

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL. Tuesday, 9th July, 1901. Sessional Committees -- Tobacco-smoking by Youths

- Imperial Honours - Defence Department- Death of Queen Victoria-Assassination of King

Humbert-Hospital Nurses Registration Bill. The Hon. the SPEAKER took the chair at half-past two o'clock.

PRAYERS.

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SESSIONAL COMMITTEES. NATIVE AFFAIRS .- Hon. Mr. Bonar, the Hon. Mr. Cadman, C.M.G., the Hon. Major Harris, the Hon. Mr. Jennings, the Hon. Mr. T. Kelly, the Hon. Mr. W. Kelly, the Hon. Mr. Ormond, the Hon. Mr. W. C. Smith, the Hon. Mr. Swanson, the Hon. Mr. Taiaroa, the Hon. Mr. Tomoana, the Hon. Sir G. S. Whitmore, K.C.M.G., the Hon. Mr. Williams, and the Hon. Mr. W. C. Walker, C.M.G. GOLDFIELDS AND MINES .- Hon. Mr. Barni- coat, the Hon. Mr. Bonar, the Hon. Mr. Jennings, the Hon. Mr. Kerr, the Hon. Captain Morris, the Hon. Mr. Reeves, the Hon. Mr. A. L. Smith, the Hon. Mr. Swanson, and the Hon. Mr. W. C. Walker, C.M.G. TOBACCO-SMOKING BY YOUTHS. The Hon. Colonel PITT asked the Minister of Education, Whether he will, during the present session, introduce legislation having for its object the suppression of tobacco-smoking by youths under the age of seventeen years ? He would just like to explain that he had noticed in the public press that in Victoria, where tobacconists were licensed apparently, there was a proposition to insert a clause in the license, that any one supplying youths under the age of sixteen with tobacco were to be liable to a penalty not exceeding £100. Now, he did not want anything of that kind, as probably such a heavy penalty would prevent convictions. had altered his question from cigarette-smoking to tobacco-smoking, because tobacco might be made up in another form, and not be technically cigarettes within the meaning of the law. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER said he was not so clear as to the amended form of the question. He believed that tobacco-the great goddess Nicotine-could protect herself against youthful votaries in the matter of a sacrifice in her honour, so long as it was absolute tobacco which was presented to the youthful votary. The extreme mischief, to his mind, was as to the cigarette, as the youthful votary did not know the insidious character of what he was taking in recurrent doses-each dose being so infinitesimal that nature was deprived of her customary power of rejection ; and, therefore, while he was quite prepared to consider the subject of suppressing cigarette-smoking, so far as juveniles were concerned, he thought it would be a mistake for the Council, perhaps, to be too virtuous about tobacco in its proper sense, which, so far as he knew, was perfectly able to protect itself. He thought it would be wiser at present to deal with cigarette-smoking by young people as the pressing evil. # IMPERIAL HONOURS. The Hon. Mr. FELDWICK .- I beg to move, That this Council tenders its hearty congratulations to the Honourable Sir Henry John Miller, Speaker of this Council ; the Honour- able William Campbell Walker, C.M.G., Minis. ter of Education; the Honourable Sir John Mc Kenzie, K.C. M.G .; and the Honourable Alfred Jerome Cadman, C.M.G. ; and hopes they may be long spared to enjoy the dis- tinguished honours deservedly conferred upon them by their Sovereign in recognition of their long and honourable lives spent in the public service of this colony. There are numerous precedents for what I propose. On every former occasion of the kind a motion has been moved generally without notice, but in this instance with notice. I think honourable gentlemen will agree with me that our Speaker's life, spent in the service of the colony. has been a long and honourable one ; as regards its length I may state that it has extended over a period of thirty-six years, as ascertained by myself from public records, during which period he has been a member of the Council. Your uniform courtesy, Sir, to all when a private member ; the dignified manner in which you have conducted and controlled the business of the Council while you have held the position of its chief, has met with universal

approbation, as shown by the fact that you are now enjoying your second term of office. Honourable gentle- men, I am certain, appreciate with intense plea- sure the conferrence of a distinction of which you are, we feel, so fully worthy. As regards the second honourable gentleman mentioned in the resolution-the Hon. Mr. Walker-I think no one can deny that he, very often single-handed. has led the Council with great tact and judg- ment. He has sometimes had public measures to deal with, from which not only what we He sometimes call the Conservative part of this Council have disagreed, but from which many of his own party also have dissented. He has carried many of these measures, and has lost some of them. Whenever he has lost any he has sustained defeat with a good grace, and has bowed to the will of the Council. He has never sought to domineer or force proposals he advocated down the Council's throat, nor do anything more than his absolute duty as representing the Government of the day. The third honourable gentleman men- tioned in the resolution-the Hon. Sir John Mckenzie-has lately been made a member of the Council, and this is a matter, I am sure, we all view with very great satisfaction. It is only tempered by regret that his state of health has not permitted him to join us in the early part of this session's deliberations, and be amongst us now. We trust he will be with us soon, and, in the words of the resolution, long enjoy the honour conferred upon him by his Sovereign. I may say much the same of the Hon. Mr. Cadman. He has had a lengthy term of service as a Minister of our late lamented Queen, and there cannot be a doubt that both he and the gentleman I have previously men- tioned were most capable administrators of their respeeptive branches in the Ministry. I do not think I need say more than that I feel sure I express the great satisfaction of the Legislative Council of New Zealand that these honours have been conferred ; and, in con- clusion, I will say that the Council feels that, in the honours received by these four honour- able gentlemen, it has itself been greatly honoured by the King. The Hon. Captain BAILLIE .-- In seconding

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the resolution I need add very little to what has any question of difficulty that may arise fallen from the honourable member. . I might state, in complimenting you, Sir, who have sat in the Council for thirty-six years and taken an active part in the questions that, from time to time, have come before that body, that you have presided in the chair with dignity to yourself, and have controlled the Council with honour. I am sure since you have presided everything has gone on in a most amicable way. There has been little or no disturbance of any sort to call present time, you see that baronetcies and for you to come down on honourable members in reference to anything unseemly in the Coun- cil. The Hon. Mr. Walker has for some years piloted the barque through many difficulties with honour to himself and in a very creditable way to the Council. The other two honourable gentlemen are unfortunately absent through ill- health, especially Sir John McKenzie. We regret his absence ; we all know he is in very feeble health and unable to take his seat, but we hope on a future occasion he will be present. The Hon. Mr. Cadman also has been an active mem- ber, and with Sir John McKenzie has been a Why,. I remember a great dust-contractor in Minister of the Crown for many years, and he London, a Mr. Kelk, was made a baronet. has also sat in the other House. I have much pleasure in seconding the resolution. The Hon. Mr. SCOTLAND .- So far as some even peerages and baronetcies are conferred on of the honourable gentlemen alluded to in this motion are concerned, I think a congratulatory or complimentary resolution ought to have come from the other branch of the Legislature. your responsible position in this Council, and It is true the Honourable Sir John Mckenzie for the soundness of your decisions ; but I must say that I cannot think that this knighthood is now a member of this Council, but any dis- tinction that he may have earned as a legislator- has added anything to your claims to our re as a Minister-is connected rather with the other spect. It has been well said that "the King branch of the Legislature than with this Council. may make a belted knight," but he cannot In respect to our honourable Speaker, I must make a gentleman. Sir, I respect you as a say that if this distinction is intended as an highly-educated gentleman who has

discharged honour, it strikes me as rather strange that the his duties as Speaker of this Council in a praise- honour had not been conferred many sessions before. The honourable gentleman has honour- ably presided over this Council for some years. tion to say a single word on this matter ; but, We all look up to him with respect, and I do in view of the remarks made by the honcurable think it looks very much like a slight upon the Legislative Council that knighthood has not been conferred upon him long before this present year. Now. with regard to this word "distinction," that any such honour as the Order of St. Michael and St. George should add anything to our respect for the honourable gentleman, I deny in toto. He may confer distinction on the Order by opinion largely runs in the same lines as that accepting a knighthood, but the Order can of my honourable friend with regard to the confer none upon him. That order-I hope I shall not be considered speaking too disrespect- fuily-I remember it being instituted, and it on the present occasion have richly deserved was stigmatized in many places as the " brigand order." It was instituted, I believe, to confer dis- its approval of the manner in which they have tinction upon certain noblemen or gentlemen in comported themselves politically in this country the Ionian Isles, many of whom, I was given to understand, were of a rather shady character. I question, as my honourable friend has in- think that order had better have been confined to sinuated, as to whether or not these titles will those gentlemen in the Mediterranean. Had our adorn the recipients. The whole question, to Hon. Speaker been made a Knight Bachelor ; my mind, is as to whether the recipients will had he received the same distinction which is adorn the title. They are not conferred, I take given to our learned Judges in England-and I it, in order to adorn. The adornment has al- look upon our Hon. Speaker as in some measure ready been bestowed upon those gentlemen, in a Judge -he may be said to lay down the the public estimation, by their conduct. There law ; he is the referee in the last resort in was another question raised by the honourable in the Council-I think it would have been preferable. Therefore, I think if that order had been conferred upon him, we might have looked upon it as something of a distinction, and I, for one, should not have said anything upon the present occasion. It appears to me that we are living in an age when too much respect is paid to titles, and some of them very small titles indeed. Why, in England at the knighthoods are conferred for all. and some- times very questionable, sorts of merit-in the case of the former, principally the merit of possessing well-lined purses. We know that the order of baronetcy was considered at its very inception to be a very mercenary one. King James the First, who instituted it, did so in order to replenish the Royal Exchequer, and even forced them by threats to take up baronetcies. Of course, now-a-days men are not forced into accepting baronetcies, but they are conferred on most questionable grounds. You saw his name on the dust-carts in Lon- don. He is "Sir something " Kelk now. And whiskey-distillers, brewers, et cetera. I have entertained the highest respect for years for the manner in which you, Sir, have discharged worthy and admirable manner. The Hon. Mr. JONES .- It was not my inten- gentleman who has just sat down, I think it may be admissible for me to say one or two words on the subject. I do not think it can be charged to any honourable gentlemen who received this honour that they have well-lined purses, so that is not the reason why they have been thus honoured by His Majesty. My value of these distinctions. I believe that all the honourable gentlemen who received honours them. If the Empire can do anything to show I think they are entitled to it. It is not a

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gentleman's remarks which I must take notice of. He said-or I understood him to say-he thought that if any notice were taken of the conferment of these titles in the cases of the Hon. Sir John Mckenzie and the Hon. Mr. Cadman it should have come from the other House. The honourable gentleman forgets that in serving in the Lower House of our Legisla- ture these gentlemen have been serving the whole colony ; and if any honourable gentlemen were entitled to distinction at the hands of His Majesty for services done to the Empire and for having conferred benefits on the Empire by their political conduct, I say that those gentle- men are distinctly the Hon. Sir John McKenzie and Mr. Cadman. That is all I want to say. I

suppose one ought to congratulate honourable gentlemen for the distinction conferred upon them, and in that spirit I shall be very pleased to vote for the resolution of my honourable friend ; but at the same time I think that the honour has been already conferred upon those gentlemen in the public estimation, and that they will more adorn the titles than the titles will adorn them. The Hon. Mr. BOLT .- Sir, in a very few words I would like to express my congratula- tions, and publicly state that I am exceedingly pleased that the honours have been conferred upon those honourable gentlemen who have received them. I do not see at all that the statements which my honourable friend Mr. Scotland brought forward have any cogency whatever. It does not matter what honours you may think of- academic, political, or social -if you like to go far enough back you will always find any number of people who have got them unworthily. We know very well that barely a century ago it was considered a right and proper thing in actions in the Court for the parties to the action to bring a couple of ducks or a turkey into the Judge's room before the case went into Court. Surely we would not think that, in consequence of such like actions at that time a Judge's position now was dishonourable. And I say the same thing applies to the honours which have been conferred upon those honourable gentle- men. I say the fact that those distinctions have been conferred unworthily in some cases in the past has nothing to do with what we have before us at the present time. I hold, Sir, that from the position which you have occupied in the public service of the colony, and from the very high position you have held for many years in this Council, the Imperial authorities were amply justified in granting you the honour they have done. And so it is with regard to my honourable friend the Minister of Education. He has not only been in the public service for a great many years, but he has been in charge of a department of State which I venture to think has greater issues in store-has a greater application to the welfare of the people-than perhaps any other department of State; and we know very well that he has carried out the duties of that department with the greatest satisfac- tion not only to the Parliament of the colony, but to the people of the colony generally. I think on that ground alone he has a right to the title which has been conferred upon him. My old friend Sir John Mckenzie and the Hon. Mr. Cadman are alike entitled to them, and I am sure it would be a very ungracious feeling that would begrudge them the honours which have been conferred on them. I may say this : that I have no sympathy with those who hold what I cannot help describing as a silly idea that by granting these titles we are setting up class distinctions. There is nothing, to my mind, that will create class distinctions but great wealth. That is the only thing that can bring class distinctions amongst us ; and I am happy to think that the policy which we have pursued in this colony for several years past will have a tendency to equalise wealth, and consequently do away with any chance of class distinctions arising among us. We see honour- able gentlemen getting honours now and again, but they do not alter the men. They shake hands with us, talk with us, and laugh with us just as they did before. They wear the same clothes, live in the same houses, and follow the same avocations as they did before, and what is the difference ? They have only had conferred on them the Imperial symbol of honourable service, which, to my mind, makes no class distinction whatever. If we want to avoid class distinction in this colony, we must endeavour to have the wealth of the colony equally distributed amongst the people of the colony. Personally, I am extremely gratified that the people men- tioned in the resolution have had this honour conferred upon them. I am sorry the usages of the Council do not allow us to mention the name of the Hon. Sir Joseph Ward in the resolution, but I suppose, as we are not allowed to censure any member of the other Chamber, we are not allowed to congratulate them ; but I must say I should have been very pleased to have seen his name associated with those other gentlemen mentioned in the resolution now before us. The Hon. Mr. TWOMEY .- In the debate on the Address in Reply I made a few remarks, and consequently honourable gentlemen may think that it is unnecessary for me to speak to-day. But I think this is an unique event. In no part of the previous history of the Council will you find four of its members honoured in this way in one year. I think it is an honour to us all, and it becomes the greater honour because we know full well that the

honourable gentlemen richly deserve it ; it is a case of " Well done, thou good and faithful servant." The Hon. . Mr. Jones said the honour had been won already, and that it added nothing to the recipients of it. That is absolutely truth, Sir. It is only the placing of the stamp of the mint on what public opinion That is what this has already approved. means : nothing more and nothing less. My honourable friend who moved the resolution told us that you have sat in this Chamber for thirty-six years. You were selected first for some distinguishing reason, and your conduct during the period you have been here met with the approval of your fellow-Councillors so that

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they selected you in the end, and placed you said on this point, but I do not think this is in the position which you now occupy. I do the time or place to do it. But if any word or not think, Sir, that to place the stamp of action of mine could put down this prejudice approval on the selection thus made by the against titles I would willingly put it down, for I do think it is altogether wrong. The people Council by bestowing Royal favours on you will injure the people of this colony, but who have rendered splendid service, like the that the very fact that there is such a reward in store for good public service must make the have a perfect right to these distinctions, and I colony brighter and happier. My honourable think the world will be the happier because friend the Minister of Education, in his own provincial district, had his name written amongst its law-makers half a lifetime ago. He worked through the other Chamber and effect: I think the honours conferred on the came in here, and finally reached the position four gentlemen have been fairly well dealt with, he now occupies; and, as my honourable friend put it, I think no man could discharge the and they all deserve them. They have been duties of that position with greater courtesy and greater urbanity to all than the honourable gentleman, while at the same time his services have been of a distinct advantage to the people as a whole. There, again, the stamp of public approval has been placed upon the honourable gentleman by his King, and I do not think any one will be injured by it. Then, we have two honourable gentlemen who are absent, on whom honours have been conferred after their day's work has been done. It is the evening of their lives. and practically what has been said to them is, " Well done, thou good and faithful servant." I should be tedious perhaps were I to say anything with regard to the services those two honourable gentlemen have rendered to the State ; but I think none can gainsay that they have been services which very well entitle them honourable members very much indeed for the to this recognition. There are in this colony many smiling homesteads created by the honourable gentleman who, down'in Otago, is lying on a bed of sickness, brought on by his devotion to duty. There are thousands upon thousands of prayers going up for the well-being of that honourable gentleman, but all human skill and aid apparently cannot avail; and if in the evening of his life his King confers upon him this distinction, which is well deserved, no man, I think, who has the love of the colony at heart will grudge it him. I regard these titles as the Victoria Cross of civil life. Young men who fight our battles get crosses and deco- rations and distinctions for services rendered ; and that is, without doubt, an incentive to them to deeds of daring-those deeds that have made the Empire. Surely, if honourable gentle- men render great services in civil life, they, too, may well be decorated for the services they have rendered. People who call themselves socialists-and I should not quarrel with any- body who called me one-ought to remember that there is nothing antagonistic to their doctrines in conferring distinctions of this kind upon people who render service to the State. If you bring people-and this is the aim of the socialist-to a common level, you must give come scope for human ambition. Human am- bition must have some scope ; no money can be given, and there is no means of giving scope to human ambition under the socialistic con- dition except by giving men some decoration which they will covet, and for which they will Imperial Honours. honourable recipients of these royal favours, men have such an incentive to work for their fellow-men. The Hon. Mr. PINKERTON .- I should like to add one word to what has been said, to this well earned, and I hope the Council will pass the resolution unanimously. And I would go further and say that,

apart from the honour conferred upon the gentlemen named and the work they have done, which we all recognise, we shall also feel that the Council has been honoured by the honour conferred on them. It may be true that Sir John McKenzie has not yet taken his seat; but I think the work he has done in connection with the whole of New Zealand in the other House-work that has conferred a lasting benefit on the community at large, and for our struggling settlers especially -has been at last suitably recognised by his King and country. I hope the motion will be passed unanimously. Motion agreed to. The Hon. the SPEAKER .-- I beg to thank congratulations they have offered me, and also for the extremely gratifying and cordial way in which they have expressed their approval of the distinction which has been conferred upon me. When first the intention of submitting my name to Her late Majesty Queen Victoria was conveyed to me, I, of course, felt a certain amount of surprise, for I had no idea that it was coming ; and I need hardly say I had never, directly or indirectly, in any manner whatever taken any steps to obtain such a distinction. But when the intention was conveyed to me that this distinction was to be conferred upon me, I very soon convinced myself that not only was it my duty to accept the distinction- because there could be no doubt whatever it was only conferred upon me in connection with my position in the Legislative Council ; but, further than that, I very soon came to feel that it would be a serious discourtesy on my part if I refused it. I therefore had no difficulty what- ever in accepting it ; and I feel, as the Hon. Mr. Pinkerton said, that it is an honour, in reality, which has been conferred upon this Council. I am well aware that I owe every- thing to the Council, and I am quite sure there never will be any occupant of this chair who feels more kindly towards the members of the Council than I do: I have every reason for feeling so. I beg to thank honourable members for the manner in which they have congratulated me. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .- I might be

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thanks for the congratulations which have been tendered to me personally. I have all along felt that whatever honour came to me it came to me simply because I was in the position of being able to do a certain duty to the public. Ever since I came to the colony I felt that I should be doing only what I was called upon to do in accepting any honour which came to me in the discharge of public business. I have been exceedingly fortunate all through my public life in meeting with gentlemen who always have been more generous than I can describe ; and if the last few years of my life have been cast in the Legislative Council, I can only say that they have been exceedingly pleasant ones, and that I have met with more generous treatment here than I know I have deserved ; and I have felt that whatever I have been able to do has been as the result of that kindness which generous men always extend to those connected with the transaction of public business. I can assure you that I feel very proud indeed on having been the recipient of this honour, and still more proud that it has given so much pleasure to my friends in all parts of the colony. The Hon. Mr. SCOTLAND .- I would like to make a personal explanation. When I spoke on the Hon. Mr. Feldwick's motion I was misled by some newspaper, and made a mistake. I was under the impression that you, Sir, had been created a Knight of St. Michael and St. George, but I now find that the honour of Knight Bachelor has been conferred upon you. I beg now to congratulate you upon it, and I also congratulate the Order on whose roll your name is so honourably inscribed. # DEFENCE DEPARTMENT. The Hon. Colonel PITT, in moving, That there be laid on the table of the Council a return showing the rank and names of the several officers upon the staff of the Commandant of the Forces of this colony, and likewise upon the staffs of the respective officers commanding districts ; such return to show the date of appointment of each such staff officer, the amount of his salary, and what his duties are. said,-I desire to say that I think the information asked for in that return, if it is granted, will be of very great service to Parliament in dealing with the question of defence when it comes before either House during the present session. Honourable gentlemen will recollect that last session a Joint Committee on defence was set up, and certain recommendations were made involving our recommending the expenditure of large sums of

money which the colony and the Parliament cheerfully appropriated for that purpose. One of the principal matters recommended by that Committee was that the staff in the different districts in the colony should be properly organized. It was felt at that time that there was practically no organization of the district staffs, and, indeed, that the headquarters staff, too, required reorganization to a very great extent. Very large sums of money were voted for these purposes, and also for equipping and putting the Volunteer Forces of the colony upon a sounder basis. Now, Sir, I think I am safe in saying that defence, if it is taken in hand seriously, is an expensive department for the colony, but perhaps not more expensive than such a department deserves to be ; but it is no use taking the subject of defence in hand spasmodically : it requires to be taken in hand seriously and systematically, and if the defence of the colony is to be properly administered, one thing more than another necessary is to have an efficient and properly organized staff. Now, I think I am right in saying that little or nothing almost has been done since last session in the way of organizing the staff of the different districts under commanding officers throughout the colony. The various salaries were voted for officers who are proper for these staffs, but, as far as I can hear, nothing has been done in respect to the appointment of the necessary staff officers. It is quite true. I believe, that numerous appointments have been made to the staff of the Commandant of the Forces here at headquarters in Wellington, and I for one am anxious to know what these appointments have been, and what the duties are of the staff officers who have been so appointed. I think there must be something wrong in the constitution of that staff when it is possible, as is actually the fact, that some districts in this colony have not been inspected at all for at least two years. Now, that is a state of things which should not be allowed, and there must be something wrong in the organization of the Defence staff for such a state of things to be. One matter which was strongly insisted upon by the Defence Committee last year was . the establishment of schools of instruction in the four centres at least of this colony for the instruction of the officers of the different Volunteer corps. That recommendation was accepted by Parliament, and money was cheerfully voted by both Houses for the establishment of such schools of instruction. Almost immediately after Parliament was prorogued last session, a commandant of the school of instruction was appointed, at the salary of \$400 a year; but nothing else whatever seems to have been done since. That officer, as far as I know, still performs the duties of staff officer to the Officer Commanding the Forces. He was not appointed for that purpose, however. The officer was originally brought from England as one of the adjutants which the officers commanding the districts at the four centres were intended to have; but I believe his work to-day is that of a staff officer to the Officer Commanding the Forces. The theory of the scheme of the staff was, as far as districts were concerned, that each officer commanding a district should have an adjutant, to be brought from England : but, whether he was to be brought from England or appointed from among the colonial officers, no such appointments have been made, excepting, I think, in one instance. At all events, the return which I have asked for will give information which will be extremely valuable to Parliament. I hope there will be no objection to the return being made, and if we get it within a reasonable

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time I am quite sure it will be of the highest value to Parliament in discussing defence matters when they come before it. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .- I have no objection to the return asked for being granted. and therefore, perhaps, it would be premature if I were in any shape or form to traverse the views and opinions expressed by the honourable gentleman. I think he has been a little rash in some of the statements he has made- - An Hon. MEMBER. - Which ones ? The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER. - As I said before, there is no reason why the return should not be granted, and I have great pleasure in supporting the motion. Motion agreed to. # DEATH OF QUEEN VICTORIA. The following message was received from His Excellency the Governor :- # " RANFURLY, Governor. " In reply to the Address from the Legislative Council and House of Representatives to His Majesty. the Governor has been commanded by the

King to assure both Houses of the Legislature of New Zealand of his warm gratitude for their expressions of sympathy on the death of Her late Majesty, and to convey to them his cordial appreciation of their congratulations on his accession. cal nursing from the medical officer and matron " Government House, Wellington, 8th July, 1901." On the motion of the Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER, it was ordered, That the message be entered on the Journals of the Council. # ASSASSINATION OF KING HUMBERT. A message was received from His Excellency a nurse in a hospital, and who may not have the Governor, covering a copy of the following had the same opportunity for attending lectures despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, relative to the addresses of sympathy dealt with in the 1st subsection of the Bill, from the Parliament of New Zealand on the but is ready to pass an "examination in theoretic- occasion of the assassination of King Hum- cal and practical nursing by examiners appointed bert : - by the Governor under this Act, is entitled to registration on payment of a fee of one pound " Downing Street, 31st October, 1900. " MY LORD, -With reference to my despatch towards the cost of examination." Then, as regards the future, the Bill provides that- (No. 79) of the 20th ultimo, I have the honour to inform you that Her Majesty's Ambassador thousand nine hundred and two, every person at Rome has received a note from the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, stating that the who has attained the age of twenty-three years, and is certified as having had three years' train- King of Italy has been specially pleased with ing as a nurse in a hospital, together with syste- the spontaneous manifestations of sympathy matic instruction in theoretical and practical towards the Royal House contained in the nursing from the medical officer and the matron addresses of condolence on the assassination of of that hospital (the matron herself being a King Humbert which were passed by both Houses of the Legislature of New Zealand. certificated nurse), and who passes an examina- tion from time to time held by examiners ap- " The Italian Government requests that the pointed under this Act, is entitled to registra- Roval thanks may be conveyed to the Legis- tion on payment of a fee of one pound." lature, as well as those of Her Majesty the Queen Mother .- I have, &c., " H. BERTRAM COX, come across a modern hospital nurse in any shape or form, whether he has been nursed by For the Secretary of State. her or whether he has seen her nursing his "Governor the Right Hon. the Earl of Ran- friends or patients, who cannot but realise what furly, K.C.M.G., &c." a guardian angel she is to all who come under her influence. We should therefore endeavour On the motion of the Hon. Mr. W. C. to raise her status and protect her against those WALKER, it was ordered, That the despatch who may perhaps attempt to trade on her well- be entered on the Journals of the Council. ## HOSPITAL NURSES REGISTRATION BILL. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .- Sir, I beg to move the second reading of this Bill. It is a Bill which I feel quite certain will be for the best so far as we are concerned, and the experi- ences of last year have shown us that our hospital-training is not merely hospital-training for ourselves, and for our own purposes, but it is also a training which lends itself to very much wider purposes, and for very much wider good. That the hospital nurses trained in New Zealand have been well known and well adapted to the veldt, and to the hospitals there, is a matter of great satisfaction, as they have been for many years in our own hospitals in New Zealand ; and it is with the object of raising their status, and getting an absolute assurance that the hospital nurse of New Zealand shall never be known but by the hall-mark of real professional perfection, that I bring this Bill forward. The Bill proposes that there shall be a register of nurses which shall be kept by a registrar, who is to be the Inspector-General of Hospitals. Then, the Bill provides that,- " Every person who, on the passing of this Act, holds a certificate of three consecutive years' training as a nurse in a hospital, and proves that during her training she received systematic instruction in theoretic and practi- (the matron herself being a certificated nurse), is entitled to registration on payment of a fee of ten shillings, and on application to the Registrar on or before the thirtieth day of June, one thousand nine hundred and two." Then every person who on the passing of this Act has had four consecutive years' training as in theoretic and practical nursing as the nurses " From and after the first day of January, one Well, of course, there is no one who

has ever

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earned reputation and professional character. We want to prevent anything of that sort taking place. We want the public to be assured that when a hospital nurse goes out with a badge on her arm she is there as a certificated minister of health, and able to deal in a manner such as ought to be desired with all cases of disease. As regards those who are at and sickness. present qualified, I trust the Council will see that in every shape and form the Bill protects them, and gives them the status they now hold and the status they ought to have. As regards the future, I do not think that the requirements asked are too much—that they should have three years' training as nurses in a hospital, and that during that time they should have systematic instruction in theoretical and practical nursing by a medical officer and by the matron of the hospital. I know that even in some of the London hospitals training very often connects itself almost more with household drudgery than with necessary scientific teaching in the theoretical and practical branches of the art of nursing; but at the same time our modern hospitals in the colony are being so transformed into the higher type of hospital that there need be no difficulty whatever in any one going to the best of them passing out as a nurse within the three years mentioned by the Act. I trust the Council will recognise that the intention of the Act is a good one, and that the clauses contained in it will operate towards carrying out that intention.

The Hon. Mr. SCOTLAND .- Sir, I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading of this Bill, because I think it is a very good Bill. It would be great satisfaction to persons who have sickness in their houses to be able to engage a young woman who had a proper training in nursing. I trust that the old school of nurses—the Sairey Gamps and Betsy Prigs—are extinct. It is a source of congratulation to see the number of young women—many of them highly educated and belonging to respectable families—who devote themselves to nursing—in carrying out, I may say, practical Christianity. This, I believe, will be a highly commendable life for them: and I say this with all respect and with no wish to cast any reflections on convents: With such a career before them there is no necessity whatever for young women to separate themselves from the world, or to immure themselves, however good their intentions may be, and however valuable their services may be within the walls of a convent or a convent-school. I hope the Bill will become law.

The Hon. Mr. JENKINSON .- I want to direct the Minister's attention to a defect, I think, in the Bill, in subsection (4) of clause 4. It appears to me the Bill is going to act in the way of placing restrictions on colonially trained nurses as compared with nurses coming to New Zealand, somewhat, I am sorry to say, in the same way as all colonially trained persons are restricted in New Zealand. In most services they are handicapped in entering into competition with those who come from other countries. I want to correct this and put all on Hon. Mr. W. C. Walker an equal footing. If honourable members will notice clause 4, they will see there is little restriction put upon persons becoming registered if they come from any other place but New Zealand, compared with what there is on those trained in New Zealand. Subsection 14) says,—"Every person is entitled to registration. on payment of a fee of one pound, who holds a certificate from the medical officer or authorities of any hospital out of New Zealand recognised by the Minister under any regulations under this Act." I concede that the hospital being recognised by the Minister is a certain safeguard; but I can imagine a case where a nurse comes from outside New Zealand and asks to be registered. She may have been trained in some hospital not on a level with our hospitals, which have been rightly referred to by the Minister as being thoroughly up to date. This nurse may have been trained in some small hospital, may not have passed any examination or attended any lectures; but she may be in a position to bring influence to bear on the Minister so that he will recognise that hospital for the purpose of registering that person as a nurse. I do not think that should be permitted. I think an amendment should be allowed, or if the restriction on strangers were a little closer it would be all the better for our colonially trained nurses. If we are going to recognise hospitals out of New Zealand a gazetted list should be made of such hospitals, and then we

should know that those hospitals are hospitals in the ordinary sense of the word, and not, perhaps, some small hospital in an obscure digging township, and that a nurse should have such a hospital recognised simply for the purpose of her own case. The Hon. Mr. T. KELLY .- I think it could be arrived at in this way : by putting in the words " public hospital "-eliminate all private hospitals, and make it " public." The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .- That could be done in the interpretation clause. The Hon. Mr. T. KELLY .- I am glad to see the Bill introduced, because I think it necessary that nurses in hospitals should be placed on a proper footing; but I do not think the Bill goes far enough. It only deals with nurses that apply for registration. There should be some general system in regard to the initiatory steps of training a nurse. At the present time it is left to every hospital to make its own regulations, and those regulations are in many instances very defective. There ought to be some system of examination in the very initiatory steps with regard to an education standard and physical fitness, as intelligence is very necessary to good nursing ; and, owing to the arduous nature of the work, physical fitness is absolutely indispensable. There is nothing in the Bill dealing with that, that I can see. But this is the very starting-point of being a good nurse. In regard to nurses, what we require is some technical knowledge. We do not want nurses to have the technical qualification of doctor. and if the examination is made too technical I fear we shall spoil them as nurses. I think. a

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connection with the examinations, and dealing The Hon. Mr. JONES. - On the whole, I with the matter generally, our object should be think this Bill is worthy of our approval. If there happen to be any small defects in the to produce good intelligent nurses-that is, we want them to be effectually trained to attend measure they can be disposed of in Committee ; the sick, to have some general knowledge of but the remark made by the Hon. Mr. Kelly sanitary matters and the practical work which with reference to lady doctors, I think, ought good nursing involves : but we do not want to not to go unnoticed. I understood the honour- give them too technical a training. Any one who able gentleman to say that we did not want knows anything about a hospital must know women doctors, and he implied that they were that it is very hard work, and requires young good nurses spoilt and bad doctors. Well, we persons of strong physique to stand the arduous have not many lady doctors in the colony. I Labour and the scenes they have to go through ; only know of three, all of whom, I think, are and therefore it is absolutely necessary that ornaments to the profession, and that is ad- physical fitness should be insisted on as one of mitted by gentlemen qualified to judge. One of these ladies is Miss Siedeberg ; another is the most essential qualifications. The Hon. Mr. KERR .- I thoroughly approve Miss Platts, now practising in Wellington ; of the Bill, and think it is a very useful measure. another is a lady whose name I have for- Will the Government at all times see that in gotten, but who is practising at Waimate, in small public hospitals the matrons are certifi- Canterbury. These ladies are ornaments to the profession ; they are admitted to be so by the cated nurses, otherwise they may be disqualified. Then, in regard to the lectures, will the Govern- medical fraternity, and I think we ought not to allow them to be discredited by prejudice. ment see that there is a lecturer or qualified medical man to give the lectures? If not, they The Hon. Mr. T. KELLY .- The honourable gentleman, I think, misunderstood me. I did will be disqualified on account of not receiving not apply any remarks which reflected in any the lectures. I merely call the attention of the Minister to these points. It would be a pity if way on women doctors, who, I think, in regard to a certain class of work, are entirely bene- a girl, after training to be a competent nurse, should find at the end of her three years that ficial and useful ; but I was talking about the she is disqualified from either of these reasons. nurses. I expressed a desire that good nurses The Hon. Mr. SHRIMSKI .- There are many should not be spoiled by having to pass an un- due examination in theoretical knowledge when hospitals in the colony in outlying districts, and the nurses in those institutions have not their real practical work was nursing. If, how- the same chance of passing their examinations. ever, they chose to go in for the profession in They have a

great variety of cases to attend to, reality, and to pass the necessary examinations, I would certainly be delighted, and I would be and yet at the same time, although they may be qualified in every shape and form to discharge the last man to say anything against them charge their arduous duties, they have not the having the fullest opportunity. The Hon. Mr. JONES .- I would like to say, opportunity of passing the necessary examination by way of explanation, that I quite misunderstood as nurses. I hope, therefore, that some provision will be made to meet the case of the honourable gentleman, who is very nurses in outlying districts, who in some cases hard to hear sometimes by members sitting on have under their care more patients than the this side of the Council, speaking, as he does, nurses in the larger hospitals. Sometimes facing the other way, and with his back towards there are only one or two nurses to a hospital. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .- I am very tall. I have known hospitals where female pleased to hear that the Council thinks this nurses are employed, and these girls, though they have been there for years, have not had is a very useful measure. The suggestions that the opportunity of attending the lectures and have been made will be duly considered by me, and, if possible, adopted before it goes through rawing the examinations. They are practically wasting their time, because they are not able Committee. Bill read the second time. to qualify as professional nurses, and some provision ought to be made to meet their case. The Council adjourned at four o'clock p.m. The Hon. Mr. A. LEE SMITH .- There are two subclauses in the Bill which require some explanation. Subclause (1) of clause 4 says that # HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. every person who holds a certificate of three years' consecutive training is entitled to registration on payment of a fee of 10s., without any examination ; while subclause (3) of clause 4 First Readings-Imported Railway Passenger - car- says that every person who has had three years' training, with systematic instruction in theoretical and practical nursing, is entitled to registration on payment of a fee of \$1. I should like an explanation as to why there should be this difference in the fees to be paid. Surely three years of the same training in a hospital-consecutively or not-should enable a nurses to qualify on the same terms, and so the 1 Tuesday, 9th July, 1901.
 riages-Land for Settlements Acts - Rimutaka Railway-Vessels chartered by Government- I andless Natives in South Island - Mortgages- State Fire Insurance Bill - Assassination of King Humbert - Death of Queen Victoria - Address in Reply-Tasman River -- System of Payment to Co-operative Workmen - Fish - hateneries - Masterton - Waipukurau Loop - line of Rail- Way-Appointment of Boiler Inspectors - Local Option Poll in King.country-Old-age Pensions- Surveyor-General-Portfolios and Departments
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to Crown Tenants-Through Rate for Grain- Rifles for Volunteers and Clubs-Railway Passengers -Native Land Court-Springburn Branch Line-Overcoats for \Volunteers-Land for Land- less Natives -Dunedin-Mosgiel Duplicate Line- Charles Lillywhite-Land for Settlement in the King-country-Fair Rent Bill-Wangamomona- Ohura Road - Stratford-Kawakawa Railway- Uniform School.books - Wellington-Hutt Rail- way -Dentists as Jurymen-Terms of Judicial Appointments-Small Birds Nuisance Bill-Importation of Big Game-Rivers Commission Report- Maori Art -- Treatment of Cadets at Christ- church - State Fire Insurance- Sanatoria for Consumptives-Provision for Injured Constables -Railway-sleepers-Classification of Inmates of Lunatic Asylums-Federation Commission Report - Wairarapa Lake Reclamation - Local Authorities Indemnity Bill-Referendum Bill. ## Mr. SPEAKER took the chair at half-past two o'clock. # PRAYERS. # FIRST READINGS. Ashburton County Council Bill, Representation Bill, Borough of Mornington Tramways Bill, Divorce Bill, Totalisator Abolition Bill, Pedlars and Hawkers Bill, Impounding Bill, Impounding Bill (No. 2), Gaming and Lotteries Bill, Westport Harbour Board Reserve Vesting Bill, Woodville County Bill, Cemetery Trustees Validation Bill, Land and Live-stock Auctions Bill, Invercargill Reserve Leasing Bill, Money-lenders Bill, Limitation of Profits and Prevention of Rings and Combines Bill. # IMPORTED RAILWAY PASSENGER- CARRIAGES. On the motion of Mr. HOGG (Masterton), it was ordered, That there be laid before this House a return showing how many new railway

passenger-carriages have been imported into the colony since the beginning of the year, and how they have been disposed of, and, if similar carriages can be made in the colony, the difference in the ascertained and estimated cost. # LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS ACTS. On the motion of Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley), it was ordered, That there be laid before this House a return showing, - (1) The number of blocks of land acquired under the Land for Settlements Acts ; (2) the names of the provincial districts where situated ; (3) the area of each block ; (4) the cost per acre of each block ; (5) the number of sections each block was subdivided into ; (6) the number of eligible applicants admitted to the ballot for each block ; and (7) the average number of applicants admitted to the ballot for each section : this return to be for the years ending 31st March, 1898, 1899, 1900, and 1901. # RIMUTAKA RAILWAY. On the motion of Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa), it was ordered, That there be laid before this House a return showing, - (1) The cost of maintenance of the line from Cross Creek to the Summit, and from Cross Creek to Upper Hutt : (2) the complete working-expenses of the two foregoing alternative lengths ; (3) the term " working-expenses " to include the setting-out in a separate sum of the amount paid for overtime to railway employes engaged on the line from Cross Creek to Upper Hutt ; (4) the approximate cost of the construction of a deviation from Upper Hutt to Woodside, together with the lengths of line on the proposed deviation and by the present line, the approximate saving in time in the journey, and the estimated saving per annum in expenditure on maintenance, &c., as between the present line and the proposed deviation. # VESSELS CHARTERED BY GOVERNMENT. On the motion of Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce), it was ordered, That there be laid before this House a return showing all vessels chartered by the New Zealand Government to convey troops or produce, or both, to South Africa for the two years ending 30th June, 1901 ; the return to show the name of the vessel, terms of charter, the number of troops and quantity of produce shipped, the name of the shipper and quantity each shipped, the price paid on account of freight per ton, &c., and the total freight received. If troops were shipped on a vessel not chartered by the Government : the amount paid for their transport, and to whom. The return to show also any recoveries received by the Government on account of transport of troops, and to state any transport effected by the Imperial authorities. LANDLESS NATIVES IN SOUTH ISLAND. On the motion of Mr. PARATA (Southern Maori District), it was ordered, That the report of the Commissioners with regard to lands for landless Natives in the South Island be laid on the table of the House. # MORTGAGES. On the motion of Major STEWARD (Waitaki), it was ordered, That there be laid before this House a return of the mortgages registered in the colony from the 31st March, 1900. to the 31st March, 1901, being a continuation of H. - 45 of last session, and including the like particulars. # STATE FIRE INSURANCE BILL. IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE. On the motion, That provision be made for this Bill, Mr. T. MACKENZIE (Waihemo) said, - Am I in order in observing that we might later on find it necessary to make an amendment, including in the scope of this measure marine insurance as well ? Mr. CHAIRMAN. - That would not be in order. Mr. SEDDON (Premier). - I may say, now that I have introduced the Bill in the constitutional way by message from the Governor, that it is my intention to set up a special Committee of the House to make inquiry into this matter, and I think sufficient information will be elicited to warrant the House proceeding with

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the measure, and dealing with what appears to me to be a serious injustice to the people of this colony. Motion agreed to, and reported to the House. Bill read a first time. # ASSASSINATION OF KING HUMBERT. A message was received from His Excellency the Governor covering a copy of the following despatch which he had received from the Secretary of State for the Colonies relative to the address of sympathy from the Parliament of New Zealand on the occasion of the assassination of King Humbert :- " Downing Street, 31st October, 1900. " MY LORD, - With reference to my despatch (No. 79) of the 20th ultimo, I have the honour to inform you that Her Majesty's Ambassador at Rome has received a note from the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs stating that the King of Italy has been specially pleased with the

spontaneous manifestations of sympathy towards the Royal House contained in the addresses of condolence on the assassination of King Humbert which were passed by both Houses of the Legislature of New Zealand. " The Italian Government requests that the Royal thanks may be conveyed to the Legislature, as well as those of Her Majesty the Queen Mother .- I have, &c., "H. BERTRAM COX, For the Secretary of State. " Governor the Right Hon. the Earl of Ranfurly, K.C.M.G., &c." On the motion of Mr. SEDDON (Premier), the despatch was ordered to be entered on the Journals of the House. # DEATH OF QUEEN VICTORIA. The following message was received from His Excellency the Governor :- # "RANFURLY, Governor. " In reply to the Address from the Legislative Council and House of Representatives to His Majesty, the Governor has been commanded by the King to assure both Houses of the Legislature of New Zealand of his warm gratitude for their expressions of sympathy on the death of Her late Majesty, and to convey to them his cordial appreciation of their congratulations on his accession. " . Government House, Wellington, 8th July, 1901." On the motion of Mr. SEDDON (Premier), the message was ordered to be entered on the Journals of the House. # ADDRESS IN REPLY. Mr. SPEAKER .- I have to inform the House that His Excellency appointed Saturday last, at noon, as the time on which to receive the Address in Reply, and that, accompanied by some members of the House, I waited on His Excellency and presented the said Address, to section alluded to by the honourable member which he returned the following communication :- "MR. SPEAKER, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. "I thank you for your Address, and for the assurance it contains that the measures submitted to you will receive your serious attention. " "RANFURLY. " Government House, Wellington, 6th July, 1901." It was ordered that the reply of His Excellency be entered on the Journals of the House. # TASMAN RIVER. Major STEWARD (Waitaki) asked the Minister of Lands, Whether, in accordance with the promise given in the House last session, he has caused a report to be prepared by a competent engineer upon the best means of crossing the Tasman River (whether by mono-rail or otherwise), so as to enable the shortening by a day of the tourist route from Fairlie to the Hermitage, Mount Cook ; if not, why has such report not been obtained ? Mr. DUNCAN (Minister of Lands) said the District Surveyor at Timaru was instructed some time since to examine the river and report on the proposal made last session by the Hon. Major Steward, but pressure of other work prevented his doing it. He was, however, now on the ground, and his report was expected in the course of a few days. # SYSTEM OF PAYMENT TO CO-OPERATIVE WORKMEN. Mr. HOGG (Masterton) asked the Government, Whether it is true that workers on the North Island Trunk line have in some instances to travel distances of fifteen to twenty miles to and from the nearest township every time they receive their cheques ; and, if so, why the system of paying co-operative workmen on the works where they are employed is not uniformly carried out ? His reason for asking the question was that he had been informed that some of the gangs of men working on the Northern Trunk Railway-line, eight or nine miles beyond Taihape, had to travel to that township every time they received their money, and then back to their camp-a distance of about eighteen miles. They usually started in the afternoon, and did not get back to their camp until it was dark. It was a dangerous practice to travel about the country with money in one's possession, and at the same time it was a needless task to set for the men. He submitted it was better that one man should be sent to the works with the money than that a lot of workmen should be inconvenienced by having to travel a long journey. He understood that in the Lands and Survey Department the men were paid on the sections on which they worked. Mr. HALL - JONES (Minister for Public Works) said his instructions were that the men were to be paid on the section on which they were engaged ; but he understood that in one or two instances the men on the particular were asked to come into Taihape for their

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money. That, he understood, was on account of some of the men wishing to be paid at that place. The

engineer had been reminded of the former instruction, that the men were to be paid on the section on which they worked, and he thanked the honourable gentleman for bringing the matter under his notice. # FISH-HATCHERIES. Major STEWARD (Waitaki) asked the Colonial Secretary, - (1) Whether the Government proposes to place sufficient sums on the estimates this session for the enlargement and further equipment of the salmon-hatchery at Hakataramea ; (2) also for the further importation of salmon-ova ; and (3) to assist those acclimatisation societies which have fish-hatcheries in the breeding and distribution of trout? For a good many years past the colony had been endeavouring-so far unsuccessfully-to introduce salmon into our rivers, not only for the purposes of sport, but that they might become a means of revenue and an important item of food-supply. During the recess he had visited the salmon-hatchery at Hakataramea, in his electorate, and there seemed to be every reason to hope that on this occasion the effort would succeed. He saw no less than a hundred and fifty thousand fine healthy fry, and if the supply were kept up and the work properly managed-as it would be if Mr. Ayson got sufficient funds-he believed that in a few years our rivers would be well stocked with salmon. Mr. HALL-JONES (Minister of Marine) said the hatchery established at Hakataramea had afforded him great satisfaction, inasmuch as the ova had developed very well. Only salmon ova were being treated there at present. Arrangements were made last year for a supply, and a further supply would come in during the present year. He had been informed there was an opportunity of collecting trout-ova in the neighbourhood without any great expense, and he had practically made a start to get a small collection to see how it turned out. If successful, the operations could be extended. As regarded the salmon-ova, no distribution had been made yet to the different districts. In order to carry on the work successfully it had been considered better that the young fish should be kept until they were able to fight their own battles and take care of themselves. Not taking this course appeared to have been the fault in all previous experiments. As regarded the trout ova, he thought it should be obtained ; and, if the cost was not great, he thought it would be well if the colony obtained ova from this hatchery for distribution among the fish-hatcheries of the colony. Major STEWARD said that the Hon. the Minister seemed to misunderstand the first part of the question. Mr. HALL-JONES said that the arrangements last year were made just before the arrival of the ova, and only sufficient to meet the requirements at that time. To meet the extended requirements this year additional provision would have to be made on the estimates. Mr. HALL-JONES MASTERTON-WAIPUKURAU LOOP-LINE OF RAILWAY. Mr. HOGG (Masterton) asked the Government, If they will make full inquiry as to the probable cost, prospective traffic, and advisability of constructing a loop-line between Masterton and Waipukurau, on the Wellington-Napier line of railway? His desire was that the Government should make inquiry as to whether the time was advantageous for making a railway-line through what was now a thickly populated part of the Wellington and Hawke's Bay Districts. The line, he believed, need not be a very expensive one, and it would give assistance to Crown tenants who occupied something like four thousand square miles of country. The localities to be benefited embraced Mount Baker, Alfredton, Tiraumea, Mount Cerberus, the Puketois, and Weber. The soil was rich, and was now producing an abundance of meat, wool, and hides, and some dairy produce. There was a considerable quantity of useful timber in some parts of the country, which, within a limited number of years, would be destroyed by fire in the process of settlement unless improved means were provided for bringing timber from the sawmills in the remote bush into the centres and sea-ports. But, though this country was rich in almost every other kind of material, it was extremely deficient in road-metal. It was papa country, and, though a large amount of public money had been spent in making roads, these were only available for wheel traffic during the summer. The result was that the settlers were at a great disadvantage. They could not carry on properly such a thing as the dairy industry-an industry which would be of great use to the settlers and their families. There was a necessity for giving them better means of access to the markets. The question was, whether the railway-line should not be made as soon

as practicable. He did not say whether the line should be of the ordinary construction or a light line, but he did say that a railway-line of some description would be a great advantage to those people, and also to the State and the local bodies, by enabling them to make metalled roads at much less cost than at present. There had lately been efforts on the part of certain individuals to get tram-lines constructed by private enterprise, or with the aid of the resident ratepayers. He thought the State was only doing its duty when it endeavoured to discourage such efforts. All railway-lines, he considered, should be in the hands of the State. He had no wish to see district lines constructed, such as had been witnessed in the past in the South Island and other parts of the colony—lines made by a private company or corporate body, that would have to be purchased at a huge expense by the State afterwards. If the time had arrived for making this line it should be made, after due inquiry, by the State, and the risk and responsibility should not be imposed on the settlers or intrusted to private enterprise. Mr. HALL-JONES (Minister for Public Works) said he entirely agreed with the concluding part of the honourable gentleman's

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remarks. He thought that all the railway-lines of the colony should be in the hands of the State, and he thought that this Parliament and any future Parliament should work in that direction. He had heard something of the matter that the honourable gentleman had brought up some short time ago, when a deputation waited upon the Government to draw attention to the need of a railway in that part of the colony. He was under the impression that the honourable gentleman had all the information that he was asking for in the question. They had the preliminary survey, statistics showing the class of materials to be carried on the line, approximate estimate of the cost, and nearly everything that was required. As the honourable member was aware, each session the Government had a large number of applications from various districts in the colony asking for surveys of railway-lines proposed to be made, and he would understand the difficulty there was to spare the services of the officers of the department to do the work asked for. They had a fairly large programme laid down, and he was inclined to think that they should adhere to the works that they had in hand, and push them forward as speedily as possible. If the honourable gentleman would let the matter stand over for a while, perhaps he (the Minister) or his colleagues would have an opportunity of seeing the proposed route and becoming convinced that the line should be made. Personally, he would be pleased to visit that part of the colony and see for himself what the district could produce, and then make his own recommendation. If that would suit the honourable member, he would be glad to meet his wishes.

APPOINTMENT OF BOILER INSPECTORS. Mr. COLLINS (Christchurch City) asked the Minister of Marine, Whether he will consider the advisability of amending the regulations respecting the appointment of boiler Inspectors, so that competent boilermakers may become eligible for the position? At the present time engineers exclusively held the positions of boiler Inspectors, and it seemed that engineering and boiler-making were distinct branches of trade. The boilermakers held that an engineer was not necessarily the best boiler Inspector. Some dozen Inspectors were at present employed, at a cost of £3.665. In Australia the same difficulty arose, and it was overcome by appointing competent boilermakers as assistant Inspectors, and he would ask if that could not be done here. Mr. HALL-JONES (Minister of Marine) said this was not the first time the question had been brought before him. At the first glance there seemed to be a great deal in what the honourable member had said, but he would point out that all the Inspectors were trained men, with a knowledge of both engines and boilers, and the great need was for men who combined both qualifications. To appoint a boilermaker would mean that an engineer would also have to be appointed to assist in the inspection, and the cost would be double what it was at the present time. An engineer, to be appointed as an Inspector, must have an expert knowledge of boilers, and if a boilermaker had the necessary knowledge of machinery he was entitled to apply for such a position.

LOCAL OPTION POLL IN KING-COUNTRY. Mr. LANG (Waikato) asked the Premier, Whether he intends, as promised last

session, to appoint a Commission to inquire into the desirability or otherwise of placing the people residing in the King-country (Rohe-Potae) in a similar position to the electors living in other parts of the colony with regard to the poll for local option purposes? He had been requested to bring this matter under the notice of the Government (by a meeting of clergy and laity recently held in the Waikato, who passed the following resolution : "That the Government be asked when the Royal Commission on licensed houses in the King-country, the ap- been promised, pointment of which has will commence their inquiries." The pre- sent position was generally admitted to be very unsatisfactory. The Premier promised to set up a Commission some time ago, and it was a matter for regret that that had not been done. If it had been done, the people of the colony would have been enlightened on the question. Last session the House received a very large number of petitions from various parts of the colony on this subject. He might say that the greatest number of petitions, with the largest number of signatures, came from districts most remote from the Waikato, show- ing that they knew little or nothing about the question. If this Commission were set up, the people in other parts of the colony would have been enlightened on the subject, and, he ven- tured to say, would not have signed the peti- tions. The true position, so far as the people of the King-country were concerned, was this : They simply asked that they might be placed in the same position as electors in other parts of the colony so far as the licensing question was concerned. He hoped the Premier would be able to give a satisfactory reply. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) said it was well known to honourable members that during last recess there were an abnormal number of Royal Commissions set up-in fact, you might say that the panel was almost exhausted. He trusted the honourable member was not asking this question with the view of intimating to him that during the recess he would like to be appointed to this Commission. The real diffi- culty, of course, in this matter arose from the fact that there had been a public agitation against any licenses being granted there, as would be seen by the petitions presented last ses- sion and this session. They were numerous, al- though signed by a very few persons, the de- sire evidently being to make the pear as general as possible. But, Government were aware, the situation had not changed. If there was any change at all it was for the better. That being the case, the Government had not seen its way to appoint a Commission ; but he might say the matter

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was one deserving consideration, and would not be lost sight of. Mr. LANG might say, by way of explanation, that he had not the remotest idea of being appointed to the Commission ; he never expected anything of that kind from the Premier. He was very sorry the Premier had not given a decided answer, because it was an important subject, and a great number of people were interested in this matter. Mr. SEDDON thought his answer was de- finite and decisive. # OLD-AGE PENSIONS. Mr. COLVIN (Buller) asked the Premier, If he will this session introduce a Bill to amend the Old-age Pensions Act in the direction of enabling persons to receive the pension who have been unfortunately disabled by accident, and consequently incapacitated from earning a livelihood ? Mr. SEDDON (Premier) said he was not clear what the honourable member meant by the words "disabled by accident." Assuming that he meant persons who were permanently injured or disabled, the Government had not the statistics to show the number of persons so incapacitated. In the census of 1896 upwards of a thousand persons were returned as suffer- ing from accident. Probably most of those persons were only suffering temporarily. The present cost of the Old-age Pensions Act to the taxpayers was very heavy; and the question was whether overloading might not bring down the structure. One required to be very careful, at the same time that one might desire to meet cases such as those the honourable member re- ferred to; and, presuming that the persons were permanently disabled, he thought there ought to be some treatment other than they received, but whether it should be by a cer- tain provision whereby the State should find one moiety and the local taxation of the district the other it was not for him definitely to decide at the present time. He knew of many cases where men had been permanently disabled and no provision had been made for

them. The Charitable Aid Boards sought to shirk the responsibility and put the cases off from one district to another, and meanwhile the unfortunates were in want. The Workmen's Compensation Act of last session would, he thought, go in some measure to meet the necessity. He could only say that he sympathized with the honourable gentleman, and he would obtain fuller information, so as to be able to know what really the cost would be ; but he would not take a leap in the dark, and could not at the present moment say what course would be taken. # SURVEYOR-GENERAL. Mr. HERRIES (Bay of Plenty) asked the Government, When the vacancy in the office of Surveyor-General is to be filled up, with a view of carrying out the provisions of section 4 of "The Representation Act Amendment Act, 1896 "; and, further, when the House will be given an opportunity of nominating the unofficial members of the Representation Committees, as provided in the above-mentioned Act ? He did not wish to embarrass the Government with regard to the departmental appointment of the Surveyor-General. All he wanted to know was with reference to the position of the Surveyor-General as one of the Commission to decide the boundaries of the new electorates. Under the Act to which the question referred there were two Commissions, one for each Island, and the Surveyor-General was an official member of the Commission to deal with the boundaries of the electorates in the North Island. The other Commissioners were the Chief Commissioners of Crown Lands in the various land districts. The Act provided that as soon as the census department gave the Commissioners the returns they must proceed to determine the boundaries. The Surveyor-General had not been appointed, and the Commission could not act till he was appointed. With regard to the second part of the question, the Act provided that the unofficial members were to be two gentlemen nominated by the House of Representatives. He was not aware whether the -- four unofficial gentlemen who had acted when the previous boundaries were defined were still in office or not. He thought the House should know as soon as possible the boundaries of the new electorates. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) said it would be contended that, constitutionally, if they fixed the boundaries at once or defined the new districts. then Parliament should be dissolved. An Hon. MEMBER .- Oh, no. Mr. SEDDON said, Yes, that had been contended by high constitutional authorities. He did not know that it had been followed as a rule, but he did say that the moment the districts were changed it to some extent disorganized business, and he had known it cause unpleasantness. He had known one member invading the preserves of another member when he knew that a particular part of a district would fall to his lot at the next election. It led to that ; but, at all events, there was no necessity whatever when there was no Royal Commission. Under the existing law an Order in Council authorised the Representation Commissioners to proceed to business. The honourable member who interrupted him had not read the law. However, that order had not been issued, and it would not be issued until the census returns -- were in. Such being the case, there need be no anxiety as to the appointment of the Surveyor-General or of the Representation Commissioners. In the meantime the Representation Commissioners would not go to work until next year, unless something extraordinary occurred, and he did not think there was much danger of that at the present time. # PORTFOLIOS AND DEPARTMENTS OF MINISTERS. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccarton) asked the Premier, If he will state to the House the portfolios and departments administered by each member of the Cabinet? Since the accession of two or three gentlemen to the Cabinet during

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the last twelve months there had been a good deal of reshuffling of the positions, and, although members of the House had a general idea of the portfolios held by Ministers, there were a number of departments the political heads of which it was extremely difficult for one to know. His first idea was to ask the Premier to embody this information in a paper and have it forwarded to members, but, as that would be in the nature of a return, he had thought it better to ask the Premier the question, so that members would have a knowledge as to which Minister to address, in connection with the public business they had to transact.

Mr. SEDDON (Premier) thought it would have been better if the honourable member had moved for a return ; but, if honourable members thought it would not be detaining the House too long, he would endeavour to give the information asked for. He was Premier, Colonial Treasurer, Minister of Labour, Minister of Defence. He was also in charge of the Public Trust Department, the Government Insurance Department, and the Taxing Department. In respect to the Labour Department, the workmen's homes coming under the Land for Settlements Act, and the land-purchase portion of the Land for Settlements Act—that Act which had at one time been administered by the Minister of Lands—was now administered by himself. He might add that he also occasionally acted as Attorney-General. Then, Sir Joseph Ward acted as Minister for Railways, Colonial Secretary, Postmaster-General, Minister of Industries and Commerce, and Minister of Public Health. Mr. Hall-Jones was Minister for Public Works and Minister of Marine, and he was also in charge of the Government Printing Office. Mr. McGowan was Minister of Justice, Minister of Mines, and was also in charge of the Police Department. Mr. Carroll was Native Minister and Commissioner of Stamps. Mr. Duncan was Minister of Lands and Agriculture. He (Mr. Duncan) also controlled the surveying and subdivision of land brought under the Land for Settlements Act. The Hon. Mr. Walker was Minister of Education, and, in addition to his duties in that respect, the cadets connected with the public schools and the industrial schools were under his charge. He (Mr. Walker) also administered the Lunacy and Charitable Aid Departments. Mr. Mills was Commissioner of Customs, and also was the Minister in charge of the Advances to Settlers Office. There were a large number of portfolios and departments, and the increase of work had, he thought, been fairly evenly divided. He only hoped that, with the increase of work Parliament was likely to place upon their shoulders, they would be able to carry it out without sacrifice to their health.

Mr. G. W. RUSSELL asked if the honourable gentleman would be good enough to supply members with a printed list of the portfolios he had just given to the House. Mr. SEDDON said there would probably be a corrected list issued in Hansard very shortly, and each member would have a copy.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE RATES. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) asked the Premier, If, in legislation dealing with combinations or trusts in the colony, he will include a provision against the Government Insurance Department entering into a combination with private accident insurance companies in regard to accident insurance rates ? A local body in his district found that, whereas in the past they had been able to insure their employes for twenty-four hours at a low rate, the other day they received a communication from a private insurance company to the effect that arrangements had been made by the Government Insurance Department by which accident insurance companies in the colony charged higher rates for accident insurance. Well, of course, the reason given for raising the rates was the operation of the Workers' Compensation Act, but it seemed to him that this combination on the part of the accident insurance companies with the Government department was exactly the thing they were endeavouring to prevent. He would like to ask the Premier whether he had any knowledge of this combination, and, if it were a fact, whether he thought it proper that that sort of arrangement should be entered into by a Government department. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) must deprecate allegations being made, and, on the strength of these allegations, questions being asked of the Government, tending to produce a wrong impression if it got into the newspapers. The very fact of this question, as it appeared now, being before Parliament prejudiced the position of the Government and this particular department, and he (Mr. Seddon) was not going to be held responsible for what any of these rival companies might have stated in any letters or communications they had sent to would-be clients. Mr. PIRANI said he had asked if it was correct. Mr. SEDDON said, as the question now stood on the Order Paper it read as follows: " If, in legislation dealing with combinations or trusts in the colony, he (the Premier) will include a provision against the Government Insurance Department entering into a combination with private accident insurance companies in regard to accident insurance rates." Now, whoever read that would come to the conclusion that the Government were doing it, and that there was a

necessity for special legislation preventing it, and he said that that was where the situation and the position were prejudiced. Now, there was no such combination between the Government Insurance Department and any company, and he fancied they would see before long cases of agreement between the Government Insurance Department and these companies. That was as far as he knew ; and he had every reason to know that these companies had found out from the legislation which had been enacted that their terms and conditions must be the same as our Insurance Department's. The Legislature having ordered that this should be so, the companies had agreed. They had to agree whether they liked it or not.

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That referred merely to the terms and conditions, not, of course, to the rates or premiums. An Hon. MEMBER .- They say so. Mr. SEDDON said, At all events, there was no such agreement or combination as that referred to in the question between these companies and the Government; and if there had been anything said in that way, then all he could remark was that whoever said it had been under a misapprehension. He knew what his instructions had been. His instructions were to do business for our own rates and to go our own way, and the companies were to do the same. The intention of the Legislature was that, just as in introducing cheap money into the colony, we practically fixed the rates payable. The only question that could possibly arise would be on the question of reinsuring, and in respect to the claims. At all events, the directions of the Government were clear and distinct : that they fixed the lowest possible rate, and that they had reduced their expenses to a minimum, and they would go on in that way, and that was what was intended by the Legislature. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) .- Are you reinsuring? Mr. SEDDON said they might, as far as coal-mines were concerned, but they had not decided definitely. REBATES TO CROWN TENANTS. Mr. R. THOMPSON (Marsden) asked the Minister of Lands, Why the Commissioner of Crown Lands in Auckland and the Receiver of Land Revenue have, as is stated, refused to allow any rebate to Crown tenants in the Auckland District, while it is alleged that in other parts of the colony a rebate of 10 per cent. has been allowed to the whole of the Crown tenants ? This question was one which affected a very large body of settlers in the Province of Auckland. It appeared that a rebate of 10 per cent. was allowed to the Crown tenants in other portions of the colony when they paid their rents promptly, but this has not been so in the Province of Auckland. It was a difficult matter for him to believe that the Commissioner of Crown Lands had taken up this position unless he had been instructed by some higher authority to do so. It appeared from the information he had received that the Commissioner of Crown Lands had himself no other course than to refuse to allow the rebate. He held in his hand a receipt which an Auckland settler had forwarded to him. It was a receipt from the Receiver of Land Revenue. This settler had sent in his rent in due time, deducting the 10 per cent. The Receiver of Land Revenue returned this receipt, showing the settler still indebted to the amount of 10s., being the amount of the rebate. And he put a foot-note to the receipt to the effect that the Commissioner had refused to allow the rebate. Now, it appeared to him that that was the system in which the Crown tenants of the Province of Auckland had been treated, and, if so, it was a very serious matter to them. He knew this particular settler well, and also his section of land, and there was no poorer section of land perhaps in the County of Whangarei, nor a section of land whose tenant or occupier was more entitled to a rebate than the occupier of this section. Until he heard an explanation from the Minister he could form no idea why the Receiver of Land Revenue had taken up this attitude; but this officer seemed to wash his hands of the whole thing and to throw the responsibility on the Commissioner of Crown Lands. He hoped the Minister would make inquiry and see that this state of things was not allowed to continue longer. Mr. DUNCAN (Minister of Lands) said, in answer to this question, the Commissioner of Crown Lands in Auckland reported that the Receiver of Land Revenue had allowed the rebate in all cases where good reasons had been advanced for doing so, and that several applications were now under consideration.

Mr. R. THOMPSON said, Here was a receipt showing that that was not the case. Mr. DUNCAN asked what was the date of it. Mr. R. THOMPSON said the date was the 21st June, 1901. It was the receipt for the July rent. Mr. DUNCAN supposed the case was one that came under the designation of not being, in the officer's opinion, deserving of rebate. However, he had stated the answer he had received from the Commissioner ; but later on he expected to get a report from him as to how the thing worked generally, and when this report was in his hands he would be able to say how the system worked in Auckland. Mr. R. THOMPSON might be permitted to explain further to the Minister that he had received several complaints from settlers on the same subject, and he had declined to move in the matter, thinking they were under some mis- apprehension in the matter. He suggested, therefore, to them that unless they forwarded him a receipt showing conclusively that they had not received the rebate he would not move in the matter. Now, here was a receipt in which the Receiver of Land Revenue assigned as his reason for refusing the rebate that the Commissioner of Crown Lands had so instructed him. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) said the House had agreed to a return being prepared showing the number of rebates given in each provincial dis- trict. They could do nothing in the matter outside the powers that had been granted to them. When the Bill was before Parliament members suggested that discretionary power should be given to the Commissioner of Crown Lands and the Receiver of Land Revenue, so that each case might be dealt with on its merits. That compromise he agreed to, and if it had not been acted on it was contrary to the wishes of the Government and of the Legislature. Mr. R. THOMPSON asked what would be the position of the unfortunate settler whose rebate, as he had shown, had been refused. Would these settlers get credit for this rebate which had been disallowed ? Mr. SEDDON said, When the Commissioner of Crown Lands and the Receiver of Land Revenue did agree to the rebate the tenant could deduct it from the amount he sent, but where the tenants had been deducting the

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rebate without having the consent of the Com- missioner or Receiver, in that case the tenant would have to make it good. THROUGH RATE FOR GRAIN. Mr. BUDDO (Kaiapoi) asked the Minister for Railways, If he will consider the question of charging a through rate for grain intended for shipment at Lyttelton, notwithstanding it is stored for a time at Christchurch or Addington, in order that more facilities be given to unload grain-wagons, and thus prevent the great delay in carriage of farmers' grain from country sta- tions through the long delay in return of wagons? This question had arisen in consequence of the great difficulty farmers in Canterbury experi- enced in forwarding their grain to Lyttelton during the past grain season. The railways had been practically blocked for weeks, and great loss of time had been incurred by the farmers. It was not a question of loading, because that was frequently done at night. If the trucks came up in the evening they were loaded during the night ; but in many cases on the branch lines, such as he was concerned with, the wagons had not come back for some days. He should probably be told that on one occasion there was a block of several days owing to the vessel for South Africa being delayed ; but the block had continued for six weeks, and had caused a great deal of difficulty and irri- tation by the mixing of grain-sacks belonging to different owners. It had been suggested by him, and other gentlemen who had a thorough knowledge of the working of the port, that if greater facilities were given for unloading the grain there, there would be no difficulty at all about the loading, and that even the present supply of wagons would almost cope with the grain traffic. but that owing to the limited area at Lyttelton it was not possible to do the shunting that would allow rapid unloading. He. for one, did not see that there could be any loss to the department in hauling the grain from Addington, so long as the settler agreed to pay the through rate : there could be no further cost to the department involved in hauling the grain from a siding at Addington than from a siding at Lyttelton to the ship's side. His con- tention was that, if they opened more sidings and more sheds for the delivery of grain, it would facilitate the working of the railways during the harvest season, and he therefore mentioned the matter, hoping the Minister would favourably

consider the suggestion contained in his question. Sir J. G. WARD (Minister for Railways) might say that the matter was by no means so easily given effect to as apparently the honourable gentleman thought was the case. If it were only the matter of stopping at Addington or any other place for the purpose of discharging the trucks and taking them on again at a suitable time, the trouble would be easily got over, but it meant, if the suggestion was given effect to, two terminal stoppages, which, again, meant double shunting in every case-in the interior and again at the seaport. The honourable member would see that terminal charges were made all over the world, and that the rates were invariably higher for work of this sort than for carrying goods from point to point without a terminal charge. If there were, therefore, two terminal charges, it must necessarily be a greater cost to the farmer. He could assure the honourable member that this was a matter of great difficulty, and one that would involve a great deal of extra work on the Railway Department. When a steamer or steamers were at the port loading, it would mean sending special trains from Addington or elsewhere to the steamer, instead of having the short shunting at the port between the stores and the steamer and returning the empty trucks quickly for reloading. It could hardly be expected that that could be carried out with despatch if the grain was some miles away from the port. The honourable gentleman could see that, if a great quantity of grain had to be carried from the interior to the steamer, it would mean very considerable delay. The only way to get out of the difficulty was, in his opinion, that they should have further storage and siding facilities at the port, to enable a wider distribution on the arrival of the wagons into the stores there. It would be very difficult to make regulations that would apply to Addington or Christchurch alone ; indeed, they would be required to apply to every station from which a farmer sent his grain. That would mean in every case double handling and double terminal charges. The grain rates were now very low, and he was afraid that if the suggestion contained in the question were to be given effect to it would mean the imposition of a higher rate than probably farmers would care to pay. It would doubtless in some respects be very convenient if it could be done, but in practice he did not think it was desirable to effect such a change.

RIFLES FOR VOLUNTEERS AND CLUBS. Mr. RHODES (Ellesmere ; per Mr. Hardy) asked the Minister of Defence, When he expects to be able to arm the Volunteers with the .303 rifle; also, when he will be able to supply members of rifle-clubs with similar weapons, and at what price ? Mr. SEDDON (Minister of Defence) said that, as he had told the House the other day, these rifles were on their way, and as soon as they arrived and had been branded and numbered they would be distributed. They had first armed the North Island, and were now arming the South. As soon as the rifles arrived they had to be branded and numbered, and this was in progress at present. An Hon. MEMBER .- Magazine rifles ? Mr. SEDDON replied in the affirmative, and said that as fast as they were numbered they would be issued.

RAILWAY PASSENGERS. Mr. MCLACHLAN (Ashburton) asked the Minister for Railways, Whether any four passengers who book at ordinary rates can use, to the exclusion of the public, a carriage known as a " birdcage " without paying extra fare? The

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reason he asked this question was because he had been informed that any four passengers could occupy one of the "birdcage carriage" compartments to the exclusion of other passengers, and that they had in some cases actually ejected other people from the carriage. A Stationmaster had told him that this was in accordance with the regulations, and that a carriage could be so secured if he were notified of the fact. Sir J. G. WARD (Minister for Railways) might state that the regulations permitted compartments to be so reserved, at the convenience and option of the Railway Department, on an application being made to the local Railway Manager, and upon the payment of four or- Passengers who booked in the ordinary fares. ordinary way, and who did not make the necessary application, could not use reserved compartments to the exclusion of other passengers. He might tell the honourable member that this was done all over the world. The object was to permit of a party travelling together if they chose to pay the full cost

of a compartment ; so that if a compartment was available it might be reserved for them. He might tell the honour- able member that, in consequence of the number of birdcage-carriages that were now being provided, it was intended to raise the number of fares that should be necessary to have a com- partment reserved to six -that was, those desiring to have a compartment to themselves would have to pay six ordinary fares. It was only right that people, if they chose to pay for a reserved carriage, should be able to secure one. A man and his wife and daughters might naturally prefer to travel together, or several persons who had business to discuss might also desire to discuss it in private during a railway journey, and there was no reason why they should not be allowed to make arrange- ments that would enable them to do this. This sort of thing, as he had said, was done all over the world. It had been the rule that it should be done upon payment of four ordinary fares, but the conditions would be altered so as to require the payment of six ordinary fares ; and even then the matter of reserving compart- ments would, of course, be at the discretion and convenience of the Railway Department. On very busy days the compartments might not be given up to anybody. An Hon. MEMBER. - They were on the occa- sion of the Christchurch Show. Sir J. G. WARD replied that was quite likely. If the judges of the show, for instance, were going together in the train, and wanted to dis- cuss matters, it was right that some considera- tion should be shown to them. The officers of the department, in these matters. while doing their best to meet the reasonable requirements of the public, exercised their common-sense. # NATIVE LAND COURT. Mr. PARATA (Southern Maori) asked the Native Minister. Why wills made by deceased Natives lately residents of and owning property in the South Island are gazetted to be heard by the Native Land Court in Wellington, instead of in the South Island, where the properties devised are situate and the Natives affected reside? The reason he had for putting the question was that complaint had been made to him that these cases had been set down to be heard in Wellington. He hoped the Native Minister would tell the Native Land Court officers that the cases should not be taken in Wellington, and that the Minister would look into the matter. Mr. CARROLL (Native Minister) said that, owing to the comparatively small amount of business in the South Island. there were long intervals between the sittings of the Court there. The hearing of an application sometimes meant considerable inconvenience, or perhaps loss, to the parties interested, and, to avoid that, urgent applications which involved the rights of only a few persons-such, for instance, as applica- tions for succession or for probate. - were occa- sionally heard at Wellington. Such a course was only taken, however, on the understanding that if objection was made to the Court, or if from any cause the Court was not satisfied that the parties affected were present, or repre- sented, then such cases would be adjourned until such a time as they could be heard in the district in which the applicants resided. # SPRINGBURN BRANCH LINE. Mr. MCLACHLAN (Ashburton) asked the Minister for Railways, When the long-promised large engine will be running on the Springburn Branch line ? Sir J. G. WARD (Minister for Railways) said arrangements had been made to place a large engine on the Springburn Branch line in the following week. OVERCOATS FOR VOLUNTEERS. Mr. CARNCROSS (Taieri) asked the Minister of Defence. What steps have been taken to pro- vide the Volunteers with overcoats, a vote for which purpose was placed on the estimates last session ? The delay in the matter had been considerable, and he would like to know if there was any reason for it. At the same time he would like the Minister to inform him if it was intended to supply the coats to the Volunteers gratuitously ? Mr. SEDDON (Minister of Defence) said tenders had been called in the colony for the manufacture of 1,000 mounted infantry khaki waterproof-cloth overcoats and 1,000 infantry khaki waterproof overcoats. This was done in consequence of a decision of Cabinet when considering a recommendation from the Com- mandant to import them from England. The inquiries made in England showed that the coats could be obtained there for 15s. or 16s. apiece. It was decided that, while that offer was a good one, it would only be just to manu- facturers in the colony to also call for tenders within our own shores. After these tenders came to hand a decision would be arrived at as to which tender to accept. As for making a

present of the overcoat to the Volunteers, it was a financial question that would have to be dealt with on the estimates. At the present time there was no provision made for it.

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LAND FOR LANDLESS NATIVES. Mr. PARATA (Southern Maori) asked the Minister of Lands, Whether progress has been made by the Survey Department in the matter of surveys of land for landless Natives in the South and Stewart Islands? Since he had been in Wellington he had received communications asking what progress had been made in allocating the land to landless Natives in the Waiau and other places. He hoped the Minister would look into this matter, and give him a favourable answer. Mr. DUNCAN (Minister of Lands) said two surveyors had been employed on the survey of lands for landless Natives on the west side of the Waiau River, and last month the Board which was dealing with this question subdivided and allotted two large blocks there, and the so arranged would be executed subdivision forthwith. DUNEDIN-MOSGIEL DUPLICATE LINE. Mr. CARNCROSS (Taieri) asked the Minister for Railways, -When he expects a commencement to be made with the work of duplicating the Dunedin - Mosgiel Railway ? A considerable sum was placed on the estimates for this work last year, but little of it had been expended. It was a very necessary work, and when completed would give an immense impetus to the whole district which would be served by the railway. Until the line was made, the progress of the district was really being retarded, and he trusted that immediate progress would be made with the work. Sir J. G. WARD (Minister for Railways) said that, in order to get over the chief difficulty which presented itself originally - that was, rapid transit from Mosgiel to Dunedin-changes were made by the department in the way of having more stopping-places. That had given considerable relief, and, as a matter of fact, it had enabled the traffic to be carried on with a great deal of success. In the meantime the plans and drawings were almost completed for the carrying-out of the double line of railway, and as soon as it was possible for that work to be gone on with it would be put in hand. The survey of the land required between Dunedin and Abbotsford was in course of preparation. However, what the department was most concerned with, and, no doubt, what the honourable member and others wished to avoid, was the congestion that formerly existed between Dunedin and Mosgiel, and that had been overcome very successfully in the way he had indicated. That being the position, the department would go on with the work when it was in a position to do so. # CHARLES LILLYWHITE. Mr. HUTCHESON (Wellington City) asked the Minister of Justice, What steps he proposes to take to rehabilitate the man Charles Lillywhite, wrongfully arrested for murder, and to compensate him for the mental and physical suffering he has been subjected to? He desired to assure the House that in putting the question on the Order Paper he was actuated by no feeling of hostility whatever. He was only actuated by a desire to ascertain, not only for himself but for the general public, the intentions of the Ministry with regard to this most unfortunate man. Honourable members might recollect that in 1889 Lillywhite was the victim of a serious accident at the Parliamentary Buildings. After lying in the hospital for some six or eight months with both legs broken, and after a course of treatment at Rotorua, he got some light work from the Minister for Public Works, and it was while so engaged that he was arrested. He would like to take that opportunity of stating that while awaiting deportation the Minister of Justice very cheerfully and cordially agreed in his case to mitigate the rigour of the treatment afforded to prisoners. He (Mr. Hutcheson) now wished to know what the Government intended to do to rehabilitate the man for what appeared to him to be two years' of most untoward and unprecedented ill-luck ? Mr. McGOWAN (Minister of Justice) said that, until full particulars as to the cause of Mr. Lillywhite's discharge from custody and as to the action the Colchester police, for whom the arrest was made, had taken in the matter were received, he thought it would be premature to come to any decision. The brief cablegrams received merely stated that a large number of witnesses failed to identify the prisoner as Blatch, and that Lillywhite's brother failed at first to identify him as Lillywhite. There could, he thought, be no doubt that the man was Lillywhite, and not Blatch ; but, as he was

surrendered mainly on the sworn testimony of two witnesses specially sent out for that purpose by the Colchester police, the responsibility for his detention in custody after the arrival of those witnesses in New Zealand and his subsequent conveyance to England mainly fell upon that Force. He considered the presumption was that the Colchester police would, if they were satisfied that the man was not Blatch, make due reparation ; if they did not, then it would be necessary for the Government to give the matter very careful consideration, and he had no doubt they would endeavour to do everything that was fair in connection with this unfortunate individual. In the meantime it was not for them to take immediate action until they had the whole facts before them and were able to go fully into the matter. ## LAND FOR SETTLEMENT IN THE KING- COUNTRY. Mr. LANG (Waikato) asked the Minister of Lands, When he intends to open up more land for settlement in the King - country (Rohe- Potae) ? About twelve months ago the Government opened two large blocks of land in the King-country, and the promise was made that before the end of the year another 100,000 acres would be opened. He was sorry to say that instead of that only 5,000 acres had been opened up. and for that quantity of land 15,000 applications had been put in, showing the great earth-hunger that existed in the district at the present time. He anticipated that the reply of

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the Minister would be that he intended to metal the roads before putting up the land for occupation. . If done at the utmost possible speed this would take at least two years, and at the rate in which they had been going on in the past it would take ten or twelve years. Settlers were unable to wait even for a period of two years. So great was the demand for settlement in the country that if the Minister would load the land with a sufficient sum to metal the road right through he would find that settlers were willing to take up the land at once, instead of going elsewhere to seek land. Then, if this money were put aside for that special purpose, and the work begun at both ends of the road, there would soon be a metalled road through the country. He would guarantee if that was done the country would be settled at once ; and the probability was that, if the Government did not open the land for settlement until the road was finished, the demand for land would not be as great as at the present time. Mr. DUNCAN (Minister of Lands) said he had no intention of waiting until the roads were metalled before opening up the land. Wherever the honourable gentleman got that information from it was not from him (the Minister). He might say that the lands of the Rohe-Potae, or King-country, as it was called, would be opened for settlement towards the beginning of next year-that was, towards the middle of the summer. They were now being surveyed, and as it was bush country it took a considerable time to get them ready. He thought it was a good thing to open them up early in the summer, so that those who were energetic might have time to knock down a little bush in order to get a house up and a garden laid down for a start while the weather was favourable. They were hurrying up with the preliminaries, for they did not want to keep land back so long as there were men willing to take it up. He thought that generally the settlers had been very faithful, because they were at a very great disadvantage in taking up land as regarded roads and other conveniences. Mr. MASSEY asked what area would be opened up. Mr. DUNCAN said the area was not yet stated, only that there were about four thousand acres in one block, as far as he knew. Mr. SEDDON said he thought there were 80,000 acres. Mr. DUNCAN said the surveyor had been continually at it, and whatever was ready would be put up for application as soon as convenient-about the middle of the summer. Mr. LANG asked if it included the land lying between Kawhia and Awakino. Mr. DUNCAN said, Yes ; he understood the bulk of it was in that direction. # FAIR RENT BILL. Mr. ELL (Christchurch City) asked the Minister of Lands, If it is the intention of the Government to introduce a Fair Rent Bill early this session ? Mr. DUNCAN (Minister of Lands), said the Government had already introduced this Bill. WANGAMOMONA-OHURA ROAD. Mr. LANG (Waikato) asked the Minister of Lands, When he intends to make the road between Wangamomona and Ohura fit for horse traffic? He might state that a small

portion of the road between Stratford and Ohura was practically impossible for horse traffic. It was a great inconvenience to the settlers to have to go on foot through this country. He hoped the Minister would give an answer that the road would, at any rate, be made suitable for pack and horse traffic as soon as possible. Mr. DUNCAN (Minister of Lands) said this referred to a part of the main road between Stratford and Te Kawakawa, in the Ongarue Valley. It was called the Ohura Main Road. The work on this particular section was in hand. At the end of last month there were four co-operative contracts in hand in the Tanga-rakau Gorge, and one in the Paparata Valley. It was intended to push the bridle-track through as soon as the side-cuttings on the steep faces of the Tangarakau Gorge were passable. This would probably be next summer. STRATFORD-KAWAKAWA RAILWAY. Mr. LANG (Waikato) asked the Minister for Public Works, If, in view of the more speedy construction of the railway from Stratford to Kawakawa, he will proceed with the construction of the railway at the Auckland end as well as at the Stratford end ? The Minister for Public Works, when he visited the Waikato, said he intended to make the railway through from Stratford to Kawakawa ; and he wished to ask the Minister whether he would start work at the Auckland end as well as at the Stratford end. He wished it to be distinctly understood that he did not desire the Minister to reduce the work at the Stratford end, but, in fairness to Auckland, the work should be carried on at the Kawakawa end as well as the other end. Mr. HALL-JONES (Minister for Public Works) said this matter was known in the Public Works Department as the Stratford-Wangamomona Railway, and the authorisation last year only included that extent. He had expressed the opinion that there was no doubt of that line being carried through to Kawakawa, Kawakawa being on the main trunk line. They had not, however, reached that point from Auckland yet, and it would be unwise to start works from Kawakawa, involving the cartage of a large amount of material, until the main trunk line was completed to that point. The time was near at hand when the promise made by the Premier and himself in the House would be fulfilled-namely, the rails being laid down as far as Kawakawa; but at the present time the line had only been authorised from Stratford. He was sure the honourable member would be the very last man in the House to create a difficulty by inducing him, by his suave manner, to go beyond the authority of Parliament and start work at the Kawakawa end. This was one and the same route as that referred to in the previous question, and the honourable member not only wanted the rail-

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way made, but also a road over the same country. It was a question for consideration, and it would be dealt with at the proper time. Mr. LANG said he would like the Minister to state when the railway would be finished as far as Kawakawa. Mr. HALL-JONES said the statements made by the Premier and himself would be carried out. The railway referred to would have to go ultimately as far as Kawakawa, and the House would decide later on when the work would be started beyond the point he had previously referred to. # UNIFORM SCHOOL-BOOKS. Mr. HOUSTON (Bay of Islands) asked the Minister of Education, If he will during this session introduce a measure compelling Boards of Education to adopt a uniform system of school-books in our schools? This question concerned the whole of the colony, and he hoped the Government would take some steps to bring about the reform suggested. At the present time every Education Board in the colony had a different set of books. In the Auckland Education District, for instance, they had a set of school-books which were not in use in other districts. He knew of cases in which parents with large families had had to buy a wagon-load of books, owing to the different sets of books in use, for it often transpired that the books used by the elder children were of no use for the younger ones when they had advanced a stage. He thought that this want of uniformity was injurious to the national system of education. He hoped the Government would bring about uniformity in the school-books. Mr. HALL-JONES (Minister for Public Works) said he could understand the many advantages of having a uniform set of books in use in the various educational districts, but it would be unwise to lay down hard-and-fast lines which would restrict or prevent Boards from adopting the use of

what were high-class works. The difficulty of children leaving one district for another he thought might be overcome by the line which would be required when the railway- Education Boards or the School Committee re- : purchasing-of course, at a fair price-the books which had been used by the children, and selling them or giving them to children whose parents were not in a position to purchase them. But, while he admitted the disadvantages pointed out by the honourable member, he did not think it would be wise to force on the Boards one class of books when they might prefer others. He understood the difficulty was intensified by cer- tain Boards allowing within their own districts ; different classes of Readers to be used. If that were so, he thought it a great hardship to the parents of the children, who might shift from one part of an educational district to another. He would be very glad to consider the matter, ; had been prepared. As to the second part of and he would take an opportunity to discuss the matter with his colleagues. He could, how- ever, make no promise that legislation should be brought down this session to give effect to . public road-the plans in the possession of the what the honourable member asked should be : department did not disclose such. If the done. Mr. HOUSTON said there was nothing to might show it to the department. prevent Boards of Education changing the books two or three times, and he understood that had been done in some instances. Mr. HALL-JONES was not aware that it had been done, but, if so, he thought it was very wrong, and those who elected the members of the Board should express their opinion on the matter. WELLINGTON-HUTT RAILWAY. Mr. WILFORD (Wellington Suburbs) asked the Government, Whether a survey has yet been made of the proposed new railway route from Wellington to the Lower Hutt, and whether the Government are aware that the present railway-line is alleged to be partly upon the originally surveyed public road from Wel- lington to the Lower Hutt? Thanks to the assistance of the Minister for Public Works, he was enabled to obtain for the district which he had the honour to represent the legal machinery for obtaining contributions for the improvement of the Lower Hutt Road-that was to say, the main arterial road leading from Wellington to the Wairarapa. The road, however, was unfortunately in a very terrible state. Any one who visited it must feel, as he felt, a kind of horror and repugnance, to say the least of it, at the existing state of things. At present there was mud on the road in places to a depth of 7 in. or 8 in., and there was no clear way of improving the road until the local contri- butions came in. The road at present was practically impassable. The Government would remember that some years ago-in fact, it was before they took office-part of the road was taken for railway purposes, and old plans showed that this was so. Machinery had now been provided to enable local bodies to make a levy on adjoining boroughs for improving roads; but the difficulty which the local bodies had to contend with was that they were not able to get : an exact survey made which would fix the line of railway. If the Government would fix the line was straightened, then the local bodies could decide what would be the width of the road which it was proposed to make from Wel- lington to the Lower Hutt. He hoped the Government would give a straightforward answer, so that he might be able to give his constituents a clear and concise statement on the subject. He was aware that a sum of money had been promised him for the survey last session, and that sum had been placed on the estimates for such survey. Sir J. G. WARD (Minister for Railways) said he would endeavour to give a clear and decided answer. The answer to the first part of the question was that plans of the proposed survey the question, the answer was that the Railway Department was not aware that the present railway-line was upon the original surveyed honourable member knew of any other plan he

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Mr. WILFORD said he had a plan, and he | last, on the importation of big game for New would show it to the Minister. # DENTISTS AS JURYMEN. Mr. PALMER (Ohinomuri) asked the Go- vernment, Whether, considering the great in- convenience that the public are put to by dentists being called away to serve on the juries, they will amend the law so as to ex- empt dentists from serving on juries ? He wished particularly to point out the difficulty in which country people were placed when, having made an

appointment with a dentist, they found the dentist was called away to serve on a jury. The probability was that the services of a doctor had been engaged, and it was a great hardship to people coming into town if the engagement had to be broken. He thought dentists should certainly be exempted from service on a jury. A doctor was exempt because he had to alleviate pain and suffering, and a dentist should be exempt for the same reason. This calling of the doctor and dentist distinguished their cases from those of the rest of the public, and gave, or ought to give, both a special exemption from serving on juries. Mr. McGOWAN (Minister of Justice) did not think it would be wise to exempt dentists. The exemptions at the present time were very considerable, and, if they extended them to dentists, they might just as well include photographers, or any other class of experts who were accustomed to make appointments with the public.

TERMS OF JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS. Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa) asked the Government, If steps will be taken this session to place the whole Judiciary of this colony in the same position as the Judges of the Supreme Court with reference to their appointments? This matter had been brought before the public notice very prominently of late in connection with two members of the House ; and, even if the Government could not see their way to do this with regard to the whole Judiciary, he hoped it would, at any rate, place the District Court Judges in the same position as the Judges of the Supreme Court with regard to their appointments. Mr. McGOWAN (Minister of Justice) said it was not the intention of the Government to place the whole of the Judiciary of the colony in the same position as that occupied by Judges of the Supreme Court. He did not think there were any grounds for adopting that course.

SMALL-BIRDS NUISANCE BILL. Major STEWARD (Waitaki) asked the Minister of Lands, Whether he proposes to reintroduce the Birds Nuisance Bill at an early period of the present session ? Mr. DUNCAN (Minister of Lands) said that the Bill would be introduced in a short time.

IMPORTATION OF BIG GAME. Mr. FLATMAN (Geraldine) asked the Colonial Secretary, If the Government has received any communication relative to suggestions put forth by a Mr. Grogan, at Christchurch, in May Zealand ; and if it is the intention of the Government to place a sum on the estimates to be expended in the manner suggested-namely, for the importation of the ibex, bushbuck, wapiti, and brown bear? His object for asking this question was to ascertain the mind of the Government upon this matter. He did not wish to see animals imported that were hurtful either to the human being or to domestic animals. When Mr. Grogan interviewed several influential residents of Christchurch in May last, amongst the suggestions he made was one that brown bears should be introduced for the sake of sport. He (Mr. Flatman) took it that this referred to the brown bear of America. which, he believed, lived principally upon berries, but when he could not get berries he wandered into the cornfields, squatted himself down on his haunches, and collected with his outstretched arms nearly a sheaf at a time, the ears of which he then devoured. Just fancy the havoc he would make. He did not think that these were desirable animals to introduce. Then, the ibex was mentioned as being a desirable animal to introduce. He did not know that there was much harm in this animal, but believed that when closely pursued he readily showed fight, and also displayed agility that any acrobat might be proud of. He mounted precipices 300 ft. or 400 ft. high. then threw a somersault, and alighted on his horns to save his hoofs. That might be interesting to some, no doubt ; but was the colony to be kept for the sole use of tourists. who probably came here once in a lifetime, or was it to be kept for pastoral, farming. and other industrial pursuits? If these animals were imported, not only would our stock be in constant danger, but we should be certain to have game-laws brought into existence, and there would be an end to all freedom in the colony. He noticed, by a report of a meeting of the Christchurch Acclimatisation Society. that no animals were to be imported from Africa for fear of bringing in the rinderpest : but if we imported animals from America no one knew what developments might take place in acclimatising them-their habits might entirely alter. He had no objection to sport, but he thought too many of these pests had been brought into the colony already. He believed it would be worth a million of money to the colony if every blackbird and thrush were exterminated, and he

would warn the Govern- ment to be very careful as to the class of wild animals they allowed to be introduced into this valuable colony. Sir J. G. WARD (Colonial Secretary) said it was not intended to place a sum on the esti- mates for the importation of any of the game referred to. He did not think, himself, the time had arrived when acrobatic feats such as the honourable member had described were neces- sary. Mr. FLATMAN. - Will the Government pre- vent these animals from being introduced ? Mr. WARD said the Government would pre- vent anything in the shape of bears, or any-

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thing that was likely to be injurious. being introduced into the colony. RIVERS COMMISSION REPORT. Major STEWARD (Waitaki) asked the Go- vernment, Whether the report of the Rivers Commission has been received ; and, if so, when it will be laid upon the table ? Mr. McGOWAN (Minister of Mines) said the Government had received a number of reports, which would be laid on the table as soon as possible. The schedules and other information of a private nature, however, would not be laid on the table. # MAORI ART. Mr. T. MACKENZIE (Waihemo) asked the Government, Whether they will, with a view to preserving to the colony valuable works of Native art, introduce legislation prohibiting the exportation of Maori carvings, implements, &c., except subject to the approval of the Govern- ment ? It was manifest that our very best collections were gradually passing away from the colony, and he was sure it must be the desire of patriotic New-Zealanders to retain objects of interest connected with the past his- tory of New Zealand. In older countries, such as Girece, Egypt, and Rome, laws had been passed requiring that no historical works of art should pass out of the country unless with the approval of some competent authority. He knew that lately some very valuable carvings had been discovered, and he thought the (o- vernment should not only endeavour to retafn such interesting relics, but should endeavour to acquire them, because as time went on the ditticulty of obtaining them would increase. Mr. CARROLL (Native Minister) was entirely with the honourable gentleman on this matter. He thought that special attention should be given by the Government, from a colonial point of view, to the preservation of all Maori works of art. and he thought legislation on the sub- ret in that direction would be acceptable to the House. He thought himself that provision might be made for the erection of a building, or a State museum, in which could be collected valuable articles, relies, carvings, et cetera, cha- racteristic of the country and its nativity. # TREATMENT OF CADETS AT CHRIST- CHURCH. Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley) asked the 5.0. Premier, Whether it is the intention of the Government at an early date to hold a public inquiry into the alleged maladministra- tion of the Defence Department, as regards the reported inadequate and faulty provision made for billeting and vietualling the cadet corps- numbering some four thousand boys-at the Gloucester Street and Normal Schools, Christ- church, during the Royal visit to Canterbury ? He might say that on arriving in Christchurch on Saturday, the 2nd June, by the morn- ing train, he was informed that the arrange- ments made for the billeting and victualling of the four thousand cadets, who came mostly from the North Island and from the west coast of the South Island, were bad. At three o'clock p.m. on the Monday following he went to the Gloucester Street and Normal Schools and made inquiries of a number of the boys, and of the officers in charge of them. He inquired about the treatment they had received, and he had likewise an opportunity of observing for himself the whole of the surroundings. The capacity of the schools might be noticed when he stated that the Gloucester Street School had an average attendance of a thousand scholars, and the Normal School had an average of, say, eight hundred. It appeared that the majority of the cadets arrived by steamer on the previous Thursday afternoon, and were at once entrained at Lyttelton and taken on to Christchurch, and marched from the railway-station to the Glou- cester Street School. They arrived in the midst of rain, and must have felt cold and hungry. It was some time after their arrival there before lights were provided and the school was open for their reception, and. later on, carts arrived with bundles of straw. In the meantime the rain was falling in torrents, and the straw on its way to the school became quite saturated. There were in the Gloucester

Street School from a dozen to twenty fireplaces, and, though the temperature was several degrees below freezing- point, no fire had been lighted at either of these schools from the time of the cadets' arrival on the Thursday afternoon up to the Monday afternoon, when he (Mr. Meredith) visited the schools. If proper provision had been made the schools might have been made warm and cheerful for the boys on their arrival, instead of their being placed in the schools wet, cold, and miserable. No arrangements were made for refreshments for them ; and, after placing the bundles of straw on the floor, they were called to fall in, and marched to the Normal School, about half a mile distant from the Gloucester Street School, for tea. He (Mr. Meredith) inspected the arrangements for the feeding of the boys at the Normal School. There was no fire there, and no provision for fire. The floor was covered with mud, as the roads were in a very bad state, on account of the frequent showers of rain and the amount of traffic, and he could see altogether the accom- modation was cheerless and comfortless. The Minister of Defence would see it was not right that these faulty arrangements should have occurred. Some one should have been ap- pointed to make the necessary arrangements for receiving and vietualling these boys. In that case fires might have been lighted, and when the boys arrived from Hawera, Hunter- ville, Featherston, Masterton, Wellington, and other places in the North Island their com- fort would have been looked after. It was exceedingly painful to him, as a member of the House, to find what bad arrangements were made. In one instance, a number of the boys contributed a few shillings each, which were put into a common fund, to defray the expense of getting refreshment at a restaurant instead of going to the Normal School for their meals. He stated what he had seen himself. He thought, instead of being misled by ex parte statements,

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he would go and see for himself, and he went and took a lady with him, so that, if necessary, she could confirm the statement that he (Mr. Meredith) made this afternoon. He hoped it would be the means of causing the Defence Minister to ascertain who was responsible for these irregularities and the bad treatment meted out to these noble little lads, who left their homes and families to go to Christchurch to take part in the review. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) said it was very much to be regretted that the member for Ashley should make charges such as he had just made. He (Mr. Seddon) stood there as Minister of Defence, and he said he had not had a single complaint from these lads whom the honourable member stated had been so badly treated. He had, further than that, proof positive from two medical men that everything was done in the way of providing for the comfort, cleanliness, and health of the cadets. These medical men had given their testimony, which was to the effect that nothing could have been better than the arrangements that were made. They could not have four thousand boys gathered together from all parts of the colony, under such conditions, without some of them being bound to complain. Yet, as he had just stated, he had not had one com- plaint from a single parent or boy. More than that, there were four or five members of the House who went and saw the conditions for themselves, and they had told him that they were perfectly satisfied with the arrangements. He could only say that our boys were not gingerbread. As the honourable member knew himself, the schools were full of straw, and if, when the straw was lying about on the floors, they went and lit fires there, what would have been the result ? The schools might have been burnt down, and something more serious than that even might have happened. If the officer in charge had thought that, with boys like that, there was sufficient natural warmth without the fires, was it not likely that he was right ? If the floors of the school were damp, he thought it was high time the School Committee attended to the He could not understand, as it was matter. not an old school, where the dampness could have come from. There might be passages here and there where the floor would be damp with the mud which the boys brought in from the street on their boots ; but the deplorable con- dition of things which the honourable member described as having existed in Christchurch in connection with the visit of the cadets he could not at all understand. He had had reports from the officers, and letters of thanks from the parents in different parts of the colony for the treatment of their

boys, and, that being so, he would not, as Minister of Defence, allow his officers to be misrepresented by the honourable member. He said the boys were well fed and cared for, and were made as comfortable as was possible under the circumstances, and, that being the case, the complaints now made had, in his opinion, no foundation at all. With respect to their cadets, the only mistake was that made in Wellington, in keeping the boys idle on the wharf prior to embarkation, when they could have been put into one of the goods-sheds. Apart from that there was no complaint, and, as he had said, letters had arrived thanking both him and the officers for the arrangements made. He had had reports from the officers of the cadets with respect to the arrangements made, and these reports he would lay on the table of the House. The other members from the same district as the honourable gentleman had told him they were satisfied with the arrangements made, and, under these circumstances, he thought the honourable member might have paused before launching into the wholesale condemnation he had passed on the arrangements for the accommodation of these boys. If the New Zealand boy was not well treated he was the first to let you know of it, and if he did not his mother would. In this case, as he had already explained, there was not a single complaint from the boys, and, with the exception of their coming to Wellington and going on board the boats as they were, there was no complaint at all. He would show the honourable member, and lay on the table of the House, a distinct instruction sent to the officers in respect to these boys: that unless they made proper provision for them, and saw that they were well cared for in every respect, it would be his duty to deal with them afterwards. He had taken every possible care. It had not been a question of expense at all. The instructions respecting the boys were such, and the officers intrusted with them were such, that it seemed to him almost impossible there could have been the state of things mentioned, and therefore he regretted the honourable member had made the complaint he had made. Mr. MEREDITH said, What he had stated was not that the boys were uncared for, but that the floor of the gymnasium of the Normal School, where the victualling of the boys had been arranged for, was cold, wet, and comfortable. He was prepared, if the honourable gentleman set up a Board of inquiry, to support the statements he had made as absolutely correct: and he considered his word as good as the word of any honourable gentleman within the walls of Parliament, including that of the Premier. Mr. WILLIS (Wanganti) wished to say, in continuation of the question --- Mr. SPEAKER said there could now be no discussion on this matter. Mr. WILLIS said it was not discussion, but a continuation of the question, which was in accordance with the custom of the British House of Commons. He desired to know whether the Premier was aware that the boys from Wanganui were so insufficiently provided for that a telegram had been received from the master in charge of the boys, asking the Wanganui people to send down money to make proper provision for them, and that within three or four hours the sum of \$20 was raised by subscription, and sent down to the boys, for which thanks was shortly afterwards returned, with the statement that the money had been the means of making the boys thoroughly comfortable.

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STATE FIRE INSURANCE. Mr. WILLIS (Wanganui) said, -Instead of, important that they should do it in the best way, and that they should not do anything which asking the Premier whether it was his intention to bring down a Bill dealing with State fire insurance, he would like to compliment the Right Hon. the Premier upon the prompt way in which they were now at work upon this and other matters in which he had brought down that Bill by Governor's message. SANITORIA FOR CONSUMPTIVES. Mr. ELL (Christchurch City) asked the Colonial Secretary, What steps have been taken to establish sanatoria, or a sanatorium, for the treatment of consumption. In asking the question, Whether they will this session make provision, he would impress upon the Minister, some provision for members of the Constabulary as he had done last session, the urgent necessity, in the interests of the colony, that something should be done to stem the spread of this fearful disease -this scourge, consumption. It had been stated on the authority of Sir

William his notice lately by the fact that a gentleman Broadbent, one of the greatest medical men in the Old Country, and one of the principal authorities upon this particular question, that seriously from injuries sustained when struggling consumption was undoubtedly contagious. In the Lancet of 1898, this authority said- " Consumption was proved beyond doubt to be contagious : that it is communicated from person to person, and from animals to man, and that it arises in no other way. It is not an inherited vice in the constitution, which declares itself in course of time. Every case of consumption is derived from some pre-existing case." Referring to statistics, he found that last year 577 deaths from consumption had occurred in the colony, and he had pointed out last session that 50 per cent. of these occurred amongst native - born New - Zealanders. He hoped the Government had already done something, and that there would shortly be in existence here the methods that had proved beneficial in other parts of the world. He referred to the out-door treatment of consumption. Sir J. G. WARD (Colonial Secretary), in reply to the honourable member, said that the Government had recognised the importance of this question which was now raised, and which had been raised before. Since last session the Health Department had been in operation, as the honourable member knew. This department was making extensive inquiries in many directions, with the view of seeing what could be best done in order to grapple with the fell disease consumption. He could tell the honourable member that a sketch had been already prepared of a hospital for consumptives, to provide for twenty male and twenty female patients. The Government were not, however, moving hurriedly in this matter, and it was not desirable that they should do so. They were waiting for the fullest information from the Health Department. The Chief Health Officer was going very exhaustively into the question, and upon the receipt of his report they would be in a position to judge of the best way in which the difficulty could be met and dealt with. With the honourable gentleman, he agreed that they should do something to ameliorate the condition of those who suffer from consumption in this colony; but it was might be afterwards a cause for regret. They must in this be guided by the opinion and the reports of their responsible expert officers, who which they were considering for the benefit of the colony.

PROVISION FOR INJURED CONSTABLES. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) asked the Government of the colony who have been permanently or seriously injured while in the performance of their duty? He put the question, as the subject had been brought forcibly under who was at present resident in his district, and who a few years ago was a member of the Constabulary Force of the colony, suffered very with a prisoner whom he had arrested. This officer was compelled to give up his position in the service, and was now absolutely unable to keep himself and his family, or, in fact, to earn anything at all. He had been informed that there were many similar cases, and he thought it most unfair to ask that such men should go upon the Charitable Aid Board, or become burdens upon their friends, or even to come to Parliament occasionally for a grant. The Government ought to make some permanent provision for such cases. Mr. McGOWAN (Minister of Justice) said it appeared to him that this was one case in which a man, no doubt, had suffered, and would like to come under the benefit of the Act that had been passed subsequent to his injury. "The Police Provident Fund Act, 1899," made provision for all such cases as had occurred since the passing of that Act. Cases that had occurred prior to that statute had been specially dealt with by the Government, and some were now under consideration. He did not see that there was anything remarkable or exceptional in this particular case.

RAILWAY SLEEPERS. Mr. HALL (Waipawa) asked the Minister for Railways, If he will authorise the purchase of red-birch railway-sleepers from settlers in the Seventy-mile Bush ? He had been induced to put the question on the Order Paper by representations made to him by bush settlers in his electorate who had considerable quantities of red-birch. He understood that red-birch was a very useful, strong, and lasting timber. If the Minister would authorise the purchase of red-birch for railway-sleepers, it would bring in considerable revenue to the settlers, and at the same time probably be of much advantage to the Railway Department. He believed the department were going to purchase white-pine sleepers and creosote them, but, in his opinion, the

red- birch timber would probably be cheaper. They were always talking in this House about the
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wholesale destruction of timber, and here was a chance for the Government to show that they wished to conserve the timber, and use it to the best purpose rather than allow it to be destroyed. Sir J. G. WARD (Minister for Railways) was sorry to say that the use of red-birch for sleepers had been so unsatisfactory that it was not intended to use it again. There appeared to be a prevalent impression that anything was considered good enough for sleepers for our rail- ways in the colony. Well, the Railway De- partment had great responsibilities upon them in the way of safely carrying a very large num- ber of human beings, and, taking into considera- tion the heavy class of rolling-stock and the large engines now used all over the railways, it would be apparent that what would have answered ten or fifteen years ago, so far as sleepers were concerned, could not be allowed to-day. While it was desirable to use local sleepers to the fullest extent wherever possible, no class of timber should be used on the rail- ways in the colony if there was the slightest danger or risk in using them. An Hon. MEMBER asked what was the fault of the red-birch sleepers. Sir J. G. WARD said the timber was not good, and did not last, and when a much better class could be got it should be used. It was not wise to run any risk on lines on which heavy engines and heavy trains were running, and to use an inferior class of timber or any other material would be a responsibility that one in authority would not take upon himself. It was advisable to use the very best material they could get in the colony. # CLASSIFICATION OF INMATES OF LUNATIC ASYLUMS. Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley) asked the Minister having control of lunatic asylums, Whether it is the intention of the Government to make provision during the present session of Parlia- ment for the grading or classing of the inmates of the lunatic asylums of the colony, with the view of better curative treatment than at pre- present obtains being adopted and put into operation ? He might direct the attention of the Government to the fact that Dr. McGregor in his annual reports referred to the necessity for the classification of the inmates of the lunatic asylums. He (Mr. Meredith) had been in the habit of visiting these institutions since he had been a member of the House, and in his visits he had noticed the number of imbecile children in them. Those children, he said, had no right there. According to the census of 1896, there were 146 such children in the colony, the majority of whom were in the lunatic asylums. It was in the interests of these poor afflicted children that a separate institution should be provided for their treat- ment. Then, there were some persons in the asylum who were only occasionally insane. They were respectable and well-behaved, and yet in their sane moments they had to listen to language that was far from conducive to their well-being-language used by those who were, unfortunately, not answerable for their actions. He considered that the present lack of classifi- cation in the asylums was not creditable to the colony. Mr. HALL - JONES (Minister for Public Works) thought it would be admitted that in recent years a great improvement had been made in the position of those who, unfor- tunately, had to be placed in the lunatic asylums of the colony. If the honourable member for Ashley had paid a visit to the Seacliff Asylum he would have noticed the im- provements. Mr. MEREDITH said he had only been in the habit of visiting the Lincoln Road. Mount View, and Porirua Asylums. He had not had an opportunity of visiting the other asylums of the colony, and his remarks only applied to what he saw in the institutions he had named. Mr. HALL-JONES was glad the honourable member had qualified his statement. If he had visited the Seacliff Asylum he would have seen there evidence of progress which could not but be extremely beneficial to all the inmates. The method of classification, he thought, was about the best that they could work upon for the care of the patients. Of course, it was only a begin- ning, and each year sums of money would be spent to provide further accommodation that would result in a still better classification than what had so far been attained. No doubt there were some imbeciles in the asylums who should not be there at all. For such patients a proper home should be provided elsewhere, and if they were removed a larger scope would be provided for classifying those who were really insane. # FEDERATION COMMISSION

REPORT. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) asked the Govern- ment, Whether they will give the House an opportunity to discuss the report of the Federation Commission, by setting apart a day for the purpose? The Commission had cost the colony an enormous sum of money, and, from whatever point of view it might be looked at, the question of federation was one of the 1 most important - probably the most important -before the public at the present time, con- sequently it should be freely discussed and ventilated in the interests of the people generally. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) wished members to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the Federation Commission Report and evidence. Each member should go through the evidence. and after they had fully digested it, which he presumed would be this time next year, they would be in a position to discuss it. If mem- bers were prepared to discuss it, and if there was time this session, he had no objection to its being discussed. His own opinion was that the Commission, taking into consideration the evidence they had heard and the feeling of the people generally, had come to a decision in accordance with the views of the majority of the people. Mr. MASSEY said that remained to be seen. Mr. SEDDON said there was no doubt about it. There might be some individuals who, for a particular reason, desired federation ; but the

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general feeling of the colony was that for the present matters should remain as they were. There was no doubt that that was the general consensus of opinion of the people of the colony. That was his opinion long before the Commission was appointed, and he would undertake to say there were not half a dozen members of the House who would disagree with such an opinion, or with the report of the Commission. He would like to say, however, that an opportunity would be given to discuss the matter. WAIRARAPA LAKE RECLAMATION. Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa) asked the Minis- ter of Lands, If he will authorise the sending of an engineer to the Lower Valley of the Wai- rarapa for the purpose of the taking of levels in connection with a proposal to protect the lands of the Kahutara Valley and the lands ad- jacent to the Ruamahunga River against floods, and also to reclaim the Wairarapa Lake and straighten the Ruamahunga River ? Mr. DUNCAN (Minister of Lands) said this was a very large subject, which should not be considered without very great care. The Wai- rarapa Lake was bounded at certain places by freehold land, at other places by Native land, and at other places by right lines in and out of the water of the lake. He thought the Govern- ment should not interfere with whatever rights the Natives or freeholders had to this lake with- out an Act of the Legislature. Sending an engi- neer to take levels for the purpose of draining the land would be of little value until it was decided who was to benefit by the reclamation works. Sufficient data was already published in the annual report of the Land and Survey Department for 1899-1900, page 154, to know what would be the result of draining the lake and reclaiming the margin. But he thought, independent of all this, that this was a work which should be looked into. There was a very large area of land which was almost worthless at the present time, and he was of opinion that work could be performed there to reclaim this land and make it very valuable. He would in- struct an engineer to have a look at this place and report on the question of an outlet for the lake, and also as to levels, and as to the cost of the work. LOCAL AUTHORITIES INDEMNITY BILL. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) .- Sir, I think 7.30. there can be only one opinion, and that is that this Bill should be passed. As our law stands it is defective. An unusual but most pleasurable circumstance arose, and we found ourselves, unfortunately, so far as the local authorities were concerned, without due pro- vision to meet it. Section 159 of " The Municipal Corporations Act, 1900," reads as follows :- "The Council may in every financial year, out of moneys to the credit of the General Account, expend for purposes not authorised by any Act or law for the time being in force any sum or sums not amounting in the whole to more than one per centum of the general rate struck for that year : Provided always that if one per centum of such general rate does not in any financial year amount to fifty pounds, the Council may expend the sum of fifty pounds for such purposes as aforesaid." I say that, under the circumstances, in some cases the local authorities

necessarily hesitated to incur liability. They appealed to the Govern- ment, and, as will be seen by the following correspondence sent to the Mayor of Wellington, the Government took up this position :- " Wellington, 25th March, 1901. "SIR,-I have the honour to acknowledge re- ceipt of your letter of even date, asking that an indemnity be given to enable a sum to be spent sufficient to give a fitting reception to their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York. " As stated at the citizen's reception com- mittee meeting, and later when the deputation consisting of yourself and other members of the committee waited upon me, the Government are prepared-the occasion being exceptional and not by law provided for-to do their best to pass an Act of indemnity, and legalising the expenditure of such sum as will meet the case and enable a fitting reception to be tendered to our illustrious visitors at the City of Welling- ton .- I have, &c., "R. J. SEDDON. " His Worship the Mayor, Wellington." I may say that it will be admitted there may be some exception taken to the measure, be- cause there are no safeguards so far as the sum of money is concerned. Well, I think it would be casting a reflection to some extent upon the local authorities if we were to fix any definite We must take it for granted that the amount. local authorities met the occasion, and met it reasonably ; and by comparison with othre colonies I may say our local authorities are deserving of every credit. There was no lavish expenditure in the way of money, but at the same time there was fair representation and decoration and preparation made; and, that being the case, the Bill as it stands simply legalises whatever moneys were expended. I do not know of any case where there has been extravagance, or where the Legislature should question the wisdom of the local authorities in what they have done. I would deprecate any hostile criticism in respect to the measure-in fact, members may raise a question that might be raised in connection with a Bill of this sort and thereby detract from the pleasure that was felt in entertaining and receiving their Royal Highnesses. I would advise members to simply pass the Bill, resting assured that the local authorities have done their duty. I think that is the wisest course to adopt, and I therefore move the second reading of this Bill. Mr. MONK (Waitemata) .- Mr. Speaker, the Premier just now made a statement that he hoped no one would say anything that would detract from the pleasure of 'receiving their Royal Highnesses. I do not wish to make any statement of that kind. For myself, I am gratified that their Royal Highnesses made a visit to this colony ; but, Sir, I am one of those who think that, if their Royal Highnesses

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are reasonably impressed with the responsi- bilities with which the accident of birth has invested them, they will feel that they have received very much in the privilege of personal contact with the vast extent of the Empire of the British people, and have acquired that knowledge and intimacy with the various colonies and their growing cities which will be of service to them at that time when, in the course of events, I hope they will reach the throne of Great Britain. But there is one matter to which I feel it my duty to call attention-not so much, I hope the Premier will understand, with the object of carping at what has taken place, as in order that it may act as a deterrent against any action of a similar kind in future-action which, I feel, might detract somewhat from the alacrity and generous hospitality of our Municipali- ties when they act as hosts to distinguished guests who may from time to time come to our shores. Sir, I think the Mayors of our great cities, and their Municipalities, should be regarded as the hosts of such visitors, and the Premier, whoever he may be, should not assume such control over their functions and independ- enco as I think has on several occasions been practised by the right honourable gentleman. For instance, I think it was unreasonable that the Premier, when he desired that a local body should spend its money, and that wealthy citi- zons should contribute largely in order that decorations and demonstrations worthy of the occasion should take place, should dare to send an outsider like Mr. Holmes to exercise control over the arrangements and contributions of the Auckland people. I am only speaking of Auckland ; representatives can speak for other cities. I felt somewhat indignant at this, pleasing as was the prospect of a visit from a member of the Royal Family who, in the order of Providence, will be King over our

children. I think they should have entertained him in their own way; and I think contributions in the shape of private donations would have been much larger than was the case in consequence of the Premier's interference. There was one gentleman who was sent up-Mr. Smith, an energetic young man, much more so than Holmes-who was quite sufficient to give assistance to the authorities in Auckland. But to have a Commissioner to dictate how they should spend the money they had raised with considerable trouble, and also the contributions from the local bodies, was highly reprehensible. Then, again, there are several other matters which have thwarted the desires which would have been carried out by the Auckland people- in the first place, as to the reception which should be given to their Highnesses by the Maoris-specially a feature for the Auckland City. This was controlled by the Cabinet, contrary to the arrangements proposed by the citizens of that beautiful city, and it interfered with what might have been a historic gathering. I hope I am not traversing the statement made by His Excellency in his Speech. It was, no doubt, special and remarkable so far as his knowledge or experience went; but if the Natives had been allowed to gather, as was at first suggested, at One Tree Hill, double the number would have assembled, and a programme and aquatic pageant would have resulted which would have conferred pleasure on fifty or sixty thousand people of this colony, who were debarred from that entertainment by its being held at Rotorua. They would have been ready, and they had promised to contribute to a function of that kind, which would have combined all that was done at Rotorua, with an added naval display which perhaps the young people of Auckland will never again have the opportunity of witnessing. And, above all this, there was the opportunity of completely effacing the feeling of exclusiveness which is existing in the heart of some of the Natives of this Island, and the first step towards which effacement was secured last session by the visit of Mahuta to Wellington, over which the Government then made much ado; and it only required the graceful condescension of the Government to assemble the Waikato Natives with all the others, and to have made a display that, once and for all, would have blended Maori sentiment and European hospitality in enduring harmony and conciliation. But feeling has been rather irritated than effaced by what has taken place. I know the reply will be that "we made an arrangement that the Natives should go to Rotorua." Precisely so, and the initial feeling prompting that arrangement was the gratification of an ancient East Coast Maori grudge. And in sending the Natives to Rotorua it was more costly than if the gathering had taken place as was suggested. It would have been more convenient-I will say nothing about the pleasure, which I consider of moment-to the people of Auckland. Along the East Coast and up to the North Cape the Natives would have been brought to Auckland by steamer; little or no railage cost would have been incurred. and a few thousands of the Waikatos and other Natives who did not go because of their objection to the treatment accorded to Mahuta would have been there, and the feeling of irritation engendered in the minds of important tribes would have been avoided. I do not forget that some sneers have been thrown at Mahuta's claim to rank and precedence in Maori lore; but remember, also, that Mahuta has a genealogy of which he can be quite as proud as some of the great families of England. It was one of the genealogies they possess, admitted by the Natives themselves, in the selection of Mahuta's grandfather, as blending in his veins the best blood of Maori heroes. ! Potatau was a very warm and hearty friend indeed to the Europeans. I cannot help myself feeling a personal regard for Potatau. because in my childhood perhaps he saved the Europeans from massacre by warning Heke that he would resist the hostile descent on Auckland which he threatened to make. Therefore I feel indebted to his memory. Again I say that the Natives' display and the ceremonies which they would have carried out in escorting the "Ophir" as she approached the Auckland

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Wharf - the day was so fine that it should have made use of such an occasion, specially suited for such a display-would have made a great impression upon the minds of their Royal Highnesses; and it would have been something so unique that perhaps no other part of the British Empire could have

produced any scene so impressive for their amusement and interest as that which would have then taken place. Now, what was the , disappear. There should have been one feeling of reason of the treatment accorded to Mahuta? I claim the reason of it was part of two things: a feeling of ancient pique betwixt the Wai- kato and East Coast tribes, in which the Native Minister joined, and also the feeling of the Premier that his colleague was committed to a certain programme, which he persisted in. But, seeing the influence he possesses, he should have modified it, and then thousands would have tion, and adorned with the warm greetings that participated in the pleasures of a pageant to ! are the reverse of toadism, and without dis- which, though produced at the expense of the : creditable covert insult to the Opposition. The public Treasury, they have been denied. The same thing that I complain of also took place on ; at the Poultry Association dinner that the the visit of the Imperial Contingent to our : shores. There again, instead of leaving the Mayor and the municipal authorities to entertain them right royally, the Premier-certainly I have no objection to his going up there, but only as their guest -seemed to forget that he was only the i of the "outs" and the "ins"-a singleness of guest on that occasion of the City of Auckland, and his behaviour was contrary to the courtesy due by the guest to his host. It was rude indeed to chide the host on the character of his entertainment in the pavilion where the : Imperial officers were partaking of refresh- ; 1 ments-and let me here assure the Premier that the condemnation which he so grossly inflicted : ! it is his duty to educate and encourage the on the Auckland entertainers was really the result of the delay occasioned by his attenuated speech in the open air, which was unnecessary, by the fact that it could be heard by very few, bility of a dignified self-reliance, and that every while he might have put it direct in the member of the Cabinet may feel that it is their newspapers, informing the country that he had , province to present such a noble and elevating passed over His Excellency the Governor, and telegraphed direct to Earl Roberts, asking that the contingent might be allowed to stay on our shores a few days longer than the Imperial authorities had intended. And let me remind honourable gentlemen that at that period every hour of the time of the troops, owing to the Cape war, was precious to such a { the Mayor of Auckland, because he is one of military commander as Earl Roberts. By the lengthened orating on that occasion he caused , the best of those who have benefited the city the luncheon to suffer detriment, and much of . by handsome gifts. I honoured him so much the comment he has uttered, if correct, was due to his own action. Now let me crystallize the purpose of my remarks. It is this: that Lord Ranfurly was the one to have met their Royal Highnesses on Queen Street Wharf, Auckland. He. as the chief personage in the colony, should have presented the Mayor and other officials. and the Premier and Cabinet should have waited in Wellington, at the Empire seat, in the official centre of the colony, and there have entertained to their bent, and have allowed His Excellency the Governor to have conducted them over the other parts of the colony. This complaint has been general, and I do not make it from any personal motive, but I think it is very unfortunate that the Premier where there was one common feeling of cor- diality over the Royal visit, for the purpose of exercising political partisanship by excluding, and rigidly excluding, from consideration those with political opinions diverse from his own. Political opinions and partiality at a moment like that should have been made to absolutely warm hearty sympathy, respect, and hospitality, and there should not have been that grandiose exhibition of personalism which in some instances took place. There should have been that to which the Premier has so often alluded, and which I feel myself, and am proud of feel- ing in my own heart -- the simple dignity of a refined and genuine democracy, without ostenta- Hon. the Premier the other day complained Opposition had made an abrogation of their functions ; but, as I interjected to the honour- able member for Auckland City, the principles of opposition should be for what is honest against what is dishonest, and no mere contest aspiration for the welfare of the commonwealth, and the practice of economy and prudence in the administration of our finance. These are simple points I feel it necessary to emphasize. not with any captious feeling, but with a desire that the unfortunate features to which I have referred may never occur

again. I hope that the Premier of New Zealand will ever feel that citizens in our large cities in the practice of cultured hospitality and the personal responsibility - example of proprieties to the young people and citizens of New Zealand as is usually the accompaniment of genuine worth. Mr. WITHEFORD (Auckland City). - As a member for Auckland City, I think it is right that I should correct a wrong impression that my honourable friend the member for Waitemata has, I think, created. We all honour that I declined to stand for the Mayoralty against him : and I assure you that the Premier of New Zealand has shown no disrespect to Auckland or the colony, or to our Mayor, in coming up and being with us on that occasion. Dr. Logan Campbell is a man of great age -- eighty-four. I think; he has spent all his life and strength in working in the colony; and when he accepted the position of Mayor it was on the understanding that he could not undertake many of the details of the work. He could not come out at night, he could not undertake the laborious work of conducting the business or making any arrangements, and he distinctly undertook to do nothing else except present the address. The demonstration at

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Rotorua was the chief feature in the Royal visit to New Zealand ; and not only that, but it was the chief feature of the visit of their Royal Highnesses so far as they had then gone in their tour round the world. When I was speaking to Lord Crichton at Rotorua, he said he was delighted at the spectacle of the Maori war-dances, and he could not restrain his admiration. I may mention that one of the chiefs exhibited some of the emblems of his rank. The noble form of this great warrior was tattooed in every part, the symbol of the highest position in his race; and I asked Lord Crichton could he conscientiously say that any of the aristocracy in England could show such emblems of rank, and he said they could not. I do not think it is right that the Government, - which carried out the whole Rotorua business so successfully, - should be deprived of the credit of their work, and I do not think it is right to introduce small out-of-the-way matters in order to reflect on them. I may mention that representatives of the London Times and other leading English papers cabled as much as a column and a half a day to their journals, expatiating on the success of the Royal visit to the hot lakes of New Zealand ; and the illustrated papers also did justice to the occasion. It was chiefly owing, I think, to the efforts of the Premier and Government of New Zealand that the reception arrangements were carried through so successfully. As one of the representatives for the City of Auckland, I say that our thanks are due to the Government, which so successfully carried out such a difficult and delicate undertaking. In saying this I do not wish in the slightest degree to depreciate what was done by the Mayor of Auckland. Mr. NAPIER (Auckland City). - I also desire to remove what I think may create a false impression. I cannot allow the concluding remarks of my esteemed colleague to pass without a protest. He said the reception at Auckland - if I understood him rightly - was due, not to the Mayor of Auckland, but to the Premier. The success of the reception of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall at Auckland was solely and absolutely due to the citizens of Auckland. Mr. WITHEFORD. - I spoke of Rotorua. Mr. NAPIER. - The Premier had very little to do with the success of the reception at Auckland, and cannot, and I am sure does not, claim credit for it. I do not deny that the reception as carried out by the Government has been an immense success, and I give the Government the fullest possible credit for the way in which they have upheld the reputation of New Zealand for hospitality, and for its ability to carry out a brilliant function. The reception at Auckland was organized and engineered by a large representative local committee and by the Auckland Harbour Board. I am rather surprised to hear an ex-Chairman of the Auckland Harbour Board attribute the success of the proceedings on the wharf to the Premier. Although Mr. Witheford was not himself a member of the Harbour Board committee which made the arrangements, he should give credit to those local representative bodies which so largely contributed to secure for Auckland the honour of having given the best reception in New Zealand to our future King and Queen, because there is no doubt that, so far as New Zealand is concerned, Auckland was pre-eminently first both as regards decorations and the

heartiness and enthusiasm of the 1 I people. I do not suggest that the loyalty or the 1 enthusiasm of the people of the other districts . of the colony was less ardent ; but I say that in the opinion of the journalists, and, I under- stand, also in the opinion of the suite of the Royal visitors themselves, Auckland was first. Now, though my honourable friend has stated that the Mayor of Auckland said he would only present the address to the Royal visitors, the reception by Auckland City was not intrusted to the Mayor. It was considered by the citizens to be a function beyond the capacity of the City Council. Some months before the visitors arrived, the citizens at a public meeting elected a reception committee, and the Harbour Board was to undertake the functions on the wharf. Besides this, there were hundreds of girls who \--- contributed towards the success of the functions at Auckland, and who decorated the city with garlands of flowers and greenery, and I think it is unjust to take away the credit from those people. Mr. SEDDON .- He was simply meeting Mr. Monk's arguments. Mr. NAPIER .- I have as great a respect for the Premier as my colleague has, and I do not believe the right honourable gentleman desires for a moment to pose in borrowed plumes. I do not agree with the honourable member for Waitemata that the fact that the marine de- monstration of the Maori canoes on the arrival of the Duke at Auckland did not take place was due to the Government. I believe, myself, that the failure was entirely owing to maladminis- tration and want of tact on the part of the committee that was appointed to get the canoes and Maori crews together at Auckland. 1 be- \-- lieve that Mahuta himself was so disgusted with the unbusinesslike negotiations that he, so to speak, sulked in his tent and refused to take part. There is no doubt about it, if the committee had been in earnest, and had under- stood their business, even though there may have been obstacles in the way, they could have got the canoes down by Mr. J. J. Craig's carts in plenty of time ; but the fact was that the Natives thought that the committee did not mean business, and, notwithstanding the offer of the Harbour Board to contribute #25 towards the freight of the canoes, they allowed the matter \- --- - ---- to drift on to such a late period that there was no possibility of carrying out the dis- play. I believe that if they had taken the matter up earnestly they could have collected £1,000 or \$2,000 in a very short time. To place the blame of the failure on the Railway De- partment is, I believe, quite unjust, because I am satisfied the Railway Department was in no way to blame for not bringing those canoes down. The honourable member for 8.0. Waitemata also said that the reception of the Imperial troops at Auckland had been

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somewhat marred by the interposition of the Premier. Now, the only redeeming feature about the reception of the Imperial troops at Auckland was the intervention of the Premier. Had he not intervened those men would have gone away with a bad opinion of the people of Auckland and their hospitality. I was exceedingly grateful to the Premier for coming forward and redeeming our good name. What did he do? When he found there were two thousand men under arms in a scorching sun without even a bottle of lemonade being provided for them he ordered that reasonable refresh- ment should be supplied to the men ; and, as I said on the evening of that day, I think, to the Premier in Auckland, I never felt so ashamed of Auckland as I did on that occasion. There were two thousand troops, and there was so little lemonade ordered that each man could not get one bottle. Therefore, Sir, the intervention of the Government at that time, through its head, was an event which I consider to have been perfectly right and proper. The local authorities failed in their duty. We had a tem- perance Mayor at the time-a very upright man of conscientious convictions, but a man who I think wrongly allowed his conscientious convictions to interpose at a time when the laws of hospitality should have dictated that they were out of place. I hope, Sir, this Bill will be passed unanimously. The City of Auckland did its duty in respect to our Royal visitors. The Harbour Board of Auckland took upon itself the responsibility of spending about \$750, whereas it could only spend £50 legally. The City Council also spent a large sum of money. and the citizens contributed \$2,000 out little matter to which I would call attention .. of their own pockets. I do not wish to

cast any reflections on the other provinces in saying this. I believe every city in the colony did its duty, and did it well. Mr. BOLLARD (Eden) .- It was not my intention to have spoken at all on this measure had it not been for the remarks made by the honourable member for Auckland City (Mr. Napier). As regards the action of the committee appointed for the purpose of bringing the Waikato Natives to Auckland, Mr. Napier has charged them with maladministration and want of sincerity. Those are the words he used. Now, it was a matter of grievance with the people of Auckland that the Government refused to extend that respect to Mahuta which was his due as the greatest Native chief in New Zealand. I think it was quite right that the committee should take the matter up when they found that Mahuta, the greatest Native chief in New Zealand and the representative of the Waikato Natives, proposed to come to Auckland in order to meet their Royal Highnesses there. But, Sir, the Government refused to recognise him ; consequently he felt insulted, and would not go to Auckland ; and when it was found that Mahuta was not coming to Auckland, and only a small proportion of the Natives. then the committee abandoned the whole thing. The Premier was responsible for preventing the Waikato Natives, with Mahuta at their head, from visiting the City of Auckland. Now, that is the true history of the Natives not coming to Auckland. It was not through any fault of the committee which was set up to arrange for that function, and there was no political movement in the matter, as stated by the honourable member. Another matter which the honourable member referred to was that the fact of the Imperial troops being properly entertained in Auckland was due to the Premier. Now, when it was found that the committee were not disposed to treat the troops according to the ideas which a large number of people had-by supplying them with beer-it was the brewers of Auckland who put their heads together and made provision for the entertainment of the troops. Afterwards the Premier stepped in. and said that if the committee would not find the troops beer the Government would find it. But the brewers were in before-hand ; and I say, let us give credit to those to whom it was due. I am not going to give any expression of opinion with regard to whether beer should or should not have been given, but let us give the credit where it is due. It was the brewers of Auckland who agreed to give so many barrels of beer, and send them up to the Domain, in order to entertain the troops by giving them one pint of beer each. I did not intend to speak, and should not have done so only I thought it right to set the honourable member right upon that question, and to let the House know the truth regarding it. Mr. COLLINS (Christchurch City) .- Mr. Speaker, I do not think there can be any strong opposition, if any opposition at all, to the passing of this Bill. But, Sir, there is just one It is, I feel sure, an inadvertent omission, but the Boards and local bodies do not include all the local bodies which should have been included. The Christchurch Drainage Board, I would point out, gave a donation of \$100 to the local funds in connection with the Royal visit, and under this Bill it would be just possible for the Auditor-General to refuse to pass that amount unless there is an addition to this Bill including such a Board. I shall propose, as an amendment, that " Drainage Boards" be inserted in the Bill, and I hope that There is just one will be acceded to. other matter to which I would refer. It was touched upon by the honourable member for Waitemata-as to the sending round of a Commissioner to take charge of matters which were of a purely local character. That, I think, was altogether unnecessary. But I will go a little further, and say I am quite sure that, so far as the Christchurch Reception Committee was concerned, the interference on the part of the Commissioner was regarded not only as unnecessary, but, I am quite sure, as little less than impertinent. The local committees took this interference as an unjust and unnecessary reflection upon themselves. Those bodies knew exactly what their duty was, and there was not the slightest doubt they would do it. I would remind the House-for other members probably had similar experience to myself-that I received a tele-

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gram from the Premier notifying me that Mr. Holmes would duly appear in Christchurch to make arrangements, and I had not the foresight which the honourable member for Ashburton had to send a

telegram back saying that he was not wanted in my locality. He duly notified me of his appearance, and that he was prepared to be consulted as to what was best to be done. Mr. Holmes came to Christchurch, but consulted none of the local members. He sent repeated telegrams to the members of the committee, but those telegrams simply consisted of messages telling us what was being done in other parts of the colony. They were quite unnecessary, as we were always well informed as to what was being done. The daily Press rendered it totally unnecessary that any messages should be sent notifying what was being done in other parts of the colony. An honourable member says it was to spur up the local committees; but the local committees did not want spurring up, and I am quite sure they would have regarded the Ministry as acting in a more graceful manner had they left them free and uncontrolled by any interference on the part of any Commissioner. I merely mention this as suggesting that it was a mistake to send a man who had no interest in the localities to interfere with the methods and manner in which they should arrange their celebrations. Otherwise I have no complaint whatever. I think it is unfair to accuse the Premier of unduly interfering in the local celebrations. I think this House should rather return thanks to the Premier for the arduous manner in which he worked to make the demonstration from one end of the colony to the other the success it was; but I do resent the uncalled-for and unnecessary interference on the part of a paid Commissioner who knew nothing at all about the locality or about our intentions, and whose interference was absolutely unnecessary either to persuade us or to spur us to do our duty on that occasion. Mr. T. MACKENZIE (Waihemo). - Sir, the honourable member for Christchurch City says the Commissioner was of no service; but I venture to say that if the Commissioner had not kept the whole of the leading towns of the colony in touch the success of the Royal reception would have been very much interfered with. I think that, instead of denouncing the Commissioner as some Committees have done, they should have had a little more common-sense, and if they had listened to him the demonstration in Christchurch might have been very much better than it actually turned out. Sir, it was the poorest show in the colony; and I venture to say it was largely due to the fact that the gentlemen of this committee were so conceited in their own minds that they could not listen to a few wise suggestions by a man who was thoroughly experienced in what was required. An Hon. MEMBER. - What experience had he? Mr. T. MACKENZIE. - He has had a very wide experience - an experience throughout the length and breadth of the world in the organizing of demonstrations. As a matter of fact, the Royal party have sent him well-deserved thanks, which indicates that they, at all events, have appreciated his efforts to make their visit to this colony a success. Sir, I listened to the honourable member for Auckland City (Mr. Napier). He declared that the Press representatives wired Home that Auckland was the best of all the demonstrations, and that the display was excellent. Why, they had not seen Dunedin at that time, and when they reached Dunedin they sent two and a half columns of matter representing that Dunedin came an easy first throughout the whole of the colony; and I am sure, Sir, that the Premier, when he replies, will admit that the decorations and the display in Dunedin were not surpassed by any part of the colony. I only rose, Sir, to defend Mr. Holmes from the aspersions cast on him by the member for Christchurch City (Mr. Collins). An Hon. MEMBER. - Mr. Holmes had nothing to do with Dunedin. Mr. T. MACKENZIE. - Yes; he had a great deal to do with Dunedin, and the result was that Dunedin came out first. We listened to him there, and, being a Scotch people, as his advice cost nothing, we were very willing to accept it. Mr. MCLACHLAN (Ashburton). - Sir, no member of this House thinks there is any doubt about the passing of this Bill indemnifying local bodies who spent the ratepayers' money illegally, and who in many cases spent it well, and in the general interests of New Zealand. I think the Government would have been wanting in their duty if they had not brought it forward. If it had not been for the boasting of the member for Auckland City as to the excellence of the reception in that city, I do not think I would have spoken to-night. At any rate, I wish to say that, from my knowledge of Auckland, the people there have not the energy possessed by the people of Dunedin. No doubt they are very good

people in a sleepy sort of way. They erected nice arches, and made other displays, but they were not capable of showing enthusiasm like the people of Dunedin and Ashburton. Sir, of all the miserable displays, I never saw anything worse than the street decorations of Christchurch in all my life. When I went to Christchurch that morning after the night's rain and saw all those poles with their drooping flags across the streets, I thought they looked like a lot of dirty washing. Of course, the authorities were not responsible for the elements. but if Mr. John Holmes and whoever was the high genius responsible for the decorations had sent away to the Kowai Bush and got two or three cartloads of evergreens they would not have been spoiled by the rain. Now, Sir, I witnessed an assembly in Christchurch that has never been exceeded south of the line, and that was when five or six thousand children, mostly from Christchurch and the immediate vicinity. sounded the National Anthem in Victoria Square. Sir, I say it was worth their Royal Highnesses going a thousand miles to see and hear. It was a most magnificent display. and.

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while, of course, the Aucklanders might beat us in bunting, they could not beat us in that collection of five thousand children. I had great pleasure in going to the review at Hagley Park, and, with the exception of the time when Auckland was peopled with the soldiers of the Imperial army, I do not think there was ever so many men under arms in New Zealand before. There were eleven thousand, I believe, of well-drilled men, and two or three thousand school cadets, which is the largest number of boys ever gathered together in the British dominions, and they all marched with the precision of well-drilled soldiers. In fact, I favourably compared it to the marching of the representatives of the Imperial army who recently visited New Zealand. Now, Sir, the honourable member for Waitemata found fault with the Right Hon. Mr. Seddon for going round the colony with their Royal Highnesses. Why, Sir, the show would have been like a menagerie without the elephant if the Premier had not been there; and I believe that the people of the colony felt great pleasure in seeing him there, and that the Royal party themselves did not receive louder huzzas than the Right Hon. the Premier, who was received with loud huzzas wherever he went. In fact, on one occasion I understood him to request the people to cheer the cadets, and leave him alone. Now, Sir, my concluding remark is this : that of all the receptions accorded to the Royal party in this colony-and there were many-Ashburton, I believe, topped the line. They came to that place; and I do not know whether it was John Holmes, or His Excellency the Governor, or who it was who had the arrangement of this matter, but the train was to pass there without stopping, according to the first arrangement. There was a suggestion that the Royal train might carry its own water-tank. so that there would be no necessity to stop anywhere. The Mayor of Ashburton asked me whether I would use my great influence with the Right Hon. the Premier to stop the train for five minutes at the station. I said, "No; if the people organizing this reception do not like to stop themselves, they can go on. I am going to Christchurch to see them, and you can do the same." Then, the Chairman of the County Council came to me and said, "McLachlan, you must get the Premier to arrange for the Royal train to travel from the railway-station to the bridge at a funeral pace, and then their Royal Highnesses can come out on the platform and exhibit themselves." I said, " No, I am not going to ask any favour of the Premier on this occasion." However, the train did stop at Ashburton, and I believe the Royal party expressed themselves, on leaving Ashburton, to the effect that the reception there was the best that they had received, and the people of Ashburton were equally delighted with the cordiality of their Royal Highnesses. They shook hands with the people without any restraint whatever. A gathering of five or six hundred of the Ashburton children had been got together at the last moment ; and the Duke not only shook hands with the leader of the boys, but their leader went on to the platform when going away and said good-bye to the Duchess. For cordiality in their reception Ashburton " took the cake." Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) .- I think the House ought to take exception to one statement made by the Premier-that there was a defect in the law in local

bodies not being allowed to incur extraordinary expenditure, such as is referred to in the Bill. I trust local bodies never will have power to make extra- ordinary expenditure of this kind without the direct approval of Parliament, for it is not to be supposed that if the expenditure is justifi- fiable a Bill of this sort would be rejected. I do not think the Government did their duty in putting the enormous expenditure they have done on the local bodies ; because we know there is not a local body in New Zealand that had to incur the expenditure which is solvent ; they have all borrowed large sums of money, and would not be in a position to pay it back at present if it were demanded, and it is an extraordinary thing that they should have to incur further expenditure for a purpose of this kind. There is all the more reason to think that these receptions would have been better directed by the Government solely when I remember what took place at Rotorua. There the whole expenditure and the arrangements were in the hands of the Go- vernment, and, with all due deference to those honourable gentlemen who talk about Auck- land, Ashburton, and Dunedin, I say that for general arrangement, orderliness, and success right throughout there was nothing in the colony approaching the arrangements at Roto- rua. And a particularly grand feature of the functions was the organization of the Natives. Why, the Government do not know how to organize or provide for large numbers of Volun- teers : and yet we have here an assembly of five thousand Natives, and for orderliness, good conduct, and everything in connection there- with it would be impossible to beat them any- where. If this can be done by Natives-and almost the whole management was exclusively in the hands of the Natives themselves-it is a reflection on the Government that they are unable to assemble a few thousand Volunteers in a city like Wellington without having the scandal we had. The decorations and illuminations and everything connected with Rotorua management, I think, was perfect, and it affords me great pleasure to be able to congratulate the Govern- ment on the way they carried out everything there. This strengthens my opinion that, if the functions throughout the colony had been under one direction and carried out in the same manner, we should not have had the numerous complaints, the heart-burnings, and bickerings which have gone on in many of the large centres about what was the duty of the local bodies and what was the duty of the Go- vernment. But I do say we ought not, simply because the law did not allow local bodies in this case to go to extraordinary expenditure without an Indemnity Bill-we ought not to consider any general amendment of the law,

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because if we give local bodies the right to make " unauthorised expenditure " in the way the General Government do they would in time be as bad as the General Government in this respect. Mr. ATKINSON (Wellington City) .- I quite agree with the member for Palmerston with regard to the danger of giving local authorities any such general power as is provided by this Bill in regard to this particular occasion. deed, I carry his objection a little further than he did, because I object, even on this particular occasion, to giving local authorities all the power conceded by this Bill. Seeing that the expenditure was admittedly illegal at the time it was made, and that Parliament has no official or even actual knowledge of the amount of this expenditure, I do not think that Parlia- ment should pass an Indemnity Bill without making itself better acquainted with the actual facts. In other words, I think it would be perfectly reasonable to indemnify the local bodies for all reasonable expenditure in this respect ; but it appears to me that it is for Parliament, and not for the local body, whether in theory or in practice, to prescribe what is reasonable. I would not be disposed for a moment to deal with these accounts in a cavilling fashion, but I think that, as a matter of constitutional practice, that is the proper course for us to take. Now, the Premier, in a way, anticipated that objection in the course of his very brief speech, but he did not deal with it at any considerable length. He put no power into his argument. He just stated the contention in order to brush it aside ; but, whatever may be the importance in practice of the distinction, in this particular case the course I suggest seems to be quite clearly the right one in principle, and I submit that the Right Hon. the Premier should convince me if I am wrong, or he should enable the House to carry out the principle I have suggested. Let me point out

to the honourable gentleman that there is a single word in this very short Bill which really-I will not say it gives effect to my suggestion, but, at any rate, it gives point to my suggestion. We are only proposing by clause 1, subclause (1), to indemnify the local authorities for the expenditure of any sum or sums of money in fitly receiving their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York on their visit to New Zealand. Well, the whole question will turn on the word " fitly "; but we shall abrogate our jurisdiction, and we shall retain no competence to consider the "fitness" of the expenditure in Parliament, and we shall pass away from our hands | Personally, with regard to the local expenditure that we shall have authorised under this at all, if we pass this Bill in its present form. We shall practically be giving a blank cheque to these local bodies without taking the trouble to see how it is filled in. That is wrong in principle, although in the present case it may work but little wrong in practice. With regard to the point raised by the member for Christchurch City (Mr. Collins), that appears to me to be a very important one. I should certainly support making the Bill apply to all local authorities, though I should be for retaining the practice of having their accounts audited by some parliamentary authority. This Bill will allow a local body to spend \$5,000, and it will not be liable to have its accounts stuck up by the Auditor-General. The Auditor-General can only stick up the accounts if the money has been expended for some other purpose. I should like to make the Bill more complete in the direction suggested by the honourable member for Christchurch City (Mr. Collins), who mentioned that some Drainage Board in Canterbury would be excluded by the terms of the Bill. I should indemnify all local authorities who incurred a proper expenditure for the purposes of this Royal reception. Mr. SEDDON. - That is the first I have heard about the Board in question. Mr. ATKINSON. - No doubt the Premier will be anxious to have that Board included : but I hope that the Bill will be so amended as to include that and all possible cases by the necessary general words, without attempting an exhaustive enumeration, and perhaps failing \----- in our object by the omission of one particular case. We have had some interesting speeches this evening, particularly from the member for Waitemata ; and it was a most entertaining speech that we had from the honourable member for Auckland City, Mr. Witheford. I was very sorry to see, however, that with all his kindliness, there was the same taint that appears to be very general just now- the taint of recognising in this Royal reception a splendid advertisement for the colony. Really it is positively disgusting to any man, with pride for his country in his veins, and to whom patriotism is anything but mere words, to talk about this thing as being nothing better than an advertisement for the colony-to put the patriots of this colony on the same plane as the vendors of a pill or patent medicine. Certainly it would have been a grand advertisement for a pill or a patent medicine to have had it emblazoned on the Duke's carriage; but are we to put the loyalty of the colony-and it may be the extravagance of the colony in its loyalty -- on the same footing? It is disgusting to hear that there appears to have been a lot of money extravagantly spent, but that in the long-run it will be a good advertisement for the colony. The advertisement that I understood from the honourable member for Auckland City the colony was getting was a column and a half per day in the London papers. I do not know the exact value per inch of an advertisement in the London Times, but it must be considerable. Bill, I do not think there has been anything in the nature of gross extravagance. I agree with my honourable friend the member for Palmerston that the Government have organized their part of the work very creditably. I am sorry to say, at the same time, that I think they were guilty of a great deal of unnecessary extravagance ; but I have no hesitation in saying that their organization was good. I fully agree, however, with the remarks that have come from

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most parts of the colony with regard to the interference of this Royal Commissioner, Mr. Holmes-the Royal Commission Agent, as I have heard him called, and I think it is a very appropriate name. He was drawing, I understand, commission at the rate of £100 per month, which is a large salary, but still not as

much as a Supreme Court Judge gets ; and, whatever Supreme Court Judges may do, they cannot send such lovely telegrams as Mr. Holmes sent. There is only one man in the colony I know of who can send them as good, and that is the Right Hon. the Premier himself. There was one particularly nauseating telegram that Mr Holmes sent, which expressed his hope that he would see in New Zealand "a line of loyalty a thousand miles long." It was positively nauseating to read such a telegram. But any one who can stand the Right Hon. the Premier's style should be able to stand it. The honourable member for Waitemata referred to what he termed the "grandiose exhibitions " of the Premier. But I cannot agree with one remark of the member for Waitemata in that connection. He said he wished Ministers would leave Auckland alone, and stay in Wellington all the time. We in Wellington do not want them here all the time-we can really do without them now and then. The elephant may be necessary to a travelling menagerie, as the member for Ashburton has said, but we will gladly spare the elephant from the menagerie in Wellington whenever he cares to travel. The visit of our Royal guests was a splendid opportunity for a display of our public spirit and our patriotism ; but, owing to the residence of Ministers in Wellington, even that was to some extent spoilt by the introduction of the lowest-I will not say party politics-I was almost going to say gutter politics, but let me say personal spite on the part of one man. We really had the question of the removal of the shelter-sheds-a question which the House has heard a good deal of already, and it may possibly hear more- we actually had that made a test question by the Minister for Public Works- and we know whom the Minister for Public Works represents -with reference to the Royal reception. We citizens of Wellington were not allowed to present our loyal address in front of the Post Office -which we all agreed was the best site for the purpose-unless we consented to the removal of the shelter-sheds. That paltry exhibition-I will not say of party politics-but that paltry exhibition of the spleen and spite of a single man against a single city -- that was brought into play here to add to the enthusiasm with which the city was going to welcome the Royal guests. Now, we have had some "grandiose exhibitions " here: I shall speak of a small matter. but it is really a serious matter. I felt positively ashamed for this colony, notwithstanding the brilliancy of the reception which we gave to our Royal guests-I felt positively ashamed for this colony to find myself in the presence of distinguished visitors from England -men of culture, some of them, and a few of them men of rank-and really men of rank are not much to me-but still they were members of the aristocracy of England, and one of their characteristics is a perfect sense of good manners-I felt positively ashamed for the colony when I noticed that at a banquet given to our visitors all the toasts but one were monopolized by a single man. An Hon. MEMBER .- Who was that ? Mr. ATKINSON .- The Premier ; and he had all of his colleagues around him. None of them was given a single toast except Sir Joseph Ward. And on the following day, at the reception to the returned troopers-on that occasion the right honourable gentleman went one better : every single toast was monopolized by the Premier himself. He would not allow us to encore some very excellent music, but he encored his own speech till we were weary. The Premier spoke at such length that he and everybody who sat till the finish-I did not-missed the farewell to the Duke and Duchess ; and Sir John Anderson, of the Colonial Office, was late for the departure of the "Ophir," and had to be pitched on board at the last moment. Now, of course, we saw the same thing running through all this business, and it spoilt what would really have been a very good evening, and much of the enthusiasm which would otherwise have been felt. The right honourable gentleman to-night characterized their Royal Highnesses' visit as "pleasurable." We had the same word in the Government's address at Auckland ; we had it in His Excellency's Speech ; we had it in the Address we sent in reply ; we have it running right through ; and we have had it in the telegrams which have been sent broadcast during these proceedings. We had it, first of all, in the telegram to the Mayor of Dunedin-"a great, unique, and pleasurable occasion." The word is, I suppose, in the dictionaries, and it may be a fitting word to apply to a picnic or a circus, but surely it is not expressive of the sentiments of loyalty and patriotism evoked by the Royal visit.

Now with regard to the interference of the Royal Commissioner, Mr. Holmes: As I have said already, I give the Government full credit for all they did, and if they had attended to their own part, and not interfered with the local receptions, there would have been nothing to complain of, and I should have had nothing but praise for their organization. But it was part of their scheme that the localities should be pulled up to the mark, and if they had not sufficient spontaneity themselves the Government would supply the spontaneity. An Hon. MEMBER .- The "spondulix." Mr. ATKINSON. - No; the Government was asked to supply that, but they declined. But what was really the essential part of the Government's scheme was that these localities should spontaneously demonstrate, and that the spontaneous demonstration should be supplied from headquarters if the tap was not turned on hard enough by the local authority. We had that indicated by the Premier in a statement to one committee that, if any local body did not come up to the required mark, they would have the whole of the reception taken out of their hands, and the Government would run it them-

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selves. At the same time the right honourable gentleman sent a very long telegram to the Mayor of Dunedin, of which this is an extract :- "The patriotism of your citizens in the past has evoked profound admiration, and their sterling response at the call of duty has ever given confidence; and the Government feels assured that they will rise to the present great, unique, and pleasurable occasion. We feel, further, certain that yourself and the other civic representatives will do their best to assist the people in manifesting an impressive and spontaneous display of loyalty and unstinted hospitality to the beloved son of our King, and grandson of our late beloved and ever-revered Queen." Surely it is somewhat comic to see one man publicly urging another to spontaneously urge other persons to spontaneous demonstration. Honourable gentlemen who have read these words, or who look at them now, will see that no other kind of construction can be placed upon them. But the serious side of that for us, and the permanent side, is this: that this is the right honourable gentleman's role throughout. No independent authority is allowed to look after its own affairs, and the central authority- the right honourable gentleman himself- is alone competent to do it for them. The other point I wish to touch upon may seem of a somewhat contradictory character, and that is that Ministers did not take enough upon themselves. Now, this appears to me to embody a very great constitutional question - namely, the question raised of the direct personal share taken by His Excellency the Governor in organizing and superintending the demonstrations. According to the theory of our Constitution, Ministers are responsible for whatever the Crown or its representative may do. Since Charles the First lost his head we have given up removing the head of the Sovereign of the day, but we have instituted instead the removal of the head of the Ministry. And, Sir, we find that this works much better ; it is more convenient, and it is more humane. Now, it seems to me that the Ministry lost its head in quite another sense on this occasion, and that is by allowing His Excellency to take the large share of responsibility, naturally devolving upon the Government, which he did. I am not going to raise any question as between the citizens of Wellington and His Excellency the Governor, or as between the citizens of Christchurch or any other city and His Excellency, by reason of the manner in which the details were settled by His Excellency. But I put it to the right honourable gentleman that it is a very serious point in constitutional practice that the Governor should be allowed to be brought into personal conflict and collision with the citizens. No doubt, in the Cabinet room it is quite right that he should exercise control and power of suggestion which properly vests in him as it does in a constitutional monarch. But it appears to me to be an utter violation of our constitutional practice-and a very serious one too-when we find that His Excellency is put forward to bear the brunt of making personal suggestions, and the responsibility for very complicated arrangements, which must in some places run counter to local feeling, and stir up both local prejudice and ill-feeling. I think the course which the right honourable gentleman and his colleagues took in permitting His Excellency to take so much on his own

shoulders was a most dangerous innovation, and I hope this will be the last occasion on which such a strain will be put on our Constitution. The Premier sometimes takes on himself the functions of the constitutional monarch-and an unconstitutional one, for the matter of that ; but on this particular occasion he did not push himself forward quite hard enough. He did not maintain the position of Responsible Adviser of His Excellency, and the Constitu- tion was put in a very critical position. The anomaly was brought home to me personally in a very vivid way. I was appointed in Wellington at a meeting of the citizens to go on a committee to interview His Excel- lency. and urge him to consent to some \--- alteration of the programme. The principal item was the question of route, or the question of the place where the address to the Royal visitors was to be presented-I am not sure which. At any rate, there had arisen consider- able feeling over the matter, and I was appointed one of the deputation who were to interview His Excellency. I asked myself the question when I went into the presence of vicerovalty in what attitude I should approach him. Bage- hot says that one reason why a constitutional monarch exercises such great power over his Ministers is natural deference and respect that is due to him ; he says that "a man cannot argue on his knees." So I felt myself face to face with the same problem. Was I to argue on my knees? Or was I to argue at all ? Or how was I to approach His Excellency ? Is this not an example to show honourable members that the committee was being in some way .. brought, on behalf of the citizens, into a relation with the Governor which only his Responsible Advisers-or, at any rate, that the deputation was being sent to His Excellency when it should have been sent to the Cabinet, and the Cabinet should have communicated with His Excellency, and have taken into their considera- tion, with him, the suggestions made. At any rate, a most serious constitutional question has been raised by this action, and all the gravity is due to the causes I have pointed out. I do not suggest for a moment that any great mischief has been done ; but I say we have got to recognise where we are, and to recognise that what did arise was in principle a very serious difficulty indeed. It was all the more disastrous in the present case, because it originated from the splendid display of loyalty and national pride. of which the visit of their Royal Highnesses has formed the very proper occasion. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) .- Sir, we have just listened to a speech of varied character ; but I will ask honourable members if there is a single member of this House who can say there was the slightest touch or tone of patriotism therein.

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If I were to apply the term " carping" to the speech, if I were to say the honourable mem- ber was briefed to throw ridicule upon what has been done, I think I should pretty well charac- terize the remarks of the honourable gentleman and sum up his speech. Sir, not satisfied with finding fault with the Government and with the local bodies, with the members of Parliament, and, more particularly, with "the Right Hon. the Premier "-and not like the honourable member for Ashburton, whose jocular remarks were well taken by the House-he has indulged in personalities which I suppose one must put up with under the circumstances; even an elephant, politically and metaphorically speaking, could be stung and tantalized by a mosquito. But, Sir, what I do take exception to is the attack made by the honourable gentleman upon the King's Representative in this colony. Under the guise of raising a constitutional question, the honourable gentleman has brought into debate on the floor of this House a difference that arose between himself and the committee with which he was connected and His Excellency the Governor. It was simply a question as to how far their Royal Highnesses were to be driven around Wellington to suit cer- tain business people-the very thing the honour- able gentleman now takes exception to. The proposal of the committee to which the honour- able gentleman has referred was to take their Royal Highnesses from the wharf, down Cam- bridge Terrace, round by the Recreation Re- serve, bring them down Cuba Street, then down Manners Street, along Lambton Quay, and then to Government House. I wonder who would have been held responsible if such a route as that had been adopted. Surely His Excellency the Governor. In respect to this question, I want to have it laid down very clearly that His Excellency had special

instructions and special responsibilities. That being so, he in no way trenched upon the position of the Prime Minister or the rights of the people of the colony in what he did respecting the reception of the Royal visitors. I think the honourable member ought to have been aware of that, because His Excellency the Governor has never, in the slightest, trenched on the rights of the people. The same responsibility was cast upon the Governor-General of Australia. Mr. ATKINSON .- Whose instructions? Mr. SEDDON .- The Secretary of State's. And, in respect of that, I again say there was no breach whatever of the constitutional position : there was no breach whatever in respect to the visit of their Royal Highnesses. That had nothing whatever to do with the ordinary administration of the affairs of this country. It was no question of administration ; there was no interference with the rights of the people of the colony, and consequently every argument the honourable gentleman used in that respect falls to the ground. I think the honourable gentleman, in preparing his brief, having some slight knowledge of the constitutional position, ought to have realised the absurdity of his own contention, and refrained from saying anything on the matter. I go further now, and say that what was really an act of courtesy on the part of His Excellency the Governor is now alleged by the honourable member to be a breach of privilege. His Excellency communicated with the Mayor of Wellington, and, when it was pointed out that there was a special committee dealing with the reception, they also were invited to attend. Under those circumstances, what position was I to take up? His Excellency wished for information. He desired to discuss the matter in a courteous and proper way with those who had made certain requests to him. The committee did not request the Government to fix the route. What had we, as a Government, to do with it? The request as to the route went direct to those who were responsible. That being so, Sir, I do not think we should have had to listen to speeches such as were delivered to-night by the honourable member for Wellington City and by the honourable member for Waitemata. I will say more later on about the speech of the honourable member for Waitemata. The member for Wellington City further said that Parliament should ask for a return of the expenses incurred by the local bodies. Sir, in moving the second reading of this measure, I said, and I now repeat, that you must trust the representatives of the people in the local authorities. It has generally been the other way about. The Government have generally been told they are trenching upon the functions of local bodies. Now, when the money has been spent, the honourable member asks that a return should be asked for before we pass this measure. Sir, I think the majority of the members of the House will ask for no such return. If we were to get such a return, the honourable member might take upon himself to object to some of the items. Well, is he to be the judge, or are those who are in the Borough Councils to be the judges? I understood the honourable gentleman took a lively interest in sending men to these responsible positions, and surely after they are there they should have the responsibility put on them, and the honourable member should not ask for accounts to be submitted to him, so that he might say that this or that account should not be paid. Sir, we must take it for granted that those who are responsible have done wisely and well in spending the ratepayers' money. Therefore it is proper that we should pass this Bill indemnifying them for their outlay. Now, I wish to refer to one or two other remarks the honourable gentleman made. He attacked the Minister for Public Works with respect to the shelter-sheds. He said that advantage was taken of the occasion to work out our spite on the Wellington City Council with of those sheds. respect to the removal Sir, the honourable member did a grave injustice to the Minister for Public Works. But, Sir, it seems to me that it matters not to whom he acts unjustly, so long as he for the time being gratifies his own innate vanity or spleen, as the case may be. Sir, it was stated that the presentation of the address should take place opposite the Post Office. Naturally enough, with the body

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of troops that we had, and with the large number of people who were to be there, the Government asked to have a plan submitted. A plan was submitted, and, Sir, there was only 17 ft. between the

Rotunda and the platform that was to be erected, and from which the presentation was to take place. The Commandant, the moment the plan was brought before him, came to the Government and said it was impossible to agree to that plan with anything like safety to the people. There was no way to take the men past in sections or four abreast, and he said that if an attempt was made to take the carriages past the result would be loss of life. The only way, then, would be to carry the platform back, and the platform could not be carried back, because the shelter-shed was there. That was how the question of the shelter-sheds came up at all. The honourable member was very delicate about the shelter-sheds ; but I have no hesitation in saying now that no grosser breach of faith, and no grosser piece of trickery was ever practised by a local authority than the trick which had been played in respect to these shelter-sheds. However, the shelter-sheds question would never have cropped up but for the circumstances I have just stated. Then, Sir, I do not know that I should refer at all to the honourable member's remarks about myself, as to what took place at the luncheons. The honourable member stated that I monopolized the whole of the toast-lists. Well, outside the loyal formal toasts on the occasion referred to, there was only one other toast that my colleagues could have proposed. If it was not that the honourable member took nothing stronger than water I would have thought he was sorry, for obvious reasons, that there was not an extension of the toast-lists, so that he might indulge for a few hours. But, Sir, as he takes nothing stronger than water, that argument will not hold good. I say that on an occasion of that kind no one would with reason accuse me of doing other than that which was right and proper. It galls the honourable member, as it does others, to find me where I am ; but, so long as I am in this position, I will do my best to maintain it with dignity, and, I hope, with some little credit to myself and profit to the colony. On the second occasion to which the honourable member refers there was only one other toast proposed, and that was in reference to a departing railway-officer; and I moved that toast at the special request of the head of the department, my worthy colleague the Minister for Railways, and it did not take ten minutes, so that I think I have fully answered all that has been said by the honourable member in that respect. I now come to the remarks made by the honourable member for Waitemata, who was responsible for this debate-and what do they amount to ? It simply amounted to this: that the honourable member could not contain himself. He wanted, out of the passing of this Bill, and out of the Royal visit, if he possibly could, to bring credit to his party by discrediting the Government ; and he is not the only person in Auckland who has been busy at that. I say they have deliberately, and wantonly, and wilfully endeavoured to injure the Government in respect to the question of Mahuta and the aquatic display. And it seems to me that any party or any man who uses their Royal Highnesses' visit for such a purpose is guilty of conduct which is reprehensible in the highest degree. And yet that was done. Mr. MASSEY .- It was not. Mr. SEDDON .- I have positive proof ; and it is practically admitted in the speech delivered by the honourable member for Waitemata-and organized, too. Mr. MONK .- I am not in it. Mr. SEDDON. - I accept the honourable gentleman's denial. When you say that, I have nothing further to say so far as you are concerned. But I know others did organize, and did make the attempt to make capital against the Government, and myself personally, in respect to this matter ; and they went further than that. Then, the honourable member for Auckland City (Mr. Witheford) has been misunderstood by the honourable member for Auckland City (Mr. Napier). I will not see anything unjust done. So far as I know, Mr. Witheford was not detracting from the reception committee in what they did; but he, I think very properly and generously, would not agree with the honourable member for Waitemata that the Government should have no credit whatever in respect to the reception at Auckland. I say it was fair, and he had a right to take exception to what was stated by the honourable member for Waitemata. May I say this: that we as a Government are perfectly satisfied ; the letter left behind by His Royal Highness-the letter given to His Excellency on the eve of his departure from the colony-was more than sufficient to reward the Government and all those who took part in the colony in this reception. There was only one feeling

throughout the length and breadth of the colony : that we should do justice to this great occasion ; that our Royal visitors should carry back with them to the dear old Mother- land a good impression of the country and its people for their loyalty to the Throne, and that we were happy, contented, and prosperous. That is all there was in it, and, that being achieved, we might let the matter rest. Of course, it is very distasteful to me to have to say anything at all, but I cannot allow the attack that has been made on Mr. Holmes to pass unnoticed. It would be impossible for me, or for my colleagues, to place before the House or the country one tittle of what was done, and had to be done. It was an extra- ordinary occasion, and there were a thousand- and-one things coming up day by day for which there was no precedent at all. We had to use The reception committees our common-sense. and members of local bodies were each desirous of making the reception a success, but there was no precedent, and some one had to take the lead. Very well. A great deal of blame has been thrown on Mr. Holmes. There were many things proposed by the reception committees

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and local bodies which, in accordance with in- structions, could not be allowed. Some one, of course, had to tell people who might not be going the right way in their desire to do what was right -- in their desire to make the reception a success ; and the person who has the right to My "this or that cannot be allowed," or who has to say how it is to be done,-I do not care who it is,-if he were the archangel Gabriel he would be bound to have some one finding fault with him. The position held by Mr. Holmes was a most unenviable one, because he had, from his position as the Execu- tive Commissioner, to reconcile differences; he had to make recommendations ; he had to ask for changes in programme which could not be allowed, and which had been refused. Conse- quently it is not to be wondered at, under these circumstances, that he was somewhat unpopular, and hence the adverse criticism to-night. But if honourable members read Lord Wenlock's letter to Mr. Holmes in the Evening Post of to-night. it will, I think, go a long way to remove some of the misapprehension. Lord : sums of money, and the Harbour Board repre- Wenlock says,- " Their Royal Highnesses have fully realised how arduous those duties must have been, and they wish me to intimate to you their thorough appreciation of the very efficient manner in which they have been carried out. Their Royal Highnesses have had opportunities of visiting different parts of the country, and on every occasion they have found the arrangements for their comfort and safety most perfectly carried out." I am not going to say that no one excepting Mr. Holmes must be credited with having made these arrangements. I could mention many of our officers-I could mention some of my colleagues-but I say that it would be out of place, and that it is undesirable. Suffice it to say that the arrangements were such as to bring forth commendation from Lord Wenlock, from Sir Arthur Bigge, and from His Royal Highness the Duke of Cornwall and York. I. Sir, now come to the remarks made by the member for Waitemata. He said it was quite sufficient to have sent Mr. Smith to Auckland. Sir. Mr. Smith went to Auckland a few days before their Royal Highnesses arrived simply to arrange matters in respect to the invitations. The other arrangements had to be made weeks before that. Very well. Then, the name of the worthy Mayor of Auckland has been brought into the matter; and, Sir, I am surprised to find the honourable gentleman taking all the credit for him, when really. in respect to the details, the work was practically done by Mr. Kidd, the Acting-Mayor, and the Chairman of the Harbour Board ; and it is wrong. I think, for the honourable gentle- man to give all the credit to Dr. Campbell, without giving the Acting-Mayor any credit. The honourable member took exception also to my going to Auckland - to Ministers visiting Auckland. What, Sir, has been the general cry from the Auckland Provincial District and from Auckland ? That they have not had suffi- cient visits from Ministers of the Crown. Why, Sir, they wanted a resident Minister there ; and I do not know that there is not a great deal in their contention. But when we do visit Auckland the honourable gentleman finds fault with it. I regret very much that the honourable gentleman should have taken up that attitude. Then, I was asked this ques- tion : Whose duty is it, as the head of the

Government, immediately their Royal High- nesses landed in the colony, to greet them and welcome them on the part of the people? His Excellency the Governor represents the King, and, as the King's Representative, it was his duty to be there; and I say, as the first commoner in this country, it was the duty of the Right Hon. R. J. Seddon to be there. Captain RUSSELL .- I thought Mr. Speaker was the first commoner. Mr. SEDDON .- I say, as having the respon- sibility. Then, the Mayor on the occasion was not the host. Then, again. why should not the Chairman of the Harbour Board have been pre- The Harbour Board had spent large sent ? sentative was entitled to be on the wharf. I am satisfied that all that was done in that respect was in keeping with the proper order of things, and to have that found fault with now is to me astonishing. I come, then, to this question of Mahuta. The honourable member said that the Maori gathering ought to have been at Auckland -- One Tree Hill, I think, he said. I may say that I think you must on all occasions endeavour to meet the wishes of your guests ; and when your guests were their Royal High- nesses, and it was their wish, who shall inter- vene ? Mr. MONK .-- Who prompted the wish ? Mr. SEDDON .- My opinion is this: Before they came into touch with any one from this colony the desire to meet the Maoris at Rotorua on their own ground had been formed in the minds of their Royal Highnesses. That is my honest conviction. I am reminded by my colleague that they cabled from Colombo to that effect. But I wish to point out that you could not have had those Maoris in Auckland, or any other large centre of population, without serious danger to those Maoris themselves. I say it is not possible to bring large bodies of Natives from the wilds of the forests,-from the places where those Natives were brought, -into close touch with civilisation for a long time. No one knows better than the honourable gentleman what the results would be. I say, Sir, that, taking everything into consideration, no other place was better fitted for the gathering than Rotorua. Then, coming to this question of Mahuta and the canoes. I say here-notwith- standing that it may be the making of capital against the Government-that they asked the Government to bring down the canoes : and the Government said they would arrange to do so. But, when they said that special preference should be given, and a special presentation made of Mahuta, then, Sir, the Government could not agree to this proposal. I said it would not be possible to do that. After you had invited them, and after their Royal High-

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nesses had said they would meet the Natives at Rotorua, to have made a special pre- sentation of Mahuta would have given him a position he was not entitled to, and could reasonably expect. His Excellency in this matter was in complete accord with Ministers ; and all the Maoris that had met at Rotorua would have been offended had a special pre- ference been given to Mahuta, and you would have undone all the years of Native concilia- tion work in this colony. Much as I would have liked to have pleased the citizens of Auckland-proof of which I have given time after time-when it came to that matter, it was impossible for me to accede. But that did not stop the canoes coming down. It seems to me that this canoe business was only a ruse, for, as soon as the preferential presentation of Mahuta was refused, the Maoris refused to allow the canoes to come down. The Govern- ment had done nothing to prevent the canoes coming down to Auckland. The canoes were at Mercer, ready to be put on the trucks, and a special train was sent up to bring them down, but the Maoris would neither come nor send down the canoes. Mr. MASSEY. -- Do you say the canoes were on the trucks ? Mr. SEDDON .- They were at Mercer; and the trucks were ready to receive them. I say, Sir, it is most reprehensible to make capital against the Government on that matter. What was done was done in the best interests of the colony. However, Sir, all is well that ends well. I say the Government were quite willing, and would have rendered every assist- ance to the aquatic display, but the Natives themselves ultimately told the reception com- mittee they were not coming. When they found that Mahuta could not be present they turned round and said they would not take part in the canoe exhibition. With regard to the Indian troops, it was represented to the Government that there was not sufficient aerated water for one-half of the men. After being in the

broil- ing sun and undergoing the fatigue they did, it would have been, in my opinion, a grave reflec- tion upon the colony to have allowed them to remain there without refreshment, and the Government stepped in and did what was neces- sary. The question as to who provided the beer, mentioned by honourable the member for Eden, has nothing to do with it. The question is, whether you are to bring men to- gether and subject them to fatigue, and then leave them without water or anything else to drink. The Mayor informed me that there were only seventy dozen bottles of aerated water and that there were over a thousand men. We merely did what we believed to be our duty. The affair passed off very well, and there ought to have been an end of it. As far as I am concerned, what was done then would be done again if a similar situation arose. 'One never likes taking responsibilities ; but what I think is to be regretted is that we should have been called upon to accept such responsibility, and that any committee should, under the circumstances, have endeavoured to force their convictions upon guests without their being consulted ; and they did so on the ground that it was in accordance with Lord Roberts's wishes, whereas Lord Roberts, on a great and solemn occasion, deliberately ordered that the men should be given a certain amount of beer. If Lord Roberts had been there, he would have done just the same as the Government did, or the Premier did. I, therefore, think this debate might have been avoided. I think we ought simply to have agreed to the second read- ing of the Bill, and not have had a debate of this kind, which will probably be cabled to the other colonies ere the Royal visitors have left them. I think it is to be regretted that this debate should have been forced on the House, but the responsibility for that I throw on the shoulders of the member for Waitemata. Mr. BOLLARD (Eden) .- Do I understand the Premier to say that before the brewers agreed to send the beer to the Imperial troops they got an order from the Government ? Mr. SEDDON .- I deliberately say that before it was known who the beer was to come from, the Commandant and others represented to the Government the situation ; and when the order was given by the Government that beer was to be supplied, it was intended by the Government to pay for it. Later on, the offer to supply it free came from the Auckland brewers. The Commandant telegraphed on the subject, and that telegram appeared in the papers. I cannot say now whether the whole of the beer was pre- sented to the troops or whether we had to pay for it. All I know is that we took action as & Government, and not at the suggestion of the brewers or any one else. Bill read a second time. REFERENDUM BILL. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) .- Sir, this Bill provides a long-felt want. I am sure there will be no personalities introduced in respect to this particular Bill, except that it may be said the Premier, after considerable time and under a certain amount of pressure, had intro- duced it. But I think during late years, while the Bill was in charge of the member for Inangahua, there was a general consensus of opinion in the House that the Bill should have an opportunity of being read a second time, and that members should go into Com- mittee upon it ; and, Sir, when there is a generally expressed wish of that nature. I do not think any one can blame the Government for giving an opportunity such as this. If they did so it would be the height of ingratitude. However, we have the same principle put in concrete form in this Bill. The question of referring matters to the people is nothing new at all. It is only a question of providing against deadlocks occurring--deadlocks such as occur as between the two branches of the Legislature. We have passed Bills--take Mr. Lawry's Bill, for instance, the Deceased Husband's Brother Bill, and I might mention many other mea- sures -- which were thrown out in another Cham- ber, and there was practically no appeal. They came here, were passed, and were rejected in

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another place, and there was no machinery for removing the deadlock. This Bill now provides that if on its first passage here a measure is rejected in another Chamber, and then brought forward again and rejected a second time, then that measure is referred to the electorates and a vote is taken upon it, under just the same con- ditions as though a general election were being held. That is what this measure proposes, so far as Bills are concerned. But there are other questions outside the passing of Bills in

connection with which there has been agitation from time to time in the country, and there has been no opportunity of referring those questions to the people. years ago if we could have referred the question of old-age pensions to the people. I believe myself the verdict of the people upon that measure would have been such that it would have been upon the statute-book sooner than it was. Then, you have at the present time agitating the public mind the question of liquor being sold in the King-country. We have now a number of petitions laid upon the table of the House by those who claim that a large majority of the people of the country are against any liquor being sold in the King-country. Well, on the other hand, there are many who say that those petitions come only from a few of those people who are interested in promoting temperance or prohibition. While these people say it is true they are moving directly, but behind them they have the people of the colony. Very well, if you have the power proposed by this Bill, you can carry a resolution, the matter can then be referred to the people, and the people themselves can decide upon the question, or, at all events, they can give a guide to the Legislature. Then, there is another matter in regard to which a large number of petitions are coming in - Bible-reading in schools. A very large number of people consider that the want of religious teaching in our schools is against the best interests of the rising generation of this colony. Well, I am not going to express any opinion at all upon that. My convictions have been, and I have always adhered to them-and I shall adhere to them-in favour of undenominational public instruction being given in our schools. I have never altered from that, and as time goes on I am more convinced than ever that we are on the right lines. But, Sir, under our present existing conditions, as you are aware, provision is made before and after school-hours for religious instruction being imparted- that is, if the clergymen will go there to do it. To-day very little is being done, I am sorry to say, in this colony in that respect, and blame is thrown on the Legislature which I think should properly fasten on the shoulders of those who fail in their duty in this respect. In regard to this question, there is no method, as far as I know, by which you can bring public opinion to bear, unless you bring down an amendment of the Education Act. Now, the moment you bring down an Education Bill on the floor of this House, or any measure touching the provisions of the Education Act, then, for various reasons, some logical and some otherwise, no measure can proceed very far. It is almost an impossibility to get any amendment of our present education laws through the Legislature. If this Bill was passed, Parliament could have this question decided by a resolution of the House, or both Houses, by referring to a referendum of the people. This simply provides the machinery. I cannot, of course, refer to past debates; but it has been urged, Sir, that there is a very large number of people in this colony who are in favour of federation with the Commonwealth, notwithstanding the evidence and the report of the Royal Commission. I say, Sir, that there was an opportunity of having a referendum practically through the census : but when it was pointed out to the Government that the taking of steps then would be setting aside the Royal Commission, or interfering with its functions, the Government at once saw the force of that, and nothing further was done. What I had in my mind is that the Referendum Bill, or an Act giving power for the reference of this question to the people, would meet the difficulty. Therefore, we wish to have the machinery for a reference to the people on this head, and the machinery is provided here. Then, Sir, I am sure I shall have the support of the member for Auckland City, Mr. Fowlds, and the member for Christchurch City as well, because it will afford the means of testing public opinion upon this question of the single-tax. If we had the machinery, you could refer that question to the people. Hon. MEMBERS .- Oh ! Mr. SEDDON .- I know some members are treating this matter with levity. I say myself that there is a great deal more in the pretensions of those who are contending for this than many think, and in these days of progress it may not be so long as some people imagine before there will be a change in the incidence of our taxation. and when that comes about it will be in the direction, I think, indicated by the single taxers. Mr. MASSEY .- Are you in favour of it ? Mr. SEDDON .- I am always in favour of that which is practicable, and I do not think that it is practicable at the present time.

At all events, what I do say is this : Though I stand on the floor of this House with a due sense of responsibility, I say there is too much paid by indirect taxation. Whether, Sir, we can economize and relieve in that direction is a matter which time will determine, but I do say that our impost through indirect taxation is very heavy at the present time. I cannot help speaking my honest convictions. Then, Sir, we have another matter which has agitated the public mind and comes very close home. Probably the honourable member for Waitaki, if he would include in the Elective Executive Bill the referendum clause, could get it through. He might get it through this House even without that; but how about another place ? An Hon. MEMBER .- It might be rejected there.

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Mr. SEDDON .- But, Sir, if it is refused a , sides-now, however, there is only one side- second time in another place, and this Bill is passed, it is referred to the people. Yes, that is a clincher ; and that should carry the second reading of this Bill if nothing else will. I am not going for a moment to say that the people will carry that measure. Then, Sir, we have the Bill by the honourable member for Maitāwhiri -the Absolute Majority Bill., Some change in the manner of determining elections, I believe, is necessary. We do not at the present time have the representation of majorities when we have candidates that split up the votes. In fact, we have in this House at the present time minority representation. That is the condition of things. Well, Sir, that Bill is one which might be sub- mitted to the people to deal with. Then, there is another matter. Of late the Legislative Coun- cil has been in touch with the people. An Hon. MEMBER .- With the Ministry. Mr. SEDDON .- The Ministry is in touch with the people, and you yourself admitted that when you said there was no Opposition. There- fore, if the Legislative Council carry out the behests of the people Captain RUSSELL .- The behests of the Ministry. Mr. SEDDON .- Nothing of the kind ; you yourself admitted that there was only one leader and one Government, because you said, " We are all equal now." The honourable gentleman himself told those in another place, " You must be guided now by the Government, because we are all supporters of the Govern- ment." An Hon. MEMBER .- He did not say that. Mr. SEDDON .- There is no other inference to be drawn from what was said ; but the mem- bers of the Opposition find they have gone too far. They told the country the other day there was no Opposition, and now they find the people have taken them seriously-that there is no Opposition, and that they are all going to vote for the Government measures. Suppose, then, you refer to the people the question of the abolition of the Legislative Council. There is no machinery for it at the present time. Mr. ATKINSON. - The Council would have to pass it before it goes to the people. Mr. SEDDON .- As I have said, there is no desire for that now ; that feeling against the Council has gone, for the Legislative Council is in touch with public opinion. Then, there is another measure-the Removal of Women's Disabilities Bill. It is a measure that might go through this House, but it is questionable if it would go through another place. However, if that matter were referred to the people, the machinery would be provided in this measure for any such reference. I am not saying that the suggestion of those who advocate the placing the women on the same equality as men is desirable or practicable. All I say is that there are a large number of members in the House who are in favour of it. It may be there is a majority. It may be that the House by reso- lution might agree to have the matter referred to the country. Sometimes we have vexatious debates. We have assertions made on both . Bill, if it is passed, will completely take away and to meet a situation of the kind this Bill --- has been drafted. I submit it now with confi- dence. I feel it will be read a second time. and I should like to see it passed into law. We know we have a precedent for it in Switzerland. where it has obtained for years. I cannot say the references have been successful : in fact. they have been the reverse. At all events, the reference has been made, and as one who is at all times desirous of giving effect to the will of the people, as long as we can have that will fairly and fully expressed, I believe it is the duty of the Government to promote this Bill. I hope that those who are in favour of it will vote for it. Let us get it through, and make one thorough step forward in progressive

legislation. Sir, I move the second reading of the Bill. Captain RUSSELL (Hawke's Bay) .- Sir, I cannot compliment the Right Hon. the Premier on the manner in which he has introduced this Bill. What his object was it is difficult to understand. No honourable member in this House, I think, will dream of judging what the Premier means by what he says. He generally gives to the House an example of the old adage that words are given to men to conceal their thoughts. On this occasion, however, he scarcely did conceal his thoughts. He knows full well that the tone he used in recommending this Bill to the House was one that damned it with faint praise. If he had any object at all in view, it was to prevent the Bill becoming law. I did not by any means tell him the other night that the Opposition had ceased to exist. I told him that, as an organized body, the Opposition had ceased to exist; but that, individually, we should still to the best of our ability criticize every measure he brings down. Then, Sir, though the right honourable gentleman is mistaken in saying that the House is all one party, I believe that on this occasion we shall vote as the Premier desires, and that is to reject the Referendum Bill. He is just as hostile to it as I could be myself, but for extremely opposite reasons: I might oppose the Bill because it probably would be Conservative in its operation, but the Right Hon. the Premier will vote for it because he believes it is really a Conservative measure in all its bearings. Why did he not treat the question seriously? Why did he bring the measure under the consideration of the House without endeavouring to explain the extreme width and scope of it? Sir, as I read it, this is a Bill which ought not to be introduced in a jocular fashion; this is not a Bill which ought to be voted on by people who have never considered it at all; and I honestly think, as I listened to the Premier this evening, that he had no true idea of the extreme significance of the alterations in our Constitution he proposes. Why, Sir, if you consider this Bill, and study it for two or three minutes, you will see that it is to bring about a complete revolution of the Constitution of New Zealand. Whether that may be right or wrong is a point which, of course, will be open to argument, but that this

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from us every safeguard which now surrounds our legislative proceedings every person cannot fail to observe. Mr. HUTCHESON .- They are all gone, anyhow. Captain RUSSELL .- They are practically all gone, as the honourable member for Wellington City says; and as the Premier told us to-night, the Legislative Council being now in touch with Ministers, everything goes exactly as the Right Hon. the Premier would wish it. Mr. SEDDON .- They are in touch with public opinion. Captain RUSSELL .- "They are in touch with public opinion," and the Premier is public opinion. That is what I understood his argument to be, and therefore I think I am right in pursuing the position logically, and saying that the Legislative Council now represents the views of the Right Hon. the Premier, and therefore is a body to be admired by all the Right Hon. the Premier's admirers. But, at any rate, up to the present time it has been held that we have, under the British Constitution, three branches of the Legislature—the King, Lords, and Commons; and in New Zealand the Governor, the Legislative Council, and the House of Representatives. But under this Bill we virtually are abrogating the whole position. We are destroying the power of the House of Representatives; we are abolishing the functions of the Legislative Council; and we are, I should say, practically infringing the prerogatives of the Crown, inasmuch that if a Bill which is rejected by one branch of the Legislature, and possibly might not be approved of by the Crown, is referred over the heads of the three branches of the Legislature to the uninformed vote of the people, I venture to think that it would be held inexpedient, even by the sovereign people, that a Bill which is so passed .- its provisions most probably unappreciated by or unknown to the people, - shall become the law of the country, though two instructed branches of the Legislature might be opposed to it. Well, that may be held to be right by the Premier, but I confess that I am sufficiently old-fashioned-sufficiently Conservative, if you choose to call it so-to think that the restrictions on hasty legislation are not too great at the present time. I am sick of hearing the phrase that "We are in the van of civilisation," and that "in our legislation we are giving a lead to the world." Sir, it is no one but a vainglorious child who could make

such a statement as that, though we very often hear the statement from the Treasury bench, and from no person more frequently than the Right Hon. the Premier himself. I should not, however, dream of calling him a vainglorious child. but I should stop at the word "vain-glorious." and not add "child" at the end of it. But the continual assertion that New Zealand is in the van of civilisation, creating the progress of the universe, and that no people in the world can compare with us for the wisdom of the legislation, all emanating from himself, from the Right Hon. Pooh Bah of this colony, is to most men almost nauseous. But, looking at the provisions of the Bill, what do we find? Why, that all the ancient safeguards of representative government are swept away entirely. Virtually we are transgressing the Standing Orders in force at the present time, because they forbid a Bill having precisely the same object, after being rejected, being introduced again in the same session. Under this Bill, if a measure which is introduced in either branch of the Legislature is passed by it and rejected by the other Chamber, it can be subsequently reintroduced in the same session. It can then be again passed by the originating Chamber, and, if rejected, possibly, by the other, it is then immediately referred to the people. According to the invariable custom of the present Government the Bills of most importance, and very likely infringing our liberties, are introduced in the dying hours of the session. Within the last fortnight of the end of a session every Bill of real importance is introduced into Parliament. We are not allowed even to see Bills till we are so physically exhausted that scarcely a member is able to pay them proper attention. At this period of the session a Bill is introduced into Parliament, and hurried through both branches of the Legislature in a manner which nobody here can attempt to deny is most discreditable to any Legislative Assembly, and to which honourable members themselves cannot pretend to be able to pay sufficient attention. Let us assume a Bill of vital importance to the welfare of the colony is introduced within a month of the end of the session; is passed by one Chamber and rejected by the other; then the Bill is again introduced into the Chamber where it originated-and it is quite possible to do that within twenty-eight days; it comes again to the other Chamber, and is again rejected. It is now ready to be referred to the people. The Referendum Bill provides that, within seven days of the prorogation of Parliament, steps are to be taken for the submission of the Bill to the people, and the referendum is to be held within twenty-eight days of the prorogation. I am overstating the period necessary to elapse when I say that, within fifty-six days of the assembled representatives of the people first hearing of a policy measure, it is handed over for decision to the young and old electors of the colony-it is to be submitted to the people, who, I venture to say, have no conception-nine out of ten of them-of the measure on which they are called upon to vote. Is this a desirable state of things; is it conducive to careful and prudent legislation? Assuming that the principle is a wise one, is it right that a Bill utterly unknown to the world in general shall be compulsorily forced upon the people for their ultimate decision within fifty-six days at the outside-I believe I may say within very little over forty days? I ask the House to pause and consider whether such a Bill is desirable; whether we want-because that is what it amounts to-to abrogate our present position and place ourselves unreservedly in the hands of the people, whose collective wisdom we are supposed to represent? I may be

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told on all occasions to "Trust the people." Well, when the people have thought a subject out, when it has been explained to them by public men, when from all the platforms in the country and all the printing-presses they have been enlightened on the subject of the proposed legislation, then it may be right that the people should be called into our councils. But I maintain that to say the representatives elected of the country, and the Legislative Council, who through nomination by the Ministers now claim to be elected by the country, are to be overridden completely in their decisions, and a vote is to be taken by persons who have never considered the subject to be submitted to them, is a reversal of the whole principles of representative government. Up to this time it has been held-it has been the practice in the

Mother-land and in all her colonies for the people, being electors, to select their representatives, on the same principle that the shareholders of a joint-stock company elect their directors to control their business. So have the people of all English colonies and the Mother-land elected their representatives to manage their political business, reserving to themselves the right on all occasions to refuse to approve the conduct of their elected, and on the first available opportunity to turn them out of office for having mismanaged the business intrusted to them. Is all this to be swept aside? Are we to say that the people, who know less of the subject than their representatives until the matter has been explained to them, and before they have even had time to study it - that the electors are to say what is the best form of a Bill on a question on which they have not had the opportunity of forming an opinion? I hope the House will not consent to such a thing being done. The Premier quotes Switzerland. The fashion is to quote every other Con. stitution except the British as one from which we may take a lesson. I venture to believe that almost invariably, when a question is referred to the referendum in Switzerland, a Conservative vote is taken. Therefore I may be told, as I do not believe in extreme ad- vanced legislation, that I ought to vote for any proposal which has a Conservative ten- dency. I do not think that follows at all; I do not think we ought to take up that posi- tion. I invite honourable members to consider the extreme difference between the conditions of New Zealand and those of Switzerland. What is our population? Nothing but a fortuitous or concatenation of atoms, as the honourable mem- ber for Auckland City (Mr. Napier) called us the other night. Here we are a people at the end of the world-a people who have scarcely lived together long enough to have a right to claim a national feeling. It is true such feel- ing is growing, but at this time I maintain there is not that strong national feeling which is one of the main strengths of a nation. Take Switzerland as an illustration. There is a country almost unexampled in the history of the world, surrounded on all sides by peoples against whom they might be compelled to struggle at any moment for national existence, and who consequently submit themselves to universal military service, to personal taxation, and to all sorts of laws which this country would never submit itself to for one single instant. You have a people in Switzerland whose fathers and ancestors have always lived in Switzerland, inhabiting & mountainous country, and that particular love of country which comes from living in a mountainous country. All men there are liable to compul- sory military service. Not only is every man liable, but he undergoes compulsory military training; and organization and sacrifice does not stop there. Every horse is registered, is liable to compulsory military service, and is periodically called upon to train. Every dray belonging to the farming class is registered, and is liable to be taken for the service of the country. Not only that, but everybody in the country is taxed. Not only is property taxed, but every man and every woman is taxed, the man on account of his manhood and on account of his ability to earn money, so that he is taxed in proportion to the average earnings of the trade in which he works. So it is with the women. They also are liable to taxation according to their occu- pations, and their . earnings are supposed to average a certain value. And not only that, but no man or woman is allowed to leave his or her canton without a certificate of character from the Mayor; and therefore you will see, as I say, that they are a homo- geneous people in Switzerland, liable to all sorts of taxation, and liable to military service under a condition of things to which we are not subject here, and the consequence is that these people take a practical and most careful in- terest in every form of government. There is no single thing which takes place in the Swiss Republic which is not carefully canvassed by every man and woman in Switzerland, because they know that under their system of govern- ment the men are liable at any moment to be brought under a system of universal military service under arms against an enemy of their country. and that their Government is liable to impose the taxation upon the people individu- ally unless they themselves take care to main- tain that no extravagance of any sort prevails. Here in New Zealand the great bulk of the people unquestionably are absolutely indifferent to the forms of taxation, they are absolutely indifferent to the system of government, they are absolutely indifferent to almost everything

connected with the Government. And why ? An Hon. MEMBER .- Just try them with the referendum and you will see. Captain RUSSELL .- We shall come to that presently. I have been watching them for forty years, but I maintain that, in my opinion, the people of this country so far have not yet manifested any very keen interest in the government of their country. Then, again, the Premier illustrated his argument by telling us something about the possibility of having taken the referendum with regard to the federation of New Zealand with the Australian Colonies, and I understood him to say that, in his opinion, it would have been a good thing ; and

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we know it must have been his opinion, because In the people's ignorance they revolted, and bloodshed ensued. Then, Sir, we find a leader he did contemplate taking that referendum after the Royal Commission had been set up. amongst those people rising up and saying, However, I think if the Commission were to do "The best way we can proceed is not by blood- any good at all it was unwise to submit the shed ; let power be given into our own hands matter to a referendum, because there is no to make the laws which we want for ourselves," doubt about this : that if the intention to take and so we had Parliament established. Parlia- a referendum had been carried into effect, no ment was instituted, but there was a power report would have been given to this colony by above Parliament, in the person of the King. the Royal Commission. I can say this : that When representative government was esta- blished the King and his Council withdrew, the Commission would have taken it as an insult, and this member, at any rate, would have and the Parliament had to approach the King refused to act under any such conditions. The by petition. The people revolted against that argument in favour of setting up the Commis- and strove against it for many centuries, until at last they wrested from the King and sion was that they should travel round and col- lect information, and condense the information Council that power and placed it in Parliament. so gained in a report to His Excellency, before Still the King had power to appoint the various Ministers. The people revolted against that, and the question was even discussed by the leading men of this country-the representatives of the after many centuries of struggle they succeeded people in Parliament assembled; and yet this in taking that power from the King, and they very evening the Right Hon. the Premier leads gave it into the hands of one Minister-the us to understand he would have been in favour Prime Minister; so, instead of the sovereign of taking a referendum on the question of appointing Ministers-we have one man-the federation, though he admits by setting up the Prime Minister, appointing Ministers. That is Commission that the people knew nothing the stage at which we have arrived. The people, whatever about the question. I, at any rate, after a number of years of education and owing intend to vote against the Referendum Bill : to the spread of newspapers amongst the com- I do not think it is a desirable thing that we munity, are commencing to see that their re- should submit questions to the people until presentative institutions fail to represent them. they have been properly thought out by They see that frequently what was supposed to the people. I do not think it is a desir- be a truly representative form of government able thing that we should completely change does not represent them perfectly, and that laws the Constitution of this country until the are passed which the people do not wish to be matter has been thought out, and until passed, and that it frequently happens that laws it has been submitted as a direct question which the people think are desirable are kept to the people at an election. Though I have back for years and years, so that the result has heard honourable members say that the prin- been this demand for the referendum. The ciple of the referendum was before the people at proposal for direct legislation was first brought the last election, I disagree with that assump- prominently before the people by Martin tion. The people have never considered the Rittinghausen, a great Belgian writer, and when subject, and I believe they would take exception he propounded this scheme of direct reference to the people it was scouted. The only country to some parts of the Bill. Nor do I believe there is any widespread desire to change the which took it up was Switzerland, and what do Constitution of this colony in the way

that we writers say of that remarkable country ? That, should do if we passed the Referendum Bill. I though the people are divided by great ranges shall vote against it. of mountains, and divided by race and religion, Mr. ELL (Christchurch City) .- I, Sir, regard through the effect of the referendum and tho this Bill introduced by the Premier as one of initiative bringing the people together at fre- the most important proposals ever brought into quent intervals their religious prejudices have been broken down and they are now all fused this Chamber. The possibilities are very great indeed. The honourable member for Hawke's in one mass. They are now a united people, Bay urged that we are not proceeding in a when before they were scattered atoms. This proper and constitutional way. Now, Sir, has been the effect of the referendum and tho what is a proper and constitutional way ? I initiative there. I noticed that the honour-gather from the history of our own people, able member for Hawke's Bay seemed to think from the history of the institution of Parlia- that the referendum and the initiative only ment, that a good constitutional form of govern- existed in Switzerland. Sir, it exists in every ment shall be that form of government that State of the United States of America with the will enable the people to express their minds exception of one, and even there it will be -to express their will. The purpose we have adopted before many years. I shall give a few in establishing a Legislature is to enable the instances to show its operation in that country. people to express their opinion, and to have With regard to its overriding the power of effect given to their opinion. What caused Parliament, Sir, what is Parliament supposed the troubles amongst the people in the Old to be? It is supposed to be so constituted that Land away back in the early times ? It it will actually represent the mind of the people, was because power was withheld from them. and I say that we are proceeding on true con- In more primitive days they made their own stitutional lines according to ancient English laws. Then, we know, a sovereign rose up precedent, which is that whenever the people amongst them and took to himself that power. have found any form of government to be

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not in accordance with their aims and aspira- tions and desires, so that form of govern- ment has been changed in order to suit the changed condition of the people. And that, Sir, is what we propose to do now. A great change has overtaken public opinion in this country. It is more enlightened and more active, and so demands to have more power. Sir, the dividing-line between the progressives and the moderates has been this : economic reform and constitutional reform. Social reforms are non- partisan. The economic and constitutional reforms are the only lines of demarcation between parties in this country and in every country. The proposal of this Bill is to yield up a certain amount of power to the people from ourselves, and it will be resisted by the mode- rates ; the progressives will support the proposal to yield up power into the hands of the people, which is exactly what we propose to do now. But before I proceed to give illustrations showing the working of the system I would like to call attention to one very serious defect in the Bill before the House. That is this : that it fails to place the initiative in the hands of the people, and in that respect is like a cart without wheels. Before any Bill can go before the country it has got to receive not only the assent of this House, but also the assent of a House which is purely a nominated Chamber, a Chamber which is composed partly of life-members and partly of appointees of the Government of the day, and before we can put any question directly before the country-any proposal or any Bill- we have got to receive their assent. An Hon. MEMBER. - They have got to throw the Bill out. Mr. ELL .- No ; we have got to receive their assent. If the honourable member for Wairarapa will read the Bill he will see that before any Bill or legislative proposal can be submitted to the people it has to receive the assent not only of this House, but of the other House. Hon. MEMBERS. - NO. Mr. ELL. - No. Iam right. It is further provided that if a measure is rejected by the Upper House on two successive occasions it shall be referred to the people. Well, if the Bill is to be effective, and if it is to place power in the hands of the people that they do not now possess, we must have a clause in it placing the initiative in the hands of the people. If we fix 5 per cent. it would mean that before any Bill could be submitted to the people on the initiative something

like 18,400 people would have to sign a petition demanding the submission of the Bill. Sir, it has been urged that if we pass this measure we shall be practically wiping ourselves out. Nothing of the sort will happen, Sir. There must be a House to frame legislative proposals. Every Bill will not be submitted to the people, but only those Bills the people desire to have submitted to them before they become law. If a Bill is passed by this Legislature and the people approve of it, they will not petition to have that Bill submitted to them. If they do not approve of it, they will petition the House to have the Bill submitted to them before it shall become law. In Switzerland only those measures are submitted to the people that they have revolted against. Therefore the bogey that no House of Representatives will be necessary has no existence. and the working of a similar measure in other countries shows there is nothing in such an objection. What has been the history of the system in America ? It has been in operation there for many years, and the authorities state that the effect has been to induce interest. Though at first the polls were small, it is found now that the polls on different measures are much greater than the polls on the election of members. The people actually take more interest in the legislative proposals submitted to them than in the election of members. That is the effect in America after a number of years' trial. It may interest honourable members to hear the nature of some of the questions submitted to the people. In Massachusetts they have passed a law to the effect that a city may pension old and disabled firemen, and may establish an eight-hours law. In the City of Cambridge 5,709 voted for and 1,752 against the proposal to establish a pension for firemen. In the Town of Lynn 5,880 voted in favour and 2,181 against pensioning firemen. Six large cities adopted the proposal to pension firemen, and only two rejected it. In the three cities in which a poll was taken on the eight-hour law it was carried. It must be remembered that these States are not less populous than New Zealand. We can judge of their importance by their population. In the State of Georgia they have a population of 1,837,000. and there they carried a proposal to provide a pension for the indigent widows of Confederate soldiers ; that was the effect of the referendum there. In Louisiana they have a population of 1,118,000, and they voted in favour of giving a pension to Confederate soldiers. The voting was 31,320 for and only 1,440 against. Then, in Michigan, with a population of two millions. a poll was taken re taxing railway lands-that is, the land alongside the railways not used by the company-and against granting special charters to the railway company. Well, out of 500,000 only 54,000 voted against this proposal. Then, in Missouri, where there is a population of over two and a half millions, they formerly made a man who owned a property pay the whole of the taxes. Now they insist upon a person holding the mortgage portion of the value pay also his proportionate share of the taxes upon that property, and this was passed by a very substantial majority. Then, in the State of Washington, they passed an amendment exempting personal property up to 300 dollars. Now, in this case, to show that it has had a good effect in educating the people, it is pointed out that the ballot-papers were 5 ft. long. They had a large number of questions on the ballot-papers, and each question was set out. and the people voted on them, and the authorities which I have quoted state that the people voted on these questions very intelligently. The referendum has had a wonderful effect in educating these electors. Then, Sir. it has been urged that if you give the people this

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power they will ruin the rich and plunder | since I have been a member of this House has. them. In Chicago, where they wanted a loan also been deemed undesirable by the honourable gentleman and his colleagues. The Land Act of. of 500,000 dollars for a new Courthouse, 1892 was, in his opinion, very undesirable. I less than one-quarter of the people now pay think he fought very valiantly the whole of the direct taxation, yet the voting was 166,706 against the proposal, and only 18,378 for it, important clauses in that Act. The Land for -howing that the people do not make an unfair Settlements Act was an undesirable one, as was use of the power that is placed in their hands. also the Old-age Pensions and the Advances to We know what has been done in Switzerland. Settlers Acts. I need not go over the

whole. lot of them ; nearly every important Bill that There was a proposal that the State should Well, the manufacture phosphorus matches. has been passed during the last ten or twelve years has been undesirable in the opinion of people argued-and there was a good deal of common-sense in their arguments - that the the member for Hawke's Bay. Now, as he manufacture of matches with phosphorus was states that this Referendum Bill is an un- just as dangerous to the people if manufactured desirable one, I take it that it must be placed by the State as by private individuals, and in the same category ; and, if I am to be guided : hey determined that phosphorus should not be by what has happened in the past, I think it used at all. That was how the people there will be for the benefit of the country that this used the referendum. Then, in regard to the undesirable Bill should be passed into law. laughing of cattle, the people determined The honourable gentleman pointed out that that cattle should be made insensible to pain in Switzerland, where the principle of the referendum is adopted, the citizens are liable before they were killed. Then, they nation- alised their railways in Switzerland. Then, to perform military duty. But is that not the direction in which we are travelling in. there is one other instance I would like to give New Zealand ? Look at the measure which in the United States of America. They have vast forests in some of these States, and in is before us-which will possibly be passed this session, with the help of the honourable one instance the Legislature permitted legis- member for Hawke's Bay - the State-school 'ation to pass which would have had the effect of Children Compulsory Drill Bill. What about allowing injury to be done to the State forests. The people determined that the Bill should be those speeches of a patriotic character that submitted to a referendum, and they rejected we have heard from time to time by honour- able gentlemen, pointing out the import- the proposition by a very large majority. The proposition was practically this : that the forest ance of the Volunteer movement, and trust- -should be leased out in small areas. Well, the ing that New Zealand would develop into people rose in revolt against that, and, though a thoroughly well-armed, efficient military the Legislature passed the Bill, when it came nation ? Is not that the aspiration of the before the people they rejected it. This shows honourable gentleman himself - that every that they make very good use of the oppor- man capable of taking up arms should be drilled and taught how to use them? Then. tunities and the power given them. I venture to think it would do an immense amount of he also says that in Switzerland every man and good to the electors of this country if we gave woman is liable to be taxed. Is not that the them more direct power. I was surprised and case in this country? How many escape taxa- tion, either directly or indirectly ? Is not pleased to hear the thorough, sound, democratic -perch made by the Premier ; and I hope, when every man, woman, and child taxed in New the Bill is in Committee, he will assent to a 'Zealand through the medium of Customs clause being inserted giving the people the duties, and in a variety of ways? I do not say that it is any disadvantage for the people of power of the initiative, in order that they may any country to be taxed, because it shows that be able to advance legislation that they deem they have something to be taxed upon. It to be advisable in the interests of the people. shows a certain amount of ability, and for that I cordially support the second reading of the Bill. reason I think it is a very good sign that the Mr. HOGG (Masterton) .- I feel that it is people of a country like this can afford to be taxed. In Switzerland there cannot be a large necessary for me to speak on this Bill, for the amount of poverty and distress if every man and simple reason that a number of years ago we had a similar Bill before us, and, if I remember woman is liable to be taxed, and is taxed, by the Government. Then, the honourable gentle- aright. on that occasion I opposed the measure man stated that we are destroying the power of and voted against it. Now, as I intend to vote in favour of this measure, it is, perhaps, de- the King and Parliament ; we are giving away sirable that I should explain how I have under- said, in another portion of his speech, ancient done some little conversion. It is said that "a safeguards. Well, Sir, I hope that before very wise man changes his mind, but a fool never." I hope I shall always be open to conviction, and long a lot of these safeguards will occupy the if i nnd my views have been wrong I shall be our gaols. I refer to those

manacles and chains prepared to amend them. But my conversion I partly due to the remarks and the criticism of the Bill by the honourable member for hope that some of the safeguards which the Hawke's Bay. He told us this was a very undesirable Bill. But nearly every measure of honourable gentleman referred to will be swept away. The sooner the better. In a free and. an important character which has been passed the Royal prerogative ; we are destroying, he position that some safeguards occupy now in that people had to wear in former days, but which are now used for exhibition purposes. I

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enlightened country like this we do not require to maintain the musty and fusty safeguards which have been standing in the way of progress for ages. Those are the very things which should be got rid of. We have retained unnecessary safeguards which a free people should not be required to be burdened with. In New Zealand the people are politically educated, and the honourable gentleman is not justified in assuming that, because a measure has only been before Parliament and under consideration for forty, fifty, or sixty days, the people of the colony are not likely to be able to understand it, or be in a position to give an intelligent vote upon it. I conceive that there may have been a time, years ago, when the franchise was limited, when it might have been impolitic to facilitate the passage of a Referendum Bill under which measures of magnitude and importance should be relegated to the people. I had some years ago my doubts about the measure, and I opposed it because I was afraid that it was premature -- that the people of the colony were not sufficiently educated in a political sense to be able to deal satisfactorily with some of the huge and intricate questions which might be brought in front of them; but we have had now the experience of popular rule under a universal franchise, and from the way in which that franchise has been exercised by the people we have a clear proof that the time is approaching when they ought to have the power to dictate to Parliament under what laws they are to be governed. It is the inherent right of a free, an educated people, men and women, to say how they shall be governed. What are we proposing ? We are proposing to remove from Parliament a certain amount of responsibility. We are handing a certain amount of the power that has hitherto been exclusively vested in the Parliament of the country over to the people. I am of opinion that the people should be the ultimate controlling-power. They should be the ultimate Court of Appeal in connection with our legislation. If our legislative Chambers are at variance with each other, and cannot come to a proper conclusion as to whether a measure is desirable or not, the people should be the umpire between the contending parties, and say whether the measure should be passed into law or not. Now, I contend that, with the amount of education that our young people who are leaving school and becoming incorporated in our political institutions are receiving, and with the splendid political training through the medium of the Press, platform, and otherwise that is being conferred on the people generally, if there is any part of the world where a Referendum Bill could be of any importance and do any good it is in a young country like ours. It is all very well to taunt the Premier with boasting of the liberties our people are enjoying. The people have made a splendid use of their liberties and privileges, and have shown by the way they have acted from time to time that they are fit to receive a further instalment of power, and to be intrusted with the great and responsible duties which is assigned to them by a Bill of this character. Then, Sir, reference has been made to the altered constitution of the Legislative Council. We are told that the Upper House is no longer standing in the way of the Premier. I presume that the honourable gentleman means that the Upper House is no longer standing in the way of the wishes of the majority in this Assembly, and of the demands of the people themselves. There was a time when the principal employment of the other Chamber was not merely to revise our Bills, but to consign them to the waste-paper basket. Day after day certain measures, some of them policy measures, passed by this Assembly had only to go to the other House to be rejected. Our progressive legislation was frustrated. Captain RUSSELL. - You cannot give one instance. Mr. HOGG. - I think, during the first session I was in this House no policy measure of the slightest importance passed this House that was not

rejected in the other Chamber, and as a result, towards the end of the session, a huge meeting was held on the reclaimed ground at Wellington, at which I was present, for the purpose of protesting against the action of that Chamber. The Land Act, the first Electoral Bill, including the female franchise, were rejected there. During that session, after what I call the Liberal party came into power, I believe every one of the policy measures brought forward was rejected ignominiously by the Upper House. That was the work of gentlemen who at that time occupied about two hours a day slaughtering the legislation of the people's representatives. I do not wish to treat the members of that Chamber with disrespect. No doubt they were sincere in what they did, and acted according to their lights ; but there could be no real progress while one Chamber was destroying the work of the other. That was why the constitution of that Chamber had to be altered. Now we have arrived at another stage when an alteration of the Constitution is demanded. and if we consult the wishes and interests of the people we will have that alteration carried out. It may seem a dangerous thing to some members. like the member for Hawke's Bay, that there should be any amendment of our Constitution. but I trust that we are not going to hesitate to carry out reforms and improvements if they are found necessary for the general good of the country. We have here a Referendum Bill. and if we think the people can be intrusted with more power than they now enjoy, and that the result will be the passing of measures more in harmony with the wishes of the majority than at present, then I say we ought to welcome the passing of a measure of this kind. What are we endeavouring to bring about ? It is not denied that we should do everything possible to make ourselves conversant with the wishes of the majority. By the referendum we shall be enabled to ascertain what the people require. I believe that the wish of every true Liberal and democrat is to give expression to the desires of the people. This Bill is founded upon a sound principle-the principle that every man

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sure that I presume is somewhat similar to this. and woman ought to have a voice in the government of the country, and that, as far as political At all events, the principle is similar-the principle of referendum. I do not think the con- power is concerned, they should occupy the ditions, however, are precisely the same. We same plane. The proposal means the levelling- have to bear in mind the wide suffrage we have up of the masses ; it will give the people a measure of political power which they never enjoyed in this colony. Here we have thousands of before ; and I believe it will be for the permanent young women just exactly turned twenty-one benefit of this country if this Bill is passed into years of age. We have also thousands of what you might almost call boys, because they have law. Mr. CARNCROSS (Taieri) .- I have always only just reached the age of twenty-one, and noticed, Sir, that converts are the men who we are going to throw upon them very largely most frequently are real and whole-souled en- the responsibility of deciding for us what we If you want a real and red-hot, thusiasts. are to do in the way of legislation. Sir, I think it is not a wise thing to pass legislation of whole-souled temperance orator you will find him often in one who has been a "soaker" in this nature. It is absolutely impossible for the vast majority of those to whom we would the past. The honourable gentleman who spoke last is a convert on this question of appeal, under a measure of this kind, to be the referendum, and I must congratulate him masters of the question we would submit to upon the whole-souledness of his conversion. them ; and what is the use of appealing to It really did one good to listen to his speech. those who in the vast majority of instances I do not know what it is that converted him know less about the question than we do so thoroughly. I do not think it can be the ourselves ? arguments adduced during the course of the should be doing. The idea has been thrown debate this evening ; but I shall give him the out that if we adopted this referendum we credit of supposing that he was possibly con- should then make easy and speedy the passing verted during the recess-that he has not been of what we are pleased to term " Liberal mea- persuaded by what has been said to-night, but sures." Sir, woman suffrage has been classed as a Liberal measure, and I feel as certain as that that he has calmly made up his mind during the recess. It is said that it is only fools and

I am standing here that if that question had been referred to the constituencies by means of those who are dead who never change their the referendum there would not have been the minds ; therefore I will not for one moment taunt the honourable gentleman with incon. ghost of a chance of its becoming the law of the sistency. I have upon previous occasions voted land. That is my opinion. The same thing against this Bill, and I have heard nothing to applies to the Old-age Pensions Act. If that induce me to change my mind to such an had gone to the referendum, there is, of course, extent that I shall feel inclined to vote for it not the slightest doubt that those who had the now. I think the only logical argument was hope of enjoying the benefits of that scheme that adduced by the honourable member for would have voted for it, but the vast majority Hawke's Bay-it was the most convincing I of the people of New Zealand would not have have heard to-night. There might be argu- reckoned that they were going to derive any of ments vet to be brought forward in favour of its benefits, and I once more assert that that the Bill, and I shall be quite prepared to listen measure also would have suffered defeat. to them, but I do not expect to hear anything Judging from the interjections, there are those like the arguments submitted by the member who differ from me, but I have good grounds for holding the opinion I do. I do not think, for Hawke's Bay. I may mention that the honourable gentleman who has just sat down Sir, that appealing to the people in the manner said, " If it can be shown that it is essential suggested in this Bill is going to help us with that this measure should be passed, then we Liberal or any other legislation in any shape should welcome it, and pass it." Quite so; I or form. Now, it has been given to us as an argument to-night in favour of this Bill that am quite at one with him there. If it can be shown that it is essential that this Bill should in some States of America, as the result of the be passed, no doubt we can vote for it; but referendum, they have agreed to pensions for I do submit that no argument submitted to- disabled firemen. Sir, that proves absolutely night has shown us that it is essential for the nothing. In those States where there are huge political welfare of the colony that this Bill populations, of course the firemen are a con- should be passed. It appears to me that this siderable body of the community, and they have measure would afford us, as parliamentary influence they can bring to bear, and there are various sections of the community who recog- representatives, an easy way of shifting our responsibility. All we have to do is to get a nise that the firemen should have pensions. I measure before us, secure its rejection twice, have not the slightest doubt that as this colony and submit it to the people, and then we can grows, and as the number of our firemen in- say we have got the authority and mandate crease, we shall recognise them as a very of the people as to whether we must put important body, and we shall in time give certain measures through this House, and so them similar recognition to what has been cast the responsibility upon the people. I extended to firemen in those particular States. think, Sir, it is a deliberate shelving of our And, after all, it is to a great extent a matter of finance that has to be very carefully considered. own responsibilities. Now, we have heard some arguments to-night about what has been done Now, without any referendum whatever, we have a scheme of pensions for our Police in other places under the provisions of a mea- That is really what I think we

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Force. We recognised it was a right and pro- per thing to do, and I am proud to see it now upon our statute-book. It is proposed now that we shall arrange for a pension or superannua- tion allowance for our railway employés. They are a large body of men, more numerously represented here in this House than any other class of the community, I believe, and there is not the slightest doubt that in course of time they also will receive similar recognition to that which has been accorded the firemen who were referred to by the honourable member for Christchurch City (Mr. Ell) ; and that will be done without referring to the people at all. We shall do it of our own volition by our Legis- lature. The honourable member for Christchurch City, in referring to a certain ballot in Washington, said that they had a ballot-paper .5 ft. long An Hon. MEMBER. - Five yards. Mr. CARNCROSS .- I think 5 ft. is what the gentleman said. However, I do

not know whether the honourable gentleman thought that this 5 ft. ballot would be an argument in favour of the referendum, but to my idea it added an element of horror to the thing ; and if I thought we were going to have a 5 ft. ballot-paper 1 would stonewall for a very long time to prevent this horror coming upon us. An Hon. MEMBER .- They would not be as long as the Premier's speeches. Mr. CARNCROSS .- Fortunately, we do not have to read all these speeches, but we should have to read the ballot-paper ; and, judging by the large number of informal votes which are cast at our own elections, it takes the electors all their time to understand a 5 in. ballot-paper, let alone a 5 ft. one. So we can throw that aside, and not treat it as an argu- in favour of passing this measure. Now, Sir, I am of opinion that we have our elections quite often enough. Every three years we have a general upset and turmoil of the whole people. and I should very much like to see the time for the duration of Parliament extended to four or five years. If I said five years I would be told, of course, that I am not a Liberal, so I would like to split the difference and say four years. An Hon. MEMBER .- NO. Mr. CARNCROSS .- There you are again. I believe some people would like to have an elec- tion every year, but it is those who are out of office who would like to see an annual election. As for myself. I confess I would like to see it held every four years. Sir, what should we find if the referendum does become law? I say it will become the bounden duty of the members of this House-or, at all events, those who have .studied the questions which come before it - to be continually taking the platform, stumping the country from one end to the other, and try- ing to educate the people on the various points laid before them by referendum. Those honour- able gentlemen who are sufficiently indepen- dent to spend their whole time in stumping the country on \$240 a year are quite welcome to do it, but I am not prepared to do it. But it would become almost the bounden duty of honourable members to do so if ever this Bill reaches our statute-book. Sir, I will conclude by saying that the passing of this Bill seems to me to be an appeal on the part of those who do know to those who do not know, to give us in- struction how to legislate. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccarton). - Having on every occasion since I have been in Parlia- ment supported any Bill introduced for this purpose, I propose to vote for the second read- ing of the Bill now before the House. I must congratulate the Premier on his conversion » far as accepting the principle of the Bill is con- cerned. It is true he suggested that although a Bill might pass this House it would probably be defeated in another place. So far as that point is concerned, it is not our business to inquire. We have to deal with the business as it comes before us. I must also congratulate the mem- ber for Masterton on his conversion. I shall expect both the Premier and the member for Masterton. if the opportunity presents itself before the end of the session, to vote for the periodical revaluation of the lease in per- petuity. The conversions going on in that part of the House to genuine Liberal prin- ciples shows me that before long we may have both those gentlemen voting for that strictly Liberal principle. With regard to the remarks of the Premier in introducing the Bili. as to what the Legislative Council may do, it appears to me that one of the questions this Parliament will have to face before long is the reform of that part of the Legislature ; and I believe one of the planks that will have to be formulated by the Liberal party in this colony within the next few years-one of the planks of any policy to commend itself to the country as a whole- will be that for the reform of the Legislative Council, so far as bringing that body into touch with public opinion is concerned. At the present time the power of nominating members to that Council gives any Ministry that may be in office a power of influencing the legislation of this country that is dan- gerous and improper; and, although it is con- stitutional, and according to the Constitution we have at present, I sincerely hope the time is not far distant when the number of members of that branch of the Legislature will be fixed : and not only that, but that they, like ourselves, will be sent to their constituents, although possibly not at the same time, nor in connection with the same constituencies. As I have said, I will vote for the second reading of this Bill as affirm- ing the principle of the referendum ; but at the same time I regard the Bill in many respects as highly impracticable. There was a great deal in what the member for Hawke's Bay said when he pointed out that

there might be a Bill passed or rejected twice in one branch of the Legislature during the closing hours of a session, and that within twenty-eight days the constituencies, which possibly were uninformed as to the objects of the Bill, would be called upon to decide. What, in my opinion, this Bill wants is some clause that will provide that the referendum shall be taken, and that the great machinery that is imported into this

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Bill shall be set in operation only for a purpose that is of sufficient importance. As the Bill stands now, a measure that might be rejected, and which might cost the country an expense equal to the expense of a general election, might be one of a very trivial character. It is true that in subclause (2) of clause 4 of the Bill it is provided that a Bill may be sent by both Houses to the constituencies. That would be right enough under some circumstances, where the Parliament was not sure as to the ground on which it stood so far as being in touch with the colony was concerned. But, so far as subclause (1) of clause 4 is concerned, dealing with a Bill being twice rejected in one session. I am not disposed to vote for this vast machine being set in operation under circumstances such as that. Take, for example, the constitutional checks that have existed in days past. We have had the check of a Bill being passed by this House and sent to the Legislative Council, and then perhaps rejected. Then it has been sent up again, and the constitutional practice has been -- though not always carried out -- that on a Bill being sent up the second time by the Lower House, to regard it as the duty of the Upper House then to accept the principle. But it is laid down in the clearest manner possible, in Mr. Leonard Courtenay's recent book, "The Working of the British Constitution" -- a book only issued some few months ago, and which is, I think, one of the best books on the subject I have read -- as the emphatic duty of the House of Lords to accept the verdict of the constituencies as given at a general election if the matter has been relegated to the constituencies. Now, I am inclined to think that if we wish to bring this Bill into operation and make it practicable we ought not to bring the referendum into force too hurriedly, and I think that that is the fault of the Bill now before us. I would like to point out that the costliness of the referendum is a matter that we ought not to regard too lightly. As I have said, the whole machinery of a general election is set in operation by clause 8. There is to be exactly the same expense, exactly the same number of Returning Officers; and we know that the policy of this country has been for years past to increase very largely the number of Deputy Returning Officers in the constituencies, so as to give the greatest possible facilities to the people to record their votes. I repeat, that the bringing into operation of so large and expensive a machine as that should only be done where it is such a case that it is extremely difficult for Parliament to ascertain what exactly is the opinion of the constituencies upon the matter. Now, referring to clause 13 of the Bill, let me point out to the Premier what may be the effect of that clause. Clause 13 deals with the effect of the referendum on a proposal other than a Bill. In other words, power is given there to take a vote of the people on a legislative proposal. Then, when the referendum has affirmed the desirability of the legislative proposal, what is required is that the Government shall "introduce a Bill to give effect to such proposal." But, Sir, there is no guarantee that the Bill will be passed. You might then even require a second referendum as to the Bill itself. In fact, it is very probable that that would be required if there were much feeling in the country in connection with the matter. I point that out for the purpose of emphasizing the argument that I used just now as to the importance of our getting the most clear and definite issue, and that only then that a subject of supreme importance should be submitted to the constituencies by the referendum. Now, the honourable member for the Taieri spoke just now as though he thought that the proposal of the Bill would end in our seeking to evade responsibility. He said it was a question of shifting responsibility from Parliament to the people. Now, there are some questions upon which I think it would be more desirable that the people should decide than that we should decide. Now, let me refer him to two subjects, both of which I think the Right Hon. the Premier mentioned in introducing the Bill this evening. They are the licensing question and the question of Bible-reading in schools. Now,

so far as my own constituency is concerned, I believe that a large majority of my constituents are against prohibition. So far as the question of Bible in schools is concerned, I am not sure what their feeling is. Now, I do not think that the honourable member should complain if, with regard to these two questions, both of which seem to have a great deal of feeling attached to them, and feeling which will become more intense, some of us should say we prefer not to be ourselves altogether the mouthpiece of one party, knowing that the feeling is divided amongst our constituents, and that we prefer. so far as the licensing questions or matters relating to prohibition, and so far as such questions as the Bible in schools, are concerned, that our constituents themselves should, by their vote. settle the question, so that the mind of the country as a whole could be obtained. I think, in connection with such matters as those, which are important matters and are very largely thought of and felt by the constituencies, the referendum could come in. There are other questions that might come up. The Premier himself hinted at a possible referendum in connection with the reform of the Legislative Council. Ave, and I would go so far as to say, in connection with many other large and important questions, when the public mind is educated it is right and proper that Parliament should pass over directly to the constituencies the decision. And, although there may be occasions such as the honourable member for Hawke's Bay referred to, where the constituencies have not been educated on a matter. there is no doubt if, instead of having the principles of the Bill for which a referendum is required referred within a few weeks of its rejection for the first time, if it were held over for twelve months, till after the Bill had been introduced and rejected a second time, then by that time the public mind would be fully educated regarding the question, and we could accept with

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surety the mind of the constituencies as recorded at the ballot-box. My opinion is that one reform we should look for is something in the way of a modified Hare system, as far as the election of members is concerned. The longer I live, and the more I observe politics, the more satisfied I am that the localism engendered by the small constituencies we represent now is-I will not say fatal, but tends to our taking a limited and circumscribed view regarding large questions ; and I believe if Parliament were elected in large constituencies of from four to seven members the effect would be that we should get more fully at the minds of the people than we do now by the single-electorate system. This, however, is by the way. I shall vote for the second reading of the Bill, and in Committee endeavour to give effect to the suggestions I have made by preventing the referendum being taken at so early a period as the Bill provides, and by trying to find some plan by which it shall only be taken on matters of much greater importance than is necessarily provided under the Bill. Mr. WILFORD (Wellington Suburbs) .-- I agree with the last speaker in reference to the amendments that may be required in Committee ; but it seems to me the question of whether or not the Bill should pass its second reading is one on which there can hardly be a division. It is generally conceded not only in English-speaking countries, but foreign writers on the same subject have pointed out the desirability of referring matters of great importance to the whole people of a particular colony the legislation may be deemed to affect. It seems to me a poor policy and a poor compliment to pay to the people of a country if their representatives are afraid to refer to them great questions which agitate the public mind, and which may have to be dealt with from time to time. " It is said "-I quote now from Hansari- " that about fifteen years ago, after the century opened, it came to be a generally recognised principle that to the people of the United States belonged a direct voice in deciding what their government should be. The Constitution of New York about 1820 became notably unsatisfactory. Governor Clinton, in a message to the Legislature, recommended-first, that the question of calling a Convention should be submitted to the people and decided by them by a majority vote at the polls of electors; and, second, that, if a Convention should in this way be called, the doing thereof should again be referred to the people for their confirmation or rejection. A Bill was passed by the Legislature according to the Governor's recommendations; the people voted 'Convention ' or ' No Convention,' with a large

majority in the affirmative ; and a subsequent Act ordering the election of delegates stated that it should be the duty of the said Convention to submit their proposed amendments to the decision of the citizens of the State entitled to vote under this Act, together or in distinct propositions, as might appear most expedient." In an article on federation written by George Le Rord, as applied to Belgium, he puts the matter shortly and succinctly, saying,- "The referendum has become an issue in the communal politics of Belgium, and here, as there (in America), a devotion to the institution as a means of political reform is developing which may lead to more important results than any which have yet been attained." And Sir Francis Adams, who was the late British Minister at Berne, says, in his work on the Swiss Confederation,- "That the referendum has struck root and expanded wherever it has been introduced, and no serious politician of either party would now think of attempting its abolition." Most of the great writers on this subject who have gone exhaustively into the questions quote the different decisions and methods which have been in vogue in America in dealing with this question ; but there is a difficulty no doubt, as has been voiced by the honourable member for Taieri, in reference to the class of voting-paper which would be put before the people, but that is a detail which can be discussed when the provisions of the Bill are gone into in Committee; and therefore we should, upon the second reading of the Bill, speak generally as to the proper purpose or otherwise of the measure, rather than deal with any small matters which are simply Committee objections. We had from the member for the Taieri a kind of "pat on the back " to the member for Masterton, on his conversion from being an opponent of the, Referendum Bill to being one of its supporters. I was surprised. so I turned up Hansard for 1893 and 1895. and, instead of finding that in 1893 and 1895 the member for Masterton opposed the Bill. I find he voted for the Bill on both occasions. There were altogether in 1893 twenty in favour and thirty-three against the second reading. and I find fourth on the list the member for Masterton ; so that I can hardly see where the remarks of the member for Taieri came in when he said that the member for Masterton had been converted. Again, in 1895, on the question that the Bill be read a second time, I find there were twenty-eight for and fourteen against, and amongst the " Ayes " the member for Masterton. Amongst the "Noes " we find the member for Geraldine (Mr. Flatman), Mr. Buddo, Mr. Carroll, Mr. Duncan, Mr. McGowan, Mr. R. McKenzie, and last, but not least, Mr. E. M. Smith, who is not with us to-night. I feel that it will be a subject for congratulation when we see that some of the gentlemen who voted or paired on that occasion against the Bill have now come to their senses, and, now that it has been introduced by the Government they will, no doubt, be staunch supporters of the Bill, and though they may probably express their opinions after having looked up Hansard to see how they voted, we shall now find them, on the second reading of the Bill, in the "Aye " lobby. I do not think, therefore, the remarks of the honourable member for the Taieri were called for, and no doubt they were provoked by the honourable member for Masterton himself being in a quandary as to how he voted before.

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But for his own information I can tell him that House know what it means to take round a be was a staunch supporter of the measure. petition to the electors for any particular purpose. Mr. SEDDON .- Possibly he voted for it, and pose? Why, Sir, you can get a petition signed spoke against it. by people with the greatest of ease-signed by Mr. WILFORD. Of course, I am young in the same people both for and against the same parliamentary procedure, but I have heard that object. You have only got to argue with -uch things do happen. I shall support the them, and they will sign whatever you like. wond reading of this Bill. I have always ap- They will say, "Oh, I will sign it, and let proved of it, and on the public platform I have me get on with my work." That frequently suggested that I would like such a Bill to be occurs on the taking round of petitions, and produced : and I think if, when the Hon. I am certain that in submitting the referendum to the people very much the same Executive Bill, he considers the advisability of thing would occur. The time for which we putting a clause into it that his

measure be are elected is very short -- it is only a matter referred to the public of New Zealand, there of three years and surely, when our time would be a great deal more likelihood of his expires, if we have acted against the wishes of Bill getting through this House. our constituents, all they have to do is to turn

An Hon. MEMBER .- You cannot discuss Bills us out, and put in those who will better represent them. If it were a long period-say, a matter on the Order Paper. of five or seven years the position would be Mr. WILFORD .- My honourable friend says I cannot discuss Bills on the Order Paper. But different, but when we are here for only three years it is not necessary that these matters i say he is wrong, for I say that, subject to should be submitted to the people. Then, let Mr. Speaker's ruling, which I greatly prefer, I would be perfectly in order in discussing a us consider the immense cost this will mean to clause that is to be added to that Bill so long submit question after question to the people, as the clause deals with the referendum. How- each measure so submitted costing as much as .ver. as the hour is late, I have no desire to a general election. Not that I would say that detain the House. I will merely conclude by the cost should deter us from getting an expres- saving I shall heartily support the measure. sion from the people if it were necessary. I Mr. WILLIS (Wanganui) .- It is somewhat think the question of cost would probably only surprising for me to find the manner in which be a secondary matter. I do not wish to un- the minds of members of this House in regard necessarily take up the time of the House ; but to this Bill have changed. I remember when at the same time I think it is my duty, not- this Bill was brought down by the honourable withstanding the fact that so many members have changed their minds and turned political member for the Buller some years ago there somersaults, to maintain the position I have Was very strong opposition to it, and I was one of those who then strongly opposed the intro- always taken up, and record my vote against duction of the Bill. Well, Sir, I cannot say the referendum. that I am in the same position as other mem- vers who have so rapidly changed their minds. The difficulties and objections that I saw to the twelve o'clock p.m. measure then I see at the present time. It -cems to me that this shifting of duties from the members of both Houses of Parliament to the people of the electorates is unconstitu- cional, and ought not to be supported. Now, Sir. the great difficulty, it seems to me, with regard to subinitting this question to the elec- tors is that. generally speaking, on measures of this kind there is a great deal of indifference. half-past two o'clock. it is generally supposed that when members have been returned to this House they are here to study these questions, and act in the interests of those who have returned them. Supposing this question should be submitted to the electors of the colony, I am afraid that the number of those who would well consider the question, and who would make a study of it, would be com- That the Hon. Mr. W. C. Smith be appointed paratively few, and that the very object that Chairman of Committees, in compliance with one would wish would be defeated. That is to Standing Order No. 253. In moving this av. that many of our best Liberal measures, motion, Sir, I trust that the Council will agree which we take a pride in passing, I have no with me that the gentleman I am proposing is doubt. through their being imperfectly con- well qualified to carry out the important duties idered, would be rejected by the people. It for which he is nominated. In doing so I de- takes time to bring about reforms and for the sire to express my regret that the honourable people to thoroughly understand them, and I gentleman who has for so many years exercised think. myself, that every object we desire to the position, functions, and duties of Chairman vain would be defeated. Now, I would take the Debate adjourned. The House adjourned at five minutes to