



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



# House of Representatives

## Official Hansard

No. 33, 1907  
Wednesday, 14 August 1907

THIRD PARLIAMENT  
SECOND SESSION

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

# PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

## GOVERNOR-GENERAL.

His Excellency the Right Honorable HENRY STAFFORD, BARON NORTHCOTE, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Knight Grand Commander of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire, Companion of the Most Honorable Order of the Bath, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief of the Commonwealth of Australia.

## DEAKIN ADMINISTRATION.

(*From 5th July, 1905.*)

Minister of External Affairs	... The Honorable Alfred Deakin.
Treasurer	... *The Right Honorable Sir John Forrest, P.C., G.C.M.G. <i>Succeeded by</i> The Honorable Sir William John Lyne, K.C.M.G. (30th July, 1907).
Minister of Trade and Customs	... The Honorable Sir William John Lyne, K.C.M.G., <i>Succeeded by</i> The Honorable Austin Chapman (30th July, 1907).
Attorney-General	... The Honorable Isaac Alfred Isaacs, K.C., <i>Succeeded by</i> The Honorable Littleton Ernest Groom (13th October, 1906).
Minister of Defence	... The Honorable Thomas Playford, <i>Succeeded by</i> The Honorable Thomas Thomson Ewing (24th January, 1907).
Minister of Home Affairs	... The Honorable Littleton Ernest Groom, <i>Succeeded by</i> The Honorable Thomas Thomson Ewing (13th October 1906). <i>Succeeded by</i> The Honorable John Henry Keating (24th January, 1907).
Postmaster-General	... The Honorable Austin Chapman, <i>Succeeded by</i> The Honorable Samuel Mauger (30th July, 1907).
Vice-President of the Executive Council	The Honorable Thomas Thomson Ewing, <i>Succeeded by</i> The Honorable John Henry Keating (13th October, 1906). <i>Succeeded by</i> The Honorable Robert Wallace Best (20th February, 1907).
Honorary Minister	The Honorable James Hume Cook (28th January, 1908).

\* Resigned office, 30th July, 1907.

## MEMBERS OF THE SENATE.

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### THIRD PARLIAMENT.—SECOND SESSION.

*President*—Lieut.-Colonel the Hon. Albert John Gould, V.D.

*Chairman of Committees*—The Hon. George Foster Pearce.

Best, Hon. Robert Wallace	...	Victoria.
Cameron, Lieut.-Colonel the Hon. Cyril St. Clair	...	Tasmania.
Chataway, Thomas Drinkwater	...	Queensland.
Clemons, Hon. John Singleton	...	Tasmania.
Croft, John William	...	Western Australia.
de Lurgie, Hon. Hugh	...	Western Australia.
<sup>3</sup> Dobson, Hon. Henry	...	Tasmania.
Findley, Edward	...	Victoria.
Fraser, Hon. Simon	...	Victoria.
Givens, Thomas	...	Queensland.
Gould, Lieut.-Col., the Hon. Albert John, V.D.	...	New South Wales.
Gray, John Proctor	...	New South Wales.
Guthrie, Robert Storrie	...	South Australia.
Henderson, George	...	Western Australia.
Keating, Hon. John Henry	...	Tasmania.
Lynch, Patrick Joseph	...	Western Australia.
Macfarlane, Hon. James	...	Tasmania.
<sup>4</sup> McColl, Hon. James Hiers	...	Victoria.
McGregor, Hon. Gregor	...	South Australia.
Millen, Hon. Edward Davis	...	New South Wales.
Mulcahy, Hon. Edward	...	Tasmania.
Needham, Edward	...	Western Australia.
<sup>3</sup> Neild, Colonel, the Hon. John Cash	...	New South Wales.
<sup>4</sup> O'Loghlin, Major the Hon. James Vincent	...	South Australia.
<sup>1</sup> Pearce, Hon. George Foster	...	Western Australia.
Pulsford, Edward	...	New South Wales.
Russell, Edward John	...	Victoria.
Russell, William	...	South Australia.
St. Ledger, Anthony James Joseph	...	Queensland.
Sayers, Robert John	...	Queensland.
Stewart, Hon. James Charles	...	Queensland.
Story, William Harrison	...	South Australia.
Symon, Hon. Sir Josiah Henry, K.C.M.G., K.C.	...	South Australia.
Trenwith, Hon. William Arthur	...	Victoria.
Turley, Henry	...	Queensland.
<sup>2</sup> Vardon, Joseph	...	South Australia,
Walker, Hon. James Thomas	...	New South Wales.

<sup>1</sup> Chairman of Committees.

<sup>2</sup> Election declared void 31st May, 1907. Elected 15th February, 1908.

<sup>3</sup> Temporary Chairman of Committees.

<sup>4</sup> Chosen by State Parliament 11th July, 1907. Choice declared void, 20th December, 1907.

# MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

## THIRD PARLIAMENT.—SECOND SESSION.

*Speaker.*—The Hon. Sir Frederick William Holder, K.C.M.G.

*Chairman of Committees*—The Hon. Charles McDonald.

Archer, Edward Walker	...	...	...	...	Capricornia. (Q.)
Atkinson, Llewelyn	...	...	...	...	Wilmot. (T.)
Bamford, Hon. Frederick William	...	...	...	...	Herbert. (Q.)
<sup>3</sup> Batchelor, Hon. Egerton Lee	...	...	...	...	Boothby. (S.A.)
Bowden, Eric Kendall	...	...	...	...	Nepean. (N.S.W.)
Brown, Joseph Tilley	...	...	...	...	Indi. (V.)
Brown, Hon. Thomas	...	...	...	...	Calare. (N.S.W.)
Carr, Ernest Shoobridge	...	...	...	...	Macquarie. (N.S.W.)
Catts, James Howard	...	...	...	...	Cook. (N.S.W.)
Chanter, Hon. John Moore	...	...	...	...	Riverina. (N.S.W.)
Chapman, Hon. Austin	...	...	...	...	Eden-Monaro. (N.S.W.)
Cook, Hon. James Newton Haxton Hume	...	...	...	...	Bourke. (V.)
Cook, Hon. Joseph	...	...	...	...	Parramatta. (N.S.W.)
Coon, Jabez	...	...	...	...	Batman. (V.)
Crouch, Hon. Richard Armstrong	...	...	...	...	Corio. (V.)
Deakin, Hon. Alfred	...	...	...	...	Ballarat. (V.)
Edwards, Hon. Richard	...	...	...	...	Oxley. (Q.)
Ewing, Hon. Thomas Thomson	...	...	...	...	Richmond. (N.S.W.)
Fairbairn, George	...	...	...	...	Fawkner. (V.)
Fisher, Hon. Andrew	...	...	...	...	Wide Bay. (Q.)
Forrest, Right Hon. Sir John, P.C., G.C.M.G.	...	...	...	...	Swan. (W.A.)
Foster, Francis James	...	...	...	...	New England. (N.S.W.)
<sup>3</sup> Fowler, Hon. James Mackinnon	...	...	...	...	Perth. (W.A.)
Foxton, Colonel the Hon. Justin Fox Greenlaw, C.M.G.	...	...	...	...	Brisbane. (Q.)
Frazer, Charles Edward	...	...	...	...	Kalgoorlie. (W.A.)
Fuller, Hon. George Warburton	...	...	...	...	Illawarra. (N.S.W.)
Fysh, Hon. Sir Philip Oakley, K.C.M.G.	...	...	...	...	Denison. (T.)
Glynn, Hon. Patrick McMahon	...	...	...	...	Angas. (S.A.)
Groom, Hon. Littleton Ernest	...	...	...	...	Darling Downs. (Q.)
Hall, David Robert	...	...	...	...	Werriwa. (N.S.W.)
Harper, Hon. Robert	...	...	...	...	Mernda. (V.)
Hedges, William Noah	...	...	...	...	Fremantle. (W.A.)
Holder, Hon. Sir Frederick William, K.C.M.G.	...	...	...	...	Wakefield. (S.A.)
Hughes, Hon. William Morris	...	...	...	...	West Sydney. (N.S.W.)
Hutchison, James	...	...	...	...	Hindmarsh. (S.A.)
Irvine, Hans William Henry	...	...	...	...	Grampians. (V.)
Irvine, Hon. William Hill, K.C.	...	...	...	...	Flinders. (V.)
Johnson, William Elliot	...	...	...	...	Lang. (N.S.W.)
Kelly, William Henry	...	...	...	...	Wentworth. (N.S.W.)
<sup>4</sup> Kingston, Right Hon. Charles Cameron, P.C., K.C.	...	...	...	...	Adelaide. (S.A.)
Knox, Hon. William	...	...	...	...	Kooyong. (V.)
Liddell, Frank	...	...	...	...	Hunter. (N.S.W.)
Livingston, John	...	...	...	...	Barker. (S.A.)
Lyne, Hon. Sir William John, K.C.M.G.	...	...	...	...	Hume. (N.S.W.)
Mahon, Hon. Hugh	...	...	...	...	Coolgardie. (W.A.)
Maloney, William Robert Nuttall	...	...	...	...	Melbourne. (V.)
Mathews, James	...	...	...	...	Melbourne Ports. (V.)
Mauger, Hon. Samuel	...	...	...	...	Maribyrnong. (V.)
<sup>2</sup> McDonald, Hon. Charles	...	...	...	...	Kennedy. (Q.)
McDougall, John Keith	...	...	...	...	Wannon. (V.)
McWilliams, William James	...	...	...	...	Franklin. (T.)
O'Malley, Hon. King	...	...	...	...	Darwin (T.)
Page, Hon. James	...	...	...	...	Maranoa. (Q.)
<sup>1</sup> Palmer, Albert Clayton	...	...	...	...	Echuca. (V.)
Poynton, Hon. Alexander	...	...	...	...	Grey. (S.A.)
Quick, Hon. Sir John	...	...	...	...	Bendigo. (V.)
Reid, Right Hon. George Houstoun, P.C., K.C.	...	...	...	...	East Sydney. (N.S.W.)
<sup>3</sup> Salmon, Hon. Charles Carty	...	...	...	...	Laaneecoorie. (V.)

## MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

THIRD PARLIAMENT.—SECOND SESSION—*continued.*

Sampson, Sydney	...	...	...	...	Wimmera. (V.)
Sinclair, Hugh	...	...	...	...	Moreton. (Q.)
Smith, Hon. Bruce, K.C.	...	...	...	...	Parkes. (N.S.W.)
Spence, Hon. William Guthrie	...	...	...	...	Durling. (N.S.W.)
Storrier, David	...	...	...	...	Bass. (T.)
Thomas, Hon. Josiah	...	...	...	...	Barrier. (N.S.W.)
Thomson, Hon. Dugald	...	...	...	...	North Sydney. (N.S.W.)
Thomson, John	...	...	...	...	Cowper. (N.S.W.)
Tudor, Hon. Frank Gwynne	...	...	...	...	Yarra. (V.)
Watkins, Hon. David	...	...	...	...	Newcastle. (N.S.W.)
Watson, Hon. John Christian	...	...	...	...	South Sydney. (N.S.W.)
Webster, William	...	...	...	...	Gwydir. (N.S.W.)
Wilks, Hon. William Henry	...	...	...	...	Dalley. (N.S.W.)
Willis, Hon. Henry	...	...	...	...	Robertson. (N.S.W.)
Wilson, John Gratton	...	...	...	...	Corangamite. (V.)
Wise, George Henry	...	...	...	...	Gippsland. (V.)
Wynne, Hon. Agar	...	...	...	...	Balaclava. (V.)

## HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS.

*Senate.*—E. G. Blackmore, C.M.G.; (C. B. Boydell, Acting).

*House of Representatives.*—C. G. Duffy, C.M.G.

*Parliamentary Reporting Staff.*—B. H. Friend.

*Library.*—A. Wadsworth.

*Joint House Committee.*—G. E. Upward; (G. H. Monahan, Acting).

<sup>1</sup> Election declared void 10th June, 1907. Elected 10th July, 1907. Sworn 16th July, 1907.

<sup>2</sup> Chairman of Committees.

<sup>3</sup> Temporary Chairman of Committees.

<sup>4</sup> Deceased reported, 12th May, 1908.

## COMMITTEES OF THE SESSION.

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### SENATE.

**STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.**—The President, the Chairman of Committees, Senator Best, Senator Dobson, Senator Clemons, Senator Guthrie, Senator St. Ledger, Senator Sir J. H. Symon, Senator Trenwith.

**LIBRARY COMMITTEE.**—The President, Senator Chataway, Senator Keating, Senator Lynch, Senator Stewart, Senator Sir J. H. Symon, Senator Walker.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE.**—The President, Senator de Largie, Senator McColl, Senator McGregor, Senator Mulcahy, Senator Colonel Neild, Senator Turley.

**PRINTING COMMITTEE.**—Senator Croft, Senator Findley, Senator Lieut.-Colonel Cameron, Senator Henderson, Senator Macfarlane, Senator Pulsford, Senator Givens.

**COMMITTEE OF DISPUTED RETURNS AND QUALIFICATIONS.**—Senator de Largie, Senator Dobson, Senator Macfarlane, Senator Colonel Neild, Senator Sir J. H. Symon, Senator Turley, Senator Walker.

**PRIVILEGE PROCEDURE.**—Senator Colonel Neild, Senator Henderson, Senator Turley, Senator Chataway.

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

**STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.**—Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister, the Chairman of Committees, Mr. Joseph Cook, Mr. Groom,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Kingston, Mr. Watson, Mr. Wilson.

**LIBRARY COMMITTEE.**—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Glynn, Mr. Harper, Mr. W. H. Irvine, Mr. Knox, Mr. Salmon, Mr. Bruce Smith, Mr. Spence.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE.**—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Batchelor, Mr. Chanter, Mr. Fisher, Mr. Mahon, Mr. Mauger, Mr. Page, Mr. Dugald Thomson.

**PRINTING COMMITTEE.**—Mr. Edwards, Mr. Fowler, Mr. Hutchison, Sir John Quick, Mr. Storrier, Mr. Watkins, Mr. Willis.

**PRIVILEGE PROCEDURE.**—Mr. Bamford, Mr. Fuller, Sir John Quick, Mr. Wise.

<sup>1</sup> Deceased reported, 12th May, 1908.

# ACTS OF THE SESSION.

## ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION ACT 1905-6 AND 1906-7 (No. 9 of 1908)—

An Act to appropriate further sums for the service of the years ended the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and six, and the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and seven. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir William Lyne, 22nd May, 1908. Assented to 3rd June, 1908.]

## ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION ACT 1907-8 (No. 11 of 1908)—

An Act to grant and apply an additional sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund to the service of the year ending the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and eight. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir William Lyne, 22nd May, 1908. Assented to 3rd June, 1908.]

## ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION (WORKS AND BUILDINGS) ACT 1905-6 AND 1906-7 (No. 10 of 1908)—

An Act to appropriate further sums for the service of the years ended the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and six, and the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and seven for purposes of Additions, New Works, Buildings, &c. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir William Lyne, 22nd May, 1908. Assented to 3rd June, 1908.]

## ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION (WORKS AND BUILDINGS) ACT 1907-8 (No. 12 of 1908)—

An Act to grant and apply an additional sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund to the service of the year ending the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and eight for the purposes of Additions, New Works, Buildings, &c. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir William Lyne, 22nd May, 1908. Assented to 3rd June, 1908.]

## APPROPRIATION ACT 1907-8 (No. 6 of 1908)—

An Act to grant and apply a sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund to the service of the year ending the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and eight, and to appropriate the supplies granted for such year in this session of the Parliament. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir William Lyne, 7th April, 1908. Assented to 16th April, 1908.]

## APPROPRIATION (WORKS AND BUILDINGS) ACT 1907-8 (No. 6 of 1907)—

An Act to grant and apply a sum out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund to the service of the year ending the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and eight, for the purposes of Additions, New Works, Buildings, &c. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir William Lyne, 25th September, 1907. Assented to 8th October, 1907.]

## AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRIES PRESERVATION ACT 1907 (No. 5 of 1908)—

An Act to amend the Australian Industries Preservation Act 1906. [Initiated in Senate by Senator Best, 3rd October, 1907. Assented to 14th April, 1908.]

## BOUNTIES ACT (No. 12 of 1907)—

An Act to provide for the payment of bounties on the production of certain goods. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Groom, 16th July, 1907. Assented to 28th November, 1907.]

## COAST DEFENCE APPROPRIATION ACT (No. 19 of 1908)—

An Act to grant and apply out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund a sum of Two hundred and fifty thousand pounds for Harbor and Coastal Defences. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir William Lyne, 4th June, 1908. Assented to 10th June, 1908.]

## COMMONWEALTH SALARIES ACT (No. 7 of 1907)—

An Act relating to the Taxation by the States of Salaries and Allowances paid by the Commonwealth. [Initiated in Senate by Senator Best, 5th July, 1907. Assented to 8th October, 1907.]

**CONSTITUTION ALTERATION (SENATE ELECTIONS) 1906 (No. 1 of 1907)—**

An Act to alter the provisions of the Constitution relating to the Election of Senators. [Initiated in Senate by Senator Keating, 17th August, 1906. Assented to 3rd April, 1907.]

**CUSTOMS TARIFF 1908 (No. 7 of 1908)—**

An Act relating to Duties of Customs. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir William Lyne, 8th August, 1907. Assented to 3rd June, 1908.]

**CUSTOMS TARIFF AMENDMENT 1908 (No. 13 of 1908)—**

An Act to amend the Customs Tariff 1908. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir William Lyne, 2nd June, 1908. Assented to 10th June, 1908.]

**DISPUTED ELECTIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS ACT (No. 10 of 1907)—**

An Act to amend the Law relating to Parliamentary Elections, and to provide for the Settlement of Questions relating to the Qualifications of Members of the Parliament, and to Vacancies in either House of the Parliament. [Initiated in Senate by Senator Best, 30th October, 1907. Assented to 22nd November, 1907.]

**ELECTION EXPENSES REIMBURSEMENT ACT (No. 20 of 1908)—**

An Act to grant and apply out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund a sum for the purpose of reimbursing expenses incurred by candidates in connexion with certain elections which have been declared void, and in proceedings in relation thereto. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir William Lyne, 5th June, 1908. Assented to 10th June, 1908.]

**EXCISE PROCEDURE ACT (No. 1 of 1908)—**

An Act relating to procedure on applications for a declaration under the Excise Tariff 1906 (Act No. 16 of 1906). [Initiated in Senate by Senator Keating, 10th October, 1907. Assented to 18th February, 1908.]

**EXCISE TARIFF 1908 (No. 8 of 1908)—**

An Act relating to Duties of Excise. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir William Lyne, 8th August, 1907. Assented to 3rd June, 1908.]

**EXCISE TARIFF (STARCH) 1908 (No. 14 of 1908)—**

An Act to amend the Excise Tariff 1908. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir William Lyne, 2nd June, 1908. Assented to 10th June, 1908.]

**INVALID AND OLD-AGE PENSIONS ACT (No. 17 of 1908)—**

An Act to provide for the payment of Invalid and Old-age Pensions, and for other purposes. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Deakin, 2nd June, 1908. Assented to 10th June, 1908.]

**JUDICIARY ACT (No. 8 of 1907)—**

An Act to amend the Judiciary Act 1903. [Initiated in Senate by Senator Best, 5th July, 1907. Assented to 14th October, 1907.]

**KALGOORLIE TO PORT AUGUSTA RAILWAY SURVEY ACT (No. 4 of 1907)—**

An Act to authorize the Survey of Route for a Railway to connect Kalgoorlie, in the State of Western Australia, with Port Augusta, in the State of South Australia. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Groom, 16th July, 1907. Assented to 28th August, 1907.]

**OFFICERS COMPENSATION ACT (No. 4 of 1908)—**

An Act to provide for compensation to be paid on retirement or on decease of certain officers of the Commonwealth. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir William Lyne, 13th December, 1907. Assented to 14th April, 1908.]

**OLD-AGE PENSIONS APPROPRIATION ACT (No. 18 of 1908)—**

An Act to grant and apply out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund the sum of Seven hundred and fifty thousand pounds for Invalid and Old-age Pensions. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir William Lyne, 4th June, 1908. Assented to 10th June, 1908.]

**PARLIAMENTARY ALLOWANCES ACT (No. 5 of 1907)—**

An Act relating to the Allowance to Members of each House of the Parliament of the Commonwealth. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir William Lyne, 14th August, 1907. Assented to 28th August, 1907.]

**PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS ACT (No. 16 of 1908)—**

An Act relating to the publication of Parliamentary Papers. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Deakin, 3rd April, 1908. Assented to 10th June, 1908.]

**QUARANTINE ACT (No. 3 of 1908)—**

An Act relating to Quarantine. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir William Lyne, 10th July, 1907. Assented to 30th March, 1908.]

**SUPPLY ACT (No. 1) (No. 2 of 1907)—**

An Act to grant and apply out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund a sum for the service of the year ending the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and eight. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir John Forrest, 4th July, 1907. Assented to 5th July, 1907.]

**SUPPLY ACT (No. 2) (No. 3 of 1907)—**

An Act to grant and apply out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund a sum for the service of the year ending the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and eight. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir William Lyne, 13th August, 1907. Assented to 15th August, 1907.]

**SUPPLY ACT (No. 3) (No. 9 of 1907)—**

An Act to grant and apply out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund a sum for the service of the year ending the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and eight. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir William Lyne, 8th November, 1907. Assented to 14th November, 1907.]

**SUPPLY ACT (No. 4) (No. 11 of 1907)—**

An Act to grant and apply out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund a sum for the service of the year ending the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and eight. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir William Lyne, 20th November, 1907. Assented to 23rd November, 1907.]

**SUPPLY ACT (No. 5) (No. 2 of 1908)—**

An Act to grant and apply out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund a sum for the service of the year ending the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and eight. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir William Lyne, 11th March, 1908. Assented to 14th March, 1908.]

**SUPPLY ACT (No. 1) 1908-9 (No. 21 of 1908)—**

An Act to grant and apply out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund a sum for the service of the year ending the thirtieth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and nine. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir William Lyne, 5th June, 1908. Assented to 10th June, 1908.]

**SURPLUS REVENUE ACT (No. 15 of 1908)—**

An Act relating to the payment to the several States of the Surplus Revenue of the Commonwealth. [Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir William Lyne, 13th March, 1908. Assented to 10th June, 1908.]

# BILLS OF THE SESSION.

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## BILLS OF EXCHANGE BILL—

[Initiated in Senate by Senator Keating, 5th July, 1907; lapsed at prorogation.]

## COMMERCE (TRADE DESCRIPTIONS) BILL—

[Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Austin Chapman, 19th November, 1907; lapsed at prorogation.]

## CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION BILL—

[Initiated in Senate by Senator Needham, 1st November, 1907; lapsed at prorogation.]

## CRIMINAL APPEALS BILL—

[Initiated in Senate by Senator Colonel Neild, 4th July, 1907; lapsed at prorogation.]

## DEFENCE BILL—

[Initiated in Senate by Senator Dobson, 2nd August, 1907; lapsed at prorogation.]

## ELECTORAL (DISPUTED RETURNS) BILL—

[Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Chanter, 8th August, 1907; lapsed at prorogation.]

## FIRE INSURANCE BILL—

[Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Frazer, 25th July, 1907; lapsed at prorogation.]

## MANUFACTURES ENCOURAGEMENT BILL—

[Initiated in House of Representatives by Sir William Lyne, 13th November, 1907; lapsed at prorogation.]

## MARINE INSURANCE BILL—

[Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Groom, 22nd October, 1907; lapsed at prorogation.]

## PAPUA. BILL—

[Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Deakin, 3rd July, 1907; lapsed at prorogation.]

## PARLIAMENTARY WITNESSES BILL—

[Initiated in Senate by Senator Keating, 11th July, 1907; lapsed at prorogation.]

## POSTAL RATES BILL—

[Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Austin Chapman, 23rd July, 1907; lapsed at prorogation.]

## PUBLIC SERVICE (APPEALS) BILL—

[Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Hughes, 8th August, 1907; lapsed at prorogation.]

## REMUNERATION OF LABOUR DEFINITION BILL—

[Initiated in Senate by Senator Colonel Neild, 17th October, 1907; lapsed at prorogation.]

BILLS OF THE SESSION—*continued*.

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**SEAT OF GOVERNMENT BILL—**

[Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Groom, 17th July, 1907; lapsed at prorogation.]

**NAVIGATION BILL—**

[Initiated in Senate by Senator Best, 12th September, 1907; lapsed at prorogation.]

**NORFOLK ISLAND BILL—**

[Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Deakin, 2nd June, 1908; lapsed at prorogation.]

**PUBLIC SERVICE BILL—**

[Initiated in House of Representatives by Mr. Groom, 2nd June, 1908; lapsed at prorogation.]

**SEAMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL—**

[Initiated in Senate by Senator Best, 3rd June, 1908; lapsed at prorogation.]

# P A R L I A M E N T C O N V E N E D.

THIRD PARLIAMENT—SECOND SESSION.

Parliament was convened by the following Proclamation :—

(*Gazette No. 28, 1907.*)

## PROCLAMATION

By His Excellency the Right Honorable HENRY STAFFORD, BARON NORTHCOTE, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Knight Grand Commander of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire, Companion of the Most Honorable Order of the Bath, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief of the Commonwealth of Australia.

"COMMONWEALTH OF  
AUSTRALIA TO WIT,  
NORTHCOTE,  
Governor-General.

WHEREAS by the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act it is amongst other things enacted that the Governor-General may appoint such times for holding the Sessions of the Parliament as he thinks fit, and also from time to time by Proclamation or otherwise prorogue the Parliament: And whereas on the fifth day of April, One thousand nine hundred and seven, the Parliament was further prorogued until Wednesday, the twelfth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and seven, and it is expedient to further prorogue the said Parliament: Now therefore I, HENRY STAFFORD, BARON NORTHCOTE, the Governor-General aforesaid, in exercise of the power conferred by the said Act, do by this my Proclamation further prorogue the said Parliament until Wednesday, the third day of July, One thousand nine hundred and seven, and I do appoint the said Wednesday, the third day of July, One thousand nine hundred and seven, as the day for the said Parliament to assemble and be holden for the despatch of business. And all Members of the Senate and of the House of Representatives respectively are hereby required to give their attendance accordingly, in the building known as the Houses of Parliament, situate in Spring-street, in the City of Melbourne, at half-past Two in the afternoon, on the said Wednesday, the third day of July, One thousand nine hundred and seven.

Given under my Hand and the Seal of the Commonwealth of Australia aforesaid, this eighteenth day of May, in the year of our Lord One thousand nine hundred and seven, and in the seventh year of His Majesty's reign.

(SEAL OF THE  
COMMONWEALTH  
OF AUSTRALIA.)

By His Excellency's Command,

JOHN FORREST.

GOD SAVE THE KING !

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## House of Representatives.

*Wednesday, 14 August, 1907.*

Mr. SPEAKER took the chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### TARIFF.

#### INSTRUCTIONS TO COLLECTORS—INCREASE OF PRICES BY RETAIL TRADESMEN—DUTIES ON MAGAZINES AND KEROSENE—RECOMMENDATIONS OF TARIFF COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. WILKS.—As I understand that the Acting Prime Minister is responsible for the framing and distribution of the Tariff, I wish to address to him, without notice, a question which, under ordinary circumstances would be asked of the Minister of Trade and Customs. I am informed that on Friday morning last, there appeared in the Rockhampton *Morning Bulletin* a copy of the Tariff proposals as handed to the representatives of the newspaper by the Sub-Collector of Customs at that port, and that on the following morning this correction appeared—

The Sub-Collector of Customs (Mr. J. M. Forbes) received a long telegram yesterday from the Comptroller-General of Customs (Dr. H. N. P. Wollaston), giving a list of the alterations made on the draft of the new Tariff as forwarded to him. The message considerably altered the original proposal of the Government. We therefore republish in this issue the whole of the twelve divisions of the Tariff printed in these columns yesterday, with the alterations made in them by the message from the Comptroller-General. We also give the remainder of the divisions which, as was explained yesterday, we were unable then to furnish to our readers. These were also corrected in accordance with Dr. Wollaston's telegram.

I wish to know what system was adopted in sending copies of the Tariff to the various Customs officials throughout the Commonwealth, and what mistakes, if any, occurred in transmission? Is it a fact that the Queensland officials, like those of Tasmania, had not received correct copies of the Tariff on Friday last? I also wish to know whether the preferential rates in favour of British goods were determined upon and added to the Tariff only at the last moment.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I do not know what course was adopted by the Comptroller-General of Customs for the circulation of the Tariff amongst his officials, but if the honorable member will give notice of his question, I shall try to obtain the information by to-morrow.

Mr. HUTCHISON.—I desire to call the attention of the Acting Prime Minister to the wholesale robbery of the public which is now being carried on by traders who have raised their prices under the pretence that they are compelled to do so, because of the Tariff alterations. Will the honorable gentleman take steps to let the public know that the exorbitant prices that are now being charged on hundreds of articles are not due to the Tariff alterations?

Mr. JOHNSON.—They are due to the Tariff alterations.

Mr. REID.—What the honorable member complains of has been happening from time immemorial. The moment shopkeepers see an opportunity to get more for their wares, they increase their prices.

Mr. HUTCHISON.—Then it is time that we stopped the practice.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—The matter has already been brought under my notice. I do not know what course the Government can take to prevent what the honorable member complains of.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Does not the honorable gentleman know that the Government cannot take any course?

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—We can take a course; but it would be a very difficult one, and I do not know that it would be effective. The only thing the Government could do would be to monopolize the articles in regard to which extra charges are being improperly made under the pretence that higher prices are necessary owing to the alterations of the Tariff. I should be very glad to prevent the wholesale robbery to which the honorable member refers—because I regard it as such—but I do not know that it is feasible or practicable to attempt to stop it.

Mr. POYNTON.—It is stated in today's *Age* that the Minister of Trade and Customs yesterday promised a deputation that the operation of the duty on magazines should be deferred, and that they should be allowed to be removed from bond without payment of duty. He is also reported to have promised that, when the Tariff is under consideration, he will move an amendment exempting magazines from duty. Is this report a correct one, and if so, will the honorable gentleman treat in the same way imported necessities of life?

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—It is not true that I have allowed any one to remove dutiable goods from bond without paying the duty. I have no power to do

that. What is intended to be conveyed by the report referred to is that importers of magazines are to be allowed to excise certain advertisements from them before removing them from bond. I promised also, as the case of these importers seemed to be exceptionally hard, to move an amendment in the Tariff when it is under consideration, postponing the application of duties to magazines until a certain date.

Mr. REID.—Why not give similar concessions to other importers?

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—If the right honorable member will bring under my notice any case on all fours with that of the magazine importers, I shall be prepared to consider it.

Mr. REID.—It seems to me that all importers are equally prejudiced by the Tariff.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—At the present time the importers of magazines are paying duty under protest. When the Tariff is before us, honorable members can deal with my proposition on its merits, and it will be competent for them to make similar proposals.

Mr. TUDOR.—Why are the importers of magazines being treated differently from other importers?

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—Because their case was brought under my notice, and I felt compelled to give them what I considered to be fair play. However, I shall be glad to go into the merits of any other case which is regarded as on all fours with that of the magazine importers.

Mr. POYNTON.—Will the honorable gentleman allow kerosene to be removed from bond under the same conditions?

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—If the honorable member will give notice of a question on the subject I will reply to it, or, if he will bring a deputation before me, I will consider their representations. It will be open to any honorable member when the Tariff is under discussion to make proposals similar to that which I intend to make in regard to magazines. I considered the matter thoroughly before making any promise, and I am willing to accept responsibility for what I have done.

Mr. REID.—Will the Treasurer be good enough to have printed in the form of a return, the rates of duty recommended by the Tariff Commission, so that honorable members may have the information in a convenient form?

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I have already promised that which the right honorable member requests should be done, and I gave instructions to that effect yesterday. I saw the Comptroller-General of Customs yesterday, and he hopes that the return will be far advanced, if not finished to-morrow.

#### NEW SOUTH WALES ELECTIONS.

Mr. HALL.—Will the Postmaster-General give instructions that, on the day of the New South Wales parliamentary elections, the attendants at the country telephone exchanges in that State shall be kept at work as long as the telegraph offices are open, so that subscribers to such exchanges may be able to get the fullest and latest news about contests in which they are interested.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Does the honorable member suggest that they should work overtime?

Mr. WATSON.—Why not? They will be paid for it.

Mr. MAUGER.—Every possible facility will be afforded.

#### PARLIAMENTARY ALLOWANCES BILL.

Mr. WILSON.—I wish to know from the Acting Prime Minister if the Prime Minister is for or against the proposal to increase the allowance of members of the Commonwealth Parliament?

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I decline to answer the question. It is most impertinent.

Mr. MAUGER.—He would vote for the proposal if he were here.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I should like the Acting Prime Minister to explain why a question directed to the ascertainment of the mind of the Prime Minister on a subject of public importance should be stigmatized as impertinent.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I do not think that it is fair or right to ask such a question in the unfortunate absence of the Prime Minister. I feel that the question was a very improper, unjust, and impertinent one.

Mr. WILSON.—It has a most important bearing on the position of the Government in this matter.

Mr. WILKS.—The Acting Prime Minister should ask the honorable member for Corangamite, through you, Mr. Speaker, whether he is in favour of the adoption of a conscience clause in regard to the proposed increase.

#### WORKS ESTIMATES.

Mr. BAMFORD.—I wish to know from the Acting Prime Minister whether the practice which was followed last year and in a previous year, of dividing the Estimates into two parts, and considering first, the proposals relating to expenditure on additions, new works, and buildings, will be followed this year. If so, when are we likely to be asked to deal with the proposals for expenditure?

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—The course followed in previous years will be followed this year, as nearly as possible. I cannot say when the Works Estimates will be submitted, but they must be placed before honorable members at an early date to allow of works being continued which would have to be stopped if money were not speedily voted for them. No time will be lost in dealing with the Works Estimates.

#### QUEENSLAND ELECTIONS.

Mr. McDONALD.—It is provided by the Queensland Electoral Act that all postal votes must be stamped with the post-office stamp on the day on which they are signed; but I understand that, on the occasion of the recent State election the votes which were received at the post-offices late at night, after the official work of the day had been concluded, were, on the instruction of some person in authority, allowed to be put aside, and stamped the next morning with a stamp bearing the date of the previous day. This has caused endless trouble, and probably will land some persons in heavy expenditure in connexion with law suits. I wish to know who is responsible for issuing the instruction which is alleged to have been given. Who is responsible for this illegal action?

Mr. MAUGER.—If the honorable member will confer with me I shall make full inquiries. No such order was given that I am aware of. This is a matter for the Department of Home Affairs; but, as I say, I shall make inquiries.

#### GRANT TO WOMEN'S WORK EXHIBITION.

Sir JOHN FORREST.—I desire, with your permission, Mr. Speaker, to refer to a report which appeared in the newspapers this morning, of some questions asked by the honorable member for Coolgardie, and replied to by the Acting Prime Minister, as to a payment of £1,000 on behalf of the forthcoming Women's Work Exhibition.

The inference from the answer is that I, as Treasurer, paid this money on my own responsibility, out of the Treasurer's Advance.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—There was no such inference, as the right honorable member will find, if he refers to my remarks at the close of the debate, when I had found out what had been done.

Sir JOHN FORREST.—The Acting Prime Minister said that this advance payment had been made by me, and the inference appears by the report to be that I had made it on my own responsibility. The Treasurer's Advance is placed at the disposal of the Treasurer by Parliament, but only for use in urgent cases, or under unforeseen or extraordinary circumstances. As a matter of fact, I did nothing of my own accord in this connexion, but I paid the £1,000 on a request from the Prime Minister. Honorable members may differ in opinion as to whether the payment was for an urgent or unforeseen service; but I think it was. I was personally anxious to further the success of the proposed exhibition as much as possible. I myself took no initiative in the matter, though it would appear from the answer of the Acting Prime Minister that I had done so.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—May I say a word, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. SPEAKER.—I think that, under the circumstances, the Acting Prime Minister is entitled to make a statement.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—The right honorable member for Swan is mistaken in his construction of what took place. When I was first asked the question, I said I did not know anything about the matter, and had not heard of it before.

Sir JOHN FORREST.—I was in the Chamber then.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—Later, I received a memorandum from Mr. Allen, the Secretary to the Treasury, telling me that the right honorable member for Swan had sent this £1,000 to London in connexion with payment for goods to be brought from the Continent for the exhibition.

Sir JOHN FORREST.—That is right.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—And that the Peninsular and Oriental Steamship Company had agreed to carry the goods free.

Sir JOHN FORREST.—That is quite right, but the Acting Prime Minister did not say that I had acted by direction of the Prime Minister.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I did not know. This matter was dealt with in

Cabinet, or spoken about in Cabinet, after I had left, but before the Prime Minister had left, for England.

Sir JOHN FORREST.—That is correct; but I do not want it to be thought that I took this action of my own accord.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I did not wish to convey that idea. I was asked whether I would take the responsibility for what the ex-Treasurer had done, and I said I would.

Sir JOHN FORREST.—I take no exception to that.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I do not want the honorable member to think that I tried to blame him.

Sir JOHN FORREST.—Quite so; but from what appeared in the newspapers that might be the inference.

#### PAPER.

Mr. MAUGER laid upon the table the following paper—

Lands Acquisition Act—Land acquired under, at Singleton, New South Wales—As a site for a Rifle Range (in lieu of notice gazetted 13th July, 1907).

#### BENDIGO INFANTRY BATTALION.

Sir JOHN QUICK asked the Minister of Defence, *upon notice*—

Whether the suggested establishment of a full battalion of infantry at Bendigo has been considered, and whether action will be taken in that direction at an early date?

Mr. EWING.—The answer to the honorable member's question is as follows—

There is no room for any more infantry in the existing organization of the forces in Victoria. The present allotment of the 8th Australian Infantry Regiment provides for four companies at Bendigo, three companies at Castlemaine, and one at Kyneton, the establishment of the four companies at Bendigo being 252. To meet what the honorable member suggests would mean the enrolment of another 252 men. The average cost of each militia infantry man is £13, and it is difficult to contemplate any considerable augmentation of the Military Forces under present rates and conditions. The Government, however, has the matter under consideration.

#### TARIFF : INCREASE OF PRICES BY WHOLESALE BUSINESS FIRMS.

Mr. JOHNSON asked the Minister of Trade and Customs, *upon notice*—

Is he aware that, as a result of the increased Tariff proposals of the Government, a large number of small retail shopkeepers have suffered material loss in their trade through the enforced increase in the cost of commodities, due to the action of wholesale firms in raising prices on

goods already in stock, and, on which goods, consequently, the increased duty has not been paid. Is there any way by which this species of imposition on the public can be prevented?

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN. — The answer to the honorable member's question is as follows—

I have seen the statement made in the daily press, but have no personal knowledge of the matter. I am not aware of any means by which the practice could be prevented. It is open to any seller to charge what he likes for his goods in the absence of a law to the contrary.

#### CYPHER TELEGRAMS: CHARGES.

Colonel FOXTON asked the Postmaster-General, *upon notice*—

1. Is it a fact that certain instructions of the 13th July last dealing with cypher telegrams, were misinterpreted by officials of the Department, as a result of which excessive charges were made to the public in respect of such telegrams?

2. Is it a fact that, as a result of representations made by the Melbourne Stock Exchange, further instructions were issued, and were stated to have been sent to all the States on the 27th July, calling attention to the error, and directing refunds of the overcharges?

3. Is the Minister aware that, if such further instructions were despatched on the last mentioned date, they should have reached Charters Towers, even by letter, on or before the 5th instant?

4. Is he aware that, up to yesterday, no such refunds of overcharges had been made at Charters Towers, and that the excessive charges were still being levied there?

5. If not, will he inquire into the matter?

Mr. MAUGER. — The answers to the honorable member's questions are as follow—

1. Yes.

2. The representations of the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce had reference to Melbourne only, and it was not known that the instructions of the 13th July had been misinterpreted in any other State, consequently, directions for refund were given to the officers in Melbourne only at that time; when it appeared later on that mistakes had been made elsewhere, instructions were given on 9th inst. to all other States to refund any overcharges that had been made. Special reference was made to Charters Towers, and the Deputy Postmaster-General, Brisbane, replied on the same day that he had asked the postmaster at Charters Towers for report, and for particulars of any overcharge known. On the 13th inst., he advised that the postmaster at Charters Towers could not give particulars of overcharge messages, and asked if information could be furnished to enable refund to be made.

3. See answer to number 2.

4. See answer to number 2. The postmaster at Charters Towers reports, under to-day's date, that overcharges are not being made, and that messages are being charged strictly in accordance with the regulations.

5. See answer to number 4.

#### TAXATION OF BRITISH GOODS.

Mr. McWILLIAMS asked the Minister of Trade and Customs, *upon notice*—

Is it a fact that goods of British manufacture being passed through the Customs Department are charged at the rates specified for those of foreign goods; if so, on what authority?

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN. — The answer to the honorable member's question is as follows—

There has been no authority given. It appears that at one port this was done under a misapprehension for a time, but, on being known at head-quarters, was at once stopped.

#### CLEARANCE OF IMPORTS.

Mr. GLYNN asked the Minister of Trade and Customs, *upon notice*—

Whether any alteration in the rule that imports must be cleared at the rates of duty in force at the time and place of clearance, will be made by an Act first passed for the purpose?

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—Any alteration to be made in the existing law would require the sanction of Parliament.

#### TARIFF COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS.

Sir JOHN QUICK asked the Treasurer, *upon notice*—

Whether he will, in order to facilitate the discussion of the Tariff, prepare for the use of honorable members, a list of the eighty-five recommendations of the protectionist members of the Tariff Commission, with which the Government have disagreed, and the substituted proposals of the Government; also a list of the new proposals of the Government?

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—The answer to the honorable member's question is as follows:—

The information desired by the honorable member will be found in a return now being prepared, and which it is hoped will be laid upon the table of the House to-morrow.

#### CUSTOMS DUTIES ON TOBACCO.

Mr. WILKS asked the Minister of Trade and Customs, *upon notice*—

What amount of money has been paid in Customs upon tobacco for the four weeks prior to 10th August?

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—The information will be obtained from the various States as soon as possible.

#### SUPPLY BILL (No. 2).

FEDERAL CAPITAL SITE—POSTAL VOTES IN QUEENSLAND—GRANT TO WOMEN'S WORK EXHIBITION—CANCELLED MAIL CONTRACT: GUARANTEE.

Motion (by Sir WILLIAM LYNE) proposed—

That the report be now adopted.

Mr. REID (East Sydney) [2.55].—I do not desire to delay the progress of the Bill at this stage, but I do feel that, in granting Supply the House is entitled to some information with reference to the claim of £25,000 on the bond under the cancelled mail contract. This seems at first sight a simple matter. We assume that the Government took proper precautions to enable them to recover the amount; but as the answers to questions go on, everything seems to get more shadowy. If the Treasurer cannot give the information I require, perhaps the Minister of Trade and Customs, the ex-Postmaster-General, may be able to do so. The present position is very unsatisfactory. I do not wish to prejudice, in any shape or form, any proceedings which may be going on, but merely desire to know the facts of the agreement, which are public property, and the statement of which would entail the disclosure of no secret. I do not wish to invade the province of the legal authorities representing the Government—that would be very improper. But did the agreement provide effectually for the recovery of the money? Perhaps that is a matter of law, and it would not be fair to question the Acting Prime Minister regarding it; but I may ask whether provision for the recovery of the money is embodied in the agreement between the Government and the contractors. That, I think, is a legitimate question.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE (Hume—Treasurer) [2.57].—So far as I can, I shall reply to the question of the right honorable member. In the first place the deposit of £2,500 was put to Suspense Account in the Treasury. But to-day the papers have been before me, and I have ascertained that the amount has been transferred to the Consolidated Revenue account.

Mr. McDONALD.—Do I understand the Acting Prime Minister to be replying on the motion for the adoption of the report?

Mr. SPEAKER.—The right honorable member for East Sydney spoke, and as no other honorable member arose, the Acting Prime Minister is now replying. If any honorable member has been taken at a disadvantage, no doubt honorable members would prefer that he should have an opportunity of being heard. In that case it would be better that the opportunity should be taken advantage of now, if any honorable member desires to speak.

Mr. McDONALD (Kennedy) [2.58].—I desire to say a word or two in reference

to the Federal Capital question. In the *Melbourne Age* this morning there is a long statement by Mr. Carruthers, the Premier of New South Wales, from which it would appear that he labours under the delusion that New South Wales has been unjustly treated.

Mr. JOHNSON.—Not a delusion surely?

Mr. McDONALD.—I think it is. Such an idea savours of injustice to representatives of various States, who, since the inception of legislation in an endeavour to settle this question, have done all they possibly could to bring about finality at the earliest possible moment. Some of us have been quite willing to take any course which would definitely settle the point. The whole trouble appears to me to arise from the action of the New South Wales representatives themselves.

Mr. BOWDEN.—No; the action of two honorable members on the Government side of the House.

Mr. McDONALD.—Not necessarily.

Mr. JOHNSON.—If we say the action of two Ministers, we shall have "struck it."

Mr. McDONALD.—Those Ministers may differ from other honorable members, and they are quite entitled to have their own opinions on the matter. I feel sure that if the New South Wales representatives agreed upon a reasonable site, the selection of that site would be supported by the House. Those of us who have loyally endeavoured to reach finality, feel that the Premier of New South Wales is not acting quite justly towards the Federal Parliament. At the present moment he is using the delay which has occurred in the settlement of this question for political purposes in connexion with the approaching State elections. That is my objection to his action. The question of the location of the future Seat of Government is one which should be above all party considerations. It should not be made the subject of party warfare. It should be regarded from a much higher stand-point than that.

Mr. FULLER.—It should not be viewed from the stand-point of individual constituencies either.

Mr. McDONALD.—Exactly. It is not a right thing for the Premier of New South Wales to be travelling from place to place making statements which reflect upon the honest endeavours of honorable members of this House to arrive at a proper solution of this very important question.

**Mr. FULLER.**—But he is justified in reflecting upon some of the New South Wales representatives.

**Mr. McDONALD.**—If he confined his strictures to the action of the New South Wales representatives or to any section of them, I should have no cause for complaint. But he speaks as if the Victorian representatives in the Commonwealth Parliament did not desire to see this vexed question settled. Now, I have noticed that, whenever it has been brought forward, the Victorian representatives, in common with representatives from the various States, have earnestly endeavoured to facilitate its speedy settlement. In view of the statement by the Acting Prime Minister that it is intended to proceed with the consideration of the Tariff next week, and that the debate will continue uninterruptedly until the schedule has been disposed of—which, to my mind, must be several months hence—I desire to know whether he will give the House an opportunity of arriving at some conclusion respecting the Federal Capital Site before that debate is entered upon?

**Mr. SALMON (Laanecoorie) [3.2].**—One matter was referred to yesterday by the honorable member for Coolgardie upon which I should like to say a few words. The honorable member took exception to an amount that has been set aside to assist an exhibition of women's work, which is to be held in Melbourne next September. He said that the exhibition was being carried out by a number of persons from Toorak.

**Mr. MAHON.**—I can prove my statement, too.

**Mr. SALMON.**—As I feel that the honorable member's remarks constitute an attack upon a movement which has for its object the furtherance of a most praiseworthy idea—

**Mr. THOMAS.**—What is that idea?

**Mr. SALMON.**—I will explain that presently. I desire to say a very few words in regard to the initiation and objective of this movement. It has been recognised that in Australia women have been given equal political privileges with men, and it was felt by Her Excellency Lady Northcote that an opportunity might be taken to show, not only that women were competent to take their place side by side with men in the political arena, but that they were able to hold their own in the industrial arena. Accordingly she desired to follow in Australia the example of republican France. She sought the advice and

assistance of a number of gentlemen in the Commonwealth, whose names appear upon the schedule which is in the possession of the honorable member for Coolgardie. He will find that upon that executive—which was appointed by Her Excellency Lady Northcote—every class of the community is represented.

**Mr. SPEAKER.**—I think it is very desirable that the names of members of His Excellency's household should not be introduced into this discussion. The honorable member can accomplish his purpose without making any such reference.

**Mr. SALMON.**—I quite agree that the name of His Excellency the Governor-General should not be mentioned, but I did not know that I was under the same embargo in regard to the name of his consort.

**Mr. SPEAKER.**—I said that I thought it was desirable that the names of members of His Excellency's household should not be mentioned.

**Mr. SALMON.**—I agree with you, Mr. Speaker. The president of the executive called together a number of gentlemen, and upon that executive every class of the community is represented.

**Mr. MAHON.**—Does the honorable member say that?

**Mr. SALMON.**—I do.

**Mr. MAHON.**—I will prove that the honorable member is wrong.

**Mr. SALMON.**—Every section of the community is represented down to even the Socialist class.

**Mr. FRAZER.**—“Up” to the Socialist class.

**Mr. SALMON.**—If the honorable member prefers it, I will say along to the Socialist class. The name of the president of the Socialist League of Victoria appears upon the executive.

**Mr. JOHNSON.**—Does that justify a payment being made, by the Government without the authority of Parliament?

**Mr. SALMON.**—I hope that the honorable member will allow me to proceed. I am not at present attempting to justify the expenditure of any money. I am merely endeavouring to show that the statement of the honorable member for Coolgardie, that the movement is essentially a Toorak one, is not justifiable. I hope that the honorable member will permit me to do that, because I feel sure that he would be sorry to injure a movement which has for its object the elevation of the women workers of the Commonwealth.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—What does it matter where the movement originated?

Mr. SALMON.—Does the honorable member desire to assist me or to hinder me in the statement which I wish to make? If he wishes to help me, he will allow me to conclude my statement. In each of the States, committees have been formed upon which every class of the community is represented. I am not aware of the personnel of every committee, but in Victoria the committee contains the names of representatives of every section of the community, from the wife of the Lieutenant-Governor down to any person whom it was thought would take an interest in the movement.

Mr. MAHON.—Will the honorable member point to the name of any working man's wife upon the list?

Mr. SALMON.—The wife of the leader of the Labour Party of Victoria—Mrs. Prendergast—is a member of the committee, as is also the wife of the Postmaster-General.

Mr. WILKS.—Does the honorable member call the Postmaster-General a labour man?

Mr. SALMON.—I think that he has done as much for the working classes as has any other member of the community. I would further point out that Mr. J. P. Jones is a member of the executive.

Mr. TUDOR.—He is a big business man.

Mr. SALMON.—Business men are required, and, in addition, he is president of the Socialist League.

Mr. TUDOR.—He is not.

Mr. SALMON.—I am assured by the secretary of the league that he is.

Mr. HUME COOK.—He is the ex-president.

Mr. SALMON.—The statement of the honorable member for Coolgardie, if allowed to pass uncontradicted, might do incalculable harm to a movement which is intended to assist the very movement which he and those associated with him take under their special care.

Mr. WATKINS.—Is it a fact that the executive has preferred German pianos to Australian instruments?

Mr. SALMON.—It is not.

Mr. THOMAS.—Mr. Beale himself told me that that was the intention.

Mr. SALMON.—I have been present at the meetings of the executive, and I can assure honorable members that it is not so.

Mr. BAMFORD.—Is it not true that a German band is to be engaged?

Mr. SALMON.—No. The band is to be composed of Australian women.

Mr. THOMAS.—Is it to be an exhibition of Australian work?

Mr. SALMON.—It is to be an exhibition of Australian women's work. Women from other parts of the world will not be competitors. Owing to the interjections of honorable members I have perhaps occupied more time than I should. But it is felt by the executive that a very grave injustice will be done to this movement, and that its usefulness and success will be considerably interfered with, if the statement made by the honorable member for Coolgardie—evidently under a misapprehension—be allowed to pass unchallenged. In conclusion, I may say that Toorak, in common with every other portion of the community, has done its duty in providing considerable sums of money in the form of prizes for this exhibition. But it is not likely to be a considerable competitor at it. Honorable members will see, therefore, that it is not intended to make the exhibition a society affair at all. The honest desire of those who are associated with the movement, and who, acting in a purely honorary capacity, have devoted a considerable amount of time to it, is that we shall show to the outside world that the women of Australia are prepared to undertake, and do carry out, industrial work of a character which places them at least upon an equality with—if it does not elevate them above—women in any other part of the world.

Mr. WILKS (Dalley) [3.12].—It is somewhat unusual to provoke discussion upon the report stage of a Supply Bill, but the remarks of the previous speaker are calculated to do that. I do not care whether the movement to which he has referred was initiated at Toorak, Footscray, or elsewhere. I take it that Toorak is synonymous with "swelldom," but that fact does not bias me against the proposed exhibition, because I think the object in view is a good one. If the persons identified with the movement are rendering good service to Australia by holding the proposed exhibition I say "Good luck to them." But I have something else to consider as a representative of the people. The honorable member for Coolgardie intimated yesterday that the sum of £1,000 had been paid by the ex-Treasurer to assist this movement without a vote of Parliament. I desire to know whether the honorable member will now go further and

divide this House, not into Toorak or Footscray sections, but into sections which support, and do not support, constitutional government. If it be held to be an offence for the Government to expend this money without the sanction of Parliament, I shall be only too pleased to join in condemning them by refusing Supply upon this occasion. Of course I am aware of the understanding which exists at the present time owing to the unfortunate absence of the Prime Minister. But it is my duty to consider whether the Ministry are giving effect to the principles of constitutional government or not. If the honorable member for Coolgardie proves his case he must command the support of honorable members. I recognise that it is futile for one honorable member at this stage to oppose the granting of Supply, but I nevertheless urge my protest against the action of the Ministry. I hope that the honorable member for Laanecoorie will not confuse two matters which are involved here, because the consideration of whether the movement to which he referred originated with Mrs. Blank or with Lady Vere de Vere is entirely irrelevant to the issue. If women wish to give their services to this exhibition that is their own affair. What I am chiefly concerned with is the payment of £1,000 without the authorization of Parliament. Only last week a new Tariff was tabled—a Tariff the operation of which I regard as most injurious to the masses. It imposes heavy taxes upon their food supplies and their wearing apparel, and as a low tariffist I intend to use every available opportunity to defeat the Government. The most effective way to accomplish that object would be to refuse to grant them Supply. Owing to unfortunate circumstances, however, a certain agreement has been arrived at by the leaders of the various parties in this House; although there are other opportunities of which we can avail ourselves to express our dissent. The plea advanced last night by the honorable member for Flinders, that by granting three months' Supply we should avoid any interruption of the Tariff debate, does not appeal to me. Surely no one anticipates that the Tariff will be dealt with in three months. As a matter of fact, it would not at any time take long to pass a Bill providing for one month's Supply.

**Mr. JOSEPH COOK.**—Such a Bill might be passed without any discussion.

*Mr. Wilks.*

**Mr. WILKS.**—That is so. We have been urged to agree to the passing of this Bill on the ground that it will leave the way clear for the uninterrupted consideration of the Tariff, but I believe that we shall occupy more than even four months in dealing with the Tariff. I shall content myself by raising my voice in protest against the conduct of public business in this way. The Acting Prime Minister does not care a snap of the fingers as long as he secures the passing of this Bill. He will not care if when the Estimates are under consideration we strike out the item relating to the grant of £1,000 to the Women's Work Exhibition. There is, however, a more drastic course by which we may show our disapproval of the action of the Minister, and I hope that we shall adopt it.

**Mr. MAHON (Coolgardie) [3.17].**—I do not propose to withdraw any statement made by me in regard to the proposed vote of £1,000 to the Australian Exhibition of Women's Work, but I should like to explain that when speaking to the question last night I was led to refer to Toorak by the interjection of an honorable member who inquired what was the character of the Women's Work Association.

**Mr. POYNTON.**—Does not the honorable member live in Toorak?

**Mr. MAHON.**—I do. My objection to the proposed vote has no relation to the objects of the exhibition, or the position of the individuals associated with it. I do not wish to cast any reflection upon the work which their association is doing. But I certainly deny the statement made by the honorable member for Laanecoorie that there are to be found on the executive of the exhibition representatives of all classes. I am not familiar with the names of some of the gentlemen on the executive committee, but I know that the sympathies of a number of them run with the reactionary parties in the Commonwealth.

**Mr. SALMON.**—They belong chiefly to the Australian Natives' Association.

**Mr. MAHON.**—The majority of them do not belong to the Australian Natives' Association. For the information of the House I shall give the names of the executive committee. In the first place, we have the Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Councillor Weedon. Then we have the Hon. J. Hume Cook, M.P., and Mr. W. H. Felstead, who, I believe, is a leading member of the Employers' Federation.

**Mr. HEDGES.**—Why should he not be?

Mr. MAHON.—I have nothing to say on that point. I am simply dealing with the contention that the committee of the exhibition is a democratic one, and I think I have a right to give to the House the names of the members. The other members of the executive are Mr. M. P. Fox, Mr. T. J. Gillard, Mr. J. P. Jones, Mr. J. M. Joshua, President of the Chamber of Manufactures, the Hon. W. Knox, M.P., —to whose courtesy I am indebted for this list—Mr. R. J. Larking, President of the Chamber of Commerce, Hon. E. Miller, M.L.C., and also Mr. A. A. Peverill and Mr. E. E. Roberts, two gentlemen of whom I know nothing.

Mr. TUDOR.—They belong to the Australian Natives' Association.

Mr. MAHON.—Then we have Doctor the Hon. C. C. Salmon, M.P., and Mr. Frank Tate, who is Director of Education in Victoria. I have nothing to say regarding the members of the committee or the ladies interested in the work of the exhibition. The point that I wish to make is that the sum of £1,000 appears to have been paid to the committee without the authority of the Parliament, and, so far as I can ascertain, without the authority of the Cabinet.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—No; I think that the Cabinet gave its authority at a meeting at which I was not present.

Mr. MAHON.—The Acting Prime Minister has not confided in me, but from what I was able to ascertain I was under the impression that this grant had been made without the authority of the Cabinet. Whether it was or was not so made, honorable members must recognise that the principle adopted is a very dangerous one. The committee of the exhibition, however deserving and worthy their object may be, should have been called upon to wait until Parliament could be consulted on the question of whether or not a grant should be made to them. If Parliament, in its wisdom, had decided that the amount should be paid, I, for one, after voting against the proposal, would have had nothing more to say. There are in the schedule a number of items in the same category. Among these are items relating to the expenditure of delegates to the Imperial and Navigation Conferences. I take it, however, that the House having authorized delegates to proceed to those Conferences, impliedly accepted responsibility for the payment of their expenses.

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Mr. JOHNSON.—I can find no resolution to that effect.

Mr. MAHON.—I admit that that is so.

Mr. REID.—But there is an implied authority when we ask the delegates to attend those Conferences.

Mr. MAHON.—That is so. The House was aware that delegates were to attend both Conferences, and that they were not going to pay their own expenses. As a matter of fact, however, we knew absolutely nothing about the proposed vote for the Exhibition of Women's Work. The Cabinet might well have said, in reply to representations on behalf of the committee, "We sympathize with the objects you have in view, but we cannot make you a grant until we have obtained the approval of Parliament."

Mr. WILKS.—Does the honorable member think he would be able to secure a grant of £1,000 for a Labour league bazaar?

Mr. MAHON.—I am sure we should not be able to obtain such a grant.

Mr. WILKS.—Then the honorable member ought to oppose this item from first to last.

Mr. MAHON.—When the Estimates are before us, I shall divide the Committee on a motion to strike out the item.

Mr. KELLY.—I take it that the money has already been expended.

Mr. MAHON.—Even if it has, the Auditor-General has not passed the expenditure, and the House has still complete control over it. If the Government choose illegally to pay away public funds I apprehend that they may be compelled to make a refund.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—The honorable member is making the ex-Treasurer look very sad.

Mr. MAHON.—That is no part of my intention. I do not wish to delay the granting of Supply, for I recognise that the public servants must be paid, and that the public works of the Commonwealth must be carried on. When the Estimates are under consideration, however, I shall join with others who share my views in taking steps to emphasize my objection to the action of the Government.

Mr. WILKS.—The honorable member should move the adjournment of the House and call for a division.

Mr. MAHON.—I shall be found voting against the item in the Estimates, and shall be led to take that action as a warning to other Governments. I hope the House will be prepared to teach the Ministry such a

lesson that in future no Government will be ready to grant, without the sanction of the Parliament, such a large sum for any purpose whatever.

Mr. KNOX (Kooyong) [3.25].—I am very glad that the honorable member for Coolgardie has removed the impression to which his remarks last night gave rise that there was, on the part of honorable members, any feeling of hostility to the efforts being made in connexion with the Women's Work Exhibition. As a member of the executive committee, I should like to say that its object is to make the area of the proposed exhibition as wide as possible. We desire to show the advantages which the women of Australia can secure by taking up work which, the exhibition will show, offers profitable avenues for employment. We believe that it will be shown that the work of the women of Australia is equal to that of women possessing like opportunities in any other part of the world. I am glad, therefore, that the honorable member for Coolgardie has explained that he has opposed the item in question only on the broad ground that the Government should not have accepted the responsibility of making a grant in anticipation of their action being sanctioned by the Parliament. It would be a misfortune if honorable members were not convinced that the effort is broad-based, in so far as its motives and objects are concerned. It is not by any means a class institution. The wives of men living in the most humble circumstances—and I use the term in no offensive sense—in the suburbs of Melbourne are taking a keen interest in the forthcoming exhibition. I am in a position to state that women who have had to earn their own living are preparing to compete for the liberal prizes that are being offered. I am, therefore, glad that the honorable member for Coolgardie has taken steps to correct an entirely erroneous impression that the whole movement is anything but one for the people and for the benefit more particularly of the women of Australia. It was the earnest and anxious desire of Her Excellency Lady Northcote, in initiating the movement, that the exhibition should have that result. She has had at heart that object alone, and those associated with her are working heartily to give effect to it. I trust that when the Estimates are before us we shall not have a discussion calculated to interfere in any way with an exposition which, we hope, will be a great success,

and one likely to promote the best interests of the women of the Commonwealth.

Mr. FISHER (Wide Bay) [3.28].—I think that a distinct mistake would have been made had the item been allowed to pass without discussion; but it is well that the public should clearly understand that there is no hostility on the part of honorable members to the forthcoming exhibition. The sole consideration that we have in view is whether it is safe to allow the Government to give away without authority any portion of the moneys of the Commonwealth.

Mr. WILKS.—The right honorable member for East Sydney, when Premier of New South Wales, was turned out of office because of an expenditure of £350, which was not sanctioned by the Parliament.

Mr. SALMON.—But that sum went to only one individual.

Mr. FISHER.—If that incident had not occurred, the whole political history of Australia might have been changed.

Mr. JOHNSON.—For the better.

Mr. FISHER.—I think it is well that a discussion should have taken place in regard to the Australian Exhibition of Women's Work. Statisticians give us much information about the work carried out in factories where men and women are earning a living, but I venture to say that a large volume of work that is beneficial to the human race is done in the homes of the people, and that very little, if any, cognizance of it is taken by our statisticians.

Mr. FULLER.—I hope that honorable members will remember that fact when the Tariff is under consideration.

Mr. FISHER.—So far as that matter is concerned I have much in common with the honorable member. While I hope that the exhibition of the work of Australian women will be a great success, I think that the distinguished persons who form the committee of the movement committed a serious error when they approached the Government to ask for assistance for their project. Similar movements in other towns and cities, and in country districts, have not received help from the Commonwealth Government, but have been conducted as ordinary business concerns. It is my experience of women, especially of the women connected with the working classes, that they do not desire to be patronized by members of Parliament, nor do they seek the assistance of Governments in their undertakings.

Mr. WILKS.—Then in these matters they are wholly anti-Socialists.

Mr. FISHER.—The honorable member is always bubbling over with humour, but the underlying common-sense does him credit. I am not now speaking of either Socialism or anti-Socialism. Apparently it is those of many possessions who are ready to make the first claim on the public purse. I am entirely in sympathy with the aims of those who are promoting this exhibition, and should be ready to do anything that could assist them; but a serious mistake was made by the Government in granting them £1,000 without the authority of Parliament. It was known that the exhibition was not to take place until October or November, long after the time when the Estimates would be laid before Parliament, and therefore the Government had no defence in anticipating our wishes. If £1,000 could properly be given away in this manner, so could £10,000, or any larger part of the country's money.

Mr. FULLER.—The honorable member should divide the House on the question.

Mr. FISHER.—At the right time the honorable member will find me against the proposal.

Mr. MAHON.—To defeat the Government now would only be to delay the granting of Supply.

Mr. FISHER.—I hope that the honorable members for Laanecoorie and Kooyong will not be discouraged by this discussion, and that those who read the reports of it will recognise that, while we doubt the wisdom of the Government in making this grant, we all sympathize with the movement, and desire that it shall be successful.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK (Parramatta) [3-35].—I congratulate the honorable member for Wide Bay upon his candour. We have heard from him a very proper constitutional statement of this question, from which nothing was wanting. But this stickler for constitutionalism concluded by saying that the Constitution must be thrown to the winds when questions of party politics are concerned. He says, in effect, "A fig for the Constitution if it is to interfere with my political purposes." That attitude detracts very much from the force of his exposition of the constitutional principles of which he is usually so perfect an exponent.

Mr. REID.—He would punish any other Government that might make a grant of this kind.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Yes; but this Government must be kept in power. No doubt the honorable member would support it, even if it were guilty of an enormity twenty times as great as that now complained of. However, I shall not pursue the matter further, because there are one or two others to which I wish to refer. The Minister of Trade and Customs has been so badgered in regard to the Tariff that I do not wish to add to his difficulties; but I wish to bring under his notice the desirability of speedily settling a question in regard to which his present state of indecision is causing great inconvenience to the trading community. Merchants have customers wanting goods, but they hesitate to take delivery of them, because they do not know whether they are to be subject to the new rates or to the old Tariff rates. It should not take the Minister two hours to come to a decision as to whether the cargoes of vessels which, prior to the imposition of the new Tariff, had touched at one Australian port should or should not be subject to duty under the new rates at other Australian ports of call which they may afterwards visit.

Mr. REID.—Once a vessel has entered an Australian port it should be protected everywhere within the Commonwealth.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I complain of the tardiness of the Minister in arriving at a decision on this matter. All the facts are known to him, and the sooner a determination is arrived at, the better it will be for the trading community. I do not ask him to decide in favour of importers, but I ask him to come to a decision which will put them out of their suspense, and will let them know on what terms their business is to be transacted. The Bill provides for expenditure in connexion with the Commonwealth offices in London, and I understand that on the Estimates is an item providing for the payment of money in connexion with the new site in the Strand, in regard to which the Acting Prime Minister secured an option.

Sir JOHN FORREST.—That site is no good for the purpose for which it has been secured. The Acting Prime Minister had been only three weeks in London when he determined upon it, and in that time he could not learn very much about the matter.

Mr. BAMFORD.—Why should we not have a trip to inspect the site?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—That is an excellent suggestion. We are in a mood to be lavish with the taxpayers' money just

now, so why should we not take a trip to London to inspect the site? What I wish to know is whether the Minister has secured a site, and what is in contemplation in respect to it. The Premier of Victoria has stated that he, too, has secured a site in London for the Victorian office.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—The Victorian office will have accommodation on the site which has been secured by the Commonwealth.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—We should know whether the Commonwealth Government is going in with the Victorian Government, or *vice versa*.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—The Victorian Government is going in with the Commonwealth Government, if we decide upon the site. The Premier of Victoria told me that he would do so.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I take it that the Acting Prime Minister will obtain an expression of opinion from honorable members before he spends any money in connexion with this site.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I shall put the matter before honorable members before anything is done. The item on the Estimates is for preliminary expenses and for plans. I will test the feeling of honorable members on that item. The site is under offer for a certain period—about six weeks—but it is desired that we shall come to a decision in regard to it as soon as possible.

Mr. MCWILLIAMS.—To whom is it under offer?

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—To the Commonwealth Government by the London County Council.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I presume that the honorable gentleman will lay all the papers concerning it on the table before we are asked to deal with the item on the Estimates?

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—Certainly. There is no item in the Supply Bill under which money will be expended in this connexion.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I ascertained that last night, after much trouble. I wish to make a brief reference to the Federal Capital question. The honorable member for Kennedy is right in saying that the other States are not to blame for the delay which is taking place in connexion with its settlement. The people of New South Wales have never blamed the people of the other States for this delay.

Mr. McDONALD.—The Premier of New South Wales makes it appear that the people of the other States are against the settlement of this question.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Our complaint is against this Government, which, although it only dallies with the question, is kept in office by the honorable member for Kennedy, amongst others. He must, therefore, take his share of responsibility for the delay that has occurred. The Government can do nothing unless it is directed and controlled by the larger party that is in alliance with it. Directly the Ministry is threatened, the Labour Party comes to its support. We were informed at the beginning of the session that a speedy settlement of the Federal Site question would be arrived at; but when arrangements had been made for the visit of honorable members to the sites a mysterious and unexplained postponement took place.

Mr. FULLER.—It is winter time at Dalgety.

Mr. REID.—That has much to do with the case.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Does it mean that the Minister of Trade and Customs is to absolutely rule the House on this question? It is about time the matter was taken out of the hands of that honorable gentleman, and finally dealt with in some way or other. Why was the visit mysteriously postponed, when arrangements had gone so far as to secure trains for the trip? We are told now that the weather is too severe at Dalgety for a visit. I desire, however, to protest against this dalliance with a most important question. The people of New South Wales rightly complain of the delay, which is not attributable to individual members of the House, but to the Government who, apparently, permit one of themselves to deal with the matter as he sees fit. I ask the Acting Prime Minister to indicate when it is likely that a decision will be arrived at. That is all we may reasonably ask at this stage; but we are certainly entitled to know the intentions of the Government.

Mr. POYNTON (Grey) [3.46].—That there has been delay no one will deny; but I am strongly of opinion that the only person responsible is the Premier of New South Wales. When we met in 1901, a number of sites were submitted by the Government of that State; and from those sites we made our selection.

Mr. BOWDEN.—Dalgety was never submitted by New South Wales.

Mr. JOHNSON.—Bombala was submitted, but not Dalgety.

Mr. POYNTON.—What is the difference? Both places are within the same area; and it is only quibbling to say that the site we selected was not offered by the State Government. We have acted honorably towards New South Wales. Had we gone outside of the sites submitted to us, and endeavoured to force one on the State Government, I could have understood the present attitude of the latter.

Mr. SPEAKER.—I must again call the attention of honorable members to the fact that conversations are proceeding in loud tones almost all over the chamber, and that it is quite impossible for an honorable member to address the House under such conditions.

Mr. POYNTON.—There has been every intention on the part of Victorian and other representatives to do what is fair to New South Wales. When the final selection was made, we were asked by the leader of the Opposition, supported by the leader of the Labour Party, to stand by that selection; and we ought not to be now blamed for delay for which Mr. Carruthers is himself responsible.

Mr. JOHNSON (Lang) [3.50].—When I rose to speak last night I was asked by Ministers to defer what I had to say until the report stage was reached, when, I was assured, I would have an opportunity to go fully into the whole question of the proposed three months' Supply. I suppose, however, that if I were to take Ministers at their word, I should be accused of wasting time, and, although I should be quite within my rights, such an accusation might fairly be made under the circumstances. It would have been idle to wait until the report stage before entering an emphatic protest against the granting of three months' Supply. What I desire now, however, is to say a few words in regard to the grant of £1,000 to an association which has already been referred to, and to express my surprise at the peculiar attitude of certain honorable members regarding it. Those honorable members have taken the trouble to look up the names of those associated with this particular organization, and, finding them to include a few capitalists, socialists, federalists, provincialists, and other ists, they regard the money as rightly expended, because various sections of society are represented.

Mr. SALMON.—Who said that?

Mr. JOHNSON.—I understand that the honorable member himself sought to justify the appropriation on those grounds.

Mr. SALMON.—I never mentioned the appropriation.

Mr. JOHNSON.—That was the impression which the honorable member's attitude left on my mind.

Mr. SALMON.—What other honorable member made the statement?

Mr. JOHNSON.—The honorable member for Coolgardie read certain names out of a paper, showing the identity of persons associated with this organization. All that, however, is beside the point, because it does not matter what the association is—the fact remains that it is a private organization, and that the money was given without the authority of Parliament. As to the object of the organization, I do not propose to say anything.

Mr. SPEAKER.—I should be very sorry to be compelled to mention the names of honorable members, but I may have to do so if the conversations do not cease. The honorable member addressing the House finds the utmost difficulty in proceeding.

Mr. JOHNSON.—I do not suppose there is any one who is not in full sympathy with the organization; and if the question had been submitted to Parliament, and good and sufficient reasons given, it is probable that authority for the grant would have been obtained. As it was, however, Ministers, or a Minister on his own responsibility, paid this money out of the public Treasury without any warrant. The real question is whether the Government have any right to take public funds and dispose of them to private persons, without parliamentary authority, and for what is not an officially recognised purpose. It is a most dangerous practice to make disbursements in that way, for any purpose whatever, and it can only be justified in cases of unforeseen emergency in the public interest. In New South Wales, the Government of which the present leader of the Opposition was the head, was turned out of office because a grant of £350 had been paid to a certain person, as expenses out of pocket, when he was engaged on public business of a most important character. That payment was a most legitimate one, and would have been voted by Parliament without any difficulty; but the Labour Party in the State Parliament took action, which, as I say, had the result of turning the Government out of office. It is quite true, however, that only a few months later that same party condoned the payment of £1,000 without the authority of Parliament.

under other circumstances far less justifiable, to a member of that Parliament, and I quote this incident merely to show the inconsistency of people who act in that way. We now find one member of the Labour Party, with a great show of indignation, assailing the Government for paying this money, and making all kinds of threats as to his future political action. The attitude of that honorable member was, apparently, indorsed by other honorable members so long as he and they believed that the ex-Treasurer, who has resigned from the Ministry, was solely responsible for the payment, but now that it is discovered that the ex-Treasurer is not personally responsible, and that the Prime Minister himself is involved, there is a sudden change in their demeanour. It is amusing to us on this side to watch these different phases, and to note the peculiarly elastic nature of a conscience that would go to the length of turning out one Government yet would justify another Government for one and the same act. Could insincerity be carried to any greater length? I now should like to say a word or two in regard to the Federal Capital. The assertion of the honorable member for Grey as to the responsibility of the Premier of New South Wales for the delay, is absolutely contrary to fact; and so also is his statement that the site of Dalgety was offered by the New South Wales Government. It is certain that a site not very far from Dalgety was offered, but Bombala is not similarly circumstanced, either in regard to geographical position or climatic conditions. Nor was Bombala offered by Mr. Carruthers or his Government. I ask the Acting Prime Minister when this question is to be brought up for discussion and settlement. If we are to have an uninterrupted Tariff discussion, for some months there will be no opportunity to deal with the question of the Federal Capital. Will the Acting Prime Minister fulfil a promise made earlier in the session, and afford honorable members an early opportunity to deal fully with the question? In the opinion of not only the people of New South Wales, but of the people of the whole of Australia, this is a matter which should be settled at the earliest possible moment. In New South Wales, feeling runs very high, owing to the prolonged delay in the settlement of this question. From all points of view, and irrespective of all party considerations, it is most desirable that it

*Mr. Johnson.*

should be settled at the earliest possible moment. I hope that the Acting Prime Minister will let us know definitely when we shall be afforded an opportunity of dealing with it. So far as the Supply Bill is concerned, I have emphatically entered my protest against granting three-months' Supply when one month's Supply is all that is required to meet the salaries and other payments for a reasonable period.

Mr. FOSTER (New England) [4.1].—I join with honorable members who have already spoken in urging the Government to afford us an early opportunity of dealing with the question of the Federal Capital Site. The Acting Prime Minister has stated that he intends to dispose of several matters at an early date, and I trust that that question is included amongst them. Like other honorable members, I regard the Premier of New South Wales as the chief sinner in connexion with the delay that has occurred in the settlement of this vexed question. He has adopted such a mean and parochial attitude that it is incumbent upon the Government to strike out in a Federal manner, and allow honorable members an opportunity to arrive at an early solution of the existing difficulty.

Mr. FULLER.—What is the parochial attitude which Mr. Carruthers has adopted?

Mr. FOSTER.—He has viewed the whole question from the narrow stand-point of New South Wales—I mean Sydney. At the present juncture he is engaged in fighting an election, and I entirely deprecate his tactics in dragging the question of the choice of the Federal Capital into a State election.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—If the honorable member had been here six years ago he would have taken up a different attitude.

Mr. FOSTER.—Irrespective of whether I have been present in this Parliament or not during the past six years, I have enough brains to form my own judgment upon the subject, and I am merely giving a straightforward opinion as an Australian. I have previously protested that this is an Australian question, and not a parochial one.

Mr. FULLER.—As a New South Wales representative, is not the honorable member prepared to give effect to the constitutional compact?

Mr. FOSTER.—Most decidedly I am. We heard very little dissatisfaction in connexion with the Dalgety site before it was selected.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—That statement shows that the honorable member does not know anything about the matter.

Mr. FOSTER.—Anyhow, I join with the representatives of New South Wales in asking that the question should be pushed forward by the Government. In regard to the effort which is being made to advertise Australian work, I wish to say that a wrong impression appears to exist as to the attitude of honorable members of the Labour corner. Personally, I do not care who may advertise Australian products, their efforts shall command my support, even if they happen to be the greatest aristocrats whose names appear upon the committee of the Women's Work Exhibition. So long as they undertake the national work of bringing Australian products before the public, their action should be upheld by the Australian people. To my mind, there is not nearly enough effort made in that direction. There is too much of the "made in Germany" and "made in Japan" business in regard to the products sold in this country. It is about time that honorable members ceased to cavil at particular individuals who desire to advertise Australian products. But as we shall be afforded an opportunity at a later stage of discussing the expenditure of £1,000 in connexion with this exhibition, I shall reserve my remarks upon it till then.

Mr. MALONEY (Melbourne) [4.7].—I understand that the right honorable member for Swan has deprecated the action of the Government in selecting a site for the Commonwealth offices in the Strand, London. Now, I suppose that I lived in London for as many years as he has months, and I know of no more important centre than the Strand. It would be impossible for any visitor to the world's metropolis to avoid passing down the Strand and seeing the offices of the Australian Commonwealth, assuming that we utilized a site there. Consequently, I cannot understand the right honorable member for Swan, who is a keen man of business, adopting the attitude which he has. In my opinion the Strand is a better thoroughfare for our Commonwealth offices than is Regent-street. It may not be quite in the financial centre of London, but in these days, by means of a telephone, one may be switched on to the very centre of the hub of the universe, so to speak. I congratulate the Government upon having chosen what, in my opinion, is absolutely the best site in London. Concerning the expenditure of £1,000 to aid

the Women's Work Exhibition, I wish to say that if we cannot trust the Government to expend a comparatively small sum of money in a moment of need, we cannot trust them to do anything. I understand that the amount has been advanced to assist in defraying the freight charges upon exhibits which may be sent from the Continent to London for transit here. I further understand that if the exhibition yields a profit this money will be returned.

Mr. THOMAS.—Is it likely to yield a profit?

Mr. MALONEY.—I have seen similar exhibitions very successful. But even if an exhibition which will make Australia better known far and wide should result in a loss I should not care. I have not met a single individual, either in the higher walks of life, the middle classes, or the lower classes who has uttered a single word in opposition to the proposed exhibition.

Mr. JOHNSON.—Nobody objects to the exhibition.

Mr. MALONEY.—A lot of cavilling and waste of time have been indulged in simply because the Government have expended the sum of £1,000. If honorable members do not think that that money should have been expended, why do they not table a direct motion of censure?

Mr. JOHNSON.—There is a proper way of doing things.

Mr. MALONEY.—God help the country if these things were done in what the honorable member conceives to be a "proper way." If he were a Minister, I will undertake to say that I should be far more lenient to him than he has been to any Government since I have been a member of the House.

Mr. WILSON (Corangamite) [4.10].—Many questions have been introduced into this discussion, and I should like to refer to two or three of them—notably to that which was brought forward by the deputy leader of the Opposition, namely, the collection of the old rates of duty upon goods which were in transit between Australian ports when the Tariff was introduced. I cannot help thinking that in no circumstances will the Acting Prime Minister be justified in remitting the existing duties and allowing those goods to be admitted under the old rates. If such a course were adopted, immediately the goods were cleared the merchants would charge the consumer the higher rates of duty, and would pocket the profit.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Is there not a question of justice involved as between the merchant here and the merchant in Western Australia?

Mr. WILSON.—The merchant here had to take all the circumstances of the case into consideration in the first instance. He was fully aware of the facts before he lodged his order. If, for example, a profit of £20,000 upon a consignment of goods would find its way into the Treasury as the result of collecting the old rates of duty, there might be something to be said in favour of the adoption of that course. But the margin of difference between the old rates and the new would undoubtedly find its way into the pockets of the merchants. Already they have increased prices for goods upon which they have not paid the increased duty.

Mr. FULLER.—What is the difference between paying the profit into the pockets of the merchants and paying it into those of the manufacturer?

Mr. WILSON.—So far as the Treasury is concerned, there is a tremendous difference. It is quite impossible to deal with merchants in the way that has been suggested.

Mr. FULLER.—Is it not the business of the merchants to make profits?

Mr. WILSON.—Of course it is. If the Government grant the concession which has been sought, they will simply be making a present of the increased rate of duty to the merchants. In regard to the proposed expenditure upon the Commonwealth offices, the complaint of the deputy leader of the Opposition when we were discussing this question last night was that the Acting Prime Minister refused to give honorable members information which he had in his possession. He would not tell us how the money provided upon the Estimates was to be expended. That is where he sinned, and that is why there has been so much talk upon this particular question. Honorable members will be almost unanimous in thinking that the site chosen is an excellent one. At the same time, I hope they will not at any time give the Government a free hand to expend money without Parliament being first consulted upon the matter. With regard to the expenditure of £1,000 upon the Women's Work Exhibition, nobody can take exception to it, although I agree with the honorable member for Coolgardie that the Ministry had no right to spend that money without first consulting Parliament.

Mr. MALONEY.—How could they consult Parliament?

Mr. WILSON.—The Treasurer's Advance is not made to enable the Government to spend money for such purposes. So far as the honorable member for Melbourne is concerned, I say that if a Government composed of members from this side of the House had done what the present Government have done, he would be one of the first to bark and to bite, whereas he now contents himself with barking.

Mr. MALONEY.—The honorable member is wrong again.

Mr. WILSON.—I know the honorable member pretty well. I have met him in public life before. Honorable members of the Labour corner who come here professing great principles are permitting many things to be done which are inconsistent with those principles. In that respect their action is very much to be deprecated. I take no exception whatever to the passing of the Supply Bill. I quite agree with the honorable member for New England that a great deal of the difficulty experienced in the settlement of the Federal Capital question has been occasioned by the Premier of New South Wales. I am very sorry to notice the hostile tone of his utterances from time to time. He would do far more good to New South Wales if he would restrain himself, and refrain from giving utterance to such views. They do not display a Federal spirit. I am always sorry to see an attempt made, for mere party purposes, to put State against State. We have to deal with this matter as a question of principle, and I shall always endeavour to observe both the spirit and the letter of the Constitution. It has seemed to me from the first that the choice of Dalgety as the site of the Federal Capital was unfortunate, and I shall hail with delight an opportunity to revoke that decision.

Mr. FULLER (Illawarra) [4.16].—I deeply regret the references which were made by the honorable member for Grey, the honorable member for New England, and the honorable member for Corangamite to the attitude taken up upon the question of the Federal Capital Site by the Premier of New South Wales. There has been an attempt to place on his shoulders the responsibility for the present unsatisfactory position in regard to that question.

Mr. POYNTON.—There can be no doubt that the blame should rightly be placed on his shoulders.

Mr. FULLER.—What justification has the honorable member for making such an assertion? Having regard to the way in which the settlement of this question has been delayed, and the humbugging that has been associated with it, Mr. Carruthers is certainly entitled to stand up for the interests of New South Wales. The accusation which has been hurled against representatives of that State in this Parliament is to a very large extent justified. The delay in dealing finally with the selection of the site is due primarily to the Acting Prime Minister and the Minister of Trade and Customs.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—That is absolutely incorrect. I shall say presently very emphatically who I think is responsible for the delay.

Mr. FULLER.—Then the accusation which I have made against the honorable gentleman and his colleague will bear fruit, since it will lead to some interesting information being placed before the House and the country. I have always been under the impression that the delay has been due to the fight between the Acting Prime Minister, who is anxious that a site in his own constituency should be selected, and the Minister of Trade and Customs, who desires that a site in the electorate which he represents should be chosen.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—That is so much bunkum.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—The honorable member knows that it is not correct.

Mr. FULLER.—I am sure that the Minister of Trade and Customs would say it was bunkum to propose the selection of any site other than Dalgety.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—The honorable member is responsible for the delay.

Mr. FULLER.—In what way?

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—I shall show the honorable member presently.

Mr. FULLER.—The House will be glad to learn who, in the opinion of the Acting Prime Minister and the Minister of Trade and Customs, are responsible for the delay.

Mr. REID.—Who put off for three weeks the proposed picnic?

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—I can give a little information in which the right honorable member is concerned.

Mr. REID.—I objected to the trip being put off.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—The right honorable member desired a special train for two honorable members.

Mr. FULLER.—It was put off owing to the severe weather conditions prevailing just now at Dalgety.

Mr. REID.—The other day a dog was found frozen to death in a street at Dalgety.

Mr. FULLER.—The Minister for Trade and Customs, I understand, thought it was well that the trip should be postponed in order that a visit might be paid to Dalgety under more favorable weather conditions.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—That is mere pabulum for use in connexion with the State elections. The honorable member knows that just as well as does Mr. Carruthers.

Mr. FULLER.—Surely we should rise superior to party considerations in dealing with so important a question! I believe that a number of honorable members, in common with myself, have endeavoured to rise to that higher and rarer atmosphere which some of the advocates of Federation told us would be found in the Parliament of the Commonwealth. But we have discovered, unfortunately, that honorable members like the Minister of Trade and Customs and others who were so strongly in favour of Federation are among those who fail to rise to that rarer atmosphere of which they were so fond of speaking in days gone by. They are constantly having regard to trifling State matters, and wondering what they can do to please their own little constituencies. We should determine the site of the Capital without consideration for State politics. I sincerely trust that in the near future we shall deal finally with the question of the Capital Site, and also that the Minister of Trade and Customs and the Acting Prime Minister will carry out their promise to make statements on the subject.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE (Hume—Treasurer) [4.24].—Several matters have been dealt with during this debate, the heat of which has reminded me that we are rapidly approaching a time when we shall have possibly a repetition of the tactics of the Opposition of the good old days, when they had relays of honorable members each prepared to make a speech extending over three hours. The views which some of them have expressed to-day may be only an echo of the past, and I sincerely hope that we shall not have a return of the troubous times of a few years ago. I have heard it said again and again by honorable members of the Opposition,

"Give us the Tariff; we are prepared to put it through right away, and there will be very little debate upon it." I hope that those statements will be fulfilled, although present appearances are not such as to make me sanguine.

Mr. WILSON.—Is that why the honorable gentleman has proposed an extra 10 per cent. or 15 per cent. in many cases?

Mr. WILKS.—The honorable gentleman does not wish the Tariff to be disposed of for the next two years?

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I hope that it will be dealt with as quickly as possible. Reference has been made to the selection of a site in London for the Commonwealth offices, and I may say at once that no definite step has been taken by the Government. The Prime Minister, when in London, had his time so fully occupied with other matters that he requested me to examine eight sites which it had been suggested would be suitable for Commonwealth offices. I did so, and most of those whom I consulted agreed with me that the site in the Strand owned by the London County Council was the very best that could be selected. As a matter of fact, Mr. Bent had actually selected, as a site for Victorian offices, a corner block out of the site of which I approved. He very properly and kindly said, when I spoke to him upon the matter, that if the Commonwealth secured the large allotment adjoining that which he had chosen, he would be very glad to hand over his block and join with us in securing central offices.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—He does not say that now; he wishes to know whether the Government of the Commonwealth are prepared to join with him.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I am sure Mr. Bent will stand by his offer. He has conducted many similar negotiations, and I have never known him to go back on his word. The statement which the honorable member for Parramatta has attributed to him was only a little bit of by-play on his part. The option which the London County Council gave me to secure the Strand site expired on the 20th July. I found it impossible, however, to submit the matter to Parliament before that date, and I therefore cabled for an extension of time, with the result that the option was extended for about two months. A request was made that we should decide as soon as possible whether we desired to acquire this site, since the London County Council did

not wish to hold it under offer longer than was absolutely necessary. I have not placed on this Supply Bill any sum in respect of the land, but I wish to bring the matter before Parliament in a proper way, and as quickly as possible. I have on the Estimates an item to cover the necessary preliminaries, and also if possible the cost of preparing designs. My desire is that competitive designs shall be invited, so that we may secure the very best that it is possible to obtain. I wish the House to decide as soon as possible whether we are to proceed with this undertaking, and I am sure that even the Opposition will not blame me for the action I have taken. As a matter of fact, had an extension of time been refused, I should have been tempted to accept the responsibility of acquiring the site, and feel the House would have indorsed my action. Coming now to the Federal Capital Site question, I say that those who are almost entirely to blame for the delay which has occurred are those who two years ago talked the matter almost into its grave at a time when it was ready to be dealt with.

Mr. FULLER.—Of which site does the Minister approve now?

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I do not feel called upon to answer that question. Since I have been in my present position, I have not brought the matter before the Cabinet, and therefore cannot declare the opinions of Ministers in regard to it, though I hope to do so at an early date. Honorable members will understand that I do not wish for delay in this matter. Unless there is to be an alteration of the constitutional provision imposing the 100 miles limit—which has been suggested by the honorable member for Fawcett—we should proceed to a final settlement as quickly as possible. I shall do the best I can to bring it about.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Why was the recently proposed visit of inspection to the sites postponed?

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—No one would go; I do not know why. I had nothing to do with organizing the trip, though, when it was found that honorable members would not go, I telegraphed to the Premier of New South Wales, saying that a special train would not be required. The deputy leader of the Opposition has asked whether it is intended to apply the new Tariff rates to the unlanded cargoes of vessels which, prior to their imposition, had entered an Australian port, and are to call at other ports

in the Commonwealth. To-day I consulted with the Minister of Trade and Customs and the Comptroller-General in regard to the matter, and the last-named has been asked to submit in writing to-morrow morning a full account of the reasons why he thinks the duties should be charged on such cargoes at the new rates. These reasons will be very difficult to get over.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Will a decision be come to by the Minister to-morrow? The present indecision is interfering with business.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—Ministers have not been idle, and our decision will be made known to-morrow. With reference to the grant of £1,000 to the Committee of the Women's Work Exhibition, I have been asked to read this memorandum—

The Women's Work Exhibition are procuring exhibits from Great Britain and the Continent. There are committees in London, Paris, and other places.

The Peninsular and Oriental Company have undertaken to convey exhibits to Australia free of charge.

Representatives of the Exhibition waited on the Prime Minister and urged that Government assistance should be rendered to meet the charges of collection of exhibits on the Continent, and transmission to the port of shipment.

It was decided to advance a sum not to exceed £1,000, on the understanding that it was to be repaid should the Exhibition be a financial success.

The £1,000 was forwarded to the representative of the Commonwealth in London, who makes payments to the Committee on the production of vouchers for expenditure in connexion with the continental exhibits. The amount was paid from Treasurer's Advance. It will finally appear in the Supplementary Estimates for 1906-7. Ministers who will not take the responsibility of acting in connexion with emergencies arising when Parliament is not in session are not worthy of their positions. The criticism which has been heard might have been justified had the amount advanced been a large one; but during a long parliamentary experience I have never hesitated to make small advances of this kind when the occasion demanded, and I shall not hesitate in the future, though, of course, I shall take care to ascertain the nature of the applications, and consider whether Parliament would be likely to approve of the grants. There are many matters cropping up out of session to regard to which the opinion of honorable members cannot be obtained beforehand, and Ministers must be prepared to take responsibility for their actions in regard to them. I hope that the Bill will be passed to-night, so that it

can be sent to the Senate and dealt with there, because it is necessary that we shall be able to make certain payments to-morrow.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Report adopted.

Bill read a third time.

## QUARANTINE BILL.

Bill read a third time.

## PARLIAMENTARY ALLOWANCES BILL.

Mr. SPEAKER reported the receipt of a message from His Excellency the Governor-General, recommending an appropriation for the purposes of this Bill.

*Ordered*—

That the foregoing message be considered in Committee of the whole House forthwith.

*In Committee*:

Motion (by Sir WILLIAM LYNE) proposed—

That it is expedient that an appropriation of revenue be made for the purposes of a Bill for an Act relating to the allowance to members of each House of the Parliament of the Commonwealth.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE (Flinders) [4.40].—Are we not to have an explanation from the Treasurer as to the attitude of the Ministry in regard to this proposal?

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I made a statement on the subject last night.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—I was not present when the honorable gentleman made that statement, but from what I have heard concerning it, and from the newspaper reports which I have read, I consider it the most amazing that has ever emanated from the head of a Government. I gather that, although the Treasurer has brought down this message, the Ministry will not take any step in connexion with the matter, proposing to leave honorable members to deal with it as they think fit. The newspaper report may be wrong.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—The newspaper report is quite right. I shall give a reason for what I said, though nothing that I may do will please the honorable member.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—That is one form of argument. The Treasurer's attitude is antagonistic to the purposes for which a message from the Crown is required. These messages are a constitutional safeguard in regard to proposals of a financial character imposing additional charges on the

revenue. The Crown is advised by its responsible Ministers when additional expenditure must be undertaken, and recommends appropriation accordingly. No private member has the right to initiate a measure for increasing taxation or expenditure, the whole responsibility for such proposals being thrown upon the Government intrusted with the administration of the finances of the country. Therefore, if the newspaper report is correct, the Treasurer is adopting a course inconsistent with proper constitutional procedure in regard to the initiation of measures involving a financial charge, and is removing the security which the country possesses for the administration of its finances on a responsible basis.

Mr. WATKINS.—The same course has been taken in New South Wales over and over again.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—If so, a wrong course has been taken, and two wrongs do not make a right. I do not think that this course has been taken in this Parliament, and it has not been taken in the Victorian Parliament, of which I was a member. We have been told that the message is not to be dealt with like an ordinary message from the Crown. It has not been brought down to carry out the definite policy of the Government, which Ministers have agreed upon after mature consideration, and which Parliament is to be asked to sanction. If the statement made by the Treasurer last night has been correctly reported, the Government has no policy upon this subject, as it has no policy upon a great many other important subjects. Thus we have the Treasurer bringing down a message from the Crown, which recommends the appropriation of money for the purposes of a measure in regard to which Ministers in their corporate capacity have not arrived at a decision. This step is absolutely repugnant to constitutional methods of conducting finance. The proposal is one which should be discussed from the very beginning, and I therefore ask the Treasurer to state the position of the Government in regard to it.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE. — I stated it last night, and I am not going to vary that statement.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—Then I am correct in saying that the message has been brought down, not to enable the Government to carry out what it deems a proper financial policy, but to enable any private

member who chooses to do so, to bring forward a proposal for additional expenditure in regard to which the Government has no policy. This action is absolutely unprecedented and highly dangerous, because it deprives those whom we represent of their right to be heard on the subject.

Mr. CROUCH. — Is not the Government taking the responsibility of bringing down a message, leaving it to individual Ministers to vote as they please in regard to the proposal?

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—That is an untenable position. What the honorable member says is that the Government take the responsibility of bringing down the message, but they allow honorable members to vote in any way they like in regard to it.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—The honorable member need have no doubt in regard to how we shall vote.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—If there is no doubt as to the way in which members of the Government will vote, I suppose the Government have some definite policy on the subject. But if the Government have a definite policy, why do they not have the courage to initiate this legislation, and take the responsibility, as a Government? There are many members, of whom I confess I am one, who, if such a Bill were brought down with the whole authority of the Government behind it—if we were assured by the Government that they had taken the whole matter into consideration, and thought that such a measure was in the interests of the whole community—would regard it as a Bill which ought to be considered very carefully before it was rejected. But when Ministers do nothing but throw a message down on the table of the House, and, disclaiming all responsibility, say, "Here you are; any private member can bring forward a financial proposal; we will give the necessary authority, though we are not at one regarding it"—it is adopting a course utterly at variance and inconsistent with parliamentary procedure, not only in this Parliament, but in the mother of Parliaments, and, indeed, every Parliament throughout the British Dominions.

Mr. WEBSTER.—The same thing occurred in the New South Wales Parliament.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—I am afraid we cannot make ourselves responsible for everything that occurs in New South Wales. It might be possible to search the records of some of the Australian Parliaments, and find a precedent for such a

thoroughly unconstitutional and improper course; but that would not make the position any better or sounder.

Mr. CROUCH.—Would the honorable member say that on every financial proposal there must be absolute solidarity in the Cabinet?

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—Certainly; that is the whole principle of responsible government. The Government have no right to allow the House to expend one penny of public money, except on their own responsibility and recommendation.

Mr. CROUCH.—Then the honorable member limits the principle purely to financial proposals?

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—Purely to financial proposals. The honorable member for Corio, if he has studied the subject at all, must know that that is the distinction between financial proposals and every other kind of proposal. Every proposal brought forward which involves an increase of the burden of taxation, or of expenditure, is at once ruled out of order if it is introduced by a private member, because no private member has the right to usurp the authority of the Crown or of the Ministers of the Crown.

Mr. CROUCH.—That is all right; but the honorable member said that every member of the Cabinet must support the proposal.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—If the honorable member will allow me to say so, I do not care a button what the members of the Cabinet may do. The Government have a duty as a Government. First of all, if a financial proposal is brought down, it must be with the authority of the Government, who have no right to abdicate their authority and responsibility, and continue to occupy their Ministerial offices. That responsibility is one which ought always to be taken by the Government in connexion with every financial proposal; and the circumstances of the present proposal, which were outlined by the Acting Prime Minister last night, are such as to make it essentially necessary that the rule should be adhered to. As a Victorian member, occupying, as I do, with other Victorian members, a peculiarly favoured position in regard to our attendance at this House, I should feel peculiarly embarrassed in raising any strenuous objections to the merits of this proposal. I recognise that, however we may be situated in Victoria, those honorable members who come from distant parts of Australia are in a totally

different position. I recognise that fact very fully; and, therefore, I shall not raise, so far as I am concerned, any strenuous opposition to the merits of the proposal with regard to them. What I do say is that this responsibility which I have insisted on is more pressing and more urgent in connexion with this particular measure for two reasons. First, the measure is one which affects our own individual personal interests; if we are to be allowed to give ourselves a substantial additional emolument, it is a case in which the Government should take the responsibility. The second reason is that this is a matter which ought not, in my view, to be brought before the House, even by the Government, until the country has been given a fair and constitutional opportunity to express an opinion.

Mr. MAHON.—Did the honorable member himself bring the question before the country during the last election?

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—No. I cannot remember at this moment that I was ever asked a question on the subject. Certainly the question was not even outlined before the public as one of the possible elements of the Government programme. When honorable members go before their constituencies, there is usually on one side the Government policy, and on the other the policy of the Opposition, or the various bodies of Opposition, as the case may be. But this question of increasing the salaries of members of Parliament was not brought forward, either as a Government proposal or as a proposal of any responsible party.

Mr. MAHON.—Was the disfranchisement of the railway servants in Victoria part of the honorable member's policy when he was before the country as a candidate for the State Parliament?

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—I am not going to be drawn aside from my main argument. I am prepared, and I always have been prepared, to take the responsibility of my action in that particular matter. If I were placed in the same position again I should do exactly the same thing; and I feel no doubt that I should obtain the almost unanimous support of the great body of electors, as I did on that occasion. But, undoubtedly, if there is any kind of proposal in which it is desirable that the Government should take the responsibility of making it part of their programme, and of the policy to be placed before the country, it is such a one as that now before us. The

Government would then come to Parliament clothed with the authority, assent, and sanction of the majority of the electors.

Mr. BAMFORD.—Does the honorable member think the question could ever be put to the country in such a way that the majority of the electors could decide it?

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—That is a very peculiar question. I am asked whether I think the question could ever be put to the country in such a way that it could be answered in the affirmative.

Mr. BAMFORD.—Or the negative.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—I think it could. But I think that question itself is the very strongest argument why, if the electors could not express their assent to the proposal, we should not carry it out behind their backs, and independently of their wishes.

Mr. HUTCHISON.—We have the power under the Constitution.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—That is another point. I desire to impress very strongly the honorable members on both sides of the Committee this consideration—that no matter what their opinions may be in regard to the merits of the proposal, this particular method of introducing it, immediately after a general election, at which it was not the subject of discussion, is to be objected to on the grounds I have stated. There is involved an expenditure of £22,000 a year, which is a considerable addition to the expenditure of the country. The proposal is introduced by a Government who have not even the courage to introduce it as a Government proposal; they simply bring down a message which should not be introduced except as a means of carrying out financial proposals as part of their considered policy. That message has been thrown down on the table, and the House is left to deal with it as it likes. Such a proposal could not be brought down in a more unfortunate and embarrassing way.

Mr. FAIRBAIRN.—I rise to a point of order. I should like to ask you, Mr. Chairman, whether this is Government business or private members' business, and, if it be private members' business, whether you will see that it is dealt with in private members' time?

The CHAIRMAN.—I must remind the honorable member that I am not here to decide whether the business be Government business or private members' business; I am concerned only with a certain resolution which has been placed before me.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE (Hume—Treasurer). [4.55].—The Government can give up any day they like to private members' business, so that there is not much in the point raised by the honorable member for Fawkner. The honorable member for Flinders, in his cold, calculating, highly technical, and unpractical way—

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I hope the Minister will discuss the proposal.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—The honorable member has attempted to be very severe on me, and I shall hit back at any one who so treats me.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—It is easier to hit than to argue!

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I may inform the honorable member for Flinders that probably a majority of the members of this House announced their intentions at the general elections in regard to this matter. I can say that I did so myself, and I was returned by a larger majority than ever I had before. The honorable member for Flinders says that the method of this proposal is unprecedented. I would point out to him, however, that the late Sir Henry Parkes, who was a higher authority than he himself on constitutional law—who was, perhaps, as high a constitutional authority as could be found in Australia—in the New South Wales Parliament, on the 2nd April, 1889, replied to a question concerning a proposal that there should be payment of members. That was a proposal to introduce the principle, and not a proposal, like that before us, after the principle has been established. The late Sir Henry Parkes, in replying to the question, said the matter had been considered by him, but that he was not favorable to the principle of payment of members, and could not be expected to take the initiative. He promised, however, to bring the matter under the notice of his colleagues. On the 19th April, Mr. Waddell, a private member, submitted a motion, which was carried, in favour of payment of members. The late Sir Henry Parkes voted against the motion, but the present representative of East Sydney in this House was not present, and therefore could not vote. On the 25th April in the same year, Sir Henry Parkes, in reply to a question, said that his Government consisted of nine members, seven of whom were opposed, and two of whom were in favour of payment of members, but that, as the House had decided by

a substantial majority that members should be paid, the Government were bound to introduce a measure to carry out what had been decided. On the 8th May, Sir Henry Parkes promised to introduce a Bill, and on the 14th June he was reported in *Hansard* as saying—

But in the case of this Bill—and remember that the Government do not consider themselves responsible for it—they had of necessity to bring it in, if it was to be brought in at all.

That is exactly the position I myself took up last night.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—Does the Treasurer consider that a position any responsible Government ought to take up?

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—Yes; and we follow the late Sir Henry Parkes in this matter, we shall not be wrong.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Did the Treasurer ever follow Sir Henry Parkes in his life?

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I followed him many times in his constitutional practice. When I was leading the Government in New South Wales, I looked to Sir Henry Parkes' interpretation of the constitutional law before that of any one else.

Sir JOHN FORREST.—I do not think it would do to carry the principle too far.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—But the honorable member for Flinders contended that there was no precedent for the action of the Government in the present instance, and I am showing that there is. A private member can introduce such a measure into this Parliament; but I undertake to say that there is as large a majority in favour of such a measure in this House as there was in the case to which I have referred in New South Wales. In the *Hansard* of that State, the late Sir Henry Parkes is also reported to have said—

I have at all times and in all places given my opinion against payment of members, and I do not remember an occasion when there was any remarkable dissent from my opinion. . . . I cannot admit that this principle has the assent of the people of this country. I saw no evidence of it whatever, and I know well enough that a large number of the gentlemen who are now voting for payment of members were elected without reference to the question in any way.

I may say that the right honorable gentleman opposite voted against the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—How did the Acting Prime Minister himself vote?

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I believe that I voted for the Bill. The few lines which I have quoted from the New South Wales *Hansard* constitute as strong a precedent

for my action to-day as can be found in Australia.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—It is a very bad precedent.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—It simply amounts to this: despite the fact that the late Sir Henry Parkes was not in favour of the principle of payment of members—whereas I am—he regarded the decision of the House as of such importance that he, as Premier, felt bound to bring down a message recommending an appropriation for the purpose, and to carry through the Bill which inaugurated the system of payment of members in New South Wales.

Mr. WATKINS.—Notwithstanding that there was no instruction to that effect in the Constitution.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—Notwithstanding that the Constitution contained no such instruction.

Mr. GLYNN.—If the Ministry believe in the Bill surely they ought to father it. Sir Henry Parkes did not father the proposal.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—He did not father it, and I do not. I have followed the precedent created by the late Sir Henry Parkes—a very good man to follow.

Mr. WILSON.—The Treasurer and the Prime Minister believe in the Bill, and therefore the Government ought to father it.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—The honorable member cannot instruct many of us in constitutional law. I have refrained from using the name of the Prime Minister because he is not well, but I know that if he were here he would vote for the proposal.

Mr. REID.—Has the Acting Prime Minister authority for that statement?

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—He has told me that he would.

Mr. TILLEY BROWN.—Did he tell the Acting Prime Minister that he would?

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—He did, and I believe that in what I am now doing I am acting as he would have me act.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I understand that the Acting Prime Minister is going to bring in a Bill?

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—Yes. Another honorable member may do so if he chooses, but I am strongly in favour of the proposal to increase the allowance to honorable members. The position would be entirely different if I were not. Perhaps I should then refuse to introduce a Bill.

Mr. REID.—The Acting Prime Minister is speaking upon behalf of the Government, I suppose?

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I am following the practice.

Mr. REID.—Is the Acting Prime Minister speaking on behalf of the Government? That is a fair question to ask.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—Each member of the Government can vote as he chooses upon this question.

Mr. REID.—The question which I put to the Acting Prime Minister is a fair one.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I said last night that I did not intend to make the Bill a party question, nor did I intend to make it a Government measure. That is precisely the course which was followed by the late Sir Henry Parkes.

Mr. REID.—That will not do.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I said that this matter had been informally discussed by members of the Government, and that, because it had not been included in the Governor-General's Speech, we did not consider it should be made a Government measure. Members of the Ministry are at liberty to vote as they choose upon it. But I think I may tell the leader of the Opposition that all the members of the Government are likely to vote for it.

Mr. REID.—Cannot the Acting Prime Minister be straightforward, and say that the Government are bringing in the Bill? I am not speaking in an unfriendly spirit, but I want this Bill to be brought forward in the proper way.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I have told the right honorable member the course which was followed in New South Wales.

Mr. REID.—That is another matter.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—It is the most important precedent that can be found in Australia.

Mr. GLYNN.—South Australia did not adopt the principle of payment of members upon the initiative of a private member.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—If I am desired to deal with the question of the amount of the allowance payable to honorable members, I shall be very glad to do so, but I take it that that matter may be better dealt with when the Bill is under consideration.

Mr. KELLY.—But the Acting Prime Minister cannot increase the scope of a message when the Bill is under consideration?

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I hold in my hand some information relating to the amount of the allowance proposed, and to a variety of other matters, but I think that

that information can be better given to honorable members after the Bill has been introduced.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH (Parkes) [5.8].—I do not think that the Acting Prime Minister has put the case in New South Wales quite fairly before the Committee, whatever may have been his intention. I understood him to rise primarily to point out to the Committee that a complete precedent for the course which he is proposing to take was to be found in New South Wales. Now, I happened to be a member of the Government, of which the late Sir Henry Parkes was the head, in the Parliament which was responsible for the adoption of the system of payment of members in New South Wales, and, although I have not looked up *Hansard* very carefully, I desire to tell the Committee what is my recollection of the facts of the case.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—*Hansard* speaks for itself.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—But the Acting Prime Minister has quoted only a portion of *Hansard*. He will recollect that a Bill providing for payment of members was introduced by Mr. Daniel O'Connor. It was not introduced as a Government measure at that time, and members of the Government were at liberty to vote as they chose upon it. A large number of honorable members, including myself, voted against it. This is the point which differentiates that case from the position which the Acting Prime Minister endeavoured to put in opposition to the contention of the honorable member for Flinders. The Legislative Council of New South Wales dealt with that Bill either by amending or rejecting it, and the late Sir Henry Parkes considered that as it was a Money Bill that Chamber had no right to touch it. Therefore, he stated that the step which the Legislative Council had taken was so serious from a constitutional stand-point that he felt bound as the head of the Government to introduce the measure himself, and he did so.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—That was subsequently.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—I am aware of that. But the Acting Prime Minister spoke as if the late Sir Henry Parkes had introduced the Bill in the first instance, and had thereby created a precedent by which the honorable member for Flinders should be guided to-day.

Mr. EWING.—The Bill was rejected by the Legislative Council. Where did the message come from in the first instance?

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—The Minister of Defence has not been listening to my remarks.

Mr. EWING.—I did listen, and the honorable member is fairly intelligent.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—The honorable gentleman may be fairly intelligent, but he does not show it, because he has repeated what I said. There is no parallel between the two cases at all.

Mr. EWING.—There is an absolute parallel, and the honorable member knows it.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—There is no parallel, because the Acting Prime Minister has quoted the action of the late Sir Henry Parkes as if it were a spontaneous and independent action. The Bill, I repeat, was not introduced by the late Sir Henry Parkes in the first instance.

Mr. EWING.—He allowed Mr. Daniel O'Connor to introduce the Bill.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—He allowed Mr. O'Connor to bring down a message and introduce the Bill. The late Sir Henry Parkes had nothing to do with the measure.

Mr. EWING.—Where did the message come from in the first instance?

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—The Minister of Defence is maintaining a running commentary upon my remarks, so that it is impossible for honorable members to hear a word that I am saying. All I am contending for—and one has to say it half-a-dozen times because of the interruptions of the honorable member—is that the late Sir Henry Parkes had no hand in the introduction of the Bill until the Legislative Council had either amended or rejected it. Then he declared that the matter had become a constitutional one, and that as head of the Government he must make it the subject of a Government measure.

Mr. EWING.—Where did Mr. O'Connor get the message?

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—The Minister of Defence might as well ask me where Mr. O'Connor is to-day. It would be equally relevant to the question. The Acting Prime Minister has no right to quote the late Sir Henry Parkes as an authority in favour of the step which he is now taking. I do not propose either to justify or controvert the argument of the honorable gentleman, but I say in all fairness that he has not quoted a precedent in opposition to the contention of the honorable member for Flinders.

Mr. FAIRBAIRN (Fawkner) [5.13].—Like the honorable member for Flinders, I have a certain amount of diffidence—living comfortably as I do in close proximity to this House—in expressing my opinions upon this proposal. But I should like to deal with the proposed increase of the parliamentary allowance to honorable members from the stand-point of the enormous increase which has recently taken place in the cost of government in Australia. Two years ago I obtained some figures in reference to the number of members of Parliament that there are in the Commonwealth, and I should like to give those figures to the House..

Mr. WATSON.—When did the honorable member take them out?

Mr. FAIRBAIRN.—They were taken out up till 31st December, 1904. By adding the number of members of the New South Wales Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly to the number of representatives of that State in this House and in the Senate, I find that New South Wales possesses one member for every 7,823 of its inhabitants.

Mr. WEBSTER.—Did the honorable member include the cost of the shire councilors also?

Mr. FAIRBAIRN.—They are not paid.

Mr. WEBSTER.—In New South Wales some of them are.

Mr. FAIRBAIRN.—In Victoria, thanks to the honorable member for Flinders, the number of members of the State Parliament has been reduced. But even in Victoria, which is always a model State, I find that the people have one member of Parliament for every 9,158 inhabitants. In Queensland there is one member of Parliament for every 3,897 inhabitants; in South Australia one member for every 5,007 inhabitants; and in Western Australia one member for every 2,641 inhabitants. The other day I actually met a gentleman who had not been Premier of Western Australia.

Mr. FRAZER.—Eighty of the representatives of Western Australia are members of the State Parliament.

Mr. FAIRBAIRN.—Quite so. Tasmania has one member of Parliament for every 2,804 of its population; New Zealand one for every 6,800 of its population, Canada one for every 7,380 of its population, and the United Kingdom and Ireland—where members of Parliament are not paid—one for every 34,372 of the population.

**Colonel FOXTON.**—Does the honorable member include in his computation members of the Legislative Councils?

**Mr. FAIRBAIRN.**—I do, because I wish to show that we are over-governed.

**Mr. WEBSTER.**—Did the honorable member support the Commonwealth Constitution Bill?

**Mr. FAIRBAIRN.**—I certainly did. My object in placing these figures before the Committee is to show how necessary it is that the people should have a right to say how they view this proposal to increase the allowances of honorable members.

**Mr. POVNTON.**—But the honorable member's figures cover members of the States Parliaments.

**Mr. FAIRBAIRN.**—They do.

**Mr. POVNTON.**—That being so, I cannot follow the honorable member's argument:

**Mr. FAIRBAIRN.**—I urge that the people who have to find the funds necessary for the payment of members have a right to be consulted before we vote ourselves an increased allowance. The position which we occupy is in this respect very similar to that of the directors of a company. If the directors of a company calmly voted themselves increased fees, I am inclined to think, judging by my experience—and I have had a good deal of experience of companies—that there would be an angry scene at the annual meeting of shareholders.

**Mr. CROUCH.**—But if the articles of association provided that the directors should have power to increase their fees?

**Mr. FAIRBAIRN.**—The shareholders usually take care that the articles of association are so drawn that such an action on the part of the directors would be impossible. The people of Australia are in much the same position as that of the shareholders of a company, and have a right to be consulted at a general meeting—or, in other words, at a general election—so that they may say how they view such a proposal as this. The *Age* recently published some very interesting figures in regard to the cost of government. Whether the expenditure is incurred by the Commonwealth Parliament, or by a State Parliament, the position is the same, the money has to be found by the same people.

**Mr. KING O'MALLEY.**—The workers have to pay.

**Mr. FAIRBAIRN.**—That is so, and we are all workers. I have had to work as

hard as any honorable member has been called upon to do. It is not the wage-earner who alone is called upon to work; the man who has to provide the wages sometimes finds the task a difficult one.

**Mr. WEBSTER.**—And many men work very hard in looking after what they have obtained.

**Mr. FAIRBAIRN.**—It is sometimes very easy to make money, but very difficult to keep it.

**Mr. REID.**—I am sure that our honorable friends opposite would exchange positions with the honorable member at a moment's notice.

**Mr. FAIRBAIRN.**—I dare say that they would; but it seems to me that they are prepared to take a good deal for granted. I should like to bring before the Committee a statement showing the expenditure incurred in connexion with parliamentary institutions in Australia. In view of the fact that it is proposed to increase the cost of the Federal Parliament, a review of the figures will be interesting. I find that the Parliaments of Australia cost £556,389 per annum, and that the cost of the Governor-General of the Commonwealth and the Governors of the States amounts to £57,144 per annum.

**Mr. KING O'MALLEY.**—We could do away with all the States Governors.

**Mr. FAIRBAIRN.**—That is so.

**Mr. MAHON.**—Would the honorable member favour the abolition of States Governors?

**Mr. FAIRBAIRN.**—I should certainly do so. Then again, I find that the cost of Executive Councils is £3,988 per annum, and the cost of Agents-General £24,281 per annum. The total cost of the governing machinery of Australia is £641,802 per annum. In these circumstances, a proposal to still further increase the enormous expenditure incidental to the government of 4,000,000 people deserves the closest scrutiny.

**Mr. McWILLIAMS.**—But we shall “keep all that money in the country.”

**Mr. TILLEY BROWN.**—I am afraid it is useless to attempt to seriously discuss this question.

**Mr. FAIRBAIRN.**—It would seem that the honorable member for Indi is quite right. It is true, as the honorable member for Franklin has said, that we keep this money in the country, but the fact remains that we take it out of the pockets of the electors.

**Mr. KING O'MALLEY.**—We are electors.

Mr. FAIRBAIRN.—But we occupy a dual position. In the one position we receive, and in the other we give. We are told that "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Mr. TILLEY BROWN.—Does the honorable member think that the electors in this case will be cheerful givers?

Mr. FAIRBAIRN.—I do not. An annual expenditure of £641,802 per annum in connexion with the government of only 4,000,000 people seems to me to be appalling. We appear ridiculous in the eyes of the people of the old world when we say that we have seven Houses of Parliament with their seven maces. Fancy a modern Cromwell asking us to make off with those seven maces?

Mr. WEBSTER.—The New South Wales Parliament has done away with that idiotic bauble.

Mr. FAIRBAIRN.—The Victorian Legislative Assembly on one occasion had its mace stolen. To be serious, however, I think that in dealing with this matter we should look carefully into the whole question of government. We are told that with the education of the people—and I have always been in favour of granting every facility for the education of the people—the cost of government should decrease. That being so, we should not have to incur such a heavy expenditure in connexion with our governing machinery. We have one of the most highly educated peoples in the world, and the more highly educated the people are, the less should be the cost of the government. In India, for example, it is essential to the good government of the natives that high officials should appear from time to time on gaily caparisoned elephants, and that great shows should take place to impress them with the power of the governing authority. We need nothing of the kind in Australia.

Mr. FOSTER.—Is the honorable member in favour of unification?

Mr. FAIRBAIRN.—I am not; I think that the legislatures of the States have very important duties to perform.

Mr. HUTCHISON.—Then they should be paid for the work they do.

Mr. FAIRBAIRN.—I am entirely in favour of the membership of several of the States' Parliaments being reduced. The statement that Western Australia has one member of Parliament for every 2,600 of its inhabitants savours something of a line from a comic opera. It is perfectly ridiculous.

Mr. FRAZER.—I would remind the honorable member that out of a total of ninety-one members of Parliament, Western Australia has eighty in its local Legislature.

Mr. FAIRBAIRN.—I am aware of that fact. But what, may I ask, are the people of Western Australia likely to say when this proposition is put before them? They will not be disposed to discriminate between the Commonwealth and the State legislatures. They will probably say that they are not in favour of any increase in the allowances of members of Parliament, and it will be for them to determine whether the membership of the State legislature should be reduced. I think it ought to be.

Mr. WEBSTER.—If the honorable member were living 1,000 miles away from the seat of government, he would take a different view of the question.

Mr. FAIRBAIRN.—I certainly think that the electors should have had an opportunity of expressing their opinion on this question before it was submitted to honorable members. I shall vote against the proposal.

Mr. KELLY (Wentworth) [5.25].—This is a question which, having regard to its own interests, the Committee should discuss in an atmosphere of as little warmth as possible. I am glad to find that we have returned to that judicial frame of mind which I hope honorable members will always display when they approach the consideration of questions which, however impersonally we may wish to regard them, are yet of a certain degree of interest to honorable members themselves.

Mr. HUGHES.—Hear, hear.

Mr. KELLY.—I notice a distinct difference in my honorable friend's accent since his return from his recent visit to the courts of Europe. The arguments which my honorable friend the member for Fawcett put very lucidly before the Committee apply, I think, not so much to the present issue as they do to the question of whether or not 4,000,000 people in Australia should be governed under a Federal system or a system of legislative unification. I entirely agree with him that the government of Australia costs too much; that it is voiced by too many Parliaments, and is under the control of too many legislatures. I therefore hope that eventually, when this Parliament has proved itself entitled to hold, more than it does at the present time, the confidence of the people of Australia, we shall gradually.

trend in the direction of legislative unification, which, I can see, is the desire of my honorable friend, as well as my own. However, that in the present instance is only a side issue. I wish to direct my remarks to the question immediately before the Chair, putting my views as dispassionately as I think all honorable members would wish to place their own before the country. The first question that I desire to ask is why this has not been introduced as a Government proposal? I believe that every Minister in both Houses is in favour of it. That being so, why has the Government failed to submit this as a Government measure? Do Ministers while ready individually to take the responsibility for their action on this occasion, think that their acceptance of it in a corporate capacity would expose their party to opprobrium throughout the country? If they do then the Committee should take no step which it thinks would be unpopular in the country, especially in connexion with a question of this kind. I use these arguments only to voice my strong opinion that a message of this character, even from the point of view of good government, as well as from that of proper constitutional procedure, is one that should have behind it the opinion and the voice of the Government.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—Every message should be introduced in that way.

Mr. KELLY.—I quite agree with the honorable member. On this occasion the attitude of the Government is most singular since every member of it is in favour of the proposition. I fail to see why the Ministry as a whole should not have accepted the responsibility.

Mr. FISHER.—Does the honorable member mean to say that a private member could not obtain authority for a message from the Governor-General?

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—Certainly he could not.

Mr. FISHER.—Could he not obtain authority from the House?

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—The whole thing is a direction from the Governor-General, through the House.

Mr. FISHER.—The honorable member does not know what a high authority thinks about the question. The present Chief Justice of the High Court thinks that a private member could obtain the requisite authority.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—The honorable member is now making the argument a personal one.

Mr. AUSTIN CHAPMAN.—What is the Chief Justice of Australia as compared with some of these authorities?

Mr. KELLY.—There is another question to which I desire to address myself in order to make my position clear, and that is as to the authority of the constituencies for the passing of this measure. I quite agree with honorable members generally that no party, as a party, took up this question at the recent general election. That consideration may carry great weight later on as a reason for postponing the operation of the proposed measure. I understand, however, that certain honorable members have put their views on this subject before their constituents, and are thus authorized to vote for the proposal which is to be placed before us. But, as I have not done so, I feel that I cannot take advantage of it in anticipation of that approval, and, therefore, when a Bill has been introduced and is being considered in Committee, I shall propose an amendment restricting any increase to the next and succeeding Parliaments.

Mr. FULLER.—Surely the honorable member's constituents are prepared to pay him a little more than he is now getting?

Mr. KELLY.—If they rightly appreciate my intrinsic worth, no doubt they ought to be; but, as a trustee of the public purse, I feel that it is not for me to determine that question. Therefore I wish to give an opportunity to my constituents to say at the next election whether my remuneration shall be increased. The consideration of this matter hinges on the question whether what we receive is a reimbursement of the expenses we incur in attending Parliament, or is a payment for work done here. I do not think that it will be generally held that it is a reimbursement of expenses, because the community seems to be of opinion that it should be taxed as income, a view with which I agree. In my view, the £400 we receive is an annual salary. That being agreed upon, the further question arises, is it an adequate salary for a representative of the people in the Commonwealth Parliament?

Sir JOHN FORREST.—It was not intended by the members of the Convention to be regarded as a salary.

Mr. KELLY.—Then why did the Government, when the right honorable member was Treasurer, introduce a Bill pro-

viding for the taxation of members' "reimbursements"?

Sir JOHN FORREST.—That is another matter.

Mr. KELLY.—If honorable members wish to increase the salaries of members of the Commonwealth Parliament, I take it that their object is to procure a greater choice of candidates. At this stage I express no opinion as to whether our salaries should be increased, and, if so, to what amount; but I ask the Committee to consider whether the choice of the electors will be appreciably widened if the remuneration of the members of this Parliament is increased by £200 a year. I do not think that it will.

Mr. FULLER.—Then make the salary £1,000 a year.

Mr. KELLY.—If that were done there would doubtless be a greater competition in distant States for seats in this Chamber, which might bring about better administration of Federal affairs; but I do not think that there will be a widening of the choice of the electors if we increase our salaries by £200 a year. My position in this matter is clear. I have no authority from my constituents to increase my own salary, and, therefore, I intend to move to make the Bill which is to be introduced apply only to the next and succeeding Parliaments.

Mr. KING O'MALLEY.—That was done in one of the States of the American Union, and all those who voted for the Bill were afterwards defeated.

Mr. KELLY.—I prefer to give my constituents the opportunity to decide the value of my services rather than to determine myself what they are worth.

Mr. CROUCH (Corio) [5.36].—I do not propose to discuss at this stage the merits of the proposal before us, but I should like to deal with the constitutional point raised by the honorable member for Flinders. I contend that, although proposals increasing the public burdens must be recommended by messages from the Crown, it is not necessary for all the members of a Cabinet to agree in regard to them.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—It is not necessary for all the members of a Cabinet to agree in regard to any Government proposal, but an Administration has to take the responsibility for any such proposal.

Mr. CROUCH.—It is not always practicable to secure such agreement. For instance, it is known that two members of the Cabinet hold divergent views as to the proper location of the Seat of Government.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—It has been agreed that Ministers shall be allowed to vote as they please on that question.

Mr. WATSON.—That arrangement has been come to by every Ministry since the question arose.

Mr. CROUCH.—It would be necessary, in carrying out any policy regarding the Seat of Government, to appropriate public money, and any such appropriation would have to be preceded by a message from the Governor-General. But the message having been brought down, and the Bill introduced, one member of the Cabinet might suggest the adoption of the Tumut site, another the adoption of the Lyndhurst site, and the third the retention of the Dalgety site. The honorable member for Flinders cannot take the objection that this proposal has not been recommended by the Crown, because a message from the Governor-General has been brought down; nor can he take the objection that that message has not been dealt with by a responsible Minister, because the Treasurer has taken the responsibility of dealing with it. But he contends that the Cabinet should agree as to the course of procedure to be taken in regard to the proposal recommended. I have shown that it is not always possible for a Cabinet to be of one mind in regard to questions of expenditure. On this subject I should like to make a quotation from Todd's second volume *On Parliamentary Government in England*, on page 383 of which I find this passage—

All motions for the grant of money for the public service, or for imposing any pecuniary charge upon the people, must, as we have already seen, emanate from ministers of the crown in the House of Commons.

In 1866 Standing Orders were passed by the House of Commons which are similar in effect to that section of our Constitution which enacts that proposals for imposing burdens on the people must be recommended by messages from the Governor-General. The procedure of bringing down such a message has been followed in this case; but the honorable member for Flinders insists that the Cabinet as a body should agree to the proposed expenditure.

Mr. WILSON.—The Cabinet should take responsibility for it.

Mr. CROUCH.—It has done so by allowing the Treasurer to bring down this message.

Mr. WILSON.—Ministers are absolutely spineless in this matter.

Mr. CROUCH.—The Governor-General, like the King, can do no wrong, but his

advisers must take the responsibility for his acts, and therefore Ministers must take the responsibility for the message which recommends this proposal.

**Mr. JOSEPH COOK.**—The Treasurer told us last night that Ministers had not considered it in Cabinet; that it had been considered unofficially.

**Mr. REID.**—How was it considered unofficially?

**Mr. CROUCH.**—It does not matter how it was considered. The Government cannot escape its responsibility for the message. To continue my quotation from *Todd*—

On June 6, 1867, a case occurred which shows that the House is disposed to construe these new standing orders very strictly. A private member, being desirous of moving a series of resolutions to require certain charges relating to courts of law to be defrayed out of the Consolidated Fund, and not subjected to an annual vote, obtained the formal consent of the Crown thereto.

**Mr. JOSEPH COOK.**—The expenditure of money was only incidental to that proposal; but we are being asked to make a direct vote.

**Mr. CROUCH.**—That does not affect the principle that no private member shall bring forward a measure for increasing the burdens of the people. After getting the House to consent to it—

**Colonel FOXTON.**—That is the point.

**Mr. CROUCH.**—That is not the point which was raised by the honorable member for Flinders. It is a common thing for a member to move requesting that a grant be made by the Crown. To quote from page 700 of *Todd's* first volume—

Addresses from the House of Commons to the Crown, requesting an issue of public money for some particular purpose, with the assurance "that this House do make good the same," are required, by standing order, to originate in a committee of the whole House. This "ancient and truly constitutional method of expressing the desire of the House, that some public charge shall be incurred," remains unimpaired, notwithstanding the increased restrictions imposed upon the initiation of money charges in 1866.

Here is a case in which a private member, not as his main purpose, but as a necessary adjunct to certain proposed legal changes, proposed to impose a charge on the people; and, therefore, he asked Mr. Childers, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the 6th June, 1867, to bring down the necessary message from the Crown. Yet we are told that it would be necessary for all the members of the Cabinet to vote in

favour of the proposal, although it is possible they opposed the Bill right through.

**Colonel FOXTON.**—Was there not a resolution of the House of Commons on which to base the message?

**Mr. CROUCH.**—That was three months earlier. This is not the time to go into the merits of the proposal, but, constitutionally, it seems to me the Government have acted rightly.

**Mr. JOSEPH COOK.**—The plan that is followed in such cases is to have a preliminary resolution to go into Committee, and the Government take that as an instruction from the House to bring down a message.

**Mr. CROUCH.**—I am assuming, rightly or wrongly, for the sake of my argument, that the House desires this increase.

**Mr. BRUCE SMITH.**—There is nothing on the records to show that.

**Mr. CROUCH.**—It would be shown afterwards in the discussion. I think it is quite a proper procedure to bring forward a message in this form, and if there is any chance of a difference of opinion in the Cabinet, one Minister only need be responsible, if he can induce the Governor-General to send the message.

**Mr. REID (East Sydney) [5.48].**—In this young Federal Parliament it is of the greatest possible importance that we should, in all our actions, adopt sound constitutional principles. There is no occasion on which we should observe those constitutional principles more carefully than when it might seem our own personal interests were affected. I desire to say at once that I am thoroughly in sympathy with the proposal to increase the allowance of honorable members. I am not now speaking of the evasion of responsibility; and I am going to speak most strongly of the conduct of the Government in that regard. I am not a Minister, but I say that I will take my share of responsibility as a member for this proposal. I should, perhaps, be one of the last to make myself prominent in this matter, because I am not often here. I am not fighting my own battle—I can do without this increase. But I have felt for a long time past the injustice and cruelty to a large number of honorable members who come hundreds, some almost thousands, of miles to serve their constituents in this Parliament. I confess I am partly responsible for that position, and that makes it necessary for me to say frankly that I made a serious mistake in the Federal Convention. In the Convention

Bill, as originally drafted, the salary was proposed at £500 a year, and I regret to say that I moved a reduction to £400 a year, which amendment was carried. In the light of my experience, after sitting here for seven years, I should have no hesitation in standing before any constituency in Australia and saying that the present allowance of £400 a year is not even a tolerably decent reimbursement of honorable members' expenses, independently of the time which they devote to public affairs. I do not wish to appear in the matter, except to share the responsibility, because I should be the last man in the world to put myself forward as desiring the proposed increase. I am here seldom; but I desire to share the responsibility with the men who come here constantly and from great distances, and have to keep up practically a divided expenditure in their daily life. As the man who was instrumental in having the allowance reduced in Convention—

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I supported the honorable member.

Mr. REID.—I desire to take the first opportunity to try to undo the mistake I made on that occasion. Whatever we do we shall be open to all sorts of abuse, but I am most seriously anxious that in this matter we should proceed in a proper, constitutional way; there is no matter in the world about which we should be more careful in that respect. The Acting Prime Minister has referred to a very interesting and important case which occurred in New South Wales under very extraordinary circumstances. I know that at that time I took the position that Sir Henry Parkes acted wrongly. Although Sir Henry Parkes was a very high and eminent authority, and we must speak with deference of any course he adopted, I took the liberty, and still take the liberty, of thinking that the action he then took was not strictly constitutional. But in that case, Parliament—and this makes a considerable difference—had discussed and affirmed by a large majority the principle of payment of members. The Government had the choice either to carry out the determination of the House, or, if the matter were made a serious one by honorable members, to retire from office. That was the position they were in. The House had determined that there should be payment of members, and the Government could have either said, "We will not do it, but will go out of office," or they could have done what they

really did do. Sir Henry Parkes practically said, "I am the leader of the House, and, as the House has expressed its opinion in favour of payment, I will act as its leader to the extent of allowing a Minister"—Mr. O'Connor, who was a prominent supporter of the principle—"to get a message." In that case, the principle had been before the people for a good number of elections. It had been discussed and canvassed before the people, and the expression of opinion by the House was really the result of a public agitation which had gone on for a good many years. In a House of 141 members there was a majority of twenty in favour of payment of members; and, that determination having been recorded, the Government took the course—a most unusual course—which I have indicated.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—It was highly unconstitutional, even under those circumstances.

Mr. REID.—I have never been in favour of the course, and I expressed my dissent on that occasion. There was a departure from principle which in my opinion was entirely unjustifiable. Very often, in the course of private business, an honorable member may introduce a proposal which involves some trivial incidental expenditure; and, under those circumstances, Governments have more than once enabled the private member to get a message. Otherwise, owing, perhaps, to a technical appropriation of public money, the Bill might be thrown out on a point of order at the hands of any honorable member who chose to draw the attention of the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees to the fact.

Mr. FISHER.—A message could be got by the Committee's consent.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—The Committee's consent is not necessary.

Mr. REID.—The Committee's consent has nothing to do with it.

Mr. FISHER.—But the Crown takes the hint.

Mr. REID.—What is done is that the member in charge of the Bill goes to the Government, and asks them to bring down a message to put the Bill in order. Unless that be done, if there be 140 members and 139 are in favour of the Bill, the 140th member can destroy it by drawing the attention of the Speaker to the fact that it involves an appropriation of money. No Bill in the nature of a Supply Bill—in the nature of a Money Bill—can come before

this House without a message from the Crown, and, as has already been pointed out, the Crown really means the Ministers. The moment a message from the Crown is brought down, Ministers are responsible for it; and that position must remain. Here lies the most serious objection to the attitude which the Acting Prime Minister has taken up. It is of no use our resorting to devious, indirect ways of doing these things. If a Minister advises the Governor-General to send a communication to this House, it is not open to any member of the Ministry to say that it is not a Ministerial message. We cannot have juggling with constitutional principles in that way. When the Governor-General sends a message, he sends it on the faith that it represents the desire of the Government, and that the Government will take full responsibility for it. It is not the piece of paper on which the Government take the responsibility, but having put a message before His Excellency, no Government can come to the House and say, "We have got the signature of the Governor-General as the advisers of His Excellency, but not one of us will introduce the Bill, although we are all in favour of it." What an extraordinary position is that in which to place the Executive Government of the country! And there is no necessity for this, because the Government know they have a majority. The Acting Prime Minister has no excuse for his attitude. He is always running cunning, and, like many other people who have contracted the habit, he sometimes runs cunning when there is no necessity for it. The Acting Prime Minister knows the Bill is going through with an enthusiastic majority in both Houses. I can already see the signature of the Governor-General to the Royal assent. There is no object therefore in the honorable gentleman running cunning; it is simply the gratification of an innate depravity. A certain amount of steering is necessary in all political voyages; and that is perfectly legitimate. If we enter on a voyage for a declared port, and we lash the helm, we shall never get there. There must be navigation to a certain extent; but that which to the honest mariner is a source of glory, is sometimes to the political mariner a subject of reproach. I find that my most rugged, straight-going friends, when they once get into office, exhibit a wonderfully different demeanour at the end of even a couple of weeks. I have noticed that our youngest Minister cannot

answer a question straight—I never met a Minister except myself who could. To return, however, to the constitutional point, it is entirely in the hands of this Parliament to fix the rate of remuneration. That is a distinction which must be remembered; the people in adopting the Constitution passed this enactment—

Until the Parliament otherwise provides, each senator and each member of the House of Representatives shall receive an allowance of Four hundred pounds a year, to be reckoned from the day on which he takes his seat.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—Does not a similar provision apply to almost every act of legislation we pass?

Mr. REID.—The Constitution has the effect of saying that the Federal Parliament must be started with that amount of remuneration, but that Parliament, in the light of experience of the working of the Constitution, and of the expense of members in attending to their legislative duties, is left open to increase the amount.

Sir JOHN FORREST.—Or to reduce it?

Mr. REID.—Certainly. But I wish to say that every honorable member who votes for the Bill must accept full responsibility for his action before the electors. I know that I shall do so. I am prepared to go before any electorate in Australia and justify the payment of an increased allowance to honorable members. If I am wrong in my idea the electors are at liberty to reject me. Every honorable member who votes for the proposal must accept full responsibility for his action.

Mr. WEBSTER.—And other honorable members will accept the increased allowance.

Mr. REID.—In this debate, as in all others, we ought to make allowance for conscientious differences of opinion. One of the misfortunes of being an extreme man upon either side is that an honorable member can never see eye to eye with an opponent—even if he has an eye-glass. But while I am making these remarks, I really do wish to impress upon the Government that the precedent which they desire to create should not be established in this Parliament, and that a Money Bill which is covered by a message from the Crown should be brought forward only by the Ministry. Take the case of the Tariff as an illustration. Who would suggest that a Minister should be able to rise at the table—and I am sure there is room for differences of opinion in respect of the Tariff

proposals—and, feeling that in his own constituency there was a very strong free-trade detachment, say—"Mr. Chairman, I happen to be the Minister of Trade and Customs, or the Treasurer," as the case might be, "and it is my duty to bring this Tariff before the House; but I want to tell honorable members confidentially that I put up a terrible fight in the Cabinet against it, and especially against the duty upon wire netting. I found, however, that a majority of my colleagues were against me, and I have to submit to their decision." Such a Minister would have one eye upon the man who makes the wire netting and the other upon the people who pay the duty, and the latter would cry out, "Our poor friend Bill is a martyr again. He has nearly broken his heart in fighting against this iniquitous proposal to tax wire netting." It reminds me of a Rugby football match, in which the ball is constantly passed from one player to another. The Minister would be able to say, "I fought against it, but that Mauger and those Melbourne fellows were too much for me." We must not begin upon unsound principles. I accept full responsibility for my action in supporting any reasonable proposal to increase the parliamentary allowance to honorable members, and I say the Government must do the same thing. Of course I cannot pledge myself as to the exact amount, but I am perfectly prepared to vote for any reasonable increase upon the £400. I wish to say, however, that unless the Government make the measure a Government one—if they endeavour to establish an undesirable precedent—I will not vote for it. I will not establish such a precedent as they ask us to create in connexion with the public Treasury of the Commonwealth. No hand must go into that Treasury except in accordance with rules of constitutional government. There can be no difficulty in the way of the Ministry acting as I suggest, because every Minister is in favour of the Bill. If there were a member of the Cabinet who honestly disagreed with the proposal, some allowance might be made for the Government. But inasmuch as Ministers are unanimously in favour of the Bill they should certainly introduce it as a Government measure. We cannot allow Ministers to talk to His Excellency the Governor-General in one way, and then come here and talk in another way. There must be no fracture of responsibility in this matter, and I hope that I have made my position upon the question perfectly clear.

Mr. WATSON (South Sydney) [6.5].—I do not attach quite the same importance to the constitutional aspect of this question that some honorable members do. My experience of sticklers for constitutional precedent is that they usually enlarge upon that aspect of the matter when they are in opposition to the proposal which is under consideration.

Mr. REID.—I am not opposed to this proposal.

Mr. WATSON.—But the right honorable member is constitutionally in opposition to the Government, and perhaps that fact unconsciously affects his attitude upon this question. As to the honorable member for Flinders, he is opposed to the whole idea, and I do not blame him or any other honorable member who entertains similar views for using any weapon which presents itself to defeat the proposal put before the House by the Government. To my mind constitutionalism is of very little value except so far as it safeguards the rights of the public generally. We have outgrown a great number of what were regarded as constitutional safeguards in the mother of Parliaments. These have been practically abandoned, and I think it is well that they should be.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—The checks upon Money Bills are surely as necessary now as they ever were?

Mr. WATSON.—After all, it does not seem to me that the public interest is likely to suffer because these checks are relaxed. In the last resort the question of whether the people are to be subjected to the proposed increased expenditure must depend upon the votes of honorable members of both Houses of the Parliament. Whether the right procedure has been followed by the Government upon this occasion or whether they might have adopted some other procedure is a minor matter compared with the essential question of whether the additional expenditure is to be incurred.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—A minor matter?

Mr. WATSON.—I say that the question of whether the Ministry have taken the right-hand track or the left-hand track is a minor matter compared with the question of whether the expenditure shall be incurred. That is the point in which the taxpayer has an interest, and it is the main point. I do not pretend to be a constitutional authority. Times out of number in this Chamber I have confessed that I care very little for constitutional precedent.

But assuming that there is something in the constitutional aspect of the question, I have a conviction that so far as existing conditions are concerned a number of precedents might be quoted in support of this proposal. The New South Wales precedent has been several times referred to during this debate.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—We are not following that precedent here.

Mr. WATSON.—It constitutes as near an approach to a precedent as one can expect.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—There the Bill was originated upon a resolution of the House, which was in the nature of an instruction to the Ministry to bring down a message recommending an appropriation for the purpose.

Mr. WATSON.—It was an instruction which a constitutional authority would have been justified in disregarding if it were opposed to the belief which he himself entertained. The constitutional authority *par excellence* in New South Wales—at any rate in our time—was the late Sir Henry Parkes, and he was strongly opposed to the principle of payment of members. But notwithstanding that opposition, he accepted the decision of a majority as expressed by resolution—

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—And in obedience to that decision brought down the message.

Mr. WATSON.—Had he been a stickler for constitutionalism he would not have remained in office. He would have vacated it and have allowed the majority to bring forward their proposals.

Mr. REID.—But if every member of his Cabinet had been in favour of payment of members, would he have adopted the course which the Government are pursuing to-day?

Mr. WATSON.—That introduces another aspect of the question—an aspect which, personally, I fail to understand. I say at once that in a case where Ministers are all agreed—as seems to be the fact here—I cannot understand why they have not formally made this Bill a Government question, as they have done actually.

Mr. FISHER.—The honorable member does not mean that they should have bound every member of the party.

Mr. WATSON.—I do not mean to say that they should have sought to bind their individual supporters in respect of the passing of the Bill, but that they should have made a Cabinet question of it when they were all agreed seems to be the reasonable outcome of their agreement. However, they

have seen fit to adopt another course, and the fact that they have not adopted what appeared to be the obvious course should not alter the attitude of any honorable member towards this Bill. Either the proposal itself is a good one or it is a bad one, and it should be voted upon from that stand-point alone. I do not propose to say a great deal with respect to the matter actually at issue. It has been suggested that any increase of the parliamentary allowance to honorable members should be applicable only to the members of the next Parliament. When this matter was mooted in the first Parliament I expressed the view that we should pass a Bill providing that the increased allowance should be payable to the members of the next Parliament. That was about the year 1902. That was the reply which I gave to some persons who spoke to me upon the subject. But, as the result of experience, I have come to the conclusion that it is very unlikely that that course will be followed, and the alternative would seem to be to refuse to make any alteration whatever in the present remuneration of honorable members. It seems as though honorable members are not prepared under any circumstances to vote for an increase of the parliamentary allowance to members of the next Parliament, and it seems equally difficult for members of parties to arrive at an understanding to have the case submitted to the electors. Naturally, one party is not going to place itself at a disadvantage by assuming a load of responsibility which other parties will not accept. Thus we come back to the question of whether this proposed increase is justified. Speaking as one who has taken a good deal of interest in political affairs for a considerable time, I most emphatically say that the present remuneration of honorable members is not nearly sufficient to place them in the position which they ought to occupy as representatives of the people. When we consider the expenditure to which any man of ordinary means is subjected in contesting a seat for this Parliament—an expenditure which recurs at every election—and when we consider the amount which is necessary to support in Melbourne members from the adjoining States, or to maintain the new home which they have temporarily to establish here, it must be patent to all that the amount which honorable members at present receive by way of parliamentary allowance is not nearly sufficient unless he is possessed of other means. If the present

rate of remuneration be continued the tendency will be to place the representation of the people of Australia—outside of the State where the Parliament is sitting—in the hands of two classes only, that is the wealthy men of leisure or those who are so needy that the possibility of earning a few pounds a week is hailed by them with joyful satisfaction. It would be most unfortunate, having regard to the interests of the people of Australia, if such a condition of affairs were allowed to prevail. It is essential that the area of selection open to the people should be widened as far as practicable. We should give them an opportunity to select their representatives from as large a number of candidates as it is possible to attract, for by that means alone can we insure the adequate representation of the people in the national Parliament. I admit that it is a somewhat delicate matter to be called upon to vote money for our own use; that our action is liable to be misinterpreted, and is open to all kinds of misrepresentation. I admit, further, that those who vote for this proposition will have to endure a certain degree of odium or blame on the part of some of the electors. At the same time, one must be prepared to shoulder such a responsibility. I am convinced that the great body of the people are prepared to respond to the suggestion that their representatives—the men to whose care they have intrusted the government of Australia—should be adequately remunerated for the services they render. It is for the electors themselves to determine whether or not we render adequate service, but I am quite sure that there would be a liberal response on the part of the people to the general proposition that the labourer is worthy of his hire. I am not one of those who have pledged themselves to the electors with respect to this question, but I respect the right of those who have pledged themselves to vote against such a proposal as this to observe their pledge. It is their duty to stand by the pledges they have given; yet, at the same time, I do not think we need fear the result of an appeal to the constituencies. I feel confident that the people would respond liberally, and would long and deeply regret the curtailment of their representation by reason of the inadequate remuneration offered to members of the Federal Parliament.

Mr. TILLEY BROWN (Indi) [6.19].—Every honorable member should be prepared to indicate how he proposes to vote on this

question. I recognise that some honorable members are put to great inconvenience in attending to their duties as members of this Legislature, since they have to make long journeys in order to attend here; also that the representatives of Victoria are in a somewhat different position. The point that I wish to make is that to a very large extent we, as a Federal Parliament, are on our trial. I have a very wide experience of this State, and am sorry to have to express my belief that we are not giving the people the satisfaction that they were led to expect would result from the establishment of the Commonwealth.

Mr. CROUCH.—The honorable member may not be giving satisfaction.

Mr. TILLEY BROWN.—I hope that the honorable member will not interject in that way, because I have no desire to regard this as a party question. I think that, whatever our politics may be, it must be admitted that we all are personally interested in the question, and that, therefore, we should discuss it without heat. I say advisedly that, as a Parliament, we are not giving that degree of satisfaction that was expected of us. The expenses of the Commonwealth are gradually increasing, and we are now proposing to add to our expenditure under circumstances which the leader of the Opposition, the leader of the Labour Party, and other honorable members occupying prominent positions, admit are such as to expose our action to misinterpretation. In the State Parliament of Victoria, when an honorable member took office, his ordinary allowance of £300 per annum was at once paid into the consolidated revenue, and he received only the emolument due to him as a Minister of the Crown. I am sure that the framers of the Federal Constitution were of opinion that a similar practice would be adopted in the Federal Parliament. We find, however, that occupants of the Treasury Benches have taken not only the allowance due to them as Ministers, but the £400 per annum to which they are entitled as members of this Legislature. That is, a course of action which smells not by any means like violets in the nostrils of the people. I am opposed to this proposal, and am sorry that my opposition to it will be futile. I also regret that I should feel it necessary to fight against a proposition which affects many honorable members who are certainly entitled to consideration. I should be glad if we could differentiate between the representatives of Victoria and

those of other States who suffer inconvenience in attending here. In that event, the representatives of this State would also be entitled to special treatment when the Parliament met in the capital yet to be established.

Mr. WYNNE (Balaclava) [6.21].—I do not like to see a Ministry attempting to twist a bad precedent merely because they have not the courage to boldly stand by a proposal which they favour. A very bad precedent is certainly being established by the way in which the message now before us is being dealt with. I do not think that any one can say that I have shown hostility to the Government, and I would urge them to take the constitutional and manly course of accepting responsibility for this proposal. They are not acting fairly when they throw it on the table just as a bone might be thrown to be scrambled for by dogs. I said at the last general election that I was opposed to any increase in the allowance to honorable members, but if we deal with this question in a proper constitutional way, and it is decided to grant an increased allowance, I shall be quite prepared to accept my share of the responsibility. I would again urge the Government to take upon their own shoulders the responsibility of making this a Government measure. Why should they throw it on the table, and then practically run away from it? Every member of the Ministry has said that he is in favour of the proposal, and it is not fair to private members that the House should be called upon to deal with it in this way. If I were a member of the Ministry, I should adopt the course which the leader of the Opposition has said he would pursue in such circumstances; I should say at once to the House, "This is our Bill, and we are prepared to accept all responsibility for it." The country expects the House to be led by the Government. Ministers are placed in office to take the responsibility of leading the Parliament, and the present Administration should certainly be prepared to do so.

Mr. HANS IRVINE (Grampians) [6.25].—I hold that we should consider this matter from a business stand-point. We are supposed to be business men since we are charged with the duty of acting as business managers for the people. It is only right and proper, therefore, that we should analyze this proposal, and ask ourselves just as an employer would ask em-

ployés who demanded an increased salary, "Are you worthy of it?" I certainly intend to regard this matter from the stand-point of an employer of labour. Although I sympathize with many honorable members who are put to much inconvenience, since they have to travel long distances in order to attend here, I am opposed to the proposal, because I do not think that the circumstances of the Commonwealth warrant an increased allowance. If my representatives in Great Britain to-day were to send me a letter saying, "We have arrived at the conclusion that our remuneration should be increased, and have, therefore, increased it to the extent of £200 per annum," what attitude should I take up?

Mr. BOWDEN.—That is not an analogous case.

Mr. HANS IRVINE.—I think it is. If I were paying my representatives in Great Britain what I believed to be a fair salary, I should either cancel my power of attorney, or dismiss them immediately, on the receipt of such a communication. The people whom this Parliament is supposed to represent do not think that we are entitled to an increased allowance. I have heard the honorable member for Darwin say that he fought for an allowance of £1,000 per annum. I have no doubt that if he thought he could secure an allowance of £6,000, instead of £600 per annum, he would fight for it. But we have to consider whether the country is prepared to favour such an increase. I do not think it is. One of the objects of the people in agreeing to federate was to secure a reduction of taxation; but, as a matter of fact, taxation has been increased instead of reduced since the establishment of the Commonwealth. The States did not agree to federate because they desired that the burdens of the people should be increased; they did not intend to establish a greater power, which would regard itself as their masters, and proceed to oppress the people. Have we proved our worthiness to the people whom we represent? I was frequently asked during the election campaign whether I believed in an increased allowance, and in every instance I said that I did not. On one occasion, however, I added that when the Commonwealth Parliament had proved itself worthy of the confidence of the people, and the necessity of increasing the allowance had been shown, I should be prepared to support such a proposition; but up to the present time

the Federal Parliament has not proved its value to the people. It was considered that two or three matters of paramount importance would at once be taken in hand by the Federation. I was glad to hear the Acting Prime Minister refer to-day to one of them—I allude to the appointment of a High Commissioner, and the establishment in London of large offices where our products could be displayed.

Mr. POYNTON.—Federation has treated the honorable member's industry very well.

Mr. HANS IRVINE.—I care not a snap of the fingers for that. My industry would have been far better had it been left alone.

Mr. POYNTON.—Reflections on the House come with an ill grace from the honorable member, since he is a newcomer.

Mr. HANS IRVINE.—I fail to understand the honorable member. Will he explain why he takes that view?

Mr. POYNTON.—I shall do so.

*Sitting suspended from 6.30 to 7.45 p.m.*

Mr. HANS IRVINE.—The honorable member for Grey interjected that I, as a new member, should not attempt to lecture the Committee. I do not intend to do so. I have tried to look at this matter through business spectacles, and to apply myself to its consideration as though I were addressing business men. Honorable members who support the proposal should prove to their employers, the people, that an increase of salary is justified by the excellence of their past work. Personally, I do not think that Federation has yet accomplished what the bulk of the people expected from it. I am thoroughly in accord with the proposal to appoint a High Commissioner, and to establish him in an office in London. That is one of the things which the people of Australia wish us to do, because they desire that our resources shall be exhibited in a large and magnificent way, so that more population may be attracted here. The site in London which the Acting Prime Minister has selected is, in my judgment—and I have recently visited London—an excellent one. It is situated in the very heart of the city, and no business man could wish for a better position. I should be glad to take a lease of it for a period of ninety-nine years, if I were in a position to do so, and to pay what the Commonwealth will have to pay for it, because I am sure that I would get value for my expenditure. The right honorable member for Swan thinks that

the site is not a good one, but possibly his visits to London have been of a social character, whereas mine have been of a business character. Another way to justify an increase in salary is for honorable members to use their energies to secure the reduction of taxation and the lessening of expenditure. Circumstances do not warrant the increase in expenditure which is about to be proposed; but if honorable members apply themselves industriously to the development of our resources, so that the production of national wealth may be increased, it may ultimately be justified.

Mr. FOSTER.—Would the honorable member make it retrospective?

Mr. HANS IRVINE.—There are many matters which have come before Parliament in regard to which I would like to see retrospective legislation. The Acting Prime Minister has stated that he does not approve of the agreement come to by the right honorable member for Swan with the Premiers of the States in reference to the Braddon section of the Constitution. I thought that agreement a fair one. It has been said that a number of honorable members desire that money shall be spent extravagantly, so that the Commonwealth shall be forced to levy direct taxation, but I do not say that that is so. It is, however, only fair that the States should know what their financial position is to be. It has been suggested that I should not vote against a proposal of this kind, inasmuch as the Federal Parliament has done so much for the industry with which I am connected. But Federation has cost me £2,000 a year in connexion with one item alone.

Mr. TUDOR.—Has not the honorable member made profits which counterbalance that expenditure?

Mr. HANS IRVINE.—The labourer is entitled to his hire. If an employer pays fair wages, he surely is entitled to the rewards of his industry and enterprise. The State Treasurers consider that when the Braddon provision becomes inoperative, at the end of 1910, some arrangement should be made for their protection. The State Governments have acted on the belief that they would be so considered, and instead of dealing carefully with the funds intrusted to them, have spent extravagantly, just as the Commonwealth has spent extravagantly. Now it is time that a halt was called. I give the Federal Parliaments and Governments credit for the good

work which they have done; but it is the great Creator whom we must thank for our surpluses, because it is the good seasons which we have enjoyed that have created our prosperity. I do not wish to be a Job's comforter, but I was born in Victoria, and have travelled through the Commonwealth, and having seen both good and bad seasons, know that the lean years must come again. Therefore it is only right and proper that some such agreement as was made by the right honorable member for Swan with the Premiers of the States should be entered into by the Commonwealth Ministry, so that the States may know what revenue they may expect, and may be able to consider proposals for railway extensions and other methods for developing their territories.

The CHAIRMAN.—The honorable member must not pursue this line of argument further, except in a general way. He must not go into detail.

Mr. HANS IRVINE.—I bow to your ruling, Mr. Chairman. I sympathize with honorable members who represent distant States, because I know what it is to keep up two homes. They are in an unfortunate position; but they were not forced into it. They knew, when they stood for Parliament, that the remuneration was £400 a year. Of course, the Constitution allows this Parliament to increase the allowance to its members. I have said if my business manager at Home, who holds my power of attorney, were to write to me by the next mail, saying that, as business was prosperous and progressive, he had increased his salary by £200 a year, I should act towards him as possibly the voters of this country will act towards those who support this proposal.

Mr. BOWDEN.—If the honorable member had given his manager permission in the power of attorney to fix his own salary, there would be a closer analogy.

Mr. HANS IRVINE.—At any rate, before increasing our allowance, we should prove our worth. This Parliament has already done good work; but it has also increased the burdens of the people by voting bounties to industries which it is premature to try to establish, and by voting money for the surveying of an Inter-State railway, a proposition which I opposed, not because I do not believe in Western Australia—a State in which I have great faith—but because I thought the undertaking one which should be left to the authorities of the States concerned. It is our

business to see that the interests of the States are protected, and everything done for the development of their resources. The appointment of a High Commissioner is a matter which might have been dealt with much earlier. Had the Commonwealth Parliament done all that was expected of it, its members would have earned a higher rate of remuneration. I am opposed to this proposal on various grounds. The leader of the Labour Party referred to this as a delicate matter, and said that he was prepared to respect the feelings of those who differed from his in regard to it. I have no feeling against those who differ from me; but on various occasions I informed the people of my constituency that I would oppose an increase of our allowance, and I am doing so. My views should receive the same respect that is paid to those of honorable members who think differently. I cannot forget that we are not the slaves of the public, and may resign if we consider that we are underpaid. No doubt some honorable members could earn £4,000, instead of £400, a year, if their energies were directed into the proper channels; but they cannot expect to make so much out of politics.

Mr. FRAZER.—Will the honorable member take the higher allowance if the Bill is passed?

Mr. HANS IRVINE.—I will take it if it becomes the law of the country that the remuneration of members shall be £600; but I do not think that there should be an increase now. An honorable member has stated that he has found the calls on his purse to be three times the amount of his salary, and possibly I have had the same experience, although I do not complain about it. In private employment a man commences at the apprentice stage, which is practically where the members of this Parliament are, because the Federation is only six years of age. He later becomes a journeyman, when his wages are increased, and finally, if he is proved to possess ability for organization and management, he is promoted to a managership, and his salary is further increased. A few honorable members have obtained the opinions of their constituents in regard to this proposed increase, but the people generally have not approved of it, and I do not think that it should be given until they have done so, and we have justified it by our attention to the interests of the country.

Mr. POYNTON (Grey) [7.59].—I recognise that this is entirely a matter of conscience, and that every one should be credited with sincerity in connexion with the attitude he may assume in regard to this proposal. While I hold views which differ from those of many others, I have no feeling against them, and regard them as actuated by the best motives. Before dealing with the merits of the question, I desire to say a few words in reference to the message. I submit that there is no analogy between the case in New South Wales and the case now before us. In New South Wales a distinct instruction was given by Parliament to the Government, who had to act on that instruction, and, Ministers being divided on the matter, adopted the method of making it an open question. In our own case, however, it has been stated on the floor of the House that every member of the Government is in favour of the proposition; and yet we are placed in the humiliating position of having it placed before us as an open question. I hope the day is far distant when messages for the appropriation of money will be introduced with no responsibility attaching to the Government. There are only two attitudes possible—to be either for or against the proposal. And surely the Government have a mind, as a Cabinet, on the question? In my opinion, the attitude of the Acting Prime Minister is far from dignified. When he was asked the straight-out question whether he was going to introduce a Bill, he simply said, "If you want it, you may have it; and I shall give time for you to consider the proposal." Is that the way in which a responsible Government should deal with the appropriation of money? As to the question itself, there are three ways in which it could have been dealt with. One is, as the proposal before us declares, to vote the money, and apply it directly to the present members of the House. Another is that which was discussed some years ago, namely, to increase the payment, but not to apply it until the next Parliament is elected. The third alternative is to make it a question for the electors. I remember the time when it was practically agreed that it was a matter which should be discussed at the elections. I do not say that the members of this Parliament are not worthy the increased payment; I do not say that they have not proved their worth since they entered Parliament. I thought it a little presumptuous

on the part of the honorable member for Grampians to make himself the judge of the worthiness exhibited by honorable members during the past six years. Situated as a number of us are, living so far from the Seat of Government, the expense to which we are put in attending to our duties is not at all commensurate with the remuneration. The reimbursement of £400 a year is not sufficient, particularly in the case of honorable members who live in distant States, and some of whom have had to keep up two houses for quite four and a half years out of the six years of Federation. Then, further, we must consider the enormous areas which some of us represent, and which entail work for the greater part of the recess. I am against the proposition to vote the money directly to this present Parliament; and I am equally against voting it for another Parliament. I am not such an idiot as to provide increased salaries for a coming Parliament, and allow gentlemen who are eager to get into our shoes to use the Bill as a lever against us, and who, if they were returned, would not have the moral courage to reduce the remuneration.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—That would be to place those men in the same difficulty in which the honorable member now feels himself to be.

Mr. POYNTON.—Exactly. In my opinion, this is a question which should be submitted to the electors, and a mandate asked for from them. For those reasons, I intend to vote against the proposal.

Mr. KNOX (Kooyong) [8.6].—As I am paired with the Prime Minister, whose absence we all regret, I should like to say a few words. I shall not venture to express an opinion on the constitutional question; my habit and custom is, on such matters, to be guided by the advice of those who are trained in the study of such subjects. But there is a practical side to the question, on which an ordinary layman may properly form his own judgment. I cannot see how it is possible for the Government to alienate their responsibility for the introduction of this measure. As the advisers of the Crown, they must have advised His Excellency to permit this message to be sent to us; and if they gave that advice, they must accept the full responsibility for it. This subterfuge of the Government, in not accepting responsibility, is perfectly inexplicable to me; and I trust that the country will nevertheless

insist on its due acceptance. Unanimous as the Government are in making the recommendation, I am astonished that there should be any hesitancy on their part in accepting responsibility. There cannot be any greater indication of the weakness of the Government than the fact that they are unable to accept responsibility for a recommendation in which they unanimously concur. The more this question becomes ventilated, the more it reflects adversely on the Government. Honorable members know my feelings in this connexion. There is at the present time a disparity in the financial effects of attendance as a member of this House. For myself, I live in Melbourne, and the whole of my electorate is in Melbourne; and, therefore, my position is different from that of honorable members who come from distant parts, and who are put to considerable expense in attending to their parliamentary duties. I have previously expressed myself as in sympathy with the arguments advanced by honorable members in this connexion; and I should like to see a much more just and equitable arrangement. I cannot recollect any occasion on which my electors during the recent contest ever asked me for an expression of opinion on this subject; but, had they done so, I should have said what I have now said. I think that we are unquestionably on delicate ground when we attempt to legislate to increase our remuneration. I take the view that we ought not, as one honorable member suggested, to provide additional attractions for our opponents; but, at the same time, if we pass this appropriation, it ought not to apply to the present Parliament. Otherwise, the electors would consider that we had taken advantage of our position under the Constitution, the spirit of which, I apprehend, is that any such change shall receive the approval or the concurrence of the electors. Personally, I have no mandate from my constituency; and I feel that we are not justified in voting the amount. This "Charge of Six Hundred" is now being made—we are being stormed at "with shot and shell"—and my impression is that the "numbers are up." I feel that if I am to interpret the views of my constituents, I must vote against the proposed increase.

Mr. FULLER.—The honorable member has not consulted his constituents, according to his own showing.

Mr. KNOX.—I have not; but I contend that, before I support a proposition to benefit myself, or other honorable members, the electors ought to have an opportunity to express an opinion. My attitude is a clear one. I shall vote against this proposal; but if the Government will introduce some measure by which a more equitable adjustment of the allowances could be brought about, and will agree that it shall take effect only after next election, I believe I should be justified in supporting it.

Mr. GLYNN (Angas) [8.14].—I regret that I cannot throw around the somewhat dry subject of Money Bills such an aroma of poetry as did the honorable member for Kooyong when he began almost to recite the "Charge of the Heavy Brigade"—poetry which his mental and physical powers entitle him to recite. To fall back upon the law, I should like, in a short contribution to the debate upon the constitutional aspect of this question, to refer to at least one authority. It has been very well said by several honorable members that where a message comes from the Governor-General the only intermediary between the Crown and the House is a Minister, and unless a message be a request by the Crown for the granting of Supply, a Minister speaks in this House for the Crown, and must accept responsibility, not only for making the request, but for putting into motion the necessary machinery for granting it. If that be not so, I fail to see why, under constitutional convention, as well as under our Standing Orders, all these matters are referred to the Committee of Supply. I would regard it as a piece of constitutional impudence, so to speak, on the part of a private member if he interposed between the House with which he is specially connected and the Crown—in other words, if he arrogated to himself a position of responsibility which, from the peculiar position of Ministers, is incident only to them. On the Cabinet principle, their position, of course, is somewhat equivocal. Not only morally, but as a matter of fact, a Minister primarily represents the Crown in these matters, and he is also the acknowledged Committee to act on behalf of the Crown for the purpose of initiating legislation. That is the common-sense view of the matter which has been very well expressed, and, therefore, it is not necessary for me to dwell

upon it further. But I desire to point out that in the Standing Orders specific provision is made that messages must be presented to the House by a Minister. Though our Standing Orders are silent as to what must be done in regard to the introduction of a Bill, I suppose that they follow the practice of the House of Commons. Of course, I am now dealing with money Bills, and a Bill which proposes to increase the allowance payable to honorable members is a money Bill. It is a Bill for an appropriation of the supplies of Government, and the supplies of Government are connected with the Estimates which are specially within the province of the Ministry. Therefore, it is peculiarly a Bill which ought to be introduced by a Minister, even if we did not know that all Bills dealing with appropriations should be so introduced. Referring to this question, Ridges, in his *Constitutional Law of England*, says—

It is also a constitutional principle that no Bill creating a charge upon the public revenues, or altering the incidence of or imposing new taxation upon the people, shall be introduced in the Commons except upon the recommendation of the Crown, expressed through a member of the Ministry. Such is the present constitutional position of the Crown with regard to the initiation of taxation and the control of the public revenue.

In other words, not merely the message, but the Bill to give effect to the Supply, must be fathered by the Ministry. I cannot understand why the Government object to fathering this Bill, unless it be that they shrink from the possible opprobrium which may attach to their action. Whilst the Acting Prime Minister was speaking, I mentioned that though he might have had a precedent for his action—a precedent which has been very well dealt with by the leader of the Opposition—there was a precedent in South Australia which showed exactly what ought to be done in regard to proposals of this kind. In that State the question of the payment of members was agitated during 1886 and 1887. As I was standing for Parliament for the first time in 1887, I remember that it formed one of the subjects upon which questions were put upon the hustings. Until 1887, the Government of South Australia did not, I think, assume responsibility for the Bill to give effect to payment of members, because the question had not been remitted to the public. But after the elections in that year, the Ministry accepted responsibility for the message, and the Bill, and

the Governor's speech upon the opening of Parliament on 2nd June, 1887, stated—

The question of making provision for the payment of members was fully considered at the recent election of members for the House of Assembly, and in order to give effect to the wishes of the electors my Government propose to introduce a Bill dealing with the subject.

What was done? The Bill was introduced by a Minister of the Crown. In the course of his speech he mentioned that the matter had been adequately discussed by the people, that the Bill was brought forward only because a general election had been held, and was only to come into force after the next periodical elections for the Legislative Council, and to expire after the next general election for the Assembly. So that not only was the feeling of the electors for the House of Assembly tested, but also that of the electors for the Legislative Council. Every safeguard was adopted by express provision in the Bill. It has been said by some honorable members that we have express authority under the Constitution to deal with this matter. But I would point out that about two-thirds of the provisions of the Constitution contain the words “Until Parliament otherwise provides.” All our legislative power might be exercised at once, but it is nevertheless provided that we shall not so exercise it.

Mr. MAHON.—Where is that to be found in the Constitution?

Mr. GLYNN.—It is not expressed there, but in democratic countries at all events it is understood that in the exercise of our powers of policy—which are substantial ones—we ought to consult the electors at the regular period of going before them.

Mr. KING O'MALLEY.—Did we not do so?

Mr. GLYNN.—A great many honorable members may have done so. Upon that point I do not wish to challenge their *bona fides*, or their judgment. But as in 1901, in reply to a question, I stated that I preferred that our remuneration should remain unchanged, at all events for some time, I presume that I am at liberty, with equal conscientiousness, to record my vote against this proposal.

Mr. KELLY (Wentworth) [8.25].—In accordance with the observations which I made in the House this afternoon, I move—

That the following words be added:—“Provided that no additional allowance beyond that now being paid to them shall be paid to the said members until after the next general election.”

Mr. BRUCE SMITH (Parkes) [8.26].—I do not intend to follow the example of some honorable members by dealing with the merits of this question at the present time, because we shall have a very much better opportunity of doing that when the measure is before the House, at a later stage. I have risen now to supplement the observations which I made this afternoon when I took exception to the claim of the Acting Prime Minister that a direct precedent for what he is doing to-day was to be found in the action taken by the late Sir Henry Parkes. I spoke then from personal recollection, although the event occurred something like eighteen years ago. Having been a member of the Government of which Sir Henry Parkes was the head, when the act in question was performed, I thought I was entitled to show that what the Acting Prime Minister claimed as a precedent was not what he represented it to be. I have since had an opportunity of looking up the New South Wales *Hansard* in regard to the Payment of Members Bill in that State, and I find the facts of the case are as follow: A member of the Government, who was in favour of the payment of members, submitted a resolution in the Legislative Assembly to the effect that in the opinion of the House honorable members should be paid for their services. I have abbreviated his motion, but that is the gist of it. That motion was carried by a large majority; and as the House—the representative body of the people in the State—had expressed its opinion that members of Parliament should be paid an annual remuneration, the Government felt it their duty to obtain a message from the Governor in order that the same Minister might introduce a Bill to that effect. What I wish to point out is that that fact alone differentiates that piece of history from the position which obtains here. So far there is nothing before the House to show either that the people of Australia, or the members of this Parliament, are desirous of increasing the remuneration of honorable members. But notwithstanding that, the Ministry have obtained from the Governor-General a message which enables a member of it, upon his own responsibility, to introduce a Bill to give effect to such a proposal. The Acting Prime Minister, as I have said, claims that he has the precedent for his action which was created by the late Sir Henry Parkes. I take exception to his statement upon the

ground that the late Sir Henry Parkes never intervened in this little chapter of history until the Legislative Council of New South Wales had rejected the Bill. He then took up that measure upon the ground that the Constitution of New South Wales did not entitle the Legislative Council to deal with a Money Bill. He accepted the responsibility, on behalf of the Government, of introducing the Bill to the House in a long speech, in which he dealt not with the merits of the proposal, but purely with its constitutional aspect.

Sir JOHN FORREST.—Did he introduce the Bill?

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—He introduced it after it had been rejected by the Legislative Council, upon the ground that it had then become a constitutional question.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—The Ministry introduced it in the first instance.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—I hope that the honorable gentleman will not attempt to neutralize the effect of my criticism on that which he has claimed as a precedent. The Acting Prime Minister said that he could mention to the House the precedent of Sir Henry Parkes introducing a measure of this kind, and yet leaving every member of his Ministry open to vote as he chose. The Parkes Government, however, never attempted to deal with the question until a resolution had been passed by the House affirming that, as representative of the people of New South Wales, it was in favour of the principle. But, in any event, the name of Sir Henry Parkes ought not to be introduced in this connexion unless it is pointed out at the same time that his action was based upon constitutional grounds, since he considered that the rights of the Legislative Assembly were being challenged by the Upper House, which had no constitutional power to throw out such a measure. He did not deal with the merits of the proposal; he dealt only with the constitutional aspect of the matter, saying—

The real question is the position which this Bill occupies as affecting what it is contended are the rights of the Legislative Assembly. In taking the stand I do to-night, it must be obvious—it needs no reminder from me—that I do not appear here so much as Colonial Secretary as the leader of the House; that any person occupying my place necessarily becomes virtually the leader of the House while he occupies that place, and that it is in that capacity that I make the present motion.

Later on he said—

I shall only glance at the question of the rights of the respective Houses, and I will try

to explain in a few minutes why I shall do little more than glance at that question. It is desirable that we should in the first place bring home to our minds the way in which party government arose in the mother country.

And then, having dealt at length with history, he said—

Now, I think it may be laid down as an axiom in political science that two legislative bodies—given the case of any parliament consisting of two bodies—with equal powers would be practically and verily unworkable. The conflict continuously going on would render legislation impossible.

He proceeded to quote from the Constitution of New South Wales, and at a later stage made the following observation, which, I think, will completely confirm my view of his speech and of his action—

My contention is that the Legislative Council has forgotten its place in the framework of the Constitution.

Mr. FULLER.—What has that to do with this position?

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—I thought that I had made it perfectly clear. The Acting Prime Minister said, "I claim, in introducing this measure, that I have the precedent of Sir Henry Parkes introducing a similar measure in similar circumstances." He declared that the parallel was a most complete one. I have shown that it is not. In the first place, the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales had passed a resolution showing the feeling of the country and of the Parliament. In the second place, certain action had been taken by the Legislative Council, which made the question a purely constitutional one, and it was only when it became an exclusively constitutional question that Sir Henry Parkes proceeded to deal with it.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—The only analogy is that it related to the payment of members.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—That is so. The honorable member for South Sydney made an observation of very great importance, and since it is the utterance of the leader of the Labour Party, I think it should be carefully noted. The honorable member said, in effect, that he was not prepared to pay to constitutional precedent the same respect that many other honorable members were prepared to give it. He said that, wherever the necessity of the public required it, he was prepared to pass over precedent, and to give the public that which they needed, irrespective of precedent, so long as he thought it desirable. The honorable member's observation was offered in the best possible spirit,

but I venture to say that, underlying it, was a complete misconception of the gravity and importance of constitutional precedent. No one can make a study of May's *Parliamentary Practice* or Todd's *Parliamentary Government* without feeling that we should be failing in our duty if we omitted to acknowledge the enormous value of the constitutional wisdom and practical judgment that underlies the great body of constitutional law so carefully compiled in those and other volumes.

Mr. FISHER.—All of which shows a constant change and difference of opinion.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—The honorable member may make that assertion. I remember very well that when the Labour Party first entered the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, one of its members, who was put forward as the spokesman of the party, said in a very epigrammatic sentence, "We are here, not to follow, but to make precedents." I have always remembered that observation, and am sure that every thoughtful man who heard or read it would regard it with considerable misgivings.

Mr. CARR.—Then there must be no more precedents!

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—The honorable member is going to the other extreme; I am not contending for anything of the sort. Whenever a question for which there is a great constitutional authority is submitted to the House, I shall pay great respect to it. I certainly should not hastily depart from that authority without considering that we were probably dealing with an isolated case—

Mr. CARR.—That is better.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—It is not; I am simply supplementing that which I was proceeding to say when the honorable member interrupted me. Sometimes in legal matters an individual case seems to demand a particular course on the part of the Judiciary; but we know very well that it is dangerous to deal exceptionally with a single case if it involves a breach of a big general principle. I say advisedly, and with premeditation, that to talk glibly of ignoring constitutional precedent merely because in some individual case it is apparently contrary to public interest is to fail to pay a proper regard to the great constitutional authorities that we have before us. I am no martyr to constitutional precedent. So long as I am satisfied that the whole of the circumstances surrounding any quoted precedent have been

carefully studied and considered, and that it is impossible for us, having due regard, not only for the immediate, but for the future interest of the country, to consider them, I shall be one of the last to contend that they ought to be enforced. But the honorable member at the head of the Labour Party spoke, I thought, rather lightly of a great question. If he intended to lay down, as did the spokesman of the Labour Party in the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, in 1890, that, "As a general principle we come here, not to follow, but to make precedents," the outlook for the Parliament of the Commonwealth would be very dangerous. I do not intend to deal now with the merits of this question, but I should like to reply to an observation made by the honorable member for Angas. The honorable member said he could quote an exact parallel. He proceeded to point out that in the South Australian Parliament on one occasion, when a message was brought down, it was contended by the Government that they could not deal with the question to which it related until they had been to the people of the country. Apart altogether from the merits of the question, there is a very important distinction in this case. We are not raising a proposal that has never been before the people. As was pointed out by the honorable member for Grey, as well as by the right honorable member for East Sydney, the people have virtually had this question before them. Our Constitution clearly provides that the present allowance is to continue only so long as the Parliament chooses. The people of Australia have practically granted us in anticipation the right to vary that allowance whenever we think fit to do so. That is one side of the question. On the other hand, I heartily sympathize with the amendment which has been moved by the honorable member for Wentworth. Although that power is given to us, we should be acting without justification if we put our hands into the Treasury at present and took the increased payment for this present Parliament. We are here as trustees for the people, and there is no relationship which the Courts of this and every other civilized country regard more jealously than that of trustees. We are put in a position in which, if we choose to do so, we could, as a matter of legality, vote ourselves £10,000 a year. No one could contend for a moment that we should be justified in doing so; but it has been left to us to do that which we think rea-

sonable. As trustees for the people, we should refuse steadfastly to put our hands into the public Treasury—I do not use that expression in any hypercritical spirit—and grant ourselves an increased allowance until the question has been put clearly before the people. I do not say that it should first be put before them as a policy, but it certainly ought to be laid before them in order that they might have an opportunity of choosing between each one of us and any of our opponents, having regard to the fact that a larger inducement would be offered to candidates to come forward. I shall have much pleasure in voting for any amendment that will have the effect of deferring this increased payment until the next Parliament. I shall heartily vote for the increase being granted to any future Parliament, because I think, with many other honorable members, that when the Constitution was passed it was never contemplated that the work of the Federation was going to occupy so much time, and cause so many men to so frequently travel great distances in order that they might take their proper part in the legislation of the Commonwealth.

**Mr. HUGHES** (West Sydney) [8.42].—A great deal has been said during this debate, and particularly by the honorable member who has just resumed his seat, about the precedent set by the late Sir Henry Parkes, as well as of the very great virtue that lies in precedent in general and the views regarding it expressed by the leader of the Labour Party in this House, as well as by a former member of the party in the State Parliament of New South Wales.

**Mr. BRUCE SMITH**.—I was referring to the statement made by Mr. Black.

**Mr. HUGHES**.—The name of the honorable gentleman is immaterial, since it is assumed that he was speaking for the Labour Party. I wish to say that it is exactly this difference of opinion that divides the class interests which my honorable and learned friend represents from the general interests of the people that the party of which I am a member has the honour to represent. The worship of precedent stands for that conservatism and do-nothing policy that marked the politics of Australia, and particularly of New South Wales, until the Labour Party came forward. If precedent is to be held sacred, how is any change to be made? On what did the present leader of the Opposition in this House go to the country

in 1894, when he held office as Premier of New South Wales? Did he then stand in awe of some constitutional precedent, or did he not threaten to overturn existing conditions? And this he did, though not to a sufficient extent. He gloried in his action, which is the one white stone in his career. If the right honorable member were to-night sitting where the honorable member for Hume is sitting, he would again overturn every principle which he thinks so sacred. There is something in Ministerial office so curative in its effect upon the political, if not on the natural sight—I wish it were so in regard to the other senses—that no sooner does a man get to this side of the Chamber than he sees things that he never dreamt of before; he sees visions.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—Is the honorable member speaking from experience? I have not acknowledged that it is so.

Mr. HUGHES.—There is no virtue in a precedent in itself; it is good only when sanctioned and approved by common sense. What is the precedent to which the honorable and learned gentleman referred? According to him, the late Sir Henry Parkes took a certain course under certain circumstances. What were these circumstances? I havé not had the advantage of reading the report of the debates which took place at the time, but I am sure that Sir Henry Parkes, although, no doubt, a great constitutionalist, did not deliver, as my honorable and learned friend seems to imagine he did, a legal dissertation on the question—for a very good and sufficient reason. According to his showing, Sir Henry Parkes came to the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, not as the guardian of responsible government and the mouth-piece of the Cabinet, but as the mouth-piece of the representative House, whose might, majesty, and power had been threatened by the Legislative Council. He therefore did what the House could not do without him, and took the business in question into his own hands. The Acting Prime Minister has followed a certain course. It does not matter what he may say or what he may do, he cannot divest himself of the responsibility for his action in this matter. Having taken action in this matter he stands irrevocably committed. He may say that he is not bringing this proposal forward as a Government measure. That does not matter. The Constitution concerns itself with not what a man says but what he does. The honor-

able member for Hume is at present leading the Government, and, having taken charge of this matter, the fact that he has said that the measure which is to be introduced will not be a Government measure—though it ought to be—does not make the measure unconstitutional. This talk about constitutionality is so much beating of the air. Ministers and members alike are responsible for every vote that they give. I do not wish to say anything about the merits of this proposal now, because we shall have an opportunity to discuss it later on; but I should like to say a word or two as a counterblast to the dissertation on political morality with which the honorable and learned member for Parkes has seen fit to favour the Committee to-night. I cannot recall a solitary instance when, an opportunity offering, he has not given a dissertation upon this subject. It has long been his custom to do so in New South Wales, and it seems still to be his practice to go before unfortunate women who have done nothing to provoke him, and, without even the stimulating influence of tea and buns, with which before his time it was customary to regale one's self on such occasions, deliver most touching and pathetic orations dealing with the falling away there is in existing Parliaments, and describing the kind of man necessary to rule the country—always fashioned in an admirable and unmistakable likeness to himself.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—Is not the honorable and learned member wasting these remarks? He might earn half-a-sovereign by sending them to the *Bulletin*.

Mr. HUGHES.—If I did, the money would be as well earned as any the honorable and learned member ever got for advising clients on questions of law. I take advantage of the occasion to say that, because it is libellous to say of a lawyer that he does not know law, and this is the only place where I can say it without risk. The present dissertation of the honorable and learned member came from him with very bad grace. It is one thing to preach morality and another to practise it. He is a great admirer of the classics, and must know that choice proverb of the ancient Greeks, “Let us have a good thing twice.” This may be aptly applied to the honorable gentleman’s attitude towards members’ salaries. There are some things, according to the honorable member, which we may reject once, with the approval of our morality and our conscience,

but which we may not reject twice, because our conscience and morality will not approve. My honorable and learned friend is a worshipper of Herbert Spencer, and I would therefore remind him of the *dictum* of that great philosopher, that quantitative changes make qualitative differences. While one might reject £300 a year with comparative ease, £600 a year is a very difficult proposition, while £900 a year may become almost irresistible. The morality that is easily triumphant when faced with a small temptation, sometimes fails hopelessly when it meets a great one. The honorable and learned gentleman says that we should give the people an opportunity to express their opinions in regard to this matter. Certainly we should.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—That is exactly what I did in New South Wales. I contested a general election before touching one penny of my parliamentary allowance.

Mr. HUGHES.—According to the honorable member's showing, the people have had quite a number of opportunities of considering this question, and the result is shown in the Constitution of this Committee. I shall not pretend to say that the people as a whole indorsed at the last elections, or had an opportunity of indorsing, this demand for increased remuneration; but I know that, as the honorable member for Wentworth pointed out, quite a number of candidates were asked whether they favoured this proposal, to which question some replied, "Yes," and others, "No"; and that some of those who gave an affirmative answer were returned. As the right honorable member for East Sydney has stated, every man must take full responsibility for his vote. To say that we are never to vote upon any subject until it has been specifically, and in detail, approved by the people, is to put us where the honorable member for Parkes is continually saying we ought not to be put. He says it is a degradation for men to be delegates; that we should be representatives.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—Who said so?

Mr. HUGHES.—I am labouring under the delusion that the honorable member has said so. That delusion has been fostered by my careful reading of *précis* of the honorable member's orations to the female audiences of which I have spoken. He has stated that it is a sign of the decadence of political morality that men to-day are delegates and not free and independent

representatives. The Labour members, he has said, go into Parliament with their limbs fettered. They are no longer free men; their minds are made up for them.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—I did say that.

Mr. HUGHES.—I assume that the honorable member is the antithesis of a Labour member; that he is the right kind of representative; the man who will not accept dictation from any one; certainly not from his constituents. According to his contention, it is absurd for a man to come here as the mouthpiece of his constituents, and he is a living example of an absolute disregard of the mandate of the electors. If I misunderstood his attitude, he will have ample opportunity to correct me, and I have never known him to be backward in correcting those who have been so unfortunate as to fall into error. I understand the position to have been something like this. A Bill was passed by the New South Wales Parliament, which provided for the payment of £300 a year to each member of the existing and all subsequent Legislative Assemblies. It was before my time, and I regarded the matter with indifference and contempt. The honorable and learned gentleman did not draw his allowance, but allowed it to stand to his credit in the paymaster's office. He was stern and unbending rectitude personified. Honorable members will see that, as time went on, his stern and unbending virtue relaxed. Although a very easy course was open to him, he permitted, as I have said, the allowance to accumulate to his credit in the paymaster's office, though the obvious course would have been to pay it into the Consolidated Revenue, an expedient which would have suggested itself to any man of ordinary sagacity. My honorable friend does not lightly cast aside precedent. He stands by the old order of things, which is to hold fast to what you have got. Time went on, an election came round, and he went before his constituents. Amongst other questions, they were asked to say whether they approved of the Bill, and whether they approved of the honorable gentleman. They approved of the Bill, but they did not approve of him.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—The honorable member is quite wrong.

Mr. HUGHES.—I am sorry! Hitherto I have been a faithful devotee at the shrine of democracy, but to-night I feel that my principles are wavering. That the people should have made such a mistake as to return the

honorable member seriously shakes my faith in their sagacity. Having been returned, he did what every sensible man would have done under the circumstances. He went to the Treasury, and drew the whole sum then lying to his credit.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—I should do it again.

Mr. HUGHES.—Of course the honorable member would.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—But I should not take the money before meeting my constituents.

Mr. HUGHES.—What is more to the point is that the honorable member will vote against this proposal, and then "do it again." But I feel very sure that on the bench on which the honorable member is sitting, in company with some very excellent men, there will be found few to follow his example. I think that most of the members on that bench will vote for the increase and take it; some of them may vote against the increase and take it, while others will vote against the increase and not take it; but I do not think the honorable member will be one of the latter. I say nothing about the merits of the question, but, from a constitutional stand-point, there is nothing to prevent honorable members from casting a vote for the measure. I should have preferred that the Ministry had simply said that they take the full responsibility; but their not saying so does not divest them of the responsibility, either in this House or before the country. The members of the Government, and every other honorable member, will simply have to explain and give reasons for what they have done. As to what the amount shall be, and under what circumstances it ought to be paid, these are matters which may well be deferred until the question comes before us in concrete form.

Colonel FOXTON (Brisbane) [9.2].—I am afraid that I cannot claim, like the honorable member for West Sydney, that indifference which he experienced when this question was considered by the New South Wales Assembly before he was a member of it. I cannot help thinking, in connexion with the suggestion that £900 a year would be absolutely irresistible, that the strenuous way in which the honorable member advocated that amount rather indicates that he, by some subtle means, has got behind the scenes, and is aware, or has reason to believe, that that is the amount which will be proposed in the Bill.

Mr. TILLEY BROWN.—Surely not?

Colonel FOXTON.—We do not know what are the contents of the Bill; and that is one reason why I agree with the honorable member for Parkes and the honorable member for West Sydney that this is not the best opportunity to discuss the merits of the measure. But for what I conceive to be a good reason, I shall, in one particular, depart from that view. It appears to me that the case quoted by the Acting Prime Minister in support of what he contends is the constitutional action of the Government, has been very ably met by the leader of the Opposition and the honorable member for Parkes. Those honorable members have clearly shown, as was mentioned by the honorable member for Flinders, that the two cases are only parallel in one particular, namely, that they relate to the payment of members. As a private member I, on several occasions in the State House of Queensland, introduced public Bills which involved some small appropriation. The invariable practice, so far as my recollection goes, was for a message to be preluded by a specific resolution of the House requesting that the appropriation be made. On the resolution, the private member proceeded with his Bill, and, at the proper moment, the Premier, or other Minister, acting on the private member's behalf, presented the message. That appears to me to be the correct procedure. On the present occasion, it is proposed that the Bill shall be introduced by a member of the Government, probably the Acting Prime Minister.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—He has not said so.

Colonel FOXTON.—No; but we have had no intimation other than from the Government that any member proposes to father the Bill. I am led to the conclusion that it would be introduced by the Acting Prime Minister, or one of his colleagues; and, that being so, I conceive that, even if it be introduced by the Acting Prime Minister in his individual capacity, it necessarily becomes a Government measure; no matter what may be said as to the private view of the various individual members who compose the Government. We were given to understand from an interjection of the Acting Prime Minister that every member of the Government will probably vote for the measure. That being so, why has the Government not the courage of their convictions? Why do

they not say, as a collective body, "This is a Government measure introduced by the Government, and we take the responsibility?" I am informed that on the occasion prior to the introduction of the Bill by Sir Henry Parkes, the measure was introduced and fathered by, I think, the Postmaster-General of the State in his individual capacity as a member. That is not a practice to be desired. So far as I am aware, it is an accepted principle that any legislation proposed by a member of the Government must necessarily be legislation proposed by the Government as a whole. I believe that this is a matter which should not necessarily go before the constituencies at a general election for their decision. I do not think that this Bill should be placed on a higher level than any other financial measure of equal dimensions, so far as the constituencies are concerned. I understand that the amount involved is £22,000 or £23,000; and there are many measures, involving larger expenditure, which became law without having been specially submitted to the constituencies at a general election. If the question were submitted at a general election it would undoubtedly be completely overshadowed by a number of other questions; and it would be absolutely impossible, under the existing system, to obtain a complete expression of opinion. I consider that this House, as at this moment constituted, is quite competent to deal with this matter if it so chooses. But I am entirely in sympathy with the amendment submitted by the honorable member for Wentworth. I recognise, as other honorable members recognise, that there are those of us who have brought this matter before their constituents at the elections, and who consider that they have the sanction of their electors for voting for the measure. I am not in that position, and, therefore, I am of opinion that I would not be justified in voting for the Bill without the proviso which the honorable member for Wentworth seeks to impose, namely, that it shall apply to the next Parliament only. If an increase in the payment to members is to take place, it must be by legislation, whether it operate immediately or in the following Parliament. Consequently, from my point of view, we are in as good a position to legislate on this matter as the next Parliament would be in regard to the next following one. Therefore, holding the views I do as to the

inadequacy of the present remuneration, I am perfectly prepared to vote for this measure, provided it is not made applicable to the present Parliament. As this matter was never mentioned at any of my election meetings, I feel I have, so to speak, entered into a compact, which I am perfectly prepared to carry out for the full term of this Parliament. At the same time, I recognise that £400 a year is not sufficient for those who, like myself, come from long distances. At this moment I am 1,300 or 1,400 miles away from my home and place of business, and, as it is impossible to travel backwards and forwards, I am here for six months.

Mr. FISHER.—More than that!

Colonel FOXTON.—I am going home for Christmas, at any rate. It is here that I propose to deal with the merits of the question—not with the merits of the Bill, of which we know nothing—for the purpose of making a suggestion. A number of honorable members have mentioned the fact that the present remuneration is probably ample for honorable members whose residences and places of business are in and about Melbourne, and who are not necessarily put to the same expense as those from a distance. I have had some experience of this myself. In Queensland, I represented a constituency which was 200 or 300 miles away from Brisbane, but, during my term of representation, I was resident and had my place of business within the capital. I was, therefore, not put to much inconvenience and expense, comparatively speaking, in attending to my parliamentary duties, for I had the mornings for attending to my business. In that Parliament a simple method was adopted for differentiating between the circumstances of honorable members. When I first entered Parliament as a supporter of Sir Samuel Griffith, in 1883, he was pledged to the introduction of a Bill for the payment of members' expenses. Unless my memory misgives me, the Bill was passed, but rejected by the Legislative Council. Thereupon, instead of dealing with the matter in the way Sir Henry Parkes appears to have adopted a few years later, there was in the next session an item of between £9,000 and £10,000 placed on the Estimates for the payment of members' expenses, and a footnote defined the method of distribution. This was simplicity itself; every member for every day on which he was necessarily

absent from his home or place of business, for the purpose of attending Parliament, was paid the sum of £2 2s. It was not £2 2s. for every day on which Parliament sat, nor only for every day on which he attended Parliament, but for every day on which he was necessarily absent from his home or place of business for the purpose of attending in his place in Parliament.

Mr. WILKS.—Did they ever go home?

Colonel FOXTON.—Yes. They went home; and I will tell the honorable member why. They went home because a member—whether he went home or not, of course, I am speaking of residents of Brisbane who could get home—was not necessarily absent from his home or place of business for the purpose of attending Parliament. A resident of the capital was necessarily absent from his home or place of business for the purpose of attending Parliament only upon the actual days upon which Parliament sat—some three or four days a week, as the case might be.

Mr. WEBSTER.—Surely the honorable member does not suggest that a member of Parliament has no other duties to perform besides that of attending Parliament?

Colonel FOXTON.—I suggest nothing of the kind. A member of the Queensland Parliament was paid only for those days upon which he was necessarily absent from his home or place of business for the purpose of attending Parliament. A member who lived within a stone's throw of Parliament House was necessarily absent from his home only on the days when Parliament sat, and on which he attended the House. The way in which that system worked out was this: The member who had to come a thousand miles—as many did—for the purpose of attending Parliament, was necessarily absent from his home or place of business for seven days in each week, and for many weeks in succession. Thus the system had the effect of differentiating between two classes of members—those who were put to great expense in the discharge of their parliamentary duties, and those who were not. Take my own case as an illustration. I represented a country constituency, although I lived in the capital. For attending regularly throughout a long session I was never able to receive more than about £100. Other honorable members who came from a distance obtained the maximum allowance, which was fixed at £200 per session. By the time the session was half concluded, the latter had reached the maximum, proving conclusively that if

£2 2s. per day was a fair allowance to honorable members, the maximum had been fixed too low. If the Bill providing for an increased allowance to honorable members be a Government measure, I would suggest that the present rate of remuneration should continue, and that the Queensland system which I have outlined should be adopted in regard to any allowance in excess of the £400.

Mr. WEBSTER.—What was Sir Thomas McIlwraith's opinion of paying honorable members a fee?

Colonel FOXTON.—My impression is that he was strongly opposed to the principle of payment of members.

Mr. WEBSTER.—He preferred a straight-out payment to payment by means of fees.

Colonel FOXTON.—I cannot see anything in that argument at all. I know that exception was taken to the fact that a member's name had to be recorded by the officers of the House, and that unless it was so recorded he could not receive any remuneration. But I would point out that as matters stand at present our names are recorded by an officer of the House.

Mr. HUTCHISON.—Under that system, a member might simply walk into the chamber for the purpose of having his name recorded, and then walk out.

Colonel FOXTON.—We have to trust to the honour of honorable members in this matter. I am merely suggesting a practical method of differentiating between those honorable members who are put to very great expense in the discharge of their parliamentary duties and those who are not.

Mr. WEBSTER.—There is no compulsion on the part of those who do not earn the increased salary to accept it.

Colonel FOXTON.—I am quite aware of that. But if this Parliament, in its wisdom, declared that £600 a year was a fair remuneration for one's services as a representative of the people—although I might disagree with that view—when I saw other honorable members—who, perhaps, in my vanity I might not think were as good representatives as myself, or who were put to less expense—accepting it, I should not hesitate to accept it myself. In some Parliaments not only is it a fact that members are paid for their attendance, but they are actually fined for non-attendance. However, I think that that system is very much less desirable than is that of paying honorable members for their attendance. Having seen it stated in various

sections of the press that it was desirable that some scheme should be put forward by which it would be possible to differentiate between those honorable members who are subjected to very great expenditure in discharging their parliamentary functions and those who are not, I have ventured to make a suggestion which I think is worthy of adoption and which in practice has proved thoroughly efficacious. If the honorable member for Wentworth presses his amendment to a division I shall certainly vote for it. Otherwise I feel disposed to vote against the Bill, because I do not feel that I am justified in departing from the compact which I entered into with my constituents to serve them in my present capacity without additional remuneration during the term of the present Parliament.

Mr. WISE (Gippsland) [9.25].—I did not intend at this stage to discuss the merits of the proposal, believing, with other honorable members, that a better opportunity for doing so would occur when the measure is under consideration. But I understand that a division is to be forced upon this question, and consequently honorable members who may vote for the proposal may be placed in a false position unless they intimate their opinions. If old members of this House have felt some diffidence in dealing with this question, one can readily understand with how much greater diffidence a new member—and particularly a Victorian representative—deals with it. As the honorable member for Flinders has said, Victorian representatives occupy a very different position from that of the representatives of other States. Whenever discussions have occurred upon the question of the future Seat of Government, and I have been told by Victorians that the presence of the Commonwealth Parliament in Melbourne confers no benefit upon them, I have pointed out that it confers a very great benefit upon them in many ways. One of the great advantages which the people of Victoria derive from the establishment of the Commonwealth Parliament in Melbourne is that their representatives are able to attend its sittings with very much less loss of time and income and with less expenditure than are the representatives of other States. One cannot help being impressed by the fact that this proposal has been brought forward by the Acting Prime Minister, and has been supported by the right honorable member for East Sydney and the honorable member for South Sydney.

These three gentlemen represent three leading parties in the community. They have all filled the position of Prime Minister, and, therefore, what they have said upon the subject must carry very great weight with honorable members who are new to this House. Apart from that consideration, it appears to me that very little thought must force us to the conclusion that £400 a year is by no means a sufficient allowance to the representatives from distant States. Therefore, I do not propose to inflict an injustice on them by voting against this proposal. But when the Bill is in Committee, I intend to submit an amendment which will have the effect of apportioning the allowance payable upon something like a mileage basis. My idea is to provide that so long as the Seat of Government remains in Melbourne, the representatives of Victoria, both in this House and in the Senate, shall not receive any part of the increased allowance. By inserting some such provision, we shall not inflict injustice upon the representatives of the other States, and Victorian representatives will not be able to accept a greater remuneration than that to which they are entitled at present. I agree with the honorable member for Brisbane that it is not necessary that this proposal should first be placed before the electors. I also coincide with his view that if it were submitted to the people at a general election it would be completely obscured by other and greater issues. Take the last general election as an example. How little would the circumstance of whether a candidate was in favour of an increased parliamentary allowance of £200 being paid to honorable members have affected any election throughout Australia? Holding that view, I cannot follow the honorable member when he affirms that we should pass the measure, but that it should not come into operation until the electors have had an opportunity of voting upon it.

Colonel FOXTON.—They might be given a wider choice then.

Mr. WISE.—There would be a temptation on the part of candidates to seek to give the electors that wider choice by taking up the popular cry and denouncing the sitting member for having voted for the increased allowance, knowing at the same time that, if elected, they themselves would receive the increased amount. If we are prepared to support the payment of an increased allowance to honorable members, I see no objection to giving effect to the Bill.

at the present time, although I shall not vote to make it applicable to the representatives of Victoria.

Sir JOHN FORREST (Swan) [9.30].—In listening to the remarks of the last two speakers, it occurred to me that they have employed all the arguments which can be advanced in support of this proposal, although towards the close of their observations they announced that they intended to vote against it. If we are of opinion that, having regard to the distance which many honorable members have to travel in order to attend here, as well as to the other disadvantages under which they labour, the present allowance is inadequate, we should be disposed to accept the responsibility of voting for an increase. I certainly am not in favour of adopting the suggestion made by the honorable member for Brisbane, that we should provide for an increased allowance to those who may possibly succeed us. The constitutional procedure usually adopted in regard to a matter of this kind is for the Government of the day to make the question one of policy at a general election, and, upon its indorsement by the people, to introduce a Bill to give effect to it. That, theoretically speaking, is a constitutional procedure to which no objection could be taken, but we are not always able to do that which we should like to do. When I was Premier of Western Australia some years ago, the question of payment of members arose; but not immediately after a general election. The position was very similar to that which arose in New South Wales in 1889, although I do not think that the precedent quoted by the Acting Prime Minister is a very good one to follow. As the result of a fairly general desire on the part of honorable members of the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia a motion in favour of the payment of members was submitted by a private member, and was carried by a large majority. I voted against it. Although the Government would not have been in jeopardy had it ignored that decision, I determined to recognise it, and said at once that I would introduce the necessary Bill to give effect to it. I obtained a message from the Governor; a Bill was introduced in a form approved by the Government, and it became law.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—Did the Government take charge of that measure?

Sir JOHN FORREST.—It was a Government measure, and the Ministry accepted the responsibility for it. That is the

course which I think the Ministry should follow in the present case. I fail to understand why the Acting Prime Minister has not done so. I am sure he will acquit me of any desire to treat him unfairly, but I must say that I am very much surprised that a constitutionalist of his experience should have taken up his present attitude, more especially as there is a majority in favour of the increased allowance. I presume, however, that there is some reason for the attitude adopted by the honorable gentleman. I hold that he should have caused a resolution to be submitted to ascertain the opinion of the House, and in the event of its being carried, should have taken the responsibility of introducing a Government measure to carry out the wishes of honorable members. I agree with the leader of the Labour Party that we occupy a somewhat delicate position in being called upon to vote money for our own use. As a matter of fact, this question has been discussed in an informal way at various times during the last five years. Every honorable member of the Parliament has spoken of it, and, in view of the present opinion and attitude of the Government, it is a pity that they did not determine to submit it to the people at the last general election, in order that the opinion of the constituencies might be ascertained. It would have been an easy matter to embody it in the platform of the Government. Had it been indorsed by the people a reference to the intentions of the Government would then have appeared in the Governor-General's Speech, and no one could have taken any exception to the proposal. I am not in accord with those who regard our present allowance as a salary. I should be sorry to think that we are here to pass legislation as salaried officers of the people. Such a position would be very derogatory to the Legislature. We are here to do the work of the country, and are granted an allowance which, while, no doubt, useful to all, is more necessary to some than to others. Unless we are going to lay down the rule that no one who is without means shall enter this Parliament—and it would be very desirable if we were all possessed of means other than the honorarium that we receive—we must be in favour of an allowance. Some who are well off, others who are moderately well off, and some who have very little indeed, have obtained the suffrages of the people, and enjoy their confidence. That being so, some of the

arguments that have been urged to-night may be at once dismissed. We have heard the question put, "Why did you seek election if you could not afford to devote all your attention to the work of Parliament"? The time when the possession of riches was essential to the occupancy of a seat in Parliament has long since passed. It is the ambition of rich and poor alike to be representatives of the people. It is true there is no compulsion on any one to enter this House, but the desire to become a member of it is an honorable ambition, and therefore I should be sorry to regard membership of the Federal Parliament as being merely a business. I should be sorry to think that we are here merely to secure the allowance granted to honorable members. I regret that the Acting Prime Minister took exception to the objection raised by the honorable and learned member for Flinders, that this should have been made a Ministerial proposal. The honorable and learned member was on absolutely constitutional ground in raising that objection, and there was nothing in his utterance that could be construed as being hostile to the Government. One matter which the Ministry will have to consider, in connexion with the introduction of the Bill to follow the passing of this resolution, is the question of whether the increased allowance should be paid to Mr. Speaker, the President of the Senate, and to Ministers. While I do not approve of the way in which the question has been submitted to the House, yet I agree with the honorable member for South Sydney that, although we are anxious to conform to constitutional precedent, the main question we have to consider is whether or not this increase should be granted. I disapprove of the way in which this proposal has so far been dealt with, but I hope that the Acting Prime Minister will remove all cause for objection by making the Bill a Government measure. I should be very unwilling to give my support to a Bill for which the Government is not responsible in the ordinary way, yet at the same time I am not prepared at present to vote against a moderate increase in the allowance to honorable members.

Mr. WILKS (Dalley) [9.42].—I propose to vote for the Bill, and therefore intend to defend the proposition immediately before the Chair. The last two honorable members who spoke occupy widely different positions. I recognise that a great strain is being put upon new members of this

House in their being called upon to vote for an increased allowance. I take it, however, that they have the confidence of the electors who have returned them. If the electors have no confidence in their capacity to determine the question of whether or not they should receive an increased allowance, how can it be said that they have confidence in their ability to deal with the far larger questions, involving, in some cases, an expenditure of millions, which from time to time must come before them? The right honorable member for Swan has just made what I regard as one of the most manly and outspoken speeches that we have had from him in this House. As he has pointed out, this question is by no means a new one. Those who were members of the first Parliament, and particularly such as came to Melbourne from distant constituencies, felt that £400 per annum was not a sufficient allowance. I would have preferred to have this matter dealt with by the leaders of the several parties announcing in their election speeches that it was intended to propose in the new Parliament to increase the allowance of members. At the end of the first Parliament it was almost arranged that that should be done, and I am sorry that the matter fell through. On one occasion I met the leader of the Labour Party, and he told me that he had been asked to announce at the first public meeting of his campaign that it was his intention to vote to increase the parliamentary allowance. Though not a member of his party, I then advised him not to bell the cat alone, but to wait until the leaders of the other parties were prepared to make the same announcement. To-night, however, this proposal has been brought forward by the acting leader of the Government, and supported by the leader of the Opposition and of the Labour Party.

Mr. THOMAS.—And of the Fourth party.

Mr. WILKS.—I do not know whether the honorable member referred to is the leader of the Fourth party, but after his speech to-night he should be its leader. At any rate, he is an old parliamentarian, and the only objection he took to the proposal was as to the method in which it is being brought forward. I think that he had good reasons for that objection, and that it would be wise for the Acting Prime Minister to treat the proposal as a Ministerial one. The honorable member for Parkes has recited the history of the New

South Wales Payment of Members Act, and has been replied to by the honorable member for West Sydney. The honorable member for Parkes and the right honorable member for East Sydney both voted against payment of members, but, whilst the former ultimately drew the whole of the remuneration due to him, the latter paid into the Consolidated Revenue £540, which had accrued to his credit prior to the general election following the passing of the Act. Those who say that we should not increase our salaries will be able to quieten their conscience by refusing to accept the extra allowance; but I object to any member taking the credit which will come from opposing the measure, and afterwards drawing the extra salary. I am prepared to vote for and to draw an increased remuneration, and those who think that £400 is sufficient should, when the allowance has been increased, return any surplus to the Consolidated Revenue. I can understand the position taken up by the honorable member for Gippsland, who is a new member; but I do not think that the Committee will allow him to commit political suicide in regard to this matter. I shall not vote to differentiate between representatives of Victoria and those of other States. Each member should draw the same allowance, no matter whence he comes. £400 a year is more than ample to meet expenses out of pocket, but it is not a sufficient remuneration for services. Honorable members stand on an equal footing in this chamber, whether they have £2,000 or only £1 to their credit in the bank.

Mr. FISHER.—An honorable member has a position here as the representative of a constituency.

Mr. WILKS.—Yes. I refuse to be lectured by any honorable member, whether he be the honorable member for Parkes or any other, as to what I should do in regard to a matter of this kind. If the honorable member for Parkes is so sensitive, he can pay any increase in his allowance into the Consolidated Revenue Fund. I intend to draw any extra allowance that is given to me, and I should like him to be equally frank, and to say whether he will draw his extra allowance before the people have been consulted on this matter.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—I shall not. The honorable member can put that down in his note-book.

Mr. WILKS.—Will the honorable member allow the money to accumulate, as

he did in New South Wales, and draw it after the next general election?

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—The honorable member had better ask me that question at election time.

Mr. WILKS.—I think that those who are squeamish in this matter might very well give orders that their extra allowance shall be paid into the Consolidated Revenue Fund each month. I do not believe in observing secrecy on questions of this kind. Members should express their views openly in this Chamber. I am prepared to defend on the public platform the action which I am about to take. I am glad that the right honorable member for Swan has shown that, two Parliaments ago, honorable members felt the strain of the present financial position. There is, however, no reason why the representatives of Victorian constituencies should be penalized. Is the Federal Capital to remain for all time in Melbourne?

Mr. MATHEWS.—I hope not.

Mr. WILKS.—I hope that it will soon be moved to New South Wales. But when that time comes, all representatives will feel the strain which is now felt only by those coming from distant constituencies. I do not know what increase the Bill will provide for, but, like the leader of the Opposition, I shall be prepared to vote for any reasonable advance. There is no occasion to go to extremes. The leaders of the three parties in this Chamber have publicly expressed the opinion that the remuneration of honorable members should be increased, and, while I indorse that view, I shall not shelter myself behind them, but shall take full responsibility for my action, since I have as much manliness to the square inch as has any other honorable member. No one is willing to boast that his financial position is unsatisfactory, but I am not ashamed to make the confession that £400 a year is not a sufficient remuneration for me.

Mr. McWILLIAMS (Franklin) [9.56].—Like most other honorable members, I recognise that we cannot approach the consideration of this question with any degree of pleasure, because those who intend to vote for the proposal of the Minister will render themselves liable to the charge that they are voting to put money into their own pockets, and those who vote against it to the charge that they are placing themselves on a pedestal, and are attempting to score off their fellow members.

Mr. MATHEWS.—That is the position.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—I shall not vote for the motion. Many circumstances have to be considered in connexion with a proposition of this kind, and, to my mind, the most important is the financial condition of the State from which we come. Seeing that the wages and salaries of the civil servants of Tasmania have had to be cut down owing to the financial straits of that State, I shall not vote to increase my remuneration until the proposal has been threshed out before the electors. When the Bill comes before us, we shall have an excellent opportunity to reconsider the principle of payment to members. The honorable member for Brisbane has referred to an instance in which members were paid according to attendances. But in this Parliament we have known members holding the highest positions, and residing in Melbourne, to be content to leave their offices at half-past four or five each afternoon, walk into the Chamber to have their attendance registered, and then leave for the evening, reappearing next afternoon about the same time. That has occurred week after week, the members in question stopping here only on very rare occasions. Therefore, the fact that a member's name has been recorded very frequently is not proof that he has been attending to the business of Parliament. There must, however, be discrimination. A member who has a business in Melbourne can attend to his private affairs during the greater part of each sitting day, and can give a fair amount of attention to the business of Parliament without private loss.

Mr. MAUGER.—The fact that he is a member of Parliament causes him to be pestered from morning to night.

Mr. MALONEY.—I hope that we shall be removed to the Federal Capital at the earliest opportunity.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—Even if the Federal Capital Site were selected to-morrow, it would probably be five years before Parliament met there.

Mr. MALONEY.—A Parliament House was fitted up in a few months in Victoria, at the Exhibition Building.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—Fitting up an Exhibition building as a Parliament House is a different matter from building a new capital in the interior of a State; and I think we must make up our minds that four or five years must elapse between the fixing upon the new site and our assembling in the Capital. There is no com-

parison between the expenditure to which members from a distance, and members resident in Melbourne, are put in attending to their parliamentary duties here. Members from distant States have practically to remain in Melbourne away from their homes for the whole session.

Mr. MATHEWS.—Members from a distance escape much that Melbourne members do not.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—We all get our share of visitors. There is another aspect of the case. Even if this House determines that the salaries of members shall be increased, I do not think there ought to be any increase in the salaries of Ministers. When the Constitution was accepted, and the Federal Parliament was elected, it was understood that Federal Ministers would be voted a sum of £12,000 per annum amongst them, but it was not understood that they would receive, in addition, £400 each as a private member.

Mr. MAUGER.—It is not generally known that when Federal Ministers travel all over Australia they pay their own expenses.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—That is not a proper principle. It would be far better for Ministers to have a fixed salary, and that their expenses should be paid when they are called upon to travel on purely public business. I think the Federal Parliament stands alone as one in which Ministers receive the salary of private members in addition to their Ministerial salary.

Mr. MAUGER.—It also stands alone in the fact that Ministers travel all over Australia at their own expense.

Mr. McWILLIAMS.—I am not dealing with that aspect of the case, but with the broad question of payment of members. If this increase be decided upon, I do not think that it is right, fair, or necessary that the salaries of Ministers or the salaries of the Speaker, President, and Chairman of Committees should also be increased. This is not a party question, and no heat has been introduced into the debate. We are all, I think, trying to argue the matter out fairly, recognising that the present position is not at all satisfactory. When the Bill is before us, a good opportunity will be presented, as I have said, to discuss the whole question of the remuneration of members; and I suggest that there should be some differentiation between the payments to those who reside in Victoria and those who have to come from distant States.

Mr. STORRER (Bass) [10.5].—Before a division is taken, I should like to explain that I am opposed to the proposed increase. Nearly four years ago, when I became a candidate for Federal parliamentary honours, one of the first questions I was asked was whether I was in favour of increasing the salary of members. To that I replied in the negative, and I have seen no reason to alter my opinion, and, therefore, I shall vote against the motion. The honorable member for Robertson asked me last week to pair with him on this proposal, of which he was in favour, and I promised to do so; therefore, I shall not be found voting on either side. I shall feel compelled to vote against the amendment of the honorable member for Wentworth, because I do not think it is our province to legislate for a Parliament three years hence. The Parliament of that day can take care of itself, or the question may be dealt with by the electors; to pass Estimates in respect of its own term is quite sufficient responsibility for any one Parliament.

Mr. CARR (Macquarie) [10.8].—The point at issue appears to be the method of procedure in the introduction of the Bill; and it is generally understood that the merits of the measure itself may be more conveniently discussed later. I cannot pose as a constitutional authority on precedent, but I claim to have enough common sense to see that there is not much difference in the position assumed by the Government and that of honorable members who are in favour of the increase, but who object to the method of procedure. In my opinion, the point of difference represents just as small a matter for the Ministry to decline to do, as it is for the Opposition to quibble at, and in view of the fact that in any case the Ministry are responsible, I think the Government, if they are serious in regard to the Bill, ought to place it in constitutional form, and thus secure the support of those honorable members to whom I have referred. It may be, however, that the Ministry are afraid that there may be some disaffection, and that honorable members, who have already promised to support the Bill, will not do so if they take the course suggested. Otherwise, there can be no risk; and I think the Government ought to make the concession which is desired.

Mr. PALMER (Echuca) [10.10].—The right honorable member for Swan made a statement which, in my opinion, changed the whole aspect of the case, when he said that this matter had been talked over and

discussed in Parliament for the last five or six years.

Mr. WILKS.—Not in Parliament, but amongst members.

Mr. PALMER.—Yes, and if that be the case the question should have been ventilated at the last general election, if not at previous elections. As a new member, I cannot vote for this proposal; I could not have it said that one of my first political acts had been to increase my own salary. Certainly this was never made a question at the two elections I had the honour to successfully contest at Echuca. I hope the honorable member for Wentworth will withdraw his amendment. If there has to be an increase in members' remuneration, as applied to next Parliament, the issue ought to be submitted to the people at the next election. We should then appear before the electors perfectly untrammeled, and on the same plane as any of the new candidates. This question is undoubtedly one of some delicacy. I concede at once that there is a distinct difference between the position of honorable members from Western Australia, Queensland, or even New South Wales, and my own position. I have told several members, who are in favour of an increase, that I am quite prepared to support their view, so far as it is fair and equitable to them, but that there should not be forced on all honorable members a salary which I do not think the people of Victoria are prepared to approve.

Mr. HUTCHISON.—There is no need for the honorable member to take the salary.

Mr. PALMER.—But any honorable member who refused to take the salary voted would stand in the position of a purist; and that I should not like to do. However, I certainly shall not during this Parliament take the increase if it be voted. The question does not appear to me to have been sufficiently discussed from the point of view as to its possible effect on the country; and this is the really salient point. Will the increase result in the country getting any better representation? Or rather, I might ask, could the country have any better representation than it has at present? So far as Echuca is concerned I shall be inclined to say that the country could not; and other honorable members may feel that their own constituencies are similarly circumstanced. In the more distant parts of the Commonwealth an increase of salary might have the effect of giving a wider field of choice to the electors. That is an advantage of

considerable merit, which, to some extent, recommends the proposal to my mind. When, however, I look at the calibre of the representatives of Victorian constituencies I do not see much room for improvement. As has been pointed out before, the limitation of the choice of candidates is as between men to whom a salary of £400 or £600 is a very large consideration, and those who really do not require any salary at all. We might have such an increase of salary as would be sufficient to induce quite another class or type of men to offer themselves as candidates; and that would possibly have a beneficial effect upon the government of the country. The leader of the Opposition contended that the people, in adopting the Constitution, had affirmed the principle that we may increase our own salaries; but I suggest that the great bulk of the people never realized that under the Constitution members could vote to themselves any salary they chose. The great points pressed upon the people at that time were that there was to be a great improvement in defence, and considerable saving in interest consequent upon the consolidation of the loans; and I do not suppose that the question of payment of members came under the notice of more than 10 per cent. of the people. Therefore I do not think that the contention of the honorable member for East Sydney was sound in that respect. I do not care to vote for the amendment of the honorable member for Wentworth, and I hope that he will withdraw it, so that we may be able to record our votes either for or against the adoption of the resolution.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK (Parramatta) [10.15].—I wish to make a confession to the Committee. I desire to say that this matter has occasioned me a great deal of anxious thought since it first came up for consideration to-day. I hope honorable members will believe that I am not usually unduly perturbed about political questions, but I confess that I have had some misgivings in reference to this proposal, and I shall vote in the way that I intend to do with some little reluctance. I believe that the present remuneration of honorable members is certainly inadequate. My trouble is one which was eloquently voiced by the honorable and learned member for Parkes, who has been treated rather roughly during this debate.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—He can stand plenty of it.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK: — I am quite sure of that. I do think that this is a matter upon which we ought not to dogmatize. There are two views, and very strong views, which may be entertained regarding it. My difficulty arises from the fact that at the last election I had the advantage of a "walk-over," and therefore I did not make any declaration upon this subject to my constituents. I admit that there is a very great deal in the view that before we vote ourselves money we should consult our constituents upon the matter. Upon the other hand, there is the view which was emphasized by the leader of the Opposition as to our constitutional right to take this step without reference to anybody outside. That is to say, the Constitution lays upon us the privilege, as well as the obligation, to vote this increased allowance in a perfectly open manner if we deem it right to do so. But there is always the other view to be considered, that of political propriety. The latter view must always be prominent in the mind of any honorable member when it becomes a question of voting money for his own reimbursement. In my thinking upon this matter, I have naturally had recourse to precedent. I have taken the trouble to look up what was done two years ago in the Dominion Parliament of Canada. There I find that the matter of an increase in the allowance of members was not mentioned in the Governor-General's Speech. I can find no reference to it there, notwithstanding that action was taken to increase the allowance paid to honorable members in the first session after a general election. Notwithstanding that Ministers brought forward a proposal of a far-reaching character—a very much more complete one than has been outlined by the Minister in charge of this proposal—no mention whatever was made of it in the Governor-General's Speech. I may inform honorable members that proposals were brought down to the Canadian Parliament for increasing the salaries of its members from £300 to £500 per annum. In addition, increases were proposed for Ministers—in the case of the Prime Minister, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, his salary was increased to £2,500 per annum, and provision was also made for the payment of a salary of £1,850 to the leader of the Opposition. The Government went even further than that: they submitted proposals for granting annuities to ex-Cabinet Ministers, so that in Canada to-day it is the law

of the land that if a man has completed five consecutive years in Ministerial office he is entitled to an annuity of half the amount of the salary payable to a Minister.

Mr. TILLEY BROWN.—Did any Minister ever fulfil those conditions?

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Yes. In addition, a system of allowances for Judges and other officials connected with the administration of justice was sanctioned in Canada. Not only do these conditions obtain in the Dominion Parliament, but also in some of the States Parliaments. In the Parliaments of Quebec and Ontario, similar provisions in regard to both Ministers and members, and also the leader of the Opposition, were agreed to. There is a precedent for our guidance. Immediately after a general election, and without any reference to the matter in the Governor-General's Speech, proposals to increase the emoluments of honorable members and Ministers were passed without one-tenth of the debate which has taken place to-day. I wish it to be distinctly understood that I do not deprecate this discussion. It is one of the best features of the proposal that its merits have been thoroughly debated in this Chamber. Certainly it indicates the sensitiveness with which honorable members regard their relationship to their constituents. That is one of the outstanding features of the debate, and I hope that it will always be a feature which will characterize this Parliament. I hope that we shall always manifest the utmost sensitiveness to the opinions of the people regarding matters of personal emolument and advantage. I wish now to say a word or two in criticism of the way in which this proposal has been brought forward. If anything were calculated to damn it, it is the way in which it has been handled by Ministers. I find no trace of the fear which they have exhibited evidenced by Ministers in Canada. The latter accepted full responsibility for the course which they pursued. They initiated the discussion in the proper way. First, they submitted a motion that the matter should be considered in Committee. That having been carried, a message was brought down on the authority and by the direction of the House, in the way that has been indicated by honorable members to-night.

Mr. CARR.—The same course was followed in South Africa.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—There is only one way of proceeding in regard to matters of this kind, and the Ministry have

selected the wrong one. If anything would tend to damage this proposal outside, it is the attitude which Ministers have adopted towards it. The question which was addressed to the Acting Prime Minister today by the honorable member for Corangamite was a very proper one, and if that honorable member had not put the question, I intended to have done so. If there is one matter upon which the mind of the Prime Minister should be known it is that of the proposed increase in the emoluments of honorable members, particularly when the Minister who is next to him in responsibility has assumed the chief position for the time being, and in that capacity has introduced this proposal. Making all allowance for the illness of the Prime Minister—and nobody regrets his illness more than do members of the Opposition—there is nothing that I can see in the whole circumstances of the case to prevent him from indicating his mind upon this matter to the people of Australia and to the members of this Parliament as he does in other cases. Consequently I do not see that the question which was put to the Acting Prime Minister was either an impertinent or an improper one. I wish to say further that if this proposal be left in the irresponsible and haphazard position in which it is at present, I shall feel compelled to vote against it. We must have complete Cabinet responsibility in a matter of this kind, which affects so profoundly the interest and the position of every member of the two branches of the Legislature. This proposal, I apprehend, is one which will affect both Houses. I shall welcome the day when we can see a scientific treatment of this matter, such as is to be found in the pages of the Canadian *Hansard*, and a dignified treatment of it such as obtained upon the occasion to which I have referred. Upon the merits of the question the position appears to be that each honorable member must decide for himself whether or not he deems the present position of affairs satisfactory. Upon a fair view of the whole matter, I venture to say that a large proportion of honorable members are not averse to a thorough revision of the whole of the conditions surrounding the payment of their indemnity. I like the word "indemnity" better than "reimbursement" or "salary." Our present remuneration is simply reimbursement of expenses, and I take leave to say that as such it is insufficient. There is only one

reason for any alteration in the allowance payable to honorable members. It is this : We must recollect that in Australia we have an order of things which is absolutely unique in the history of Federations—I refer to the length of time that we sit to transact the country's business. In Canada I can find no reference in the Governor-General's Speech, immediately after a general election, to any Bill which it was proposed to introduce with this object. Singular to say, the Vice-Regal utterance upon the occasion in question is the shortest that I have ever read, except, perhaps, a nominal speech which was delivered by our Governor-General when the Prime Minister was about to leave for England.

Mr. WEBSTER.—The honorable member's leader holds the record for having put into the mouth of the Governor-General the shortest speech ever delivered at the opening of a Parliament.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Putting aside accidental occasions, the speech delivered at the opening of the Dominion Parliament by the Governor-General two years ago was the shortest that I have ever read. I have already looked at page 12,000 odd in the Canadian *Hansard*, so that notwithstanding the brevity of Vice-Regal deliveries, the members of that Parliament evidently do a great deal of talking.

Mr. WILKS.—The leader of the Opposition there is paid a salary.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—My honorable friend has not been listening to my remarks. I have already said that he is paid.

Mr. WILKS.—I want to emphasize the fact for future reference.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—If I am any judge, the honorable member is in an imperative and emphatic mood to-night. The position is that in Australia we have to devote ourselves for eight or nine months in the year to our legislative duties. Those duties therefore make a very serious demand upon the time of honorable members from the other States. Their disabilities can only be realized by those who have to undergo them, and who are not privileged to reside in Melbourne. Some honorable members have broken up their homes in New South Wales, and have come here to reside, practically permanently. Other honorable members are not able to do that ; I, for one, am not. There are some honorable members who have their livelihood to earn in New South Wales, and the inducement now offered is not sufficient to

enable them to leave their livelihoods, and betake themselves to the precarious living which is offered to them by the small emolument they receive as members of Parliament. Therefore, to my mind, a very serious question is raised. The whole-matter resolves itself into a question of a free and full choice, by the electors, of the men who are able to represent them in this the supreme Parliament in Australia. I venture to say that already we are beginning to see that the choice of the electorates is very much restricted, owing to the disabilities which are imposed upon honorable members coming from distant parts of Australia. I believe that if we are going to alter the allowance at all we should make a radical departure, and pay a sufficient indemnity, such as, when it has been paid, will enable the country fairly to ask for the complete and undivided services of the best men who can be obtained to come here, and do its business. Does the proposal foreshadowed by the Government do that? It does nothing of the kind. The difference between £400 and £600 a year affords but little logical standing room for a new departure. I do not regard the position from the same standpoint as those who regard this as a slight increase in the amount of the present indemnity, and have no better argument than that to offer. In my judgment the one argument on which the matter can and ought to proceed is an argument which aims at providing the fullest, the freest, and the best choice which can be made of representatives to come and do the work of this great national Parliament. That is the only logical standing-ground on which we can place ourselves firmly in arguing the question in any adequate way. I do not yet know what the proposal of the Government is. After much anxious consideration, I frankly state that, on a fair consideration of the whole of the circumstances, and since the matter is presented to us for decision, I have come to the conclusion to take my full responsibility and vote for the proposal which has been foreshadowed by the Government, reserving to myself the right, if the Bill should make its appearance, to deal with it in the way which my judgment may suggest.

Mr. SALMON (Laanecoorie) [10.40].—Understanding that a vote is to be taken on the motion, I desire to define the position I occupy. I have agreed to pair with an honorable member who has found it impossible to be here to-day, and under

those circumstances I do not wish the question to be put without explaining my attitude. I feel indebted to the honorable member for Parramatta for the speech which he has just delivered. It is a speech of a kind which we have frequently heard from him, and it has placed the question on something like the plane which it should occupy. We realize, of course, that outside all sorts of things will be said about what has been done here tonight. But that, I think, will not affect us very much. It will not affect me in the slightest degree. The only thing which affects me is a distinct promise which I made to my constituents, but which, if I had the opportunity to-morrow, I should ask to be relieved from, because the longer I have thought about the question the more I have been convinced that Australia has not been getting all that it demands and deserves. It will not get all that it demands and deserves until we not only induce the most suitable men to seek a seat in the Parliament, but insure to those who may come here that on their departure they will not be compelled to ask for charity. I am aware that dozens of honorable members have made large sacrifices of which their constituents and the world at large know absolutely nothing. It is a stigma upon the fame of a country such as ours, which desires to occupy, and should occupy, a very high position amongst the great countries of the world, that we should not be able to escape from the terrible stain of accepting from men services which we do not adequately reward. I think that honorable members now understand how I stand. If I had the opportunity to go before my constituents to-morrow I should ask them to relieve me from the promise I made, and tell them that I should be prepared to support the Bill. It has always been my custom to keep a promise, and therefore I must keep faith with my constituents.

Mr. ARCHER (Capricorna) [10.42].—I propose to explain my position in a few words. I feel bound to place it on a clear basis, and I shall do so by merely saying that I am in a similar position to my honorable friend who last spoke.

Question.—That the words proposed to be added (Mr. KELLY's amendment) be so added—put. The Committee divided.

Ayes	...	...	...	10
Noes	...	...	...	38
Majority				28

## AYES.

Archer, E. W.	Irvine, W. H.
Brown, J. T.	Wynne, A.
Foxton, Col. J. F. G.	Tellers:
Glynn, P. McM.	McWilliams, W. J.
Hedges, W. N.	
Irvine, Hans	Smith, B.

## NOES.

Bamford, F. W.	Mahon, H.
Batchelor, E. L.	Maloney, W.
Bowden, E. K.	Mathews, J.
Carr, E. S.	Mauger, S.
Chanter, J. M.	McDougall, J. K.
Chapman, A.	O'Malley, K.
Cook, J.	Palmer, A. C.
Coon, J.	Poynton, A.
Crouch, R. A.	Quick, Sir J.
Ewing, T. T.	Storrer, D.
Fisher, A.	Thomas, J.
Forrest, Sir J.	Tudor, F. G.
Foster, F. J.	Watson, J. C.
Frazer, C. E.	Webster, W.
Fuller, G. W.	Wilks, W. H.
Groom, L. E.	Wise, G. H.
Hughes, W. M.	
Hutchison, J.	Tellers:
Johnson, W. E.	Cook, J. H.
Lyne, Sir W. J.	Watkins, D.

## PAIRS.

Kelly, W. H.	Fowler, J. M.
Salmon, C. C.	Brown, T.
Edwards, R.	Page, J.
Knox, W.	Deakin, A.
Fysh, Sir P. O.	Hall, D. R.
Fairbairn, G.	Thomson, J.
Sampson, S.	Spence, W. G.
Livingston, J.	Liddell, F.
Wilson, J. G.	Reid, G. H.
Thomson, D.	Catts, J. H.

Question so resolved in the negative.

Amendment negatived.

Original question put. The Committee divided.

Ayes	...	...	...	31
Noes	...	...	...	15
Majority				16

## AYES.

Bamford, F. W.	Hutchison, J.
Batchelor, E. L.	Lyne, Sir W. J.
Bowden, E. K.	Mahon, H.
Carr, E. S.	Maloney, W.
Chanter, J. M.	Mathews, J.
Chapman, A.	Mauger, S.
Cook, J.	O'Malley, K.
Crouch, R. A.	Quick, Sir J.
Ewing, T. T.	Thomas, J.
Fisher, A.	Watson, J. C.
Forrest, Sir J.	Webster, W.
Foster, F. J.	Wilks, W. H.
Frazer, C. E.	Wise, G. H.
Fuller, G. W.	Tellers:
Groom, L. E.	Cook, Hume.
Hughes, W. M.	Watkins, D.

## NOES.

Archer, E. W.	McWilliams, W. J.
Brown, Tilley	Palmer, A. C.
Atkinson, L.	Smith, B.
Coon, J.	Tudor, F. G.
Foxton, Col. J. F. G.	Wynne, A.
Glynn, P. McM.	<i>Tellers:</i>
Irvine, Hans	Hedges, W. N.
Irvine, W. H.	L'oynton, A.

## PAIRS.

Fowler, J. M.	Kelly, W. H.
Brown, T.	Salmon, C. C.
Catts, J. H.	McDougall, J. K.
Page, J.	Edwards, R.
Willis, H.	Storrer, D.
Deakin, A.	Knox, W.
Hall, D. R.	Fysh, Sir P. O.
Thomson, J.	Fairbairn, G.
Spence, W. G.	Sampson, S.
Liddell, F.	Livingston, J.
Reid, G. H.	Wilson, J. G.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

Resolution reported and adopted.

*Ordered—*

That Sir William Lyne and Mr. Groom do prepare and bring in a Bill to carry out the foregoing resolution.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—Then the Government is bringing in the Bill?

Bill presented by Sir WILLIAM LYNE, and read a first time.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE (Hume—Treasurer) [10.49].—I should like to proceed with the second reading of the Bill tonight.

HONORABLE MEMBERS.—No.

Sir JOHN FORREST.—Why not to-morrow?

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I had hoped that honorable members would concur in our proceeding with the second reading tonight; under the circumstances, I move—

That the second reading of the Bill stand an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK (Parramatta) [10.51].—I should like to hear a statement from the Minister as to what is in the Bill.

Sir JOHN FORREST.—We have not seen it yet.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—I hope that the honorable gentleman will make a statement with regard to it. It is only a fair thing to do.

Mr. SPEAKER.—The Minister cannot make a statement concerning the Bill at this stage. The first reading has been agreed to, and we are now dealing with the fixing of a time when the second reading shall be called on.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—Is it in accordance with the Standing Orders that a statement cannot be made by the Minister at this stage?

Mr. SPEAKER.—Yes. The question is that the second reading of the Bill be an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

Mr. JOSEPH COOK.—This procedure is so extraordinary that I think we ought to hear a statement from the Minister. The least he can do is to explain the whole matter. At present, we are absolutely in the dark.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH (Parkes) [10.54].—I should like to hear from the Acting Prime Minister—and I want something more than a nod such as the honorable gentleman gave to the question of the honorable member for Flinders just now—whether the Government now propose to take up this measure?

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—The honorable member will not force me into taking that step.

Mr. SPEAKER.—The only question that can be discussed at this stage is whether the second reading shall be made an Order of the Day for to-morrow or for some other day.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—May I ask whether the Government are taking up this measure? I want to have that question answered, as it may affect my vote.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE (Flinders) [10.55].—I think we are entitled to have, at this stage, from the Government a statement as to how they propose to act with regard to this measure. Up to the present they have not intimated whether or not it is to be made a Government proposal. They now appear about to take the responsibility for it. That is a step they ought properly to take. So far, no honorable member has seen the Bill, and we have not the slightest idea of what its provisions are. If the Minister will assure us that to-morrow he will simply move the second reading of the Bill, and allow the debate to be adjourned, there can be no objection.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I shall certainly not give that undertaking.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—Then if we are to be called upon to proceed with the debate on the second reading of the Bill to-morrow—

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—I know that the honorable member will place every obstruction in the way.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—That is a decidedly unfair statement. It is only at the last moment that the Government have announced that they intend to take the responsibility for this measure.

Mr. SPEAKER.—A standing order, which is always enforced in connexion with every Bill, provides that the only matter that can be discussed at this stage is the question of the date on which the second reading shall be taken. I must therefore confine the discussion to that question.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—Then I would suggest that, since the only question that we may discuss at this stage is the date on which the second reading shall be taken, the debate on the second reading of the Bill should not be proceeded with to-morrow.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—Why? Honorable members will receive copies of the Bill in the morning.

Mr. MALONEY.—The honorable member may move an amendment that the second reading shall be an Order of the Day for some other date.

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—I am aware of that. We have just had for the first time an intimation that the Government is bringing in a Bill—

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—Have we that information?

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—We have, because the Bill has already been introduced and read a first time.

Mr. BRUCE SMITH.—How does the honorable member know that it is to be made a Government measure?

Mr. W. H. IRVINE.—Because it has been introduced by the Acting Prime Minister and the Attorney-General. I simply wish to urge that the Minister should give us an assurance that if the second reading is to be moved to-morrow we shall not be called upon at once to debate the measure; it is not yet before us.

Sir JOHN QUICK (Bendigo) [10.58].—I voted for the resolution on the distinct understanding that this was to be treated as a Government measure.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—The honorable member had no understanding from me.

Sir JOHN QUICK.—That was the understanding on which I cast my vote.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—The honorable member may make his own understandings if he pleases.

Sir JOHN QUICK.—I also understood that honorable members would have an opportunity to consider these proposals. I did not think it right to vote against the resolution before I knew the nature of the Government proposals. It is advisable that the Government should state what is their attitude towards the Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER.—I have already pointed out that that cannot be done at this stage. I wish to emphasize the point that this Bill is being treated precisely as every other Bill is. The first reading has been carried without debate, and the date when the second reading shall be taken has now to be fixed. That is the course always pursued, and no other step is possible until the second reading has been called on.

Sir JOHN QUICK.—If the Government wish to facilitate the fair and reasonable discussion of this Bill they ought to-night to move the second reading, and explain its provisions.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—Honorable members objected to take the second reading of the Bill to-night.

Sir JOHN QUICK.—I submit that the second reading should now be proceeded with, so that we may be acquainted with its provisions without delay, and that the adjourned debate should be made an Order of the Day for to-morrow, when the House might approach the consideration of the Bill with a full knowledge of its contents.

Sir JOHN FORREST (Swan) [11.0].—I do not think that the Acting Prime Minister should attempt to unduly rush this Bill through the House. I supported the resolution, and am prepared to give full consideration to the Bill itself. To-morrow will be private members' day.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—Private members' business will be taken only up to a certain hour.

Sir JOHN FORREST.—If the Acting Prime Minister would circulate the Bill to-night, so that we should all receive copies in the morning, and make its second reading an Order of the Day for Friday, that would be a reasonable course.

Sir WILLIAM LYNE.—We propose to take it to-morrow evening.

Sir JOHN FORREST.—This is not a matter of great urgency. It would be unseemly to unduly hurry the consideration of a measure in which we are all personally interested. I am sure we do not wish to appear too eager to pass the Bill. We shall be able to deal with it on Friday or on Tuesday next, and perhaps pass it through all its stages. I do not think there is any necessity to press its consideration, and even if the Government have a large majority behind them they certainly ought to consider the views of the Opposition; I believe that the desirableness of

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*Wire Netting*

[SENATE.]

*Papua: Steam Service.*

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the course I suggest will be at once recognised by the Acting Prime Minister.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

#### COMMONWEALTH SALARIES BILL.

Bill received from Senate.

Motion (by Mr. Groom) proposed—

That this Bill be now read a first time.

Mr. CROUCH.—I wish to raise a point of order. I do not know, Mr. Speaker, whether you have examined this Bill with the object of ascertaining whether it infringes any of the privileges of the House in so far as it is a taxation measure. I should like, at a proper time, to put my views before you, and perhaps you will tell me whether this is a stage at which I should mention the matter.

Mr. SPEAKER.—The Bill has only just come down from another place, and I have made no scrutiny of it. The proper procedure is to take the first reading now, and should it be discovered later on that there is anything in the Bill to which objection can be taken on the ground that it infringes the privileges of this House, it will then be my duty to call attention to the fact.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a first time.

House adjourned at 11.3 p.m.

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