expiring hours of the session, to say that, on the bald and bare statements made to the House, Parliament should saddle the colony with this very large responsibility. The Bill proposes that the sum of £1 10s. per share shall be paid on 170,000 shares. Now, I hold in my hand the New Zealand Trade Review and Prices Current, a paper of recognised commercial standing, issued in Wellington. It is dated the 7th November-this very day-and in the line opposite "Manawatu Railway Company " I find the latest market price of the shares is £1 7s. Now, a paper like this is presumably corrected up to date, yet the Government proposes to pay £1 10s. on the whole 170,000 shares. The pre- sumption is that if you buy a small parcel of fifty or a hundred shares you pay the market rate, but that when you are dealing with the whole of the shares you ought to be able to get a better price than 3s. higher than the market rate. I have also looked up the latest London #cc-zero quotations in the British Australasian, and find that the Home price is from \$1 to £1 5s. Now, what is laid before Parliament to show the value in connection with the line? The Minister for Railways says that Mr. Coom and Mr. Hudson have gone into the question and say it is a good purchase. Well, where is their report? Where are the official reports by the Government officers, and by any other experts

that the Government might have thought it necessary to obtain to justify Parliament in incurring this large responsibility ? Have we any report as to the life of the railway, as to its condition, as to the life of the rolling-stock that may remain, as to whether the lands that are held are of the value set forth in the schedule, and as to whether the balance due on land-purchases is what is stated ? What guarantee is there to the House in any shape or form that this is not buying " a pig in a poke"? I say it is not fair on the part of the Government, in connection with a large and important matter like this, to spring a surprise on the House at this hour-a surprise which no one contemplated, and after a number of honourable members have returned to their homes. I do not know what data the Government have had prepared in connection with this matter, but I know that the statement of the 17th August. It is quite evident that as far back as the 17th August the Government had determined to buy the line ; if complete negotiations had not been entered into, at any rate they had brought them to that point where a balance was struck as to the cash in hand and the value of the stores-and yet the matter is not brought before Parliament until nearly twelve o'clock at night on the very last night of the session. Sir J. G. WARD .- You are a grossly unfair man, and you are misrepresenting the position. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- I decline to submit to the statement of the Minister for Railways that I am deliberately unfair and am grossly misrepresenting the position. That statement I leave to be judged by the country. Yet, in the face of what I have stated as to the absence of official reports and the value of the shares, we are told, in the dying hours of the session, that to-day is the first occasion on which the Government were in a position to bring the matter down. I ask, What loss will be sustained by the colony if this matter is left over until next session ? We should have an impartial investigation as to whether these shares are worth 30s. What harm is going to happen by a delay ? The shares are evidently falling in value. Last year 35s. per share was asked ; now there is a prospect of 30s. being accepted. The Government have been fighting the company for a considerable time, and they have endeavoured by their railway arrangements to depreciate the value of the company's property. The railway time-tables are so framed as to assist in minimising the value of the company's lines. What harm, I ask, will happen if this matter is postponed to another session ? Sir, the Government should come down as businessmen, and treat us as business-men, and bring before us the data upon which the House may consent to vote this sum. The honourable member opposite referred to the debentures paying 5 per cent. Why, the policy of the Ministry is that our railways shall only pay 3 per cent., and yet for the next six or seven years we will have to carry this £680,000 of 5 per-cent. debentures on the back of the colony, and make the railway produce that amount as well as pay working expenses. I say the House is entitled to see the balance-sheet of the company in order to see whether the revenue of the line is sufficient to pay the 6 per cent. dividend which was paid on the last occasion. Then, we should also have the fullest and most complete schedules of the assets, lands, unpaid purchases, and full particulars as to what the value of those assets are. Lastly, I say we are entitled to have official reports laid on the table of the House as to the condition of the line and as to its value-reports not only by Government experts, but if necessary by experts from outside. Mr. SEDDON .- That has been done. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- The Premier says, " That has been done." Then, why are we not supplied with this data? Members are asked to face a serious responsibility, and, coming

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would be justified in sticking up this Bill. Mr. SEDDON (Premier). - I am surprised. You may do your best to help the colony, and when you have an opportunity of a great saving and of doing business for the colony, which is in accordance with the wishes of the great majority of members and of the people, you are met in this way. I have here something to make known to members. Here is a paragraph which was prepared for insertion in the Financial Statement, - " Honourable members will recollect that an offer was made last year by this company to sell the line to the Government, together with all assets, on a 6-per

cent. term basis, which would have yielded to shareholders about £1 15s. a share. The Government notified the company that they could not entertain the proposal at the price submitted ; that it would be cheaper to take over the line under the existing agreement; and that the Government would purchase it at a satisfactory figure. Recently the statement of assets and liabilities of the Wellington and Manawatu Railway Company has been submitted to the Government, and there was a prospect of the company being prepared to accept a payment equal to 5 per cent. upon the capital, equal to about £1 11s. 9d. a share, and it would be an advantage as compared with taking over the line under the original agreement. The Government, however, does not see its way to agree to take over the line on these terms; but the difference between the company and the Government is so small that there is every probability of the House this session being called upon to approve the conditions of purchase of the Manawatu Railway by the colony. The taking-over of the Manawatu Railway at the present juncture is somewhat inconsistent with the advice generally tendered throughout the Budget ; but there are exceptions to all rules. There can be no doubt that it would be an advantage to the colony if this line were secured. It is desirable that all railways in this colony should belong to the State, as they can be better controlled and regulated, and confer greater advantages to the public, than under private management and control." At four o'clock in the afternoon of the day the Financial Statement was delivered the Chairman of the directors informed the Government that a majority of the directors would not sell at £1 11s. 9d. per share. Subsequently, they offered to take £1 12s. 6d. The next thing was, I made a statement when opening one of the bridges on the line, and said the Government had been prepared at the time to offer, subject to confirmation by Parliament, \$1 10s. per share. The next step was, that the company wrote to know whether the Government were still prepared to give 30s. per share. I replied, " Yes, subject to ratification by Parliament "; but I would not submit anything to Parliament until it was intimated to me that there was a prospect of this being agreed to. It was intimated to me that the majority of the directors were not favourable, but there was every reason to Mr. G. W. Russell would be prepared to accept an amount for the assets equal to #1 10s. per share. If, in the face of that, I had taken no action and nothing had been done, and it had leaked out that such an arrangement was possible, why next session I should have been accused of barring the way to acquiring the railway at a reasonable price. What am I to do ? Those who like to take the responsibility to-night, and let this opportunity go by, can do so, so far as I am concerned. I am prepared to do that which is in the best interests of the colony. The last speaker says, " How do we know the statement of the assets is correct ? Have the Government had no reports ? " The Government took this 6-per-cent. proposal and had it worked out by the Insurance Department, and we find it much better to purchase at the price mentioned in the Bill. and we get the land and all complete by paying a little more. An Hon. MEMBER .- Why not put the papers on the table? Mr. SEDDON .- How can we do that? It was worked out by Mr. Hudson, the railway expert ; and then we had the report by the Engineer-in-Chief and Mr. Napier Bell as to the condition of the rolling-stock and the condition of the line, and we were told that everything was in very good order. If that report had been laid upon the table of the House it would have fully justified us offering #1 10s. a share : and because I want to deal in a businesslike way with a business transaction doubts are cast on the matter by the honourable member. You must rely on the Government of the day. and, if you cannot trust us on a matter of this kind when you require to have the exercise of business aptitude, I simply say you had better get somebody else. It is sickening, when endeavouring to help the country, and to do the best in the interests of the country, to have these statements made. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL. - We have got our duty to the country as well as you have. Mr. SEDDON .- It is not your duty to asperse the Government. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- I have not done so. Mr. SEDDON .- Probably the honourable member does not understand the English language. I think, sometimes, he does understand it ; on this occasion he said it was his duty. as a member of the House, to stop this business going through. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- Yes. Mr. SEDDON .- Why ? Mr. G. W.

RUSSELL .- Give us the information. Mr. SEDDON .- I cannot with fairness to our officers and the colony give you the whole of the information-and even what I have already said may have a construction put upon it, that the Manawatu shareholders may say, " We are not prepared to accept your offer." That is exactly the position that, perhaps, the hon. member wishes should obtain. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- I understand you to say the directors say that now.

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do say so. Mr. J. ALLEN .- Who are you treating with, then ? Mr. SEDDON .- Opportunity is given in this Bill to the majority of the shareholders in value to decide, and if a majority of the shareholders in value hold a meeting as provided for in this Bill, and accept our offer for the property, permission is given to purchase. But there may be reasons why a director or directors are not prepared to sell, while the shareholders themselves, by resolution, are prepared to dispose of the property. Now, if you get into a situation of that kind, and if you look at this Bill, you will understand the situation at the present moment. I take now, Sir, as a business-man, a statement of the assets and liabilities in the balance-sheet. The railway and rolling-stock is set down at \$952,492 12s. 6d. Very well; of course, there would be interest charged during the time of construction. The directors have since that written off £191,255 4s. 10d., bringing the capital value to £761,237 7s. 8d., that is the cost of construction as shown now in the company's statements. If the Government decided to take over the line under the original agreement we should have to add to that 10 per cent., which would bring it up to about £839,000; and issues might arise, and on those issues you must go to arbitration ; and if you do it might cost you more for the line-leaving out the land and the assets altogether --- than what we are paying for it under these proposals. I am going to prove that. Taking £761,237, as shown in the company's books as the cost of the line; to that you must add 10 per cent., and the company would probably wish to add something more. #cc-zero Captain RUSSELL. - Their books have nothing to do with the cost of construction. Mr. SEDDON. That is exactly why I say you cannot definitely take it on the \$761,237, with the 10 per cent. added ; other claims might arise, and with arbitration you might be run into a million of money. That is the position. Mr. J. ALLEN .- But we do not know. Mr. SEDDON .- You must take it that, when the Government take the responsibility of submitting a proposal like this to the House, we are not likely to do that unless we have all the information fully before us. Then, there are the freehold lands, \$51,221. You have the balance due by land purchase of £51,819. You have the deposit, with accrued interest, of £40,527. Then, you have the railway stores £10,000, and sundry, #2,000. The cash balances amount to £37,269 14s. 11d. These make a total of £954,365 14s. 3d. The liabilities are as follows : Debentures, £680,000; sundry creditors, £4,429 1s. 10d. ; debenture interest accrued, \$7,265 16s. ; appropriation for dividend at 3 per cent. to shareholders for half-year, £5,150 : making a total of #696,844 17s. 10d. ; which deducted from the assets, £954,365 14s. 3d., leaves a balance of assets of £257,520 16s. 5d. This, on 170,000 shares, equals £1 10s. 3d. per share; and I undertake to say that under these terms and conditions it is a little the land and everything, and the line handed over as a going concern. As to taking the other course, I do not blame the honourable member for Hawke's Bay in suggesting what he did, as to dealing with it under the original agreement, but there is a question of doubt in respect to the original cost of construction ; and, from what our own officers say they are prepared to undertake in respect to it, and from the information before us, and from the actuarial working out of the position by the experts, and also by Mr. Hudson and our other officers in the Public Works Department, we can only come to the conclusion that the taking over of the line on the terms mentioned in the Bill will be a good thing for the colony. We say the working of our own lines will be made easier if we do this, and that the very heavy impost on the settlers along the line and those along our own lines, owing to the short-distance rates now charged, will be done away with. Under all the circumstances, I advise the House, even at this late stage of the

session, to approve the proposals contained in the Bill. And I believe there is a general disposition on the part of members to accept it. I felt myself some diffidence in bringing the matter forward at this stage of the session, and no one can regret more than I did that the negotiations should not have been completed sooner, and that it was thus left to the last moment. I would have made this speech on moving the second reading of the Bill, if I had thought for a moment that the Bill would not be generally accepted ; and if I made a mistake in taking it for granted that it was generally acceptable I hope honourable members will pardon me. Probably, if I had made these remarks then, the Bill would have been through before this. I can only give my assurance to honourable members that this matter has been carefully investigated, and that our experts advised the Government to acquire it if we can get the railway at the price proposed. That is the advice given to the Government, and we give it to the House; and when the thing is concluded I am prepared to give members the report of our officers, and if they do not then agree that what we have done is a good thing for the colony, whilst not inflicting any wrong on the shareholders, I hope I shall not remain very much longer on these benches. I could not give any further assurance than that ; and as to the quotations for shares on the market, I do not think there is 10 per cent. on the market. The shares are held, and very firmly held, in London and in this colony by gentlemen who know what the value of the property is. I say, if we miss this opportunity, as time goes on and we extend our own lines of railway and extend our settlement, we are bringing up the value of this property all the time. Captain RUSSELL .- Not under the Act. Mr. SEDDON .- I know what the honourable member is alluding to. We can certainly reduce rates ; or perhaps the honourable gentleman refers to the total cost of construction, and that by the Act, it does not matter what the amount of business is, they are tied down

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at the same time we have to consider that the cost is not a defined quantity. I cannot go into that phase of the question now ; but I say, in respect to the original contract and its terms, conditions, and uncertainties, that the colony would act wisely in avoiding a leap in the dark, for that is what is meant if the Manawatu line is taken under the old agreement. I do not want to depreciate or inflate the value of the property ; I only want to impress on members that there are good reasons which weigh with the Government, and which has caused Ministers to bring down the Bill; were it otherwise I would never have had my name associated with it, or have brought it down at this late period of the session. I must ask members to take for granted that there are good reasons for passing it. If the House likes to take the responsibility of postponing it for six months, then we wash our hands of all responsibility in respect to it. Mr. W. FRASER .- Is any date fixed in the agreement with the directors within which this offer must be closed ? Mr. SEDDON .- My intention was to fix a date early next year within which the transaction must be concluded. Mr. W. FRASER .- There is no date fixed just now ? Mr. SEDDON .- No. Mr. W. FRASER .- Has the company confirmed the offer at present ? Mr. SEDDON .- It has been intimated to the Government by the Chairman of directors that it is his opinion, and he has reasons to support it, that a majority of the shareholders in value are prepared to take the offer. It is on the strength of that the Government have brought in the Bill. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccarton). - As a matter of personal explanation, I would like to ask what the Premier meant when he charged me, in the course of his speech, with aspersing the Government, and uttering what he regards as insinuations ? I made no such insinuation, and I want to know what he means ? Mr. SEDDON .- Well, you said that we had a statement here of the assets dated the 17th August, and that for some purpose or other-you did not know what-the Government had kept it back. There was a suggestion there that we had kept it back to the last moment for the purpose of taking the House by surprise, and so rushing it through. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- You only meant the reference to be a political one ? Mr. SEDDON .- That is all. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- Not that I intended a personal reflection on the Minister ? Mr. SEDDON .- That is so. It is true we had some

information before I prepared that reference in the Financial Statement, but they wanted 35s. a share ; I indicated that the Government would not offer more than 30s., and then they intimated that they would take 32s. 6d. I wanted to show that we had not deliberately kept it back, but there was no use in attempting to deal with it when we were not prepared to purchase at the price mentioned by the directors. Mr. Seddon the word ' now ' be retained." AYES, 38. Allen, E. G. Hall-Jones Mills Palmer Arnold Hogg Atkinson Hornsby Parata Rhodes Buddo Houston Seddon Carroll Hutcheson Collins Kaihau Steward Lang Colvin Tanner Laurensen Duncan Thompson, R. Ell Ward Lawry Witheford. Fowlds Lethbridge McGowan Fraser, W. Tellers. McKenzie, R. Gilfedder Barclay Meredith Fraser, A. L. D. Hall NOES, 7. Tellers. Herries Russell, G. W. Allen, J. Millar Russell, W. R. Monk Massey. Majority for, 31. Amendment negatived, and Bill read a second time. ## IN COMMITTEE. Clause 2. - " The Governor is hereby empowered, in the name and on behalf of His Majesty, to enter into an agreement with the Wellington and Manawatu Railway Company (Limited), (hereinafter called ' the company '). for the purchase of the railway and other assets of the company mentioned in the Schedule hereto (hereinafter referred to as 'the said railway ') as a going concern, subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter mentioned." Mr. SEDDON (Premier) moved to add, after the words " His Majesty," the words " not later than the first day of May, one thousand nine hundred and two." Amendment agreed to, and clause as amended agreed to. Bill reported, and read a third time. PUBLIC WORKS BILL. A message was received from His Excellency the Governor, transmitting the draft of a Bill to amend the Public Works Act, and recommending the House to make provision accordingly. The message was referred to the Committee of the Whole, and the resolution was agreed to, reported to the House and agreed to, and the Bill read a first time. Mr. HALL-JONES (Minister for Public Works) moved the second reading of the Bill. Mr. HUTCHESON (Wellington City) said he would like to point out to the House that this Bill did not afford any real relief at all. It merely shifted the disability from the individual to the local governing body. He was anxious to see relief given in these cases of anybody, but this Bill did not do so. Mr. W. FRASER (Wakatipu) said the objection to the present law was that it would cause houses in the streets to have the appearance of the teeth of a saw-there would be no uniformity in the frontage of the houses. The clause would not alter that one bit. The individual who was compelled to go back would be compensated by the local body, but the aspect

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rather see a 40 ft. street than a street partly 40 ft. wide and partly 60 ft. wide. Mr. BARCLAY (Dunedin City) regretted that this Bill did not seem to meet the difficulty. The trouble was this: The clause in the original Act said that directly a man subdivided he must dedicate the necessary amount of land to widen the street where it was not already the regulation width. The clause in this Bill said that directly the dedication, which was compulsory, took place there was to be a claim for compensation against the local body. Thus, all over the town or borough there would be scattered odd patches of vacant land, where there was no possible chance of the street being widened, which were of no use to the city or borough, and which nevertheless would have to be paid for from the Corporation funds. Mr. FIELD (Otaki) said the Bill afforded no real relief. From the point of view of the man who lost the land some little good might be done, but from the point of view of the local body there was no good done at all. Mr. TANNER (Avon) said the House should be aware that this method for street-widening must be followed for a series of years before it could be completed. It was not possible to undo the mismanagement of the past in a day, or in a single Act of Parliament. As years went on properties were destroyed by fires and in other ways, and the civic authorities should take advantage of every such occurrence to set back the frontage, and in the end that process would be successful. He thought it was advisable to make the price paid by the local body for the portion of the land taken proportionate in some degree to the total valuation of the section. Mr. FOWLDS (Auckland City) said the remarks made by the previous speaker in regard to the

time required to carry out the widening of the streets would apply if on each sale and transfer a portion was cut off for the widening of the street. That, however, was not so, and in the present state of affairs the millennium might arrive without the streets being widened. Under the Minister's proposal the City or Borough Council would be let in for the payment of heavy compensation claims for something that would be of no use to them till the end of time. It would be better to have nothing at all than to pass this proposal. Mr. HALL-JONES (Minister for Public Works) said, if this Bill did not meet the views of honourable members they should throw it out on the second reading. The House divided. AYES, 32. Allen, E. G. Colvin Houston Allen, J. Hutcheson Ell Field Lawry Arnold Fisher Lethbridge Atkinson Hall-Jones McGowan Barclay McKenzie, R. Herries Carroll Meredith Hornsby Collins Monk Tellers. Symes Rhodes Hall Tanner Russell, W. R. Thompson, R. Palmer. NOES, 6. Tellers. Millar Heke Fowlds Hogg Parata. Laurensen. Majority for, 26. Bill read a second time. IN COMMITTEE. Section 2. - "In any case where under section twenty-one of 'The Public Works Acts Amendment Act, 1900,' the owner of land is required to dedicate land for the purpose of widening a street, he shall be entitled to compensation from the local authority, to be assessed under the provisions of 'The Public Works Act, 1894.' " Mr. HUTCHESON (Wellington City) moved to add the following proviso :- "Provided that section twenty-one of the said Act shall not apply to subdivisions fronting on existing streets." The Committee divided on the question, "That the proviso be added." AYES, 22. Allen, J. Parata Hogg Hornsby Rhodes Atkinson Russell, W. R. Barclay Lang Witheford. Collins Lawry Field Massey Fisher Millar Tellers. Fowlds Monk Hall Palmer Hutcheson. Herries NOES, 18. Tanner Allen, E. G. Houston Buddo Laurensen Thompson, R. McGowan Ward. Carroll Meredith Tellers. Duncan Mills Arnold Ell Fraser, A. L. D. Seddon Symes. Hall-Jones Majority for, 4. Proviso added. Bill reported. On the question, That this Bill be read a third time, Mr. LAURENSEN (Lyttelton) wished to put on record his protest against the Bill. He believed, in doing what they had done, they had made an alteration which was one of the most retrograde steps they could possibly have taken. He believed every man in the House would yet live to regret what they had done. They had undone one of the best clauses in the Public Works Act of last year, and had given the right to any man who desired to do so to continue the narrow slums and streets which were a disgrace to so many towns. At the request of the honourable member who represented Wellington City-a town which in respect to narrow streets was the worst in the colony-they had passed this amendment. He could only express his regret that the Committee had taken so foolish an action. He could not allow the

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for a division even though he were the only one to vote against the present Bill. The House divided on the question, "That the Bill be read a third time." AYES, 23. Monk Fraser, W. Allen, J. Palmer Arnold Hall Rhodes Herries Atkinson Russell, G. W. Hornsby Barclay Russell, W. R. Hutcheson Collins Tellers. Fisher Lang Lethbridge Colvin Fowlds Field. Fraser, A. L. D. Massey NOES, 20. Tanner Allen, E. G. McGowan Thompson, R. McKenzie, R. Carroll Meredith Ward Duncan Millar Witheford. Ell Mills Tellers. Heke Buddo Hogg Seddon Laurensen. Symes Lawry Majority for, 3. Bill read a third time. FLAX GRADING AND EXPORT BILL. A message was received from His Excellency the Governor transmitting a draft of this Bill, and recommending the House to make provision accordingly. The message was referred to the Committee of the Whole, and the resolution was agreed to, reported to the House and agreed to, and the Bill read a first, a second, and a third time. VICTORIA COLLEGE SITE BILL. IN COMMITTEE. Amendments before the Committee in clause 2 withdrawn. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) moved that the following clause be substituted for clause 2 :- "(1.) The Mayor, Councillors, and Citizens of the City of Wellington are hereby empowered to convey or transfer to the corporation of the Victoria College the land described in the First Schedule hereto in exchange for such part of the Wellington College Site Reserve, or of any other lands within the City of Wellington vested in the Governors of the Wellington Col-

lege and Girls' High School, as may be agreed upon between the said Governors and the Mayor, Councillors, and Citizens of the City of Wellington as of equal value to the land firstly before mentioned. "

(2.) The said Governors are hereby empowered to convey or transfer any part of the said reserve, or of any other lands vested in them, to the Mayor, Councillors, and Citizens of the City of Wellington."

Amendment agreed to, and clause as amended agreed to. Mr. HUTCHESON (Wellington City) moved the following new clause :- "Any land conveyed or transferred to the corporation of the Victoria College under this Act shall be held by the said corporation upon Mr. Laurensen buildings and as grounds appertaining thereto. and upon condition that the said buildings shall be commenced within two years, and completed within five years, from the passing of this Act, and that the said land shall be inalienable by sale, mortgage, lease, or otherwise: Provided that, upon breach of any of the said trusts or conditions, the said land shall revert to and be revested in the Mayor, Councillors, and Citizens of the City of Wellington as a public reserve, and that any land which may have been conveyed or transferred to the Mayor, Councillors, and citizens of the City of Wellington by the Governors of the Wellington College and Girls' High School under this Act shall thereupon revert to and be revested in the said Governors." Clause read a second time. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) moved to omit the words " and completed within five years," and to omit the proviso to the clause. Amendment agreed to, and clause as amended added to the Bill. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) moved the addition of the following new clause :- " Section eighteen of 'The Wellington College and Girls' High School Act, 1887,' is hereby amended by inserting, after the words ' the said buildings or either of them.' the words 'or such other buildings as may from time to time be deemed necessary.'" New clause added. Bill reported, and read a third time. DUNEDIN CITY AND SUBURBAN TRAMWAYS BILL. Clause 5 .- Corporation deemed promoters of tramways. On the motion of Mr. MILLAR (Dunedin City), the following proviso was added to the clause :- " Provided that no such power, right, or privilege shall be deemed to permit the Corporation to construct any tramway through that part of the Town Belt of Dunedin known as the Botanical Gardens, and being all that land on the east side of the Main North Road. and between the aforesaid road and the Opoho Road." On the motion of Mr. MILLAR (Dunedin City), clauses 6 to 13, 17, and 19, and the First Schedule, were struck out, and the following new clause was added :- " All such further sums as may be required for the purposes of the said Act or this Act, of any of them, may be borrowed under the provisions of 'The Municipal Corporations Act, 1900.'" On the motion of Mr. MILLAR (Dunedin City), the preamble was amended accordingly. Bill reported, and read a third time. NORTH OF AUCKLAND RAILWAY. On the motion, That the House go into Committee of Supply, Mr. WITHEFORD (Auckland City) moved. That the estimates be taken back, with a direction that the Government should make

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He Railway during the present session. He was surprised and indignant that before the scheme could be carried out. The city would require to obtain the best expert evidence, there was no amount on the supplementary estimates for the North of Auckland Railway. and unless they knew that they would obtain the When the House considered the thousands of pounds to carry out the scheme they could not go names attached to the petitions which had to the expense of getting the best expert advice been presented to Parliament in favour of a money could command. As things were now, vigorous prosecution of this line, he thought twelve months would have to elapse before the it showed clearly that those petitions had not city would be warranted even in going so far influenced the Government to the extent of as to getting that expert evidence. It was a the expenditure of a single pound. He hoped matter which concerned an important and large the Auckland phalanx would gather round in city, and the commercial prosperity of a city a strong body and force the Government to which promised to become the manufacturing do something. That was why he moved his centre of the

colony. He would undertake to amendment. He was quite sure he would say that if this scheme were a feasible one, and have the support of the other Auckland City were given effect to, it would mean greatly enhanced members. When the House considered that hanced prosperity and an immense impetus to the North Island was five hundred miles short the manufacturing capabilities of Christchurch of the length of railways which had been made and the surrounding districts, and would be a in the South Island, he was certain that in a great advantage not only to the city, but to small matter like this the House would sympathize with him in the course he was taking. Mr. FOWLDS (Auckland City) seconded the church people had taken a deep interest in the proposal contained in the Bill in question for amendment. Mr. PALMER (Ohinemuri) said he would some considerable time. That city had no support the motion which had been moved by high-pressure water-supply, and it was to give the member for Auckland City (Mr. Witheford) that that the Bill was required, and also to give power to be used for electric lighting, power Mr. COLLINS (Christchurch City) had no to be used in manufactures, and as a means of desire to delay the House, but wished to call driving the trams, for which the city were in attention to a matter of importance which he negotiation to purchase. There were a number of small towns between Christchurch and the thought ought to have been dealt with—namely, the question of dealing with local Bills. A few place of supply, and those towns wanted the days ago provision had been made by the Pre-use of the electricity also. It would be seen, mier for dealing with the unopposed local Bills, therefore, that the question was one which did and under that arrangement a number of Bills not affect Christchurch only, but extended far which had been nearly at the top of the Order into the country. A distinct promise had been given earlier in the session that this Bill would Paper were relegated to an inferior position at have an opportunity of being dealt with, and the bottom of the Paper. Amongst those Bills was one which was under his charge, to the ex- he believed a large number of members of the treme importance of which he wished to direct House were anxious that the Bill should be attention. It was a Bill to give the City of passed into law. Christchurch power to construct works for the establishment of an electric-power scheme to be against the action of two Auckland City members in bringing in this amendment in such a frivolous way as representing the wants of to be utilised in the city and its surroundings the district north of Auckland. That was not for electric power, lighting, and other purposes the way to assist the North of Auckland. Those It was impossible to overestimate poses. the immense advantages which this scheme honourable members had been presenting would give to the City of Christchurch. And numerous petitions this session from people it would not only be of immense advantage in the North of Auckland, and the settlers to Christchurch itself, but to the colony as a whole, since it would be an object-lesson and their friends, and he regretted that the wants illustration of what might be done in that of that district should be brought up in the direction. He understood that the Bill would manner in which they had been brought up have been opposed by those who had interests by Mr. Witheford and Mr. Fowlds. If those connected with the Selwyn County Council and honourable gentlemen could not do something the Waimakariri-Ashley Water-supply Board, better to assist the North of Auckland, he, as and he thought Parliament ought to have been a member representing that part of the colony, permitted to decide whether those bodies were would be much obliged to them if they never mentioned that district in the House at all. entitled to monopolize the waters of the river. He protested against the wants of that district being ridiculed by any member of this fore Parliament and being considered on its House. He did not ask for any different treatment than should be accorded to any ordinary know whether the honourable gentleman referred to him or not, but he did not think he member, nor did he take it as a personal matter. What the city asked was to be empowered not had said anything in a frivolous manner. Mr. ELL (Christchurch City) said the Christ- Mr. R. THOMPSON (Marsden) protested Mr. PALMER (Ohinemuri) said he did not

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North of Auckland, and if that was the way they were to be thanked for helping the North of Auckland he would be inclined to let the North of Auckland help itself. Mr. WITHEFORD (Auckland City) said the motion he had moved was moved in a perfectly bona fide manner, and he was quite in earnest over it. Mr. MONK (Waitemata) said he was not going to find fault with any honourable members, but with the Cabinet. He thought the Ministers had reason to feel regret, and even to blush, for the manner in which they had treated the North of Auckland district. There was only too much truth in what honourable gentlemen had said in complaining of the amount allocated to the North, and to the expenditure upon a railway that had been pressed upon the attention of the Government year after year, and for which many definite promises had been made. He felt ashamed of the iniquities on these estimates. There was a large amount of money which could only be called wasted, whilst there was such a very small amount awarded for roads. The Premier had asserted in the House that no one had more consideration for farmers than himself ; but that was not his (Mr. Monk's) feeling, but rather that the farmers were ignored, because in this House there were too few of them to be considered, which was a strong argument in favour of their combining for the protection and recognition of their claim to an equitable share of the public money. He had no doubt the Premier spent money where there was the most pressure. The amount that had been spent over the visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall might well make their visit to be remembered by the country people with regret rather than thankfulness, when they were made to suffer all kinds of inconvenience, and to contribute large sums of money upon this and the other items for mere show and fites to be found throughout the estimates. Much as members and the people generally sympathized with Royalty and the people of Australia in connection with the inauguration of the Commonwealth. they felt that more economy and care should have been exercised. It was impossible to defend the manner in which this expenditure had been conducted during the last six months. It was not well for us to be extravagant at the cost of works that the people must have or else suffer in consequence. If the prosperity of New Zealand was to be achieved at all, the community would have to slave for long hours with low prices, and compete with the energy of the world in selling their products. Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) must express his regret at the manner in which the moneys for the Public Works Fund had been allocated. The Minister for Public Works in his Statement said that after bringing down his public works estimates he had a sum of \$300,000 odd not then allocated ; also, there was an extra quarter of a million voted for the Public Works Fund, and yet they found an allocation of only \$178,000. Why should not the unallocated Mr. Palmer placed on the supplementary estimates ? Even that was not allocated. He must call attention also to the wretched amount put down to roads and bridges. Out of the €178,000 allocated to Public Works Fund only \$38,000 was for roads. He must say the Minister for Public Works Was treating the back-block settlers and the roadless people with a hard-heartedness which he (Mr. Herries) had not thought he was capable of. Mr. LANG (Waikato) said the amount placed on the supplementary estimates for roads in his own particular district was very small inderd. especially when many applications hall teac made for important works. The only distru: that had come off well in this respect was Westland. Westland altogether received abos; as many thousands as other districts did hundreds. Mr. HALL -JONES (Minister for Paldie Works) wished to reply to the statements wheni the smallness of the vote for the railway norte of Auckland. He had received the following letter during the session from a gentleman in that district :- "Komokoriki, 5th July, 1901. "DEAR SIR, -While the settlers here nete with pleasure the business-like manner work s progressing on the Komokoriki Section. vet the committee would respectfully draw your atten. tion to the imperative need of pushing on the permanent survey. "It is alike to the best interests of the rai. way and to the settlers that it should be price- cuted without delay, so that the work can go on uninterrupted. " The committee hope that the continuity of policy

that has obtained latterly shall be maintained. - I am, &c .. "ALFRED WOODCOCK, Jun., "Chairman, Ahuroa Railway Committee. "The Hon. the Minister for Public Works." This showed the settlers had confidence in the Government, and the result would show that their confidence was not misplaced. Mr. MONK (Waitemata) asked why the Minister did not reconcile that with the estimates. To-day he had received a telegram from the very gentleman the Minister mentioned-Mr. Woodcock-protesting against the smallness of the grant for the North of Auckland Railway. Mr. HOGG (Masterton) said. In his opinion the Minister for Public Works had done the best to distribute the money at his disposal in such a way as to give a reasonable amount of satisfaction to members who are prepared to accept a fair arrangement. He was sorry so much money was being expended in order to put New Zealand on a war footing, and hoped such expenditure as had lately taken place in this direction would not take place again for many years to come. If half or two-thirds of this money had been devoted to roads and bridges, the effect on the colony would have been most salutary.

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the words proposed to be omitted stand part of could assure the House that never since he had been Colonial Treasurer had the amount remained the question." In on the 31st March been so small as it was AYER, 26. at present. He intended to look ahead. They Parata Allen, J. Fraser, W. had to go ahead from the 31st March until Hall-Jones Rhodes Arnold further supply was granted, and after the 31st Russell, G. W. Atkinson Hogg March there would have to be a cutting-down Buddo Hornsby Steward of expenditure, or he would be twitted, as he Carroll Hutcheson Symes had been this session, with having liabilities Ward. Collins Laurensen over and above his ways and means. Consequently Tellers. Ell McGowan frequently, he feared the margin must be left, and Meredith Field Colvin in the face of an expenditure of two millions, Mills Tanner. Flatman which was the amount on the estimates, a margin of £380,000 was not too large ; in fact, the margin ought to be more. He considered, however, Lethbridge Thompson, R. Fowlds that £1,250,000 was sufficient loan-money for one Massey Tellers. Heke year, and the colony would have to do the best McKenzie, R. Herries Palmer they could with it. Members should realise Witheford. Monk Lang that the country could not go on keeping up Lawry the public debt and borrow more than a million Majority for, 14. a year. The pressure on his funds by members Amendment negated. had been very great ; but he recognised that Mr. SEDDON (Premier) said he had a few they must keep within reasonable limits, and words to say. Regarding the railways north of the amount asked by way of loan for this year Auckland-the subject-matter of the specific £1,250,000-was a liberal amount by which to increase the indebtedness of the colony. He amendment, so far as the Government was concerned-it was recognised that there was great had a few words to say about the provision in necessity both for roads and railways there. the way of roads for the farmers. He could That portion of the country had not received only say this : that he believed the better roads you had and the more roads you made you improve the same attention as other parts of the colony. In this remark he alluded to years gone by, to prove the condition of the country, and gave the days of large loans, when the public works greater opportunities to producers to get their policy was inaugurated. He remembered a produce to market, and thus relieve many who at present laboured under serious disadvantage being made showing the relative expenditure and what had been contributed, advantages. taking the population basis, and there was a and in some districts where there was very little very large sum due to that part of the colony. gravel for the roads, any one who travelled In respect to the North of Auckland Railway, he through the country realised the disadvantages wanted to say there would be a full expenditure under which these people laboured. At all upon the work of the money voted for it, and events, he took it that if you took the votes for there was nothing to prevent the Minister for roads this year, as compared with years Public Works, when he under spent one year. gone by, the comparison would be favourable to the votes for this year.

Then, they had been making liberal expenditure next year. Mr. MASSEY .- You intend doing that ? told that the Royal visit had a good deal to do. Mr. SEDDON hoped his colleague would do with the stopping of moneys in connection bear this in mind. He wished to remove with roads. He (Mr. Seddon) said that had no another misapprehension. Members looked effect whatever on the expenditure on roads. over the estimates, and if they did not find The Government had taken from the consoli- certain items there they at once put it down dated revenue \$500,000, and transferred it to that he, as Colonial Treasurer, had struck out the Public Works Fund. He thought. in a the item. Well, he would like to say he gave little country like New Zealand, that 15s. per the Minister of Lands \$30,000 to divide as he head of population, as they had already, pleased. How was it possible for the Colonial for the construction of public works was a Treasurer to know how that money had been very fair amount indeed. With respect to divided ? All the Colonial Treasurer had to do the question raised by the member for was to find the money. Christchurch City (Mr. Collins), he admitted An Hon. MEMBER .- Why not give him that there was room for complaint. There was no doubt, to his mind, that the Wai- £100,000. Mr. SEDDON said he could not do it. In makariri River should be and would be utilised the Public Works Fund he had a margin of for the generation of power. The difficulty had \$380,000 to carry him on after the 31st March been in the adjustment as between other bodies next and till the November following. A sum who had rights in respect to that river. With of \$100,000 had gone to additions to open lines, respect to the City of Christchurch Electric and \$50,000 to roads, out of the \$250,000 Power and Loan Empowering Bill. the Govern- additional authorised to be raised. ment could not be blamed. The Government Mr. W. FRASER. - We have not got it. It would have been quite prepared, were it possible, is not on the estimates. to have allowed further time for the considera- Mr. SEDDON said, Yes, they had got \$150 of tion of the Bill in question. Once the estimates And in these newly settled districts,

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were through, if those concerned came to some agreement he would be prepared to put the Bill through. His colleague, the Minister for Public Works, had had his difficulties in connection with the estimates, and so had the Minister for Lands, and if there had been more money he supposed there would have been greater satis- faction. Motion agreed to, and the House went into Committee of Supply. ## SUPPLY. IN COMMITTEE. SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES. CLASS I .- LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT. Vote, Legislative Council, 28, agreed to. Vote, House of Representatives, \$315, agreed to. Vote, General Expenses, £2,000, agreed to. CLASS II .- COLONIAL SECRETARY'S DEPART- MENT. Electoral Department, £750. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccarton) wanted to know when the Representation Commission was going to be set up. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) said it would be done next year. Mr. R. MCKENZIE (Motucka) asked whether the electoral rolls had been revised since the last election. Sir J. G. WARD (Colonial Secretary) said the ordinary law had been carried out regarding the matter. Vote, \$750, agreed to. Vote, Printing and Stationery Department, £6,250, agreed to. Vote, Public Health Department, £462, agreed to. Vote, Office of Industries and Commerce, €5,010, agreed to. Vote, Tourist and Health Resorts Depart- ment. £6,457, agreed to. Miscellaneous services, £32,722. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) would like some ex- planation of the items, "Entertainment of Admiral and officers of United States warship ' Brooklyn,' \$105 " ; of the item, "Further sum required to meet expenses connected with the Royal visit, \$20,000"; also, " Grant to Right Hon. the Premier for expenses connected with the representation of the colony at the coronation of His Majesty Edward VII., £1,500." Mr. R. MCKENZIE (Motucka) moved, That the item, "Entertainment of Admiral and officers of United States warship ' Brooklyn,' \$105," be struck out. He did not see why this should be charged to the State. Sir J. G. WARD said the " Brooklyn," which had been visiting Australia in connection with the Commonwealth inauguration, had been invited to come on to New Zealand, and as a matter of courtesy to New Zealand she had done so. It was not, therefore, a

private matter, and it was only fitting that the Admirals and officers should be entertained at a public dinner. Mr. Seddon Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccanton) moved that the item, " Federation Commission : \- Additional allowance whilst in Australia to Commissioners who were members of the General Assembly, anything contained in ' The Disqualification Act, 1878,' or ' The Public Revenues Act, 1892,' to the contrary notwithstanding (extra allowance, (442," be struck out : First, because it was in defiance of the Disqualification Act ; and, secondly, . because he did not want a precedent set up. and honourable members would understand that this was a new order of things. He did not raise the question as to what should be paid to Royal Commissioners, but he thought: that whatever was done should be done by an amendment of the Disqualification Act, which the Premier had promised to bring down earlier in the session. Mr. SEDDON said this only provided for the payment of these Commissioners during the days they were in Australia. If the House expected these members to go to Australia and represent this colony in this important position, and mix with the leading men in the Commonwealth, and live there on £1 a day, it was expected what was impossible to do. It was unreasonable, to his mind, to ask these members to be out of pocket while acting in the service of the colony. This course had been followed with the Royal Commissioners who went to Australia before. He knew the House voted \$300 to the Commissioner on the Public Trust Commission ; he knew another case where the House voted £220; and several other cases of a like nature. He was of opinion that the Disqualification Act required amendment in this respect. Mr. HOGG (Masterton) knew something about the other colonies, and thought that the travelling-expenses in New Zealand were quite as great as in Australia. He would not object to the vote if the Government showed a disposition to treat the other Royal Commissioners in the same way. But the fact was that the money could not be legally paid. He did not think the Government was justified in making a special allowance for this Commission, especially when they were not in a position to alter the allowances to Commissioners? all round. Mr. BARCLAY (Dunedin City) said there was a great difference in the matter of expense between travelling in Australia and New Zealand, and that seemed to him to be an extremely good reason why something additional should be granted to the members of this Commission. Mr. FLATMAN (Geraldine) did not approve of this vote being on the estimates, and he voted to strike it out. Any one who went on a Commission knew what pay he would receive when he was appointed, and none of the Commissioners seemed to have raised their voices against their appointments. If they were dissatisfied they should have objected in the first instance. He admitted that it did not pay one to go on a Royal Commission, for, after paying hotel bills out of the allowance, they

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did not receive the wages of an ordinary labourer. Although the amount granted was not sufficient, this was not the proper manner to increase the allowance, and the proposal was practically an evasion of the law. Mr. A. L. D. FRASER (Napier) intended to vote for this amendment if only as a protest against the Government for not having kept the promise to bring down an amendment of the Disqualification Act. He considered the payment of so small an amount was unjust. Mr. TANNER (Avon) said it was clear that at the time the Disqualification Act was passed it was not intended, as far as the matter of pay was concerned, to put members of the House on the same footing on Commissions as experts who were called in to assist in their inquiries. He would be sorry, however, to see the Act amended by the House as it was at present constituted, and in its present temper ; he thought it would be very much to the disadvantage of the country. If any member of the House was invited to serve on a Commission, he knew before he accepted the position exactly what the remuneration would be, and could decide accordingly. He (Mr. Tanner) would vote for the resolution proposed by the honourable member for Riccarton, but without any prejudice on the question, and without sympathy with the feeling, which appeared to be rapidly spreading, that because a particular class of people received £3 3s. a day for their services on a

Commission members of the House ought to be paid more than was at present allowed them by the law. Sir J. G. WARD (Colonial Secretary) said he thought it was only right and fair to some of the members of the Federation Commission that he should state to the House what the conditions were upon which they agreed to take seats on the Commission. It was only fair to say that two of those gentlemen -- Colonel Pitt and Mr. Millar--at first refused to go on the Commission. The Government were desirous, however, of securing their services, and, after considering the matter, it appeared to him (Mr. Ward) that it would be unfair to those gentlemen to ask them to go with the Commission to Australia for \$1 a day. He therefore informed them that, as other members of the Commission were receiving three guineas a day, the Government would undertake to ask the House to make their case a special one, and to authorise that a certain sum should be voted to them. In saying this to the House he did not desire to influence members in any way in their votes. The statement he had made was only due to the two gentlemen he had named, and, with the explanation he had given, he thought the House would ratify the action the Government had taken. Mr. HUTCHESON (Wellington City) admitted that the services of members of the Legislature were as likely to be quite as valuable as the services of any other individual on a Commission. At the same time he contended that, as members of Parliament, they had a duty to the country extending beyond the session of VOL. CXIX .- 80. Parliament, and as members of the House they were expected to make sacrifices in certain directions when called upon to do so. If members, in the face of the Disqualification Act, and in spite of the service they owed to the country throughout the whole term of their membership, came to the House with an ad misericordiam appeal, as in the present instance, it was to his mind a sign that the Legislature was on the down grade. In face of what the Colonial Secretary had stated, it would be a most invidious task for members to strike out the vote, but, nevertheless, if he stood alone he would raise his voice against it. Mr. LAURENSEN (Lyttelton) said he could not approve of this vote. He thought their course was perfectly clear. The law said that any member of Parliament serving on a Commission was to get \$1 a day, and he therefore trusted the House would strike out the vote and carry out the law. Mr. HOGG (Masterton) said the House was being asked to set the law entirely aside, and he contended that there was very little difference in a man taking this money and a man who had put his hand in some one else's pocket. It was an illegal thing, and he hoped members would consult their dignity and respect the law of the land. Mr. R. MCKENZIE (Motueka) said he intended to vote against this item, because the Government had been remiss in their duties. They ought to have brought in a Bill to amend the Disqualification Act, and pass a clause to validate this payment. If this sort of thing went on it would be the duty of the House to go back to the old Public Revenues Act. He was satisfied that the members on this Commission must have been money out of pocket, but that statement would also apply to members of all other Commissions. He would withdraw his amendment, That the item " £105 " be struck out. The Committee divided. AYES, 14. Meredith Hornsby Atkinson Monk. Hutcheson Collins Tellers. Lang Flatman Hogg Fowlds Laurenson Russell, G. W. Herries McKenzie, R. NOES, 23. Allen, E. G. Hall-Jones Symes Tanner Buddo Heke Thompson, R. Lawry Carroll Ward McGowan Colvin Witheford. Mills Duncan Tellers. Palmer Field Barclay Fisher Parata Fraser, A. L. D. Seddon Hall Majority against, 9. Amendment negatived, and item retained. Mr. BUDDO thought the sum of \$32 for encouragement of swimming in schools was inadequate. Sir J. G. WARD said this was to cover a liability incurred last year, being the cost of a number of copies of hand-books and charts

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issued by the Life Saving Society, of England, obtained through the Agent-General, and distributed to schools. Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley) asked, in reference to the item "Grant to the widow of the late Sir John McKenzie, Minister of Lands, \$2,000," whether it was the intention of the Government to hand over the lump sum, or provide an annuity. Mr. SEDDON said the Government would have the matter carefully

gone into, and the House might rest assured that they would do their best and give effect to the wishes of the majority of the House, who in this manner desired to pay a tribute to their late friend and comrade. Mr. HUTCHESON (Wellington City) thought the House should be afforded some particulars about the enormous sum of £20,000 in connection with the Royal visit. Mr. COLLINS (Christchurch City) thought the expenses of the Royal visit had been covered by the amount on the general estimates. Mr. BARCLAY (Dunedin City) said it appeared that the expenses in connection with the Royal visit amounted to \$90,000. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccarton) wished to know something about the Premier's visit to the Coronation. He did not object to the amount set down, because it was far better that a reasonable sum should be named, and there should be no haggling afterwards, and he hoped there would be no future sum referring to the visit. Would the Premier say whether he was to be the sole representative of the colony at the Coronation, with the exception of the Agent-General? Mr. SEDDON said the Government had discussed the matter, and they came to the conclusion that the Premier might be invited to attend the Coronation, and that being so, they considered it their duty to make provision accordingly. He had all along said that he would not again be placed in the position in which he was placed on the occasion of the Jubilee celebrations. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) asked if £1,500 would cover all the expenses in connection with the representation of the colony at the Coronation. Mr. SEDDON. - Yes, it would cover all his expenses. Mr. MASSEY asked the Premier to give some indication as to what course would be adopted in regard to the meeting of Parliament next year. Were they to have a short session? Mr. SEDDON said they would, so far as he saw, follow the usual course, and take the session at the usual time. Mr. ATKINSON (Wellington City) said the £1,500 that appeared on the estimates was too much. It was not so much by \$250 as was voted on the occasion of the Jubilee visit; but at the same time it was \$500 more than any of the Australian Premiers spent on the same occasion, and £1,000 more than was spent by the Premier of Tasmania. Our Premier's expenditure during his stay in England at the Jubilee amounted to some \$20 a day, although champagne and all the other necessities of life were found for him by the Imperial Government at the Hotel Cecil. He failed to see that there would be any more exacting or expensive requirements on this occasion, and he would move, That the item be reduced by £500. He greatly regretted that, amid all our professions of democracy and Liberalism, there was so little regard for democratic simplicity and frugality—that extravagance itself seemed to be regarded as a patriotic virtue when the country had to foot the Bill. Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa) said this was one of those occasions on which honourable members should drop the quasi-personal tone. All understood that the Premiers of the Empire would go to London to the coronation of the King, and he hoped honourable members would see that the New Zealand Premier went Home in the proper way, and that there would be no haggling or miserable huckstering by members of the House when the right honourable gentleman came back, as was the case at the time of the Record Reign celebrations. He hoped the honourable member would withdraw his amendment. If the Cabinet had any intention of extending the representation of the colony beyond the visit of the Premier, he hoped that that would be dealt with now, if possible, so that proper provision could be made, and so avoid any unpleasant remarks about the increased expenditure next session. Mr. HALL - JONES (Minister for Public Works) wished to state, in reference to the Premier's last visit Home, that at his (Mr. Hall-Jones's) request the Premier made inquiries as to the best and most economical way of obtaining the supplies of paper and stationery for the Government Printing Office. As honourable members were aware, a very large quantity was used every year, and the improved arrangements effected a saving of £1,000 per annum, or a total of £3,000 to date. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) said the reason why he did feel sore, when the expenses of his visit Home were being discussed by the House, was that, by one financial transaction alone he saved this colony £10,000. In view, therefore, of what took place on the floor of the House on his return they could understand what his feelings were.

The small matter just mentioned by his colleague and by which £1,000 a year had been saved for four years was outside this other business which he had just referred to. If any representation was asked for, outside of what was contemplated to be covered by this vote, then the Government would have to consider it. Mr. HUTCHESON (Wellington City) said. In the event of the Governor receiving a message from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, expressing the desire of the King to see a contingent of our Native warriors or Volunteers, what would happen would probably be that honourable members would get telegrams asking if they were favourable. In that case he would himself have no opinion to

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cost to the colony would certainly not be £1,500. Mr. BARCLAY (Dunedin City) would like to see arrangements made by which the Native Minister also could go Home, as he thought the Native race should be represented at the Coronation. He hoped when the Premier did go Home he would come back as good a radical as he was now. Mr. R. MCKENZIE (Motueka) had no objection whatever to the amount of the vote for the Premier's visit Home; in fact, he believed for the occasion it was inadequate. The Committee divided on the question, "That the item, Premier's expenses at the King's coronation, £1,500, be reduced by £500." AYES, 4. Tellers. Herries Atkinson Monk. Hutcheson, J. NOES, 28. Millar Allen, E. G. Hall Mills Hall-Jones Barclay Parata Heke Carroll Colvin Symes Hogg Ward Duncan Laurensen Witheford. Lawry Ell Lethbridge Field Tellers. Fraser, A. L. D. McGowan McKenzie, R. Hornsby Fraser, W. Meredith Palmer. Guinness Majority against, 24. Amendment negatived. Vote, £32,722, agreed to. CLASS III. - COLONIAL TREASURER'S DEPARTMENT. Vote, Treasury Department, £10, agreed to. Land- and Income-tax Department, \$150. Mr. HUTCHESON (Wellington City) wished to know the status of the persons compensated for loss of office by these votes. Mr. MILLS (Minister for Trade and Customs) said one had been four years in the service, and the other two years, and both had been compulsorily retired. Vote, £150, agreed to. Vote, Miscellaneous services, £3,144, agreed to. CLASS IV. - JUSTICE DEPARTMENT. Vote, Department of Justice, £25, agreed to. Vote, Crown Law Office, #25, agreed to. Vote, District and Magistrates' Courts, £185, agreed to. Vote, Native Land Court, £45, agreed to. Maori Lands Administration Department, £1,685. Mr. ATKINSON (Wellington City) thought the sum of \$500 for the election of Councils and \$500 for contingencies was a very large sum to be spent on the administration of the Act passed last session. He would like an explanation of how the contingencies were made up. He noticed that in the next vote there was included another \$500 in aid of the cost of administration of Maori Councils. The total Acts was £3,000, which seemed to be an enormous sum for the working of two Acts, of one of which the best to be hoped was that it would remain a dead letter. Mr. MCGOWAN (Minister of Justice) said the operations of the Councils extended over the whole of New Zealand, and therefore it seemed to him this was a very moderate amount, considering the interests involved. Vote, \$1,685, agreed to. Vote, Maori Councils, £1,234, agreed to. Vote, Miscellaneous services, £1,790, agreed to. CLASS V. - POST AND TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT. Vote, Postal and Telegraph salaries, £1,095, agreed to. Vote, Ocean mail-services, £6,951, agreed to. Vote, Carriage of mails by railway, £750, agreed to. Miscellaneous services, £1,335. Mr. R. MCKENZIE wished to call the attention of the Minister to the frequency of frauds in connection with the Post-Office Savings-Bank and Money-order offices in the colony. He thought some better system should be adopted for the prevention of such fraud. In sending money by wire, when the moneys were handed over the counter there was no receipt or acknowledgment of any kind given, nor was there a suitable system of checking. He thought this was offering a premium for fraud, and placing unnecessary temptation before young officers. Sir J. G. WARD (Postmaster-General) said the whole system of sending telegrams throughout the colony was on the stamp system, which the public themselves could use and so prevent abuse. People who sent telegrams had a right to stamp them, and if they took that precaution no fraud could occur. He dissented

entirely from the honourable member's reflection upon the officers of his department as unwarranted, and not in accordance with facts. Vote, £1,335, agreed to. CLASS VI .- CUSTOMS AND MARINE DEPARTMENTS. Vote, Customs Offices and services, £325, agreed to. Customs : Miscellaneous services, £1,165. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) asked for an explanation of the item, "Refund of Customs duty on hat-making machinery, £421." Mr. MILLS (Minister of Customs) said this was a refund on part of certain machinery imported for the purpose of starting a new industry. This was following the usual course. Vote, £1,165, agreed to. Marine and Harbours, \$595. Mr. MILLAR (Dunedin City) asked who was the new officer, Secretary of Marine, \$450 per annum ? Mr. HALL-JONES said the vote was three months' salary for an officer to be Secretary of Marine. No appointment had yet been made.

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the Minister thought the salaries of Inspectors of Machinery were sufficient. Mr. HALL-JONES said that this year they had been gradually increasing some of the lower salaries, and would continue to do so until they reached what was a fair salary. Vote, 4595, agreed to. Vote, Government steamers, £950, agreed to. Marine, miscellaneous services, 9956. Mr. MASSEY wished to know where the wharf in Manukau Harbour, \$100, was to be. Mr. HALL-JONES said it was the Awhitu Wharf. Mr. FOWLDS (Auckland City) asked why the consolidated revenue had to bear the cost of a gratuity to some one in the employment of the Westport Harbour Board. Mr. HALL-JONES said there was no power under the Westport Harbour Act to pay the money, and the department would pay it and deduct it from the money payable to the Harbour Board. Mr. LAURENSEN (Lyttelton) asked why \$250, further compassionate allowance, was being granted to the widow of the late Captain Fairchild. Mr. HALL-JONES said Captain Fairchild was a very old officer, who received at one time a salary of \$700. When he died he was receiving \$450, and his widow got a year and a half's salary. This sum was put on in view of representations made by several members. Mr. R. THOMPSON (Marsden) said it seemed to him the widows of Civil servants in Wellington were treated differently from the widows of Civil servants in other parts of the colony. He thought the system should be uniform. He referred to the case of Mrs. Lanauze, in which case a compassionate allowance was recommended by the Committee, but had not been granted by the Minister. He considered that justice ought to be meted out all round, and to test the feeling of the Committee on the matter he moved, That the item, " Further compassionate allowance to the widow of the late Captain Fairchild, £250," be struck out. Sir J. G. WARD said that Mrs. Fairchild's case was a most deserving one. The Government had so decided after full inquiry into it. Her husband lost his life in the service of the colony, and had been a most faithful, zealous, and valuable officer. He had no doubt, from the facts stated by the honourable member for Avon, the case he referred to—that of Mrs. Lanauze—was also a case that was worthy of consideration. Mr. ELL (Christchurch City) thought it was about time the Government made more generous provision in the case of widows who were left in poor circumstances and with children depending upon them. Mr. TANNER (Avon) said, in the case he had referred to, no claim could be entertained for service or anything of that kind, but a petition was presented to the House and was favourably recommended by the Committee. He understood the matter was brought under the notice compensation, but a fair case for a compassionate grant. No notice, however, had been taken of it. When the petition came before the Committee again this year it was favourably reported upon once more, and he understood a grant was actually placed on the estimates, but had been dropped in the period that elapsed between the compilation and the publication of the estimates. The case he was referring to was that of Mrs. Lanauze. Mr. MILLS (Commissioner of Customs) said the case of Mrs. Lanauze was one that would be looked into. The Cabinet would give full and fair consideration to any claim there might be. Amendment negatived, and vote, £956, agreed to. CLASS VII .- STAMP AND DEEDS DEPARTMENT. Vote, Stamp Department, €212, agreed to. CLASS VIII .- EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT. Vote, Education Department, Head Office. \$50, agreed to. Vote, Public Schools, £337, agreed to. Vote, Industrial Schools, \$15, agreed to. Vote, School for Deaf-mutes, \$56, agreed to. School for Blind, \$24. Mr. COLLINS (Christchurch City) understood a sum would be placed on the supplementary estimates for a fireproof building for the inmates of the Blind Institution in Auckland. That promise had not been fulfilled. Vote, \$24, agreed to. Vote, Miscellaneous services, £3,145, agreed to. CLASS IX .- LUNACY AND CHARITABLE DEPARTMENT. Vote, Lunatic asylums, £50, agreed to. Vote, Charitable, £324, agreed to. CLASS X .- DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR. Vote, Department of Labour, £2,250, agreed to. CLASS XI .- MINES DEPARTMENT. Vote, Miscellaneous services, £4,750, agreed to. CLASS XII .- DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE. Vote, Department of Agriculture, \$533, agreed to. Vote, Miscellaneous services, £4,000, agreed to. CLASS XIII .- WORKING RAILWAYS DEPARTMENT. Vote, Working Railways, £33,352, agreed to. CLASS XIV .- PUBLIC AND SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND DOMAINS. Public buildings, \$1,050. Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa) moved. Thx the item, "Fuel, light, water, &c., Government Houses. \$50," be struck out. Mr. HALL-JONES said this was an item that had always been charged against the colony, and had always been paid by the colony, and His Excellency the Governor was

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decessor. In fact, it was part of the arrangement. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccarton) pointed out that on the main estimates \$350 had been passed for this very purpose. The Committee divided on the question, "That the item be struck out." AYES, 17. Hall Symes Atkinson Hutcheson Barclay Tanner Laurenson Thompson, R. Buddo McKenzie, R. Collins Tellers. Meredith Hornsby Ell Russell, G. W. Millar Guinness NOES, 16. Rhodes Allen, E. G. Heke Carroll Ward. Kaibau Lawry Duncan Field McGowan Tellers. Fraser, A. L. D. Mills Colvin Palmer Hall-Jones Parata Majority for, 1. Item, £50, struck out. Vote as amended agreed to. CLASS XV .- DEFENCE DEPARTMENT. Vote, Defence Department, £180, agreed to. Vote, Stores and Magazines, £193, agreed to. Miscellaneous services, \$4,054. Mr. HUTCHESON (Wellington City) asked for particulars about the steamer "Nile," which had been purchased recently in 6.0. Auckland. Mr. HALL-JONES said this vessel had been purchased in connection with the defence-works in Auckland. Hitherto they had been hiring a boat to carry stores, et cetera. The "Nile" had been reported on by the engineer-surveyor before being purchased, and it was considered a good purchase for the colony. Vote, £4,054, agreed to. CLASS XVI .- POLICE DEPARTMENT. Vote, Police Department, £270, agreed to. Miscellaneous services, £338. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccarton) asked for an explanation of the circumstances under which \$55 was set down as a further allowance to ex-Constable Patrick McGill. Mr. McGOWAN (Minister of Justice) could not remember the circumstances now. This was a further allowance given for injuries received while in the service. Mr. SYMES (Egmont) said, In reference to the £183 set down as compensation to Daniel Hannan, ex-sergeant of police, this sergeant petitioned the House some few sessions ago, and the Committee had no recommendation to make. Mr. McGOWAN believed the petition was referred to the Government. Mr. SYMES had a very distinct recollection of sitting on the Committee, and he thought there was no recommendation. Unless there Buddo was a better answer forthcoming he would move to strike this item out. the Government as a necessitous case. Mr. ATKINSON (Wellington City) said that the member for Riccarton had referred to ex-Constable Patrick McGill as having been some time out of the Force, but, if he was not mistaken, the man had been out of the Force more than once. Colonel Hume submitted to the Police Commission a report from Sergeant McDonald to the effect that this man was drunk while on duty at a racecourse. He was accordingly dismissed by the Commissioner in November, 1890. The Commissioner then had power to act on his own initiative ; but a new Minister. of Defence, Mr. Seddon, came into office in January, 1891, and one of the first of his administrative acts was to reinstate the drunken officer. Mr.

McGOWAN said he was not able at the moment to give the information asked for. But, at any rate, this ex-Constable McGill was a very old officer, and it was under a strong recommendation that the sum had been placed on the estimates. Mr. ATKINSON (Wellington City) would move, That the item, " £55," be struck out. Mr. SYMES (Egmont) said, in reference to Daniel Hannan, ex-sergeant of police, for whom there was \$183 put down as compensation for loss of office, that officer had several black marks recorded against him, and it had been proved that he was connected with some business that no police officer ought to have been mixed up in. If he was entitled to it at all, the amount should have been put on the estimates some years ago. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) said this sum of £55 was put down as an allowance for Constable McGill as he did not get his full compensation on retirement. He had been many years in the service, and it was believed he ought to have got his full compensation, and this was the balance of the money due. As to Constable Hannan, that officer was not mixed up with anything at all. The transaction upon which he was called upon to resign was some business transaction, altogether unconnected with his duties as a police officer. There had been no black mark against him. Mr. SYMES moved to strike out the item, " Compensation for loss of office to Daniel Hannan. ex-sergeant of police, \$183." Constable Hannan had already petitioned the House, and the Public Petitions Committee had reported against him. The Committee divided on the question, "That the item, ' Compensation to ex-Sergeant Daniel Hannan, £183,' be struck out." AYES, 11. Barclay Laurensen Tanner. Meredith Ell Tellers. Rhodes Hornsby Atkinson Russell, G. W. Symes. Hutcheson NOES, 18. Allen, E. G. Duncan Hall Fraser, A. L. D. Hall-Jones Colvin Guinness Heke

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Tellers. Parata Kaihau Field Seddon Lawry Palmer. Ward. McGowan Mills Majority against, 7. Item retained. The Committee divided on the question, " That the item, ' Further allowance to ex-Constable Patrick McGill, \$55,' be struck out." AYES 9. Rhodes Tellers. Barclay Atkinson Symes Ell Tanner. Hutcheson. Hornsby Meredith NOES, 18. Parata Heke Buddo Seddon Kaihau Carroll Ward. Lawry Colvin Tellers. McGowan Duncan Allen, E. G. Mills Field Fraser, A. L. D. Palmer Hall Hall-Jones Majority against, 9. Item retained, and vote, £338, agreed to. CLASS XVII .- DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEY. Vote, Department of Lands and Survey, £235, agreed to. Vote, Miscellaneous services, £4,326, agreed to. CLASS XVIII .- VALUATION DEPARTMENT. Vote, Valuation expenses, £67, agreed to. GOVERNMENT LIFE INSURANCE DEPARTMENT. Vote, Salaries, £25, agreed to. Vote, Government Accident Insurance Department, £390, agreed to. Vote, Contingencies, £4,000, agreed to. PUBLIC TRUST OFFICE. Vote, Public Trust Office, £55, agreed to. GOVERNMENT ADVANCES TO SETTLERS OFFICE. Vote, Government Advances to Settlers Office, £400, agreed to. PUBLIC WORKS FUND. CLASS XX .- PUBLIC WORKS, DEPARTMENTAL. Vote, Public Works, Departmental, £2,885, agreed to. CLASS XXI .- RAILWAYS. Vote, Railways, £525, agreed to. Additions to open lines, \$125,000. Mr. BUDDO (Kaiapoi) desired to call attention to the unsafe and unsatisfactory condition of the Kaiapoi Railway-station, and he urged that more accommodation should be provided. Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley) said the Kaiapoi Railway-station and the arrangements for shunting were a menace to the lives of people travelling there, and it was surprising that accidents had not occurred. The station-building was small and unsuitable. Sir J. G. WARD said he would be very glad to give consideration to the representations of the member for Kaiapoi and the member for Ashley ; but he could not promise anything definite at present. His action was necessarily governed by the moneys available for the department. Vote, £125,000, agreed to. CLASS XXII .- PUBLIC BUILDINGS. Vote, Postal and Telegraph, £1,490, agreed to. School buildings, \$6,000. Mr. BUDDO (Christchurch City) desired to know if the Cabinet had agreed to allow the Board at Christchurch to sell the site for a technical school, with a view of acquiring a more central site. Mr. HALL-JONES regretted to say that nothing yet had been done in connection with this

matter, but he might say he quite agreed with the honourable member on the view he took on the subject. Vote, £6,000, agreed to. CLASS XXIII .- Lighthouses, Harbour- Works, ETC. Vote, Lighthouses, £500, agreed to. Vote, Harbour-works, £350, agreed to. CLASS XXIV .- TOURIST AND HEALTH RESORTS. Vote, Tourist and health resorts, £3,400, agreed to. CLASS XXVI .- CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE, AND SUPERVISION OF ROADS, BRIDGES, AND OTHER PUBLIC WORKS. Vote, Roads, £37,643, agreed to. Vote, Roads on goldfields, £783, agreed to. UNAUTHORISED EXPENDITURE. CONSOLIDATED FUND. Vote, For services not provided for, £26,367 18s. 6d., agreed to. Vote, For services in excess of votes, £62,788 3s. 2d. PUBLIC WORKS FUND. Vote, For services not provided for. Er), agreed to. Vote, For services in excess of votes, £17,468 3s. 7d., agreed to. LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS ACCOUNT. Vote, For services in excess of votes. 5334 18s. 1d., agreed to. GOVERNMENT LIFE INSURANCE DEPARTMENT. Vote, For services not provided for, 5327 9s. 6d., agreed to. Sums irrecoverable by the Crown required to be written off departmental accounts, \$25 4s. j .. agreed to. Resolutions reported. Mr. SEDDON moved, That the item. f. "Fuel, light, &c., Government Houses." be restored. The money had already been paid. Mr. BUDDO (Kaiapoi) said he would oppose the motion, but he thought reasonable economy should be observed. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccarton) stated to the Premier that the principal objection to

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of what had already appeared in the main estimates. Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley) protested against what he considered to be an excessive amount paid to the Governor during the present session of Parliament. He was, however, not prepared to offer any further opposition to the item being restored if that was the wish of the House. Mr. HUTCHESON (Wellington City) said he also voted for the excision of this item, and the vote was the strongest indication the House could give of its objection to the most unseemly and lavish expenditure of money that had taken place during the past year. If he thought he could do the slightest good he would call for a division against the motion to recommit. Mr. ATKINSON (Wellington City) said that he put the question to the Minister in charge of the item-it was not the Premier-whether this amount of \$50 was not, as being in excess of the amount fixed by statute for the Governor's allowance, illegal but for the Public Revenues Act of last session. He was of opinion, also, that, as it was increasing the Governor's emoluments, the Appropriation Bill would require to be reserved for the Royal assent if that item was not struck out ; so that it appeared to him that honourable members were simplifying the Premier's position by striking the item out. Mr. HALL-JONES said he pointed out in Committee on this vote that since the time there was a Governor in New Zealand this item had always been borne by the colony. It was part of the contract entered into by the colony with the Governor, and therefore the colony should carry it out. The late Auditor-General used to pass the amount when voted on the estimates in the usual way; but the present Auditor-General would not do so without a vote on the estimates specially indicating that it was in excess of the Governor's Salary and Allowances Act. On the motion to consider the resolutions reported from Committee of Supply, Mr. SEDDON moved, That the item, £50, Government Houses, struck off the vote of £1,050 for public buildings, be restored. Motion agreed to. Resolutions agreed to. PUBLIC WORKS BILL. A message was received from the Legislative Council to the effect that the Council had passed this Bill with certain amendments. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) moved, That the amendments be disagreed with, and that Mr. Field, Mr. Barclay, and himself be appointed Managers to draw up reasons for so disagreeing. Motion agreed to. Subsequently, Mr. SEDDON brought up the following reasons assigned by the House for disagreeing with the amendments made by the Legislative Council in this Bill :- "1. That the Bill is intended to remedy great loss, inconvenience, and hardship which is being suffered by numbers of property owners ' The Public Works Acts Amendment Act, 1900'; and also to prevent the unsightly appearance which streets will present if that section remains unaltered.

"2. That the amendments of the Legislative Council, if agreed to, would result in the continuance of the evils above referred to." He moved, That the reasons be agreed to. Reasons agreed to. Subsequently, a message was received from the Legislative Council, forwarding the following reasons for insisting on the Council's amendment in this Bill :- "The proviso struck out would, if passed, throw additional expense on the local authority in connection with the widening of streets." Mr. SEDDON moved, That the House do not insist on its disagreement with the amendment made by the Legislative Council. Mr. ATKINSON (Wellington City) said he thought the proviso which had been struck out was the only part of the Bill which was of any use. He would sooner see the Bill hung up altogether than see it passed without the proviso. Motion agreed to. APPROPRIATION BILL. This Bill was read a first time. On the question, That the Bill be read a second times, Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley) said, - Sir, I desire to take advantage of the present opportunity, as it is the only opportunity I shall have before the session closes, to read to the House . correspondence which passed between myself and the Assets Realisation Board in reference to an offer I made to purchase a portion of the Glentui Estate. I do not intend to take longer than I possibly can in placing the matter before the House and the country. It is not my intention in this speech to go into the question. What I intend doing is to read the correspondence. During the last week I wrote to the General Manager of the Assets Board, and I have obtained from him copies of all letters written by me to the Board, and of all letters written by the Board to me. The correspondence between myself and the Board was as follows :- "Wellington, 30th October, 1901. "SIR,-Copies of my letters addressed to you in 1898, re an offer to purchase a portion of the Glentui Estate, having been destroyed by fire in May last, will you be good enough to give me copies of the said letters ?- Yours, &c., "R. MEREDITH. "The Manager, Assets Realisation Board, Wellington." " Assets Realisation Board, Wellington, 1st November, 1901. "DEAR SIR,-I am in receipt of your favour of 30th ultimo, and in response to request therein have pleasure in enclosing copies of letters received from you in the connection .- Yours truly, " WALTER G. FOSTER, General Manager. "R. Meredith, Esq., M.H.R., Wellington."

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" SIR, - I have to thank you for copies of my letters addressed to your Board during the year 1898. Will you be good enough to forward me, not later than Wednesday evening next, copies of your letters to me in reply to my letters of 1898 ?- Yours faithfully, "R. MEREDITH. "The Manager, Assets Realisation Board, Wellington." " Assets Realisation Board, Wellington, 5th November, 1901. "DEAR SIR, -As requested in your letter of yesterday's date, we enclose copies of our letters to you, dated 26th April, 1898; 19th May, 1898 ; and 3rd June, 1898 .- Yours faithfully, "W. C. CUFF, Pro General Manager. " R. Meredith, Esq., M.H.R., Wellington." "Tullamore, Springbank, 8th April, 1898. " SIR,-Will you be good enough to inform me if your Board will sell me from 500 acres to 1,500 acres of the Glentui Run, partly pastoral and partly agricultural? I am aware that towards the close of last session of Parliament you signified your intention of having the Glentui property cut up and offered for sale by November of the present year ; I therefore anticipate your subdivision by approaching your Board at the present time. Please give me full particulars as to locality, acreage, price, &c .- Yours faithfully, "R. MEREDITH. "The Chairman, Assets Realisation Board, Wellington." " Assets Realisation Board, Wellington, 26th April, 1898. " DEAR SIR,-Glentui Estate : I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, in reference to the purchase of portion of the above estate. We are quite willing and are desirous to sell, but at the present time the difficulty is that we have temporary license over the leasehold only, the time of which expires very shortly. As long as we hold that pastoral country we need the whole of our freehold in case of bad winters. Still, I should be sorry to miss a chance of a purchaser, and if you will point out to us the country you require we will, if possible, endeavour to meet your wishes .- Yours faithfully, "WALTER G. FOSTER, General Manager. "R. Meredith, Esq., Tullamore, Springbank." "Tullamore, Springbank,

12th May, 1898. "DEAR SIR,-In reply to yours of the 26th ultimo, re the purchase of a portion of the Glentui Estate, I regret that I was in the most distant portion of my electorate when your letter reached my address. " We (myself and son) have been this day at Glentui, and went over a considerable portion of the freehold, and have decided to apply to you for that portion of the estate extending from the Ashley Gorge Bridge, and bounded on the north by the main road, at the east by the road running from the said main road to I you 25 per cent. cash, balance in three years, at Mr. Meredith by the River Ashley, containing about 500 acres, and marked on the enclosed plan, " No. 1A," in red. This block has had some surface-sowing of cocksfoot, varies very much in quality, being patchy ; some fair land, including about 40 acres of swamp, with stony flats containing large boulders predominating, largely covered with gorse, broom, and couch ; all the fences out of repair ; purely sheep country. We also apply for 500 acres, or any less portion, to the east of the road forming the eastern boundary of Block 1. This block varies very much in quality, from swamp land to light stony land, and is not improved other than a few drains in the swamp, and the fences being in fair condi- tion. There is a small whare on Block No. 1. No buildings whatever on Block 11. Block 11 does not include any of the English-grass pad- docks. So far as I could judge, not any of the land I am applying for has ever been broken up. I enclose you my map, as it enables me to define what I want. " Will you now be good enough, as you have given me the hope you will offer me the land, to state the value you place on the land, and the terms and conditions on which you are pre- pared to sell? This land would suit me, as my home is situated only a few miles from the place, and I could work it for sheep in conjunc- tion with my agricultural homestead. " If convenient to you, or to one of the mem- bers of your Board, I would suggest, in case you are not conversant with the land in ques- tion, instead of leaving the valuation to an out- sider you might come and see the property yourself, and I would arrange, if necessary or desirable, to meet you .- Yours truly, " R. MEREDITH. " W. G. Foster, Esq., General Manager, Assets Realisation Board, Wellington." " Christchurch, 19th May, 1898. "DEAR SIR,-I am in receipt of your letter of 12th, and am intending to bring the matter before my Board at next meeting, with a view of fixing reserves in the various portions of the estate. " We are having many inquirers for farms on the Glentui, and it may be that the Board will decide to adhere to its usual practice of first offering by auction. I will, however, give you early advice in reply to your inquiries .- Yours faithfully, "WALTER G. FOSTER, General Manager, Assets Realisation Board, Wellington. "R. Meredith, Esq., M.H.R., Springbank." "Tullamore, Springbank, 28th May, 1898. "SIR,-Re Glentui Freehold : In reference to my former letter applying for about 1,000 acres of the Glentui freehold, and your reply to the said letter, I may state that I am now pre- pared to make you a definite offer for the land as described by me in my former application to purchase. I will give you the Government valuation with 5 per cent. added ; I will pay

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me an answer by Friday, the 3rd June next, by letter, or by wire addressed to Rangiora for me. I have another property in view in case you are not willing to negotiate with me .- Yours faithfully, "R. MEREDITH. "The Manager, Assets Realisation Board, Wellington." " Assets Realisation Board, Wellington, 3rd June, 1898. "DEAR SIR, - Glentui Estate : I have brought the matter of the sale of this property before my Board, and am instructed to inform appli- cants that it will be surveyed at an early date, and offered by auction about November next. I thank you for your inquiries and offer, but, understanding you have expressed a wish that the public should have an opportunity of pur- chasing at auction, the Board has not been unmindful of your views .- Yours faithfully, " WALTER G. FOSTER, General Manager. "R. Meredith, Esq., Springbank." I have now read the correspondence which passed between me and the Assets Board. I addressed three letters to the Board, and re- ceived from the Board three replies. A portion of the land in question was sold on the 17th November, 1898, seven months after I had written these letters, and the rest on the 21st December, 1899. I now give the lots, acreage, price

per acre, and names of purchasers :- Sale of Glentui Estate, at Oxford, by Messrs. Ford and Ingram. Name of Price per Lot. Area. Purchaser. Acre. #cc-zero Sold on 17th November, 1898. £ d. A. R. P. S. 10 James White. 2:21 2 0 1 0 283 James Judson. 3 5 17 G 1 0 110 0 36 R. H. Parish. 5 8 2 6 7 12 5A 153 3 13 6 J. Judson. 250 3 18 6 3 G 7 P. Rvan. 212 0 32 7 7 5 0 R. Blunden. 180 8 5 2 1 6 R. Henderson. 280 3 31 9 5 15 0 Sold on 21st December, 1899. W. Brock. 7 2 15 0 44 0 1 165 H. Meyer. 6 2 3 5 0 4 J. O'Halloran. 238 0 10 0 0 9 10 6 0 20 305 6 2 11 W. Berry. 5 12 0 3 0 305 8 James Rudd. 0 0 6 0 13 242 0 J. O'Halloran. 14 0 1,300 0 3 10 0 15 329 4 10 3 16 0 Dohrman Bros. 16 575 0 1 10 0 0 17 746 0 0 2 0 0 W. Vincent. 18 364 0 2 7 0 4 936 0 20 1 15 19 0 The following were the terms :- " Five per cent. of purchase-money on fall of hammer ; 10 per cent. to be paid on 28th Feb- February, 1903 ; balance to be paid 28th Feb- ruary, 1905; interest meantime at 4} per cent. per annum." Clause 12 of "The Valuation of Land Act, 1896," gives the conditions under which the Government, under the Land for Settlements Act, have power to purchase. It says,- " In any case where land is taken or acquired under the provisions of 'The Land for Settle- ments Act, 1894,' the sum to be offered by the Minister shall be a sum not less than the valuation of the land appearing on the general valuation-roll, and if such offer is not accepted by the owner, then the compensation payable shall, in the case of lands acquired or taken under 'The Land for Settlements Act, 1894,' be ascertained by the Court and in the manner prescribed by that Act, and, in the case of lands acquired or taken under 'The Public Works Act, 1894,' by the Court and in the manner prescribed by that Act." Sir, I have now given the whole of the correspondence that passed between me and the Assets Board. Honourable members will notice at once that I did not offer to pur- chase fifteen hundred acres. I had not copies of these letters by me last week when this question came up before the House, as all my manuscript papers were destroyed in a fire which destroyed my dwellinghouse on the 5th May last. I had to get copies of my corre- spondence from the Assets Board. Honourable members will notice that I applied for not more than a thousand acres-one block of five hundred acres, and a second for five hundred acres or any less quantity. As the question was gone into on a previous occasion, I do not think it desirable to say anything more. I have read the correspondence, which will go into Hansard, and will place the case before the country. I regret what took place on Thursday last in the House, in consequence of the Premier making the statement which I felt it my duty to flatly contradict. I have been eleven years in the House, and desired to maintain the dignity and high character that has always been characteristic of our Par- liament, and I regret the circumstance on that account, and on that account only. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccarton) .- Honour- able members, I have no doubt, feel at the pre- sent time like persons at the end of a long voyage, who at last come within sight of their destination. We have had a long voyage of nineteen weeks, and are now about to arrive at our destination. I think it will not be in- appropriate that some references should be made to what are the outstanding features of the session which is now drawing to a close. I think that honourable members and the country will recognise that the most important thing that has happened in connection with this session has been the criticism with regard to the financial position of the colony, and it is that to which I desire briefly first to refer. Last March, in the speech which I delivered at Riccarton, I referred to the increase of the ex- penditure which was going on, and I pointed

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of the colonial finances, the result being that the expenditure was increasing to an alarming extent. During the session the facts have all gone to prove that what I said was really the case. A few days ago the quarterly returns for the September quarter were published, and they throw a ghastly light upon the weak financial condition of the colony at present as compared with what it was only a year ago. During the six months ending 30th September there was an increase in the revenues of the colony amounting to £111,762. That, Sir, is an import- ant item, because it indicates that the colony is in a prosperous

condition. No one would deny that that is the case. I have no idea of throwing any doubt upon the splendid prosperity which the colony enjoys. I am not prepared to say it will continue, because there is a heavy shrinkage in the value of our wool, which is one of the staple products of the colony, and that is bound to tell later in the financial year, although, as it has not probably come to account yet, it is not felt by the people of the colony. Up to the present they are, I presume, living upon the advances made a year ago. It is only when the present wool season is completed that the position will be fully realised. But, Sir, turning now to the expenditure, I find that the expenditure is £328,000 for the half-year in excess of what it was during the same period of the previous financial year, and this is bound to tell its tale upon the colonial finances. The increase of revenue of £111,000 is thus swallowed up twice over. Your revenues are increasing only by 7.30. £111,000 per half-year, while your expenditure is increasing by £328,000. However you may be able to stave off the evil day, the time will come when the Treasurer will find himself-I will not say in difficulties, but attacked by anxieties which in this colony there should be no need for. Now, judging from the Public Accounts, one would think we are not very far off that condition now. The Treasurer started the financial year with cash in the Public Account to the amount of £522,000. By the end of the first quarter that £522,000 had disappeared, and he found himself with a debit balance on the Public Account of \$96,849. At the close of the September quarter the debit balance had been paid off, but the Treasurer found himself with only £5,348 in cash in the Public Account, as against £317,662 at the same date of the previous year. Again, although the old-age pension payments must during the half-year have amounted to at least \$100,000, only £43,230 has been brought to account during the whole of the half-year, the remainder of the £60,000 unexpended being presumably represented as advances in the hands of officers of the Government which are recorded in the statement. I do not know that it is necessary I should refer in detail to the increase of expenditure shown in connection with the public service of the colony during the half-year just ended as compared with the same period of the previous year, but some of them are as follows: Colonial Secretary, £42,102; Post- Mr. G. W. Russell Defence, £52,540 ; Agriculture, £13,750. Those which I have stated total altogether somewhere about \$221,000 for those five departments of the public service. In addition to the points I have referred to, there is one item which requires explanation in connection with the Deposit Account. The Imperial Government deposited in the hands of the Government during the September quarter \$24,422 as balances due to the Fourth and Fifth South African Contingents. Those troops returned to New Zealand on the 10th July, but down to the 30th September, according to the Public Accounts, the sum of only £269 had been paid to the men. I think that was surely a very striking comment upon the praise that had been given to our noble young men who had gone and served the Empire and our country in South Africa, more especially when the money was really deposited in the hands of the Government by the Imperial authorities to pay them. I would point out also that during the quarter ended the 30th September, 1901, the Treasury bills in support of revenue were no less than £120,000 more than they were for the same period of the previous year. This session there have been several important developments in connection with the colony. One that has been condemned, and justly so, has been the enormous growth of the defence expenditure. A few years ago, before the South African war broke out, the colony set about, in a businesslike way and according to our means, the extension and improvement of our defences; but we recognised we were a young country, and that our ambition should be that of colonisation rather than that of aping the extravagances of a semi-military Power. I have heard the Premier, before he made his visit to England-and I have admired him for it -state that roads and bridges were more important in this country than expensive defences. Well, the world is changing in some respects, and no doubt the defences should be improved compared with what they were & number of years ago; but when I see the tremendous growth of our defence expenditure I cannot help feeling some alarm and sorrow. During this session £213,000 has been passed on the consolidated estimates for defence, and in connection with the

public-works estimates another £180,000, making a total of \$393.000: and I do not think that covers the whole of the defence expenditure. We see in the City of Wellington evidence that the military spirit is taking an undue and imprudent hold upon the community, and the Government are fanning this to an extent that I think is undesirable. The result will be that the colony will be compelled in time to insist upon military expenditure being reduced to something like a normal level. Let us by all means assist our Volunteers, and let our youths be trained; let us provide them with the best and latest weapons: but there is a tendency, which I regard as most unfortunate, to create something like a military caste in the colony, and to regard men who devote themselves to

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colony than those who devote themselves to the peaceful arts of colonisation and the development of the colony. I desire to draw attention to the large amount of money spent by the Minister for Railways on rolling-stock. I have no doubt he believes the increase is necessary; but when we find £576,000 on the public-works estimates voted for increased rolling-stock, and that we have now passed another £25,000 on the supplementary estimates for the same purpose, I cannot but express my regret that so large a portion of this rolling-stock has been imported from outside, instead of being made in the colony. And I express still greater disappointment at the fact that throughout the whole of this session there has been no declaration that the Government propose to spend any part of the money given to them for additions to open lines in extending the workshops in our own colony and increasing the plant, so that the Government workshops may be able to take up a large part of the work of constructing rolling-stock in the colony. I trust that before the session closes the Minister for Railways will be able to indicate that the Government have not forgotten this. I trust that the Government is not likely in the course of another year or two to find that further large importations of rolling-stock will be necessary to meet the growing traffic of the railway system. One matter to which I wish to refer is that this year the Workers' Compensation Act has not been amended and extended to agricultural labourers. The Right Hon. the Premier gave, I will say, a qualified promise last session that the legislation that might be introduced by the Imperial Government would be placed on the statute-book of this colony. I regret that the session closes without any amendment to the Workers' Compensation Act, so that the farmers of the colony have no means of knowing now, except by appeal to the legal tribunals, whether they are or are not under the provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act. My opinion is that the Premier in that matter made a mistake. The farmers of the colony are not averse to being brought under the provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act. I believe the agricultural labourers desire this should be done, and I regard it as unfair and illogical that, while the labour laws apply to the whole of the artisans in the cities, the workers on the farms of the colony should be debarred from the privilege of the protection that is given by the Workers' Compensation Act. If I am told in reply that they are already under the provisions of that Act, then I say it is to be regretted that some distinct pronouncement of that nature has not been made; and, at any rate, no harm could possibly have been done had the Government introduced the English Act, which I quoted in a speech delivered the other day on the matter, because in that case the precedents of the English Courts would have been available for the assistance of our own tribunals in settling the question. Sir, the Crown Tenants' Rebate Bill, which was to have been amended by the Government during the last session. No amendment has been made to that obnoxious and iniquitous measure, which has caused more dissatisfaction among the Crown tenants of the colony than any measure placed on our statute-book for some years past. The administration of that Act has been faulty in the extreme. The Government have laid down no line of interpretation for the Receivers of Land Revenue. The result is that in different land districts of the colony the law is differently interpreted, and the effect is that there is no finality as far as the rebate is concerned. But I have a still greater complaint against the Government in connection with the settlers throughout the

colony. In the course of the Financial Statement, under the heading of "Crown Tenants' Rebate of Rents," the Treasurer said, - " Last session the Rebate of Crown Tenants Act was passed. Its working has not been satisfactory, or equitable in its incidence. An amendment of the Act is necessary, and at this juncture it is well to speak plainly, for from facts which have come within my own knowledge it is quite clear that a person taking up bush land, and having little or no capital, cannot pay rent until the land yields a return. There are practically no returns for two years. By that time two years' rent are in arrear, and the yield is not sufficient to maintain the settler and his family. Another two years pass over, and still find him behind in payment of his rent, or, if he has paid the rent, he has probably had to borrow the money for that purpose. Under these circumstances it is much better that the State should insist upon the improvement conditions being strictly complied with, and allow the tenant to sit rent-free for the first four or five years. After that time the tenant would be in a position to pay the rent, and the anxiety and worry caused under the conditions now existing would be avoided. There is also another point worthy of being taken into consideration - namely, that, although there is a large area of Crown land available for settlement, most of it is inaccessible, and situated a long way from the centres of population, and is not of extra good quality ; therefore some inducement is necessary, which, if given, will tend to promote settlement of the people on our Crown lands, and relieve the existing congestion among those who prefer to go upon the lands acquired under the Land for Settlements Act, thus avoiding the hardships which fall to the lot of the pioneer or back-block settler." Sir, there was a great deal of truth in those remarks of the Treasurer, and it is to be regretted that the session closes without the benefit being given to the back-block settlers of the concessions promised several months ago by him in the Financial Statement, delivered so long ago as the 16th August. And why has that concession not been given ? The Government brought down a Bill to give that concession to the back-block settlers. We have the Bill before us ; but it is not passed. Why ? | I do not desire to peer into Ministerial secrets

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to ascertain why so important a measure has been kept to the dying hours of the session. The Bill, which was promised as far back as the 16th August, only made its appearance before us yesterday, and the Government have not been able to pass it because of want of time in the concluding hours of the session. I leave the Government to explain why, with that paragraph in the Financial Statement, they continue the Crown Tenants' Rebate Act, which they state themselves has not worked in a satisfactory or equitable manner. Sir, I leave them to explain why the back-block settlers are to be left for another year without any relief from the troubles the right honourable gentleman detailed. Another paragraph in the Speech from the Throne dealt with the Land for Settlements Act and the earth-hunger that was experienced. That earth-hunger still continues, but for some reason the Government is unable to keep pace with the demand for land-settlement. Instead of that, we have a number of small sections purchased by the Government as workmen's homes, village and hamlet settlements, which in some cases are not applied for by the public, who apparently do not want land in these small holdings ; whilst the larger class of sections, which would provide reasonable-sized homes for men who desire to start as farmers for themselves, are not being purchased to the extent by the Government they should be. I congratulate the Government on one important development of policy during the present session. I refer to the Bill passed for opening State coal mines. I believe the effect of that will be to open a new line for industrial development for the colony, and will show that New Zealand in this matter is keeping pace with the progressive spirit of its population; and I believe also it will have the effect of lowering the present extortionate and unreasonable price of coal. One very important matter that has come before the Parliament is the action of the Government in proposing to grant £442, in defiance of the provisions of the Disqualification Act, for the purpose of rewarding the Federation Commissioners who were members of

Parliament during their absence from New Zealand. I notice clause 22 of the Appropriation Bill is intended to deal with the matter. There is here an important difference in the clause from the explanation that was given by the Right Hon. the Premier in Committee of Supply when this vote was being taken. In Committee of Supply the Premier stated that the computation upon which this sum of £442 -which I will parenthetically remark represents £88 8s. to each of the five Federal Commissioners who were members of Parliament - I say the Premier stated that that sum was intended to provide them with two guineas per day during the time they were in Australia; but that statement is not supported by the clause that is in the Bill now before the House. This clause contemplates the payment of £1 2s. per day for the Commissioners for the whole of the time they were engaged in connection with the Commission. Mr G. W. Russell Mr. SEDDON .- No. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- Then, all I can say is you will have to amend the Bill if that is not the case. The members of the Commission who were not members of Parliament were paid the sum of \$3 3s. per day for their services \-. during the whole time. According to the payments under the Disqualification Act, as commuted by the more recent Act, members of the House were paid only £1 per day for their expenses ; but the Government apparently have made up their minds to take a new departure, which seems to imply this extraordinary position : that, while the members of the Federation Commission are to be paid £3 2s. during the whole of the time they were employed in Australia on the Commission, the members of the Rivers Commission, the Coal-mines Commission, the Teachers' Salaries Commission, and the Midland Railway Commission all of which, with the exception of the Coal-mines Commission, had members of Parliament as members of those Commissions-are to be paid only £1 per day for their expenses. This is a distinction that has no business to exist, and it is improper that such a distinction should have been made by the Government. If any alteration is required, that alteration should be made by an amendment of the Disqualification Act. I do not say that members of Parliament should receive only £1 per day when on Commissions. I think, myself, that that small payment entails an unreasonable sacrifice on the part of members of Parliament who accept positions on Royal Commissions ; but I say that everything that is done should be done according to the law, and if the law stands in the way the law should be altered. I do not desire to detain honourable members any longer, but I have thought it desirable to express these opinions in connection with the closing hours of the session. I believe that the session will in some respects be regarded as historical, from the fact that it has been the one in which the State Coal-mines Act has been passed. I believe also the free criticism that has been indulged in by members on this side of the House has shown the Government that, while there is no organized Opposition, members of the House are alive to a sense of duty, and that party ties have not the same hold on them as existed in days past. We have to realise that we are not sent here merely as party marionettes, but that we have a duty to perform to the country ; and I believe that the more free and outspoken our criticism is the better it is for the colony. I have to thank honourable members for the courtesy with which they have listened to me after the long sitting of the House, which has now nearly come to an end. Sir J. G. WARD (Minister for Railways) .- The honourable member has given us what he calls the outstanding features in connection with this session, and he commenced by saying that he would speak in connection with the financial position of the colony, and he indulged in some criticism concerning it. The honourable member referred to a speech which he

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he then indicated that the increased expenditure of the colony was alarming, and he then prophesied a deficit, I think, of \$400,000. His predictions were completely falsified, as, instead of a deficit, we had a surplus of £532,564 at the close of the 31st March last. The actual surplus for the year itself was \$427,213. The difference between the revenue, 55,906,916, and the expenditure, \$5,479,703, and the balance remaining after transferring \$500,000 to the Public Works Fund from the previous year of

\$105,351 added to the year's balance of \$427,213 gave us the surplus of \$532,564 to begin the financial year with. What is the honourable gentleman's criticism as regards the financial position of the colony ? No one denies that the expenditure has gone up. That the departmental expenditure has increased is admitted ; but where it is possible for the Government to keep down the departmental expenditure and the growth of ordinary expenditure it is the duty of the Government to do so. We are fully alive to that. But when considering the expenditure of the colony as a whole you must, as a matter of fairness, take into account whether that expenditure is normal or non-recurrent ; and you should also consider the position of the revenue of the colony to ascertain whether the barometer is fair to medium, or is rising or falling. You should see whether the increase in the revenue is normal also. What did the honourable member say? While he said the quarterly returns presented a ghastly light, he said the increase in the expenditure was \$328,000 for the half year ; but he either forgot or would not say that a great portion of that was non-recurrent. The honourable member then went on to admit what there is no gainsaying—that the colony was prosperous ; and then, owing to the present value of wool, he predicted a possible fall in the revenue and a reverse of the prosperous state of affairs, and that bad times might come to the colony. Ever since I have been in the House there has always been some startling prediction of that kind ; our prices for the staple products vary ; one year it has been in connection with wool, another year frozen meat is on the downward path, or our grain, or our butter and cheese. But, fortunately, this colony has not all its eggs in one basket ; it has always been in the position that when one of our staple products has been on the downward scale some other one has maintained a high value and filled up the gap. I regret exceedingly the fall in our great product wool, and I hope it may not long continue. All we can do is to do all in our power to create fresh markets, and assist in the development of the country in that way ; and it is clearly the duty of the Government to give effect to a policy of that character. No one can say the Government has not done its utmost in that direction ; any way you look at it, whether in connection with assisting the producers to get cheaper freights to the Old World or sending men to improve the condition of the markets, the Government have been doing everything in their power in this direction, and will continue to do so. Financial collapse owing to the fall in wool ; but we have a buoyant country, and one that will be able, as it has in the past, to meet its troubles, and the indomitable spirit of the people of the country will assist them to overcome the passing troubles referred to by the honourable gentleman. He further referred to the fact that the increase in the expenditure of the colony was £328,000 for the half-year, and he went on to say there were indications of an evil day arising -- that we might stave it off, but that the present position was marked by grave anxiety. But, in referring to the fact that the expenditure of the colony had gone up, you must realise what the colony is doing, and take into consideration the fact that last year the colony reduced taxation by over \$300,000, and that the bulk of the increased expenditure is due to unusual and non-recurring causes. And when you are discussing and talking about 8.0. the increase in the relative position of the finances of the colony you must, I say, keep before you the fact that we made a very large remission of taxation last year, of which the colony as a whole has the benefit. Now, when the honourable member is considering the finances of the colony, how does he do it? Does he go down the gamut of the departments and give the amounts of the large concessions made last year ? I think not, for almost every department has shown that, notwithstanding the concessions that have been made or the increases of revenue in each of them this year, they have in the increased volume of business shown that in the gross results of revenue, and in nearly every case in the net results also, they have made up by a long way the \$300,000 remissions, and that will favourably affect the future of the colony. Then, the honourable member referred to the fact that the increase in the Colonial Secretary's Department was \$42,102 ; in the Postmaster-General's Department, \$21,063 ; in the Railways, £92,000 ; in Agriculture, \$13,750 ; and, in the Defence Department, \$52,540: making a total of about \$221,000. Now, I propose for one moment to devote myself to these figures. First of all, the honourable member,

and every member of the House, knows that the £42,000 increase in the Colonial Secretary's Department is not an annual increase. It is an abnormal one, and one to which we have a right to refer to show the unfairness of the strictures about the increase of expenditure, because it is not recurrent. I cannot go through all the items, but honourable members know that included in this amount is a large part of the cost of the Royal visit. That is a disappearing item, and is not recurrent, as is also census expenditure, which is also included, and that is non-recurrent. The honourable member says that free criticism is a good thing for the Administration and for the country. That we all admit ; but it is no use of the honourable member presenting only one side of the picture to the country, and that side the worst side, and imagining that we are going to let him misrepresent by only giving the one side. The

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side to the colony as far as the administration and the policy of the Government go. He has been unfair to the colony and unjust to the Government when he puts forth the fact that we have an increase of \$221,000 without stating a set-off or giving the causes of any sort or kind. Take the railways as a case in point : There we have an increase of £92,000 in our expenditure ; but what about the increase of its revenue ? was only a day or two ago since I stated the fact that the increase of revenue for the last six months alone, by comparison with the corresponding period of last year, was #87,000, and that the last four weeks was nearly £14,000 better than the corresponding period of last year. Mr. R. MCKENZIE. - Due mostly to the Roval visit. Sir J. G. WARD .- If the honourable member would go into the figures since the Royal visitors left-take those of the last month, which is regarded as about the worst month for the year, when there were no Royalty here at all-he would find that the figures show nearly €14,000 more than for the same month of the year before. The increase in the Postal Department is due entirely to growth of business, and the same applies to the Agricultural Department. I pass on for one moment to refer to the statement of the honourable member for Riccarton regarding the item £24,000, deposit of balance due to Fourth and Fifth Contingents. The honourable member said that from the 10th July to the 30th September there was only £269 paid to these men, and he wanted an explanation why this was the case. Very well, I can give the desired explanation. The members of the contingents have been paid off as rapidly as possible. The Under-Secretary for Defence and the other officers paid off the men as fast as they could. They could not do so blindfold. The members of the contingents have been paid as rapidly as possible. The Under-Secretary for Defence and other officers paid off the men, and the accounts of the payments they have made during the September quarter-that is, during the month of September, the money only having been received in September-will be charged during the September quarter, after the accounts have been duly audited. The whole amount requires to and will be charged to the succeeding quarter to that to which the honourable member refers. If he looks at the December quarter he will find that the total amount will have been paid : and they could not pay it before, because the officers had not the full accounts in some cases, and duplications of the accounts were required from South Africa, so there is nothing in the point made by the honourable member. Now, I think it is necessary for me to refer to the honourable member's statement regarding the €120,000 of Treasury bills that were issued in excess of the amount for the same period last year. This is an item in connection with the finances of the colony that necessarily fluctuates, owing to the particular conditions of the moment. The honourable member knows Sir J. G. Ward every-day finance in the issue of Treasury bills an increase gives no indication whatever that the Treasury is out of joint financially-it is what I may term the bread-and-butter side of carrying on the finances of the colony ; and it is necessary, just as a tradesman has a till for silver and gold to enable the daily cash transactions of his business to be carried out. The fact that his gold or silver was less at the end of the day than at the beginning would not imply he was worse off, as in all probability he had taken cheques in exchange, or had even purchased something with his

bread-and-butter cash from the till ; and so with Treasury bills. There is, therefore, no point in referring to them. Now, I pass on from that to another statement made by the honourable member. He referred to the abnormal expenditure in connection with the Defence Department of the colony. The Right Hon. the Minister of Defence will deal with this matter, doubtless, if there is time at his disposal, much more fully than I can. But I could not listen to the honourable gentleman's statement of the expenditure of \$213,000 on the consolidated estimates and £180,000 on the Public Works Fund estimates, making a total of \$393,000, without realising how misleading such a statement was. First, it is abnormal in many respects ; and, second, it includes a large balance from the previous year. He also referred to the military spirit which is being created in this colony. The honourable member knows perfectly well, in regard to the defence expenditure, there have been unusual conditions, and that a very large proportion of that amount is abnormal and is non-recurrent ; and the honourable member himself took very good care, before concluding his remarks, to put in a good word or two for the Volunteer system of the colony. Well, there are about eighteen thousand Volunteers in New Zealand. No one has called upon us to reduce, but rather to increase, the Volunteer corps of the colony, and so long as you had the representatives of the people, and the people behind them, are urging that there should be an increase of the Volunteer corps, and that the Volunteer system has now reached a strength of eighteen thousand, which is larger than in any of the adjacent colonies, we can accept that as an indication that the defence expenditure had to be increased in that direction ; and that in increase, so long as it is not of an extravagant character, must be faced if the people want a thoroughly efficient Volunteer system. Now, the honourable member referred to this increase, and said the people would insist on that large vote being reduced. Why, the Government themselves will insist on every large vote being reduced in connection with the defences of the colony where they can legitimately do it. We mean to reduce the amount, and very considerably too. But the people here have a great and valuable trust in their possessions, and the day may come when it may be an object for attack ; it is idle for the most peaceably disposed amongst us to deny that. Peoples beyond our shores have an eye upon us now,

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who does not realise that amongst our many responsibilities one of the chief is to see we have the means of defending our shores, of protecting our families and our homes, in the event of trouble arising ; and it is our bounden and solemn duty to see to the proper defence and maintenance of our country. It will be of no satisfaction or avail to us, should the day ever arrive when the future destiny of our country is assailed, to then lament our want of foresight in being found unprepared. No one can discount the fact, which is every day arising, of the increased value of our great colony, and the inducement it, among other advantages, offers as a base, at some period in the future, of operations for those who want to get close to our neighbours of the Australian Commonwealth. And, while the critical may deprecate the increase of defence expenditure, which they would be perfectly right in doing if it were of a wasteful or unnecessary character, I say it should be the duty of every true well-wisher of this country for years to come to see that within our own borders we have the element of a system that can be relied on for the purpose of maintaining the position of our country, and that this important fact should be apparent to the eyes of the world. In doing that we are only doing that which may be said to be providing an insurance fund for a valuable asset in our possession, not for ourselves alone, but for those who for generations to come will follow us. I quite agree with the honourable member when he says, instead of endeavouring to foster a military spirit, we should endeavour to promote the more peaceful arts of agriculture and matters of that kind. I am as strongly opposed to a spirit of militarism spreading through our country as any one ; but I am not foolish enough because of this to allow it to dim my vision, and therefore not be able to see that we must protect our shores and our people. Does the honourable member mean to tell me that the farmers of

this country have abandoned any of the peaceful arts to which he has alluded in the last few years ? Some of their sons may have done so, and an odd farmer here and there may also have gone to fight in South Africa; but the farmers themselves, as a body, have not given up in any respect the great industry in which they are concerned in order to take part in what the honourable member refers to as a military spirit which was being created. They have, it is true, and to their everlasting credit, given their sons and their means to assist in maintaining the integrity and the power of our Empire. I say that we in New Zealand ought not to attempt to inflate ourselves with anything in the shape of militarism, but we should try to impress upon the farmers and all classes that, while we are prepared to assist them in maintaining the great industry of agriculture in this country, we are also alive to our great and growing responsibilities as a portion of the British Empire. To say that the farmers are desirous of abandoning that industry on account of a military spirit is an insult to them which the member referred to a branch of the service which I at present administer. He got back to his old theme of the Minister for Railways, and he deprecated the expenditure of \$576,000 for increased rolling-stock, and \$125,000 voted on the supplementary estimates in connection with the necessary railway rolling-stock upon our lines. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- I said " importation." Sir J. G. WARD .- Well, it is not all for imported stock; but we are ordering no outside rolling-stock this year at all. Both the Premier and myself have stated in the House, and outside the House, that the Government were opposed to the importation of any material from beyond the colony ; but, Sir, the circumstances of the colony were such that we could not supply our lines or carry on the business of the country unless we had the assistance of material from outside the colony. Although this was necessary owing to the rapid increase of traffic, we decided to import the material greatly against our will, and we have all along said it is not our intention to continue to import material from outside the colony. Then, he said that no declaration had been made in reference to increasing the railway workshops and increasing the plant, and he found fault with myself for not having, eighteen months ago, when it was found necessary, then made arrangements to meet these growing requirements. I am now going to refer him to an important public document, and honourable members will be able to gauge the value of the criticism in regard to what he says was the position eighteen months ago, and what ought to have been done. If any member would turn to D .- 2, page 10, of the Railways Report submitted by me last year, he will find that there is set out for the years 1891 to 1895 an expenditure of \$2,500,000 upon additions to open lines, at the rate of \$500,000 a year. What is included, among other things, is "Workshops, additions, #12,000 for each year," or £60,000 for the period ; and last year we spent over that sum in connection with the workshops. I did not fail to grasp the position at all, as the figures indicated in the Statement clearly show, and the whole programme set out there will be found to be,-

Additions and improvements to stations	250,000
Rebuilding and strengthening bridges	100,000
Improvements of line (curves and .. 100,000 gradients)	Signals and telegraphs .. 200,000
Dwellings, additions and improvements	22,000
Workshops, additions .. .	Relaying 120,000 .. .
Respacing sleepers ..	40,000 ..
Fencing	35,000 ..
Wharves, additions and improvements	47,000
Ballast plant and ballast sidings	45,000 ..
Water-services	9,400 ..
Additional locomotives	196,861 ..
Additional cars and cost of conversions	182,268
Additional wagons, brake-vans, travelling cranes, and cost of converting	

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bogies 638,126 Additional machinery and electric light for workshops 40,345 Automatic continuous brake for existing stock 347,000 Automatic continuous brake for additional stock to be built .. 67,000 .. A total of \$2,500,000. And in the Railways Statement I went on to say,- "To enable the work to be carried on continuously authority will be necessary to carry the votes over from year to year until the works are completed and the votes exhausted, and legislation will be introduced to give effect to this." And yet the

honourable member this morning coolly finds fault, and says that eighteen months ago I ought to have realised what was required in this particular direction and made some arrangements in this respect. Why, Sir, there is the whole report, not only for last year, but providing for the five years, foreshadowing the programme to meet not only the exigencies of the moment on the railways that then existed, but to provide for the enormous growth that is going on year by year in this country, and which requires to be met. When the honourable member talks to me of not having done what was required, he must either have- I was going to say wilfully misrepresented the position, but I will not say that-but he must have supposed, at all events, that I would forget that I was alive eighteen months ago, and had done nothing in the direction of trying to improve our rolling-stock, whereas I had done so over the whole period of five years. Although the member for Riccarton has not done so, I am glad to say that the colony has recognised that the improvement has been material from one end of the colony to the other, and that the business has been met in a way that the public have appreciated. The honourable member is therefore not in any way justified in saying I should have made arrangements at that period, because they were made by me, and the authority of the House also got for the expenditure of two millions and a half, and which is now going on; and yet the honourable member refers somewhat critically to the fact that we went out of the colony in the way he indicated to purchase material to carry on the business railways of the colony. I say now, without a shadow of hesitation, that if we had not, in addition to keeping our workshops going from one end of the colony to the other, also adopted the course of going outside the colony and obtaining additions to our rolling-stock, we would not have been able to meet the extraordinary increase of traffic that has taken place throughout the whole of the colony, and we would consequently have interfered with and dislocated trade, and thrown many people in various outside occupations out of work. It has to be remembered that during last year alone 136 miles of open railways were added to the railways of the colony, and during this year about a hundred additional miles will be Sir J. G. Ward power and rolling-stock of all kinds, and the honourable member must know that not only has no man been put off work in any of the workshops, but that some hundreds of additional men have been put on, and have been kept on full time to enable the department to carry out the work in our own shops. Now, in contrast to what the honourable member said had been done in New Zealand during the last twelve months, if any one takes the trouble to refer to the Railways Report he will find that 2,068 vehicles passed through the local workshops in New Zealand, to say nothing of the hundred and one other works carried on in our shops. I say that at no time in our colony's history has so much work been done in the railway workshops: and the honourable member's statement is therefore incorrect, and may mislead the unthinking person who does not know the facts. Why, the honourable member, by the statements he made in the course of his remarks, almost made me wonder whether he was trying to take a "rise" out of me, or whether he had himself been asleep, or whether he was serious upon this particular point. The honourable member finds fault with the Government for not keeping pace with the land-settlement of the colony. He takes exception to the fact that no rebate of rent has been allowed to the Crown tenants, as he says was indicated last year. Well, Sir, the Government cannot do everything within a limited period. On the one hand, the honourable member finds fault with us for not having altered the Crown tenants' system in the colony, and, on the other hand, he says we cannot keep pace with the land-settlement of the colony. Now, if the honourable gentleman himself were on these benches, and were associated with the very ablest men in the country, he could not possibly meet, within a short period, the extraordinary demands that are continually being made upon the Government within a year or even two years. The policy must, as it were, be ahead of the demands made upon it: and I think, if the honourable member will only consider the matter for a time, he will see that is the position. But where does the honourable member land himself in connection with this matter? It is the same in connection with the railway workshops. He says in one breath we are increasing our expenditure, and finds fault with us for adding to

the public indebtedness. He finds fault with us in very strong terms about the high-water mark of the financial position of the colony, yet before he would up his speech what did he say ? He urged the obtaining of millions of money additional. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- That would nes come out of the Consolidated Fund. Sir J. G. WARD .- I did not say it would come out of the Consolidated Fund. I ato dealing with the financial position of the colony as a whole. The honourable gentleman knows that £500.000 was transferred from the Consolidated Fund last year to the Pable Works Fund ; vot, while the honourable gentle- man urges on the one hand that we are going

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too fast, and that we require to curtail the deter the proper development of our coalfields, expenditure, and curtail the departmental ex- penditure-I agree with the honourable gentle- man there, and every member of the Ministry desires the same-in the same breath he urges the obtaining of millions of borrowed money, 1 so that more land may be acquired for the , The honourable gentleman was so very un- settlement of the people. Well. as I have said, I interesting in the latter part of his speech that you cannot do all these things at once. To do . he has not much right to be fastidious. Then all this within a year or two would require an extraordinary expenditure-a sum we would not be warranted in asking the House to assent to. So, while he deprecates the increase of our indebtedness and says we are going too fast in one direction, he urges that we should proceed very much faster in two other directions. Therefore he is clearly most inconsistent. In carrying on the land-settlement policy the Government must proceed as they have pro- ceeded during the last eight or nine years- vigorously but prudently ; and as land is being obtained we must road it as far as possible, and that policy we must and will carry out as far as it is in our power to carry it out. We conceive that to be our duty, and we are doing it now, although not so fast as we ourselves desire. We are carrying on our railway-lines throughout the colony, and employing on those important works a very large number of men. Work of that kind, however, is in time bound to come to a diminishing-point, and it is well that the Government should acquire lands in various parts of the colony, not only for fresh settlers from outside to come to our colony and take up, but so that these men now employed making our railways may also go upon the land if they choose; and in that way they would be absorbed, and would not, when our railway. con- struction ceases, come into the labour-market. If the honourable gentleman were to take an impartial view of what the Government is doing, instead of being hypercritical in his criticisms, he would wear a happier aspect ; he would be bound to honestly admit that the policy of the Government was a good one for the country as a whole, and that it had added and would still add materially to its prosperity. My honourable friend would to-day have looked much happier and much more pleasant if he could put his hand on his heart and say that he himself occupied his old position. But he has drifted off, and he knows not to where he is drifting. The honourable member, in the course of his speech, did say one word of congratula- tion, and in respect to that I echo the senti- ments which he gave utterance to. He con- gratulated the colony upon having decided to acquire a State coal-mine. I think it is a great thing for the country that we have decided to acquire a State coal-mine, and that will assist us in carrying on the great departments which largely utilise coal. This policy will assist us not only in obtaining our own fuel, but will, I think, have the very desirable effect of steady. ing the price of coal in New Zealand, and prevent any undue rise owing to rings, combinations, or other causes in the different centres of the colony such as apparently there has been in the past, aud which must have done so much to VOL. CXIX .- 81. and also to restrict and interfere injuriously with some of our manufacturing industries. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- How much longer are you going to speak ? Sir J. G. WARD. Until I have finished. he said something about the £442 paid to the Federal Commissioners who are members of Parliament. I think he said he would have preferred to see the Disqualification Act amended. And so would I have preferred it. An Hon. MEMBER .- Why is it not ? Sir J. G. WARD. - " Why is it not ?" The

honourable member might as well call for the moon. In the first place, it was during the recess that the Federal Commission was set up, and the honourable member knows perfectly well-at least, I hope he will see upon mature consideration-that we could not then have done anything in that way. We could not have made provision in any other way than we are now doing. There is no member of the House who, outside the House, has suggested that the Disqualification Act should be amended, and we could not have asked for consideration to members of Commissions excepting to those who went across the sea. There is no member of the House who has voiced the proposal in the direction now indicated, and yet when the Government make a fair proposal to meet in a proper manner an unusual position they say, "Why did you not amend the Disqualification Act?" An Hon. MEMBER .- The Premier promised it early in this session. Sir J. G. WARD .- I am asking what any honourable gentleman who now complains of this has said outside. What has he done on the platform ? An Hon. MEMBER .- None knew that this money was appropriated. Sir J. G. WARD. - Well, I say, let them go out on the platform now and do so. Mr. HUTCHESON .- I will. At least, I will condemn this Bill. Sir J. G. WARD .- I have no doubt the honourable member will. It is the easiest thing in the world to condemn anything. I have gone along a street more than once, and, looking up at magnificent piles of buildings, have thought what an easy thing it would be to pull them down. I know there are men who, when they look at such things, think that this and that can be altered ; and what damage such men would do if they were only given the opportunity, just because they think they could do work so much better than others have done. It is easy to criticize and to pull down. It is much more difficult to design and construct. I have been referring briefly to the different points touched upon by the member for Riccarton. The honourable gentleman says it is a good job that party ties have not the same hold as formerly, and that members of the House are not marionettes. Now, since I have been in the House-that is,

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since 1887-I have never known where the party marionettes were. The parties have all been created by the people outside of Parliament, and not by those who, for personal reasons, desire to destroy them in the House. The honourable member is trying to do so now. Within my limited experience, from end to end of the colony, I have never known that parties could have been formed, or, if formed, that their ties would hold, unless they were the result of the policy as affirmed by the people, and who desired that their representatives in Parliament should on that question be united. Now, I say that in New Zealand at the 8.30. present moment, however much the honourable member may desire that there should be a weakening of party ties, I say that in this country he will have to be a very clever man who will make the members of a party forget the causes of their old party attachments. Those ties have been formed in order to give effect to great principles. I say that future political warfare in New Zealand will require policies upon both sides which will necessitate -at any rate, on our side-a policy in the general interests of the country. When the right time does arrive you may depend upon it that in future, as of yore, men will declare themselves openly under one banner or the other, and all this talk of the weakening of party ties will then be found to be visionary. You will find that any slight weakening on the part of some few members will, by the voice of the people, be rectified, and that the same good-sense will prevail amongst the people, and again amongst the members of our party, and we will find that good party administration will be as potent a factor in the future as it has been in the past. I regret exceedingly that the honourable member should have thought it desirable to give so one-sided a criticism of the policy of the Government. But for his having done so I would not have spoken. I believe that on mature consideration, if he looks back at the history of the party to which he was formerly attached and was elected to support, he will find that the Government has done its best to carry on the business of the country in a manner intended to be for the best interests of the majority of the people of the country. Mr. R. THOMPSON (Marsden) .- There

is a personal matter I wish to bring before the House. Early in the session I presented a petition asking for an inquiry into the valuation of certain properties at Whangarei. A lengthy inquiry was held. The evidence was all taken down and printed. When the report was brought up in the House, the member for Auckland City (Mr. Fowlds), who was a member of the Committee, moved that it be read, and then proceeded to make some unfair criticisms on the report and the finding of the Committee. The Premier then immediately got up and moved the adjournment of the debate, thus depriving me of the opportunity of making any reply to the unfair criticism of Mr. Fowlds, the member for Auckland City. My desire when presenting the petition was to have a full inquiry into the proceedings of the officers Sir J. G. Ward of the department, and to have the whole of that evidence printed and placed in the hands of the Government and the public, so that every landowner in the colony should know the unfortunate position that he occupies at present in reference to the Valuation Department. Owing to the alteration that had been made in the Land- and Income tax Act of recent years the landowners now have practically no protection, and are at the mercy of the officers of the department and the witnesses they employ to give evidence in the Assessment Courts. The result of that was that I had no opportunity of replying to anything or of making any explanation. I then immediately put the following question on the Order Paper, which has been there for the last fortnight :- "Mr. R. THOMPSON to ask the Government, What steps they intend to take to give effect to the report of the Public Petitions M to Z Committee on the petition of Robert Thompson. relative to the unequal valuation of some of his properties in Whangarei, in which the Committee states that 'the valuations of some of the petitioner's properties and the great reductions made by the Assessment Court were strong reasons for a careful revision of all field-book valuations where inequality is evident'?" I wish to place on record the history, as short as possible, of what took place at the Assessment Court. The position is this : In December last the portion of my property on which I live- twenty-five acres-which, three years ago, was valued by the department at a capital value of £50 per acre and an unimproved value of \$12 per acre, was raised in capital value to \$110 per acre and in unimproved value to \$77 per acre. Of course, I appealed, and the Assessment Court reduced the unimproved value from £77 to £40 per acre, after taking evidence. I am not finding any fault with the Court, but I say, where the Court has to make a reduction of £37 per acre on the unimproved value of 3 farm there must be something wrong. What I ask is for the Minister in charge of the department to have an inquiry made into the whole matter as to whether the officers of the department have done their duty fairly or not. I make no complaint against the head of the department here, but, as far as its officers are concerned, I have not been fairly treated. Of course, the Court has protected me to a certain extent. In support of the valuation a land agent was brought from Auckland to give evidence, and no inspection of the property was made either by the officer of the department or by the witness. Neither came to inspect the property. yet were prepared to go into the Court and give evidence on oath not only as to the capital value, but also as to the unimproved value. I think it is only right that the Government, the House, and the country should know this. because if this sort of thing is allowed to go on all over the colony there is no security for any landholder. So far as I am personally concerned the matter is over ; but in the interests of other landowners, who may find themselves any day in the same unfortu-

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nate position, I hope the Government will take steps to see that no such abuses occur again, because, no doubt, had I been absent from home and not able to defend i Bill, which would lessen the revenue of any local myself I might as well have been put off the property altogether. In the interests of the department, and in the interests of the Government, either the law should be amended and we should go back to the conditions of 1894, by which the Government would be responsible to take over the properties at the valuation of the officers of the department, or steps should be taken to appoint valuers who have some

knowledge of land-values. At the present time landowners are not protected at all, for every protection has been swept away, and they are placed entirely at the mercy of the officers of the department and the witnesses they employ. Mr. O'MEARA (Pahiatua). - I regret very much that at this late hour any members should be compelled to detain their fellow- members, more especially in view of the weary session we have had ; but, still, there are occasions on which duty compels us to speak in this Chamber, otherwise we might just as well remain at home with our constituents. I came here to represent my constituents, and as long as I have a grievance I shall stand up and represent it here in the House, notwithstanding the protest of the Right Hon. the Premier. I wish to speak with regard to clause 9 of the Appropriation Act, and in regard to the Woodville Borough Council being improperly and unfairly deprived of its subsidy on rates. This borough adopted the rating on the unimproved value, an Act which was generally approved of not only by members of this House, but by the Government of the country ; and yet, by the fact of their adopting that Act, the Woodville Borough Council have lost revenue approximately amounting to the amount of £43. Under the rating of the old Act a rate of 1s. 3d. in the pound was struck, which brought in a revenue of £600 odd. But in order to comply with the rating on unimproved value so as to bring in a similar revenue, a rate of 3gd. was struck, and, instead of the usual subsidy of \$110, they only received two - thirds of that amount. In the first year. it was deducted, and was afterwards remitted by the Government. In the second year a similar circumstance occurred, and in the third year they granted a subsidy without any reduction at all. But, strange to say, in the fourth year the Government retained from the borough the sum of \$42, and by the Government treating boroughs that adopted the rating on unimproved value in that manner I consider they have done them an injustice. The effect of the Government doing that is a deterrent to any borough or county adopting the Rating on the Unimproved Value Act. I hope the Premier will reconsider the importance of this matter, and will deal out justice to boroughs that have adopted the rating on the unimproved value. I hope that, instead of deducting the sum I have stated from the Woodville Borough, he will at once give his ! he was going to claim credit for the amended sanction and authority to have the amount remitted. That is the only reason for my rising at this late stage to protest against such a clause being introduced into the Appropriation body that adopted the Rating on the Unimproved Value Act. Mr. SEDDON (Premier). - This has been a most remarkable session, and I am delighted we have come within sight of "Chicago " ; and, if I may allude to the members as I see them on the benches, one and all must come to the conclusion they will arrive there in a pretty sound state, notwithstanding the nineteen weeks and a half we have been here. Sir, the criticism we have had with respect to the Appropriation Bill, to my mind, shows that whilst there have been statements made which have not been in accordance with the facts, still there has not been that rancour that I have noticed in previous sessions at the conclusion of the sessional work. First of all, I wish to reply to the statement made by the member for Riccarton as to there being anxiety as regards our financial position. I may at once relieve that honourable gentleman's anxiety. It is quite true that our expenditure this year is extraordinarily high, but there are reasons for it which are well within the knowledge of the honourable member. What ought to weigh with him and other honourable members is that, although there has been this abnormal expenditure, we are still in a position to more than pay our way. I am satisfied we shall this year have a surplus of about a quarter of a million. The results for the past seven months of the year justify that belief, and we have the best five revenue-producing months still to run. We have £100,000 to the good, although our calculations of revenue for this year are below that of last year. Next year, 1902, if we make no further reduction in revenue, there must be over half a million surplus, because the abnormal expenditure which has been caused this year will not recur. To have attained such a position, while making reductions in railway rates and reductions in taxation of nearly \$300,000 last year, and this year to have over £200,000 over normal expenditure, and a surplus, is a position which should relieve the honourable member of his anxiety. If not, the honourable member is a pessimist of the first

water. Then, again, members must take some responsibility for the increased expenditure, and I was surprised at the honourable member twitting my colleague the Minister for Railways in respect to the increased railway expenditure. The honourable member himself did what he could to increase that expenditure. Will he say that they should take from these railway men the extra 6d. a day we gave them. It comes with an ill-grace, I think, for the honourable member for Riccarton to draw attention to the increased railway expenditure. What has the honourable member been doing this session ? After my colleague had announced that we were bringing in a Railway Classification Bill, which would mean increased expenditure, the honourable member appeared very impatient, and it looked as if

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increased expenditure. Now the honourable member finds fault with the increase, and has grave anxiety as to the financial position. I may say at once there is no foundation for the statement in regard to unpaid troopers. Some of the officers from South Africa brought Imperial money and paid their men out of that fund, and, consequently, nothing passed through our books at all. For instance, Jackson paid his men ; and we know little of the details. We paid the difference between the Imperial pay and what we pay in the colony in respect to the First, Second, and Third Contingents. At all events, the delay as to payment was no fault of ours. In the first place, when leaving South Africa there was no way of ascertaining what was due to the troopers, with the exception of the Fourth and Fifth Contingents, who brought their pay-sheets with them. However, I can only say, so far as the Government are concerned, that we have advanced moneys to these men, and in some instances have paid them more than we owe them. Then, the honourable member complained of the growth of the defence expenditure. Well, of that, £92,000 is for rifles, and I say the country must have a supply of modern weapons. That has been pressed upon the Government in season and out of season, in addition to a desire to increase the number of Volunteer corps. I say it is nonsensical in the extreme to now find fault with the Government on account of the increased expenditure. We must do it, and I believe it is the desire of every well wisher of the colony to keep the country in a strong and safe position of defence. I have had very severe criticism because of this increased defence expenditure, and I felt rather hurt, because we have had our harbour defences in an incomplete state for years, and we have had our Volunteers armed with obsolete weapons. When this was brought under the notice of the Government we asked Parliament for appropriations, and Parliament the year before gave a very large appropriation for defence ; but the money could not be spent, because we could not get big guns, batteries, and rifles. Of the large expenditure this year, nearly £100,000 is a revote of the unspent moneys of last year, and this is the first time the fact has been stated to the House.

Mr. R. THOMPSON .- Are they able to supply your orders this year ? Mr. SEDDON. - No; I believe we will not be able to get the big guns and one of the batteries this year. At all events, I anticipate my Defence vote next year will be very much less than it is this year, and there will be a gradual tapering off in the future. I think this is necessary, because we cannot afford to go on with the heavy expenditure on defence that has been incurred during the last few years. I now come to the Workers' Compensation for Accidents Act. It is impossible to do anything this year, and I think we may as well let things go on as they are until we know the mind of the country and the position of the law. The trouble has been more with the insurance agents than with the law. However, I am prepared that will be satisfactory to everybody. As for the Crown tenants' rebate, I wish to say that is no defect of the law-it is the administration of the law, and the Government intend to see that there is a compliance with the law by those who administer it. The administration in Canterbury, where everybody gets relief, is the outcome of a wrong interpretation of the law, and the new Commissioner who is going there will be told that the Government want the law interpreted in the proper manner. The other Commissioners, who give no rebate at all, will also be told to carry out the law in the way in which it was intended to apply. As for relief

to the back-block settlers, I think all I require to say is that we have the Land Bill before us, and I am prepared even now to take up that Bill and put it through. If we did so, however, we should be accused of taking advantage of the absence of those who had returned to their homes. I wish now to point out to the member for Riccarton how inconsistent he has been, and to tell him that people who live in glass houses should not throw stones. He said the Federation Commissioners drew large sums in excess of the amount allowed to them under the Disqualification Act. Well, it is true we gave some of these Commissioners £2 2s. a day during the time they were in Australia. That sum comes to £460. It is true too, that, spread over all the members of the House on the Commission, this gave them the large sum of £88 each. Well, now, the honourable member for Riccarton has himself drawn from the State £150 in one year, and he is not within the Disqualification Act. It seems, then, it is a case of one law for one member and another law for another. I admit the honourable gentleman has, as a newspaper proprietor, given value for that money, but at the same time he has had an advantage over other members ; and, that being the case, he should be the last to draw attention to the matter when these members gave their services, as they did in this case, in a way that reflected greatly to their credit. Sir, I would ask that members should have some little consideration for others. The honourable member for Hawke's Bay does not want the money. He did not want the Government to put it on the estimates, but out of consideration for others he did not protest. It seems to me, Sir, that while they were in Australia the Commissioners must have been out of pocket, and this is really only a reimbursement of expenses. To state that it is rewarding them for services is certainly a wrong thing to say. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- I did not say that. Mr. SEDDON. You said they were being rewarded, and I say it is no reward to recoup men for money they are out of pocket. I am sorry to see the member for Ashley is not in the House. I have something to say to bring to conclude the little difference of opinion we have had respecting the Glentui Estate. I wish members to note this: First of all, he wrote to the Assets Board for correspondence,

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He has had that correspondence for some days. He did not submit it to the House when he received it. . Now, some time ago he asked me to get the Assets Board to lay that correspondence on the table ; and I said if he wrote a letter and asked that it should be done, I would be glad to do so; but when he had that correspondence in his possession he did not lay it on the table, and I will tell the House why. He commenced his correspondence this morning by reading a letter of the 8th April. That letter, however, is not the first of the correspondence. He omitted altogether this letter of the 19th October, 1897. Now, I want members to mark how he commences this letter. He says there is public inquiry, and that the land is wanted for the public. The letter says .- "Wellington, 19th October, 1897. "SIR, - There is considerable inquiry in North Canterbury as to the intention of your Board to offer for sale, or on terms, portion of the Glentui Estate. I have just received a letter from a gentleman living in the Oxford district who is anxious to obtain a section of land for his sons, but no land at present in that district is under offer. Wool and mutton have been, and are, selling at fairly remunerative prices, hence the desire on the part of the public for the acquisition of land. In case of a lull in the market for mutton and wool, there must inevitably follow a depreciation in value of land. "I beg to suggest that your Board should place the Glentui Estate in part or in whole in the market at the earliest possible date. If the best portions of Glentui were subdivided into sections of from 150 to 500 acres, I am convinced there would be a ready market at satisfactory prices to your Board. I should be pleased to be advised by your Board of your intentions to act on my suggestion .- Yours, "R. MEREDITH, M.H.R., Ashley. &c .. "The Chairman, Assets Realisation Board, Wellington." Well now, he deliberately, whilst this letter was given to him, leaves it out of the correspondence which he told the House he was placing before it. And, mark you, he wanted the land for the public, and said that for farms of from 150 to 500 acres there would be a demand. Then, the honourable member told the

House to-day that he never applied for 1,500 acres, and he read a subsequent letter in which he mentions " 1,000 acres." But when he says he never applied for 1,500 acres he is condemned by his own letter. Here it is :- " Tullamere, Springbank, 8th April, 1898. "SIR,-Will you be good enough to inform me if your Board will sell me from 500 acres to 1,500 acres of the Glentui Run, partly pastoral and partly agricultural? I am aware that towards the close of last session of Parlia ment you signified your intention of having the Glentui property cut up and offered for sale by November of the present year; I there- fore anticipate your subdivision by approach- give me full particulars as to locality, acreage, price, &c. - Yours, &c., "R. MEREDITH. " The Chairman, Assets Realisation Board, Wellington." Now, an honourable member who will stand up in his place in the House and say he never offered for 1,500 acres in the face of that letter -well, I can only say you must discount any statement he may make. The honourable member's forgetfulness is peculiar, seeing he had this letter in his hand at the time. As a member of the Board, I was furnished with the same correspondence as the honourable gentle- man. But there is something else the honour- able member has not told the House which I will tell it. There is, under his hand, a little note in which he, so I am told, said he did not want his name to be disclosed. He has not told the House that; nor has he told the House of the candid views he gave the General Manager in the streets of Wellington, because Mr. Foster did not concur in letting Mr. Mere- dith have the land at the price offered. An Hon. MEMBER .- Was that Foster ? Mr. SEDDON .- Yes, Mr. Foster, the man- ager ; and Mr. Meredith said that he had made a fair offer for it ; that it ought to have been accepted, and that the refusal was a very serious matter ; that he would bring up the Board's action-and he did commence making it warm for the Board. He asked questions, and brought the Board's administration before the House, and at last it grew so hot that the member for Wakatipu had to challenge the honourable member to accept the challenge and give prac- tically what I gave the other day. Now, the honourable member to-day, very astutely, in his letter-and I hope whoever reads those letters will see this-the honourable member tells you that the land is stony. Here is a description of the land in one of his communications,- " (1.) That portion of the estate extending from the Ashley Gorge Bridge, and bounded on the north by the main road, on the east by the road running from the said main road to the Ashley River, and on the south and west by the River Ashley, containing about 500 acres, and marked on the enclosed map (' No. 1A') in red. This block has had some surface-sowing of cocksfoot, varies very much in quality, being patchy, some fair land, including about forty acres of swamp, with stony flats containing large boulders predominating largely, covered with gorse, broom, and couch ; all the fences out of repair ; purely sheep country." An Hon. MEMBER. - Not bad land at 15s. an acre from that description. Mr. SEDDON. - I am going to give you later on the price which this sheep country brought at auction, and which was over #8 per acre. "(2.) We also applied for 500 acres, or any less portion, to the east of the road forming the eastern boundary of Block 1. This block varies very much in quality, from swamp land to light stony land, and is not improved other than a few drains, the swamp and the fences being in fair condition. There is a small whare

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No. 2. Block No. 2 does not include any of the English grass paddocks. So far as I could judge not any of the land I am applying for has ever been broken up. I enclose you my map, as it enables me to define what I want." He sent the map, and on that map is indi- cated the parts of the estate containing the 1,500 acres, and the description of this stony patchy land was amusing. He then says,- "This land would suit me, as my home is situated only a few miles from the place, and I could work it for sheep in conjunction with my agricultural homestead. If convenient to you, or to one of the members of your Board, I would suggest, in case you are not conversant with the land in question, instead of leaving the valuation to an outsider, you might per- haps come and see the property yourself, and I would arrange, if necessary or desirable, to meet you." He still maintains, mark you, it was sheep country : "in conjunction with my

agricul- tural homestead." This is the reply :- "Christchurch, 19th May, 1898. "DEAR SIR,-I am in receipt of your letter of 12th, and am intending to bring the matter before my Board at its next meeting, with a view to fixing reserves on the various portions of the estate. " We are having many inquiries for farms on the Glentui, and it may be that the Board will decide to adhere to its usual practice of first offering by auction. I will, however, give you early advice in reply to your inquiries .- Yours, &c., " WALTER G. FOSTER, General Manager, Assets Realisation Board, Wellington. "R. Meredith, Esq., M.H.R., Springbank." On the 19th May we told him that we were going to submit it to public competition. On the 28th May, in the face of being informed that this land was to be submitted to public competition-and you mark that he wrote in his first letter to us in October his reason for writing. His October letter was as follows : - " Wellington, 19th October, 1897. "SIR, - There is considerable inquiry in North Canterbury as to the intention of your Board to offer for sale, or on terms, portion of the Glentui Estate. I have just received a letter from a gentleman living in the Oxford district who is anxious to obtain a section of land for his son ; but no land at present in that district is under offer. Wool and mutton have been, and are, selling at fairly remunerative prices, hence the desire on the part of the public for the acquisition of land. In case of a lull in the market for mutton and wool, there must inevitably follow a depreciation in value of land. "I beg to suggest that your Board should place the Glentui Estate in part or in whole in the market at the earliest possible date. If the best portions of Glentui were subdivided into sections of from 150 to 500 acres, I am con- vinced there would be a ready market at satis- Mr. Seddon pleased to be advised by your Board of your intentions to act on my suggestion .- Yours, " R. MEREDITH, M.H.R., Ashley. &c., "The Chairman, Assets Realisation Board, Wellington." And, in his letter of 28th May, 1898, he says,- " In reference to my former letter applying for about a thousand acres of the Glentui free- hold and your reply to the said letter, I may state that I am now prepared to make you a definite offer for the land as described by me in my former application to purchase." His former application to purchase was for the 1,500 acres :- "I will give you the Government valuation with 5 per cent. added. I will pay you 25 per cent. cash, balance in three years at 44 per cent. per annum interest. Please give me an answer by Friday, the 3rd June next, by letter, or by wire addressed to Rangiora for me. I have another property in view in case you are not willing to negotiate with me. "R. MEREDITH." This is the reply :- "I have brought the matter of the sale of this property before my Board, and am in- structed to inform applicants that it will be surveyed at an early date and offered by auction about November next. I thank you for your inquiries and offer ; but, understanding you have expressed a wish that the public should have an opportunity of purchasing at auction, the Board has not been unmindful of your views. ## " WALTER G. FOSTER, General Manager."

We did not give the honourable member what he wanted, and here is the result. Here is a little map ; here is the bridge across the river ; and here are the prices fetched at auction for this sheep country : Section 2, 56 10s. per acre ; Section 3, £5 17s. 6d. per acre : Section 5. £8 2s. 6d. per acre ; Section 5A, £7 12s. 6d. per acre ; Section 6, £3 17s. 6d. per acre : Sec- tion 7, £7 15s. per acre ; Section 8, \$5 7 .. nd per acre; and Section 10, 59 10s. per acre. This is the sheep country. The lowest section sold was \$3 17s. 6d., but the average was over £6 an acre, and the difference would have gone into the pocket of Mr. Meredith-over 50(0) When I was engaged in fighting with ofer honourable members, and he interfered, it would have been best for him had he left me alone. I have no feeling in the matter. The honourable member has expressed his regret for what of- curred, and I accept it in the spirit in which it is tendered, but I hope that the next time be reads the correspondence which has taken place he will read the whole of it, and not leave out an important letter which he had in his p. In doing that he made a serious session. blunder. I suppose he did not know that I bad the same correspondence in my drawer, an- ticipating some such proceedings. The mes: important letter he never read : and it struck me that possibly an oversight might occur: but.

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recent date, I would like to know what became of the other letter, and I know there exists a little note about his name not being disclosed to another party. If the honourable member presses for its production he will be obliged. The honourable member said he courted an inquiry. Now, Sir, I shall be most happy to oblige him. He may name his own Magistrate, who shall go through the correspondence and over the accounts of the land that was sold, and consider the position taken up by the Board in respect to the matter and the position and action of the honourable member in respect to it, and the world shall judge. I cannot say anything more clear than that. I would not have brought the matter up at all, and should have treated it with silent contempt ; but when he used his position as a member of the House to bring pressure to bear on the Board, and accused the Board of not doing their duty with respect to realising the estate satisfactorily, he must take the responsibility, and as he has read part of the correspondence, I have completed it for him. Generally at the wind-up of the session I have been able to shake hands with every member of the House. Whatever has taken place during the session, I have been able to part with members on the best of terms. I know in the heat of debate we often view matters in a different light, one from the other, but I hope that whilst we differ, we differ conscientiously, and that there shall be no personal feeling engendered. I have always managed to do that so far in my public life, and I shall endeavour to always do so; but when a member studiously in cold blood seeks to cast a reflection and becomes personal I must, perforce, protect myself. And I say the member for Ashley next day deliberately, under the pretext of correcting, brought up what appeared in one of the papers. When a member does that deliberately it proves vindictiveness, and having deliberately provoked he must take the consequences : there goes consequently on record the statement of his peculiar attempt to obtain land cheaply-I cannot use a stronger term-I will say a desire to make a splendid bargain at the sacrifice of the Board and at the sacrifice of the honour, if I had been a weak man, of a friend and his own leader. Now, I will say this: I do not want to hold a position in this House and in the country unless in holding it I can at the same time hold up my head and defy any man to say I have been a party to that which would not bear the strictest scrutiny, and I say to have sold him the land at the price offered could not have borne scrutiny either with credit to myself or the member for Ashley. It is a good job for both of us I was a strong man, who would not be a party to sacrificing this property, which belonged to the shareholders of the Bank of New Zealand, and in which the colony is also interested, and of which I am a trustee. I maintained my integrity, and the member for Ashley became a candid friend from that time forward. Sir, I hope that these personal of my speech-there has been with some members during the session, and repeatedly, violent personal attacks upon myself. That has not been appreciated by the large majority of the members of the House ; and, when these personal attacks are made upon one holding my position, it does not commend itself to the majority of the members, to the people in the colony, or to our well-wishers outside the colony. They do not appreciate it; and it recoils, in my opinion, more upon those who respect neither the position nor the man than it does upon the man or the position. We should feel while we are here that we are the representatives of the people, and for the sake of the people we should show forbearance and work together for the common good ; and, where personalities occur, those who send us here neither wish them nor do they respect us any the more for being parties to them. If that is borne in mind, and, what is more, if we feel we are only here for a time- and repeatedly occurrences take place which remind us we may wound and injure-then the time comes when as men we regret it. I hope, at all events, so far as I am concerned, that shall not be the case with me. I hope those who have differed from me will give me credit for having differed conscientiously. My colleagues and myself have to encounter very great difficulties ; we cannot see eye to eye with members with respect to matters of administration ; we cannot, of course, hold the same views with respect to legislation ; but I wish them clearly to understand that, whilst we differ, we differ on general principles, believing the views that we

hold are for the best interests of the colony ; and so far I think we may claim this credit : that our policy has been one which has promoted the well- being and the prosperity of the colony. There has not been a single experiment made to which exception can be taken or which we are asked to repeal. We have taken a step forward this session in respect to the State coal-mine. I feel as sure as I am standing here that that experiment will be a success; and to make that a success my colleagues and myself will use our best endeavours; and by doing this, and by bringing down the price of coal so as to place it within the reach of all, and by the saving to the State itself in respect to what we require for State purposes, by this time next year, and when I am in the same position of moving next year's Appropriation Bill, I hope then we shall be complimented on having successfully opened a mine or mines, and on having met success- fully what was a public necessity. Before concluding, I desire to express my pleasure and sincere hope that we may meet again. I re gret extremely that our worthy Speaker has, owing to ill-health, not been for some time in his place; and you, Sir, have had a very heavy strain placed upon you in the dual capacity in which you have been called upon to act. You have had also the able 0.30. assistance of the member for Wai-

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of the Standing Orders, and being, perhaps, de- sirous sometimes of gettting my own way as other members are, the Chair and myself may have differed as to points of order. But that is only for the moment. We must uphold the Chair, and thus preserve order, decorum, and fair debate. To yourself, to the Chairman of Committees, and to all honourable members I express, on behalf of myself and colleagues, our very best wishes, earnestly hoping that the prosperity of the colony may continue, and that our labours for the session will be productive of good to our colony and will be in the best interests of its people. Bill read a second time. IN COMMITTEE. Clause 22 .- Extra allowance to members of the Federation Commission. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) moved, That "two pounds " be inserted in lieu of " one -pound." Amendment agreed to. Bill reported. On the motion, That the Bill be read a third time,- Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) .- Before you put that question, Sir, I have a few words to say. First of all, I regret to find, while we are finishing up the sessional work, that a great many of the returns which have been ordered by the House have not been laid upon the table There were a number of returns ordered on the first day of the session which should have been placed on the table of the House long ago. In the second place, the manner in which we have been hurry- ing legislation during the last few days is a scandal to Parliament. We have rushed through Bills during the last few days without sufficient consideration, and I regret that this state of things should be continued ; and I do suggest to the Ministry that, instead of delaying Bills that there is no necessity for keeping back to the last days of the session, they should bring them down in the early days, when members of the House are fresh and are ready to consider them, and to do their duty to their constituents and to the country. Then, I regret, too, that no steps have been taken by the Premier to accept the recommendation of the Public Accounts Committee and bring in a Bill to deal with the Midland Railway Company. I think it is a great pity that Parliament is finishing up without, at any rate, having placed on the statute-book a Bill that would enable the Ministry to settle this question once and for all. Especially do I say that because at the present juncture nobody can deny our needs with respect to borrowed money are consider- able, nor can anybody deny that we ought to be able to go on the London market on the most favourable conditions. That may not be so under the conditions that now exist with this Midland Railway question unsettled, and I must express my deep regret that there is no Bill on the statute- book under which the de- benture-holders and the shareholders could be satisfactorily dealt with as recommended by the Public Accounts Committee. I also want to Mr. Seddon with our public works money. We have been still more lavish with our Consolidated Fund ; and a review of the nrst part of the year leads one to have considerable doubts as to how we shall end up the twelve months. I find, for in- stance, that for the first six months of the year, in the Consolidated Fund, there has been a revenue

derived of £2,648,591. The expenditure during that six months has been \$3,12-,718, leaving a deficit of £480, 127. I do not wish that to go forth as what may be considered the true deficit of the Consolidated Fund, because, while we have a deficit of £480,127, there is included a transfer to the Public Works Fund of \$310,000, and some debentures redeemed-£19,000. But, taking those two items, there is still a deficit of #151.127, which, I take it, is rather dis- heartening. In the corresponding period of last year we ended up with a surplus of some- thing like £60,000, whereas this year, even after making all the allowances one can make for transfers to Public Works Fund and de- b- tures redeemed, we finished up with a deficit of £151,000. The balance for the first half of this year is therefore \$210,000 worse than it was in the corresponding period of last year. Sir J. G. WARD .- What is the increase of revenue for the same period ? Mr. J. ALLEN .- The increase is all right enough, but, unfortunately, there is a very much larger increase in the expenditure. The revenue for the first half of last year was \$2,530,208. The revenue for the first half of this year was £2,648,591, or an increase of about \$118,000. But the increase in the expenditure during the first half is startling, for one finds that the expenditure for the first half of last year was \$2,471,933, and the expenditure for the first half of this year, including the two items I have mentioned, is \$3,128,718, or an increase of #656,785, or, deducting the two items I men ioned before, which amount to about \$500,000, the increased expenditure is £156,000. Sir J. G. WARD .- There is a difference of £100,000 between you and Mr. G. W. Russell. Mr. J. ALLEN. I make my own calcu. lations. I make it £656,785 ; and if you deduet from that the amount transferred to the Pu: he Works Fund and the debentures redeemed, which amount to about \$500,000, it makes an increased expenditure of #156,000. With re- gard to the Public Works Fund, I find that the receipts for the first half of last year were £635,832, and for the first half of this year they That is accountable have been £ ,311,308 from the fact that a million of loan-money has been raised for the first half of this current year ; but that particular balance-sheet is not of great interest, except so far as it discloses that all the borrowed money up to that date had been raised. But what is startling is the difference in the expenditure between the first half of last year and the first half of this year. Last year the expendi- ture was #404,746 and this year \$1,191,425, or an increase of somewhere about £136.679. I know a great deal of that is due to the fact

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came up for payment during the first part of this year, and it is quite likely that during the succeeding half the expenditure would be very much less than it was in the second half of last year. But, Sir, we are placed face to face with this fact: that at the six months we had available of loan-money and of balances -including the balance available still from the Consolidated Fund, which amounts to £190,0 0, new loan £1,250,000, and balance at the 30th September of #352 399 a total of available money at six months' time of £1,792,399. Well, it seems a tolerably large amount available, but when one looks at the Appropriation Bill and the amount that has been appropriated for public-works expendi- ture, and looks especially at the column which authorises the Government to enter into lia- bilities beyond the appropriation I refer to column 9 of the Fourth Schedule, where autho- rity is given to enter into liabilities of close upon £1,000,000 - £929,000 - one begins to wonder again where we shall finish up on the 31st March next, and whether we shall have ways and means to meet our liabilities. On the 31st March last we were unfortunate enough to finish up in this position : that, taking all the liabilities into account that had been incurred by the Crown, we had not ways and means under the Public Works Fund to meet them. Now, the Premier met that by saying that he had another half-million in the Consolidated Fund which he could transfer ; but at the time be said that he had no authority to transfer it to the Public Works Fund. I do not think he could say now, at any rate, that at the end of the cur- rent year he will have half a million to trans fer from the Consolidated Fund to the Public Works Fund. #cc-zero Mr. SEDDON .- I will have a quarter of a million. Mr. J. ALLEN .- I certainly hope the Pre- mier may, in the interests of the colony ; but,

even if he has a quarter of a million, it seems to me we are running our finance too close now to be sound. I do not mean to say that our expenditure is going to exceed our ways and means, but unless great care is taken I venture to say there is a great probability of our having incurred liabilities for which we have no available moneys in our ways and means. I think it is to be deprecated that, even in regard to liabilities or contracts that have been entered into, the colony should enter into them not having provided some means of securing moneys to meet these liabilities. I do not think we ought to exceed our ways and means in that direction, and I hope the ill perpetrated last year in so doing will not occur again on the 31st March next. Sir, I have no more to say. Although one would have liked to have a good deal more to say on this Appropriation Act, I am aware that members are all desirous of finishing up, and therefore I will not detain them any longer. Sir J. G. WARD (Colonial Secretary) .- I do not want to take up the time of the House at any length. If the honourable member had been placed in connection with financial matters, he would have heard my reply to the speech of the member for Riccarton-and I personally dealt with those matters now referred to by the member for Bruce, while the Right Hon. the Premier covered a good deal more ground than I did in the same direction-he would have found, by the statement he now makes and that made by the honourable member for Riccarton; that the difference between the figures of the honourable gentleman and the member for Riccarton regarding the estimated deficiency is about £100,000. The honourable member for Riccarton made the deficiency £328,000 for the half-year, and the honourable gentleman makes it, in round figures, #150,000. Mr. J. ALLEN .- What do you get ? Sir J. G. WARD. - I think that the honourable member's figures are not very far out. I think they are fairly accurate ; but we require to take into consideration in connection with these matters the fact, which the honourable member appears to have overlooked, that our revenue shows an increase up to date this year of £118,243. That increase is a most important factor. Had we a falling revenue, then there would be some reason to be afraid, but that element should fill us with hope and encouragement. In addition to that, I cannot but refer to another important feature in the finance of last year which is also a significant factor in dealing with this matter - namely, that £300,000 per annum in the shape of taxation was remitted to the people of the colony ; and when we know from the Colonial Treasurer that he contemplates this year, judging from the returns to hand, having a quarter of a million surplus to pay into the Public Works Fund from the Consolidated Fund, I say that, even though the expenditure has increased abnormally-and it is largely upon non-recurring items there is no tangible ground for taking a pessimistic view of the future. There is, I repeat, no ground whatever for any fear as to the future position of the affairs of the country. Prudence in its management will be required, and also, I venture to reaffirm, something like vigour and a little boldness in carrying on its affairs, both of which, I am sure, are elements that are not wanting on our side. The Opposition, we know, is able to introduce a vast amount of talk and of criticism. That is their stock-in-trade. Policy they have none. I believe I am right in saying that this is the most talkative House the country has ever seen, and the Ministers find themselves, nine times out of ten, when it is desirable they should talk, compelled to make up their minds to sit quiet, in order to allow the outpourings of honourable members who are criticizing us to go on in their sweet uninterrupted way. An Hon. MEMBER .- The honourable member for Rangitikei, for instance. Sir J. G. WARD .-- No; the honourable member for Rangitikei (Mr. Lethbridge) has not been very talkative ; but this must be said of the honourable gentleman : that whenever he does talk he talks common-sense, and for that.

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singling him out very conspicuously from the honourable members who surround him ; and I must make an exception in this respect of the honourable member for Wakatipu also. I want for the moment to refer to the returns alluded to by the honourable member for Bruce, who says that the Government have not furnished the returns asked for by the House. I do not know if the honourable gentleman is aware how

many returns have been asked for from the Government this session. Mr. ALLEN .- Forty-five not supplied. Sir J. G. WARD .- The honourable member is wrong. The number of returns asked for is ninety-two, and the number that has actually been supplied is sixty-two. Of the returns mentioned in the question on the Order Paper given notice of by the honourable member for Bruce there are not less than seventeen that have since been supplied. I wish to say this also ; that there has been no attempt whatever on the part of the Government to stop any single return asked for by honourable members. We have not given the slightest indication to any officer to hold back or to delay any return, but, on the contrary, our desire has been that all the returns should be furnished to the House. I cannot, however, do other than carry my mind back to about a fortnight ago, when I received a written memorandum sent to me by the head of a department under my control, stating that it would take twelve months or more to prepare one return that was asked for by the honourable member for Bruce, and it would involve between two and three solid months of typewriting before it could be furnished to the House. An Hon. MEMBER. - Which return was that ? Sir J. G. WARD .- I think it is a return relative to the divisional cost of laying sleepers, rails, and other matters connected with the Railways. I merely refer to what responsible officers have advised me; and when departments are going at high pressure, as they are during the session, and such a tremendous amount of information is sought for, it is impossible, with the ordinary work of the departments, for it to be supplied at short notice ; but I believe myself the departments in every instance do their best to furnish information. But the fact that every return is not furnished with railroad speed is not to be put as a sin of omission to the door of the Ministry, for there is not the slightest desire on the part of Ministers to withhold information. Wherever it has been possible for us to give information we have given it very readily. In looking at the work that has been carried out during the session by the House, I am not far out in stating that a vast amount of work has been done in the direction I have referred to. The returns which have been put on record themselves disclose the fact that an immense amount of work of a detail character has been done by the various departments, and I say that the honourable member for Bruce and others should be reasonable. When I look Sir J. G. Ward to Ministers, and when I consider the fact that, apart from House work, we have had to administer our departments, and the long hours that have been worked, notwithstanding that at the early part of the session early-rising hours were observed, I cannot get over the fact, nor can any fair critic, that a tremendous amount of work has been put in by Ministers. I am satisfied that the financial position of the colony is reassuring, and that there is nothing whatever to warrant fear in the way that is predicted by those most strongly opposing the policy of the Government. I recognise that care is as necessary to-day as it ever was, and it need not be assumed by any one that Ministers are not fully alive to their great responsibilities. We will do our best to steer the colony in the right and sure course. Mr. LAWRY (Parnell) .- Without reflecting upon you at all, Sir, in your discharge of the duties of the chair, I desire to express the hope that Sir Maurice O'Rorke will be able to come back next session restored to health. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) .- My reply on the third reading of the Appropriation Bill will be brief and to the point. I must say that, as regards the remarks on the third reading, there is nothing I can reasonably take exception to. Honourable members will differ from each other on matters in general, and there is no question, I think, on which we have differed or will differ so much as the one of finance. I will at once say that the member for Bruce takes a very pessimistic view of the situation, but I think he must admit this : that, taking the figures he has given us 35 being correct, and with the abnormal expenditure during the first six months of the year with the succeeding six months, which are the best revenue-producing six months-taking the debit balance mentioned by the honourable member, that will be more than wiped off during the next five months, and leave us with a credit balance of over a quarter of a million. I do not myself take and never have taken an optimistic view in respect to our finance, and I have erred, I think, on the side of caution : but I will say this to the honourable member : that last year, in reduction of railway charges, in direct taxation, and otherwise, we gave relief to the er-

tent of a quarter of a million of money-very nearly \$300,000; and then this year we have the abnormal expenditure of over a quarter of a million. You have therefore a difference of half a million of money. We have thus, with the abnormal expenditure, and what we have given away, over half a million; yet with that our accounts have balanced, and we have something to the good. Mr. J. ALLEN. - Your railway revenue is more. Mr. SEDDON. - Yes, but still we have given away concessions. If we had retained our Customs and our railway charges as they were we would have had \$300,000 more money. . . come now to the question of the returns it? honourable member complained of. One of them is the B. - 1 paper-the Public Accountant

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table, and no one on the opposite side appears threatened the Government; and the names to have seen it. applied to myself-why I had a paper the other An Hon. MEMBER. - When was it put down which was sent from Home, and the language it contained would not be allowed there? Mr. SEDDON. - I put it on the table, and in this House. I read that paper, and I said, "This is not the way to get much from the gentlemen opposite do not seem to trouble Premier or the colony." themselves a fig about it. They told us they could not understand the finances of the colony without it, and yet they are going home with- language if it would not have been allowed here. out even looking at that celebrated B. - 1. Mr. W. FRASER. - It was not there two paragraphs was modest as compared therewith. days ago. Mr. SEDDON. - Oh; the honourable mem- At all events, I have said this: that the Government has not made inquiries. Government have acted in deference to the report Mr. W. FRASER. - I heard the honourable of the Public Accounts Committee, and in deference to what was the opinion of the Com- gentleman ask his Secretary to put it on the mission which was appointed. So far as the table two days ago. Mr. SEDDON. - My Secretary could not say Government is concerned, we have nothing to it on the table. Why, B. - 1 has not been regret. Many years ago, when a Bill was pro- mentioned on that side of the House for the posed to give £618,000 in the way of debentures in lieu of land, I asked the House to carry that; last six weeks; and on this Bill, when members and it was objected to at that time by, I think, have the opportunity of referring to the return, they leave it alone-not one of them has Sir Robert Stout and others, and that proposal referred to it. However, I recognise that the Opposition is not an organized Opposition, and they do not want to make things unpleasant an accomplished fact. for the Government. The honourable member also took exception to there being no Bill brought in in connection with the Midland the land-value into debentures or cash was the right thing to have done at the time, and Railway Company debenture-holders. Well, if any one had told me a week ago that the honourable member for Bruce wanted a Bill of Twelve years have now passed, and blocks of the kind, I should have doubted it very much, land in Canterbury, Westland, and Nelson have owing to the action he took on the Public Accounts Committee. He was one of those law, and after the colony has been injured who objected to it. Mr. FISHER. - No; he was betwixt and otherwise-and you wind it up by giving between. Mr. SEDDON. - Well, at all events, he has been convinced and converted, and is now an ardent supporter. In this matter I have heard have got it. one member saying that unless something is done by the colony for the company it will be a case of "Get you gone; get more honest men"; right. I wound up a speech then, and I said and another says the bondholders have laboured under an injustice, and that they must be treated fairly. Now, I have been watching the position narrowly, and with the desire to do what was known as the B1 value, and, as we had said that it was worth £618,000, to simply what was just. The feeling to do something say, "We will give you debentures in lieu of for the debenture-holders and shareholders has come along gradually and slowly, and at last and that the land was of the value we assessed it reached a majority of the Public Accounts Committee, and the one member who was not overshadowed was the honourable member for Wellington City (Mr. Fisher). But I was a little bit surprised this afternoon that he too was

anxious that something should be done for the debenture-holders, and that this Mid-land Railway question should be dealt with and the debenture-holders. In conclusion, I once and for all. The question is this: We say those who were in the Ministry when the certainly have come to the conclusion that this project was first mooted and who entered into gift shall be offered. I am not so sure, if it is offered now, whether the parties will accept it in the spirit intended, and be satisfied. Time helps in these matters, and no great harm will the result that subsequently it has gone on result by holding it over until next year. I believe they will appreciate it much more, having had time to reflect on what they have An Hon. MEMBER .- It must have been strong Mr. SEDDON. - Why, the "mailed fist " was defeated. If that proposal had been carried we would have had the Midland Railway to-day An Hon. MEMBER .- Never. Mr. SEDDON .- I say, Yes; and, changing the railway would now have been finished. been locked up, and we ultimately wind up, after thousands of pounds have been wasted in £130,000. Mr. FISHER .- Who stopped that ? Mr. SEDDON .- Sir Robert Stout. Mr. FISHER. - That is right. Now you Mr. SEDDON .- Those who were with the Government at that time, and myself, were that the honour of the colony was at stake. We had said that the land-value was worth the land," would have proved our sincerity, it at. We were giving them in land full value, and were asking Parliament to give them cash or debentures equal to the land, and I said that the honour of the colony was at stake, and we ought to make that good. Of course, another colour has been put on those remarks of mine when it suited the company the first contract must take the responsibility. The proposals we made to give the £618,000 in debentures in lieu of land were defeated, with from law-court to law-court, and it has put the whole of the districts interested seven or

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going on very slowly. So far as Canterbury is concerned it has a right to have this connec- tion. Whereas other parts of the colony are having large sums lavished on them from the Public Works Fund, Canterbury prac- tically gets nothing at all. The lands have been sacrificed, and have been locked up for all these years. I am surprised at the Canterbury members. If I was off these benches-if I was a member and not a Minister-I would know the reason why. We want to have the line completed, and bring the line up to the Cass on the Springfield end. Members will see that we are compared with other districts and main trunk lines not going quite fast enough, and they should take a share of the responsi- bility. It is during the session that Ministers are always pressed for expenditure ; but, as I have said, we must be moderate in our expen- diture, and it is the intention of the Govern- ment to ease off the expenditure. An Hon. MEMBER. - Metal our 1.0. roads. Mr. SEDDON. - As far as metalling the roads in the summer time is concerned, it costs twice as much as during the winter; in fact, you lose a good deal of the metal I want members to realise they must take their fair share of responsibility. It is unfair for mem- bers to press on the Ministry all this expendi- ture, and then, when we have expended the money at their request, turning round and telling us we are galloping to a deficit. The honourable member for Bruce is as bad as the rest. Why, Sir, of course, I know nothing about the estimates myself. Hon. MEMBERS .- Oh ! Mr. SEDDON. - I see them when they are printed. Members will have noticed the dis- consolate face of my colleague the Minister of Lands last week. He came to me with about £200,000 for roads on the supplementary esti- mates, and I had to say, "That will never do. I have only £325,000 left of the loan- moneys." Then, of course, he cut them down to £100,000, and he said, from what members had said to him, it would be a moral impos- sibility for him to do with anything less ; " In fact," he said, " I have promised this." I then said, " You must break that promise to the ex- tent of two-thirds ; ■32,000 is all you can get." Now, I believe that £32,000 has not given general satisfaction, but I want honourable members to know I am not responsible. I do not know what the allocations are. I do not know the particular works. It is not the duty of the Colonial Treasurer. It is his duty to find the moneys, and he has to find out what are reasonable requirements, then to ob- tain his ways and means, and then he gives to the other Ministers the

distribution of the particular amounts. I will conclude my few remarks on this by saying that the position, as far as the Opposition and the Government are concerned - or, rather, the members on this side of the House-has been unique. First of all, we had an announcement made by the honourable member for Hawke's Bay that he was not Mr. Seddon did not say so in the House last session, although he told me personally-but this time he made the announcement that there was no leader of the Opposition. Mr. FISHER .- Still you termed him the leader of the Opposition. He was like clay in the hands of the potter. Mr. SEDDON .- I do not think so. At all events, the position has been as I have explained. When we wanted to fix the order of business in measures of policy, we have had this situation : depending on the support of members of the Opposition-at least, those who formerly belonged to the Opposition - and though their arguments suggested that they would vote with us, we found they voted against us just the same as before; and one of the results has been that some members of our side of the House have taken pity on those members, and have shown them the different points where the Government was assailable. And, Sir, I have been surprised, when their services have been voluntarily offered, that, instead of being accepted in the spirit intended, members on that side have taken umbrage and said, "Oh, no; there are four or five on these benches, and each of us considers he is going to be leader. We are not going to have Government supporters helping us, and we refuse help from such a source. And we resent it, and we will not go into the lobby with Mr. Fisher, the member for Wellington City." Mr. FISHER .- But there is much in your story. Mr. SEDDON .- Then, Sir, it has had another development. It has developed some candid friends. Now, if there is one thing in our political life that I do detest it is the candid friend-the friend who is ever watching over your interests, who professes a deep concern for your welfare ; but whenever he can, and as fast as he can, if I may say it, politically cuts your throat. These candid friends are not at all respected by members of the Opposition side of the House, nor are they esteemed by members on this side. Still, they are there, and, as I have said -- not here of course, because it would not be permitted here-but as I have said about the fly in amber, one wonders how they ? : there. However, we survive all that. The work of the session when it comes to be summarised and fairly inquired into, will show that we have placed upon our statute-book this session measures which are of great importance for the good of our colony. I will not weary members by mentioning the various Acts. but I may say that the Factories Act, that was passed yesterday, is in the interests of the great body of the workers of this country. It is a great improvement on the existing law. and in respect to many industries that are injurious to health it enforces considerations that were previously denied. It also protects the youths. It has not gone as far as I should like it in respect to boys, but at all events those below eighteen have protection now that hitherto did not exist. Then, as regards women and

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in the Act of 1884, and which, from 1894 to put through its Committee stage, there was not a single " No" against the third reading of the 1901-for seven years-has been resisted in Parliament. It was carried unanimously by the Parliament by one means or another, and has been subordinated by interested parties. At last, House. And then we had a spectacle I never however, we have it on the statute-book of the witnessed before in the House, and hope never colony. In the woollen factories women and to witness again. I do not wish to say anything that will cause heartburning, but I no- girls now, of course, can work their forty-eight hours in the Press something in this style : hours, but all girls under eighteen years of age are now only permitted to work forty-five hours. " A gallant band of heroes set up a stonewall, I therefore say that, under all the circumstances and did their level best to prevent the passing of the measure." What a travesty on the true stances, I congratulate the House and members ; they were not opposing the bill at first upon the work done. There are some measures which I regret have not been placed all; they wanted it passed. Sir, what were the heroes doing ? They were engaged in a on the statute-book. I allude

to the Licensing struggle to save themselves from having to write Act Amendment Bill. I regret that that question to the Paymaster-General, "We do not want it has not been dealt with, but the fault lies the increase." with those who flooded the Order Paper with amendments. The representatives of the Prostonewall ; it was not the Bill at all. Members told the House and the country on the second hibitionist section - what have they done, after going on the platform and denouncing the Go- reading " We are opposed to it until it goes before the constituencies : we will not soil our vernment ? After strongly asserting that there fingers with dross obtained at the end of the must necessarily be some alteration in the way session : we will not pollute our pockets with of amending licensing laws, when we gave them money obtained under such circumstances : our the opportunity for making amendments they constituents must be consulted; it is uncon- flooded the Order Paper and threatened stone- stitutional and unprecedented to do this." walling and obstruction to such an extent that But, when called upon to put in a proviso to, in the Government, fearing that other measures that were necessary would be blocked, have had effect, tell the House and country that " Having in the House stated I was not in favour of to allow that matter to stand over till next this money being paid until after next ses- session. The Counties Bill is another measure I should like to see on the statute-book, but it sion of Parliament, I notify the Paymaster that I do not wish to receive the increase" is impossible. I sent it to a Committee, and -why, Sir, rather than be put in the position found the Committee absolutely opposed to the of giving effect to their own opinions as ex- policy contained in the Bill. They struck pressed, and as they told the country were the out every cardinal point of the Bill which I believe the people of the country desire. views they held, they stonewalled the Kill for a solid day and night, and they managed to get The general feeling is that there is too much out of the difficulty, and members know the government, and I say the fact that we have rest. That measure has put upon the colony Road Boards with a paltry revenue of \$100 a about \$6,000, which is scattered over 800,000 year by the score in the colony points to the people; and I will say this, that the people necessity for reduction. The Bill was kept of New Zealand, if you give them bene- before the Committee for a long time, and the ficient laws, and if you watch carefully their draftsman had not time to remodel it ; and to interes's, and the country is main ained pro- have brought in the Bill in its mangled shape sperous, will never, in my opinion, have a word would have been only to waste the time of the to say against the increase in salaries that are House. But next session I will take a lead paid to members the people believe in pay- from the House itself. I shall ask the House ing a living-wage. One of the rules at the to decide finally on the policy as to whether present time is that each one shall receive a there is to be a reduction of the number of living-wage-that each one shall be rewarded local bodies, whether there are to be Town for the services he renders. It is the position, Boards and Road Boards, or whether it will be no' the individual, that the salary is given for, necessary to do away with some Road Boards and i is the position of the member of the day. and increase the number of counties, but He is only a passing event-whoever comes making them much smaller than proposed in and takes his place, there is the position, and the Bill. I know now pretty well the mind of there is the salary. The ques ion is, Is £300 the House on this question, and I will endea- equal to the position ? I say i is. The vour to have a Bill ready next session that will amount paid before was not equal to the enable us to grapple with the question and position, and as far as members were con- complete this necessary work in the present cerned it left them year to year making great Parliament. I also wish to put on record sacrifices for the people of the country, which some remarks in regard to a matter that sacrifices, I say, were not necessary. I con- personally affects the House in respect to clude, Sir, by expressing the hope, as stated the Payment of Members Bill. I say that by the honourable member for Parnell, bat 90 per cent. of the members of the House were our Speaker, Sir Maurice O'Rorke, will be in favour of that measure, but there are a few res ored to perfect heal h, and tha he may who are nervous, and feared the consequences. be with us next session. You, Sir, for pre- They had not mentioned the matter to their siding during the session, I, with

other mem- constituents and they hesitated about the Bill ; That was the reason of the

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bers, trust we may see you back in good health, and that during the recess you may enjoy every blessing that is given to man. Of our worthy Acting Chairman of Committees, he has had a most difficult time during these long hours, and sometimes members-of course, I never sin myself in that direction-but some members have thought that in some of his rulings he was too severe. At all events, Sir, I may say this: that the session has been tedious. At one time I thought the record would not be a satisfactory one ; but on going through the Bills passed and the business that has been performed, I say that the session of 1901 has been one of the most profitable sessions of the Parliament of New Zealand. To members I say, speaking for the Government, we have had our trials, and I wish members clearly to under- stand this: although there has been a differ- ence of opinion, our earnest desire has been to promote the wellbeing of the country, and give hope and expectation to its people. To one and all in the House I say I hope they will return to their homes, take their constituents into their confidence, and fairly and impar- tially lay the work of the session before them, and I am sure that nothing will be found fault with. Bill read a third time. PARLIAMENTARY SESSION, 1902. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) wished to ask the Premier a question without notice. There was a vote on the estimates to enable the Premier to proceed to the Coronation in June next. He would like to know what arrangements had been made about the meeting of Parliament next year. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) said that, as far as the Government saw, there would be no neces- sity for any alteration next year. It had been suggested that an early session should be held, but members did not seem to fall in with the view ; and he was satisfied that if he did go Home on that auspicious occasion his colleagues would be well able to satisfactorily carry on the business of the country. When he returned he trusted that his services would tend to the ad- vancement of the country and the good of all. ##

BUSINESS OF THE SESSION. Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid on the table the following schedule of the business trans- acted during the session :- 1\ SELECT COMMITTEES- On public matters On Private Bills ... 2\ PUBLIC BILLS- Received the Royal assent Reserved for the signification of His Majesty's pleasure Dropped, or otherwise disposed of 3\ PRIVATE BILLS- Received the Royal assent Dropped 4\ PETITIONS PRESENTED- From Europeaus 1,222 .. From Maoris Mr. Seddon 5. Divisions- In the whole House 71 In Committee 144 .. 215 - 6. SITTINGS- Days of meeting 77 ... Hours of sitting- Before midnight 518 h. 23 m. ... After midnight 116 h. 1 m. ... 631 h. 24 m :. Daily average 8 h. 14 m. ... 7\ VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS- Questions asked of Ministers Entries in Journals ... 1,150 --- 1.95 Daily average ... 8\ ORDERS FOR PAPERS 00 9. PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE- By command 86 .. In return to Orders 62 In return to Addresses 0 By Message 0 By Act 110 By leave By Mr. Speaker 2 301 - Papers ordered to be printed 212 Papers not ordered to be printed ... 99 311 10\ REPORTS FROM SELECT COMMITTEES- From the Public Petitions A to L Committee 73 From the Public Petitions M to Z Committee 66 From the Native Affairs Committee 115 From the Waste Lands Committee 62 From the Goldfields and Mines Committee From the Local Bills Committee ... 41 From the Railways Committee 41 .. From other Committees 'S ... -- ## ADJOURNMENT. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) moved, That the House do now adjourn. The House divided. AYES, 24. Hall-Jones Allen, E. G. Parata Heke Allen, J. Seddon Hornsby Steward Arnold Tanner Hutcheson Atkinson Laurenson Carroll Ward. McGowan Teliers. Duncan Flatnan Fisher Millar Fraser, W. Mills Palmer. NOES, 14. Buddo Hall Rhodes Thompson. R. Collins Lawry McGuire Tellers. Ell 25 3 Mckenzie, R. Lethbridge Field 28 Fraser, A. L. D. O'Meara Symes. Majority for, 10. 98 Motion agreed to. 2 Mr. DEPUTY - SPEAKER .- Before leaving 91 191 \-- the chair I would ask the indulgence of honor. able members for a moment. I desire to thar.i. 3 the Right Hon. the Premier for the courtesy 0 and the kind remarks which he made courem- 3 ing the manner in which I have fulfilled ch? onerous duties of Deputy-Speaker. I ras, 64 on behalf of

honourable members and myself, 1,286

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that the Hon. the Speaker (Sir Maurice O'Rorke), through illness, has been unable to preside over our proceedings. I also desire to thank honourable members for the very great consideration, forbearance, and assistance they have shown to me during this long and arduous session in performing the duties of the high office of Deputy-Speaker. I wish them all a pleasant time and good health during the recess, and hope we may all meet again next session in the best of health and spirits to perform the duties we are sent here to carry out. In conclusion, I cannot allow this opportunity to pass without tender- END OF ONE-HUNDRED-AND-NINETEENTH VOLUME. By Authority : JOHN MACKAY, Government Printer, Wellington
ing my sincere thanks to all the officers of the House for the valuable and able assistance which they have given to me in performing my duties as Deputy-Speaker during the present session. Major STEWARD (Waitaki) .- May I also be permitted to tender my acknowledgments to the Government and to the House for their graceful recognition of such services as I have been able to render as Acting-Chairman of Committees. The House adjourned at three o'clock p.m (Friday).

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NEW ZEALAND.

=== PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

=== Second Session, fourteenth Parliament. LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. INDEX TO #cc-zero VOLUMES 116, 117. 118. & 119. 1901. WELLINGTON. BY AUTHORITY : JOHN MACKAY, GOVERNMENT PRINTER. 1901\.

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LEGISLATURE OF NEW ZEALAND.

=== ## GOVERNOR. His Excellency the Right Honourable UCHTER JOHN MARK, Earl of RANFURLY, Knight Com. mander of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George. ## THE MINISTRY. Premier, Colonial Treasurer, Minister of Labour, The Right Hon. RICHARD JOHN SEDDON, P.O. and Minister of Defence Colonial Secretary, Postmaster-General, Com- The Hon. Sir JOSEPH GEORGE WARD missioner of Electric Telegraphs, Minister for Railways, Minister of Industries and Commerce, and Minister of Public Health Native Minister and Commissioner of Stamp The Hon. JAMES CARROLL. Duties Minister of Education and Minister of Immi- The Hon. WILLIAM CAMPBELL WALKER, gration Minister for Public Works and Minister of Marine Minister of Justice and Minister of Mines Minister of Lands, Minister for Agriculture, and Commissioner of State Forests Commissioner of Trade and Customs .. ## ROLL OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS. Arkwright, Hon. Francis, Wellington. Baillie, Hon. William Douglas Hall, Marlborough (Chairman of Committees). Barnicoat, Hon. John Wallis, Nelson. Bolt, Hon. William Mouat, Otago. Bonar, Hon. James Alexander, Westland .* Bowen, Hon. Charles Christopher, Canterbury. Cadman, Hon. Alfred Jerome, C.M.G., Auckland. Feldwick, Hon. Henry, Otago. Fraser, Hon. Francis Humphris, Wellington. Gourley, Hon. Hugh, Otago. Grace, Hon. Morgan Stanislaus, C.M.G., Wellington. Harris, Hon. Benjamin, Auckland. Holmes, Hon. Mathew, Otago. t Jenkinson, Hon. John Edward, Canterbury. Jennings, Hon. William Thomas, Auckland. Johnston, Hon. Charles John, Wellington. Jones, Hon. George, Otago. Kelly, Hon. Thomas, Taranaki. Kelly, Hon. William, Auckland.

Kenny, Hon. Courtney William Aylmer Thomas, Marlborough. Kerr, Hon. James, Westland.] Louisson, Hon. Charles, Canterbury. * Died 7th November, 1901. + Died 27th September, 1901. 1 Died 25th August, 1901. § Died 6th August, 1901. K.C.M.G. C.M.G. The Hon. WILLIAM HALL-JONES. The Hon. JAMES MCGOWAN. The Hon. THOMAS YOUNG DUNCAN. The Hon. CHARLES HOUGHTON MILLS. McKenzie, Hon. Sir John, K.C.M.G., Otago. § MoLean, Hon. George, Otago. Miller, Hon. Henry John, Otago (Speaker). Montgomery, Hon. William, Canterbury. Morris, Hon. George Bentham, Auckland. Ormond, Hon. John Davies, Hawke's Bay. Peacock, Hon. John Thomas, Canterbury. Pinkerton, Hon. David, Otago. Pitt, Hon. Albert, Nelson. Reeves, Hon. Richard Harman Jeffares, Nelson, Rigg, Hon. John, Wellington. Scotland, Hon. Henry, Taranaki. Shrimski, Hon. Samuel Edward, Otago. Smith, Hon. Alfred Lee, Otago. Smith, Hon. William Cowper, Hawke's Bay. Stevens, Hon. Edward Cephas John, Canterbury. Swanson, Hon. William, Auckland. Taiaroa, Hon. Hori Kerei, Otago. Tomoana, Hon. Henare, Hawke's Bay. Twomey, Hon. Jeremiah Matthew, Canterbury. Walker, Hon. Lancelot, Canterbury. Walker, Hon. William Campbell, Canterbury. Whitmore, Hon. Sir George Stoddart, K.C.M.G., Hawke's Bay. Williams, Hon. Henry, Auckland.

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LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. Allen, Edmund Giblett, Waikouaiti . Allen, James, Bruce. Arnold, James Frederick, City of Dunedin. Atkinson, Arthur Richmond, City of Wellington. Barclay, Alfred Richard, City of Dunedin. Bennet, James, Tuapeka. Bollard, John, Eden. Buddo, David, Kaiapoi. Carncross, Walter Charles Frederick, Taieri. Carroll, Hon. James, Waipapu. Collins, William Whitehouse, City of Christchurch. Colvin, James, Buller. Duncan, Hon. Thomas Young, Oamaru. Ell, Henry George, City of Christchurch. Field, William Hughes, Otaki. Fisher, George, City of Wellington. Flatman, Frederick Robert, Geraldine. Fowlds, George, City of Auckland. Fraser, Alfred Levavasseur Durell, Napier. Fraser, William, Wakatipu. Gilfedder, Michael, Wallace. Graham, John, City of Nelson. Guinness, Arthur Robert, Grey (Chairman of Committees). Hall, Charles, Waipawa. Hall-Jones, Hon. William, Timaru. Hanan, Josiah Alfred, Invercargill. Hardy, Charles Albert Creery, Selwyn. Haselden, Frederick Henry, Patea." Heke, Hone, Northern Maori. Herries, William Herbert, Bay of Plenty. Hogg, Alexander Wilson, Masterton. Hornsby, John Thomas Marryat, Wairarapa. Houston, Robert Morrow, Bay of Islands. Hutcheson, John, City of Wellington. Kaihau, Henare, Western Maori. Lang, Frederic William, Waikato. Laurenson, George, Lyttelton. * Unseated on petition, 9th October, 1901. IN Vol. 118, at page 519, 1st column, in comparative statement of the revenue and expenditure for the years 1890-91 and 1901-02, the figures should read as follows :- " 1901-1902- Estimated revenue .. Estimated expenditure The words "revenue " and "expenditure " were accidentally transposed. Also, at pages 678 and 679, the word " monotypes," wherever used, should be " monolines." Lawry, Frank, Parnell. Lethbridge, Frank Yates, Rangitikei. Mackenzie, Thomas, Waihemo. Massey, William Ferguson, Franklin. McGowan, Hon. James, Thames. McGuire, Felix, Hawera. McKenzie, Roderick, Motueka. MoLachlan, John, Ashburton. McNab, Robert, Maitaia. Meredith, Richard, Ashley. Millar, John Andrew, City of Dunedin. Mills, Charles Houghton, Wairau. Monk, Richard, Waitemata. Morrison, Arthur, Caversham. Napier, William Joseph, City of Auckland. O'Meara, John, Pahiatua. O'Rorke, Hon. Sir George Maurice, Kt., Manukau (Speaker). Palmer, Jackson, Ohinemuri. Parata, Tame, Southern Maori. Pere, Wi, Eastern Maori. Pirani, Frederick, Palmerston. Rhodes, Robert Heaton, Ellesmere. Russell, George Warren, Riccarton. Russell, Hon. William Russell, Hawke's Bay. Seddon, Right Hon. Richard John, Westland. Smith, Edward Metcalf, Taranaki. Smith, George John, City of Christchurch. Stevens, John, Manawatu. Steward, Hon. William Jukes, Waitaki. Symes, Walter, Egmont. Tanner, William Wilcox, Avon. Thompson, Robert, Marsden. Thomson, James William, Clutha. Ward, Hon. Joseph George, Awarua. Wilford, Thomas Mason, Suburbs of Wellington. Willis, Archibald Duddingston, Wanganui. Witheford, Joseph Howard, City of Auckland. ##

ERRATA. CAS 5,896,000 . . . 5,763,814 .. £132,186"

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