

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL. Thursday, 11th July, 1901. First Readings --- New Member -- Labour Bills
Com- mitter -- Election of Chairman of Committees -- Hospital Nurses Registration Bill. The Hon. the
SPEAKER took the chair at half- past two o'clock. PRAYERS. FIRST READINGS. Local Authorities
Indemnity Bill. Police Offences Bill, Young Persons Protection Bill, Chinese Immigrants Bill. # NEW
MEMBER. The Hon. Mr. Charles Louisson was intro- duced by the Hon. Mr. W. C. Walker, C.M.G., and
the Hon. Mr. Feldwick, and took the oath and his seat. # LABOUR BILLS COMMITTEE. The Hon. Mr. W.
C. WALKER. in moving, That the name of the Hon. Mr. Fraser be dis- the name of the Hon. Colonel Pitt
be added to the Committee in lieu thereof, said that he very much regretted that the Hon. Mr. Fraser did
not feel equal to taking part during this session in the onerous duties of member of the Labour Bills
Committee, and had asked, therefore, that he should be relieved from that duty. Motion agreed to. #
ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES. The Hon. Mr. REEVES moved, That it is desirable that
the Standing Order of the Council be amended so that an annual ballot be taken for the election of
Chairman of Committees of the Council, and that this be an instruction to the Standing Orders Committee
to prepare the necessary new Order. The Hon. Mr. W. C. WALKER .- I had ex- pected, Sir, that the
honourable gentleman who has tabled this motion would have said a little more upon the subject. I do not
think it is a matter that should go without argument, as to whether we are to abandon the traditions of the
past and make a change as regards the future. What happened yesterday was, of course. ap- proved by
the Council and carried into effect, but I took it to be pro hac vice. I do not know, from what occurred
yesterday, that it should always be taken for granted that the same procedure should be followed. At all
events, if this motion is carried I trust that the Standing Orders Committee will look very care- fully into the
regulations which were adopted yesterday as regards the use or abuse of the ballot. I think that, as the
regulations now stand, they are not calculated always to bring out the best intentions of the Council. If this
motion is carried it is, of course, not final, be- cause it requires the adoption of the amend- ment by the

Standing Orders Committee and by this Council : but I hope this Committee, when they take the matter into consideration, will take into consideration every point of view, so that if the ballot is to be adopted it will only be adopted for one purpose-that is. to enable the members of the Council to cast their votes without in any shape or form disclosing their own personal feelings, which disclosure might possibly make relations at some future time uncomfortable. Otherwise I see no reason for the ballot at all; and certainly I see no reason for the ballot if it can be so manipulated as to bring about a result immediately opposite to that which is desired by a majority of the Council. I am sorry this motion has been brought up so shortly, and with so little preliminary explanation from the honourable member who moved it; and I trust that, if it is considered, the Standing Orders Committee will look carefully into the whole of the surroundings, and see that the new departure will be so protected by proper regulations that the exercise of the ballot can only bring about one result, and that in accordance with the wish of the majority of the Council. The Hon. Mr. SCOTLAND .- I cannot say I am very much in love with vote by ballot - I

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that there is some force in what the Hon. Mr. Reeves said yesterday-that, if we are to elect our Speaker by ballot, it almost follows as a natural consequence that we ought to have power to elect the Chairman of Committees by ballot. At the same time I can imagine a case may arise which would justify the Hon. the Minister of Education in saying what he has just said. One party in the Council may desire to elect A, another party may desire to elect B ; the A party, seeing they cannot carry their man, or the B party, seeing they cannot carry their man, may, under the circumstances, make up their minds to let C slip through, C possibly not being the best man, or the favourite candidate of the Council. I can imagine such a contingency arising, and therefore I do not consider the ballot is an infallible test of the feelings of the Council on any particular question or with regard to any particular person. The Hon. Mr. W. C. SMITH .- I was going to say that it would be wise, I think, to postpone this motion for a week, so that we may give full consideration to it. There are still many Councillors away, and it is quite a new proposal. If there is a majority in favour of it it will be carried, and therefore I move, That the debate be adjourned for a week. The Hon. Mr. T. KELLY .- I cannot myself see any occasion to postpone the question, because it is not by this resolution finally decided : the object is simply to send it to the Standing Orders Committee for the purpose of drawing up a new Standing Order to meet the case, and that proposed Standing Order must afterwards be approved by the Council. It is not correct to say that this is a new departure, since the new procedure given to the Council providing for the election of the Speaker is simply extended to the Chairman of Committees. The Council having resolved that the election of a Speaker should be by ballot, it is a necessary sequence that that course should be followed in the case of the election of the Chairman of Committees. The principle is exactly the same. I think the mode of election can be improved. I think it is rather cumbersome myself : but as a principle I think election by ballot in personal matters is admirable. I

therefore think it should go to the Committee, and the Committee will have ample time to discuss the matter among themselves before it again comes before the Council for final approval. The Hon. Mr. REEVES .- I was myself upon the point of making that remark. This motion only goes so far as to refer the matter to the Standing Orders Committee, and they will have to bring up their report ; and that report, I presume, will be adopted. Now, Sir, what do we find with regard to the ballot ? We find that for very many years past there has been a strenuous fight in the Old Country for this ; and we had the same thing here, where vote by ballot was secured. and is recognised as being the proper system of voting right throughout. As to what the Hon. the Minister of Education has said, there is nothing in it. If the Council agrees with this motion the matter will be sent to the Standing Orders Committee, who will, no doubt, study out fairly the mode of ballot that should be adopted. But I cannot, for the life of me, see why we should not carry on the same as we have done before. One honourable gentleman said that it did not show what was the feeling of the majority of the Council. Why, Sir, that is absurd. Surely nothing can be more ridiculous than to say that. What we had yesterday we had over the same question two years ago: but then one honourable gentleman withdrew from the contest-if I might call it so-a friendly contest ; and so there was no ballot, if I remember rightly, two years ago. I think it fully showed the intention of the Council at that time that we should have a ballot, and we should have had a ballot if one gentleman had not very gracefully and very openly withdrawn from the contest. I allude to the Hon. Mr. W. C. Smith, when he withdrew in favour of my honourable friend Captain Baillie. But I think-and I hope most of the members of the Council will agree with me-that it is a most invidious position in which to place members of this Council when they may be called on to vote against the man who may be one of their personal friends. I trust, therefore, the Council will agree with me that the proper system of election, either in the case of the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees, is by a ballot. I am now speaking, Sir, to the amendment. The Hon. Mr. BOWEN .-. Without going into the merits of the question at all, I think it would be well to adjourn the matter for a week. It is only fair that a serious resolution of this kind should be debated, and that all members of the Council should have an opportunity of expressing their opinions on it. The Council is still small, and, that being so, I think it would be advisable to give a week's notice of the matter. I am not expressing an opinion for or against the resolution, but if such a change is to be brought about I think it would be better to fully discuss it beforehand. The Hon. Mr. REEVES .- Sir, out of courtesy to the absent members of the Council, I am willing that the matter should be adjourned for a time. The Hon. Mr. BOLT .-- Sir, the question now before us is simply one of remitting the matter to a Committee. I take it that the principle of the suggested alteration will be discussed when that Committee report, and, that being so. I do not think there is now any necessity to adjourn the subject. The Hon. Mr. SHRIMSKI .- Sir, I cannot see that there would be any harm in postponing the question. I will speak plainly on the matter, Sir. It seems to me there is a determination on the part of some honourable members to force the matter : and, if I am rightly informed, there is an agreement among this party that, having the ballot in the future, they will vote for some one of their own party. Sir. why do they not consent to the matter standing over for a week, unless there is a desire to take advantage of the fact that some members of the Council are absent?

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The Hon. Mr. KERR .- I think the matter should be put off for a week. I do not agree with the Hon. Mr. Shrimski that there is any combination or understanding among any party in the Council to force the motion at the present time for a particular purpose. I think it would be as well to postpone the question for a week. The whole subject will come up again when the Committee report to the Council. The Hon. Mr. JONES .- Sir, the Hon. Mr. Shrimski is quite right. This motion has been brought on for a particular purpose-namely, for the purpose of enabling the Council to choose any gentleman whom the Council may think fit to put in the position of Chairman of Committees. If we are not to have the ballot for the election

of Chairman of Committees-if the ballot is not fit for such a purpose-surely it is not fit for anything, especially if it is to be treated with the contempt that has been shown towards it by several members during this discussion. Sir, I cannot understand how the honourable gentleman could consent to the nomination of a candidate for the position by the Government, but object to a system of this kind on the ground that it might be unfair. do not see that any good purpose could be gained by adjourning the motion. The Standing Orders Committee will bring up a report on the matter, and when that is done the Council will be able to consider the whole question with some amount of intelligence. I trust that in the meantime those honourable gentlemen who have spoken against the ballot will investigate the question for themselves, and see if it is really what they have said it is, or whether it is not one of the best methods for carrying out what the Council has in view. The Hon. Mr. A. LEE SMITH. - Sir, I am disposed to vote against the adjournment, for two reasons. When the motion was proposed an amendment was made that the ballot should be taken, and the Hon. the Minister in charge strongly opposed it. We have now disposed of that situation by electing the Hon. Captain Baillie to the position of Chairman of Committees, and now, when an independent motion is brought forward for the purpose of deciding whether or not in the future the selection of Chairman of Committees -and, I suppose, of Speaker also-shall or shall not be carried out by ballot, the honourable gentleman gets up again and gives us a dissertation on what he considers the disadvantages of the ballot. Sir, I believe that nine-tenths of the members of the Council still believe that there is good precedent for adopting the ballot form of appointing our chief representative of authority in this Council-that is, the election of yourself, Sir. I cannot see that, if in the case of the Speaker it has proved an advantage, the same advantage should not be gained in the choice of our Chairman of Committees. What do we gain, Sir, by delaying? One or two more members may attend, but several gentlemen may have important business to keep them away on the day when the question again comes up. Under any circumstances, there will be no harm in taking a ballot now, as this is not the time when we can finally decide whether we should adopt a new system or not. The matter will have to come before the Council on another occasion-when the Committee bring up their report-and I am glad to hear that the Hon. Mr. Reeves is averse to postponing the matter. To my mind, Sir, the ballot is the proper method to adopt in all elections of this kind. I think it is a very invidious thing to be called on openly to decide between two men who may be equal friends with the voters, and to avoid any unpleasant feeling the ballot is the proper way to get out of the difficulty. I cannot understand why the representative of the Government in this Chamber opposes that principle. The Council divided on the question, "That the debate be adjourned." AYES, 21. Smith, W. C. Arkwright Louisson Barnicoat Ormond Swanson Pinkerton Taiaroa Bowen Tomoana Harris Pitt Walker, L. Johnston Reeves Scotland Walker, W. C. Kelly, W. Shrimski Williams. Kerr NOKS, 10. Rigg Jenkinson Baillie Smith. A. L. Jones Bolt Feldwick Kelly, T. Twomey. Gourley Majority for, 11. Debate adjourned. HOSPITAL NURSES REGISTRATION BILL. IN COMMITTEE. Clause 4 .- Who may be registered. Subsection (2) .- " Every person who. on the passing of this Act, has had four consecutive years' training as a nurse in a hospital, and passes an examination in theoretical and practical nursing by examiners appointed by the Governor under this Act, is entitled to registration on payment of a fee of one pound towards the cost of examination." The Hon. Mr. A. LEE SMITH moved to strike out the words "one pound," for the purpose of inserting "ten shillings" in lieu thereof. The Council divided on the question, "That the words proposed to be struck out be retained." AYES, 14. Tomoana Louisson Bolt Feldwick Walker, L. Ormond Walker, W. C. Pinkerton Gourley Williams. Pitt Harris Shrimski Kerr NOES, 8. Rigg Swanson Barnicoat Jenkinson Taiaroa. Scotland Smith, A. L. Jones Majority for, 6.

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Amendment negatived, words retained, and , NEW COMMANDANT OF THE FORCES. clause agreed to. Bill reported. The Council adjourned at ten minutes to four o'clock p.m. # HOUSE OF

REPRESENTATIVES. Thursday, 11th July, 1901. First Readings - Hours of Sitting - New Com- r. andant of the Forces - Sta e-school . hildren- Compulsory Drill Bill - Eight hours Bill. Mr. Speaker took the chair at half past two o'clock p.m. PRAYERS. FIRST READINGS. Prevention of Employment of Women in Dangerous Trades Bill, Remuera Waterworks Construction Empowering Bill. HOURS OF SITTING. Mr. SPEAKER said that it would be recol- lected that the House had the previous day passed a resolution to meet on Government dass at half-past ten in the morning, and to devote those days to Government business. Sme misunderstanding had arisen over the resolution, and he thought it better to remind the House of the purport of the resolution. It stated "that on the first day for morning sittings only orders of the day shall be taken." To-morrow would be the first day for this rule coming into operation. They would therefore meet next day (Friday, 12th instant) at half- past ten in the morning, and transact business connected with Government orders of the day only, up to half-past ten in the evening, when the House would rise. On Tuesday, as he understood the resolution, questions would be put to the Government on the House meeting at half-past ten, and then the House would proceed to the Government orders of the day. As the House would meet at half-past ten, he should, as he had sometimes done before, take the sense of the House about one o'clock as to his leaving the chair until half- past two. He proposed to leave the chair at one o'clock, to resume it at half-past two, and, continuing Government business, to leave the chair at half-past five as usual, resuming it at half-past seven, and continuing Government business. He presumed the House would dis- pense with the present supper adjournment on Fridays and Tuesdays at ten o'clock, as the House would, under the new resolution, rise at half-past ten o'clock p.m. on those days. Mr. SEDDON .- That is my intention. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) .- Do I understand that questions are not to be put on Friday ? Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) .- There is no- thing in the resolution to that effect. Mr. SEDDON. - The honourable gentleman has evidently not read it. We propose to go on | That this paper do lie on the table and be with the orders of the day. Mr. SEDDON (Minister of Defence) .-- I in- dicated to the House yesterday that I should be able to announce to the House the course proposed to be taken by the Government in respect to the appointment of a Commandant to succeed Colonel Penton. The Government communicated with the Commander-in-Chief, in the first place, asking what section of the army he thought the Commandant should be- long to, and his reply was that he thought the officer best suited would be one who had had experience in South Africa with mounted in- fantry. We then further communicated with the War Office, asking its assistance in advising us as to the selection of an officer. They have given that assistance, and they have recom- mended Major and Brevet- Colonel St. George Charles Henry, who is shown in the Army List as follows :- "Twenty-two years' full-pay service. He is the third on the list of majors of the 5th Regiment (Northumberland Fusiliers), being senior major of the 3rd Battalion. He was made a brevet lieutenant-colonel on the 6th July, 1899, and brevet colonel on the 14th March, 1900, and is shown as having com- manded the 4th Corrs of Mounted Infantry in South Africa since 4th April, 1880. He served in the Dongola Expeditionary Force under Sir Herbert Kitchener, in 1896, with the Camel Corps, including engagement at Firket and operations at Hafir (mentioned in despatches, British medal, and Khedive's medal with two clasps) ; in the operations in 1897 (clasp to Khedive's medal) ; in 1898 with the 1st Bat- talion Northumberland Fusiliers (5th Regi- ment), present at the Battle of Khartoum (mentioned in despatches), at the operations at Gedaref (mentioned in despatches) ; brevet of lieutenant-colonel, clasp to Khedive's medal, in the operations in 1899, resulting in the final defeat of the Khalifa, in command of the Camel Corps flying column, and including the engage- ments at Abu Aadel and On Dubreikat (men- tioned in despatches, brevet of colonel)." The following is an extract from the London Gazette, dated 16th April, 1901, page 2604 :- "Colonel St. G. Henry, Northumberland Fusiliers, has repeatedly shown to advantage as a leader of men, and as Commanding Officer of the 4th Corps of Mounted Infantry he has done excellent work." Then, there was another extract from the Landom Gazette, dated the 19th April, 1901, at page 2696 :- " Order of the Bath .- To be ordinary mem- bers of

the Military Division of the Third Class, or Companions of the said Most Honourable Major and Brevet-Colonel Order, viz. : . St. George Charles Henry, the Northumberland Fusiliers." The terms and conditions which we propose to offer are the same as at present enjoyed by Colonel Penton. It is the intention of the Government to give the first refusal of the position to Colonel St. Henry. I will move now, printed.

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Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) .- I do not intend to discuss this matter; but I would like to express my sincere regret-and I think that regret will be echoed from one end of the colony to the other-that none of our brave men who have been in South Africa, and who have seen many times the service that the gentleman just referred to has seen in South Africa, have not been considered fit enough for the position. Mr. SEDDON .- The responsibility is with the Government in respect to this matter, and we have cast no slight whatever on those who have served this colony in South Africa. I say here that we have no one in this colony who can compare with the officer I have mentioned, and in a matter of this kind it is necessary that the War Office and Commander-in-Chief should be in touch with the defences of this colony, and we have been acting in accordance with the express wishes of this country in this respect. We have taken what we believe to be the best advice possible, and we have done that which will give confidence to the people of the colony. We are not going to place any one over the heads of our own men in this colony who is not as well fitted to hold the position. I would like the honourable member, before making a statement of this kind-it may be done for effect- to name any officer in this colony whom we have overlooked. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccarton) .- I would like the Premier to state the terms of the proposed engagement, and the emoluments of the office. Mr. SEDDON .-- The appointment is on the same terms and conditions as Colonel Penton's engagement. I think that is \$700 a year, and I think the Act of last session makes the term not exceeding five years. Mr. J. ALLEN (Bruce) .-- Sir. I would like to ask the Premier whether, if the terms now offered are not sufficient to induce a good man to come here, he will so alter those terms as to induce a really good man, such as this officer appears to be, to take up the position. I take it that the whole position with regard to our defences here depends very largely on the capabilities of the man who is in supreme command, and I question very much whether an offer of \$700 a year will induce a man of first-class ability and record of service to accept the appointment. If it will not induce him to come to the colony, I want to know if the Premier will give something more to secure the valuable services of a first-class man ? Mr. SEDDON .- I take it, Sir, that the Agent-General. in communicating with the War Office, would tell them the terms and conditions which the New Zealand Government were offering, and that this recommendation has been made by the War Office under those conditions. I quite agree with the honourable member that for the sake of a few pounds it would not be advisable for the colony to stand in the way of getting a thoroughly good man. This is not saying that we have not had excellent men in the colony at the same pay. I say we had a good man in Colonel Fox, and I say we have a good 1 man in Colonel Penton, and I do not see why we cannot get a good man at that rate, because .. after all, the pay in the military service at Home is very low. Then, again, an officer will look forward to improving his position in the Imperial service, and being the Commandant of the Forces of a colony like New Zealand will help him in his position as a military officer in the Imperial service. It is not altogether a question of money that officers should look to. I would say to the House, so that there might be no mistake as to the intention of the Government as regards the positions under the Commandau:, that we intend to adhere to what I stated to the House previously-namely, that we shall give preference to our own men, and to those who have had training in South Africa: and we are doing that. Any appointments made that might appear to clash with that statement arose from the fact that in accordance with the recommendations of the Commanding Officer we were to have four adjutants to help the Officer Commanding Districts. We sent to the War Office and asked them - nearly two years ago-to make recommendations, and they did so, but

the officers at that time could not come. Take the case of Captain Bingley, for instance. When we were informed that the officers could not come, we stated we would endeavour to supply the positions from within ourselves. Then we got an intimation that Captain Bingley had left the Cape, because, having accepted the appointment some months before, he decided to come to New Zealand after his service in South Africa to take up the position, and although our reply had gone to the War Office we could do nothing else under the circumstance but accept his services. However, in the future we shall adhere to the position I have already laid down. and I think that, with a Commandant such as we have succeeded in obtaining, our own officers will be able to fill all the other positions. Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley) .- While the Premier proposes introducing a Commandant from England to take charge of the forces of the colony, and to fill up the officerships under him with the officers of our returned contingents who are eligible, and who desire to follow a military life. is the honourable gentleman prepared to allow our own officers who have returned from South Africa, and who desire to follow a military life, to go Home and complete their education in military colleges, in order to provide from our own material officers to fill the position of Commandant in the future? I think if that is not done it will be offering a serious reflection to the young men who have so distinguished themselves in the command of our contingents in South Africa as to merit the highest commendation from the highest military authority-Lord Roberts. Mr. WILFORD (Wellington Suburbs). - Sir, might I be permitted to ask the Premier if the Colonel St. Henry he speaks of is the Colonel Henry who visited this colony when the Fourth Contingent went away? Mr. SEDDON .- I do not think, looking at the record of service I have here, it can be that Colonel Henry; but, of course, I have no deti-

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nite information on the point. I should not think so, however, because the dates of his service and the date of the departure of the Fourth Contingent would clash. He is shown as having commanded the 4th Corps of Mounted Infantry, South Africa, on 3.0 the 4th April, 1900. The Fourth and Fifth Contingents were sent away on the 23rd March from Dunedin, if my memory serves me right. put by the honourable member for Ashley, which is quite a proper one, he ought to be aware that in the training of our young officers at Home, we have four at Home undergoing a course of training. Captain Hume is at Home Lieutenant undergoing an artillery course. Pilkington has been at Home for two years and has gone through a course. Lieutenant Wall has gone through a course, and is now in charge of the batteries at Auckland, while Lieutenant Pilkington is at the Cape of Good Hope. I think it ought to be said to the credit of this officer that I cabled to Lord Kitchener asking that he should be returned to the colony some six or seven months ago, and Lord Kitchener said his services were indispensable, and would I allow him to remain. It is our intention to send our young men Home to have a course of instruction in certain branches, but in respect to mounted corps I do not think there is any necessity. In respect to artillery and engineering it may be necessary to do so, but I am positive as to mounted infantry that we shall have quite sufficient and quite competent officers without the necessity of sending them Home. The difficulty of bringing school-instruction into force has been that owing to the sending away of contingents to South Africa we have not yet got into a normal condition with respect to our cadets, and the officers to be appointed to the position of Instructors could not be spared from their ordinary work. As soon as we get into anything like a normal condition the training and instruction of our young officers will be resumed. Mr. HOGG (Masterton). - The Premier has, I think, glided delightfully round the question asked by the member for Ashley. I would like to have an explicit reply on the question myself. It has for a very long time occurred to me that it is extremely regrettable that all these positions are filled up from abroad instead of from our own population. I want the Premier to say distinctly -- and I may say that in replying to me he will be replying to a great many people in New Zealand who are very anxious to be informed on the subject- whether the young men of New Zealand who are identified with our Volunteers, should they go

abroad and qualify themselves in the best military schools, will be allowed to compete for the position of Commandant. If it is recognised amongst our Volunteers that they will be considered acceptable for appointment to any position for which they may prove their fitness, We will probably not be under the necessity, as We are now, of constantly importing veterans from other parts. Mr. SEDDON. - The honourable member has raised another question entirely from that raised by the member for Ashley. The question now raised by the member for Masterton is, whether in respect to Commandants in the future we shall give a preference to New Zealand. Mr. HOGG. - No; 1 asked whether they would be allowed to occupy the position. Mr. SEDDON. - I am not aware whether Colonel Henry may not be a New-Zealander. The question raised by the member for Ashley is whether we should train officers to fill every position in the colony, and my answer was most decided-I could give no more pointed answer to the member for Masterton. We have had offered to us thirty commissions in the British army for young New-Zealanders. We made thirty nominations. Only some ten or a dozen at the most have been able to accept those commissions, owing to difficulties that stand in the way. An Hon. MEMBER. -- It costs too much. Mr. SEDDON. -- Well, that is no fault of the Government ; but we have asked the Imperial Government to extend the time, and I have received a cable from the Agent-General to say that, although the time expired on the 31st December last, it would be extended, so as to give us an opportunity of filling up the number offered, and I am prepared to receive nominations and endeavour to get those thirty offers accepted by young New-Zealanders. And I am living in the hope that the time is not far distant when we shall be able to fill the positions in this colony from amongst our own people. Mr. WILFORD (Wellington Suburbs). - Is Colonel Henry seventy years of age ? Mr. SEDDON. . I should say he would have been, most likely, eighteen when he entered the service : he has been twenty-two years on full pay, and twenty-two and eighteen make forty. I do not know where the other thirty years come from. Motion agreed to. STATE - SCHOOL CHILDREN COMPULSORY DRILL BILL. Mr. GUINNESS (Grey). -- I beg to move the second reading of this Bill. Under "The Education Act, 1877." there is a permissive section -- section 85-which reads as follows :- " In public schools provision shall be made for the instruction in military drill of all boys, and in such of the schools as the Board shall from time to time direct provision shall also be made for physical training, and whenever practicable there shall be attached to each school a playground of at least a quarter of an acre." This Act has been in force since 1877, but, unfortunately, all the Education Boards of the colony have not carried out the intentions of the framers of the measure - that is to say, they have not made provision for instruction to be imparted to the scholars attending all the State schools. Some of the Boards certainly have done their duty in this respect in certain parts of a district, but what I complain of, and what a large section of the people complain

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of, is this : that provision is not made equally throughout the school districts -- that is to say, that in the larger centres provision is made for imparting physical and military drill, but in the outlying districts no such provision is made. I am also aware of the fact that it has been urged as a reason why this has not been done, that funds are not available. I take it that if this measure is passed it will be a direction from this House to the Government to provide the necessary funds for this purpose to the different Education Boards. It will require a very small sum to make provision to meet this want. It is not necessary for me to take up the time of the House any further in adducing arguments or giving reasons why it is necessary that children attending State schools should be taught drill, both military and physical. I think every one will admit that it is a very good thing for the children to be taught discipline. and that they should learn to obey orders ; also, that they should be trained and brought up so that afterwards, when they leave school. they may become the nucleus from which our cadet and Volunteer corps can be formed. The Bill provides that instruction shall be given to all children over the age of eight years. It also provides that the Boards of Education shall make regulations, subject to the approval of the Governor in Council, for the purpose of

imparting this instruction to the boys and girls ; also as to the time and places where that instruction shall be imparted. Provision is also made that out of the vote for Native schools the Minister of Education shall provide for giving a similar training to the children attending the Native schools. There is also a clause to meet what I may term the conscientious objections of some persons to having their children taught military drill. Those people, I am happy to say, are very few in the colony ; but I can see no objection to making provision in the Bill that, on the certificate of a parent or guardian, their children shall be entitled to exemption from the provisions of this Act. This Bill was read a second time last session and taken through Committee ; but, unfortunately, it was not called upon in sufficient time before twelve o'clock in the evening to be read a third time. I hope I shall have the support of the Minister in charge of the Education Department, as he must know there is a strong feeling throughout the colony that there should be a uniform system of teaching both military and physical drill to all the scholars attending the public schools. Mr. T. MACKENZIE (Waihemo) .- I think the Bill is a very valuable one, and I may say I myself moved in a similar direction on a previous occasion. But, Sir, I consider the weakness of the Bill is contained in clause 6. because you might find, perhaps, the parents in the colony would prefer to see their children grow up stunted, or, at any rate, exempted from physical drill. I consider, if you are going to establish a system of drill, it ought to be compulsory throughout. I think it essential that all children should be drilled. It gives them a Mr. Guinness certain deportment, physical development, and is healthy in its influences. It will also form the nucleus of an army in the country, which, should occasion unfortunately arise for our people defending themselves, would be of infinite value. An Hon. MEMBER .- Some of the children may be physically incapable. Mr. T. MACKENZIE .- That is quite a different matter. You can easily adjust that, and exempt such from service : but if a person has conscientious scruples against his children being properly trained, I think honourable members will hardly agree to exempt them. Mr. FOWLDS (Auckland City) . - I quite agree with the proposition that the children attending our schools should be drilled physically and in military movements, but I dissent entirely from what has fallen from the last speaker, the honourable member for Waihemo, that the weakness of this Bill is contained in clause 6. We do not want in this colony that tyrannical spirit which will refuse to recognise the conscientious scruples of any members of the community. There are people in this country who believe that anything that tends to promote a military spirit is wrong in principle. It is a religious conviction with those people. An Hon. MEMBER .- Oh ! Mr. FOWLDS .- I say it would be just as wrong for this House to insist that the children of such people should be compelled to undergo military drill as it would be to insist on any particular form of religion being taught to the children in our schools. I do not believe for one moment that half the children in the colony would have exemption claimed for them : but, if such were the case, it would mean that the majority of the people were not in favour of this Bill, which would only be an additional reason why they should be exempted. Sir, I deplore the growing spirit of tyranny that would trample on the conscientious scruples of people who hold opinions differing from our own. The convictions of every man against anything which he thinks tends to promote a military spirit have a right to be respected. Mr. HALL-JONES (Minister for Public Works) .- Sir, with regard to the remarks of the last speaker, I would remind him that the drill referred to in the Bill is both physical and military drill, and I am sure he will recognise that physical drill is an advantage to both girls and boys. At the present time in most of our schools the boys and girls are taught physical exercises, and it must be manifest to every one that it develops their physical qualities, and that that must be an advantage to the generations to come. But, when referring to military drill, I must confess that, like the last speaker, I would respect the scruples of those who would not wish to have their children forced to receive military education. But, Sir, the introducer of this Bill is to be commended, because he is actuated by the same spirit we have all felt in recent times ; and we all recognise that it would be an advantage to this colony that our boys should receive some military training. What they acquire in their earlier years will never be for-

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gotten, and no one can say when their services study so as to be able to impart this kind of will be required in the defence of our own instruction to the children, or are you going country. But, Sir, it must not be forgotten that great progress has been made during the last school-in which case we will have a stand- few years in this respect. Those who had the ing army of drill - instructors? If that is pleasure of witnessing that great assemblage in Christchurch, where there were about three The whole of the machinery that is required thousand of our colonial lads taking part in the we have at the present time. Last year we manœuvres, must have been struck with the passed a Bill taking the cadet corps from the spectacle ; and, from what I have heard from the Education Department; and from that day men competent to express an opinion, their drill would compare with anything of a similar kind in any country in the world. And it was has been issued transferring the cadets from only a few of our lads who are taking a course the Defence Department, and the result is that of military instruction in connection with our these cadet corps are languishing. They can schools that were present on that occasion. get neither capitation nor anything else, and Then, in many of our schools where there are they cannot get any information. What is the no cadet corps there are thousands of child. use of placing an Act on the statute-book unless ron who are being taught, directly and in- it is going to be properly administered ? Un- directly, military drill, and also physical fortunately, we have not got a Minister of dril. - because we cannot separate the two. Education on these benches to ask about this Now, with regard to those who were in matter. I think, if the Government simply Christchurch, their drill comprises nearly all take steps to encourage the cadet corps or the that is comprised in ordinary physical drill. older children in our public schools, and give a They can go through the ordinary movements military drill to those that desire it, purely and company drill : and. in addition, they prac- voluntarily, they would be doing a good work, tise ritle-firing. Those who are supplied with the more especially as they have a form of inter- model rifles, of course, receive instruction of a mediary corps through which they may go after mere primary character. and as they advance in leaving school and before entering the Volun- years they are moved forward to ordinary exer teer corps. If that were done we should have cises. For these three thousand lads five hundred ample means of training our sons up in the med -I rides have been supplied, and are in turn use of arms. Personally, I would not allow a daughter of mine to go in for military drill. used by schools representing some fifteen thou- Physical drill is right enough. The spirit of sand scholars-by boys of an ag , at which they might be taught this form of military drill. I militarism is becoming rampant in the country, with no good object to be attained. I will mention this because it might be inferred from what the honourable member said that nothing assist the honourable gentleman all I can to make physical drill compulsory, but I will was being done in the matter. It must be oppose the making of military drill compul- borne in mind that this has only been brought into operation during the last few years, and it sory. is a question whether it would not be as well to the second reading of this Bill. Two years ago let the voluntary method continue and grow, and where it is required it can be extended ; there might have been some necessity for it, but during the past two years a great military wave and I say it is the duty of the Government, no has passed over this colony, and expressions of matter what Government sit on these benches, loyalty have been made in the most concrete to provide the necessary rifles and facilities to form that it is possible for a people or a nation enable our lads to take advantage of such in- to express their convictions. Spontaneous struction as is proposed in the Bill. I am of opinion that we have all the necessary ma- chinery under the existing law, and that the and shows a much healthier state than any compulsory effort. I feel that, inasmuch as Bill now before the House is not required. Mr. MILLAR (Dunedin City) .- Sir. I cannot been organized into cadet corps, and that the see why we should be asked to support this Bill as it at present stands, because it seems to me to be a modified form of conscription. We are foster them and encourage them, I do not think not prepared to say to the adults of the colony that they must undergo military training, but we are

asked to say to the children of the colony that they must have a military training. This Bill goes a great deal too far : and if the honour- able gentleman had confined it to physical drill on their hands in the evenings when they might I would have supported it, because I think that ought to be done. But let us take this Bill as it stands at the present time. I do not know a great deal about the country wants, but I can understand that the majority of the schools in the country districts are taught by female teachers. Are you going to compel these female teachers to go through a course of military to have drill-instructors appointed for every what it means, I am opposed to that too. Defence Department and placing them under to this no Gazette notice or any instruction Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley) .- I cannot support effort put forward by the people is much better the youth of the colony have for some time Government of the colony has been fostering these cadet corps, and intends in the future to there is any necessity for this measure. The proper time to educate the boys of the colony in military drill is not while they are at school, but after they have passed the Sixth Standard, have left school, and have a considerable time be learning drill. An Hon. MEMBER. - The Bill is not for cadet Mr. MEREDITH .-- I understand that perfectly well. The principle of the Bill is to introduce a spirit of militarism into the schools of the colony. I have no objection to physical

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exercise being taught the boys and girls in our schools. Indeed, it is being taught at the present time to a large extent, and would have been taught to a greater extent by the Education Boards and School Committees were it not for the want of funds. At one time the North Canterbury Education Board had a drill-instructor. His salary and expenses ran into an expense of \$600 a year, and the Board found that they could not continue to retain his services, and elementary military drill fell into disuse in the district. Clause 3 of this Bill says that the Education Board of each district shall from time to time, with the approval of the Governor in Council. make regulations, and so forth. But the Education Board has not power to alter the syllabus and introduce military drill The initiation and power into the schools. of veto lies with the Minister of Education. The Boards of Education and Committees have neither power to add to nor take away from the syllabus. Then, again, that clause is also defective in this way : While it calls upon the Education Boards to provide the military drill, it does not supply the Education Boards with the necessary funds to enable them to do so. When the honourable gentleman deals with the Native schools he says, --- " Out of the vote provided for Native schools the Minister of Education shall make provision for the teaching of military and physical drill to all children over the age of eight years attending Maori schools." The Native schools are to be provided with funds for carrying out the provisions of the Bill from the vote for Native schools, but the schools under the Education Boards are to be provided with no funds at all - the Education Boards shall be expected to make bricks without straw. Now, let us see what effect this Bill would have if introduced into the schools of the colony, and especially on a large number of country schools away from the centres of population. The Bill might do some good in the large schools in the large centres, but, forasmuch as I have pointed out that the cadet corps are established in the large centres in connection with nearly every large school of the colony, it is unnecessary. With regard to the schools in the remote country districts, take the Provincial District of Marlborough. In that district there are sixty-five public schools, out of which forty - one are aided schools, and not one of those forty-one aided schools reaches an average of twenty - three scholars. The largest attendance is twenty- three, and the lowest runs down to three or four. Now, just think of having military drill taught to three scholars in a remote country district. Each of these aided schools is in charge of a mistress. There are one hundred and twenty-five schools in the Nelson 3.30. District, of which forty are aided schools, and the average runs from twenty to five scholars. If this Bill were passed it would be of no advantage whatever to those schools. The fact of the matter is. we are trying to overdo the thing-we are weighting the syllabus too much ; and in the course of time, what with military drill and extra ornamental subjects of all sorts in

connection with our schools, the three Rs will be neglected. In the country schools, where the children have to travel long distances to reach school, with bad roads, and sometimes inclement weather. it is of the greatest importance that the three Rs should be attended to, and the greatest encouragement should be given by the Boards to country schools. Mr. HUTCHESON (Wellington City) .- I consider clause 6 is the one redeeming feature in this Bill, and to hear the honourable member for Waihemo declare that conscience clause to be a defect, and urge, in tones of arrogant intolerance so characteristic of the jingoistic spirit of the age, was simply atrocious. Sir. we have undergone a two-years' period of wild military debauchery. It has now reached such a state that a man is not safe in the exercise of his privileges as a free man ; to speak openly and freely his views, to talk as he feels, is almost denied to a man in this country. For what reason ? Because of the overshadowing influence of the demon of militarism that has been propagated and fostered by the honourable gentlemen on those benches. If being a pro- Boer means the holding of views the very anti- thesis of those just enunciated by the honourable member for Waihemo, then I glory in the title I am one of those who consider the freedom of the subject to speak and think as his intelligence prompts him the highest privilege of man, without which life would not be worth living. All the other advantages and privileges are as naught compared with that. I do believe in the physical training of our youth ; I do consider it beneficial for the physical welfare of the children that they should be taught discipline and a method of combined motion and action ; but for heaven's sake let it be voluntary. I believe aggressive warfare for the acquisition of fresh territory to be legalised murder, and I am not one of the community of Friends, of whom the honourable member for Auckland City (Mr. Fowlds) spoke. But I have looked at this question carefully, and I hold these views strongly, with the memory of the pressgang in my mind -- with the picture of the Continental school of militarism before my eyes. And we are moving in that direction. But, thank God, there are a few men who are not afraid to deprecate this state of things in this House. When we come to think of the German schools, where the very badge of scholarship is a scarred face and the swaggering truculent air of the military rascal, what are our circumstances that we should seek to follow their ignoble example-a handful of peaceful settlers, whose forefathers braved the dangers of the deep to subdue the wilderness in this non land, which is completely isolated from the other countries of the world? What are our requirements? Let us take our example from the Boers that the honourable member for Waihemo talks about : what military organization have they? And has not their defence been good " Mr. T. MACKENZIE .- They are not afraid to fight.

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Mr. HUTCHESON .- No; nor yet were they boastful braggarts who " soiled " their brothers or their sons to fight, with no intention of doing so themselves. And I have invariably found it the case in the vicissitudes of life through which I have passed that the vainglorious boaster was not the man I would put my money on in a fight. We are all liable to military service in respect to the present situation and what has led to it, I say I am not responsible for it. In the present state of our law, if the dire necessity arose, and very likely the man who deprecates war will be most like the Quaker in the old English rhyme, who was averse to the shedding of blood. The rhyme begins in this way :- We sailed from the downs in a ship called the " Lion." With forty good brass guns our crew could rely on. Among the crew there was a Quaker, who declined to shed blood ; but when the enemy came he. From whom do they hold their privilege came aboard he took the galley poker and legged to-day ? To those who advocate no military service acquitted himself as a brave man in defence of his life and belongings. When the actual battle came and allow the Empire to be insulted ? Are necessity arises there need not be the slightest apprehension of the failure of New Zealand's men, Sir, to go in the way in which such nations are wont to rally to the call of " Homes and Country." Are not our young men now in sufficient numbers to rally to the call of " Homes and Country ? " numbers volunteering to bear arms as soon as No, Sir, I say it is the British pluck ; it is the they are physically strong enough to support a

rifle? Until then let us teach our young maintenance of our national honour- and that honour has been maintained for years-the love ones the arts of learning. " Why make educa- of country, its freedom and inherent justice, tion compulsory?" asks the member for Wai- hemo. Could any one, but a man mentally blind, is inborn in us; and I am not responsible for his reason obfuscated by the spirit of militarism, enunciate such a proposal before sane men ? Is was a latent spirit, a latent British feeling, in not the absence of education a source of danger to the community and to the individual ? Has the fathers, and in the forefathers before them ; the State not the right to interfere? Is not and when the emergency arose they rose to the ignorance crime ? Are not ignorance and crime occasion for the good of the country, for the good of the honourable gentleman : and those synonymous terms? Why restrict the liberty of those who break the law ? But the proposi- who have reaped all the benefits are not prepared tion is absolutely absurd and without analogy. to move a single finger for the Empire's good ! While I have no hesitation in opposing this Bill in all its stages, I do recognise that clause 6 opposed the First Contingent being sent to South Africa, and in his heart he has been opposed to is the one redeeming feature in it. But to say that our youngsters are now not being properly trained wherever possible is to say what is not honestly deny it. But, Sir, if this is his convic- in accordance with fact. As has been pointed tion, by what force of reasoning can he show to out by some speakers, there would be great this House logically that he should, as he said, difheulty in getting a qualified instructor -- and metaphorically spit upon an honourable gentle- if we are going to have an instructor he must man because he holds different views? I never be qualified-to go into the country districts, heard such an expression fall from the lips of where the children are few and the schools any member of this House without its being widely scattered. To say that an instructor taken exception to; and, coming from the should co into those districts, a day's travel. to senior member for Wellington City. it makes teach four or tive children the right-about-face one exclaim, " What next ?" I say that, allow- -I do not believe the Colonial Treasurer has ing every latitude for the honourable gentle- the money to do it. man's convictions, he ought to respect the feel- An Hen. MEMBER .-- Let the teacher do it. ings of others who differ from him on this most Mr. HUTCHESON .- In . these particular important question. cases the teacher is a woman. Of course, we know the Boer women, either in their own coerce me. clothing or their husband's, took the trenches ; but there is no necessity for our women to matter at all ; it is a question of good taste. Here The time has is a question brought on the floor of the House attempt that sort of thing. arrived when we ought to deprecate this wild in a proper and constitutional way, and upon and altogether unwholesome spirit of militarism this question there will be differences of opinion. that has taken possession of us. for which there Respect, not insult, should fall to the lot of those is absolutely no need, and which can only have who differ from the honourable member. Pro- an evil and detrimental effect on the interests of the young generation. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) .- Might I be allowed to say a few words ? The honourable member's attack seems to be pointed at myself. There are very few things in the country that I am not held responsible for. At all events, in re- trust that, as Britons, our sons, whenever our country or Empire is insulted, or whenever an attempt is made to take from us by cunning, stealth, and deceit a strategical position such as was sought in South Africa, will do as our sons to-day have done; and far be it from me to say that we shall ever lie down and allow contumely and insult to be heaped upon us, whilst we stand by calmly and take it, as the honourable member has told the house we should. There are gentlemen holding the same opinions tary training : to those who would sit quietly wished us to go in years gone by, and under which we should have become a second-rate or that, although I commend it. I say that there the youth of this colony. It was, of course, in The honourable gentleman is one of those who the assistance right through, and he now cannot Mr. HUTCHESON .- You need not seek to Mr. SEDDON .- There is no coercion in the

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bably honourable members will be surprised when I say that I do not think there has been any necessity

at all for compulsion. I say that the same feeling that caused our sons to volunteer for South Africa caused their fathers to agree, and to desire that they should go to South Africa, and that same feeling weighed in respect to giving them training in the schools so as to pre- pare them for every emergency; and I say that that feeling is quite sufficient without its being made compulsory at all. That is my opinion on the matter, and we can agree to differ without allowing our feelings to carry us away as has been the case with the honourable gentleman. I say that it is absolutely necessary to be prepared and to be ready. Being ready, Sir, helps the preservation of peace : but if we were to follow the advice tendered to us by the honourable member we should be wiped off the face of the earth as a nation, become sub- ordinate to other nations, and fall back into a most deplorable condition. That would be the result of following such advice. The Czar of Russia propounded peace and the settlement of international disputes by arbitration ; but, Sir, while that very Peace Conference was being held what did we find ? We found Russia at that time selfish in her actions, and not going in the way advocated by the Czar, and for which he called the Conference and as, ed other nations to join in. That peace policy was propounded, but we found that in actual practice, instead of attempting to carry out that policy so as to strengthen the hands and work of those who were engaged in its deliberations, the armies of the Czar were being transported towards China and towards India. Railways were being construc- ted to carry out their designs on China, and secret treaties were the order of the day. Manchuria was coveted as an outlet to Chinese waters, and the securing of Corea was not divulged to the Peace Conference. Those are the facts of what was contemplated, and on the tapis at the very time this Peace Conference was sitting, and we find the same thing going on in the case of other nations, all of whom are training up their men to war. The honourable member referred to Germany and to other nations at the present time. He complains of the growth of militarism, and of the conscrip- tion, and of the forcing into military training of the Germans. Then, so long as the honour- able gentleman admits that that is going on, does not his common-sense strike him that unless we do the same thing we cannot meet on equal terms ? It is a moral impossibility ; and when we find other nations strengthening their navies and putting huge burdens upon their people, what course are we to take but to do the same? They are doing this because they are jealous of our supremacy upon the seas. The honourable gentleman said that our fathers crossed the seas to escape this militarism ; but who was it who kept the sea clear so that our fathers could come to the colonies? I say it was the Mother-land. It was our kindred at Home. It was they who kept the seas clear and have helped to maintain our freedom. Are towards helping the Mother-country, who has done this for us? We are putting people here upon the lands of the colony ; we are sending away exports to the value of \$13,000,000: and if you take away the natural produce of the soil from the exports where are you? And unless the sea is kept clear how can you get your pre- duce to the markets of the world and to the Mother-land ? And if your Mother-country is starved. then she falls a prey to other nations. I say that the work that our forefathers did stands out plain. The whole thing is plain, and we, like them, must keep the ocean clear. You must have your land forces in training, or else when you have to face a hostile nation you will be in the position of an army armed with the old " Brown Bess " meeting another armed with the magazine rifle. Military training and military drill improves a young man. Contrast a man who has been drilled with one who has not, and the bearing of the one is superior to the bearing of the other. Mr. HUTCHESON. - It was never dis- puted. Mr. SEDDON .- I say, again, that by bors meeting in company, being well organized, and with good officers over them, they improve and develop. No man can possibly say that any one is worse off morally, physically, or m any other way through Volunteering. I say, Sir, that it improves your nation, it improves your manhood, and anything that tends to improve your man- hood or to strengthen your position as a nation is beneficial, and should be encouraged and pro- moted ; and any member who desires the good of the people and of his country should Dit take exception to what we are doing in this respect. Mr. HUTCHESON .- I do not. Mr. SEDDON .- Then, why not allow the Bill to proceed, and when

it is in Committee he can help us to pass the measure in as perfect a form as possible. That is the course that honourable members should take in dealing with a large question of this kind. The honourable member for the Grey has brought the matter forward, and when it was first mooted in respect to the lads in our public schools there was a necessity for something of the kind being done. I am one of those who believe that you should train up a child in the way he should go, so that when he gets old he will not depart from it; and I say again, that you start with your cadet corps in the public schools- the limit of age at eleven years if you like. After they have had the training in the school, when they leave they continue in the ordinary cadet corps : and, when they get old enough, they naturally join your Volunteer Forces. I say that the boy gets, as it were, his first liking for it at the public school. He never leaves it until the time arrives for him to leave the Volunteer corps and go into the rifle club. In his old age he still enjoys shooting as a pleasurable and particular pastime. And thus we stand better to-day than ever we did. It may be said that there is an abnormal condition of things prevailing, and that we shall not continue to have our eighteen thousand

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That is quite true; but, I ask, who will deny the fact that being in this position to-day has strengthened, not only ourselves, but our brethren and our kindred in the Mother- country, and it has strengthened the Empire, because it has proved to the world there is a power in existence which, in my opinion, was never reckoned upon before. It is a power for defensive purposes. It shows the outside nations that there is no possibility whatever of their coming to our colony with any hope of success. If, again, there is any necessity- and as the emergency has arisen once it may arise again- we may then again contribute our help to the Mother - country in the way we have already done in South Africa. I say, then, why should we now, in discussing a Bill of this kind, raise maintained by the Education Department no the larger question that has been raised by the honourable member for Wellington City (Mr. Hutcheson) namely, " little Englander " peace-at-any-price - and the wiping out of respect to the military training of the youths the British nation from the face of the map? Sir, I say there was no necessity whatever to have control. The instructors, of course, are rise that question: and I resent the attack that has been made upon myself. In anything that I have done I have only been the -the boys in the Sixth and Seventh Standards mouthpiece, owing to the position I hold, of -that they should be provided with a light the people of New Zealand. If the people of New Zealand had not desired what has been classes to have wood guns, I do not think it is done I say it would never have been done. We sufficient for the boys who have reached a certain took the voice of the people as represented in this Chamber, and when we find that only four boys is shooting, and there is no doubt that the shooting gives the boys a taste for volunteering or five members out of seventy representatives hold the views held by that honourable gentleman- and a pleasure which compensates for the drill and the fatigue they have to undergo. Of man, then I say, with all due respect to the course we shall not be able to arm the whole large majority, that they should bow down to that decision, and they should not imply that of the corps with light rifles; but I think we might offer as a prize, as it were, twenty or so because the majority have taken this course rifles to the first dozen or twenty boys of a cadet they are not doing what is right to the nation and to the people of this country I, Sir, corps who showed the best drill, so that they take exception to that conduct altogether ; could be used in turn by the different members and when we know what the consequences have of the corps. In this way the rifles could be made been, it is hard to sit here and have one's-self a sort of reward for proficiency in drill. Now, that is the view of the Government on this question- accused of simply doing this to promote jingo- tion ; but, as I have said, there was a difficulty. ism- that one is influenced by a jingo spirit, We had no desire to interfere with the Boards and does this with that object and for no other motive. Sir, considering the suffering that has of Education and teachers and children of the boon entailed, setting apart altogether the great schools. On the other hand, unless there is to be a difficulty with the instructors, there must be

cost of this war - two hundred millions-to the Mother-country, and considering the homes complete control of all military training by the now mourning the loss of those who have gone, Defence Department. The best course, pro- to say that those who have taken part in this bably, to be pursued, as matters now stand, have been actuated only by jingoistic motives is saving that which should not be lightly levelled, Education themselves, and, after conferring with particularly when there are no grounds to sup- the Boards of Education, then to decide what is port it. Sir, I say with regard to the Bill that the best to do under the circumstances. But I am not in accord with conscription ; I am not the passing of this Bill in an amended form, in accord with forcing conscription in the public and the introduction of this Bill as it is now schools. before the House, ought to have been met, as it Mr. ATKINSON .- You said just now you has been met, in a proper spirit. The honour- were in favour of conscription. able member's desire is to see that our boys get Mr. SEDDON .- Sir, I do not know how it is, a military training. I believe myself that it but there is something in respect to the accous- helps them out of school, and it does not take tie properties of this chamber which generally too much from the time that they devote to pats exactly the opposite of what I said in the other subjects. However, I should not have ears of the honourable gentleman opposite. I troubled the House at all had it not been for could not expect the honourable gentleman to the charge levelled against me : that I have not undergo a surgical operation to clear his under- been actuated by proper and patriotic motives the reverse The member for Wellington City will bear me out that I never said that I was in favour of conscription. What I did say was this : that there was no necessity for it. At the same time, I believe that this Bill could be improved in Committee. I believe that there was a necessity at one time for something to be done; and now, while I am on mv feet, I will put the position before the House. The Government decided some time ago in respect to the cadet corps in the public schools that the Education Department should deal with these corps. It was urged that if the Defence Department, or the Commandant, of the military officers were to interfere with the public schools the Boards of Education might object to that course, while if the system was exception could be taken. My own view, I may tell honourable members at once, is that in of the colony the Defence Department ought to under the Defence Department. I believe also, in respect to the older boys in the schools rifle. While it is right enough for the junior tain age. The great attraction, of course, to the would be to refer this matter to the Boards of

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I say, in respect to the position in which we stand to-day, that what has been done has been for the good of the colony, and also, I believe, has been of benefit to the Britith Empire. Mr. BUDDO (Kaiapoi) ...- Sir, if there was no one else in the House prepared to support the honourable member for the Grey, I should cer- tainly do so in a matter like this. His Bill, so far as the principle is concerned, has my full ap- proval : I may differ greatly from the honourable gentleman in regard to the details of his measure. My honourable friend has entirely forgotten, perhaps, that the Boards of Education in more favoured districts than the West Coast have carried on this system of military and physical drill in the schools under their control for many years past, and it cannot be said of the Canter- bury, nor of the Otago schools, I believe, that they were not prepared with cadets when re- quired for military purposes for South Africa. The Education Boards of the colony have in many cases had to meet circumstances which the original Act did not provide for. The origi- nal Act states that in public schools there shall be instruction in military drill for all boys. Well, Sir. I take it that the intention of that Act was that boys attending country schools should receive the same benefits from military and physical training as those in the town schools ; but, unfortunately, I do not think that one-third of the public - school boys in our colony have received any training whatsoever in military and physical drill. The Bill before us practically takes up the position of making drill compulsory for all, and perhaps my honourable friend differs from me in the means to attain this end. Military drill and physical drill are to some extent similar in their objects, but in some cases it is

not necessary to have physical drill at all : that is to say, in the cases of infant schools, where the kindergarten system is most suitable. But country schools have as much right to receive the benefits of military and physical drill as those in the cities. Perhaps in many cases country lads and girls suffer to some extent from the fact of the hard work they have to perform at an early age. The work in our cities is usually lighter, and the boys there receive all the benefits of military and physical training in town schools. I want to say just a word or two with regard to the cadet corps in our public schools. Many of the schools have applied for rifles, but, unfortunately, they have not been supplied with them, owing to the conditions attached to the supply of the rifles, the headmasters being held responsible for the rifles -- that they should be kept clean, and that any damage should be made good. That provision has militated against the adoption of the system in our public schools. As to the cost of imparting military and physical drill. I think that will be very trifling. In Christchurch every Saturday the teachers within a radius of perhaps fifty miles gather together, and they are instructed by a drill-instructor from the Defence Department. This instruction has been carried on now for several terms, and the result is that a number of the i not be so ; but we must recognise that without teachers-if not a large proportion of them-can ' the moral and without the physical it is not now teach military in addition to physical drill : and, if that system is carried out in all the education districts, in a very few years there will be no necessity for the State spending a single penny extra on the teaching of physical and military drill in our public schools. There is one thing I would like to say-I admit that it is slightly foreign to the Bill. but the question has been raised by several speakers-as to the necessity of military training for our young people under any circumstances. I, for one, say that we in this colony cannot forget our isolation in these southern seas, and, notwithstanding that Britain is believed to rule the seas, there is the fact that we may be attacked by some Power that may elude the fleet of Great Britain, who may not have a large enough fleet to prevent an attack by the sea ; and, if so, what will be our defence ? Why the Volunteer Forces of the colony, trained in discipline and drill in our public schools. Let me ask these honourable members who are opposed to this measure to consider this : this Empire practically owes its present position to military effort and to war. We have only to go back to the time of Elizabeth, and the great defence of England : to the time of Cromwell, who made the British flag respected abroad; and to the long Napoleonic wars, useless as they were, and ask ourselves, what was it that made the British Empire what it is? Canada and India are the result of conquest. The South Island is retained to the Crown by the planting of the British flag at Akaroa by the " Britomart." I admire what our New Zealand troops have done for the flag in South Africa, and feel that this colony has paid a debt to the Empire for the protection the British fleet has given this colony during the past fifty years ; and I take it that no one in this House, or out of it, will be doing their duty if they ignore the fact that the Empire has been built up by the force of arms as well as by the arts of peace. Industry and toil in this colony has its triumph ; but, " lest we forget." keep defence ever before us, and try to make our boys amenable to discipline by teaching them military drill in our schools and physical drill to develop their energies. I consider the measure necessary, and I shall support its second reading. Mr. ARNOLD (Dunedin City) .-. It is surprising how every debate this session seems to come round to the question of the visit of Royalty to this colony, or else to the war in South Africa. I trust this will not continue during the whole session, for a number of us, at any rate, have had quite sufficient of it during the last year or two, and we desire now to transact the business of the country. The Bill before us is one that touches the educational question, and from that point of view we must consider it, and from none other. Our educational system now deals with three different : questions : it takes up the intellectual teaching of our children, also their moral and physical teaching. Intellectual teaching, perhaps, always predominates, and I do not see why it should

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complete. Any one who studies the question of our school-books-who goes through them

thoroughly-must come to the conclusion, if they are not biased, that the moral teaching that is there contained, and which is inculcated from time to time by the teachers, is quite sufficient to meet the requirements of the State schools : but. when we come to the question of physical teaching, until recently our public schools have not striven to train up our children as I think they should be to make our system of education complete. The statement made by the Premier is, of course, thoroughly correct : that those who have had military training can be recognised by their gait anywhere, and I think it matters not what age one may attain to. that person may still be recognised as having undergone military training. Physical training need not necessarily be military training. and physical training will meet the same end as military training. Consequently, while I sympathise with this Bill as far as it meets the case of physical training, I think it oversteps the bounds when it says that every boy and every girl who attends a State school shall have a military training. I do not think it is necessary or right to give children of eight years of age military training. Then, as to older children, the question arises whether the whole of our children shall receive a military training, and be trained up with a military spirit -- for that will be inculcated by a military training. Personally, I do not think that it is necessary, or that it is desirable. But then there comes the difficulty we had in our colony last year, and we shall have more this year when the returns come down. There are 541 schools with an average attendance of under twenty, and each of the teachers are females. I know that in Wellington District there has been a person appointed to instruct the teachers, but I cannot imagine an instructor being sent by an Education Board to visit those various schools in the outlying districts to give lessons in military drill, and training the female teachers so that they may be able to drill their eight. or nine, or ten children that they each have under them. And then there comes the question of the scholars. If military drill is to be imparted to them it should be done perfectly. It is all very well for the Premier to tell us that eight, or nine, or twenty rifles are sufficient for a set of schools, but what are you going to do with the small schools of the country? Give them none at all ? Then, with regard to supplying pieces of stick to our boys, as is done in some cities -- I am glad to say, not in Dunedin, and I hope we shall not receive them-but to give these wooden rifles to boys is worse than a farce, because it causes them to treat the whole thing with contempt. Now, Sir, we must recognise that the time may come when we shall have to train our boys to fight ; the time may come when it will be necessary to send others to South Africa or to other places, and that time may come when it will be necessary that some of us should be able to defend our own country ; but I hope and believe that when the time does arrive a small portion of our inhabitants will be quite sufficient to do so, and to make them able to do so and fit them for that position, the cadet corps and Volunteer corps we have had in the past-perhaps multiplied a little in the future-should, I think, be quite sufficient for anything that may arise. The question of shooting has been touched upon by the Premier. Why, Sir, we know this : that the greatest number of those who went to South Africa were young fellows who were absolutely undrilled until a few months previous to leaving, and yet they did justice to the colony, and were a credit to themselves. But. Sir, a man cannot learn to shoot in five or six weeks; and that has been the one weakness of our own people and of others. Very well, then, let the Government encourage cadets; let them not only give the cadets their rifles, so that they may learn to shoot : let them not only give the Volunteers fair capitulation, so that they may be enabled to practise, and ammunition, so that they may have plenty of it, but let them also encourage the rifle-clubs, so that ex-Volunteers and others may continue to practise that which they have learned and which they love, and which may be useful in the future. I intend to vote for the second reading of this Bill, but at the same time I think there are other things quite as necessary as physical drill. I believe, for instance, the Government should encourage to a large extent the formation of swimming-clubs in connection with our schools. I know that a small amount was placed on the estimates two years ago, and the whole of that amount has been given to a swimming-club in Auckland, which has not up to the present time expended it. Last year it was divided between the various Education Boards, and they are pausing because the

amount is so small that they do not know how to allocate it between the various schools which have swimming-clubs. Then, there is the question that is continually mentioned in regard to one universal set of school-books. That is a question that will have to be met by the Education Department sooner or later, and I trust they will undertake it very soon, so that we may have one set of school-books for the whole colony, and those books published by the Government Printing Office. Then, as to the present corps being taken over by the Education Department from the Defence Department, I consider that is one of the greatest mistakes that could possibly have been made. If they were retained by the Defence Department they would be properly looked after, and we should know that those who are in those corps would be properly looked after. Now, I wish to point this out to the Minister : that the cadet corps do not know whether they belong to the Education Department or the Defence Department. The Defence Department say they have nothing further to do with them, because they have been handed over to the Education Department, and so their capitation is not forthcoming, and they are in want of uniforms. The Education Department, on the other hand, say they have not been handed over to them, and they have no desire to receive them, nor have they any intention of

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doing so: and consequently these cadet corps are in this unfortunate position : that they are appealing first to one and then to the other to get that which they require and are entitled to, hardly knowing whether they will have to disband at an early date or not. Sir, I trust that the Minister will yet take this matter into consideration, and when this Bill goes into Committee I hope that such amendments will be moved and carried as will remove from it the whole of this spirit of militarism in connection with our children, and make it a Bill to encourage physical drill, and physical drill only, in our public schools. Mr. HOGG (Masterton). - I am sorry, Sir, that the honourable member for the Grey has brought forward this Bill, because I cannot see my way to support it. In the first place, I do not like the word "compulsory." If we pass a Bill of this character we must be prepared to infer that the Education Boards of New Zealand are not doing their duty ; and, considering what has been done in the past under the auspices of this form of local government, I think it would be a retrograde step at this time to pass any measure interfering with their discretion. If we compel them to introduce military drill, which undoubtedly they have done generally throughout the colony- An Hon. MEMBER .- No. Mr. HOGG .- Yes. I have been travelling over the schools lately throughout the colony, and I have hardly visited a school of any size or magnitude in which military drill is not being taught. Hence I question very much whether there is any necessity for this Bill. Then, if we pass the Bill, how are we going to enforce it ? What are you going to do with those Boards if they treat this measure as a dead-letter? Are you going to imprison them or fine them ? There is no penalty provided ; the members may do as they like -- they may take no notice of this measure. I am sorry I cannot agree with the honourable member for Kaiapoi in the remarks he made. He referred to the necessity of giving our young people a military education, and he went on to say that the British Empire had gained its position through war. That is a very debatable question. My impression is that there is no country in the history of nations of which that can be said. If any one thing more than another has contributed to the greatness of the British Empire it is its love of peace. The best and wisest of British statesmen have been endeavouring by every means in their power to promote peace, and it is by reason of the Empire securing a long reign of peace that it has gained its present position of grandeur. There has been no country in the world that has been more forward in supporting every description of industry. Why, Britain has been the home of manufactures. It is her industrial spirit that has made her greatness, and not the art of war. Mr. GUINNESS. - At the point of the bayonet. Mr. HOGG .- " At the point of the bayonet " - - no, Sir ; but at the point of her machinery. at the point of splendid scientific and industrial triumphs-the achievements of men who have always been in the van of progress. Do not her sons and daughters stand first amongst the world's thinkers? Look at her poets and her historians. Mr. WILFORD .-

And her Maxims. Mr. HOGG. - Yes, intellectual Maxims : those are the men and women who have made her greatness. I should be very sorry to think it was through the art of war that Great Britain had become the wealthy, prosperous country that we find her. And I hope it is not by studying the art of war that New Zealand is going to excel amongst British colonies. Up to the present time we have got along very well by cultivating the arts of peace, by spending our money on public works and in endeavouring to supply the people of the colony with comfortable homes. The army upon which we have to rely is not so much our Volunteers, or those that learn how to use the rifle, as the army of our producers. Those are the men who are building up the fortunes of the country. And I would ask the honourable gentleman to reflect for a moment after what has occurred during the last year or two: seeing the number of young men that have been ready to assist the British army in Africa -seeing how many the Government have had to reject-good, eligible, courageous men, able to hold their own alongside of any British Force to be found on the African veldt-I would ask the honourable member to say, in the face of these facts, whether there is any necessity for enforcing this military drill. I do not see any necessity for it. If it could be shown that there is the slightest necessity for it I would be found supporting the Bill. But it is very unfair to our Education Boards to say that a measure of this kind is necessary. If we pass this measure, the next thing will be Bills for the compulsory teaching of swimming, the compulsory teaching of cooking. compulsory bicycle-riding on our school-grounds, or compulsory laundry-work-& very useful subject, of course. We might as well make everything compulsory. I do not like the word, and I, for one, must protest against its introduction in connection with our system of education. This Bill is quite unnecessary, and if it is passed it is likely to become a dead-letter, because there is nothing in it to compel, though the word "compulsory" is used. its adoption by the Education Boards of New Zealand. Mr. WILFORD (Wellington Suburbs) .- I naturally rise with a great deal of diffidence to reply to the eloquent, caustic, and intellectual addresses that have already been delivered before the House this afternoon. I feel absolutely unequal to the effort, but I will do my best to answer some of the most cogent arguments that have been adduced by previous speakers, and I propose to deal first of all with the remarks of the honourable member for Masterton, Mr. Hogg. I cannot understand how a gentleman so well versed in the ethics of economics can possibly come to the conclusion that the prosperity of Great Britain, or the pro-

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prosperity of any other particular country, is due to the place England has in the commercial world with her products and produce. I say it is the British navy that has made England what she is to-day ; and it is a very very plain way of putting it to the honourable gentleman -if he cannot realise it in any other way- to say that if you have got a bull-dog in your back yard you won't lose your chickens. Now. Sir, it is, of course, quite plain that the honourable member who last spoke must have a very short memory. He objects to the word " compulsory "; and why, forsooth? He objects to the compulsory system, or to the word " compulsory," which is being introduced in our various measures. Why, our very education system is compulsory, and the honourable member for Masterton is a gentleman who takes the greatest interest, or professes to do so, in that particular part of the curriculum, if I might so call it. "Compulsory" is a word introduced into our Education Act, and one which, to my mind, is a proper one to be introduced in this Bill. I support the honourable member for the Grey in his Bill. I now wish to make one or two remarks with reference to the statements made by the honourable member for Wellington City (Mr. Hutcheson), who, I regret to see, is not present, and when I reply to his remarks I shall endeavour to do so without heat or warmth, and, though I may feel a warmth and an amount of feeling which perhaps the honourable gentleman could not appreciate, I shall endeavour to reply to his few statements as clearly and calmly as I can. He says, in a few words, "Hang this spirit of militarism, and let us do what we can to keep it away "; and he also says, in answer to the remarks of the Premier, that he is against, and was against from the start, the sending of troops to the assistance of the Mother-country in South Africa. Sir, I say this with a

due feeling of responsibility: Thank Heaven no such state- ment as that has been made in this House by a young New-Zealander, and I hope as long as I am in this House I shall never hear a young New - Zealander make such a state- ment. Thank Goodness it is the imported article that uses this kind of statement in this colony. I feel certain there is no young New- Zealander in the colony to-day that does not applaud the part the colony has taken in South Africa by sending troops there. There is no young New-Zealander who does not feel in his heart the good that has been done, and the great majority of the old settlers back up the young New-Zealanders in that feeling. That statement which the honourable member ex- pressed was never made by a young New-Zea- lander, and I do not think any young New-Zea- lander would so disgrace himself as to put forward that proposition in the House. The honourable member has added that he does not believe in the fostering or encouraging of this spirit. That may be so. The honourable member might carry his objection even to the ducal visit we have heard so much about ; but the honourable member, although he may object to the display that took place on the occasion of the recent visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York, does not hesi- tate to take a contract for the festooning and garlanding of the city in order to fittingly wel- come the Duke and Duchess.

An Hon. MEMBER .- Is there any harm in that ? Mr. WILFORD .- None whatever. It is inconsistent : that is all. Now, what 4.30. does the Bill do? It simply makes drill compulsory, subject to a conditional re- servation. Section 6, as has already been pointed out by an honourable member, is a kind of conscience clause which enables the parent of any child, on a certificate, to prevent that child going through the drill which it would be ordered to go through under this measure. The member for Dunedin City (Mr. Arnold) was far, far away from the fact when he said that it was an absurd thing for children under eight years of age to be expected to drill, and that the difficulty would be met by raising the age to ten years. Sir, I have in my hand a photograph of what is called the Rangitikei Battalion School Cadets, A Division, and I can tell the honourable gentleman that the picture comprises children ranging from ten years of age to under six years. Mr. ARNOLD .- Military drill ? Mr. WILFORD. - Yes, and they are all armed with the wooden rifles which the honourable gentleman laughs at, and they are uniformed in a way that is a credit to the district they hail from. That company of school cadets is practically a voluntary com- pany. It is a company that has been raised by the enthusiasm of the people of the Rangitikei district. The schools have their sectional divi- sions, and the various divisions form a battalion with their headquarters at Hunterville. A very enthusiastic man, Captain Tegner, took the matter in hand, and without any remuneration or reward he works in his spare time to bring these children to a state of efficiency as far as drill is concerned. That he has succeeded there can be no question. The photograph which I have here, and which I will hand to the mem- ber for Dunedin City (Mr. Arnold), will prove to him that his statement that children under the age of eight years would not be able to drill with the wooden carbines is nonsensical. He also ridiculed the idea of the wooden carbine, and said he could tell whether a man had been drilled or not by his walk. Well, I venture to say the honourable gentleman was never drilled in his life. Mr. ARNOLD .- You are wrong. Mr. WILFORD .- Then, if I am mistaken, the argument of the honourable gentleman is very weak, because I am forming my judgment The honourable from his style of walking. gentleman says these wooden carbines are of no use for practical purposes in drilling. I saw they are absolutely useful. He furthermore said it would only engender in the mind of the young children a ridiculous value of the weapons they were holding. I say that nothing of the kind will result. I say-and I believe it is correct-that children, especially those under

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the age of eight years, should have these light wooden rifles to learn to drill with. Why not ? They are easily handled, and the whole of the movements required in the exercises could be learned by the children without tiresome effort. In that respect the photograph I have will be instructive to every member of the House, and I am sorry I have not the opportunity of put- ting it in Hansard. to show the general

physical bearing of the young lads in the district which the honourable member for Rangitikei (Mr. Lethbridge) has the distinction to represent. Sir, I shall support the second reading of the Bill, and I hope that clause 6 will be retained in the Bill. I believe it is a proper clause - a conscience clause-and I consider that the remark of the member for Masterton, to the effect that the word " compulsory " should be struck out, is altogether wrong, and I intend at a later stage to suggest to the Government, in the event of the Bill passing, that drill-instructors be immediately appointed. Mr. CARNCROSS (Taieri). - Sir, this Bill was before us last year. I then deemed it to be my duty to vote against it, and I shall do the same on the present occasion. I consider the measure is some years behind time. Five or six years ago something was necessary to stimulate what might be termed the military spirit of the people, but there has been plenty of stimulation since those days, and nothing is required now to instil a love for volunteering or for military display into the minds of the public generally. The cadet movement, I may say, is now an established fact, for the Act providing for cadets is being availed of. Within the last two or three months we have had several cadet corps formed. One particularly I might mention, in the City of Dunedin, is connected with the company of engineers, and is a fine object-lesson. The military spirit is spreading all over the country, and there is no need now at all for compulsory drill in connection with our schools. There is another movement that, I dare say, has not been brought under the notice of the honourable gentleman-a movement that takes in what I might term the smaller boys of the country. It is a movement that was started at Home some years ago, although it has only recently been introduced to New Zealand. It was originated in connection with the Mission Sunday School of the Free Church College, Glasgow, and now includes eight hundred companies, three thousand officers, and thirty-five thousand boys. The movement has now reached New Zealand, and is rapidly spreading here. It is the formation of what are known as "boys' brigades," largely taken in hand by ministers of churches in the country districts. It has been recognised that the drill is an attraction to the boys, and, in addition to the moral gain that is imparted to them, they have the military drill. They are brought together every Saturday afternoon : their numbers are rapidly increasing : and I consider that the existence of such a movement is alone sufficient to do away with the compulsion which the honourable member asks for in this Bill. It has been said that if we allow the Bill to go into Committee it may be altered in such a way that it may be rendered acceptable ; but, Sir, we cannot alter the one principle without destroying the Bill. The main idea of the Bill is that there shall be compulsory drill. and if we are going to alter the measure in detail in Committee we shall simply mutilate it and take the principal feature out of it. We have been told to-day that the one blot on the Bill is the final clause, the "conscience clause," as it may be called. Sir, to my mind that is the best feature of the Bill. and I congratulate the honourable member upon that feature of the measure. that if the Bill should pass it will have that clause retained in it. As regards the whole principle of the Bill I think it is absolutely unnecessary, and on that ground I deem it to be my duty to record my vote against the second reading of the Bill. Mr. GRAHAM (Nelson City) .- Mr. Speaker. I have no doubt the people of the colony who may read the debate on this Bill will form an impression that members of the House have been taking a very careful and serious interest in the question under discussion. I have been here during the whole of the afternoon, and the number of members present in the Chamber most of that time has ranged from twenty to thirty. frequently only a bare quorum being present ; and not more than one-third of the members of the House are in their places now. I take it, Sir, that is an indication of the interest that is taken in the subject. The question also, I am sorry to have observed, has not been discussed without considerable heat. There is not the slightest occasion, surely, when discussing a question of whether it is necessary to have compulsory military drill in the State schools. for the display of any feeling. The member for Wellington Suburbs is the latest to show it by an uncalled-for retaliation on the member for Wellington City (Mr. Hutcheson). He (Mr. Wilford) expressed great interest in the question under discussion, but I make bold to say that his interest began and ended

with his speech, because no sooner had he finished than he followed the other two-thirds of the members of the House, who have been absent during the discussion on this subject. Sir, I do not think there is the slightest necessity for legislation to compel school-children-boys and girls from the age of eight years - to submit themselves to compulsory military drill. If such a thing were necessary I say it should not, and I believe would not. It is left to a private member of this House to bring forward a Bill of this kind. We have a Minister of Defence who is efficient and energetic. During the last year our Volunteers, including cadets, have increased from seven thousand until they now number eighteen thousand, and there is not the slightest difficulty in getting our young people, pupils of the State schools and colleges, to join the cadet corps of the colony. If there were any difficulty about the youth of the colony voluntarily joining cadet corps it might then be a different question. This is a Bill that, to my mind, is not necessary. Some

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honourable members have said that they believe in that portion of it relating to physical drill, but this Bill is to provide for compulsory military drill for all boys and girls over eight should not be armed ; but, providing we are years of age. Now I know that in nearly all armed, I believe the people of the colony are the schools in the colony physical drill is quite capable of defending themselves and their already not only regularly but very efficiently homes, and we ought not really to put into the taught ; and I do not know, if this Bill were heads of young children of such tender years passed into law to-morrow, how it is going to the wish to carry on this military spirit compel Boards of Education to do more than more than it is at present. Nothing ever occurred they are doing at the present time. Before you carried that has given greater proof of our can compel Education Boards to do more than ability to defend ourselves, and that we should do it if the necessity arose, than has been shown they are doing at present you would have to find something more than is provided for in during the last year or two by the way we have this Bill-you would have to find the ways and responded to the calls of our Mother-country ; means of giving effect to it. For our Volun- and, as has been stated by other members of the House, although we have not been a military £2 10s., also capitation allowances for cadet colony, although we have not been ground down by military drill, compulsory or otherwise, yet, corps. Now, if this is to be of any use, we must do more than say the Education Boards when our boys were given the opportunity are to do a certain thing-we must also find alongside those who have had a life's training the means to enable it to be done ; and this Bill in military matters, they proved a credit to our does not do anything of the kind. Some members of the colony, and were able to do as well as any others have congratulated the honourable member of their confrères from the Old Country, or member for the Grey upon putting in clause 6. which from any part of the British Empire. I have provided that boys and girls may be exempted not the slightest doubt that such will always from the operation of the Act by exemption be the case whenever necessity arises. But, with regard to the education of our children- certificates to be given at the written request of their parents. I suppose I may also repeat that children, when they are at the ages of eight, nine, or ten, I say they have plenty to learn to congratulation, but I would congratulate him still more if he had refrained altogether from making them good citizens without having their bringing in such an unnecessary Bill. If their time and attention taken up with compulsory military drill. When they have left school, and had been any necessity for it I believe the Minister of Defence would promptly enough have even sooner in the higher standards, they may join cadet corps connected with the schools, and brought in a Bill. But even he (the Minister), become trained up to a point of efficiency, and although he was here for a short time this afternoon, showed that his interest began and ended afterwards, if they wish to carry on their military with his personal reply to the member for Wellington City, for he has not been present in the House since. But if this was a question that time the boys and girls are efficiently taught physical drill, and in many of the Board

schools really required the attention of the colony-if it was a burning question-I have no doubt he they are taught military drill as well, and I am would have been here : at any rate it would have pleased also to say they reflect credit on the been the duty of the Minister of Defence to have colony, and compare favourably with the Volun- teer corps that are trained by military experts been present, and to have heard the arguments of members, and to have led and advised them upon outside the schools. In our secondary schools the subject. I think we are going altogether we have the same thing. I think the various too far in this matter. The Boer war has been colleges have cadet corps that are equal in pro- referred to, and the statement made that we do ticiency to any that can be produced either in this colony or in any other. That being so, I do not know when we may be called upon to de- fend ourselves. If the Boer war taught one not see the necessity for a Bill of this kind, and lesson to us and to the world, it is that people, I shall certainly vote against it. in the defence of their homes, do not require say but a few words on this Bill. Any legiti- that highly-trained and costly militarism that has been rampant throughout Europe and mate attempt to perfect the defences of the throughout the older countries of the world. colony would have my warmest sympathy, but I believe that if any nation in the world were to I do not see any necessity whatever, in the come in any way, or at any time, to attack existing circumstances of the country, for the this colony. if our sons were properly armed Bill now before the House. In the first place, with those 24,000 magazine rifles that the the title of the Bill is a misnomer. Section 1 Minister of Defence told us would be almost says : "The Short Title of this Act is . The immediately available - if these are put into the State - school Children Compulsory Drill Act, hands of as many men as there are rifles, the 1901." in the Act which makes it compulsory at all. people of the colony, young and old, as has been the case in South Africa, would defend The Bill is merely an academic declaration of their hearths and homes in such a way that the duty of Education Boards ; it is, in fact, a those who came to attack us would certainly weapon which is loaded with blank cartridge. regret it, and they would think more than once Now, I object to the Bill because it seems to An Hon. MEMBER. - What about ammuni- Mr. GRAHAM .- Without ammunition we Mr. NAPIER (Auckland City) .- I desire to But, Sir, there is not a single syllable

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government. I do not approve of this constant | pared to defend the productions of their work interposition of the central authority in the af- fairs of local bodies. I believe, myself, that when the Education Act created Boards of Education the Parliament and the country had confidence in the bodies that would be elected by the votes of the School Committees, and I believe that that confidence still exists. I feel satisfied that the Boards of Education are doing work which it would be impossible for this Parliament to do ; that we have gentlemen with very detailed knowledge of local circumstances on those Boards who devote, without any fee or remuneration of any kind. a very large portion of time to the administration of the education system of this country ; and I say that to pass an Act of this kind, even though it may contain a mere empty threat, would be an insult to every Education Board in the colony. Now. the concluding remark in the Premier's speech was one with which I have great sympathy-namely, that the cadet corps attached to State schools should be under the direction of the Defence authorities. There are cadet corps in the colony at the present time doing excellent work, and I thoroughly believe in the training of cadets of a suitable age in military exercises, so that the ranks of the Volunteers may be replenished by them, and as the cadets leave school they may be drafted into the ranks of the Volunteers. But that is a very different thing from training children eight years old in military drill as this Bill proposes to do. Then, section 3 says that the Education Board of each district shall from time to time, with the approval of the Governor in Council, make regulations and orders. Why should the Education Boards require the ap- proval of the Governor in Council, which means the approval of the Minister ? Why should the members of those local bodies have their re- gulations-even supposing the Bill were passed into law - subjected to the censorship of the Minister of the day? It practically deprives them of the power of administering the

Act. Section 4 says that every Education Board shall furnish a quarterly report to the Minister of Education showing that the requirements of this Act and the regulations made thereunder are being complied with : but it does not say that they shall furnish a quarterly report if the regulations are not being complied with. The Bill proceeds on an assumption that the Education Boards will carry it out, and there is no compulsion from the first clause to the last. As I have said, I am quite in favour of every practical step to place our power of defence on a better footing- as honourable members are by this time probably aware- and I have done my utmost to see that the work of perfecting our defences is not lost sight of : but, at the same time, I do say that it would not promote the best interests of this country if we allow the minds of the rising generation to be dominated with a military spirit. Nations do not live by militarism, but by work, and it is the advantage of work, and the duty of work, and the nobility of work that we ought to impress upon the minds of the rising generation. It is, of course, necessary that they should as adults be pre- and their fatherland, and I do not think that the children of this country will ever be wanting in that respect. Then, again, I object to the Bill because it suggests that the young men of the colony are incapable of defending their mothers, sisters, wives, and sweethearts. I say it will be time enough for the girls to qualify for military service when the young men show themselves incapable of doing so. I, of course, agree with that portion of the Bill referring to physical drill, but physical drill is being taught now. It is universally done in the district I come from. and I understand from honourable members that it is being done throughout the colony. There is no necessity, then, for this provision. and we should not legislate until the necessity arises. I would like to refer to one remark made by the honourable member for Wellington Suburbs in support of. I think, an argument used . by the honourable member for Kaiapoi, that the British Empire was made by war and existed by war. That is not the case. Professor Seeley, who is one of the greatest authorities on the subject of the growth of the British Empire. in the " Expansion of England." his well-known work. at page 96. refers to some of the important causes for the expansion of the British Empire. and he shows that it was not an empire created by conquest. Anybody who reads the lectures will see the system of reasoning, and the extra- ordinary fund of learning and facts he produces to support his contention. The Empire was not created by conquest. the only exception being India, and he shows that this was not really an exception, because we conquered India as much by trade as by war. He says this. -- " England has not been thus distracted le- tween two objects. Connected but slightly with the European system since she evacuated France in the fifteenth century, she has not since then lived in chronic war with her neighbours. She has not hankered after the Imperial Crown. or guaranteed the Treaty of Westphalia. When Napoleon, by his Continental system, shut her out from Europe, she showed that she could do without Europe. Hence her hands have always been free, while trade of itself inevitably drew her thoughts in the direction of the New World. In the long-run this advantage has been de- cative. She has not had to maintain a Eu- ropean ascendancy, as Spain and France have had ; on the other hand, she has not had to withstand such an ascendancy by mortal conthet within her own territory as Holland and Por- tugal and Spain also have been forced to do. Hence, nothing has interrupted her, or inter- fered with her to draw her off from the qui t progress of her colonial settlements." Sir, the expansion of England and the growth of the British Empire have been due to the sturdy spirit of the early pioneers of coloni- i- tion, and to the fact that British citizens baxo gone out into the primeval forest - even before the flag was there, and the flag has been con- pelled to follow them-and carved out homes and developed the resources of new lands. T ... British Empire indisputably has not grown to by methods of warfare. The flag has in every

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instance followed the trade. We have always shown that we were capable of protecting our own ; but the cause of the Empire's growth has been the indomitable pluck of the emigrants who went out from the shores of the United Kingdom to found new nations. If you look at the component parts of the British Empire, is this fact not self-evident? Look at Canada. Was Canada made by war? Look at Aus- tralasia.

Was Australasia made by war? I say it is by work and industry that nations live : and, as one who has taken an active interest for some years past in the defence movement, and devoted a considerable part of my time to military work, I say that there is a limit beyond which we ought not to go, and it is unwise and impolitic to teach our little children. as this Bill virtually provides, that we ought to live by war and fighting. Sir, if it had not been for war, especially the wars of Mr. Pitt. the British Empire would have been able to do far greater work than it is capable of doing at the present time. During the Napo- leonic wars the national debt was run up by hundreds of millions, wars that it is now proved did not ultimately make for the consolidation of the Empire. Again, how did the Crimean War help the Empire? What would have been the case had England not had a national debt, which has been exclusively created by war ? We would not have had the spectacle of four or five millions of British people without proper homes. We would not have had the squalor and misery that so disgrace the Home-country. I think it is General Booth, of the Salvation Army, who says that there are three millions of people in England who scarcely know, from day to day. where their breakfast will come from. If we had had less war, or more prudent counsellors use#cc-zero and diplomatists in the past to avoid war where unnecessary. the British Empire would have been in a much stronger position than it is to-day. We have gone far enough here with the military spirit. I fully approve of the South African War and what we did to help the Mother- country. and I concurred in the proposals of the Defence Committee for strengthening our defences ; but, after the exhaustive attention given to the matter last session by the Secret Defence Committee it seems to me to be some- what of an anomaly that before that report has been properly carried out, or even before a proper beginning has been made to carry out the recommendations of that report, we should find ourselves now tinkering with an alleged State- school Compulsory Drill Bill, which, as I say, is not compulsory at all. I trust that as the Bill could not possibly go through in its present form the House will reject it as being unneces- sary, and calculated to be more mischievous than beneficial in its effects. Mr. McGUIRE (Hawera) .- We have had a very interesting lecture from the senior mem- ber for Auckland City ; it covered a great deal of ground. but did not give much information. He spoke about Canada. Does the honourable gentleman not know that Canada was won to the British Empire by force of arms? Had it not been for Pitt sending out military chiefs with strong forces Canada would have been lost to the Empire, because at that time the position of Canada was very like that of South Africa at the present time. We should not have had Canada now as part of the British Empire only for the masterful policy of Pitt. The honour- able gentleman read the whole of the Bill with the exception of clause 6, which provides that if parents or guardians object, children are not compelled to learn either physical or military drill. Surely that is quite a sufficient safe- guard. It is one of the best things that could happen to our children that they should be taught physical and military drill-the girls physical, and the boys both physical and mili- tary. When the minds of our youths are im- pressionable it is the time to teach them what they should learn ; then they will never forget. Whoever became an effective Volunteer who did not drill as a boy ? Even in the early days of the war in New Zealand it was the boys from the public schools who were the most efficient soldiers: they showed to most ad- vantage, and those who entered the colonial forces at the age of thirty or upwards were never able to learn their drill thoroughly. It is absolutely essential that it should be inculcated into our youths while they are im- pressionable : therefore I think it is in the true interests of the colony, isolated as we are, that our children should learn military discip- line. Our girls should learn physical drill, and our boys both. There is no more manly exercise than military exercise : it is as good if not better than football, which is as nearly an approach to battle as anything I know of. Any one who would discourage military drill is working against the true interests not only of the youths of the colony, but of the British Empire. We should be prepared for any case of emergency, and in the event of any foreign enemy invading this country efficient and well-disciplined Volun- teers would give a good account of themselves. Again, I would ask. Who can so efficiently till up the ranks of our Volunteers and veterans as

our boys drilled in the schools ? Therefore, in the true interests of the country, let our lads receive a military training. I am in sympathy with the Bill. But if clause 6 were not in the Bill, if it were really compulsory. I should vote against it, because the time has not arrived for compulsory measures, nor do I believe that time will ever come in New Zealand, because our boys are only too anxious to become efficient. It would not be proper to interfere with parents and guardians, who have a perfect right to control their children. I am in hearty sympathy with the principle of the Bill, and trust it will become law. Mr. LAURENSEN (Lyttelton) .- I shall support the Bill. I shall do so, although I am as much opposed to militarism as any one, because the Bill is not permissive, as the present Act is, but is mandatory. It is because it compels the Boards of Education to see that physical drill is taught in the schools. The honourable member for Ashley said the most important thing we had to teach our children was the three Rs. In this I differ from him. I believe every think-

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ing man will agree with me that it is a much | object in view should cause so much heat and more important thing that our boys and girls should be healthy and well-developed than that they should be either good readers or writers. It is much more important that the girls especially should be physically well-developed than that they should be good scholars. That being so, I shall support the Bill, because in it physical drill is made & compulsory subject in the school curriculum of the colony. I was rather struck with some remarks that fell from the honourable member for Auckland City (Mr. Napier). I admire the pains he takes in getting up all the subjects that come before the House ; but I think in this case he is entirely in the wrong in his doctrine that the British Empire has not been to a large extent built up by war. I think, with the exception of Australia, he cannot name a single possession which was not originally acquired by war. I ask him one thing : If we were not prepared to defend what to a large extent has been acquired by war, how long, seeing the feeling that exists against Great Britain in Europe, would she be able to retain her position of supremacy? I should like to refer the honourable member to a remarkable book written one or two years ago by Captain Mahon-"The Influence of Sea Power on History." Mahon points out how, by being paramount at sea, Great Britain has been able to build up the most remarkable Empire the world has seen, and he also points out how she has been able to maintain it. If Britain had not command over the seas, how long as a people could we exist? Not another twelve months. We know what envious eyes the other nations are directing towards the colonies. It is only a few months since the leading papers in Germany counted the number of English people to the square mile in the Australasian Colonies, and contrasted that with the number of people to the square mile in Germany, and concluded that if Great Britain was not able to populate the Australasian Colonies Germany could, and it was high time that Germany took a hand in colonising the waste places of the earth. Only the other day one of the leading German statesmen said that if Germany had command over the sea the whole course of the history of South Africa would be altered. That being so, it is idle to lull ourselves into a state of false security and say we are not liable to attack. To say that war has not acquired the larger portion of our Empire, and is not retaining it, is, in the present position of affairs, to blind our eyes to the most patent facts on the page of history. I cannot sit down, Sir, to-night without expressing my regret at the heat which has been imported into this debate, for if one subject more than another might have been debated without heat to-night, or at any time in this House, it is the subject which has been introduced by the honourable member for the Grey. The Bill provides that our children should be trained in physical and military exercises. do not believe in the military item, and when the Bill is in Committee I shall be prepared to strike that clause out ; but why a Bill with this so much excitement amongst certain members appears to me an extraordinary thing. Amongst the speeches which tended to provoke the most heat was that of Mr. Hutcheson. the member for Wellington City. who, in the course of the discussion, made use of an expression which, I trust, he will have sufficient decency to apologize for and withdraw before this debate

concludes. With other members of the House, I regret the heat which has been imported into the debate, but I trust that the House will affirm the principle of this Bill, and let it go to its second reading ; then, if there are any amendments required, we shall be able to make them when it reaches the Committee stage. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) .- With some other members, I am surprised at the heated speeches which have been made in the course of this discussion, and I think on that account the debate has assumed an importance and magnitude that would not otherwise have been the case ; but, Sir, I wish to say that I intend to support the Bill on its second reading, though, in saying that, I wish it to be distinctly understood that I cannot support the whole of the details or provisions of the measure. The Bill provides that "It shall be the duty of the Board of Education in each district constituted under 'The Education Act, 1877,' to cause military and physical drill to be taught to all boys and girls over the age of eight years attending the public schools in the school district." Well, I do not object to physical drill being taught to both boys and girls; but, while I think it is the right thing to do, I think it is almost ridiculous to talk about teaching military drill to girls of eight years of age. I think, Sir, that even in the case of boys it would be well to increase the age to ten or, possibly, eleven years. Then, there is the difficulty with regard to schools in out-districts. We all know that there are many schools in out-districts with an average of ten or twelve pupils, and that such schools are in most cases in charge of female teachers. By whom is it intended that the physical and military drill should be taught in these cases ? Is it intended that we shall employ drill instructors ; and, if so, how many will be necessary ? Or is it intended that the female teachers shall teach the physical drill themselves ? These are questions for the honourable gentleman in charge of the Bill to answer. Clause 6 is one of which I strongly approve. It provides that on the certificate of the parent or guardian of any boy or girl the teacher shall have the right to exempt such boy or girl from being instructed in military and physical drill. Had that clause not been in the Bill I could not have promised to support it. With regard to the other subject which has been referred to, I do not think that any one can accuse me of being a pro-Boer. I was a loyalist and an Imperialist when many of those people who are now so fond of Jingoistic utterances were truckling to the enemies of the Empire, and who would truckle to the enemies of the Empire again if it suited them to do so.

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I am a loyalist and Imperialist now. I believe in proper provision being made for the defence of the Empire. I believe in proper and sufficient encouragement being given to Volunteers. I believe that we have reason to be satisfied and proud of the doings of our representatives in South Africa; but we may have too much even of a good thing, and I think we have had too much trading upon the loyalty and the military spirit of the people of this country. I think the time has come when we ought to remember the words of Kipling's "Recessional," and particularly the last line,- For frantic boast and foolish word, Have mercy on thy people, Lord. Mr. A. L. D. FRASER (Napier) :- I only wish to say a very few words to give reasons why I shall vote against the compulsory clause of this Bill. I do so because compulsion, or conscription, is antagonistic to the nature of an Englishman. It removes from his mind that inherent gift that is given to him of feeling he is a free agent. Secondly, I shall vote against the Bill as regards its compulsory clause because it is superfluous. If any honourable member chooses to cast his mind back to what we saw only a few days ago in Christchurch, when three thousand cadets assembled there, he will see that it is quite unnecessary for us to place any such compulsory enactment on the statute-book. These cadets are a credit to the colony, and they have been brought to that state of perfection without any compulsion from teacher, Board of Education, or parents. It is the natural instinct of a boy to become a defender of his home, and inferentially a defender of his country. An Hon. MEMBER. - You only saw a twentieth part of them at Christchurch. Mr. A. L. D. FRASER. - Yes, of course, it was only the small portion whom their parents would allow to be taken there by steamer and by train hundreds of miles away from their homes. I find, Sir, that in the city I have the honour to represent we have the finest body of cadets in this colony. I

am not giving my own opinion only when I say that, but I am quoting that of the military authorities of New Zealand and of His Royal Highness the Duke of Cornwall and York. On his visit these cadets marched past His Royal Highness, and he asked who they were, and then said that they were the best drilled boys that had passed before him. I am not saying this in any spirit of romance or unnecessary adulation to the boys, who some day will have votes and know how to use them. But I do so for the reason that we want to follow out the course which has been laid down by the gentleman who has so ably conducted the Napier School for a number of years. Mr. Morgan has worked on this plan : When a new master has come to the school he has said to him. "It is my wish that you should join a Volunteer corps." They have done so-every one of them-and two of those masters now have reached the positions of subalterns in local Volunteer corps ; consequently, every master in that school is a drilled man himself, and can give to the children the necessary elementary drill required in the cadet corps. If this plan were carried out in connection with all the large schools of the colony I do not think it would be at all necessary to have any instructors. I would again recommend this plan to the Minister of Defence, and more especially to the Minister of Education ; and I . would suggest that he should be prepared, if masters so qualified themselves, to add, say, 5 per cent. to their salaries when they have reached the position of sergeants or subalterns in a Volunteer corps. It would be beneficial to the school, to the boys, and also to the teacher himself, for when he applied for a position of a higher grade he would find that such a high testimonial would stand him in good stead.] have already said that I am against making this measure compulsory. It would be better to leave it entirely to the discretion of the master himself. I think there is a good deal, however, in what has been said by the member for Wellington City, and other members, that we are carrying this Jingoistic feeling a little too far. It is inherent in every boy to be a fighter, and the feeling only wants a little encouragement-a little judicious moulding -- to enable him to reach that high position that will be satisfactory to himself and his country. For these reasons, brief as they are, I shall vote against the compulsory clause of this Bill. The other clauses have much to commend them : but I strongly disapprove of having girls drilled as soldiers. It is a monstrous idea to try and bring about a race of Amazons. We want to bring up a race of mothers who can look after their children, and bring up their children in a proper way -the boys to be honourable men, and the girls to sew, and cook, and be good mothers after them. I think, Sir, that some physical drill could be given to girls for their benefit. For one thing, it would make them walk well, and it is regrettable to see how very few English and colonial girls and women can walk decently. It would be a good thing if the girls had physical drill, because it might improve them in their health and carriage. There are many other matters that I think might be dealt with in connection with this Bill, but as it has been so lengthily debated I shall not detain the House further. Mr. MONK (Waitemata) .- Sir. I merely wish to state that I shall support the second reading of this Bill, but when in Committee I shall strongly oppose the clause providing for compulsory military drill. Honourable members know that I have been very anxious that there should be manual instruction taught in our schools, and I would like that to be compulsory both for boys and girls-for girls up to a certain age, and for boys so long as they were attending the public schools; and I believe that both sexes will have life-long benefit by the drills, and probably the State may reap incalculable advantage by the increased fitness of citizens for its defence. I think a great deal of unnecessary debate has been uttered this afternoon, and some of it, I think, of a very misleading character, particularly that which has been given in such flowing language by the senior member for Auckland City, Mr. Napier. The

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honourable member quoted from Professor Seeley as a certain person is said to quote the Scriptures-he gave quite a different meaning to what the writer's words intended to convey. He and no one else will claim that industrial activity, resource, and wealth are caused by war or brought about by war; but the territorial expansion of Great Britain has come about and been confirmed by the incidents of war and

martial prowess. What, Sir, has made New Zealand, with its developments of the past fifty years, reaching last year the annual export of £13,000,000 ? Not militarism ! But what makes New Zealand an observed power to-day is the military spirit which prompted her to hasten to give assistance to the parent State and defend her prestige from its encroachment. It was the militarism which in the times of attack by the aborigines of this country, which I am very sorry ever took place, showed them that we were prepared to fight for our homes. It was militarism which won the battle of Trafalgar, and the battle of Waterloo. and enabled us to hold our place in the world and shield those other prominent qualities of our race-the mercantile and industrial spirit. Has the military spirit had nothing to do with our expansion ? Why, Sir, the history of our race would not have been anything but for the military spirit that actuated our oldest ancestors, following right down the line from Cromwell, and the heroes who fought at Blenheim and Waterloo, and the hundred daring fights that have taken place on the ocean. Where should we have been but for the capacity to perform such illustrious deeds as has been done by our ancestors ? Nor do I think we should without some reservation find fault with the jingoistic spirit, which language has been applied to our emotions and feelings during the last two years. It has been a fortunate thing, Sir, that we have the qualities which caused such a spirit to arise. I dare not trust myself to dilate upon the behaviour of the young New-Zealanders upon the battlefields of South Africa. Not, Sir, for fear I should speak too flatteringly of their achievements, but rather from the dread -- and I say it honestly- - that the poverty of my language might but detract from the meritorious blazon of their illustrious deeds. We have added to the history of this country, and to our record, deeds that will be enshrined in the hearts and dwell on the lips of our posterity, and which shall leaven with emulative valour the souls of the future generations of New Zealand. And is that not some good ? I say, Sir, that unless that spirit is continually in our race we shall, as has been said by some honourable members, " We shall go down." Then, again, do not be afraid of a military spirit in our women. Is it unwomanly for women to have a love of country and to be patriotic ? I tell you, Sir, that patriotism and the love of country will have but a feeble and rickety growth in the spirits of the men if it has not a vigorous vitality in the hearts of their women. A touch of martial emotion will make them none the less loving and womanly. Mr. FIELD (Otaki) .--- Sir, I simply rise to express my concurrence with the measure before the House, and I shall support this Bill in the second reading. Before proceeding further I would like to congratulate the honourable member who has just sat down upon the very eloquent words he has uttered. This colony is the most isolated and distant part in the British Empire. It is practically now decided that we shall not become a portion of the Australian Commonwealth-that we shall have to stand alone, and, if war breaks out, that practically we shall have to fight our own battles. That being so, surely it is necessary we should encourage in every possible way & military spirit among the youth of our colony. I agree with the honourable member for Franklin-I think it was-who said that the age mentioned in clause 5-eight years-was somewhat too young. I think if the age at which the boys began drill was ten years instead of eight it would meet the purpose. I also agree with those honourable members who are against compulsory drill for girls. I think that military drill in the case of young girls is absolutely unnecessary. It would be quite sufficient if the girls were taught, to some extent at any rate, physical drill. Physical drill in the case of girls is almost more necessary than in the case of boys. One of the great wants in the case of the female population is to learn deportment and carriage, which is necessary to make perfect women. As to making drill compulsory amongst boys, it seems to me it would be unfair to leave things as they are. and as they would to a large extent be left if the honourable member for Napier had his way. If we are to have military drill in schools at all, we must have military drill in all the schools. and I believe that in every school in the colony there is a very general wish, not only amongst the children themselves-because it does exist amongst the children -- but . amongst the parents and teachers, that there should be military drill. In my own district there is a small school at Johnsons-ville, close to the City of Wellington, the master of which is largely imbued with the military spirit.

He has there a cadet corps of boys dressed in Highland uniform. whose drill would be a credit to any Volunteer adult corps. Similarly, in numerous other schools in my district I know there is a desire to teach the children of the school their drill. There is an objection which has been raised by the honourable member for Franklin-namely. that. if this Bill passes, we shall have to appoint a number of drill instructors throughout the colony. No doubt. Sir. there is some little truth in that. It seems to me that it may take some time before we can teach every teacher in the colony the rudiments of drill. But, Sir, the time will come, and it is not a very distant time either. It is not difficult for either a female or a male teacher to learn the elements of drill. which is really all that is necessary in the case of young scholars, and in a very short period of time I believe, if once the Bill becomes law, we shall very soon find the teachers throughout the colony studying their drill and making them.

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selves competent to teach the children whom it was the force of arms, backed up by the they have in their charge. I am also in accord with clause 6, which makes it optional for parents to have their children exempted from drill where they have conscientious objection to it. It seems to me that is necessary, because there are some people whose scruples, where they are of a conscientious nature, should be respected. The Bill shall have my cordial support. Mr. WITHEFORD (Auckland City). 7.30. -I shall support the second reading of this Bill. because I think it runs on true lines, and because I think it will be the means of building up our Volunteer system in the future without having recourse to the Continental system of conscription, which takes away man- hood from agricultural and other pursuits. When travelling on the Continent I felt regret many times to notice that the farmers were taken from agricultural pursuits, and that women were doing the work of beasts of burden ; and I have actually seen two women in shafts drawing a cart along, and doing work which men would have done but that they were idling about railway-stations in different parts of Italy, performing their turn of military work. If we pass this Bill we can train our children at a time when they look on it as sport. We can train them to military evolutions and discipline, and in doing so we shall be training the children who will be in the future the pride of the man- hood of this country. Great Britain's position amongst the nations of the world is due to her force of arms. With the Bible in one hand, and the sword in the other. she has gone forth and annexed territory all over the world. Although she has deprecated the greed of Russia in extending her territory, yet Great Bri- tain has, after all. been the foremost of the whole lot in increasing her territory by annex- ing distant lands. She has gained the position which she now holds by the force of arms. In proportion as England has increased her terri- tory and population she has increased her com- merce; and at the times when Great Britain has been menaced those were the periods when her industries have languished-when she was unable to send her goods out of the country. For instance, during the Peninsular War that was the case, but owing to victories gained by force of arms her commerce expanded, and it has gone on expanding up to the pre- sent time. The question may be asked, Is it the force of arms and not the extension of commerce that has gained for England her supremacy, and the proud position she has attained amongst the nations of the world ? Take General Wolfe's victory over Montcalm at Quebec. Then, again, we have at the present time an illustration of the force of arms in what America did when she gained the Philippines. What gained America the Philippines? Was it commerce, or was it force of arms? Sir, it was the force of arms, backed up by the moral support of Great Britain. Then, when we come to the question of South Africa, was it commerce, or trading in dynamite, or any other commodity that gained Great Britain the sub- jugation of the Boers in South Africa ? No; indomitable energy and pluck of the New Zea- land boys we sent there to help them. That is what has secured to us territory in South Africa, and what will eventually lead to that extension of commerce and trade which is so necessary to the progress of any country. And here we in the southern seas occupy the same position as England does in the northern seas, and we have to follow to a certain extent on the same lines. Although we in this colony go in for the

Volunteering system instead of adopting the paid military system, I think in the long- run it pans out just as well. Sir, I cannot but think we are indebted to our honourable friend Mr. Guinness for bringing this measure forward. The only thing I should like to see added to it is a provision by which our boys could also be trained in training-ships, so that these who live on the sea-coast can have opportunities of becoming expert in maritime matters, and of perfecting themselves to take their place in the navy which is to protect our shores. There is one thing we cannot close our eyes to, and that is that just as England's first line of defence is its navy, so New Zealand's first line of defence in time to come will be her navy. Here in New Zealand we stand like a shield over the Australian Colonies. We are placed right in the highway of the ocean trade that will be brought to us through the Isthmus of Panama, and through the Nicaragua Canal. Vessels coming that way are bound to come into our ports and obtain the necessaries of life. The consequence is that New Zealand must be of the highest importance to the new Commonwealth of Australia, and she must have as great an interest as we in the defence of New Zealand, because the stronger the defence of the outpost the stronger must be the defence of Australia. I am proud to say there was the kindest feeling towards New Zealand shown in Australia, when it was proposed to make New Zealand a naval station, in opposition to the wishes of the Admiralty for the last fifteen years. It was felt that there is a community of interest between New Zealand and Australia, something more than an international feeling, and that the stronger New Zealand was made the better it would be for Australia. They therefore ceased their objections to New Zealand being made a naval station : and their feeling now is that the stronger New Zealand is, the stronger will be Australia. It is for these reasons that I think if it were possible to introduce a clause which would give encouragement to our young people to train for the navy it should be done. I shall not detain the House any further, but will only say I am pleased so much attention has been given to the important matter of the defence of the colony, because to be prepared for emergency is the best way to prevent attack. I think the House is disposed to take the right course in dealing with the matter, by endeavouring to make New Zealand one of the strongest posts in the Southern Hemisphere, and I feel confident the Imperial Government will give us every support in this direction.

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Mr. HALL (Waipawa) .- I have been wondering to-night what has caused the honourable member for the Grey to bring forward the Bill which has led to this very long debate. I should have thought that a measure of this kind, which embodies really a policy of defence, would certainly have been brought forward in a Bill emanating from the Ministry themselves. I do not know whether the honourable member for the Grey has introduced this measure as a sort of feeler to find what the House was prepared to do; but I do object to a Bill being brought down at such short notice which involves some principles that I think ought to have the very gravest consideration of the House, because it is really trenching upon our educational system, and trenching upon our educational system in such a manner that it may act to its detriment very materially. Now, we have during this debate heard a great deal of talk about Imperialism from members of this House, and I should have thought they would have had so much Imperialism during the last six months that we could, at any rate, have afforded now to let it drop, and not by this latter outburst of Jingoism make a laughing-stock of ourselves to the rest of the world. One of the objections I have to this measure is this : that the school-teachers of New Zealand have got plenty of work to do-very many of them more than they can do-and if you are going to burden them with further duties, if you are going to compel teachers to fulfil other duties -- the drilling of their children -- you will find that some of them will require more salary than they are getting at the present time. There has been a Commission sitting on these educational matters during the last few months, and until the report of that Commission is laid before this House, and the financial aspect considered, it is the duty of this House to withhold any legislation casting on the teachers further duties in the direction which this Bill indicates. And, Sir, I wish

particularly to draw the attention of members of the House to the fact that there are scores of schools in New Zealand that have been closed through insufficient attendance. Whenever districts have become depopulated in consequence of the mopping-up of small holdings, it has caused schools to be closed in consequence of an insufficient number of scholars to keep the school going under the Act. The parents in these districts are called upon to contribute in order that their schools may be kept open. I can take you to schools in my district that are in this position at the present time. Would it be wise to initiate a policy involving, as this does, a considerable expenditure, while we are neglecting to give the children in some back blocks of our colony the merest rudiments of education ? We have heard a great deal about Britain's greatness being in consequence of her prowess in war. Now, I venture to say that any one who has read up the history of Great Britain will have learnt that she has become great in consequence of her commercial pursuits. There can be no doubt that India was acquired by the influence of her commerce. Canada was also won in consequence of her trade relations; and, indeed, look where you will, it is apparent that in consequence of her commerce she has become rich, and from her richness she has become powerful, and in consequence of her power she is unconquerable by the nations of the earth. I do not want to say any more, Sir, but, in conclusion, I would remark that it is the duty of the Government of New Zealand to see that all her children are well educated in the three Rs before it forces schoolmasters to give the children instruction in drill in all the public schools of this country. Mr.

MCLACHLAN (Ashburton) .- Sir, I have to compliment the honourable member who has just resumed his seat on the lucid speech he has made to the House. All the evening I was trying to grasp his ideas, but I could not tell what he was talking about. Sir, I understand the subject before the House is the State-school Children Compulsory Drill Bill, which has been introduced by the honourable member for the Grev. I think it is a very good Bill, notwithstanding all the adverse criticism that has been levelled against it by the honourable member for Waipawa. An Hon. MEMBER. - How do you know that ? Mr.

MCLACHLAN. - Well, I assume he was speaking against the Bill. At any rate, some of the members this afternoon objected to compulsory drill for girls. I would ask, Why should they not be drilled ? We want Amazons in this colony, and from the Amazons we will breed soldiers. We could not have anything better for our girls than physical training if we wish to rear New Zealand soldiers. Sir, various arguments were used this afternoon with regard to the Bill. Some were favourable to it, and some were against it : but I must say that the arguments used against it were of a most flimsy kind. Some honourable members spoke about the degradation of our girls, doing this or that. Why should our girls not take all advantage they can of the benefit Parliament is willing to give them ? They are entitled to it ; they are citizens, and they deserve any benefit that we may have it in our power to confer on them. This afternoon the member for Waihemo indulged in a tirade against the Bill, and in the whole of his abuse there was not one logical statement. As I have already intimated, Sir, I shall support the Bill. I regard it as the forerunner of the initiation of a great family whom I wish to see physically developed. Without physical training our intellectual training is worth nothing. I did the honourable member for Waihemo an injustice. I said that he was speaking adversely to the Bill, but the fact of the matter was that I did not catch his remarks. I thought, from his volubility and the noise that he made, he was against it ; but I now withdraw the remarks I made in reference to the honourable member for Waihemo, and compliment him on supporting the Bill. Mr. PIRANI (Palmerston) .- Sir, a great deal of blame has been put upon the shoulders of the

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member who introduced this Bill because of the fact that Education Boards, at any rate, will be the fact that the only compulsory part of it is the title. But honourable members seem to forget that the Bill in its present shape is as it left the House after being mangled in Committee last year. The framer of the Bill had a clause in it under which the Government had power to stop the capitation of any Education Board that did not carry out the provisions of the measure. The House struck this clause out. I may say that last

year the Minister representing the department in the House opposed the passing of the Bill root and branch ; but I understand the Premier is supporting the measure this time, so that, at any rate, there is a change of front on the part of the Government, and that is something to have brought about. Last year I pointed out with regard to this Bill that it would not be necessary if the Government carried out its duty with regard to drill in schools. I pointed out then that one of the Canterbury Education Boards had the advantage of Government instructors to teach their teachers drill, and then the teachers instructed the children. This year the Government certainly sent a circular round to Education Boards, adopting, as usual, one of my suggestions-that other Boards should be treated the same as Canterbury-and asking the Education Boards to make arrangements for a class for the teachers and they would supply the drill-instructors. All the preparations have been made on the part of the Wanganui Education Board months and months ago. but, so far as I can see, there has been no appearance of the drill-instructors. I trust, now that we are returning to a normal state of affairs in the colony, and there are no extraordinary military functions to be attended, that the Government will revert to my suggestion, #cc-zero and give the Education Boards instructors to enable them to carry out their functions under the Education Act. If that is done, there is not the least necessity for the measure that is before the House. Undoubtedly there is need for some measure of this sort to stir the Government up to carry out its duty ; but unless the penalty clause I proposed last year, which the House would not adopt, imposing a fine upon the Education Boards who do not carry out the Act-unless that is included in the Bill we are just wasting our time and our breath in simply assisting to explain what the provisions of the Education Act are at present. Objection has been taken, I notice, to girls being compelled to be taught military and physical drill. The honourable member for the Grev can hardly be blamed for that, because two members of the House last year -- the member for Wanganui, Mr. Willis, and the member for Wellington City. Mr. Fisher- - are the gentlemen who are responsible for the amendment including girls in this Bill. I sincerely hope the Minister of Defence will allow no delay by the Defence Department in carrying out the instructions with regard to the drilling of teachers under the Education Boards of the colony, and, if there are not sufficient men competent to carry out these duties. I hope he will take steps to not be blamed for deficiency of duty for which they are not responsible. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) .- I desire to make an explanation, so that there shall not be any misapprehension as to the statement made by the honourable member. I explained this afternoon as to whether the drill in the schools was to be under the Defence Department, or whether it was to be under and regulated by the Education Department. If there was no penalising of the Board if the Board did not comply with the Act, and it was left to the Government, then it would have been possible for us to hear that the Government had favoured one Board as against another. That is the reason, and there is no change as far as the Government is concerned. Mr. PIRANI. - Sir, the Hon. the Premier misapprehended me. I intended to point out that, whereas the Government at present are employing Government instructors for the teachers in the North Canterbury district, when the Wanganni Education Board applied for a similar privilege from the Government, at the instance of the Education Department, the Government promised to supply the instructors, and all arrangements were made for the teachers to assemble at certain places at certain times ; but we have been waiting for the last five months for the Government to carry out what they promised to do. That is where I think the Defence Department have failed. Mr. SEDDON .-- I will look into that matter. It is the first I have heard of it. Mr. McGOWAN (Minister of Justice). - I would just like to say a word or two. I think the honourable gentleman who introduced this Bill will hardly know whether to be pleased with those who commend the Bill or those who condemn it. for it appears to me that they have introduced all sorts of questions that have very little connection with the Bill itself. There are-and it is right that the House should know this-Boards of Education that are not only doing so now, but have for years and years carried out physical drill in the schools without recourse to or special support from the (Govern- The Auckland Education Board has ment. conducted physical drill for

years, and in some of the smaller places the Committees have made strenuous efforts in order that physical drill should be taught to all the pupils of primary schools ; and, in addition to that, they went a little further : they allowed a certain portion of military drill to be introduced. such as marching, forming in line, et cetera. But physical drill has been carried on in all the large schools in the North, and, I think, throughout the district. If the various Boards in other parts of the coun- try had been true to their own interests, there would have been no great necessity for the honourable member to bring in this Bill. After all. there is nothing additional in this Bill more than any well-constituted Board of Education, careful of the mental and physical culture of the scholars, should do. The only addition here is the military drill. Objections have been urged that parents are opposed to their children

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learning military drill ; but no parent could | the time of the House at any great length in an- object to his child, either boy or girl, getting physical training, because it is for the physical benefit of the child; and it is absolutely neces- sary that something should be done, in order that the whole of the Boards of Education throughout the colony should deal with this important matter in a uniform manner. It is a ridiculous position to be in, when we find children in one part of the colony being taught physical drill and a portion of military drill, and in another part they know nothing what- ever about it. Of course, there will always be a difficulty in the small schools, but in these places the teachers, first having learnt the drill necessary in the large schools, will be able to impart it to the pupils. In many of the country districts we find pupils who are most expert in physical drill-especially on the goldfields is this so -- and some of the teachers have gone to great trouble and expense in order to equip a certain number of their boys for this exercise. It is a pity-because this could be 8.0. made a useful Bill-that the discus- sion has been so wide and has gone into such questions as the expansion of the Empire, and so forth. With regard to some things that have been said about the expansion of the Empire, it has been said that we should not encourage it, and that it has been extended owing to commerce. As the Premier pointed out, commerce would not be secure unless we had a powerful fleet ; and, apart from this, we occupy a position in the world, and it becomes a question whether we are to hold it or go back. So far as I am concerned personally, whether as a member of the Government or as a private member, I am not prepared to go back ; we must go on, and in order to do so we must see that our children are being so brought up as to be properly equipped for the battle of life, not only mentally, but physically. I am very glad to support the Bill on its second reading. Mr. GUINNESS (Grey) .- I thank honour- able members for the great attention they have given to this important subject. I do not wish it to go forth in Hansard that the remarks made by the member for Nelson City are correct when he says that the whole discussion shows that very little interest is taken in the Bill. I would remind that honourable member, and put it on record. that twenty-six or twenty-seven speeches have been made so far on the Bill. Mr. GRAHAM. - There were only twenty-one in the House, and barely a quorum at any time in the afternoon. Mr. GUINNESS. - Sometimes there may have been only twenty-one members in the House -that was probably the case when the honourable member for Nelson City was speaking -but I wish to put on record the fact that at some periods of the debate there were between forty and fifty members present. For some considerable time during the early part of the debate, especially when the honourable mem- ber for Wellington City (Mr. Hutcheson), the honourable member for Waihemo, and the Right Hon. the Premier were speaking, there was a very large attendance. I shall not take up i in view when they come to consider the ques- swering the speeches of those honourable gentle- men who dissented from the principles of the Bill. A great deal of irrelevant discussion has been introduced into the question-the question of militarism, of sending troops to South Africa, the question of defending portions of the Empire, and matters of that kind, which are wholly irrelevant. The question of providing proper instruction in physical and military drill to the children attending our State schools is not a new one at all. It is one that was recognised by the Education Act of 1877, and it is because of the

neglect of the members of the Education Boards to carry out the provisions of that Act that I have felt it necessary, at the instigation of many who have felt that neglect, to bring this Bill forward, in order to insure a more uniform and more proper administration of the Act being carried out by the Boards throughout the colony. Therefore it has not been brought forward to-day in consequence of the military spirit that honourable members say has taken charge of the people of this country. The Bill was brought in last session, and has been brought in again this session, and many of the objections that have been urged to it are urged against what has been actually carried by the votes of the House in Committee. For instance, the honourable member for Napier says there is nothing compulsory in the Bill. As I originally brought it in there was a penalising clause that made it compulsory on the Boards to do their duty ; it was struck out by a large majority, and I presume the honourable member, if he was present, was one to support that. Then, the honourable member for Ashley, in opposing the Bill, said there was no necessity for it. I shall not deal with the arguments made use of by honourable gentlemen who say they are against this military spirit and the militarism that is rampant in the country, and are against the Bill because it proposes to perpetuate that ; and I do not think that that argument ought to weigh with the question at all. But I want to deal with the argument that the Education Boards are providing this instruction. We find the member for Ashley telling us that is being done. We find the member for Masterton telling us that is being done. The honourable gentleman recently travelled. he said, from one end of the colony to the other as the Chair- man of a Commission, and he has seen that this is being done. I venture to tell him that he has only travelled through the main centres of population. He has not gone back to the back blocks in the country districts, where he would have found that they have not done so, and where the member for Ashley would have found that, instead of doing so, the Education Boards are totally neglecting their duties. They are providing all the necessary machinery, all the necessary staff -- more so than they have done in the past-for having mili- tary and physical drill taught in the schools in the centres, but they are neglecting their duty with regard to the outlying districts. Therefore I hope honourable members will keep that point

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tion whether it is necessary that this measure should be placed on the statute-book. Another point is in regard to funds. It is said that the Boards have not the funds; but the Educa- tion Act provides for it, and this Bill is to be read as part of the Education Act. Then, if the Legislature passes this Bill and puts it upon the statute-book, it simply means that if the money is not at the disposal of the Education Boards to carry out the objects of the measure, it will be the duty of this Parliament to provide the necessary funds for that purpose. I think it is not right for members of Education Boards to get up in this House and say that they have not the means to carry out this measure if it is placed on the statute-book, because when the measure does get through, the Parliament or the country must find the means to carry out the provisions of the Act, the same as they find the money to carry out the provisions for teaching the three Rs. Provision is made here for regulations to be made by the Educa- tion Boards. The member for Auckland City (Mr. Napier) said he was opposed to the Bill because it contained the principle of taking away the powers of local authorities. Well, under the original Education Act the Governor in Council has power to make regulations with regard to educational matters, but my measure goes further than that: it provides that the Education Boards can make these regulations, subject to the approval of the Governor in Council. I take it that these regulations will provide for where there are schools of at least ten or twenty pupils over a certain age, and that in those cases instruction shall be im- / 32106019788238 parted. Of course, the measure, as I brought it in last session, only provided that military and physical drill should be taught to boys; but, & majority of this House having decided that girls should also be taught, I take it that it Was my duty to accept the decision of the majority of the members of this House, and bring a Bill down giving effect to the wish of the majority of the House, leaving it to the House to agree to that amendment. I

am not in favour of the principle that girls should be taught military and physical drill ; but I do say that boys, at any rate, should be taught military drill. It is good for their health, it is good for their discipline, it is good for them in every shape and form to learn obedience to orders ; and, as I have said, it is good for their health. I say it is as necessary to train and drill a boy in physical and military drill in our public schools as it is to teach him the three Rs. I will not detain the House any further ; I hope the measure will pass its second reading, and in Committee I shall be quite prepared to accept any reasonable amendments that will bring the measure more into harmony with the wishes of the majority of the House. The House divided. AYES, 35. Fowlds Allen, E. G. Collins Arnold Fraser, W. Colvin Bennet Heke Duncan Herries Buddo Flatman Hornsby McLachlan Steward Houston Monk Symes Palmer Thompson, R. Lang Lawry Parata Wilford Russell, G. W. Witheford. Massey McGowan Russell, W. R. Teiiers. McGuire Guinness Seddon Mackenzie, T. Stevens Laurensen. NOES, 18. Pirani Atkinson Hutcheson Bollard Lethbridge Tanner Meredith Thomson, J. W. Carneross Ell Millar Teliers. Hall Graham Morrison Hardy Napier. O'Meara Hogg PAIR. For. Against. Fraser, A. L. D. Field. Majority for, 17. Bill read a second time. EIGHT HOURS BILL. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL (Riccarton) .- Sir, in moving the second reading of this Bill I shall not detain the House at any great length. The history of this Bill is that last year it was introduced and the date was fixed for the second reading ; but, unfortunately, the same evening that this Bill was to come on for its second reading the member for Wairau, Mr. Mills, had a Mortgages Bill which was not acceptable to the House. The result was that at the time of the adjournment the House was counted out, and the Eight Hours Bill went down accordingly. I noticed, Sir, that on the following day after the House was counted out on the Mortgages Bill -which involved the setting-aside for last year of the Eight Hours Bill - the Premier gave notice of a Bill that was entitled "The Limitation of Workers' Hours Bill." That Bill, unfortunately, was not laid before Parliament during last session, so that I am in the dark as to what the provisions of that Bill were proposed to be. I notice, however, that during the recess a deputation of the Canterbury Trades Council waited upon the Right Hon. the Premier during one of his visits to Christchurch, and he then pledged himself to introduce an Eight Hours Bill during the present session. In looking through the Bills that were foreshadowed in the Speech from the Throne no reference was made to the Eight Hours Bill. I therefore gave notice of this Bill in the ordinary course. At the same time I have no desire to forestall any legislation which the Government may propose to bring down upon this very important question. I admit that the responsibility of so important a matter should rest upon the shoulders of the Administration, and I am prepared that this Bill shall be referred to the Labour Bills Committee, and shall be allowed to be laid aside for the purpose of facilitating any measure which the Government may bring down to deal with the eight-hours question. Or I am prepared that this Bill shall be-if it is desired to so use it-absorbed into any measure that the

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Government may propose to bring forward. I therefore say at once that I have no desire whatever, in connection with this Bill, either to anticipate or to accept a responsibility which should, in regard to so important a matter, rest upon the Government, after the professions that have been made by the Premier as Minister of Labour, of the anxiety of the Government to give legislative effect to the eight-hours principle. Now, Sir, I think it will be admitted when I say that eight hours as a day's work is universally accepted in theory. So far as all the awards of the Arbitration Court are concerned, and as regards our factories, mines, and so on, the principle is universally admitted of an eight-hours day. In fact. I think the Arbitration Court has recently been fixing even the less period of forty-four hours per week, in order that the workers may not be required to work more than eight hours in any one day and may also have the benefit of a half-holiday on Saturday. But, Sir, while the eight-hours day is accepted in theory, there are a large number of cases indeed where it is not carried out, and this Bill is intended in the first place to lay down the broad principle that eight hours shall be a day's work, and in the second place it

makes an attempt to deal with those cases where an eight-hours day is not practicable. The labour unions, and organized labour generally, recognise eight hours as a day ; but, as is always the case where legislation requires to step in, it is not on behalf of the organized bodies of labour, but on those who are not organized. Let me take as an illustration the condition of the dairying industry. Last year and this year I have had letters from persons in the North Island who have seen my name associated with this Bill, and they have given me most deplorable accounts of the hours men have to work in connection with the dairying industry in the North Island. And that industry requires that employes shall work seven days in the week. Of course, the cows must be milked, and, that being so, it appears to me that unless we are careful, however important the dairying industry may be within this colony-and I admit it has grown to an immense value so far as the products are concerned-unless we are careful, I say, in regulating industries of that class there will be a danger of the men that are employed becoming what I have seen them called in one of the newspapers of the colony a little while ago, little better than white slaves. I admit the position is a difficult one. and no doubt there are members in this House who have a much closer acquaintance with that phase of our economic life than I possibly could have ; but I venture to say this House will not be prepared to maintain an industry unless the conditions in connection with it are fair to the worker as well as profitable to the employer. An Hon. MEMBER .-- You cannot do it. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL. - Sir. I would remind the honourable member that a few years ago exactly the same remark was made in connection with nearly every industry proposed to be brought under the labour laws. Now, I should like to very briefly refer to the provisions of the Bill. Clause 2 provides that eight hours shall be a legal day's work ; but it provides that it may be agreed between employers and employes that the hours of daily labour can be so arranged as to exceed or be less on particular days, the maximum number of hours per week being fixed. The principle of this Bill is that the total number of working-hours shall not exceed forty-eight per week. But it goes further, and provides, with regard to the work of those persons who are employed in hotels, in boardinghouses, and as domestic servants and others, that they shall not be required to work longer than twelve ... hours in any one day, including meal-hours, and that certain holidays are to be given to them as compensation for the extra time which they give. With regard to farm-labourers, and persons employed in tending horses or cattle, it is provided that they shall be entitled to holidays according to the provisions which are dealt with in section 3-namely, a half-holiday every week, and every alternate Sunday afternoon at least, but that the time that is taken up in connection with tending horses and cattle shall be independent of the actual working-hours that they are employed. Section 5 brings the State and its various departments under the operation of the eight-hours principle. An Hon. MEMBER .-- Are members of Parliament included ? Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- I am not dealing with the duties of members of Parliament at the present time. I am dealing now with the departments of the State in which labour is employed, the same principle being laid down in connection with the State-namely, that eight hours' work shall be a day's work. There is a proviso, of course, in section 2, by which the State may be able to regulate the number of hours per day, thus dealing with intermittent labour, so that the total number of hours shall not exceed forty-eight in a week. It may be asked, " Is there any need for an Eight Hours Act in connection with the State employes ?" I reply there is; and here I might say that less than a year ago I pointed out to one of the Ministers a case in which men in his department were working fifty-four hours, and in some cases more, a week. Now I have to deal very briefly with the question of overtime. Personally, as an employer, I do not believe in overtime. Neither do I think that any one who has the employment of men will ever think it is desirable that any man should be worked longer than eight hours per day. If you are working men for a longer period than eight hours per day they do not give you as full value for your money as if they were working no longer than eight hours per day. An Hon. MEMBER .- Is it a continuous eight hours ? Mr. G. W. RUSSELL. . Well, it is eight hours in a day. My honourable friend knows as well as most people, I presume, that he himself requires to stop to take his

meals, and it is exactly the same with those who are employed in connection with any industry-they require

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to stop and take their meals. The question : old age and for their families. This Bill, if that my honourable friend has just asked does not indicate that high intelligence with which I have always credited him. Now, in connection with overtime, I admit there are cases in connection with certain industries where men are compelled to work overtime. The only safeguard with the view of limiting that is the provision in section 6, namely : that where there shall be workers employed more than forty-eight hours in a week the employer shall be required to pay for that overtime at rate and a quarter for the overtime so worked.

Those are briefly the provisions of the Bill. I do not claim that it is a perfect Bill. I am not aware of any law in force to form a precedent upon which such a Bill as this could be drawn, but it is an attempt, like all Bills dealing with similar questions; and it is only by giving legislative effect to the principle, and building upon an enactment the superstructure that experience teaches that you can get a start. I venture to place this Bill before the House as a start towards legislation on the eight-hours question. I am prepared that the Bill shall be referred to the Labour Bills Committee, and I am prepared to withdraw it in the event of the Government bringing down legislation, as promised by the Premier, dealing with this question. I beg, Sir, to move the second reading of the Bill. Mr. McGUIRE (Hawera) .- Sir, the 8.30. honourable gentleman made a statement that was quite correct - namely, that the Bill has a great many defects. I am in agreement with him on that point. The honourable gentleman referred to the dairying industry. Let me assure him and members of this House that if the ordinary rate of wages were paid for milking that is now paid by the Government use#cc-zero on the co-operative works, and if only eight hours were worked per day, the whole of the dairy industry of New Zealand would have to be suspended, and it would result in throwing a large number of people out of employment, and in great injury to the country - more injury than ever the honourable member will be able to do good. I am satisfied of that. The conditions of the life of those who engage in that industry demand that the milking shall be done in the morning, running over two hours and a-half, and again for two hours and a-half in the evening-five hours altogether. But between the morning and evening milking many hours intervene, perhaps as many as seven or eight hours, and if the dairy industry were to be brought under this Act the work could not be done. Many men in this country have been induced to put their money into this industry believing that they would not be hampered by legislation. Perhaps the honourable gentleman has received a solitary letter on the matter from some individual who has nothing whatever at stake, but there are many people in the colony who have their all at stake, and who are endeavouring to make a living out of this particular industry. They are self-reliant and industrious, and they do not wish to become a burden on the State, and they desire to make provision for their passed as brought in, will prevent them from achieving that object. It will take from them that energy and thrift, together with self-reliance, which they now possess. Sir, I am surprised that any member of this House should bring in a Bill of this kind, so far-reaching and hurtful. I am prepared to believe that the honourable gentleman was not aware of the damage he was about to do to such a great industry as the dairy industry. There may be some good points in the Bill, but, as regards the dairy industry, I say it would almost annihilate it. Last year we exported from this colony butter and cheese to the value of over a million sterling, and if this Bill should become law that valuable industry would become seriously hampered, or perhaps destroyed altogether. Why, Sir, should our dairy farmers not have an opportunity of making a living for themselves, and working out their own salvation ? They cannot all get Government billets. It is strange indeed that, in a country where the people are industrious and thrifty, they should be penalised and interfered with as they would be under this Bill, and I sincerely hope the good-sense of the House will give this vicious measure a short shrift. I did intend to move, Sir, that the Bill be read a second time this day six months, but I will not do so on this occasion. I will leave it for some of

my honourable friends opposite, as they may have a better chance of carrying such a proposal through than I would. The member for Egmont says "Hear, hear," and I will therefore give the honourable gentleman the opportunity to move in the direction indicated by me. Mr. SEDDON (Premier) .- Sir, I may say the Government support this Bill. To do otherwise would be inconsistent with all we have done, and against that which we think is in the best interests of those engaged in certain occupations in the colony. The great difficulty has always been - and the great difficulty still is- that there are certain occupations, in which many are engaged, to which it is not possible to apply either the labour legislation or a measure such as the one now before the House; and why on earth, because a difficulty exists, you should still continue to keep thousands of others to whom it can be applied, and to whom it ought to be applied. without the benefit of it I cannot understand. It is no use mincing matters. There is no man in the House here who would say that in respect of mining - of coal-mining and other mining-a man should work for more than eight hours. There is not one of us here who would say, in respect of our factories, that we should not have the eight-hour system applied. We have it already on our statute-book. The same principle is there applied ; but when a Bill is introduced putting us in conflict with what has been given in other measures, then there is hesitation whenever the Bill gets into Committee. The second reading of this Bill will be carried. Do not make any mistake about that; but as soon as ever the Bill gets into Committee there will be amend-

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ments proposed, and it will take so long to discuss the amendments that we will never get much further forward. Now, that is the position. Well, it is much better, I think, for us to say straight out to what a measure of this kind shall apply, and to put it definitely. Let there be no ambiguity at all. It is much better to take it, I say, even though there may be some who are left out of its benefits who may be entitled to it, than that we should fight for that which we cannot achieve. Now, the course I intend to take is this : Speaking for the Government, I say we shall support the second reading of the Bill. We will do all we can to assist the honourable member in getting the Bill through. I am quite prepared to go further, and to say that if he fails I shall take up the measure and go on with it. It does not matter to the Government that it has been introduced by a private member. I hope I have always evinced that, if a measure is for the good of the people, it does not matter to the Government how or by whom or in what way it has been introduced. It is the duty of the Government to give effect to the wishes of the people, and to the wishes of the majority of the House, and consequently to give facilities for its passing. The honourable member has said that this was not mentioned in the Speech from the Throne. there, but it is amongst the subjects included in the words, labour Bills and other measures of importance and of interest will be introduced. I think that sentence is very wide, and will apply to this. I may say that what we are doing now is consistent with what we did last session. Last session the honourable member's bill was sacrificed on account of some other Bills. Then the Government gave notice of a Bill limiting the hours of labour. That was practically in another form to that which was proposed by the honourable member's Bill ; but that did not get further forward. During the recess the men belonging to the various organizations have supported this proposal, and I may say there is still a very general wish to have in a concrete form a measure such as that proposed here, and to further that I have told the House the course we intend to take in respect to it. I may say I should be the last, after all that the colony has done in the way of furthering the dairying industry,-or any other industry,-I should be the last, I say, to do anything or assist in passing any legislation that would prejudice or materially injure such an important industry. We might, of course, in that respect amend the Bill. There is no doubt that members representing these districts will be able to show to members here in the House that we should not pass it, because it would have an injurious effect on the industries. As Minister of Labour, and as one who has endeavoured to improve the position and condition of the workers, I say advisedly that it would be better for those like

ourselves and those representing country districts to give and take. If by a conference, or by setting up as between us a Conciliation Board, we could come to a conclusion not to do anything that would injure but to help the country districts, country members would help us in legislation which is required more particularly in the towns. There is no difference as between town and country-the interest of the one is inseparably bound up in the other. If the country is prosperous those in the towns are prospering, and if the producer is forging ahead you always find the residents in the towns doing likewise. On the other hand, if your consumption of the produce of your own country is increasing in the towns, and if your industries are prospering, you have a market of your own and within yourselves, and that helps the producers, and it helps those in the country districts. We should not forget that, and, instead of having any division of opinion, and country versus town-I say who- ever starts anything of that sort in this country is an enemy of the country. That is my honest conviction, and I say there is no necessity for any disagreement. I have been many years here in this House ; I have met members representing country districts; I have met the advanced wing with respect to social progress and labour legislation, and I would say honestly that I have not known a man antagonistic to any member simply because he represented a country district, and I have not met members of the country districts antagonistic to progressive or labour legislation. But there are times when legislation has been proposed that would probably have had an injurious effect on the country districts. On the other hand, if the country districts and those representing them were to do nothing simply because there is a danger, or they fear danger, no progress would have been made at all, and I would ask honour- able members who represent country districts. and who have these fears, to look at the results that have attended our progressive legislation. The condition of the man in the town-of the workers-has been improved, and. in a greater ratio, there has been an improvement in the condition of the settlers of our colony ; and where both are prospering under these conditions I say we should not fear much. Let us pass the second reading of the Bill and get it into Committee, and, as far as my influence will go, I will do my best to see that there is nothing that will injure the country districts : and I hope the country members will do their best to assist the town members in getting this Bill passed, because it meets a point that is not met by the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, or any other legislation. It is nonsense to say that the Conciliation and Arbitration Act meets every case : nothing of the kind. I do not suppose it would be at all out of place where you have cities or boroughs where there are industries, and those engaged in those industries are affected by the measure. It is not an unreasonable suggestion made by the member for the Bay of Islands to. sav, put in a schedule and name your cities or districts in which this Bill shall apply : I see nothing whatever objectionable in that. What I do say is this : that it is consistent with what

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we have done, and we ought to bar that which is occurring. There is no use mincing the fact : as Minister of Labour I say, with a due sense of responsibility, there has been an attempt made to infringe upon the settled hours of labour. An Hon. MEMBER .- Where ? Mr. SEDDON .- I say it has been done. If you leave it to the Conciliation and Arbitration Act. under that Act the employers will, in placing their case before the Board or Court, try to infringe upon it ; and you cannot gain- say the fact that we ourselves, unthinkingly and not knowing the effect, certainly did, so far as women and children are concerned, increase the hours of labour by the Factories Act. Under the circumstances, notwithstanding the rather pessimistic view that has been taken by the president of the Employers' Association, I say that our industries to-day are in a good position. I say that there has never been a better feeling between employer and employed than at the present moment. I say it advisedly, if we are to believe what we hear from the leading employers and those intrusted with the control of the labour affairs in the colony. I should know, as Minister of Labour, through my department and my officers, if there was any antagonistic feeling between the two. There may be when some of these questions are before the Board. But you must not be guided

by what occurs at that stage ; each party tries to make the best they can of their respective cases, and, if you judge by that, it might appear for the moment that the relationship was strained. But when the Board or Court has come to a conclusion it has been well received, and that has been the case right through. I do hope each and every industry that has been founded in our colony may increase and prosper, and I trust the workers themselves will see that with the competition there is it will be as well for them to bear that in mind. Taken on the whole, I say there is no reason to complain of what has been done by the Legislature. A great deal lies between employer and employed. But on this question as between town and country, as I have said before, let us go slowly. We have made advances during the last few years for the good of employer and employed. I say now that I counsel moderation. We cannot stand still ; we must progress : and there can be no real sound objection taken to this measure we have before us. Like every other measure, members may vote for it on the second reading, reserving to themselves the right to amend the same when they get into Committee. That is the course I advise in respect to this Bill. Mr. GUINNESS (Grey) .-- I shall support the principle contained in this Bill, but I want the member for Riccarton, who has introduced it, and also the Government, to support an amendment in the direction of altering the law with regard to coal miners and gold-miners as it at present exists. The law with regard to coal-mining is that eight hours' work at the face shall be considered a day's work. Now, honourable members who have a knowledge of coal-mining and gold-mining must know, where the miners have to go down into the bowels of the earth, so to speak, that they are a considerable time going from the bank, as it is called, to the face where the workings are carried on, and also a considerable time in coming back. Now, this time is not taken into account by the law at the present time, and I wish an amendment made in the law that any miner commencing work should be held to commence his work the moment he leaves the bank to go to the face, and that he should be considered as working in the mine until he arrives at the surface again. The miners who are concerned have asked that this amendment should be put in an Eight Hours Bill. They are strong on the question, and when the Bill goes into Committee I shall take steps to see that an amendment is made in that direction, so that eight hours shall be considered from bank to bank, and not eight hours' continuous work at the face, as is the present law. I hope honourable gentlemen will accept the amendment, and I trust that the Premier and the Minister of Mines, who are well acquainted with this question, will take it into their favourable consideration and support it. Mr. WITHEFORD (Auckland City) .- I have every desire to give the honourable member who introduced this Bill every credit for good intentions in regard to the matter, and I think also that the Bill will be beneficial to the workers in the cities. And I also approve of the remarks of the Right Hon. the Premier on the subject ; but at the same time I do not think that every member of this House thoroughly understands the position of those labourers who are Crown tenants, and those labourers who are earning their living on the soil, and who do not get a daily wage. We have heard a great deal about improving the position of those worthy settlers in the country districts of the colony, and especially in the North Island ; and those men are not able to make ordinary wages such as a working-man receives. And yet the working-man is to be protected- his work is to be confined to eight hours a day ; but the men who are settled upon the soil, who are the backbone of the country, and who work sixteen hours a day in the majority of cases, cannot earn the wage that the man in the city makes. In regard to fruit-growing in the North Island at the present time, wages-men have been employed and paid their eight hours a day growing strawberries, fruit, and other commodities for the market, and yet we find our settlers, with their families working from daylight in the morning until perhaps midnight - sixteen hours a day. The struggling settler has to pay wages and employ the ordinary working-man, who is confined to eight hours a day for his work. He is unequally competing with people who are, with their wives and their children, working sometimes sixteen hours a day, and there is no equivalent aid, or protection for the price of their produce. And then also, in regard to the markets, there has been nothing done in many of the districts in the North

of Auckland to

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enable the poor struggling settlers to bring their produce to the nearest markets. They have no roads at all ; and, in the case of the settlers around the Auckland Harbour, they have no means of railway communication with the city. They have to drive down to the Auckland Harbour and cross the water-way. We have heard of the proposal to spend three or four millions in establishing steamer lines between this colony and Australia and Eng- land. I think what should be done is to make these harbours traversable, in order that the produce of our settlers may be brought to market. And, in the face of all this, here is a proposal that eight hours a day shall be the limit of work. We do not even allow, under this Bill, the man who engages in the dairy in- dustry to employ his men the few hours neces- sary to enable his cows to be milked. There is a clause in the Bill about working-cattle and horses, but that does not mean cows. I do not infer that city men do not know the difference between working-cattle and dairy cows. but I do know the case of a settler who arrived from London, and he was personally ignorant of cattle and blundered through it. He agreed with a friend of his to go to the nearest mar- ket to buy some dairy cows. They had all the appliances for the dairy cheese-making, and they each wished to start dairying on their respective holdings. They went to the sale and saw there a pen of very big cattle and another pen of small cattle, and they decided to buy the two pens between them, and divide the animals afterwards. One pen happened to contain bullocks and the other cows. They bought them, and brought the cattle home. They tossed for choice, and the man who had the first chance picked out all the biggest beasts and put them in his stockyard, and then brought his servant out to milk them, but they were all working-bullocks. There is a clause provided in this Bill in reference to looking after working-cattle. But I ask, what about the man who is engaged in the dairying indus- try ? We have no means for the settlers to get their produce to market, and, though it is a very grand thing to send our produce to England or Australia, there are markets here much nearer than England and Australia that many of our poor struggling settlers have no opportunity of reaching. I hope sincerely that the attention of this Parliament will be given to the inter- nal requirements of the country, and to the needs of our settlers and working-men ; and I so far support anything in the labour line that I think our duty lies in the direction of giving every attention to establishing avenues of labour in every part of New Zealand. Let there be no such thing as. I am sorry to say, has already happened, of returning troopers not being able to find work. I think it is the duty of the Minister of Labour, if he is any good-and I believe he is-to find work for these young men, and not let us have them, as was the case with the First Contingent, idling about the town and looking for work. Let the Government find work for them, no matter whether it be survey-work, or road-work, or railway-making, or prospecting for gold, so long as we do anything to assist in developing the resources of the country by some- thing practical and definite. I do not think that the Government has sufficiently developed our resources. I think, if the energy that has been directed in sending men to South Africa had been diverted to making roads, surveying railway .. duplicating railways, and laying out townships, and arranging for drainage schemes and water- supplies, there would be no difficulty whatever in employing ten times the number of men who are at present employed in this country. If the Government set to work and laid out a practical programme of this sort, I say it would be entirely in the interests of the colony. and would push this country ahead to an extent never dreamed of. I say the more wealth-pro- ducers there are in the country the better it is for the country, because every man's labour is worth \$40 or \$50 to the State. Our difficulty should be not how to find work for men al- ready here, but how to get enough men to develop the country's mineral and pastoral wealth. We should use every effort to bring men to this colony in order to develop the resources of New Zealand, which are so great and immense ; and if we did that attention will be diverted from South Africa, and, instead of the people of New Zealand and Australia going there, it will bring them here and keep them here, and then this country will go ahead. That is practically the way in which I should like to

see New Zealand handled. Mr. HUTCHESON (Wellington City) .- I consider that the Premier's speech was well timed and conciliatory, and I will say no word to spoil its good effect. As my views are so well known on the matter of the regulation of the hours of labour, it is scarcely necessary that I should recapitulate them. But surely by this time we have discovered that the conditions which apply to industrial labour in the centres of population and the conditions that will suit the independent toiler on the soil are not compatible. While I agree in one respect with the member for Riccarton, who introduced this measure, I think he has been rather ambitious : that he has got out of his depth - if I may be pardoned for saying so; that he has sought to include a heterogeneous aggregation of worker, scarcely knowing the various conditions of labour applying to them, and so has caused some hostility to the Bill which otherwise might not have arisen. Of course, these matters can be dealt with in Committee. I quite agree with country members that the restriction of country workers to eight hours a day is practically impossible. But I do frankly and very freely acknowledge that no class in the community has up to recent times had such an ungodly dog's life as the dairy farmer. I lived for a considerable number of years near a dairy farm. and I have watched the ceaseless, hopeless toil of the unfortunate wretch during every day of the week, and at all hours almost of the day and night. I merely rose to-night to make one reference to the question of the dairy industry. Let us not be altogether carried away by our enthusiastic support of a young industry to the

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detriment of the rising generation. I do not say it on my own authority-honourable members can easily understand that I have not had a very great personal or practical experience of the industry-but I speak on the reliable authority of country representatives, country school-teachers, and men whose business takes them about the country and who have powers of observation. Their evidence shows the detrimental effect which the present conditions have upon the health and the physical and mental well-being of the children in our country districts. Young lads are roused out of bed at two, three, or four o'clock in the morning, summer and winter, in order to bring the cattle home : and when the unfortunate children go to what is to them their daily labour -- that is, to school -- the country teacher tells us dispassionately, and without any desire to exaggerate, that the unfortunate youngsters fall asleep at their work owing to the fact that they have not been a sufficient time in bed for their young and growing bodies, and they are thus unable to take in that mental pabulum which is their due. I submit that suggestion to the favourable consideration of the Government. I am averse to such restrictive legislation. I agree with those who say that unless we can get our legislation to square with common-sense and practice, and to meet the approval of the people who are governed by it, we cannot hope to have good and permanent legislation. But at the same time I do think we ought to save those people from themselves who are demoralising their own flesh and blood, in the shape of their children, by subjecting them to such unnatural hours of labour. Now, coming to the industrial workers of the cities-in the large centres : it is true, as the Premier has pointed out, that a very large section, principally of those who are organized, are very well able to fend for themselves with the weapons already in their hands. They have almost invariably made one of the causes of complaint the consideration of the hours of labour, and in nearly every case they have had them reduced mostly within the limits of forty-eight hours, and in most cases forty-six hours. But there is a substratum of wage-earners whose circumstances do not permit of organization yet outside the pale. The wage-earner has no hope or prospect that he can count upon. The stake he is playing for is nothing at all but a present livelihood. He is merely living from hand to mouth, from week's end to week's end. Nine-tenths of the workers are unable to save anything out of their wages. Now, I do not want to appraise the prospects and ambitions of the country Mittlers too highly, but at least there is plenty of food about the house. There is always stuff growing near him, and he does not dread the danger of material hunger ; and, moreover, he is always braced up with the prospect of passing his declining days

under his own fig-tree. He is always playing for a stake, whether he is likely to realise it or not, and that will enable him to undergo labour which the wage-carner in the city never can do. Now, if the honour- able member is agreeable to limiting the mea- sure to the conditions of the industrial wage- earner in the centres where it may be applicable, and where it will not be repulsive and repugnant to the sense of reason and justice of the people, he will not have much difficulty in getting a simple Bill through. Now, just a word in conclusion : I hope he will see that it is made applicable to all branches of the Government employment. Then, there is purely a Committee matter which I intend to deal with myself. In clause 6 it is provided that any one who has wrought for more than forty-eight hours in a week may demand in any Court of competent jurisdiction additional payment for the time, and, in addition thereto, 25 per cent. on such amount. Now, I would point this out : that in many industries 50 per cent. is paid immedi- ately the ordinary eight - hours day's work is done. Others, again, where time and quarter is paid for the first two hours and time and a half afterwards. Besides, provision must be made for the intermittent workers, such as wharf-lumpers and others, who, after stand- ing compulsorily idle all day, may perhaps begin at about four p.m. and continue throughout the night. It would be the reverse of a benefit to ask that man to work eight hours before the overtime began. I want to make it quite clear in Committee that we shall not commit the error made in the Factories Act, and im- pose longer hours while attempting to amelio- rate their condition. Now, one word more about the miners. I have not myself made a livelihood in the mines, although I have been down the shafts and along the drives ; but I say -- perhaps because of the novelty of the situation-that I would not take twice the wages the men earn in the mines, and give the few short years that is allowed to man, in the process of acquiring as an inevitable heritage some kind of ailment, either in the coal- mines that have been referred to, or in the damp and wet that are incidental to quartz- mining. And, Sir, I feel in sympathy with the honourable member for the Grey, and if he moves an amendment making it so that the eight-hours shifts shall be applied from bank to bank, and not from face to face, I shall support him. In the meantime I support the second reading of the Bill, and I hope to see it so amended in Committee as to make it a workable measure. Mr. WILFORD (Wellington Suburbs). - I shall be very brief, and will not keep the House more than a few minutes. I intend to support the second reading of the Bill, but I consider that most of the objections put forward by certain members are undoubtedly Committee objections. I should like to call the attention of the honourable member in charge of the Bill to clause 4. It seems to me that clause 4 is altogether unworkable, and for this reason : Any person whose employment is on a farm, or any other occupation such as tending horses or cattle, may be required to tend such horses or cattle in addition to the legal day's work. Now, what is the meaning of the word " tend " ? It may mean anything. There is no interpre- tation of it in the Bill. An Hon. MEMBER .- It means " attend to."

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Mr. WILFORD .- That might be your defini- tion of it ; but is it right according to this Bill because you say so? " Tend " may mean "attend to." It may mean the attending to the feeding or caring for horses or cattle in some other way. I do not consider that that clause is at all conclusive or comprehensive, and I consider the real object of it will be defeated by the use of that provision saying that, beyond the day's work, the worker can also be employed in tending cattle and horses. But probably that is a Committee objection. think every member of the House -- at any rate, every member on this side of the House; I cannot speak for the other members because you never know when you have got them -- will agree without the slightest doubt that eight hours is the proper thing where it can be made practicable. To some branches of labour it is absolutely impracticable ; and probably the honourable member for Hawera, Mr. McGuire, will be able to convince this House in Committee that farm-labourers should be exempt. At any rate, that is a Com- mittee objection, and can be dealt with later on. I do not think there is any necessity for going into the question of commerce and bullock-drays, and into the dissertation that was given us by the

honourable member for Auckland City (Mr. Withford). It seems to me that we simply have to discuss when we get into Committee objections that have been brought forward by different members, and therefore I suggest, as we have got a great number of Bills on the Order Paper, that we do not waste any time at all. An Hon. MEMBER .- What are you doing ? Mr. WILFORD .- I have watched my time, Sir, and I have not been two minutes, and if the honourable member who interrupts would keep quiet the Bill can be put into Committee, when the various objections that have been urged to various clauses may be discussed. Mr. SYMES (Egmont) .- I intend to oppose the second reading of this Bill, because it seems to me that we are being asked to vote on a Bill so vague in its provisions and so injurious in its proposals as to make it absolutely impossible for a member representing a country district to support it. It simply seeks to kill one of the greatest industries of this colony- the dairy industry. Some honourable members evidently forget that there are other industries - such as the shearing of sheep, bushfelling, and harvesting that this Bill could not be applied to. To apply the eight-hours principle to harvesting when bad weather is coming on would be preposterous. What was our experience last year when the Crown Tenants' Rebate of Rent Bill was before this House, to give relief to people that some honourable members are now pretending to have a great deal of sympathy for? Two or three days' stonewalling was indulged in by way of giving the small modicum of relief asked for the Crown tenants. I am not disposed, therefore, to trust any of these so-called friends of the unfortunate back-block settlers. To suggest that the eight-hours system should be introduced into any of the industries I have mentioned shows that those who suggest such a thing know absolutely nothing of what they are speaking about. It would be quite impossible of application without killing the industries mentioned. As I pointed out last year, these unfortunate back-block settlers are handicapped for 999 years for roading at from 2s. 6d. to £1 per acre, and they have not even a pack-track vet. The member for Wellington Suburbs says the members who support the Bill are on the Government side of the House. I hope he did not include me among them, because I will not support anything that, in my opinion, will be so injurious in its effects as this Bill. Mr. WILFORD. - I did not. Sir, the Premier Mr. SYMES .- That is right said we should make a compromise, but I would like to know how it is possible to make a compromise where cows have to be milked. It is impossible, and, indeed, ridiculous, to suggest such a thing. I trust every member who understands the question, and the bearing and effect this measure will have on the industries I have mentioned, will vote to strike out clause 4. if not the whole Bill. I am always anxious to assist our workers in every way that is fair, reasonable, and practicable, but I say that to pass a measure of this kind would seriously interfere with industries that should not be interfered with, but fostered in every way possible. It would simply mean ruination to farmers engaged in any or all of the industries mentioned. As the member for Wellington City (Mr. Hutcheson) remarked, these men work from sixteen to twenty hours a day, and even then they only eke out an existence. An Hon. MEMBER .- In the mud. Mr. SYMES .- Yes, an honourable member says, "In the mud." The honourable member has only seen the sunshine of a farmer's life- he has only seen the life of the farmers near the cities ; but if he comes out into the back blocks he will see a very different picture. Sir, I shall oppose the second reading of the Bill, and I trust every other country member in the House will do the same. Mr. CARNCROSS (Taieri) .- Sir. I was very sorry indeed to hear the Premier say he intended to support the Bill. He threw out a strong lead to his supporters to go with him and to support the Bill, but I trust. Sir, there is not a majority in the House to carry it through the second reading. The Premier gave us very good advice in the course of his speech. He made reference to labour legislation, and said we should go slowly. I have no doubt that is the opinion of the country on questions of this kind : but it is hardly consistent with his advice to us that just in his previous breath he told us that he was going to support this Bill. I do not think it is by any means going slowly if he favours placing this Bill on the statute-book -at any rate, in the shape in which it is before us. He told us in the course of his speech, with regard to the labour legislation already placed on the statute-book, that there

was at the present time a most conciliatory feeling between the employer and the employee in this country.

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He gave us as his authority for that assertion that he received that information from the officers of his department. If that is the class of information the officers of his department give him, then all I can say is that very little reliance can be placed upon it. At the present moment. I am sorry to say, there is not that good feeling that we would all like to see existing between employers and employes. On the contrary, things are in a state of unrest, and the Premier's advice that we should go slowly is excellent advice, and should be followed. Let us work out our salvation on the labour legislation that is already on the statute-book, without at present rushing more legislation of the same nature upon it. On more than one occasion the Premier has told us to go slowly. Evidently in his heart of hearts he thinks matters are not quite as smooth as they should be in connection with our labour legislation. I hope the House will be very cautious about what further labour measures are placed on the statute-book in the meantime. Many of the labour-laws require consolidating and amending, and probably improving, and I am quite willing to do my best according to my ability in that direction : but I must admit that I am not anxious to see any fresh labour-laws placed on the statute-book for some little time, until we have had a chance of settling down and creating a better feeling between employes and employers than there is at the present moment. I am quite sure that a pause at the present time would be to the advantage of those for whom labour measures are designed. I form my opinion from men in business, large employers whom I have had occasion to converse with on this matter, and I say there is not by any means that good feeling existing at the present moment which would be gathered was the case from the information supplied to the Hon. the Premier. Sir, coming back to this Bill before us, it proposes to give an eight-hours day for everybody. It has been proved over and over again that that is an absolute impossibility. There have been men in this House long before us, sixteen, seventeen, and eighteen years back, who endeavoured to bring about an all-round eight-hours' day of labour for every one ; but it was found to be an absolute and downright impossibility, and all the attempts were failures. These men, Sir, had just as humane feelings as we ourselves have, they were just as eager to help the worker, yet it was found to be an impracticable thing to give effect to. The Premier has deprecated that there should be any feeling between town and country on this question. That is quite right, and I hope we may go through this debate, and the session, without any really direct contest between town and country. But, Sir, when a Bill of this nature is introduced, when we see a Bill of this nature before us, professing to limit the hours of certain classes of country labour to eight, and knowing it is impossible, how can we help acting in a manner that has the appearance of hostility? But it is not actually a case of town versus country ; it simply means this: that the country members must vote in the direction they think is in the interests of their constituents, and if people say this is a hostile vote, and is town versus country, they are not treating us generously or fairly. It is not from any hostility or any question of town versus country ; it is simply because we know the conditions of labour that prevail in the country districts, and that legislation of this nature is not practicable, and, in justice to ourselves and our constituents, we must vote against a proposition of this kind. We have no necessity whatever for an Eight Hours Bill. In some industries there is less than eight hours being worked now. If this Bill were passed we should do as we have done in the case of the Factories Bill -increase the hours that some have to work. That would be the effect of the Bill. An Hon. MEMBER .- How about the farm ? Mr. CARNCROSS .- I maintain you cannot bring in an Eight Hours Bill that could be made applicable to all the labour of a farm. This Bill affects to deal with domestic servants. Now, if it were passed domestic servants would be in a much worse position than they are at the present moment. Domestic servants at present -- if I may be allowed to make a "bull"--are masters of the situation. They are absolutely scarce ; they cannot be obtained for love or money, and they demand very high wages ;

and if you want to get good servants you have to offer them very many inducements - much greater than those offered in this Bill. Mr. HORNSBY .-- A very good job, too. Mr. CARNCROSS .- I quite agree with the honourable gentleman ; I think they are a class in the community who deserve a large amount of consideration, and I am pleased that their condition is better than it was in the past. But the Bill will not place them in a better position than they are in at present. An Hon. MEMBER. - It would some. Mr. CARNCROSS .- No. I do not think it would any of them, for if they are badly treated now. and the Bill were passed, it would be taken out of them in some other way. Then, again, as an argument why I think it unnecessary to legislate in this direction. I would point to the case of flour-millers. If there was a class in the country who required legislation in this direction it was the flour - millers. Twelve hours a day has been their average work for many years. Legislation was attempted last session and was not successful, but since then, by meeting together and considering the matter in a conciliatory spirit through the Arbitration Court, they have got for themselves more than we could have given them by legislation. What applies to flour-millers applies to almost every other section of the community. There is a proposition here to include hotel servants in this Bill. Well, they are forming unions of their own, and will place themselves in as good a position as we could do by legislation. My opinion is, if you can get arrangements made voluntarily between employer and employed, those arrangements will be much more lasting, and will give more satisfaction and cause less friction than those carried out by legislation.

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An Hon. MEMBER. . We should never have got what we have without the compulsion of legislation. Mr. CARNCROSS .- In some respects that is true, but eight hours' labour prevailed in many trades in this colony long before we came to the House or an Arbitration Court was thought of. Still, I am not entering into a debate as to what has happened in the past or the necessity for it, I am confining myself to the Bill before the House. I should like to give the honourable gentleman every credit for endeavouring to right what he believes to be a wrong, and endeavouring to place on the statute-book what he thinks will be of immense benefit to many people ; but I differ from him as to whether this is the best method of obtaining what he is so desirous of obtaining, and, in the interests of my constituents, I shall vote against the second reading of the Bill, because I do not think it can be made workable when it reaches the Committee stage. Mr. MILLAR (Dunedin City) .- The honourable member, in moving the second reading of the Bill, stated that he was dealing with a very big subject, and no doubt he is dealing with a subject which has puzzled many prior to his attempt, and which, I fear, will puzzle many more yet, because it is absolutely impossible to have an Eight Hours Bill which will apply to outdoor work. That has been admitted ; but I compliment the honourable gentleman on having brought in the Bill so that we may discuss it, and I intend to support the second reading with the object of having it amended in Committee. I wish to show the honourable gentleman, however, one or two defects which appear, to my mind, in this Bill, and it seems to me that if we put it on the statute-book as it stands we shall take away the power of the Arbitration Court, because the Arbitration Court has no power to override a statute-law, and in this Bill it is laid down that forty-eight hours shall be the week's work, so that the Arbitration Court would have no power to fix less than forty-eight hours as the legal number of hours per week, nor to define the hours between which such eight hours can be worked. Let us assume that a case came before the Court from the casual labourers on the wharf. That is work for which there is no regular hour of starting. We shall assume that work begins on the vessel at two o'clock, and that a man works on until ten o'clock before his eight hours are up. The Bill says he shall be paid time and a quarter overtime, and you also say that he shall only work forty-eight hours per week. Where does his overtime come in ? Then, that man could go on at two o'clock in the afternoon and work until two o'clock in the morning for the ordinary wage before the overtime could come in at all. In any calling like that there can be no fixing of the hours at which the man shall work if the Bill goes through as it is at present drafted. To make the Bill effective you would require

to place in it certain hours within which the eight hours shall be worked. Of course, we know that where three shifts are worked they do work the eight hours pretty well all through, but in regard to all questions of casual labour, or where there is only one shift working, the overtime is paid more for after a given hour. Now, the very principle which the honourable member has applied in this Bill has been asked for for the last two years by employers of labour. They have asked to be allowed to work their hands forty-eight hours in the week at any time they like, and they said no overtime should be paid until the man had worked his forty-eight hours. You can see the improbability of overtime if the Bill passes in its present form. There are trades in this country - and the honourable member for the Taieri mentioned one - who have settled the matter themselves; but I will tell you of another trade which has not settled itself so far, and that is the paper - mills. Both north and south, at Auckland and Mataura, they are working twelve hours a day now. An Hon. MEMBER. - Two shifts. Mr. MILLAR. - There is power under the Arbitration Act to settle it, and I say, although we have the eight-hours principle laid down in the Factories Act, it is erroneous to suppose that the principle is general in its application, because it only applies under the Factories Act to women and young children, and does not apply to adult labour, which can work all day and all night, so far as the law is concerned. If the Bill is to be made effective one of two things must be done. The only way to make it practicable in its working is to make a schedule of the trades to which it shall apply. You can then deal with the whole of the indoor labour, the mines, and all classes of labour of that description ; but, I for one, cannot see how you can possibly apply it to agricultural labourers. In certain times of the year it could not be applied. In harvest-time you could not apply it. Now, the Government are sinners in connection with this very same matter ; take the railway goods-sheds : Men are ordered to come down there perhaps at ten o'clock, expecting a vessel to come in. The goods do not arrive in time, and the first truck-load gets into the shed at four o'clock, and the gang is taken on and employed at 1s. per hour up to twelve or one o'clock. There is no over-time payable in that case at all. That is an object-lesson in what is done at the present time, and what will take place under this Bill. So, if the honourable gentleman in Committee will accept amendments to affirm the principle that forty-eight hours per week shall be a week's work for a weekly wage, fix the hour-between these forty-eight hours that shall be worked, and then place a schedule at the back specifying all the trades to which it shall apply. I believe that will meet the whole case so far as we are concerned. The honourable member for the Taieri suggested that we might think he was opposing the Bill simply because it was a town Bill. I do not think a single member of this House belonging to the Labour party, or representing a centre of population, believes that any country member opposes a

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Bill through sheer cussedness. We believe that when a country member opposes a Bill he does so because he thinks it is not in the interests of his constituents. Likewise, when city members have to oppose a country Bill, or a Bill dealing with the country-we do not as a rule do so, but when we do it is because we think it is in the interests of our constituents. It is exactly the same on both sides. It is not with any desire simply to oppose it, because, as my honourable friend said, both town and country must go hand-in-hand ; and I, for one, with the exception of a Bill last session, have never shown any opposition to any Bill which is for the benefit of the country, and I hope I will never have to. I opposed the Bill last session because, under the Bill that the honourable member for Egmont referred to, there were persons going to get a rebate who were not entitled to it, and that is what I object to. We were quite prepared to give those men who really required the concession-men who had gone into the back country to make homes for themselves - a much larger reduction, and I say now that if a Bill was brought down to-night by the Government or by the honourable gentleman to give those men who cannot pay their rent 50 per cent. reduction, or to wipe it out altogether, I will go into the lobby to support the honourable gentleman. But when you are going to give men such as we heard of in the Cheviot Estate, who are getting a couple

of thousand pounds to clear out of the place, a rebate of 10 per cent., I do not think it is in the interests of the country that such a Bill should be passed. An Hon. MEMBER .- Some in the North Island did not get anything at all. Mr. MILLAR .- Yes; I believe some in the North Island did not get any rebate at all. use#cc-zero The settlers in Canterbury got 10 per cent. all through, and Otago was cut up into blocks, and the settlers were allowed a rebate of 23, 5, 73, and 10 per cent., according to the block. That is the only thing we objected to; we did not desire to help those who really do not require it, because it was simply giving public money to those who did not require it. I hope this Bill will receive a second reading, and I, for one, will endeavour to put it in such form as to benefit all those whom the honourable gentleman intends it to benefit, whilst at the same time I do not desire to do anything that will tend to injure any industry in this colony, town or country. Mr. O'MEARA (Pahiatua) .- Sir, it was not my intention to speak at all to-night on this Bill, considering the great amount of debate that has already taken place upon it. When the honourable member for Riccarton was introducing the measure I made a remark which I do not think the honourable gentleman understood, or otherwise he would not have made the answer he did. I wanted to convey to him the fact that the dairy farmers started work at six, and sometimes at four o'clock in the morning, and continued his work two or three hours. He has nothing to do with his cows then until - four, or five, or six o'clock in the afternoon. asked the honourable gentleman, If the hours were continuous, would the eight hours count from four o'clock in the morning, and would he have to discontinue work if the eight hours expired previous to milking-time. Mr. G. W. RUSSELL .- I beg the honourable member's pardon. I understood he was speaking of the ordinary eight hours in the factory. Mr. O'MEARA .- I was speaking of dairy-farming. I was rather surprised at the Premier stating in his speech to-night-I am sorry I did not hear the whole of it, as I was called out by a constituent-that he was prepared to support this Bill. If the Premier were here I would tell him that if he was prepared to support it he would find nearly the whole of the country members who are on this side of the House not going with him into the lobby. I think this Bill is unfair to the dairy farmers in the country. I give the honourable gentleman every credit for introducing a Bill of this description, but I would have liked him to go further and provide against the way in which the children of our dairy farmers are employed. I must congratulate the honourable senior member for Wellington City on his thorough knowledge of the dairy industry. He spoke really as if he had been living in the midst of it. I have witnessed, myself, children of tender years turning out at four o'clock in the morning, as he described, to milk their cows ; but they have to do that, it is compulsory. Then they have attended the school during the day, and the schoolmaster has informed me that they have fallen asleep over their lessons. If this state of things continues what may we expect from our future generations ? Why, we shall have a decrepid and miserable race, instead of our sons and daughters becoming a sturdy people. And if we want to benefit the children of the dairy farmers I think some provision will have to be made fixing the age at which children shall be employed in the dairy industry. We want to legislate against the inhuman father, and I am pleased to say there are very few in my electorate. If you were to do that I think you would be doing some good. I regret exceedingly to say that many settlers who are endeavouring to hew out for themselves a home in the backwoods become so discontented and miserable because the prospect of making a home for themselves seems so far off that they lose heart. No later than yesterday an announcement appeared in the Wellington Times-in a telegram from Palmerston -- announcing the death of a settler who has resided in my district for many years. This unfortunate man struggled hard against many adversities attached to bush settlement. He had a dispute with the Lands Department, and he was not treated with great kindness. The man's labour was not confined to eight hours a day. He rose the first thing in the morning and struggled manfully on in order to try and secure a home for his wife and children. An Hon. MEMBER .-- All honour to him. Mr. O'MEARA .-- I say all honour to the man. I intend to ask the Government to make an in-

quiry into this particular case. I received a letter from the unfortunate man asking me to beseech the Government to provide for his wife and children. I hope the Government will do something in the matter, because this man, like many other settlers in the back blocks, has not received that assistance from the Government which he was led to expect he would receive. Mr. WILLIS (Wanganui) .- I do not intend to say very much in regard to this Bill, because the matter has already been discussed pretty freely, and very many objections have been raised with regard to it ; but there is one matter that I think we should consider-that is, with regard to the clause dealing with do- mestic servants. It is provided that they shall have a holiday once a week, and also once a fortnight on Sundays. I think any one who knows anything about domestic servants is aware that they are generally able to make their own bargain, and they are so scarce that they have no difficulty in getting wages and arranging hours pretty well on their own terms. If this Bill becomes law we shall find that these girls will have to leave their mistresses' house in order that they may have these holidays. Four years ago the then member for Inver- cargill introduced a Domestic Servants' Half. holiday Bill. When that Bill was introduced the honourable member had a pretty rough time of it from the servant-girls, who wanted to know why they were being interfered with, and what was to become of them if they were to leave their houses in order that they may take these compulsory holidays. What does the Bill say ? " Any employer who refuses or neglects to allow to any employé the holidays provided shall be liable to a fine not exceeding five pounds." Does it mean that the servants are to remain in the house doing nothing during that time, while the mistresses are doing the work ; and will it be a holiday at all if they are idle about the house ? An Hon. MEMBER .- Yes. Mr. WILLIS .- Well, consider what the position would be with the mistresses doing the work while their servants were reading novels or watching their mistresses, and not being allowed to assist them. I say the situa- tion is absurd, and it is not necessary to in any way interfere with the present arrangement. We hear no complaints from domestic servants that they are not allowed these holidays. As a matter of fact, they take very good care that they get them, and I quite agree that they are fully entitled to their holidays. But to say that an employer shall be liable to a penalty of \$5 if she merely neglects to see that her servants take their holidays, simply means, in my opinion, that the servants would have to leave those homes or, possibly, lay an information against her employer. My opinion is that they do not need to do anything of the sort. All a servant has got to do, if she is dis- satisfied, is to go to her mistress and say she is going to another situation, which she can easily do, as situations are pretty plentiful for them. It seems to me there would be very great diffi- culty in the working of this Bill, because the question of whether a girl works twelve hours or eight is entirely a matter between her and her mistress. If a mistress and a servant wish to work together, I do not think it is anybody's business to interfere with them. With regard to the question of country labour, it seems to me that the tendency over the whole colony is to raise wages and shorten the hours of labour. I do not object to anything fair and reason- able ; but my opinion is that if the payment for every description of labour is raised, and the hours of labour reduced, everything will become dearer. and the consequence will be that those who apply for a "rise" will afterwards require another " rise " in order to keep pace with everything that is rising throughout the colony, because if labour becomes dearer the labourers themselves will also find that they are charged more for the necessaries of life, and must re- ceive more wages. Take the tailoring trade, for instance : I know that the tailors have been compelled to raise their prices in many cases because they have been compelled to pay higher wages. An Hon. MEMBER .- You can get your clothes cheaper now than you could twenty years ago. Mr. WILLIS .- What kind of clothes are they ? Shoddy, I should think. However, I am only expressing my own opinion. But with regard to this Bill, I am not opposed to the principle of it. I do not wish to see low wages. and I feel inclined to support the second read- ing ; but I see so many difficulties in the Bill that I cannot see how it is to be made work- able. At the same time I am not going to throw any difficulties in the way so far as the second reading is concerned. I will support it at this stage, and if it can be shown that it can be made

workable in Committee, and suitable to the circumstances of the colony, I shall be pleased to see it pass through the House. Mr. NAPIER (Auckland City) .- I hope the House will agree to pass the second reading of this Bill, as it can be amended considerably in Committee. I think I might make a suggestion to the honourable member in charge of the Bill which will overcome the objections of the country members to the drastic character of the Bill as it at present stands. Some time ago a Bill was introduced into the Queensland Parliament by the Premier of that colony, called an Eight Hours Bill, and it overcomes. I think, every possible objection I have heard urged against the general character of this measure to-night. The clause in the Queens- land Bill is as follows : - "The term 'manual or clerical labour' in- cludes any kind of work except as herein expressly excepted, but does not include the work of sailors when the ship or vessel is under way or on a voyage, or the work of domestic servants, or the work of persons employed in ships or vessels to do similar work to that of domestic servants, or the work of persons employed in work of an intermittent character in connection with agricultural or pastoral pur- suits." Now, Sir, if in Committee the measure were

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amended in the direction indicated by the Queensland Bill I think the objection of the honourable members representing the dairying districts of the colony would be overcome. But it seems to me that, even under the Bill as it stands, there is a way out of the difficulty, because it would appear from the wording-of course I am not in the confidence of the honourable member who introduced the Bill - but it seems to me he must have had in his mind work of an intermittent character, and attempted to make provision for it in section 2. Section 2 says, -- " Provided that it may be mutually agreed between employers and employes that the hours of daily labour shall be so arranged as to exceed or be less than eight hours, but the total num- ber of working-hours per week shall not exceed forty-eight." Now, it might be that under that section such hours could be agreed to between the employés and the employers in a dairying district as would cause a minimum of inconvenience - sav, three or four working-hours in the early morn- ing, and three or four hours in the afternoon, but so arranged that in the week they should not exceed forty-eight hours of actual manual work. As a city member, I am against applying the principle of the Bill to country districts. I do not think the time has arrived for, and I think the circumstances of the colony do not warrant, the application of a measure of this kind to agriculturists and pastoralists. But surely honourable gentlemen who come from country districts will admit that most of our remedial legislation applies to the grievances of particular classes; and there are classes of workers in the cities-and I can speak with confidence of the City of Auckland-to whom this Bill would be a boon. There are men working in some instances twelve, and even up to sixteen or seventeen, hours a day in the City of Auckland at the present time. I believe also that in the City of Wel- lington there are men working an excessive number of hours. I shall contend in Commit- tee that we ought not to adopt the suggestion of the honourable member for the Bay of Islands by defining special areas within which the measure is to operate. It would be prefer- able to put in a schedule of employments. I think if we put in a schedule of employments saying that the Bill shall only apply to those employments-that is, employments for city workers-then we shall overcome the objections that have been raised by members from agri- cultural districts. But it would be a mistake merely to say that the Bill should operate only within the cities, or within a certain radius of so many miles from the boroughs, because in that case factories would be certain to be established just outside the radius, and you would continually have to alter your radius, and the Act would become a dead - letter. I think, Sir, the principle of the Bill may be accepted by the House even without a division. It is twenty years since the late Sir George Grey introduced a short measure simply declaring that a legal day's work should be eight hours, and I think the time has arrived when it should go on the statute-book, and be applied only to such trades and such occupations as are ripe for it. The work of extension must be gradual, and we can trust to the good sense of future Parliaments to

extend it as circumstances warrant. I do not think there is any necessity for contention with regard to the second reading of the measure. I am satisfied the Bill will have to be completely recast in Committee, and I shall lend all the assistance I possibly can to make it a workable measure. Mr. FLATMAN (Geraldine) .- Sir, I have no wish to vote against an Eight Hours Bill provided it is an Eight Hours Bill, but I agree with the last speaker that this particular measure will have to be recast before it is a workable measure. We are practically asked to vote in the dark on the second reading. When the Premier announced he would support the Bill, I think he should have said the Government will take the measure up, and have the necessary schedules prepared, so that we may have a properly prepared Bill before us, and so know what we are voting on. I am of opinion the Premier should even yet take the measure out of the hands of the honourable member who introduced it and, later on, bring it before the House in a workable form. For my part, I am not going to vote in the dark, and shall vote against the second reading, as I believe that in its present form the measure is against the interests of the whole colony. How can it be called an Eight Hours Bill when under it domestic servants may work twelve hours a day? Why, I ask, are the females to work longer hours than the males? Is this a fair and equalising measure to propose such a method as that? It is true they are to have a holiday from noon on one day weekly and from two o'clock on alternate Sundays ; but I question whether this would be acceptable in many cases. Sir, I know cases in which men have a long holiday before they go out to muster sheep, and if during the period the men are mustering they were not allowed to work more than eight hours a day, or forty-eight hours a week, what might be the position ? Why, in some cases they could not do their work at all. Sometimes when they go out they are overtaken by mist, and may be idle a day or two in consequence. After the mist goes away they go on with their work of mustering; and in that way-working whenever they have a chance-they get the sheep together. They cannot leave the sheep - they would go back to the place they had just been mustered from, and the result would be that the men would not be able to finish their work in a reasonable time. Then, there is the harvesting ; and yet, notwithstanding the difficulties to be met with there, as in other matters, we are asked to vote for the second reading of a very imperfect Bill and run the risk of having it put right in Committee. Sir, that is not the proper way to legislate. I do not think the Bill is an Eight Hours Bill at all. I consider it is badly and wrongly drafted. It is as rough as an unbroken colt, and, although I

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am not a lawyer, I venture to say I could draft a Bill better than this one in about an hour's time. Clause 8 says : "No person shall be allowed to contract himself out of the provisions of this Act." Sir, there are many men working in this colony who agree to take a weekly wage wet or dry. Is a man to be debarred of that privilege if it suits his purpose to do so ? These men know that, taking the year round, they are better off by accepting this arrangement than they would be if they were paid a daily wage and had a deduction made for loss of time. If the Government will take this matter up, and if the Premier will introduce a workable Bill to suit all classes, I will support it ; but in its present condition I will not support this Bill, which is nothing short of a malformation. I believe that the majority of members of this House will say that my argument and contention is right, and that we should not be asked to vote blindly on any Bill on the understanding that it will be put right in Committee. Those are my views, and those are the reasons why I will vote against the Bill. Mr. HORNSBY (Wairarapa) .- It is 10.30. not my intention to detain the House for more than a few moments, but there have been some statements made to-night which I cannot allow to pass without a word of protest. I am a country member, representing perhaps one of the most prosperous dairying districts in the whole of the North Island, though not the most populous or most numerous. An Hon. MEMBER .- How many dairy factories have you got ? Mr. HORNSBY .- We have about six in my district. I say this : that all this talk about the unfortunate dairy farmer is an insult, I take it, to a class of people in this country who are doing exceedingly well, and who are very well pleased use#cc-zero with

their position. These men are able to drive about in traps; they are doing well, their families are well-cared for, and they are amongst the most prosperous people of the colony. But I agree with the remarks that fell from the honourable member for Hawera, who said that if you insist upon placing these people under the disability of this Bill, and confine their work to eight hours a day, you would be helping to destroy one of the finest industries in this colony. Therefore up to that point I would support the Bill, but if it went beyond that point-if there was any attempt made to insist upon making the provisions of this Act apply to the dairy industry- I would consider it my bounden duty to vote against it. But I recognise this : it is quite possible to amend the Bill in Committee, and I shall do my share in that direction. I also recognise that there are thousands in the colony that this Bill will very largely benefit, and it is on their behalf that I support the second reading, with the desire to see that it does not harm any industry. I believe it can be so worded, and the clauses so arranged that it will not harm the country districts. Now, Sir, whenever a measure of reform comes into this House there is always an outcry raised that you are going to ruin somebody or other. The same story is told over and over again, in the House and out of it, with regard to every piece of labour legislation that has ever been introduced, and I have been waiting for years and years to see this wholesale smash that was going to be brought upon industrial New Zealand. It has never come about. I admit there is a certain amount of unrest in the colony ; I believe there is a certain irksome feeling amongst employers in this colony ; but, as one who has been cited before the Conciliation Board, I say this : I am glad it has been done. I am proud to think that an effort is being made to level up a number of men who have been levelled down during the last fifteen or twenty years. I am an old union man myself, and I say I should like to see every trade and calling in the colony levelled up. I should like to see the condition of the agricultural labourer improve. I know in my district the hours worked by many men on stations are very long : their duties are very arduous ; and shepherds and drovers in my district have to work seven days a week instead of six. I do not think it is fair they should do so: but what I want to see is the whole army of people that the present labour laws do not touch at all given some help, and I think there are thousands in the towns and cities of the colony whom this Bill will very materially benefit. For this reason alone, I shall support the second reading, and I shall, as I said before, do all I can to amend the clauses in Committee so that no harm shall be done to the agricultural and pastoral industries of the colony : because it would be a serious mistake to interfere in any way with these people, who are the backbone-aye, the spinal marrow-of the colony. Without them the colony would be nothing, the colony would crumble away into nothingness : and we should be very careful about what we do in regard to these industries of ours in the interior. The Premier and the mover of the Bill have both told us that they are willing that something should be done to amend it in Committee. The honourable member for Riccarton has offered the Bill to the House, and is perfectly willing it should be amended if the House thinks fit, and, under these circumstances, I ask every man, whether he is a country member or not, if he is a Liberal, and his Liberalism is worth anything, to vote for its second reading, and then assist in the work of amending it in Committee. Mr. MEREDITH (Ashley) .-- In saving a few words on the second reading of this Bill, I have to compliment the honourable gentleman who introduced it, as it has led to a most interesting and good-tempered debate. No such question as town versus country has been raised. We are here as the representatives of the people of the colony to do our level best in the interests of the whole colony, and not in the interests of any particular portion of the colony. I have to compliment the member for Dunedin City (Mr. Millar) on his excellent speech. He is a city member, and viewed the question from a common-sense standpoint. I have also to compliment the member for Taieri, who represents a

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country constituency, and who spoke so much in this House to establish and foster to the point. Indeed, I could not see any difference in the remarks of those two gentlemen I have just mentioned.

Although they viewed the question from different standpoints they both arrived at the same conclusion. I think, Sir, that the heading of this Bill is wrong. It is called an "Eight Hours Bill," but that is a misnomer. It should have been entitled "a Bill to cripple certain industries in this colony." I have the honour to have in my electorate a variety of interests : the sawmilling, dairying -including butter factories, creameries, and cheese factories-the stock and pastoral industry, and the farming industry, which is also a very large and important one. I represent the great Amuri district, which produces the finest sheep in the colony, so that I am fairly competent to give an opinion on those matters. Clause 4 of this Bill applies to these industries ; and I would point out to honourable members that if the provisions of the Bill were carried out it would kill the goose that lays the golden eggs, and it would mean that we should have to drop the curtain, put up the shutters, and suspend all these industries. Take, in the first place, the dairy industry, which has established itself throughout the length and breadth of this country, particularly so in the Provincial Districts of Taranaki and Wellington, to the settlers of which it has been a perfect godsend. Had it not been for the dairy industry the lands in those districts would have had to be abandoned, and thousands of families would have had to go into the towns ; the condition of labour in the large centres of population would have been congested ; and New Zealand would have been in a deplorable condition. These settlers took up land in the back blocks, and by perseverance and incessant labour have succeeded in clearing and laying the land down in grass. It is no use to them, even for sheep, or for growing grass-seed, and the only thing they could fall back on was cattle. Now, if they had gone in to fatten cattle the latter would have become a drug in the market, and, instead of being sold at £1 and £1 2s. per head, fat cattle would have been down to 10s., or even 7s. 6d., per head. These people, however, went into the dairy industry, and, thanks to the fostering care of the late Minister of Lands, Sir John McKenzie, during the past ten years this industry has gone ahead. When I came to this House ten years ago the dairy industry was in a feeble condition. Now, the value of the industry has reached practically a million of money. According to the latest return for the 31st December, 1900, the export value of butter sent from this colony reached the enormous sum of \$740,620, and the value of cheese \$229,111, totalling 2069,731, or, in round numbers, a million of money. Now, is it the intention of the honourable gentleman who introduced this Bill, and honourable gentlemen who see with him, to destroy this industry ? I say, No, it is, perhaps, to house more than fifteen hundred. The honourable member who introduced this Bill, and every honourable member who days rain comes on, and perhaps they have to have spoken partly in favour of it, have assisted these industries and other industries in the colony ; and I believe it is their intention, as much as it is the intention of any member who opposes the provisions of this Bill, that it is in the interests of the colony that these industries should continue to be fostered, and that we should endeavour to establish new industries and find more employment for our people. However, I feel that if the Bill were allowed to go unopposed in this House it would be disastrous to the industries to which I have referred. Sir, in dealing with those engaged in the dairy industry, the terms "employer" and "employé" have been used. Now, in respect to the dairy industry, to a very large extent, the terms "employer" and "employee" are synonymous, because the employer and the employé simply mean the farmer and his wife and children. They work the industry, and they rise early and toil late ; and whatever they get from their labour they are richly entitled to. It is absolutely necessary for them to rise early and toil late, as otherwise they would make nothing out of it. I have known men in Canterbury who, at the time when there was no Crown lands to be procured, and when there was no land for settlements established, or when it was in the early stages of its existence, left my own district, went to Taranaki and took up sections in the back blocks, went in for cows, and established homes for themselves. Most of them, I am happy to say, have done remarkably well. Such people ought to be encouraged as much as possible ; and I hope to see the day when the export of dairy produce will not reach a million of money, but will reach four or five millions of money, and when the quality of the butter and cheese produced in this colony will capture the

British market to a very much greater extent than at the present time. Sir, in respect to the stock and pastoral industry, it would be impossible to apply eight hours to that industry. I can easily imagine a run containing about two hundred thousand acres, such as the St. Helen's Station, in the Amuri district, which has a carrying-capacity of about sixty thousand sheep. The musterers must go out to the huts right away in the mountainous regions. They have to go right to the mountain-tops with their dogs and muster the sheep, and have to camp in the bush wherever they happen to be. They even cannot always go back to their huts and spend the night. When the sun rises the following morning they must rise too, and this continues day after day. Sometimes perhaps a rain-storm sets in, and the rivers become swollen, and they cannot get their sheep across, and they have to look after the sheep sometimes for days before they can get them down to the station. We all know that sheep must be mustered two or three times a year. In sheep-shearing on back stations the hands start work at six o'clock in the morning. The accommodation is not sufficient to keep sheep and keep them dry and under cover. After the men have been shearing for some

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suspend work for a week, which means keeping the men about the station for a week or ten days doing nothing. Then, we come to the agricultural industry, and we find that industry, combined with the pastoral industry, representing an export value of \$10,017,421, so that the export value of those industries, which are affected by this Bill-and which it would prove disastrous to if passed into law-amounts to ten thirteenths of the total export value of the products of this colony. The remarks which I have made in connection with this Bill, and the remarks which have been made by a large number of members representing country constituencies, have been made in a perfectly friendly manner. If I thought the provisions of this Bill were going to benefit the industries of the colony I should be the last to oppose the Bill: but I believe honestly if the Bill passed in its present form it would be disastrous, and I hope the honourable member will accede to the suggestions which have been thrown out to him to withdraw the measure, and introduce a measure simply dealing with the eight-hours question. As an old colonist, I venture to say that since I arrived in the colony by common consent eight hours a day has been looked upon as a day's work. It would be impossible to apply these provisions to farming operations generally. Take, for example, the largest agricultural farm carried on in Canterbury-that of Mr. John Grigg, of Longbeach. At harvest-time any one visiting that farm may see twenty-five or more men working harvesting-machines from early dawn to late in the evening. It would be disastrous if the work of those machines was suspended in order that the men might have a holiday. The grain has to be harvested when opportunity offers, so that the farmer may get some return for the year's work. Mr. COLLINS (Christchurch City) .- I think it would have been better if the second reading of this Bill had been taken pro forma, and the Bill sent to the Labour Bills Committee. That would probably have obviated the necessity of a great deal of adverse criticism. I do not quite understand the advice tendered to the honourable member for Riccarton by the honourable member for Ashley. He suggested that it would have been better had the honourable gentleman simply remained satisfied with bringing in a Bill affirming the eight-hours principle. Then the honourable gentleman immediately proceeded to tell us that even in country districts the eight-hours principle was generally assented to. Now, it is undoubtedly true that, generally speaking, throughout the country the eight-hours principle is assented to in the abstract. I most sincerely congratulate the honourable gentleman who has brought this Bill forward in an honest attempt to reduce this principle to a concrete and practical form; but at the same time I see difficulties in the way of accepting the Bill as it now stands. I shall heartily vote for the second reading, and shall help to amend the Bill in Committee so as to make it a truly workable and practical measure. I feel sure that many of the criticisms which have been raised to-night as Committee objections, and finding fault with the manner in which the Bill has been drafted, have underlying them a strong dislike to the principle of the Bill itself. Now, as a city member, I naturally cannot claim to represent country pursuits as well as honourable

gentlemen who represent country constituencies. but at the same time I can see from what has been said to-night that it would be very difficult indeed to apply a principle of this kind to such industries as dairy-farming, shearing, harvesting. grass-seeding, or almost any of the agricultural and pastoral pursuits. I can see there is a distinct difference between those pursuits and the manufacturing pursuits-the mercantile, manu- facturing, mining, milling, and other pursuits- so that I think the honourable gentleman might have overcome this difficulty had he allowed himself to be guided by the expressed opinion given by this House in the year 1896, when the Premier's Bill was before the House. It has been suggested, Sir, that the difficulty might be overcome by appending a schedule to the Bill enumerating the trades which should be brought Personally, I have a strong dislike to Bills with schedules, and I have a distinct recollection that that was tried with regard to several labour measures a few years ago, and almost invariably those Bills were defeated through what was commonly asserted to be the sting in the tail. But the difficulty could have been overcome had the honourable gentleman drafted in his Bill an interpretation clause on similar lines to that contained in the Premier's Bill of 1896. Under that Bill "employer " and "worker " were defined. That Bill, I might say, brought under its operations Government employees :- " Employer" included " Government Printer, the officer in charge of each Government railway workshop and repairing-shed, and any person employing any person for hire, reward. or maintenance to perform any kind of labour in or about any mine, or in any factory registered under 'The Factories Act. 1894.'" Then, it goes on to define " Worker " : -- "' Worker' means any person of any age or of either sex employed as aforesaid to perform any species of skilled or unskilled manual labour for any employer, or in or about any gold-mining claim, or any coal-mine, or any factory registered under . The Factories Act. 1894.'" Now, why should not some such interpretation be drafted in this Bill? I believe it would take away every objection raised by the country members. Sir, I know there is still a good deal of latent feeling with regard to the imposition of further labour-laws. And I know, further, that we may take the social body itself as the counterpart of the individual body as an organism, and I know that that organism can only stand a certain amount of food of a particular class, and it must have time for the digestion and assimilation of that food : and there is no use cramming the social stomach with an unlimited supply of food of this character. I feel, however, that this is so just a proposal, and since the general principle of this Bill is assented to all over the colony.

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since even the member for Ashley has declared that the country districts assent to the general principle of the eight-hours day- Mr. MEREDITH .- It has been' so since the foundation of the colony. Mr. COLLINS .- Exactly so ; and, the principle of this eight-hours working-day having been so generally recognised, this Bill would simply mean that such employers as have delayed to come up to the general standard, as recognised by the honourable and intelligent workers of the colony. would be brought under the operation of the Act. It would affect no intelligent or honest employer of labour, and that appears to be a strong reason why the honourable gentleman should give his hearty assent to the Bill. The Bill contains so much that is good, and its principle is recognised to be so sound, and it may be so readily put into working shape in Committee, that I think it would be almost puerile to raise any further objection against the Bill. I shall give my vote very heartily for the second reading, and I hope to see it so amended in Committee as to become a part of the labour-laws of the colony, which have already worked to the marvellous benefit of the people of this country. I am not going to indulge in any fulsome or high-falutin' language about this colony having led the world in regard to labour-laws; but in this respect we are behind other countries, and I would like to see it well abreast of, at any rate, the more intelligent labour - laws of other English-speaking countries. Mr. COLVIN (Buller) .- In rising to support this measure, I have to compliment the honour- able gentleman on his pluck in bringing forward a Bill of this kind to place on the statute-book of the colony. Like honourable gentlemen who have spoken before me, I think this is a measure that the

Government ought to have taken in hand. It is a measure which suits the part of the country that I come from, though we have heard a great deal to-night about the back blocks and the trouble that the settlers in those districts have to put up with. I have been in the back blocks, and have been engaged in mustering sheep and all kinds of work in the back country, and I feel sure that nobody who has had to put up with the sufferings that are endured in the coal-mines and gold-mines of my district, where men go into the bowels of the earth to do their work, will fail to sympathize with this measure. It is dangerous work, for these men have to put up with the fumes arising from dynamite and powder in trying to get out the coal. The coal-miner has to under- take all this; and I say, with the honourable member for the Grey, that the eight hours ought to be from bank to bank for coal- and gold-miners. Those miners who go in for this hazardous and dangerous work have to work eight hours, and they get only half an hour off to take their food, and perhaps they have to go four or five miles to get to their homes. The time has come when we should fix eight hours as quite long enough for such undertakings. An Hon. MEMBER .- Do they not get paid for what they turn out ? Mr. COLVIN .- Yes; but the miner has to work in the mine, according to the Arbitration Act, eight hours, and the miners are paid at so much per day filling coal. Mr. J. ALLEN .- That is where the miner has to cut. Mr. COLVIN .- No; I know better from local experience than the honourable member for Bruce, Mr. Allen. I know men working in the mines, particularly with the iron-men, who fill the coal into trucks, and it is the hardest work on God's earth to fill coal into trucks underground. Do you know, Sir, there are only about forty miners at Denniston getting coal at the point of the pick, out of about three hundred working in and about the mine. I want to see justice done to the men in the back blocks ; and while I would do all I can to improve their condition, I say that we must have fair-play for our own men ; and if the honourable gentleman who introduced the Bill would withdraw it and allow the Government to bring down a more completely drawn mea- sure, I am sure that such a course would be acceptable. A schedule should be put in the Bill to show the industries to which the Bill is intended to apply. There would then be no mistake as to its intentions and scope. I also wish to say that in 1898 gold to the value of a million sterling was obtained in this colony, and in 1899 the amount got had in- creased to over a million and a half sterling. The amount is increasing yearly, and the men who are working hard in that occupa- tion surely have a right to be considered. Clause 6, I wish to point out, would affect a large number of wharf-labourers in the district I represent. A steamer may be expected at. say, two o'clock in the afternoon, and if there is a head-wind she may not come in until four o'clock. Until the vessel arrives the men are kept hanging about. After five o'clock the men are paid at overtime rates-pay and a half after five o'clock, and double pay after midnight. According to clause 6, these men would have to work for forty-eight hours before they would be paid for overtime. I hope and trust, Sir, the honourable gentleman in charge of the Bill will withdraw it, and that the Government will undertake to bring down a measure that will suit all parties concerned. If the Bill goes to a vote on the second reading I will support it, and I trust it will be carried, and that after the principle has been affirmed the Government will take it up. Mr. HOUSTON (Bay of Islands) .- Sir, there is a remarkable feature in the arguments of honourable members who have spoken in sup- port of this Bill. That remarkable feature is this : they ask other members to agree to the second reading, and say that it will be so amended in Committee that it will not be injurious to any class of the community. Well. as a country member, I object to such a course being taken by this House. I understand that any member voting for the second reading of a Bill confirms the principle of the measure, and as a country member I could not support any measure that I felt contained a provision

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that was injurious to my district, and it has been admitted by all who have spoken in favour of the Bill that there is something injurious in it. They ask us, however, to affirm the principle, and promise that in Committee the injury will be removed. Sir, I am surprised at such a principle being enunciated in this House. It is a principle that I could not support. I am sorry, Sir, to have to raise a question that I raised last

year, when the now Public Contracts Bill was before the House. I then said on the floor of this House that that was town versus country. It was a most injurious Bill, as far as the country was concerned. I look upon this Bill in a similar light. I could not support the principle of this Bill. I have always been in favour of eight hours as a day's work, and that has been the custom in my district for many years past. Has this measure been demanded by the country ? I say it never was demanded by the country, and supposing this Bill was referred to the people by the referendum it would be rejected from end to end. I could not, as a representative of a country district, support this Bill. The Government should have brought in the measure. I think the honourable member who introduced this Bill would be doing right if he withdrew it and allowed the Government to bring in the measure. Those who have spoken in favour of the Bill admit that there is something injurious and wrong in it, and yet they will support the wrong that is in it in the hope that it will be amended in Committee. Supposing it is not amended in Committee, the wrong will be perpetuated. I am entirely opposed to such a principle, and it is my duty as a member of this House to oppose it. I cannot support the second reading of this Bill, and will vote against it.

Mr. R. THOMPSON (Marsden) .- I had no intention of speaking upon this Bill, but I have been amused with some of the arguments that I have listened to. The last speaker has expressed himself in strong terms against the Bill, but I, as a country member representing the adjoining constituency, intend to support it. I have never yet in my district known a man to work for more than eight hours, and I have never asked a man myself to work for a longer period. I do not think there is any necessity for the Bill, or that the passing of the Bill will have any effect on any labour in country districts ; but, if it is the intention of the members who support this Bill to injure the dairy industry, or any other industry, I cannot see why those engaged in the dairy industry or any other industry should be expected to work longer hours than people in other industries. For people engaged in dairying, farming, or other pastoral pursuits eight hours a day is any amount long enough to work, and they should get a fair day's pay for that day's work. City members have expressed strong sympathy with labourers in country districts: then let them bring down a Bill fixing the minimum price of produce of the country. Let them do that, and then for eight hours' work in the country the men will receive the same pay as is paid in the towns. That is the way to deal fairly with those who work in the country districts. I am prepared to support this Bill, and I hope that the Government, after hearing the expressions of sympathy of honourable members in favour of the country settlers and those who work in dairy factories, will take steps to protect these people, and see that they get a fair day's wage for a fair day's work. I object to any persons being asked to work sixteen hours a day for a living. From what I know of the dairy industry it is nothing better than white slavery, and it is unfair that a small settler, his wife, or his family, should have to work fifteen or sixteen hours a day for a living. It is the duty of the Government, who encourage and foster settlement on the land, to introduce some measure that will protect the produce of the settlers so far as local consumption is concerned. Of course, we cannot control the London market, but surely we can pass an Act fixing a minimum price for produce consumed in the colony, and let those who live in the cities and receive high wages pay a fair price for the produce brought into towns by the settlers, then we should have fair-play all round. That is the only way to meet it, and I hope that those members representing cities will be prepared to support the Government in passing such a measure. I know there are some members in the House who imagine that they can never impose enough taxation upon the country settler. What is the position of the country settler now as regards produce ? What does the wool grower get for his wool ? 3d. or 4d. I can speak, because I am not a wool-grower; if I were a wool-grower. as are some other members of this House, it might be said I was interested; but, though not a wool-grower, I represent a large number of small wool-growers, and I say their position is a most pitiable one. I have attended the wool-sales in Auckland, and have seen bale after bale knocked down at 3gd., and 43d. was considered a big price. It is impossible for any settler to produce his wool and sell it at a profit at that price ; it cannot be done. Take other kinds of produce : What

does the fruitgrower get for his produce? During the present season it would not pay the fruit-grower, if he produced his fruit without any expense, to employ labour to gather and pack the fruit and send it to market. Very well; the city people who are employed in the cities expect to work stated hours and get big wages. I do not object to that, but let us regulate the price of produce so that those who work long hours in the country shall get a fair remuneration for their labour. You should regulate the price of all produce consumed in the colony, and that is the only way to do justice to the settlers. You cannot produce fruit of any kind at a profit in New Zealand, neither can you produce wool, neither is there a profit in wheat or oats. If you go on increasing the burdens of the settlers in this way, and assist him in no way as to the price of produce. I will point out to the Government what will happen in New Zealand-perhaps sooner than is expected. The Crown settlers will find that they receive no encouragement, and are having

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taxation heaped upon them, and they will form a union and say, " We will pay no more rent." That is what is going to happen. I heard some remarks in the House condemning the farmers for forming a union. There is a movement throughout New Zealand in that direction ; farmers are going to form themselves into unions, and if we keep on taxing them in this way you will find before many years the Government will get very little Crown rent from these farms. The Premier may laugh- Mr. SEDDON .- I was only saying that the unions you refer to are only the National Association under another name. Mr. R. THOMPSON. - The honourable gentleman is wrong. Personally, I am not connected with them ; but that is not the point. There is a movement in this direction, and the result will be, if things go on as they promise to do, in a very short time we shall have a strike, not against work, but against paying rent ; that will be the end of it. I say the people who have gone on the land and have been clearing bush are not going to work sixteen hours a day for a bare living, while everybody else in the towns work eight hours, draw high wages, and enjoy themselves. I intend to vote for the second reading, because I can see plainly what is going to happen ; but, depend upon it, before long the Government will find that other measures will have to follow this. Sir, the more burdens that are heaped on the country settler the better ; it will simply hasten what is coming about : and I can assure the Government that. unless something is done to protect the farmers in the way I suggest, before many years the Crown tenants will take a very decided step that will astonish whatever Government may be on those benches. Mr. STEVENS (Manawatu) .- Representing a country constituency as I do, I do not think I should be doing my duty if I were to record a silent vote upon the Bill under discussion. have always been in favour of the principle of " Eight hours' work, eight hours' play, eight hours' sleep, and eight bob a day " ; that I believe to be fair. Now, Sir, it is not possible, in my opinion, that this Bill can serve any good purpose in its present form, unless it enables me to say that I do not think there is the slightest necessity for the interference of the legislator with the settlers, who are producing about a million and a half pounds' worth of wealth in this country in the form of butter and cheese. There is no necessity for legislative interference between the parents and their children who are working on their farms, milking the cows, and generally conducting the business of dairying. I am astonished to hear the statements made by members that children are compelled to work sixteen hours a day, and that they are being badly treated. I have heard it stated outside the House; I have seen it in public print ; I have seen words to the effect that the parents of these children were practically treating them brutally. Now, that is absolutely incorrect, and no such statement can be proved to be true, and every word that has been said against these settlers treating their children badly in the matter of making them work overtime and laboriously is not only a misstatement, but no specific case has ever been made public that I could mention on the floor of this House, and I prefer to deal with facts instead of generalities. In the district I have the honour to represent there is one of the largest and best butter-factories in the colony-that is at Rongotea ; and if honourable members wish to see what prosperity is I advise them to visit Rongotea ; to go any day of the week, at any hour of the day, and see there what I say without fear

of contradiction to be the case, the finest, best, and most healthy rising population that you could find in any part of the world. An Hon. MEMBER. - There are no hotels there. Mr. STEVENS. - There are hotels within a reasonable distance ; but, be that as it may, it is certainly safe to say that the country settlers of New Zealand who are engaged in the dairy industry are not badly or harshly treated in any way whatever. There are some poor little creatures I see in the back slums of some of the larger cities who would benefit very largely if they had an opportunity to go into the country and be employed in the dairy industry. Well, Sir, with respect to limiting the labour of persons employed in tending horses and cattle, or in milking cows, or shearing sheep, and so forth, to my mind, it appears that it would be almost impossible, for this reason : Assuming that you require to shear your sheep, and you have a muster of two or three thousand sheep, whenever the weather is fine, and during the long days of summer when the shearers turn out in the morning, it is their business and their pleasure, and it is also the wish of the owner of the sheep, to have the sheep shorn so that they might be turned back on to the run and not be starved to death. Wherever stock and agriculture are to be dealt with in the matter of labour, we ought to be very careful indeed that we do not in our kindness do an irreparable injury to those persons who are most concerned in the matter. Now, there is one other question which has arisen, and it is this : there is not a single honourable gentleman who has spoken in favour of the Bill who has offered any good reason why this Bill should apply to dairying and agriculture. There has not been an agricultural servant that I know of who has written to any one to say that he is overworked : and, that being the case, I hope the House will pause before it passes this Bill into law in its present form. I wish it to be clearly understood that I am as strongly in favour of the principle of eight hours, as being a fair day's work, as any other member in this House, and during the whole of the legislation that has passed through this Chamber for the amelioration of the working-man or the working-woman, while I have had the honour of a seat here, it has always had my most earnest support, and always will have it. At the same time, I do hope we will guard jealously indeed the rights and privileges of the small farmer,

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who, after many years' struggle in trying to perfect the proper system of producing one of the colony's best and greatest products, is only just reaching a period of prosperity. I would suggest, with other honourable members, that the honourable gentleman in charge of the Bill should have it recast. If the honourable gentleman will have it recast, I say, with all sincerity, that the principle of eight hours will receive my hearty support, provided it does not interfere with the working of live-stock in the country districts-and in the matter of agriculture live-stock is also worked, because horses are required for harvesting. Horses cannot go without their feed because the driver has worked eight hours, and cows cannot go without milking because the milker has worked eight hours ; and, that being the case, to apply the eight-hours system to the agricultural and pastoral districts is very different from applying it in cases where no live-stock is brought into the question. Wherever there are manufactures in which machinery only is dealt with, then you require to consider the workmen. With respect to the half-holidays that workmen are to get, as provided in the Bill, I have had a life's experience in country districts, and never under any circumstances have I heard men in the country districts say that their employers were overworking them. The employee has the key of the position in his own hands, for this reason : it is very difficult indeed now to obtain good reliable labour, and the workmen can dictate to the employer in the country districts to-day. The country settlers are borne down by the heavy weight of depression in the wool-market and in the grain-market, and those are two very large products of this country, and they have practically gone down almost to zero. That being the case, I think, if we are going to have experimental legislation, this is hardly the time to place such a burden upon the farmers and agriculturists. If this Bill in its present form goes into Committee I shall use every effort in my power for the purpose of bringing it within such lines that I feel confident will not do any injury to those whom it is intended to

benefit. Mr. MASSEY (Franklin) .- I can hardly say that I see my way to support the Bill now before the House, though, like the last speaker, I believe in the principle of an eight-hours day. Representing as I do an agricultural constituency, I think it is necessary to say a few words upon the measure which we are discussing at the present time. As one honourable member stated, the principle of the eight-hours law has now generally been accepted ; and I, for one, do not object to an eight-hours law being applied to any industry wherever it is possible and practicable to apply it; but this Bill is intended to apply to industries where it is neither possible nor practicable to apply the eight-hours system. I refer, of course, to the most important industry in the colony, the agricultural industry. It is not necessary for me to repeat what has already been stated ; but we all know, both city and country representatives, that there are times and seasons when it is quite impossible without serious loss to limit the working-day to eight hours. Then, take that important branch of agriculture, the dairy industry. That industry is important not only to the people directly concerned, but to the colony as a whole. I venture to say that the average working-day in the dairy industry during the height of the season and for seven days in the week is over twelve hours. And I say, speaking with knowledge of the subject, that that time cannot be curtailed without causing considerable loss, and perhaps absolute ruin, to many of those now engaged in the industry. As to child labour, we all know that at the present time it plays a most important part in connection with dairy operations, and I regret to admit that there is serious reason to believe that many children are overworked. But what would be the effect of this Bill so far as child labour is concerned ? Will it improve matters ? Not in the slightest, because if this Bill is placed on the statute-book it would make it more difficult for the dairy farmer to obtain hired labour; and he would simply endeavour to get on with the labour of his own family, and the last state of things, so far as children are concerned, would be worse than the first. The member for Marsden expressed an opinion that the Government ought to fix a minimum price for produce. That sounds very well, but, like a Bill of this nature, it would be almost impossible to give effect to it, because prices are almost constantly changing. I believe there is a much easier and better remedy than that suggested by the honourable member for Marsden. We have an Act upon the statute-book, called the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, which provides for the settlement of disputes between employers and employees. Why not amend the Conciliation and Arbitration Act so as to make it apply to disputes between consumer and producer ? That seems to me to be the real remedy. Make it possible for the producers to go to the Conciliation Board or the Arbitration Court, and ask them to fix a fair price for produce, taking into consideration the hours worked by the farmer and the capital he employs. That I believe would be the real remedy, and if the Government would assent to that I believe the country settlers would get better remuneration for their labour. It would not be necessary for them to work such long hours as they do at the present time, and the people in the cities would simply have to pay a little more for their supplies. I want to make this offer to the Government, and to the member in charge of the Bill, who, I believe, has introduced it with the best intentions. If the Government will promise to so amend the Conciliation and Arbitration Act as to provide for the settlement of disputes as between consumer and producer, and thereby fix the price of produce, I shall support the Bill. Otherwise I shall have to vote against it. Major STEWARD (Waitaki) .- Sir, the district I have the honour to represent contains a borough within an agricultural district. Now, so far as the borough is concerned, the provisions of this Bill might be approved by the workers, but certainly it would not be approved

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of by the agricultural portion of my district. ' would be injured if this Bill were to become law. In fact, it would be impossible for farmers to ; law without being amended. Then, the dairy- work under its provisions. I quite recognise ; ing industry has been mentioned. Now, this that in the large centres of population there is , industry at the present time is exceedingly a demand for a Bill of this kind, and year after : prosperous, and we should not do anything to year attempts have been made in this House to pass it. I believe the

mistake that has been made by the members in charge of those ' of the Government in encouraging it by Bills has always been that they have been too sweeping, and that the Bill has applied to all , in grading and freezing the butter before parts of the country and to all pursuits in the country alike. Time after time in Committee we have attempted to put in exemptions, and so much time has been taken up that the House ha- given up the attempt as hopeless. I am quite willing to support the honourable mem- ber in the second reading, on the under- standing that either he or the Government shall bring down a schedule, which shall be pat upon the Order Paper, so that we may exempt from the operations of the Bill agricul- tural and pastoral pursuits, and all others that require to be exempted. If that is done, the honourable gentleman will gain his object -- that is, of passing an Eight Hours Bill to apply to the populations of the cities-and it will meet the objections of members from the country districts. I therefore reserve to my- self the absolute right of voting against the honourable gentleman's Bill on the third read- ing if the amendment I now suggest should not be embodied in it in Committee. In the meantime, I would give the honourable gentle- man the opportunity of trying to achieve that which nobody else has been able to achieve- namely, to prepare a satisfactory clause ex- empting from the operations of the Bill agri- cultural pursuits, and such others as it may be necessary to exempt. Mr. E. G. ALLEN (Waikouaiti) .- I do not care, Sir, to oppose the second reading of this Bill: but if I thought it would become law as it appears now I should certainly oppose it Very strongly. But, judging from the remarks of the Premier, and the greater number of the honourable members who have spoken on this Bill. it is going to be amended in Committee, and therefore I shall give my vote for the second reading. "If the objectionable features of the Bill are removed --- namely, those applying to agricultural, pastoral, and other occupations in the country -then I shall approve of the Bill. I consider the principle is quite correct. think it is very unfortunate that a schedule showing the ocnepations to which the Bill should not apply has not been added to it. If that had been done a lot of time would have been saved, and a lot of discussion also, upon this Bill. There is no one who is averse to legalising the working-hours which are at the present time customary. If this Bill were to become law in its present form there would be a gr. at number of classes of workmen who would be very much injured. For instance, the wharf labourers. It would have the effect of lessening their wages. These people after working a certain number of hours get time and a half, and then after twelve o'clock they get double wages. Well, that is one class whose position affect it prejudicially. Under the present dairying regulations, and through the action the expenditure of about £15,000 a year it is exported, the condition of the dairy farmer has been very much improved. It is considerably different from what it was before the Government took the dairying in- terest in hand. Before then the dairy farmer had to rely, practically, upon local markets for his produce, and any surplus over what would be consumed in the country was sent Home ; and what did he get? His net return was something like 2d. a pound, and now, through : the assistance of the Dairy Industry Act, dairy farmers are enabled to compete successfully in the great markets of the world with Denmark and the other butter-producing countries. I think, with other honourable gentlemen, that it is a great pity the question of regulating the hours of labour had not been taken up by the Government. The Bill as it is presented to us now is not practicable, and I shall vote for its second reading on the distinct under- standing, and in the belief, that it will be so amended in Committee that it will be a work- able and useful measure. Mr. GRAHAM (Nelson City) .- I had no in- tention of speaking on this measure, but I feel it incumbent on me now to say a few words. Of all the members who have spoken to-night hardly any, if indeed one, has approved of the measure as it is brought before the House. Every one who has spoken has approved of the principle of the eight-hours working-day. Members who have announced their inten- tion of supporting or voting against this mea- sure have alike approved of that principle. Some of them have also correctly stated that the principle has been in existence in the colony for many years, and I hope there are few, if any, who would wish it otherwise. I have been in the colony for a good many years, and the principle has been in force since my boyhood. At

the present time, under the existing labour-laws, the working-hours per week in many trades are forty-six, which amounts to 1 less than eight hours a day on the average. In some of the trades it is not more than forty-four hours. I have not heard any general demand for any further legislation with regard to the length of the working-day. My own opinion is that, having passed so many labour measures during the last few years, we should be consulting the general wish and inclination of the people of the colony, both workers and employers, if we rested for a time from any labour legislation. My conviction is that Ministers, if not the Labour Department officials, are also of that opinion. The Government have not brought forward this measure; it has been left for a private member to do so, and it is brought forward under a

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captivating title an eight-hours working-day. Nobody opposes that; it has, indeed, been recognised and acted upon for many years past, and, as I have said, the working-hours in most of the trades are less at the present time than an average of eight per day. The Bill provides in the 2nd clause that the House by passing the measure should affirm that eight hours is a legal day. It goes on, however, to make numerous exceptions. It makes provision for a large class of domestic servants, servants in hotels and boardinghouses, and other similar kinds of service, providing that they shall be exempted from the provision which purports to fix eight hours as a legal working-day, and that their work shall not exceed twelve hours per day, and provided they have an afternoon as a holiday on one week-day in each week, and from two o'clock every second Sunday. Therefore it implies they may be called upon to work seven days in the week. On five of those seven days they would work twelve hours a day, which is much more than the average time such people are called upon to work now. With reference to the other two days, it does not even say they shall be limited to a less number of hours of labour on those days. Of course, it would be absurd to suppose that they would begin work at three or four o'clock in the morning, but at the same time there is no restriction in the Bill as to the hours. We can therefore count that they may be called on to work five days of twelve hours each, which is equal to sixty hours, and, say, six hours on the other two days; so that under this Bill these employes may have to work seventy-two hours a week. That is what it amounts to. The Bill also proposes to exempt farm-labourers who may be working on farms. I believe that generally farm-labourers only work eight hours a day at the present time. I am a city member, and reside in a city, but I have also been a farmer, and as such I employed men, who would have seen me somewhere first before they worked more than eight hours a day without equivalent compensation. The custom was to work eight hours a day, and the custom is the same still, and farm-labourers know very well how to look after themselves in this respect. I think the laws as they stand at present are quite sufficient for the time. We should now give our labour legislation a rest to see how those already on the statute-book work out. Of those members who have spoken in favour of the principle of the Bill, some have suggested that it should have been moved pro forma, and referred to the Labour Bills Committee. I think that would have been a proper course to adopt. It is too late, however, to do it now. Then, the member for Christchurch City (Mr. Collins) and others suggested that the present Bill should be withdrawn, and brought up again by the Government in a form that would be more acceptable to the House.

Mr. PIRANI .- It may be referred to the Labour Bills Committee after the second reading. Mr. GRAHAM .- Yes. that is true; but it cannot be read pro forma now. The Premier, when speaking on this question, said that the Bill as it stood could not, he thought, be agreed to, but that we might allow it to go into Committee, and there so shape it that it might be acceptable to the country. There is nothing to benefit the workers in this Bill except the affirming of a principle that does not require to be affirmed, because it has been recognised in the colony for the last forty years. After the discussion that has taken place, the honourable member should withdraw his Bill, knowing that the Minister of Labour says he could not support it in its present form, and would only support the second reading to enable it to go into Committee. I think, in view of the discussion that has taken place, that the Government should be in a

position to prepare a Bill, if they believe it is necessary, such as might be acceptable to the House, and so save a great deal of acrimonious discussion over this Bill in Committee. I agree with those members who have spoken with reference to the dairy industry, that the Bill, if passed, would be disastrous to the dairying and agricultural industries in the colony. It purports to be an Eight Hours Bill, but is really a Twelve Hours Bill. Why should servants and others work for twelve hours a day, and for seven days a week. while labourers and trades generally only work eight hours? Why, Sir, this Bill even provides that these unfortunate people shall work twelve hours a day independent of the time allowed for breakfast, dinner, and tea. The Bill says they shall not work longer than twelve hours in one day. The hour for dinner and the half-hour each for other meals is not taken out of the working- time, and consequently they can be required to work twelve hours exclusive of time for meals. That shows how crude the provisions of the Bill are. A Bill which affects labour questions which ramify throughout the whole extent of the colony, and might lead to very serious hardships and differences between employers and employés, should have most careful consideration. I commend the honourable member for Riccarton for honesty of purpose in bringing his Bill forward, and I have not the slightest doubt that he is perfectly honest in his desire and intention. The discussion has, no doubt, done a considerable amount of good : but I do think, now that the discussion has taken place, it would be far wiser of him to take the assurance of the Government that they will deal with this question on such lines as they may see now will be acceptable to the House and the country. I think this would be wiser than for us to pass the second reading simply as a compliment to the honourable member. and then tear his Bill to pieces and leave no beneficial result at the end of that process. Mr. ELL (Christchurch City) .-- One would imagine, after hearing the honourable member, that eight hours really obtained in New Zealand. Sir, I also come from a city, and I represent a city constituency, but I have had many complaints made to me. and many requests and demands, that something should be done to enforce the eight-hours principle which

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the honourable member says obtains. Tramway employees work considerably more than eight hours a day, and they have been complaining for many years past. There are also many other callings. The men engaged in connection with the railway-carting contract also complain about working more than eight hours. Seeing that this Bill is going to benefit those people who are working more than eight hours now, why should not the gentlemen who agreed to the eight -hours principle vote for the second reading of this Bill, and when it gets into Committee we can get the objectionable portions of the Bill removed. Let the Bill go to the Labour Bills Committee, where there are country members, and no doubt the welfare of the country districts will be well looked after. I think we have had sufficient to show us that there is need for the Bill. I, for one, shall cordially support it, and vote for its second reading. I congratulate the member for Riccarton upon the interesting debate which has taken place on the measure. I was glad to hear the very conciliatory speech we had from the Premier. There is one other matter I should like to say something on-in regard to the question of town versus country. This was raised by the member for Egmont. He stated that the town members last year wished to hinder the back-block settlers. We did nothing of the sort. What we urged was that the Bill introduced to assist back-block settlers would not be any assistance to them, but would grant a concession to those who did not require it, and we urged that if they were in distress, so far as their rents were concerned, they should have their rents reviewed. We are quite prepared to do it now if any proposition comes before the House in that direction ; but we do object to concessions being granted to settlers not in need of it while others in need of it are not assisted. There is a lot of misapprehension in the minds of country members with regard to the effect of labour legislation, as there was in the minds of employers before the labour legislation was brought into operation. Take the half-holiday, for instance. It was contended by the employers in Christchurch that if the half-holiday was introduced it would ruin the shopkeepers. Now, Sir, the shopkeepers were never more prosperous than

they are now, and they have received no injury from the application of the half-holiday. Neither have our industries suffered. I venture to think we shall be able to frame a Bill to shorten the hours of labour for those in the country districts without seriously injuring the agricultural industries. Mr. T. MACKENZIE (Waihemo). - The for Christchurch City honourable member suggested that the Bill should be referred to the Labour Bills Committee. If it is the intention that agricultural matters should receive proper attention before that Committee, I would suggest that some country members be added to it. The Committee as constituted consists of city members, with the exception of Captain Russell, and Mr. Hardy, who is more connected with commerce than agriculture, although he most ably represents a country district. An Hon. MEMBER .- Mr. Bollard. Mr. T. MACKENZIE .- He is a member for the suburbs of the City of Auckland. Eden is a suburb of Auckland ; but the other 12.0. members of that Committee cannot possibly be called country representatives. I will name the members constituting the Labour Bills Committee, who are all town men- Messrs. Arnold, Bollard, Collins, Ell, Hutcheson, Laurensen, Millar, Morrison, Palmer, Tanner. While the gentlemen who are on the Labour Bills Committee are, no doubt, all excellent men, and will give these measures attention, there is not on it a representative for a purely agricultural community, except Captain Russell. When you are dealing with measures affecting that particular interest you should have agricultural members on it. I therefore maintain that the Labour Bills Committee should have a larger representation of purely agricultural members. An Hon. MEMBER .- What about the Premier ? Mr. T. MACKENZIE. - It cannot surely be said that he represents an agricultural constituency. I agree with Mr. Ell in saying that the half-holiday in the shops has done no harm. I was one of the most prominent supporters of that measure in this House, and I am quite satisfied that instead of doing harm to the employers it has been a distinct benefit to them. There are points in this Bill which are worthy of consideration, but that it will suit the agricultural interests I emphatically deny, and it will have to be very materially re-modelled before it can assist them. The people engaged in agricultural pursuits in this country must work out their own salvation in their own way, and I think it is very undesirable that measures affecting the agricultural labourers of the colony should be passed through the House without very sincere consideration indeed ; instead of being an assistance to them it might be the reverse. We must also bear in mind that we have to meet to-morrow morning at half-past ten, and unless we adjourn now we are not likely to be more than eight hours out of the Chamber. I chiefly rose to point out that I think we have made up our minds on this Bill, and to suggest that we should come to a division on it at once. Debate adjourned. The House adjourned at five minutes past twelve o'clock a.m.