LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Tuesday, September 17, 1889.

New Members—Elections and Qualifications Committee—Fencing Law Amendment Bill—Law of Evidence Amendment Bill—Education Law Further Amendment Bill.

The PRESIDENT took the chair at twenty-five minutes to five o'clock p.m., and read the prayer.

PETITIONS.

Petitions praying for the introduction into the State schools as part of the curriculum (but with a conscience clause for those who object) of the Irish National Scripture lesson books, were presented by the Hon. J. H. CONNOR, from inhabitants of Moorabool district; by the Hon. F. T. SARGOOD, from inhabitants of Toorak, Prahran, South Yarra, and (on behalf of the PRESIDENT) from inhabitants of Albert Park and South Melbourne; by the Hon. C. H. JAMES, from members and adherents of the Church of England, Kilmore, from members and adherents of the Toorak Wesleyan Church, and from inhabitants of Heidelberg and Ivanhoe, and from inhabitants of Coburg; by the Hon. J. BUCHANAN, from inhabitants of Dandenong and Berwick; by the Hon. J. P. MACPHERSON, from residents of Port Campbell and neighbourhood, and from members and adherents of the Presbyterian churches at Carngham and Lintons; by the Hon. W. A. ZEAL, from inhabitants of Heathcote and the surrounding districts; by the Hon. C. J. HAM, from members and adherents of the Erskine Church, Carlton; and by the Hon. W. H. ROBERTS, from inhabitants of Williamstown.

A petition was presented by the Hon. G. S. COPPIN, from David Blair, timber merchant, Market-street, Melbourne, praying that the Council would take into consideration the action of Mr. H. H. Romilly, who was Her Majesty's Commissioner in British New Guinea in January, 1888, in, as the petitioner alleged, unjustly and arbitrarily stopping the cedar trade which he had established, at great cost, between New Guinea and the Australian colonies.

NEW MEMBERS.

The PRESIDENT announced that the writs which he had issued (under the provisions of Act 995) for the election of new members to serve respectively for the South Yarra Province and the Northern Province had been returned, showing that Mr. John Mark Davies had been elected for the South Yarra Province, and Mr. George Simmie for the Northern Province.

Mr. Davies and Mr. Simmie were then introduced and sworn, and they delivered to the Clerk the declarations of qualification required by Act No. 702.

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE.

The PRESIDENT laid on the table his warrant appointing the Hon. G. Le Fevre a member of the Committee of Elections and Qualifications.

FENCING LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

This Bill was received from the Legislative Assembly, and, on the motion of the Hon. A. WYNNE, was read a first time.

LAW OF EVIDENCE AMENDMENT BILL.

On the motion of the Hon. J. SERVICE, this Bill was re-committed, for the further consideration of clauses 7 and 8.

The Hon. J. SERVICE drew attention to clause 7, which was as follows:—

"It shall not be lawful for any person to print or publish any question or inquiry which has been forbidden or disallowed by the court, or in respect to which the court may have warned the witness that he is not obliged to answer it; and any person offending against the provisions of this section or any or either of them shall be liable to imprisonment with or without hard labour for a term not exceeding two years, or to a fine not exceeding £100, or to both imprisonment and fine as aforesaid."

He remarked that while the clause provided certain penalties for publishing questions which had been forbidden or disallowed by a court of law, he had omitted to insert any precise provision as to how those penalties were to be enforced. With a view to amend that defect, he begged to move the insertion after the word "shall" (line 7) of the words "on proof thereof to the satisfaction of any Judge of the Supreme Court or of any Chairman of any court of General Sessions."

The amendment was agreed to.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL asked whether it was desirable that a man should be compelled to undergo imprisonment with hard labour for a civil offence? (Mr. Service—"A very uncivil offence.") Would it be right to put a man to break stones on the road or to work in the quarries for publishing a question which had been disallowed in a court

of law? Would not the object of the measure be gained by imprisoning offenders?

The Hon. J. SERVICE remarked that many prisoners preferred what was called "hard labour," because the work was never hard, and they got better rations.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL observed that he could understand a labouring man preferring hard labour, but a totally different class of men would be proceeded against under this measure. (Mr. Brown—"A newspaper editor would not like hard labour.") Newspaper men were not used to such hard labour as breaking stones, or working in a quarry.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT remarked that as an offender would be liable to two years imprisonment, or a fine not exceeding £100, or both, which would be a very severe punishment, the words "with or without hard labour" might very well be omitted. (Mr. Service—"I have no objection.") Then he begged to move that the words in question be omitted.

The amendment was agreed to.

The Hon. J. SERVICE moved the addition to the clause of the words "at the discretion of any such Judge or Chairman."

The amendment was agreed to.

The Hon. J. SERVICE called attention to clause 8, which was as follows:—

"Every decision under the provisions of this Act by any Judge of the Supreme Court, County Court, or Court of Insolvency, and every disallowance of any questions or inquiries as aforesaid, shall be final and without appeal, whether by consent of parties or otherwise."

He begged to move the insertion after the words "Supreme Court" (line 2) of the words "or any Judge of any."

The amendment was agreed to.

The Hon. J. SERVICE remarked that he had also omitted to include in this clause the Chairman of General Sessions, who was generally a County Court Judge. He begged to move the insertion after the word "Insolvency" (line 3) of the words "or any Chairman of any court of General Sessions."

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT observed that the interpretation clause provided that the word "court" should include "all Judges and justices and all persons by law or by the consent of parties authorized to hear receive and examine evidence." The amendment appeared to be unnecessary, as a Chairman of a court of General Sessions would come under the head of justices.

The Hon. J. SERVICE said he did not see that the amendment could do any harm, and it would certainly make the clause clearer to the lay mind.

The amendment was agreed to. The Bill was then reported with further amendments, and the amendments were considered and adopted.

Subsequently, on the motion of the Hon. J. SERVICE, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

EDUCATION LAW FURTHER AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT moved the second reading of this Bill. He said—Mr. President, this Bill is intituled "an Act to further amend the law relating to education." It is a short and comprehensive measure, and, as honorable members will see, the changes contemplated by it do not interfere in any way with the fundamental principles of the Act which has worked so well in the cause of education since the year 1872. The first of the principal amendments proposed in this Bill is to reduce the number of years during which the children are required to attend our State schools. Under the present Education Act they have to attend from the age of six years until they reach the age of fifteen years. It is proposed to alter that so as to require the children to attend school from the age of six years to the age of thirteen years, so that there will be a reduction and a saving of two years. The next amendment of importance is to increase the attendance at our State schools. At the present time the children are obliged to attend 30 school days in each quarter; now, it is proposed to increase the compulsory attendance from 30 to 40 days in each quarter. I think that these amendments are in the right direction, and that they will commend themselves to the adoption of this Chamber. As to reducing the age, I think we may fairly conclude that the children of this colony are not dull of apprehension, but that they are as quick in perception, as intelligent and as ready to receive and to retain knowledge which may be imparted to them as the children of any country in the world. Now, when we find that the experience of other countries is in favour of the amendment proposed in this Bill, and that the limit of age during which it is necessary and compulsory for children to attend school is lower than the standard which we have adopted, I think we have reason to ask ourselves whether it is not advisable and desirable that we should reduce the limit of

age at which a child may cease to attend school. It would be a low estimate of the intelligence of our children to assume that they could not learn to read and write and master the rudiments of arithmetic before they are thirteen years of age. In England, France, South Australia, and New Zealand the age at which a child may leave school is thirteen years; in Queensland, Ontario, Italy, and Holland it is twelve years; and in Germany, Sweden, and Norway it is fourteen years; so that even as compared with Germany, Sweden, and Norway we are a year in excess of the school age in those countries, and I may mention that in Germany the school children have a greater number of holidays than our children have. Another reason in favour of the reduction of the school age is this: That if a child be dull, and it is almost impossible for him to get any advantage from continuing his attendance at school, I think it is a mistake to keep him too long at school. It will be observed that while the age is fixed at 13 years, it does not necessarily follow that the children will leave school at that age. They may remain until 15 years, and if their parents do not require them they can, during the interval from 13 to 15, attend one of the technical colleges which are springing up in all parts of the colony. By the same clause the number of school days in each quarter that a child must attend is increased from 30 to 40. By this change an advantage will be gained, as the children will be induced to attend more regularly and constantly than heretofore. It is much easier for a teacher to teach a class the children in which attend regularly, than one in which they do not attend regularly, and of course the sooner a child passes the standard the sooner it will be fitted to enter upon the duties of life. At the present time there are in our schools no less than 31,000 children between the ages of 13 and 15 years, and assuming that only one-half of the children in attendance avail themselves of the provisions of this clause and leave school at 13 years, there will be a saving to the State of £15,000 a year. It may also be argued in favour of this alteration that it will be a means of reducing the work of the inspectors, and to some extent relieving teachers—especially female teachers—in the very important duty they have to discharge of preserving discipline. It is not so easy to keep children between the ages of 13 and 15 years under control as younger children, and the teachers will feel the benefit of this provision if it is carried. The clause makes another amendment in section 13 of the principal Act, by adding to it the words—

"Whenever any child has attended school for 80 school days in any two consecutive quarters of a year it shall be unnecessary for such child to attend for the full period of 40 school days in the second of such quarters. If a child of 13 years cease to attend school before having been for four quarters of a year in the 4th class, then, until such child shall attain the age of 15 years, or shall obtain a certificate of exemption from compulsory attendance, such child shall attend not less than five hours a week at any such night-school, school of mines, technical school, or other school as may for the time being be approved by the Governor in Council," &c.

The object of this is that a child may, if its parents desire it, attend school in the first quarter for say 50 days, and in the second quarter 30 days, and that in the remaining interval the labour of the child may be utilized by its parents. In harvest time, or in the fruit season, this will be a great advantage. It will be seen that the attendances of the children at school will really be greater under this new system than it has been hitherto. Under the present system the children have to attend 120 times a year, and that, multiplied by nine, —the number of years during which children have now to attend—gives a total of 1,080. The number of attendances required under this clause will be 160 a year, and that, multiplied by seven, gives a total of 1,120. In clause 4 provision is made for the attendance of children at what are termed half-time schools. In various parts of the country districts, where the children would have to travel long distances to attend the ordinary State schools, half-time schools are established. A teacher may have two such schools under his charge, and may divide the day between them or devote alternate days to each. With regard to these schools the number of days on which a child is required to attend in each quarter is reduced to 24 Clause 5 provides that half-yearly examinations shall be held by the district inspectors in each school district for the purpose of the examination of children not attending State schools. This has been the practice of the Education department since 1872, but it has never been brought properly under the notice of the public, and has not been taken advantage of. It is thought to be advisable to legalize the practice, and to afford parents whose children are being educated at home, or are attending denominational or private schools, an opportunity in a more formal

manner than hitherto of having their children examined every half-year, and of ascertaining the progress they have made. That provision is not compulsory. Notice will be published of the time at which the inspectors will be in particular districts. The inspectors will be empowered to give a certificate that the child is being educated up to the required standard, and until the next examination is held such certificate will be deemed a reasonable excuse within the meaning of section 13 of the principal Act for non-attendance at the State schools.

The Hon. F. T. SARGOOD.—If the inspector does not give a certificate, what will happen?

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT.—If the children are not educated up to the required standard, I suppose the parents will be punished under the provisions of the principal Act.

The Hon. F. T. SARGOOD.—Although the child is actually attending school?

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT.—Yes. Clause 6 relates to the penalties imposed on parents for the non-attendance of their children. No alteration is made with regard to a first offence, for which a nominal fine may be inflicted, but with reference to a second offence, it is proposed that the fine shall be not less than 5s. nor more than 20s. The object of clause 7 is to define more fully the powers of the Governor in Council in relation to the holding of elections of boards of advice. It is intended that the elections shall be held on the day of the municipal elections, and that a certain number of members shall retire by rotation each year. The boards are now appointed for a fixed period of three years, and the members then all retire, being eligible, however, for re-election. It is thought that the change proposed will lead to greater interest being taken in the elections. The clause empowers the Governor to fix the dates of all elections, and to make regulations prescribing the number of members (whether five, six, or seven) of which each or any board of advice shall consist; the term (in no case to exceed three years) for which the members thereof may hold office; the order of retirement of members by rotation or otherwise; the filling up of casual vacancies; the mode in which nominations shall be made and polls taken; the form of the ballot papers; the powers and duties of the returning officer and his deputies; and generally all matters whatsoever necessary for the proper carrying out of such elections. Clause 8 makes every State school, and the land and premises in connexion therewith, a "public place" within the meaning of the Police Offences Statute 1865; and clause 9 provides that in the 1st schedule of the principal Act, before the words "gymnastics," the words "singing, drawing and" shall be inserted. The intention is that, where practicable, singing and drawing shall be taught as well as gymnastics. Many of the teachers at present in the service are quite capable of giving instruction in these subjects, and it is to be made one of the qualifications of teachers appointed in the future that they shall be able to teach singing and probably drawing. Clause 10 was not in the Bill when it was introduced. It provides that the secular instruction to be given in every State school shall include Richardson's Temperance lesson book, and Ridge's primer. I do not think that honorable members will be disposed to agree with this clause. It interferes too much with the duty that properly devolves upon the Minister who has the administration of the Education Act, and it has reference to a matter of too great detail to be dealt with by legislation at all. The lesson books named may be first-class authorities on temperance to-day; but we do not know how soon they may become obsolete; and are we then to introduce new legislation to determine what other books shall be used? This is obviously a question of administration that should be left to the Minister of Public Instruction. Clause 11 repeals the 2nd schedule to the principal Act, and substitutes a new schedule, altering the title of the certificate from "certificate of a child being sufficiently educated" to "certificate of exemption from compulsory attendance." The present certificate conveyed the impression that the child receiving it actually was sufficiently educated, and it is for that reason it has been thought to be advisable to make the change. I have now dealt with the whole of the clauses of the Bill. They will not, with the exception of clause 10, interfere in the slightest degree with the fundamental principles of the principal Act, and I think the House should not hesitate to allow the motion for the second reading of the Bill to be passed.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—Mr. President, we have had several amendments of the Act of 1872 before us at different times, but in my opinion we have failed to deal with that part of the measure which most requires amendment. The present

Bill is as defective in this respect as were the preceding Bills. The Minister of Justice has stated that the Act of 1872 has hitherto worked well. That, in a qualified way, is quite true. I am here to defend that Act, but I deny that it has worked well in regard to some points, and I hope to be able to convince the House of the truth of this statement. Before entering upon the discussion of the points to which I refer, I desire to allude in a few words to the remarks of the Minister of Justice in relation to some of the clauses of this Bill. The honorable gentleman has pointed out that the Bill reduces the fine to which parents are liable for a second offence in respect to the non-attendance of their children. I am not quite sure that that is a wise thing to do. We have still a good deal to do to overtake the so-called "gutter" children. If it is thought that the reduction of the fine will assist to make our efforts in this direction more successful, then I shall support it; but I do not see how that can be so.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT.—The object of the clause is to get a higher penalty imposed for a second offence. At present it is difficult to get magistrates to impose more than a nominal fine.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—If that be so, it is a different matter. The "gutter" children are still to a large extent uneducated. The compulsory section of the Act of 1872, of which I thoroughly approve, has not been so effective as it was expected it would be in the large cities and towns. Mr. Foster, who takes charge of the Try Excelsior class, told me the other day that numbers of the boys who attached themselves to that institution could neither read nor write, and it is evident that the compulsory provisions of the present Act do not reach them. Another question to which the Minister of Justice referred was the proposal to introduce temperance lesson books in the State schools. I rather dissent from his remarks that such matters as these should be left to the Minister of Public Instruction. I am of opinion that a great deal too much is left to the Minister of Public Instruction. Our system is too centralizing, and that is at the bottom of a great deal of the mischief which has been done under the present Act. I may mention, as showing the extraordinary infatuation which some persons have reached in connexion with education in this colony, that a member of the Assembly, who at first supported the use of the temperance lesson books named in clause 10, dropped them like a hot potato because he found that there was a text from Proverbs in one of them. Now, let us just look back at what the education systems of this colony have been, in order that we may the better understand the question to which I desire to direct attention. When I came to this colony two systems of education—the denominational and the national—were running in parallel lines. There were schools established by the denominations, and assisted and inspected by the Government; and I say here to-day, without fear of contradiction, although I am a nationalist out-and-out, as my whole history in connexion with education shows, that we owe an immense deal to the denominations for what they did in the early days. The national schools were then a mere handful; they did their work well, but it was owing to the energy and attention of the churches that the people obtained the education they did. I do not want denominationalism; but I say that in our zeal for the present system we sometimes forget what we owe to those who were the founders of this colony. The two systems were, as I have said, run together. The national system was based on the principle of having the instruction conducted by local committees, but it was altogether independent of the churches. The denominational system was conducted entirely by the churches. Then after this we had an amalgamation of these two systems under the Common Schools Act—Mr. Heales' Act—and I had a good opportunity of watching the effects of that measure. Although I was not appointed in the first instance, I did subsequently obtain a seat on the Education Board, and assisted in managing the educational system of the colony, and I can say that the Common Schools Act did a great deal of good. The intention was to establish one good common national system, and to a large extent the Act fulfilled its purpose. But there were defects in it, and it did not accomplish all that was wanted. That was the opinion of those who were most active in working the new system, and trying to make it a success. No men could have done their duty more faithfully and earnestly than did the members of the Board of Education under the Common Schools Act. They had to deal with the whole of the education system of the colony, and they received no remuneration for their services. There was always a great accumulation of work, and members had to study a large number of papers at their own homes. But even then

they were unable to overtake their duties, and that was one reason why I and others desired to see a Minister of Public Instruction appointed. The principal reason, however, was this, that we felt we were not connected closely enough with Parliament, and that we were to too large an extent a responsible body. It is not often that persons in such a position desire to be freed from responsibility, but we felt that in our case it would be an advantage. But for all that, I must repeat what I said before, that the present Act is a great evil in its centralizing influence—in its bureaucratic power. It was never our intention to deprive those who were intrusted with the government of the schools in the country of any of their power, and to transfer it to a Minister. That was one of the greatest evils done by the Act of 1872. I approve of the Act, but I say that there has been great weakness in its administration. The chief thing about which I have to complain is the definition given to the word "secular." When the Bill which afterwards became the Act of 1872 was before Parliament, the question of the definition to be given to the word "secular" was raised, and was fully discussed. An attempt was made to introduce a definition similar to that contained in the New South Wales Act, to the the effect that "secular" instruction should include religious teaching of an unsectarian character. But that attempt was not successful, principally because the Minister in charge of the Bill contended that it was not necessary to insert such a definition in the Bill, inasmuch as the lesson books of the Irish National Board—not the Irish National Scripture lesson books—were then in use in the State schools. The Minister pointed to those books, and said that they were full of religious instruction of an unsectarian character. And those books did contain religious instruction of an unsectarian character to a larger extent than even the present editions. If the Minister had not made that statement much of the trouble that has since taken place would have been avoided. The consequence was that provision was simply made for four hours' secular instruction in the State schools each day; but there was nothing in the Act to prevent other than secular instruction being given outside of school hours. The Act, if it had been interpreted as was intended by Parliament, would have given us what we wanted, and all that we are now asking for. But what happened? The lesson books of the Irish National Board were used for many years after the Act came into operation—they were used for four, five, or six years at least; it may have been longer, but I wish to be within the mark. The books were, however, gradually altered; and this is one reason why I say that we should not leave everything to the Minister of Public Instruction. I do not suppose that the then Minister of Public Instruction had any intention of excluding religious instruction; but the officers of the Education department were at the time introducing lessons on Australian subjects in the books, and, as they did so, they dropped the lessons relating to religion. This went on for a while, and at last a greater revolution took place. Suddenly the books were dispensed with altogether, and Nelson's Royal Readers introduced. These books were very good in their way, for they were drawn up for use in the schools of England and Scotland, where religious lessons are given regularly. But they did not contain as much religious instruction as the lesson books of the Irish National Board. The present Minister of Public Instruction has said that those books contained only a little Old Testament history; but that statement is incorrect. They contained not only distinct dogmatic teaching, but historical teaching of the sacred story, leading up to New Testament times, and lessons about Christ and Christianity. Those books were abandoned for Nelson's Royal Readers. One would have thought that that was a very considerable jump to make without any appeal to Parliament—without even any advice or instruction from Parliament—but a still more extraordinary step was taken subsequently. I allude to the excision from the books of all references to Christ and Christianity. Wherever the words "Christ" or "Christianity" appeared they were altered to something else, and a number of very beautiful passages relating to Christ and Christianity were struck out altogether. I have the authority of the then Premier, Sir James McCulloch, for saying that the proposed change was never brought under the notice of the Cabinet, and that the Cabinet knew nothing about it until after it was effected. The change was a very serious one, and completely altered the character of the instruction provided, and intended by Parliament to be provided, in the State schools. If honorable members will refer to *Hansard* they will find that when the Bill, now the Act of 1872, was under discussion in the Assembly, Mr. Edward Langton advocated

it on the ground that the lesson books of the Irish National Board were in use in the State schools, and that there would be no interference with the religious instruction then given. In a few years the great changes to which I have referred were made, and now we are told that if we allow religious instruction of any kind to be given in the State schools we shall be introducing denominationalism.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL.—Hear, hear.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—Some honorable member says "Hear, hear."

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT. — Hear, hear.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—I am glad that two honorable members say "Hear, hear," because I have now somebody to whom I can apply my remarks. They say "Hear hear" to the statement that the cry—which is now undoubtedly a cry—for Bible reading and religious instruction means denominationalism. That is, in fact, the counter-cry. What was the condition of affairs when there was a national system of education in the colony? The very extracts from Scripture for the introduction of which we are now asking were read daily in the national schools, and denominational teaching could be given outside the school hours. The teachers themselves had to give religious instruction unless the parents objected, and several religious books were kept in stock, including a book of sacred poetry, and a book on the Christian Evidences. This is what Sir James F. Palmer, who was the chairman of the National Board of Education, said in the evidence he gave before the Royal Commission of 1867, in reply to the question—"Would you never allow the teacher to impart religious instruction?"—

"Yes, and in many cases it is so. We have no rule in any way whatever to prevent it. We permit it. Under the National Board, for instance, to which I was first attached, religion was constantly taught by the master. We had a series of sacred reading lessons and sacred poetry among our books."

Was that denominationalism?

The Hon. J. SERVICE. — You said there was dogmatic teaching.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—Yes, but I am now speaking only of the national system. In a circular letter from the National Education office, dated the 20th November, 1854, the following statement was made:—

"That the local patrons of each school be informed that religious instruction in the school or class rooms—but not during the hours of secular instruction—may be imparted by the teacher in conformity with the regulations of the Commissioners, if the local patrons, in writing, consent to such arrangement."

Under the national school system the character of the teachers was very closely scrutinized, and there were maxims or statements hung on the walls of the schools relating to the duty of instructing the scholars in the Christian religion. But that was not denominationalism; it was Christianity. The Minister of Public Instruction made a great deal of certain extracts he read from the evidence given before Mr. Higinbotham's commission, to the effect that very little religious instruction was given in the common schools. The Common Schools Act provided that secular instruction should be given for four hours each day, and during those hours religious instruction was not given; but otherwise each local board could introduce whatever religious instruction it thought proper. There was a good deal of misunderstanding about some of the answers given to questions before Mr. Higinbotham's commission. Some of the witnesses thought that religious instruction meant denominationalism, and these answers had reference to denominationalism. As a matter of fact a good deal of religious instruction was given in the common schools. One very important witness was Mr. G. Wilson Brown, formerly Inspector-General and recently Secretary of the Education department, and I will read some extracts from his evidence:—

"Do you believe, generally speaking, that there is religious instruction?—Not what I should call religious instruction; certainly not. At the most the religious instruction is confined to reading a chapter from the Bible in Protestant schools, or a short prayer before commencing work."

We call that religion; our opponents call it denominationalism.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT.—Will you have that?

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—I shall be very glad to have it. If you will give us that it will stop the discussion. The evidence continued:—

"Not both?—Occasionally both.

"Is there any examination on the chapter?—There is sometimes; I know two or three instances, but not as a rule.

"Do you believe that in most Protestant schools these forms of reading a chapter and saying a prayer are used?—In the majority of schools connected with denominations.

"You would scarcely consider that religious instruction?—No.

"Why would you not regard the reading of a chapter as instruction?—There is no teaching nor explanation.

"But you have found explanations of the chapter in some instances?—In a few, but very few; it is quite the exception.

"In the Protestant denominational schools have you known of any sectarian instruction as distinguished from religious instruction, such as catechism, being imparted?—No, I do not ever remember seeing the catechism taught in a Protestant school, or any other sectarian form used."

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT.—Very little religion was taught in the schools then.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—If you give us now what religion there was taught then, it would satisfy the community and settle the question.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL.—That is just what it would not do.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—Try it. Mr. Brown's evidence proceeded:—

"So there is no fear of sectarianism being taught in these schools?—No, I see nothing of the kind.

"Then the question of religion does not come up?—Not at all. I keep clear of it.

"What is your own opinion; would you approve of a system of national education exclusively secular?—I think it is the very thing that is wanted. I believe it is the only system that would work here.

"Exclude religion?—Not excluding religion; but the local committee should make the arrangements as to what it should be. As far as the central board is concerned, there should be nothing but secular education recognised.

"If an Act of Parliament or law should prohibit expressly religious instruction in connexion with the schools, would you consider that a desirable system?—Certainly not. I would leave the power of making arrangements for religious instruction to the local committees.

"Do you think the present Act works well in that respect?—No, I do not think it does. It is possible under the Act to get up denominational schools, and in scattered localities when one such school is established no other can be.

"Until the juvenile population rise to 200 children?—Yes; that is practically impossible in an agricultural district.

"When you say you would not adopt a system excluding religious instruction, do you mean that you would disapprove of a system that admitted of sectarian instruction; you approve of religious instruction, providing it is arranged for by local committees; would you approve of a system by which the local committees should be allowed to give sectarian religious instruction?—I would have the local committees composed of persons so selected as not to leave an absolute majority belonging to any one denomination; and they should make any regulations they pleased as to religious instruction.

"Would you provide for the minority by allowing them to retire during the religious instruction if they object to the religious instruction agreed on by the committee?—Certainly, they need not attend it."

That is exactly what we are claiming now.

The Hon. J. SERVICE.—That is outside school hours.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—We are quite satisfied with that. It is what every petition asks for—that local committees should have power to direct Scripture extracts to be taught by the teacher outside the four hours of secular instruction, with a conscience clause under which any child might be withdrawn.

The Hon. F. T. SARGOOD.—Whether the teacher likes it or not?

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—No. The teacher, if he sent in a statement that he conscientiously objected to give this instruction, should not be compelled to do so. We would find teachers to take the places of the few who would object. In most schools there are more teachers than one, and all would not be likely to object; but if they did there would be no difficulty in finding volunteers to come in and give the instruction desired. I think I have conclusively shown that it is nationalism, not denominationalism, to give religious instruction under such a system. Mr. Higinbotham, in the report of the commission, said—

"The evidence is almost unanimously to the effect that parents generally desire that their children should receive an unsectarian religious, and not a merely secular, education in the public school; and to this desire on the part of the parents, and their consequent preference for the supposed advantages of the denominational system, some of the witnesses refer the prolonged vitality of that system. We beg to submit that the instinctive feelings of parents and the theoretic views of the majority of the witnesses upon this subject are in favour of the course which the interests of education, no less than the dictates of sound policy, prescribe. The drawing out in the mind of a child of a sense of its relation to God, and of the duties which flow from that relation—the inculcation by the words, as well as by the example, of the teacher of a reverent and truthful tone of thought, feeling, and expression—and the enforcement by gentle, yet constant, pressure of cheerful obedience and habits of discipline, are, we think, wholly distinct from the process of imparting mere intellectual knowledge on the one hand, and from instruction in dogmatic or sectarian theories on the other,"——

The Hon. J. SERVICE.—Hear, hear. That is what he calls religion.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—I am quite with him. The report continues—

"while at the same time we believe them to be essential, and indeed by far the most important elements in the education of a child, and the formation of its character. Teaching of this kind, together with such religious exercises—for example, a prayer, or a hymn, or the reading of some version of the Scriptures—as may be calculated to give it aid and effect, should be encouraged and stimulated in the public schools instead of being forbidden."

That was the view in 1867 of a very distinguished and great-minded statesman. The report was drawn up by Mr. Higinbotham, and presented in the name of the whole commission to Parliament. Mr. Higinbotham was responsible for drawing it up and the commission for accepting it. I hear a whisper that Mr. Higinbotham afterwards changed his views, but such was not the case. I know the whole history of the matter. The facts are these:—The Bill which accompanied the report—an excellent Bill, providing for this very kind of instruction—was introduced in the Legislative Assembly, but got no support from the people who ought to have supported it. Bishop Perry took the strong denominational view. In fact he wanted payment by results, as did also our late respected friend, Dr. Hearn. They refused assistance to the Bill, and the weight of the Church of England was such that the measure fell flat, and Mr. Higinbotham, in indignation, withdrew it, telling them that they would never get such a measure again. If that Bill had been passed it would have saved many an hour's trouble, and what, I believe, will be a serious result to the colony from the present ultra-secular system. In consequence of the way the Bill was received Mr. Higinbothom said he was done with the matter, and he has never gone in for helping us since, "because," he said, "you would not have it when I offered it." Since then another commission has sat on the education question, of which Mr. (formerly Judge) Rogers and Colonel Templeton were successively chairmen. Mr. Rogers had to go to Tasmania, and Colonel Templeton, who was the nominee of Mr. Service's Government, was appointed acting chairman. Mr. Rogers drew up a report, which was agreed to by a certain section of the commission. This section went in for what we are now asking, and also for an amendment of the Act with regard to the Roman Catholics, giving them the relief they desired. With regard to the point I am now discussing, what Mr. Rogers and the portion of the commission who went with him said was as follows:—

"To effect this amendment—

That is, as previously stated in the report, the introduction of undenominational religious instruction of a Christian character in the State schools in a manner which would supply the defect complained of by the Protestant denominations, and could neither lessen the time at present devoted to secular instruction, nor interfere with the conscience of those parents who did not wish their children to attend the Scripture lessons—

"To effect this amendment, which the evidence has satisfied me is desired, speaking generally, by the Protestant portion of the population, it would be necessary to repeal section 12 of the present Act, and to enact in its place a section similar to that in the New South Wales Act—an amendment which would admit of teaching, as part of the school curriculum, of the broad principles of the Christian religion, apart from sectarian distinctions. Scripture readings and lessons based upon this principle should then form part of the school curriculum, the first half-hour before the time fixed for the commencement of the secular lessons being devoted to that purpose, the State school teacher giving the prescribed instruction, except in those cases in which the teacher had stated in writing that he had conscientious objections to doing so."

Thus Mr. Rogers and the party with him, while they wanted more relief for the Roman Catholics, advocated what we desire for the Protestants. Colonel Templeton drew up another report, which was agreed to by the rest of the commission, and these were the views put forward in that report:—

"We therefore recommend that the hours for secular instruction be not interfered with, viz., two hours in the forenoon and two hours in the afternoon, and that provision be made in the school curriculum for religious instruction of a non-sectarian character either before or after the time set apart for secular instruction, with a conscience clause for the protection of both teachers and children. The text-book to be used might be the books of Scripture lessons issued by the National Board of Education of Ireland. We further recommend that during the time set apart for religious instruction of a non-sectarian character the children of such parents as desire it may receive religious instruction separately from some teacher approved by such parents, and that such separate instruction may include the teaching of the tenets of any sect."

So that Colonel Templeton and his friends recommended exactly what we ask for. I may also refer to the views expressed by the conferences of the boards of advice. It seems to be often overlooked that we have such boards. The boards of advice have far too little power. A great deal of the evil of the present system arises from the fact that we have not given the local authorities sufficient control of the schools, which would have saved much trouble and expense. The resolutions passed by the conferences of these boards at different times show what steady progress they have been making in their demands. In 1879 all they asked for was this:—

"That provision should be made in the department's programme of instruction to teach

morals and manners by enforcing habits of personal cleanliness, neatness in dress, and obedience to parents, and by telling simple stories to illustrate the virtues of honesty, truthfulness, and kindness."

In 1883 they went a little further and recommended that "boards of advice should be allowed to grant the use of school buildings for religious instruction before as well as after school hours"—it is very singular they have not that power now—and that "where teachers are willing to give religious instruction out of school hours they should be permitted to do so." But in 1886 they had advanced so far as to pass the following resolution:—

"That in consequence of the ignorance manifested by many of the children in State schools of the most elementary religious truths, it is desirable that the Irish National Scripture lesson books be taught with the ordinary school work; any scholar whose parents have a conscientious objection to such teachings to be allowed to leave the room during the lesson."

They also resolved—

"That the expurgation from the reading books by a former Minister of Education, without the consent of Parliament, of all passages referring to the person and work of Christ was a serious mistake, which should be rectified at the earliest possible moment."

So it will be seen that the evidence has been accumulating in favour of what we desire now. In consequence, I suppose, of one of these recommendations of the boards of advice, a book was introduced into the State schools of which we have heard a great deal, although I suppose few honorable members have seen it. I refer to the book entitled *Notes of Lessons on Moral Subjects*, by Frederick W. Hackwood, of which I some time ago purchased a copy in order to judge of its nature. A more miserable book for a teacher I never saw in my life. It is founded on the utilitarian principle that you are to be good because it is wise to be good, that you are to be honest because honesty is the best policy, that you are to obey your parents because they care for you, feed you, and clothe you. The book has the redeeming feature, I admit, that at the end it recommends teachers in using it to enforce and illustrate the precepts given by suitable references to Holy Scripture. This recommendation, however, would never suit our Education department, and so a circular went out that this portion of the book was to be considered as expunged. The book is a wretched production—about the driest book I ever read on such subjects—and I cannot see how such a miserable system of teaching could be any possible good to a child. Several of the inspectors have spoken in condemnation of the book, and I will read an extract from a report by one of them, Mr. Laing. He says—

"The teaching of morals in our schools cannot be said to be a success. In answer to the question—'Why should we be honest?' the reply generally is, 'Because it is the best policy,' and this is but a sample of the utilitarian answers one gets to similar questions on other lessons. Perhaps the teachers think they would be treading on forbidden ground if they were to inculcate honesty because it is right. Any attempt to teach morality on purely utilitarian grounds and apart from a sanction must result in failure. There is but a short step between being honest by faith in the maxim that it is the best policy, and being honest only in those circumstances in which it is plainly seen to be the best policy."

I could quote similar opinions from several other inspectors if necessary. I may mention that this is not the only school book which has been published on morality. I hold in my hand a copy of a *Moral Class Book* published by Messrs. Chambers, the principle of which is a great deal better, and the work much more interesting to children. I am not advocating this book, because I want to see morals founded entirely on the teaching of religion; but there is no doubt that the *Moral Class Book* would be useful in secular hours. Having given this accumulation of proof within our own colony, I will now turn to New South Wales and see whether denominationalism has been produced by the adoption there of the system which is advocated in the petitions which have been presented to the House. In the New South Wales Education Act there is a section defining what secular instruction is to include, and permitting it to include general religious instruction, so that every teacher can give general religious instruction—not denominational or sectarian. Not only so, but in New South Wales the Scripture lessons are amongst the books supplied to teachers, and it is the business of the teachers to teach these lessons every week as part of the programme, and the children are examined in them by the inspectors. That has not resulted in denominationalism in New South Wales, nor has there been any outcry on the subject. The Minister of Public Instruction stated in his speech in the Assembly that he knew nothing about the Irish National Scripture lesson books being used without trouble in New South Wales, but, as a matter of fact, he had sent Mr. Brodribb to report on the New South Wales system, and that gentleman, while refraining from giving

any opinion on the religious qustion because he was not instructed to do so, reported that he found that there was regular religious instruction of a non-sectarian character given by the teachers in the New South Wales public schools. He said nothing about trouble or denominationalism having grown up in consequence, and I think that should have been sufficient evidence for Dr. Pearson. Subsequently, in a speech at the opening of a State school, Dr. Pearson said they had such a good plan of giving religious instruction in New South Wales that if we could only adopt it in Victoria all our troubles would be over, and we need not cry for the Bible. He described how volunteers from the clergy, especially of the Church of England, attended the schools and gave instruction outside school hours, and thus the whole trouble was got over. But after announcing this great discovery, Dr. Pearson soon found he had been speaking "without the book." He sent a letter to the Education department of New South Wales, asking certain questions, and the answers he received were the exact opposite of the statement he had made. He was informed that the religious instruction by agents of the churches were not given outside but inside school hours. In New South Wales not only are the Scripture extracts used by the teachers, but also, under the law, any authorized instructor from any church or denomination can, by arrangement with the board, obtain any hour of the day, fixed by him and the board, for religious instruction. So that instead of waiting until the school is dismissed, when the children are worn out and tired, the instructor can have the first, second, third, or fourth hour, according to arrangement. In Sydney and other large towns in New South Wales instructors can overtake four or five schools in one day under this system. This could never be done in Victoria if we are to keep within the four corners of the Act. In England, America, Germany, and many other places there is this system, and no denominationalism is created.

The Hon. F. T. SARGOOD.—There are not many denominations in Germany—only two.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—There are the Roman Catholics and two or three branches of the Protestant Church. There are plenty of denominations in England, and in England—even in Birmingham, that chosen seat of secularism—they have come back to the Bible in schools. I may state at once that the amendment which I intend to propose in committee will be something to this effect:—That the Irish National Scripture lesson books be used in the State schools by the teachers outside of the four hours of secular instruction, but within the school curriculum, at the wish of the local board, and with a conscience clause for teachers and scholars. Let us leave it to the local board whether to have this or not. That is only carrying out the principle of local self-government, which we all admire and agree to be the best system of government for the colony.

The Hon. J. SERVICE.—You would have the children in one city growing up heathens and in another Christians.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—They are all growing up heathens now, and we want to have some, at all events, growing up Christians.

The Hon. D. MELVILLE.—Very good heathens.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—We have not yet reaped what we are sowing. We have to wait a little while. We had the past system for a long period and we are reaping its good. We have not lived long enough to see the inevitable result of bringing up children on the utilitarian principles of *Hackwood*, and denying them the knowledge of the Bible. It is just to prevent the country from growing up heathens that I want to give the local boards power to have these Scripture lessons read in the schools.

The Hon. J. SERVICE.—It would never do.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—Local government does for everything else. Local authorities manage everything local except the schools. I think it was a great mistake to take away power from the local boards. I would always wish to have a central power, but great latitude should be left to the local boards with regard to what is to be taught—subject, of course, to a proper curriculum—and the choice of a teacher, provided he be certificated. The Irish National Scripture lesson books have been attacked by Dr. Pearson. He spoke of Archbishop Whately having drawn them up with the distinct intention of undermining the Roman Catholic Church. I need not say a word on that point, however, as the statement has been entirely disposed of by the able paper of Mr. Andrew Harper, which has been circulated amongst honorable members. I am told by people who knew Archbishop Whately that he was the

last man to be guilty of anything of the kind; if anything, he was accused of surrendering his own views and being too friendly with the Roman Catholics. He and Archbishop Murray, of the Roman Catholic Church, each thought that the introduction of these lessons would benefit their respective churches and do harm to the other. Dr. Pearson also stated that the lessons had a Protestant bias, and alluded to the omission of the passage with regard to Peter and the keys. The simple answer to that is that the only New Testament extracts in the book are from the Gospels of St. Luke and St. John and in neither of those Gospels does the passage referred to occur. As to the books being biased, they were drawn up, not by Archbishop Whately, but by a Presbyterian —Dr. Carlisle—and the lessons were submitted to and signed by Archbishop Murray and Archbishop Whately, fortnight by fortnight, as they were being prepared. Again, we are told by Dr. Pearson that some of the lessons contain statements and words unfit to be used in mixed schools. In this, also, he is entirely wrong. He quoted, for example, the question, "Why did God destroy Sodom and Gomorrah?" and gave as the answer "Because the people went after strange flesh," and so on. There is no such answer in the book. When he is pressed he refers to certain illustrations given at the end of the book, among others one from St. Jude. But it is deliberately misleading to quote this as the answer to the question. No answers are given to the questions at all, the intention evidently being to bring out the answers from the preceding lesson. He also refers to the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife, but nothing could be more admirable or delicate than the way the story is told in the book. It says:—

> "Joseph was a person of singularly beautiful appearance; and his master's wife, a wicked woman, formed an unlawful attachment to him, and solicited him to commit sin with her. But Joseph answered her 'How shall I do this wickedness and sin against God.'"

Are we to eliminate from Scripture any reference to sin, when the object is to teach children to avoid sin? As a commentary on this I may read what Hugh Miller says of the story of Joseph:—

> "During my sixth year I spelt my way, under the dame, through the Shorter Catechism, the Proverbs, and the New Testament, and then entered upon her highest form as a member of the Bible class, but all the while the process of acquiring learning had been a dark one, which I slowly mastered, in humble confidence in the awful wisdom of the schoolmistress, not knowing whither it tended, when at once my mind awoke to the meaning of that most delightful of all narratives—the story of Joseph. Was there ever such a discovery made before? I actually found out for myself that the art of reading is the art of finding stories in books, and from that moment reading became one of the most delightful of my amusements."

He goes on to say:—

> "I began by getting into a corner at the dismissal of the school, and there conning over to myself the new-found story of Joseph; nor did one perusal serve; the other Scripture stories followed—in especial, the story of Samson and the Philistines, of David and Goliath, of the prophets Elijah and Elisha; and after these came the New Testament stories and parables."

All this shows that to a child's mind there is nothing better than the stories of the Bible. We all know that from the experience of our own children. In New South Wales there are higher passes in the Scripture lessons than in the other subjects, showing how much more the children are interested in the stories of the Bible than in ordinary lesson books. Another question which Dr. Pearson quotes is "What is circumcision?" There is no such question in the book, although the quotation is given in inverted commas. His arguments with regard to the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments have also been disposed of. We have the Ten Commandments in these books as adopted by Catholics as well as Protestants. Dr. Pearson said that in some of the Catholic catechisms they are given differently, but we are not going to teach any catechism, but only the Scripture. As to the Lord's Prayer, the only difference is that one Catholic version has the phrase "supersubstantial bread" instead of "daily bread."

The Hon. J. SERVICE.—One version has "the evil one" instead of "evil."

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—That is the revised version; it does not affect this question. Dr. Pearson also spoke of the Roman Catholics as objecting to the use of these books; and he expressed, further, his horror of a religious war. Of course, I am entirely with him on the latter point. But in my opinion his remarks have a tendency to produce the very thing he professes to dread, because what the Roman Catholics are most against is education which does not include anything in the shape of religious instruction. He contended that if the prayer of the petitions was granted the Roman Catholics would immediately be claiming something for themselves. I

notice, however, that his views in this direction did not attract the Roman Catholic members of another place. This is plain from the circumstance that of the two members of the Assembly of that persuasion who addressed themselves to the subject, one spoke in favour of the proposal to admit the Scripture lesson books, while the other stated simply that he was neutral on the point. In short, what the Roman Catholics desire is something altogether different and apart from what we have now before us. Therefore, Dr. Pearson's contention that the Roman Catholics would raise objections on account of the introduction of these books falls to the ground. It has, indeed, been effectually answered by the Catholics in New South Wales, where they are more in number in proportion to the general population than are the Catholics of Victoria, and where these books are taught in the schools. In fact many Catholic teachers in New South Wales do not object to teach the Scripture lessons in the school books. And this is in the face of the fact that the Catholics of New South Wales don't profess themselves to be any more satisfied with the Education Act of that colony than are the Catholics here with our Education Act. Altogether Dr. Pearson's argument went beside the mark. The Catholics of Victoria don't mince matters. What they aim at is that their own schools should be conducted separately, and be subsidized separately. In any case they would rather the State schools had a religious atmosphere about them, than that they should be purely secular. I believe that if Scripture lessons were taught outside the regular school hours the Act would, if anything, be more agreeable to them, because, they would say, the more Christianity there is about the schools the better for them and for everybody else. Then Dr. Pearson was very severe on some individuals who, he said, had made a charge that the name of God had been struck out of the school books. But no such charge ever came from the National Scripture Education League. I find that when a certain ex-Member of Parliament publicly used an expression of that kind he was immediately answered by a letter to the *Argus* which pointed out that it was the name of Christ and not the name of God which had been struck out. So that the league never made any mistake on the subject. It was too bad of Dr. Pearson to try to fix upon all those who want to get certain passages restored to the school books, the stigma of the mistake of complaining that there is no reference in the present books to the name of God. Still, even the references to the name of God grow fewer and fewer. The report of the Royal Commission on Education, of which Mr. C. J. Ham was a member, complained of the excision from the Royal Readers of certain extracts of a religious tendency; and I find that since then no less than eight other extracts of a similar character have been left out. This shows that a constant change is going on in these books—a change which is carried out without the least reference to Parliament. Surely discretion in this direction should not be left wholly to the Education department. There has been a controversy of late as to a uniformity of school books, and I am quite in accord with the view taken by the *Argus*. I do not approve of the school books being all of one uniform pattern. In the old national school days several sorts of books were kept in stock. The Irish Readers were the ones chiefly used, but there were others. Under the existing system we have not only a single set of books, but that set is continually being more and more expurgated by the Education department, and now Dr. Pearson wants to go further—to have one reader for the whole of Australia. That, however, is not at all likely to be carried. In the first place there is too much jealousy among the colonies to permit of anything of the kind. The other colonies would not trust Victoria to compile the books, and we would not trust the other colonies. I would say that there ought to be something like local option in the matter—a certain amount of freedom. The other day Dr. Pearson said something very strong—something which I really don't quite understand. In fact he made an assertion which I do not think can at all be borne out. Not that I attribute to him any intentional misstatement. I cannot imagine for a moment that he would put forward anything for the purpose of deceiving. Speaking at the opening of the Mornington Railway, he expressed himself, according to the *Argus* report, to the following effect:—

> "He quite admitted the advantage of allowing particular teachers to follow, to a great extent, the bent of their own genius in teaching the young, and it might be news to them to learn that teachers had the right at present to use any reading book they liked, the Act naming as a primer the Nelson Reader, or any approved equivalent."

If this report is correct, which I do not assert, Dr. Pearson committed a very great

mistake, for the Education Act makes no reference to the Nelson's Royal Readers, or to any book of the kind. I am also certain of this, that if the teachers could use any reading book they liked the majority of them would at once choose the books formerly used in the national schools.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT.—Do you even suppose that the Minister of Public Instruction was correctly reported?

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—I cannot say. If he was misreported I regret it. I regret still more that he should be so often misreported, for he seems to be always making mistakes. I only wish I had been present at the Mornington Railway opening so that I could have answered him on the spot. I would have been there had I had the opportunity, for I have always been much interested in the line, seeing that it was engineered through this Chamber by myself. It will be said by some that the school is not the place in which to teach the children of the country religion, that it should be taught either at home or by the churches. Well, I am quite prepared to admit that we should not relieve either the parents or the churches from the duty of seeing that our youths are brought up religiously. I most sincerely hope that no parent will ever think himself relieved from any duty of the sort, simply because his child is attending a secular school. Still there are a great number of children who would not get even secular instruction but for the State compelling them to come into the schools—a plan I agree with entirely—and with children so situated what chance is there of the parents, who will not look after the secular instruction of their offspring, caring for their religious instruction? Can such parents be expected to teach them about God, or about the conscience which tells them what is right and what is wrong? While I don't expect the State to take upon itself the duty of the churches, and to give dogmatic religious instruction, I do expect it to impart instruction bearing upon character and conduct. No education can be complete without that. Therefore, I say that the great rule of conduct should form part of the regular round of school teaching. I do not ask the State to become a religious instructor, but I ask it to lay down the basis of moral training, which can be done entirely apart from anything in the shape of denominational school teaching. The churches also ought to work in the same direction, but the voluntary system has not been found to answer satisfactorily while confined to teaching in the schools after school hours, when the children are wearied and want to go out to play. Indeed, so far voluntary religious teaching has proved more or less a failure. ("No.") At all events the teachers do not get at the children they principally want to get at. In largely populated towns of course a certain number of children can be reached, but after all their numbers are few, and there is great difficulty in keeping up the attendance. It would be a very different thing if the instruction I allude to was given in the morning instead of in the afternoon, when every child who likes can be away.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT.—But allowing such teaching in the morning would not satisfy you.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—Certainly not. I am now simply drawing attention to the difference between voluntary teaching and regular teaching. The fact is that there are a great many difficulties in connexion with voluntary religious teaching in the afternoon which would not be felt if the thing could be done in the morning. For example, a voluntary teacher cannot easily give his time after any fixed fashion in the afternoon. If he is of the mercantile classes his afternoon engagements are much more pressing than those of the early forenoon, while if he is a clergyman he has calls upon him in the latter part of the day—funerals, visits to members of his congregation, and so on—which he cannot put on one side. So much for the towns; the obstacles in the country districts are greater. A friend of mine who is a volunteer religious teacher in a large country district has to travel 20 miles in order to reach a school which he visits once a week. If he were to attend every school in his district once a week his whole time would be taken up. That is no uncommon case in the more sparsely populated parts of the colony. Upon the whole, you cannot carry out the volunteer system in the inland districts with any regularity. Here I must pay a compliment to Mr. Service, who, when he was in office, did what he could to help the voluntary system. For instance, he allowed the regular teachers to remain, if they chose, to keep order. He did not go as far as we wanted him to go, he would not let us have morning teaching, but the assistance he afforded was of great advantage. The system adopted now of making the teacher afraid to speak about anything pertaining to a child's religious nature or his obligations to God is really banishing from the schools every trace of

the religious atmosphere, which I, for one, think it most important to maintain. We want in schools what we want in every department of life, the feeling that God is present, that in our ordinary occupations we owe a duty to One above us, who has placed us on earth to do His will. But under the existing system we banish from the schools every sense of the presence of God or the power of Christianity.

The Hon. J. SERVICE.—You should explain whether you want Christian dogma or only morality taught, because the two things are utterly distinct.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—We want the Scripture extracts taught because they contain the facts of Divine history. We would then leave it entirely to the child to accept what he liked—what Christ on earth was, what is his duty to God, and the rest. We would be satisfied to teach the Bible so as to let it tell its own tale—to teach it without any questions at all, if you would rather there were no questions. For my part, however, I would rather there were questions. I believe that on this point I speak for the entire National Scripture Education League. We would be content if the facts contained in the Bible were allowed to produce their own effect.

The Hon. J. SERVICE.—That would be teaching dogma.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—Perhaps some parts of the Bible set forth dogma, but we have no desire to teach dogma in that way. For example, does Mr. Service believe that the Sermon on the Mount teaches dogma? We don't wish to have argument or discussion in the schools as to infant or adult baptism, or even, if you choose, as to the divinity of Christ. I repeat that we want the Scripture extracts because we desire that the Bible should be left simply to tell its own tale. We do not wish to see the influences the Scriptures are capable of exerting entirely banished from our State schools. Why should our school children be denied a knowledge of Scripture history—a knowledge of the oldest historical record in the world? I may mention that such knowledge is imparted even in China. The teaching in the University of Pekin now includes teaching the Bible. On what good ground can we deny to our rising generation the instruction necessary to enable them to understand a very large proportion of our ordinary every-day literature? I guarantee that many of Mr. Services' speeches would be found to be unintelligible to a great number of our State-school children simply because he is so fond of introducing—I admire it in him—Biblical quotations and illustrations. To many of them he might as well be talking Greek or Hebrew. Would you also deprive them of any power of appreciating the meaning of a very great deal of our painting and sculpture? Besides, in taking the Bible away from the State school children, you take away from them the best story-book in the world. You also take away from them their best chance of understanding the rule of Providence over all its creatures, because teaching on that head runs through the Bible from beginning to end. What can be the great good of teaching the alphabet and the multiplication table if at the same time you leave the scholar ignorant of the great spiritual Governor of the Universe? As long as he has no sense of the God of love, life must be to him a perfect enigma, and he can have no real idea of what goodness is. Then, without the Bible the child is without the best model of life, for, whether you do or do not believe that Christianity is divine, the mere reading of the life of Christ, from His childhood to His maturity, supplies a moral ideal which is to be found nowhere else. Nothing can influence a child towards morality so much as the knowledge of the perfect life which he can get from the life of Christ. In Dr. Joseph Cook's lecture on "Shall the common schools teach common morals?" I find the following passage:—

> "In Christ, the highest ethical reality known to established and incontrovertible history, there is the highest self-revelation of God. That revelation, so far as Christ is man, is a part of natural morals. Any system of instruction which shuts its eyes to that fact shuts its eyes to reality. A book on architecture that should not mention the Parthenon, or one on painting that should say nothing of the Sistine Chapel, would be no more defective than is any book on purely natural morals without any definite account of the highest historical reality in morals—the character of Christ as a man and the ethics of the Gospels. Natural morals, if taught thoroughly, teach, of course, the highest attained moral ideals. The character of Christ, as exhibiting the highest ideal of morals actually attained among men, is the supreme illustration, and contains the organizing principles of every scheme of natural morals that can be called thorough or scientific. No adequate picture of that character exists except in the New Testament. Natural morals, therefore, cannot be thoroughly taught when the Bible is excluded from the schools; and hence the State, in exercise of its right of self-preservation, has authority to require that the Bible shall not be excluded."

By depriving a child of the Bible you take from him the best motive of conduct, the

restraints of an enlightened conscience, and the foundation of faith and hope, while you leave him in ignorance of the only thing that can lead him truly to God.

The Hon. C. J. HAM.—Sir, not having anticipated that this question would come before us this evening, I would prefer to see the debate adjourned. Nevertheless, rather than there should be delay, I will say forthwith what I have to say on the subject. So far as the Bill is concerned, the House is, I think, entirely with the Government, for its leading proposals have long ago met with general sanction. If I remember aright, the intended increase in the number of school days per quarter was, in effect, recommended by the last Education Commission. In short, the measure, as a whole, recommends itself to the judgment of the House. As to the question raised by Mr. Balfour, it may be perfectly in order, but I regard it as somewhat outside the scope of the Bill. Still, we may fairly take it into consideration, seeing the numbea of influential petitions we have had presented to us with regard to it. No doubt there is in the country, and especially among parents, a strong and growing feeling that the children attending the State schools should receive a certain amount of non-sectarian religious instruction. For my part, I agree with that view, and I think that the difficulties in the way of carrying it into effect are more imaginary than real. For instance, in New South Wales religious instruction of a non-sectarian character is given in the State schools with very good results indeed. We find, also, that in England a strong sentiment in favour of a similar system is rapidly establishing itself. I am fortified in making this statement by the following extract from a recent English publication:—

"At a recent sitting of Convocation for the province of York, the encouraging statement was made by the Bishop of Sodor and Man that religious instruction is regularly given in 348, out of the 385, board schools of the country; and the Bishop of Liverpool bore testimony to the value of the religious teaching given in the board schools of that city. The principle that all true education must be based upon religion was practically acknowledged by the Royal Commission on Education, and the bringing up of children without any religious belief or instruction would be fraught with grave consequences, both individually and nationally. The best way to secure a Scriptural education for the children is to promote the election of men of Christian principle to school boards—men who are not in bondage to any denominational shibboleths, but who will see that the great facts and foundation doctrines of the Gospel are made familiar to the young scholars."

That shows the way the wind is blowing. I also agree with Mr. Balfour's remarks to the effect that if the Bible were read in schools without either note or comment it would to a great extent meet the wishes of the great mass of the people of the colony. Again, I think it is very desirable that encouragement should be given to State school teachers to impart religious instruction. Indeed, it seems to me to be an unwarrantable interference with the rights and privileges of those teachers that they are at present deprived of any opportunity of giving such instruction after school hours. I will not follow the argument further, but will simply express the hope that the Bill will receive careful consideration.

The Hon. D. MELVILLE.—Mr. President, in taking part in this debate, I feel like a person who is called upon to wear an old coat that he had worn twenty years before, and I am at a loss to understand why we should be called upon, at the present time, under cover of this Bill, to discuss again the old question that was raised and fully discussed twenty years ago. I must say that Mr. Balfour has dealt with the question in a most able manner—in fact I never heard him speak so well and bring out more thoroughly what he desired to propound; but the fact of the matter is, he has taken us all by surprise. This Bill is merely an amending Bill intended to perfect some of the minor points of the system of public instruction that is now in operation, and I daresay the Minister of Justice never dreamt that he would be called upon, in connexion with this measure, to reply to a speech in which the whole of our system of public instruction is challenged from its very foundation. Still, it would be most unfair to allow Mr. Balfour to take up the ball and run away with it, as if nobody believes in what we have done, and done so well, for the past twenty years. Does the honorable member desire that it shall go forth to the world unchallenged that our splendid national system of education—the most costly, in proportion to the population, and probably the most perfectly administered in the world, and the fairest for our children —is a heathenish system? The speech of the honorable member was grand up to that point. Then out came the enthusiasm of the old Scotch covenanter, and he began to prophesy that terrible consequences would happen to the unfortunate Victorians who are receiving a really good sound education under our present system, an education that will enable them more properly to appreciate

religious feeling and sentiment than they ever could before we began to educate them. What has caused all this scramble for education for the last century or century and a half? Fifty years of agitation in England could not bring about what Victoria now possesses. For ten or fifteen years our best men tried to combine a little religion with all this school education, but they utterly failed. The best men that we have had in this colony, including the late Mr. Justice Fellows and the present Chief Justice Mr. Justice Higinbotham, have tried to accomplish the task, but they have never been able to show a practical and proper method by which we could have combined even homœopathic doses of religious sentiment and religious instruction with the ordinary day school education. Many of the clergymen themselves have come to the same conclusion. Among those who were examined before the Royal Commission on Public Education in 1867 was the Rev. Anketell M. Henderson, who was asked:—

"Would it be your desire to not merely not encourage such religion to be taught in the schools, but would you absolutely forbid it if the local committee or other body that had the control of the schools desired to introduce it?"

The answer of the reverend gentleman was:—

"I would exclude it from all schools under the Board, because the local committees would in many cases wish to see it made denominational."

One after another these witnesses expressed the same conscientious conviction, that it is impossible to teach religion properly unless the mind of the teacher is imbued with religious feeling. There are many people in this community who will not allow their children to be taught religion by the ordinary day school teacher. And for very good reason too. What is the teacher of to-day? He is not the old cast-off middle-class man who could not earn a living at anything else but teaching—the decayed clerk, or "stickit" minister. In the old times the education of children was entrusted partly to these men and partly to the clergy. They did the work for a time, but it was a most ineffective system. Now, however, the state of affairs is altogether changed. We train our teachers from the beginning for the work of teaching the young as the State requires them to be taught, in the best manner possible. But the teacher of to-day may be anything in religious matters or nothing. He may be a sporting man—I know some of them are; he may be a betting man; he may hold very light views on many things; and am I to entrust the religious instruction of my children to men such as these—men who were never trained to teach religion, some of them light-minded men, who would turn many of the Scripture passages in these lesson-books into ridicule? Really, I do not think that the State should interfere in the work of religious teaching; and yet the whole Bible, the Old and New Testaments, the whole of the doctrines of Christianity are involved in the books which the honorable member desires to see introduced into our State schools. Do the honorable member and his friends mean to tell us that it does not matter who teaches these things—that it is no matter what are the feelings and convictions of the men who are to be allowed to ask the children questions about Moses and Moses's messages from God, and what happened to Moses, and all about Sodom and Gomorrah; what happened to the Israelites, and all about Pharoah and his troubles, and about the various characters mentioned and incidents narrated in the Old Testament? Are we to take these Bible lessons and hand them over to anybody to ask such questions as I have indicated? Does the honorable member think that by those means we will promote religion and a feeling of reverence for the Bible? I venture to say that this House will tell the honorable member that the teachers of the State schools are unqualified to teach religion. The State has trained them for the particular work in which they are now engaged, and they are not qualified to take the place of the clergy. But why should we proceed on to this dangerous ground? Let me tell the honorable member that there is a general opinion among the great body of the people in this colony that the proposal he now advocates is the little bit of a dynamite cartridge which, if adopted, would blow up our whole system of public instruction.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—Will you agree to take a plebiscite?

The Hon. D. MELVILLE.—I am perfectly satisfied that if the honorable member will appeal to the people of this colony he will find that three-fourths of them will condemn any proposal for the present teachers to impart religious instruction to the children who are attending the State schools, and I will undertake to say that when the clergy understand the proposal they will condemn it too. I am fully persuaded that the great bulk of the constituencies are satisfied with the Education Act as it stands, and as it is administered. The honorable member has

dealt very severely with the present Minister of Public Instruction. I don't wish to be Dr. Pearson's apologist, but it is only fair to the honorable gentleman that I should say that on every occasion when I have presented myself with any suggestion for the increase of school accommodation the Minister of Public Instruction has been alive to it in a moment; in fact, I have never found a Minister administering an Act more satisfactorily. He throws his whole heart and soul into the work, and is thoroughly imbued with the spirit and purpose of the Act. However, I don't wish to follow that line any further. Of course, the petitions that have come in should not be undervalued; but it must be borne in mind that they have come mainly from the religious bodies, through the influence of the clergy, who are no doubt under the impression that it would be better for us to revert to the old system of teaching. That may be all very well from their point of view, but there are too many men in this country who have tasted the benefits of the present system of public instruction and its good effects are too apparent on the community for the people of Victoria ever to revert to the old system. We owe our liberty to this system of primary education. Only 150 years ago, when the instruction of the British people was in the hands of the clergy of the Presbyterian, Church of England, Roman Catholic, and other churches—a time when the clergy included men of the highest learning—the mass of the people were steeped in the deepest ignorance. Poor old women were burnt at the stake for showing a little more practical skill than the doctor, and the clergy of that day believed that there was warrant for that horrible work in the Holy Scriptures. Why in Germany, when they had burnt one of those poor unfortunates, they went into her house and strangled her children. A hundred years ago, however, the printing press began more and more to illumine the minds of men, educational agencies sprang into existence, and just as fast as the people became educated the old goblins and demons and witches disappeared from the world, and children were no longer frightened out of their wits by stories of the dreadful deeds of these creatures of superstitious imaginations. Fifty years ago you could scarcely find a carter in the old country who could give you a receipt for the goods he was intrusted to deliver; to-day, every Victorian you meet can dash off his name in a fair bold hand, and every man in the colony is a diligent reader of the newspapers. There is not the slightest doubt that the people read and are governed by the press. Why the *Age* has a circulation of nearly 100,000 daily, the *Argus* has an enormous circulation, and the other newspapers get a share of public patronage. The press, in fact, is educating the people.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—Who gave education to Scotland?

The Hon. J. SERVICE,—*Chambers' Journal.*

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—John Knox.

The Hon. D. MELVILLE.—I don't wish to discuss everything at the same moment, but surely the honorable member will not deny that Victoria is an intelligent community, and that its intelligence chiefly arises from the determination of the people that the children of this colony shall be educated. We are all at one with the honorable member on many things, but surely he does not want it to go out to the world that we are all irreligious in Victoria? What we tell him is that we are making the future Victorians better religious men and more noble-minded by beginning in the right and practical way, so that they may be able to understand and value the beautiful passages in the Old and New Testaments better than the neglected and half-educated. I should have been all the better pleased if, in framing the measure now before us, the Government had gone a little more into perfecting our grand system of public instruction, by taking charge of the children after they leave the State school. The lack of some provision of that kind is a great defect in our system. We do very well with the children at the State schools, but we want some means of reaching them when they enter upon the active duties of life. But that is by the way. I want to point out to the House that, since the passing of the Education Act, even religious sentiment and religious feeling have considerably altered. If the late and worthily-respected Mr. Justice Fellows could reappear in one of our suburbs, and see a number of men with red shirts, as I saw them last Sunday, with crowds of people around them, singing in a most extraordinary style favourite passages of hymns to old negro melodies, to the strains of a brass band and the beating of a big drum, he would say that the old ideas of reverence for sacred things taught by the Church of England and the Church of Scotland have altogether changed. "The old order changeth, giving place to new." On Sundays we see the Salvation Army marching

along the streets with banners, trumpets, drums, and tambourines, and there is little if any of that reverence which is indicated in that verse from the old Book—"Take thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." Surely, when the honorable member is patronising the Salvation Army, it must sometimes occur to him how completely the old notions of his early teaching have been reversed. It would appear as if the whole object of religion was to teach a boy how to beat a big drum—a complete reversal of the old idea of true reverence for sacred things. With all this before us, surely we should not discourage the State from teaching the children how to read and think for themselves and how to earn an honest livelihood. As a democrat, I believe in our present system of public instruction. All children who enter the portals of our State schools are equal; the State is no respecter of persons there; the children of the rich and the children of the poor who attend our State schools are taught alike. Is not that right and just? Surely we might write up over the portals of our State schools the proud motto of the French Republic "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity." Our State schools are common ground, where the children of all creeds and classes meet and are educated together, forming associations that will not be soon forgotten, learning in early youth to help one another, and carrying that spirit of true brotherhood into their after life; and I would almost say that the man who tries to introduce any class feeling into our schools is an enemy to his race. Mr. Balfour quoted from the report of the Royal Commission on Education, written by Chief Justice Higinbotham, and he built his argument largely on the opinions which the Chief Justice held at that time; but events have proved that the Chief Justice thought it was an easier thing to arrange for religious teaching of a non-sectarian character than it turned out to be. The Chief Justice got a severe practical illustration of the dreadful bitterness of religious differences. By invitation he went to give the Scots' Church people a modicum of his religious views, and in the course of his celebrated lay sermon he said, quoting from Lessing:—

> "The Christian religion has existed for more than 1800 years. The religion of Christ has yet to be tried."

The Hon. J. SERVICE.—Hear, hear.

The Hon. D. MELVILLE.—Yes, many good men think that the religion of Christ has never yet been tried; but supposing the Chief Justice had been a school-master, and he had dared to tell the children what I have just quoted, would he not have had the churches crying out against his teaching? The Chief Justice is an able man, a man of scrupulous conscientiousness, and yet Mr. Balfour knows that the teachings of Christ, as they would be given to the children by the Chief Justice, if he were a schoolmaster, would be repelled and denounced by the churches with the greatest contempt.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—The Chief Justice is an honorable man, and before he went to deliver the lecture from which the honorable member is quoting he told those who invited him what kind of lecture he was going to deliver. If the Chief Justice were a State school teacher he would know that he could not give such instruction to the children, and that he would only have to hear them read these Scripture lessons—that is all.

The Hon. D. MELVILLE.—Let me read to the House another quotation from the lecture of Chief Justice Higinbotham:—

> "Again, some of these dogmas which the churches have superadded to the doctrine of Christ, without his authority, and which they endeavour pertinaciously to force upon the clergy and the laity, are dogmas which, as some of you, I doubt not, know from bitter personal experience, are revolting and odious to the natural conscience and to the understanding of man."

I venture to think honorable members are satisfied that it is no easy matter to bridge over the difficulties that are in the way of devising such a system of religious teaching as would be generally acceptable. These quotations from an able, intelligent, and conscientious man like the Chief Justice—a man we all respect more and more day by day, whether as a judge or as a politician—clearly show that it is utterly impossible to approach religious matters without bringing a hornet's nest about our ears. The Chief Justice thought that the Christian feeling among the different churches would prompt them to do a great deal to meet the views of the Education Commission with regard to religious instruction in the State schools; but when he himself tried to teach the young men of the Scots Church it nearly created a schism—it did create the Australian Church—and it brought down upon himself and others, who were what I may call passive participants in the affair, the bitterest condemnation of the Presbyterian Church. The same sort

of thing would occur over the length and breadth of the land if we were to permit religious teaching in the State schools, and instead of spreading abroad the truths of religion we should sow the seeds of sectarian strife. We are no nearer a solution of the problem than we were 20 years ago, and I don't think that the people of this colony are prepared to believe that we can accomplish now what some of the best men in Victoria failed to accomplish then. The State is giving our children the practical education they require to fit them for the work of every day life. We have established agricultural colleges, where our young men can be taught how to grow crops and farm profitably. The instruction which our children receive in the State schools, and the education and training which the young men obtain at the agricultural colleges, will make them all the better able to understand and appreciate the teachings of religion. The instruction given in the agricultural colleges is of an intensely practical nature, as is shown by the questions in the examination papers; but I hope this fact will not induce Mr. Balfour and his coadjutors to make anything like an attack on these colleges. I will read only one of the examination questions, because it will be sufficient to show how practical is the instruction given. That question is:—

"Name the two breeds of pigs on the farm, and give a short history of their origin and characteristics."

There is only one allusion to religious matters in the instructions to the students, and that is to the effect that if they take their horses to go to church they must be careful to close the gates after them. But I think I have said enough on this question. My advice to honorable members is this:—Let us develop our education system thoroughly, and not be frightened away from the task by any fear of Mr. Balfour's dreadful prophecies being realized and of the terrible calamities he predicts falling upon us. Of course the honorable member may be a prophet. Men who believe sincerely have believed themselves to be prophets, and the gift of prophecy may exist in Mr. Balfour. He deserves to be a prophet if any man does in the present age, because he is a man of consistent faith and principle, and he is, I was going to say, cruelly religious. Still I am perfectly satisfied that we are on the right track, and that we cannot do wrong in upholding and further developing our splendid system of public instruction. It is the pride and admiration of the world, and its establishment was one of the noblest of the many noble things that were done for this country by its earlier citizens.

The Hon. J. H. CONNOR.—Sir, I do not intend to reply at length to the very radical speech we have just heard from Mr. Melville, but I cannot refrain from expressing my surprise that we have not been favoured with the views of the leaders of the House on this very important question.

The Hon. F. T. SARGOOD.—There is no amendment proposed.

The Hon. J. H. CONNOR.—I am quite aware of that, but still I expected to hear expressions of the views of the leaders of the House—gentlemen like Mr. Service, Colonel Sargood, Mr. Zeal, and others—who know all about education in this colony from the beginning, and who have taken a great interest in the question; and I hope we shall hear the views of the new members who have just come fresh from the country. We are all agreed in accepting the principles of the measure now before the House, and I thoroughly endorse them; but I contend that, in framing this Bill, the Government have not gone far enough. We have had petitions from all parts of the country, sent by a very large number of the most influential and respectable people in the colony, and they ought to receive due attention. I am by no means convinced that the people of this country are really satisfied with the present Education Act as a perfect Act; in fact, I am quite certain they are not. They are satisfied with its main principles, and so am I, and so I believe are a majority of the members of this House; but I am confident that a very large number of people in this colony desire to see religious instruction of some kind given to the children in our State schools—the teaching of some moral code.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL.—We have a moral code.

The Hon. J. H. CONNOR.—But it is not taught in the State schools. The different religious sects ought to agree upon a moral code that could be taught in our State schools without giving offence to any section of the community. Surely that could be done. Religious instruction might be given before and after school hours by competent teachers, without interfering with the main principles of the Education Act, a conscience clause being provided for such parents and teachers as might object. That

is all Mr. Balfour asks. I will read to the House a letter I have received this morning from a lady teacher at Geelong, to whom I wrote, asking for her opinion on the Scripture lesson books which have been circulated with a view to their being introduced into our State schools. This lady replied as follows:—

"In reply to your request regarding my opinion on Bible instruction in State schools and the adaptability or otherwise of the books under consideration. Those at present proposed to be used are, I think, inadequate to the requirements. Might I suggest that a concise Bible History be compiled, omitting all doctrinal points as being in compulsory education calculated to offend one or other of the many denominations, and consequently better left to the conscientious teaching of each special sect in its own Sunday schools, and introducing the characters, who they were, what they did; the object of this being that scholars will see that the Bible is recognised and upheld as a daily guide to our being better men and women. Also, that the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments, in bold type, be hung conspicuously in each of the class-rooms."

The Hon. J. SERVICE.—That is quite original.

The Hon. J. H. CONNOR.—I think it is very good; at any rate it is quite as valuable a contribution to the discussion of this question as a great many of the statements made by the Minister of Public Instruction, and a great deal more valuable than some of his statements. Although I respect a great deal that the honorable gentleman says, still he sometimes makes statements without supporting them by facts. And although the suggestion of this lady teacher at Geelong that the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments should be hung up conspicuously on the walls of the State schools may not be original, it is nevertheless a very good suggestion, because the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments have from time immemorial been the best guides of men, and they might be taught without giving offence to any section of the community. I really cannot see who could take offence. If objection is raised, however, surely the different schools of religious thought can agree upon some moral code to be taught in our State schools.

The Hon. S. FRASER.—That is the difficulty.

The Hon. J. H. CONNOR.—But if these books containing Scripture lessons are used with such great advantage in New South Wales, why cannot they be used here? We had them in use for years, and Mr. Balfour has answered all the objections raised by the Minister of Public Instruction. I sincerely hope the House will agree that some system of religious instruction may be taught in our State schools. I regret that no religious instruction is given in our agricultural colleges. Only this morning I met a gentleman who wanted to send one of his sons to an agricultural college, but he was deterred from so doing by the fact that no religious instruction is given to the students. We have the very best teachers at the agricultural colleges, and I believe that those institutions will do a great deal of good.

The Hon. D. MELVILLE.—The pupils are taught to breed cows and pigs.

The Hon. J. H. CONNOR.—They are taught more than that. They receive a thoroughly practical education, which fits them for the duties of life in the country districts, and enables them to properly utilize the rich lands of the colony. No religious instruction is allowed in those colleges, and ministers of religion are not even permitted to preach in them.

The Hon. D. MELVILLE. — The pupils go to church.

The Hon. J. H. CONNOR.—Yes, but they are not compelled to go to church.

The Hon. F. T. SARGOOD.—Would you compel them to go to church?

The Hon. J. H. CONNOR.—No, but I would encourage them to do so in every possible way. The pupils at the agricultural colleges are in a very different position from the children attending the State schools, who reside at home with their parents, and go to church and Sunday-school at least once a week; and it is going to extremes to prevent the teachers in those colleges from imparting religious instruction. Another great objection to the present Education Act is its centralizing influence. The local boards of advice have not sufficient control over the schools. I endorse the recommendation made by the local boards of advice, which has been read by Mr. Balfour. Often when a window-pane or a door is broken the local board of advice have to wait months before they can get it repaired. The Education department has to be communicated with, and an inspector sent up, and sometimes the preliminary expenses amount to more than the actual cost of the work. I believe in the extension of local self government in every possible way, and there is no direction in which it could be better extended than that of education. The local boards of advice should have larger powers of control, with reference not only to school buildings, but

to teachers. Why should they not be able to dismiss, or at any rate suspend, a teacher who was considered to be unfit or unworthy for his position?

The Hon. F. T. SARGOOD.—They could report him.

The Hon. J. H. CONNOR.—Yes; but months might elapse before any action would be taken on the report.

The Hon. J. SERVICE.—Nonsense.

The Hon. J. H. CONNOR.—I say it is not nonsense. I know of instances in which the inhabitants of particular districts have been trying for months to get teachers removed without any effect. I trust that honorable members will express their views upon this Bill. I look upon it as a most important Bill, and I think that we should not attempt to hurry it too quickly through the House. I hope sincerely that we shall be able to agree to some scheme which will enable religious instruction to be given in the State schools, by competent teachers, without giving offence to any section of the community.

The Hon. D. HAM.—Mr. President, I agree in the main with the provisions of this Bill. Clause 3 deals with a difficulty—if not a grievance—that has existed for some time. The school age should be reduced from 15 to 13 years, and that change is a step in the right direction. I have followed the remarks of preceding speakers with some pleasure and with some pain. I cannot give a silent vote on this occasion, as the subject of religious instruction which has been agitating the public mind for so long, and which has caused this House to be flooded with petitions, has been introduced. The petitions ask that the Irish National Scripture lesson books shall be used in the State schools. These books have been criticised most unmercifully, and the Bible has been spoken of, I think, irreverently, though I hope that I am mistaken. As a believer in the Bible, I trust I shall always have the courage to express my convictions, whether in the House or out of it. I do not suppose that my constituents sent me here to preach religion, or to speak of the Bible excepting as setting forth a moral standard in the life of Him to whom I believe we should all look for help and succour. I have been looking over the Irish National Scripture lesson books, and I think that as long as a teacher follows them closely, their use would not be likely to lead to the teaching of any religious dogma. I give Mr. Balfour all honour for the amendment he intends to move. The honorable member has shown that this is not a denominational but a national question, and that the introduction of religious teaching into the State schools in the form suggested will not in any way interfere with the fundamental principles of the Education Act. I have always been an admirer and supporter of our educational system; but I have been pained by the exclusion from the State schools of the best book that ever God or man gave to the world, and I say now fearlessly that if I could re-introduce that book, to be used without dogmatic teaching, I would do so to-morrow. Believing as I do in the truth of the Bible, regarding it as I do as the revelation of the great God who has made us all, who governs us all, and to whom we look for all, I feel that I would not be a consistent conscientious Christian if I did not give expression to that view. I am prepared to admit that there are difficulties in the way. If Bible reading in the State schools would involve the teaching of any particular creed I would oppose it. I would be very sorry indeed to do anything that would endanger the Education Act; but I have no apprehension of that. The Royal Commission on Education of 1884, in their elaborate and exhaustive report, actually recommended that Scripture lesson books should be introduced into the State schools. And what objections are there to Scripture lessons being read by a teacher in a State school, no matter whether he is a Protestant or Roman Catholic, or an infidel? If the teacher followed the questions given in the Irish National Scripture lesson books that would be a sufficient safeguard.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL.—Safeguard against what?

The Hon. D. HAM.—Safeguard against religious dogma being taught. We owe it as a duty to the State to impart such an education to the young as will fit them for the positions they will hereafter occupy as the men and women of this colony. How can we do that better than by teaching them the duties of life—those principles of temperance, industry, truth, and loyalty that will make them good and useful men and women, and without a knowledge of which education is worth very little? Do not let us have them finding fault with those who went before them, that the education they received was defective because it did not include instruction in the principles of religion and morality, which can alone give

them that breadth, that greatness, and magnanimity of character that is necessary to fit them for, and to sustain them in the discharge of the important duties of life. If we instil those principles into their minds and hearts, if we teach them, as we ought, that "righteousness exalteth a nation," then they will pay back to the State what they have received from it a hundred-fold, and will be able to maintain the honour and dignity of this integral part of the British Empire. We shall then have the gratification of feeling that we have done our duty; but if we do not teach our children religion, if we do not seek to impart to them that fear of God and that righteousness which "exalteth a nation," what will become of us as a community? I hold that it is essential to the well-being of a community that its children should know something of God, that they should be taught to fear Him, to honour Him, and to keep His commandments; and we cannot do wrong in sanctioning the use of the commandments, the Bible, and the Lord's prayer in the State schools. The passages of Scripture in the Irish National Scripture lesson books appear to have been culled both from the Douay Bible and the authorized version, and there cannot, I think, be any objection to them. I should be sorry to do anything that would be a cause of grievance to any section of the community and that would lead them to seek redress in some other way; but I believe that religion should be taught in the State schools, and I shall support any amendment that may be introduced with that object.

The Hon. G. YOUNG.—Sir, it appears to be the desire of honorable members generally that this Bill, as introduced by the Government, should be passed. At all events no exception is taken to its provisions. This debate has arisen upon the amendment that Mr. Balfour has indicated his intention of moving when the Bill goes into committee. While I agree with almost all he said, and I desire to see the Bible or the lesson books to which reference has been made used in the State schools, I feel that at the present time, looking at the way in which this Bill was treated in another place, there is no prospect of such an amendment being agreed to. The question of religious instruction was discussed in the Assembly, and so little support was given to the views now enunciated by Mr. Balfour, that the proposition made was rejected without a division. The speech delivered by the honorable member was a very able one, and did him great credit, for it showed that he had devoted a large amount of time to its preparation, and that he was thoroughly in earnest on the subject. But he cannot expect to see the amendment which he intends to move embodied in the Bill.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—There was no division in the Assembly.

The Hon. G. YOUNG.—No. The proposition made in the Assembly met with such scant support that no division was called for. Mr. Balfour has gone fully into this question, and has expressed the views of a large number of honorable members. They agree with him, but they see that the difficulties that would attend the introduction of Scripture lesson books into the State schools would be very great, and that that step would involve consequences more serious than any he has referred to. One large section of the community would be satisfied with the change; but Mr. Balfour has quite ignored the fact that there is another large section of the community —the Roman Catholics—whose views are very different from his own.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—I spoke of them.

The Hon. G. YOUNG.—The honorable member did not, in my opinion, give sufficient prominence to the earnestness with which the Roman Catholics hold the views they are at all times so ready to express, and to the fact that they find the sinews of war to carry on a system of education in their own way. If we introduce Scripture lessons in the State schools, we cannot then reasonably refuse to give some State assistance to the Roman Catholics.

The Hon. C. J. HAM.—There would be a conscience clause.

The Hon. G. YOUNG.—A conscience clause is all very well; but I do not think that we could withhold from the Roman Catholics a special subsidy for the support of their schools. In fact many of those who advocate the introduction of Scripture lessons into the State schools have announced that as soon as they get what they want they will be prepared to support a grant to the Roman Catholic schools. The Education Act is one of the most popular measures ever passed in Victoria, and whatever may be its defects we do not desire to give up what we have secured. We may try to improve the Act, but until we can improve it in such a way as to give satisfaction to all sections of the community,

we ought to be content with it as it is. I would be very reluctant indeed to do anything that would have a tendency to break up our present unsectarian system of education.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—Hear, hear.

The Hon. G. YOUNG.—The honorable member says "Hear, hear;" but he was silent when I referred to the statement made by some of his friends that they would be prepared to support a grant to the Roman Catholic schools.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—I suppose the honorable member is referring to the views that were held by the late Bishop of Melbourne, Dr. Moorhouse, and by Mr. Robert Harper, when he was a member of the Assembly. If so, he is certainly conveying a wrong impression to the House. They advocated the Canadian system, which does not give any separate vote to the Roman Catholics.

The Hon. G. YOUNG.—I am not prepared to do an injustice to any section of the community; and I contend that if we introduce the Bible into the State schools we ought as fair and reasonable men to give some assistance to the Roman Catholics. Rather than that I would preserve our present system of education, which has secured to the colony the enviable reputation of having the smallest percentage of uneducated persons of any country in the world. We cannot do anything in the direction of introducing religious instruction until the religious bodies have agreed amongst themselves upon a system to which no exception can be taken. I know that individuals may take exception to anything; but I am referring now more particularly to the Roman Catholics. The Minister of Public Instruction has indicated that he has in course of preparation a series of school books that will be different from those at present in use. I do hope that he will reinstate many of the passages that were improperly excised some years ago, and that he will introduce some of the beautiful moral lessons that are contained in the Old and New Testaments, which involve no question of religious dogma. If he will do something in that direction it will be as much as we have a right to expect at the present time, and he will vastly improve our educational system. I hope that honorable members will be content to wait patiently to see what the new books do contain, and that they will not be disappointed by them when they appear.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL.—Mr. President, I think that every honorable member in this Chamber would agree with the amendment Mr. Balfour has indicated his intention of moving if it could be carried out. I do not think that there is a single honorable member who has any objection, not to a modicum of religious instruction, but to as much religious instruction as possible being given in the State schools; but we must look at the difficulties which surround the question. We are not a community of Protestants, we are a mixed community of Protestants, Catholics, Jews, and others, all of whom are equally entitled to consideration. Is Mr. Balfour prepared to ignore the just and reasonable rights of a minority, and to force upon them a course of religious training which they abhor?

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—No; I do not propose to force it.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL.—The honorable member surely does force it if he insists upon its being grafted on to our State school curriculum. He will force upon certain sections of the community one of two alternatives—their children must either leave the State schools, or they must stay and listen to that in which they do not believe, and which is to them almost blasphemy. Mr. Balfour knows what are the religious beliefs of the Catholics and the Jews. Is he prepared to say that any religious training that we can give in the State schools will satisfy them? The honorable member has spoken of "heathens," but is a man a "heathen" because his views do not exactly accord with those of the honorable member? Is the Almighty so unjust that He will condemn all those who do not believe in any particular dogma? I take it that religion consists in shielding one another's faults, and in trying to make every member of the community better. I do not believe in attempting to engraft upon our school system such a course of religious training as will bring about dissension, and throw us back at least a quarter of a century in our history. When the Bill, now the Act of 1872, was introduced there was no one who was a stronger supporter of it than myself. The arguments now used by Mr. Balfour have been used over and over again, and have been thrashed almost to death. The honorable member talks about the alarming example of Victoria. I say with pride that the example of Victoria is one of which the world may be proud. Instead of this being a "heathen" community, it is,

according to Mr. Hayter, one of the most religious communities in the world. Mr. Hayter tells us that there were in Victoria in 1887, 2,110 Sunday schools. The number of children attending the Sunday schools in 1886 was 141,781. In 1887 there was a falling off, but still they had the respectable total of 138,164. Do these figures lay us open to the reproach that has been hurled against us that we are a "heathen" community? They compare very favorably with the corresponding returns for the mother country, and they show that we are doing our duty with regard to our children. What will be the result of the amendment Mr. Balfour intends to move if it is carried? The Roman Catholics and the Jews will get a separate grant from the State.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—No.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL.—Then a great injustice will be done to them. If religious dogmas are taught in the State schools, we will be bound in honor to assist the Roman Catholics and the Jews in teaching to their children their own religious views. Is the honorable member prepared to do that? If not, can he bring forward a practical scheme of religious instruction which will be accepted by the leaders of all the religious bodies?

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—I have done that.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL.—The honorable member's scheme is this, that certain passages from Scripture, which the Roman Catholics say are garbled, shall be read in the State schools.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—The Roman Catholics have accepted those passages.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL.—No, they have taken up a negative position in the matter. They say, "It is quite immaterial to us what you do, we must teach our own children." What would the honorable member think if a large proportion of this community insisted upon opening the theatres, and engaging in all sorts of secular amusement on Sunday?

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—If they were a majority they could do it.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL.—We cannot introduce religious instruction. The honorable member proposes that there shall be such religious instruction imparted as will satisfy his own conscience, but it will not satisfy the conscience of a great majority in the colony. The State school system has been a great blessing to the colony. According to Mr. Hayter there are only 8,732 children in the colony who are not being educated, while 193,954 children receiving education, or a per centage of 95·62 per cent. And is not that a position of which we may be proud? Is the honorable member now, in his enthusiasm for a particular cause, going to introduce such discord and dissent into this community as will break down our Education Act. Many honorable members would do a great deal for the sake of bringing about unanimity among the religious bodies on this subject; but that cannot be achieved. Let our State school system be carried on as it has been hitherto for a few years longer, and probably some new experiences may suggest methods of overcoming the difficulties that at present surround this question. I will read again a statement I quoted from an article in the eighth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, when speaking on this subject in 1872. It is as follows:—

> "The first of these processes is adapted to the child, the second to the youth, the third to the human mind in its full maturity. To teach the catechism to a child is beginning at the wrong end, and holding up the truths of theology to him in their most abstract form, before the power of abstract thinking is at all consolidated. Religion must be inculcated first in the intentions and feelings, then it must occupy the memory and imagination, and lastly it must live in the understanding and the reason."

Until Mr. Balfour can introduce a system which will have these results, and which will be acceptable to all the religious bodies, he will not be justified in attempting to interfere with the Education Act. The Roman Catholics have established their own schools. Let the Protestants do the same and I will be one of the first to give them a handsome subscription towards the cost. Until they do that and show that the system they are fighting for is worth paying for, they are not entitled to any special consideration from us. On these grounds I shall support the Bill. I think the Government are to be complimented on the stand they made in the Assembly against the attempt that was made there to secure the introduction of religious instruction in the State schools, and to break down that grand Act of which we have so much reason to be proud.

On the motion of the Hon. W. H. ROBERTS, the debate was adjourned until the following day.

The House adjourned at ten minutes to ten o'clock.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, September 17, 1889.

Central Board of Health: Appointment of Inspector—Public Instruction: Classification of Junior Assistants—Local Government Act Amendment Bill—Railway Department: Station Buildings at Oakleigh: Duplication of Gippsland Railway to Berwick: Annual Report of Commissioners—Railway Accidents: Proposed Reserve Fund—Rabbit Extirpation—Personal Explanation: Mr. Nimmo—Want of Additional Magistrates—Fire Brigades—Fencing Law Amendment Bill—Supply: Inebriate Retreat: Police Superannuation Fund: Training Institution: Schools of Design: Mrs. Lucinda Parkinson—Revision of the Tariff: Manufactures of Metals: Portable Engines—Law of Evidence Amendment Bill.

The SPEAKER took the chair at half-past four o'clock p.m.

CENTRAL BOARD OF HEALTH.

Mr. CLARK asked the Chief Secretary the following questions:—

"1. If the cablegram to the effect that the Agent-General has recommended a suitable gentleman for the position of Inspector of the Central Board of Health, Victoria, is correct?

"2. If so, were inquiries made to ascertain if a qualified gentleman to fill the position resided in the colony before the Agent-General received instructions?"

Mr. DEAKIN stated that the Agent-General was asked to inquire whether the services of a suitable professional man of sanitary experience under the Local Government Board in England could be obtained for this colony, and he replied that the services of a gentleman of very high qualifications were available. Beyond this no steps had been taken in the matter. In view of the special qualifications of the gentleman recommended, he (Mr. Deakin) believed there was no one in the colony equally qualified for the position.

PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

Mr. ANDREWS asked the Minister of Public Instruction why junior assistants who signed the release had not yet been classified on the new roll of 24th August, 1889?

Dr. PEARSON remarked that the committee of classifiers and the Public Service Board had found some technical difficulty in classifying the teachers referred to. The Attorney-General intended to have a clause inserted in the Education Law Amendment Bill, which was now before the Legislative Council, that would have the effect of overcoming the difficulty.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. KEYS asked the Premier when he expected to introduce the Local Government Act Amendment Bill, and whether he would take the second reading, and then refer the Bill to a select committee of the Assembly?

Mr. GILLIES said he was not yet in a position to state when the Bill would be introduced. As to the second question, he had no doubt whatever that a select committee could very well determine some of the points in connexion with the Bill, but he was afraid there was one point they would find some difficulty in dealing with, and which he hardly thought it would be fair to ask them to settle—he referred to the distribution of the endowment. No doubt when the Bill was submitted the House would express its opinion, on the second reading, as to whether it was desirable to refer the measure to a select committee.

RAILWAY DEPARTMENT.

Mr. KEYS asked the Minister of Railways when the new station buildings at Oakleigh would be commenced?

Mr. GILLIES stated that no plans had yet been made for new station buildings at Oakleigh. He did not think that the erection of new buildings was contemplated immediately—certainly not this year, as certain alterations had to be made at the station, and these must first be carried out in accordance with the general design before new buildings could be set out.

Mr. KEYS inquired of the Minister of Railways whether, in view of the increasing traffic on the Gippsland line and the early opening of the Great Southern line, he would make provision for duplicating the line to Berwick?

Mr. GILLIES said it was proposed to duplicate the line as far as Dandenong, which, it was believed, would meet the circumstances of the case at present. When this was done, it would be seen whether the working of the traffic in the immediate future would require the duplication of the line as far as Berwick.

Mr. LAURENS asked the Minister of Railways if the report of the Railways Commissioners for the year ending 30th June, 1889, would contain separate statements of divisional revenue and expenditure, in accordance with the practice of former years?

Mr. GILLIES replied in the affirmative.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

Mr. LAURENS asked the Minister of Railways if, in view of the fact that, when large sums had to be paid for compensation by the Railway department to persons injured by accidents, there was no Accident Reserve Fund from which such compensation could be paid, he would bring in a Bill to authorize and direct the annual payment of 1 per cent. on the yearly gross railway revenue for the formation of such a reserve fund, as repeatedly recommended in the Railway Commissioners' annual report?

Mr. GILLIES observed that the matter had been under consideration for a considerable time, but he was not in a position to say whether the Government were prepared to accept the proposition of the honorable member. The subject was a very large and extensive one, and would require great consideration. As soon as the Government were in a position to intimate the leading lines on which a proposal should be based they would introduce a Bill dealing with the matter.

RABBIT EXTIRPATION.

Mr. LEVIEN asked the Minister of Agriculture what steps, if any, he proposed taking to ascertain the relative merits of the various schemes for destroying rabbits which had from time to time been brought under the notice of the department with the view of recommending the most deserving?

Mr. DOW said that some time ago the New South Wales Government appointed a commission to inquire into the extermination of rabbits and invited the other colonies to be represented on it. Victoria accepted the invitation, and had a representative on the commission. Some 1,400 schemes for the destruction of rabbits other than by disease, such as M. Pasteur's method, had been submitted to the commission, which had appointed a special committee to investigate them.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. NIMMO said he wished to make a personal explanation. In his remarks on the Police vote on Thursday night he took occasion to refer to the want of protection to the police, and it seemed that his observations had been misunderstood by the Prahran bench of magistrates. In reply to an interjection by the honorable member for Bourke West, he stated that in a case of assaulting the police at Prahran the prisoner was only fined a paltry 40s., but it appeared, from a communication he had received from the Prahran bench, that he was not aware of the whole of the facts at the time. If he had been he would not have spoken as he did. It seemed, from the newspaper report, that there were two prisoners, one, called William Hodgkinson, charged with using obscene language and assaulting Constable Kenneburgh, and the other, called Thomas Orchard, with inciting a prisoner to resist the police. The latter was fined 40s. or seven days, but Hodgkinson was not only fined in a similar sum for using obscene language, but was also sentenced to three months' imprisonment without the option of a fine for assaulting the constable. Dr. Fetherston, the chairman of the bench, remarked that Mr. Matthews, the landlord of the hotel, was to blame for not going to the constable's assistance, and also said that "if he had his will the term of imprisonment would be twelve months." In his (Mr. Nimmo's) remarks, he had not the slightest intention of reflecting on the Prahran magistrates, whom he recognised as a conscientious and painstaking body of men. If all magistrates acted as they had done there would be better protection for the police.

MAGISTRATES.

Mr. FOSTER asked the Chief Secretary whether he was aware that a man was recently found dead at Bonang, near the New South Wales border, and that owing to the want of a magistrate to hold an inquiry, the body was buried without any investigation?

Mr. DEAKIN stated that he was not aware of the fact. He would cause inquiries to be made into the matter.

FIRE BRIGADES.

Mr. ZOX said a number of his constituents had asked him to bring under the notice of the Government the absolute necessity which existed for some better management of the fire brigades of the colony, in order to secure the protection of life and property. The feeling of the people of Melbourne—and no doubt of the up-country towns also—was that immediate legislation on the subject was required, and he desired to ask the Chief Secretary what his intentions were in the matter?

Mr. DEAKIN stated that he quite concurred in the opinion that it was desirable that the question should be dealt with as soon as possible. He had just received

from the Law department the draft of a measure dealing with the fire brigades question, and he proposed to revise it at the earliest possible moment, with the view of introducing it in the House on the first opportunity.

FENCING LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

The SPEAKER informed the House that he received a communication from the Clerk, reporting that, in accordance with Standing Order No. 264A, he had made certain corrections in this Bill.

SUPPLY.

The House proceeded to consider the resolutions passed in Committee of Supply on September 12.

INEBRIATE RETREAT.

Mr. MUNRO said he desired to ask the Chief Secretary what he intended to do with regard to the Inebriate Retreat? The whole affairs of the institution were now in absolute confusion. There was no interest being paid on the money borrowed, and the trustees were likely to be sued for it. Nothing seemed to be done in the way of putting matters right.

Mr. DEAKIN said the Government were placed in a difficulty with regard to the Inebriate Retreat. He made a proposal which he had hoped would have been accepted—and of which he understood the honorable member himself approved—that would have provided a settlement of the question. The Government were now providing temporary accommodation for both male and female inebriates at a somewhat greater distance from Melbourne, but still within a convenient distance, and they intended shortly to erect a very commodious asylum for the accommodation, both of patients who could afford to pay, and of those who could not. Under these circumstances, the existing retreat would not be necessary, and the most advantageous step that could be taken with regard to it, would be either to devote the land to some other public purpose, or else to dispose of it to pay the debts of the institution. (Mr. Munro—"Who is to pay the interest now?") If some arrangement was made by which the Government could obtain the land for public purposes, he might be able to persuade the Treasurer to take some action in that respect. So far the Government had been unable to move, as there had not been the assent of all parties.

Mr. MUNRO expressed the hope that the Government would do something in the matter.

THE POLICE.

Mr. McINTYRE said he desired to draw the attention of the Chief Secretary to the fact that if a member of the police force died from natural causes without having sent in his resignation, no money could be paid from the superannuation fund to his family without a vote of the Assembly. The police contributed largely themselves to this fund, and it had been promised time after time—it was recommended by the Police Commission several years ago—that the present rule should be altered.

Mr. DEAKIN stated that a Bill was now in preparation dealing with the whole of the amendments required in the Police Regulation Statute.

PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

Lt.-Col. SMITH said he desired to draw the attention of the Minister of Public Instruction to the extraordinary way in which funds had been provided on the Estimates for the new Training Institution. The cost of the institution as it existed at the Model School was pretty well known, but it was now being removed to the University grounds, where some five acres of land had been appropriated to it, and it seemed to him that a most extravagant amount of money was being expended on the institution. He had ascertained from the department that the new institution was to cost £31,000, of which £15,000 was being provided on this year's Estimates, whereas, for the number of students now in training, or the number likely to be for many years to come, he ventured to say that an expenditure of £4,000 or £5,000 on the Model School buildings would have been amply sufficient. He was informed that there were only 40 students—10 male and 30 female—and the unfortunate thing was that the number of male students seemed to be decreasing every year. These 40 students were being taught at a cost of £7,000 or £8,000 a year to the State, and it really seemed as if the new institution was being designed for the benefit of the gentleman who had charge of the students. There were several items on the Estimates in connexion with this institution. He found that the superintendent received a salary of £700 a year, and in addition to that he was to get £100 a year for acting as director of the educational library and museum.

The University museum was close by, and he (Lt.-Col. Smith) did not see the necessity for duplicating such institutions. Again, there was £3,400 put down for boarding out these 40 students. He was informed that a portion of the institution was being turned into a residence for the superintendent, and that he had applied for the State to afford accommodation for the students on the premises, so that he would get this £3,400. Then there were the salaries of the vice-principal and the teaching staff—in fact, a new department was being created which was not required. The students, cost something like £200 a year each, and he was told that many of the male students, as soon as they had gone through the course, cleared out to the adjoining colonies. He certainly thought the Minister was being drawn into an extravagant expenditure—no doubt on the recommendations of the superintendent—from which there were no adequate results to show.

Mr. RICHARDSON drew attention to the absence of any provision for technical teaching in the country schools. The schools of mines were well provided for, and he thought that provision should be made for special technical instruction in country towns where there were no schools of mines. The schools of design had been of great value, many men who had since made their mark having received their first instruction there. The present art inspector, however, had condemned the course of instruction given in those schools, and was inclined to practical geometrical drawing, and some scheme should be adopted by the Education department which would, at any rate, give an equivalent to the children of country towns for the instruction which was being taken away from them. Such towns as Creswick, Clunes, and Allendale had large schools, and no provision was made for the technical instruction of the children attending them. It was at the school of design at Clunes that Mr. Longstaff, an artist who was now studying in Europe, and who was likely to do credit to the colony, obtained his first lessons in drawing. He (Mr. Richardson) trusted that in any change the art inspector was proposing, the schools in country towns would not be overlooked.

Mr. McINTYRE said he desired to remind the Minister of Public Instruction of the case of Mrs. Lucinda Parkinson, whose health had broken down after 30 years' service in the department. He hoped the Minister would see that justice was done in her case.

Dr. MALONEY stated that the total amount of fees received by the University of Melbourne last year was £12,817 14s. 6d. He looked upon these fees as a bar against the poorer class of the community, the removal of which would cause a thorough nationalization of the education system. Considering the paltry proportion which £12,000 bore to the total expenditure on education, which was estimated at £730,000 for the present financial year, he did not see why, in justice to the rising generation, education should not be made free from the bottom right up to the top.

Dr. PEARSON said he was surprised to hear the honorable member for Ballarat West (Lt.-Col. Smith) object to the policy of removing the Training College to the University, because in 1878 the honorable member himself attempted to do that precise thing. (Lt.-Col. Smith—"No; that was the Model School.") The Training College at that time was connected with the Model School. As a matter of fact, however, the State actually gained by the change which had been made. The department was giving up one of the most splendid sites in Melbourne, the value of which it would be difficult to exaggerate, and in exchange the Government were resuming land that was practically lost to the State in the University grounds. They were building a college—no doubt at an expense of £20,000 or £25,000—but that college would be something more than the old Training Institution was. It would not only serve the invaluable purpose of keeping the young men and the young ladies in training under the eye of the college authorities instead of their being scattered about a great town without proper surveillance, but it would also afford them the advantages of University students, enabling them to attend the University lectures and the University Museum. Moreover, as the general idea was to make the State school the portal of the University, it was desirable, in order to popularize the University as much as possible, that the State school teachers should be made actual working members of it. It was also intended to provide a common meeting place for the different teachers' associations, where conferences might be held on subjects connected with teaching. Not only this, but preparations were being made for establishing what did not exist in Victoria, nor, he believed, in any part of Australia, namely, a great educational library. The idea had already received the highest commendation

in the French *Journal of Education*, from M. Buisson, who attended the Centennial Exhibition last year as the representative of the French Government. The honorable member for Ballarat West went on to say that the expenses were being increased inordinately—that the superintendent received £700 a year, and was also to get £100 a year as director of the educational library and museum, and that he was to have rooms in the college. All that was perfectly true, but he would remind the honorable member that when he himself was Minister of Public Instruction in 1878, the superintendent of the Training Institution received a salary of £867 and £140 in addition as an allowance for house rent. Where then was the ground for the honorable member's objection? He also complained of the expenditure of nearly £200 per head per student, but no such sum was thought of. He (Dr. Pearson) had not the regulations at hand, but, as a matter of fact, the sum per head had not been materially changed since the honorable member's time. The amount was about £60 per head, with allowances for board, amounting on the whole to £3,400, which sum, or one like it, the honorable member would surely recollect, had appeared on the Estimates year after year. This sum included not only the cost of boarding the students at the Training College, but also those at the affiliated schools. Taking everything together, it would be seen that the Training College was doing good work, and doing it cheaply. It was training up pupils who were not leaving the colony, after they were trained, to any appreciable extent. On the contrary, the colony was gradually winning back its trainees instead of parting with them, which it was no doubt doing at one time. The honorable member for Creswick referred to the necessity of encouraging the country schools of design. Well, in this respect, the department were carrying out the recommendations of Mr. Simpson, the gentleman who came out from England to inspect the schools of design of the colony. Most of those recommendations related to mere matters of detail. For instance, he advised that certain additional appliances should be procured, and those appliances had been ordered. He also urged that in all future schools of design there should be a separate room with a specially arranged light, and that arrangement would be made. His chief recommendation was, however, that the ordinary teachers of the Education department should teach drawing, he being of opinion that by that means better results in drawing would be obtained, on account of the better attendance and better discipline the teachers could enforce. Consequently, steps were being taken to train future teachers to teach drawing, the services of the present drawing masters being retained as inspectors. With respect to the country schools of design, taking them by themselves, he would mention that a few days since he had a conversation with some of the members of the committee of the Technological Commission in regard to a plan then under their consideration for reducing the number of schools in the metropolitan area, in order that a larger portion of the grant might be allotted to the inland districts. As to the case of Mrs. Parkinson, which had been brought up by the honorable member for Maldon, of course the department had to discriminate between the cases of teachers who lost their health through the fault of the department, and cases where the loss was due to some wholly different cause. (Mr. McIntyre—"Mrs. Parkinson was in the department for 30 years.") That circumstance would receive due consideration. The desire expressed by the honorable member for Melbourne West had his (Dr. Pearson's) cordial sympathy, but the proposed change, namely, the abolition of University fees, was a matter of great importance, and could not be hurriedly entered upon. In fact, it was a new departure in regard to which public opinion had to be educated. In the meantime he would take care that the fees were not increased in any way.

Mr. KIRTON thought that when his honorable colleague in the representation of Ballarat West dealt with matters connected with the administration of the Education department, he spoke with such authority as an old administrator of the department that his observations were entitled to very careful consideration. Indeed, there were, in connexion with this branch of the public service, a number of matters which needed looking into. For instance, while he (Mr. Kirton) found it proposed to increase the salaries of some of the more highly paid officers, he looked in vain for any similar proposal on behalf of the men who did the really hard work of the department. On the contrary, he noticed that it was an axiom in this, as it was in other Government departments, that the hardest workers should receive the least remuneration. He had also fault to find with the appointment of inspectors. In his opinion, consideration should be given, not only to educational attainments,

but also to knowledge of the work to be done. There were teachers of 20 or 30 years' experience who would make most efficient inspectors, but their claims for promotion had been altogether overlooked, and they had to submit their schools to the inspection of young men, who had been placed over their heads for no better reason apparently than that they had taken the degree of B.A. In one case a young teacher left the department to attend the University, and when he had got his degree the Minister of Public Instruction immediately took him on again, and shortly afterwards gave him an appointment as inspector. Arrangements of this character were anomalies which should be rectified, if not by the Minister by the House. He (Mr. Kirton) regarded it as also very anomalous that £10,000 should be set down for the Working Men's College —an increase of £5,000 on last year's grant — while the Sandhurst School of Mines, which was, like the Ballarat School of Mines, a magnificent educational institution, was only to receive £3,000. The grants to both establishments ought to be greatly augmented, for they were doing a large amount of most useful work. He regretted that his honorable colleague did not move for a reduction of some of the higher salaries of the Education department. Unquestionably a time was fast coming when very strong steps would have to be taken in that direction.

The resolutions were adopted.

REVISION OF THE TARIFF.

The House went into committee of the whole for the further consideration of the proposals submitted by the Treasurer for the revision of the Tariff.

On the question that the following resolution be adopted:—

"Metals, manufactures of, and machinery, not otherwise enumerated, on and after 18th September, 1889, 35 per cent. *ad valorem*.

H rolled girder and channel iron	On and after 18th September, 1889, per ton, 60s.
Castings, viz. :—	
Cylinders (hydraulic)... ...	
Pipes, and connexions for same	
Plates (tank)	
Bars (fire)	
Weights (sash)...	

Lamps, lampware, and lanterns, on and after 18th September, 1889, 25 per cent. *ad valorem*."

Mr. PATTERSON stated that this was the form of resolution which he had substituted for the one previously submitted by the Government. In asking honorable members to consider the new proposals, he begged to point out that they did not materially differ from the old ones except as to rate. There was, however, a substantial change in the definition and classification of the dutiable articles. It had been pressed upon him by the iron-masters that they were particularly anxious that the Tariff should, in their respect, be so framed that everybody should pay alike, and they were afraid that sufficient care had not been taken as to exemptions. On the other hand, the iron manufacturers were extremely alive to the devices which they thought might be resorted to in order to elude the duties, and on this ground they asked for the adoption of a broad definition which should cover everything that had to be covered—everything that was not specially exempted. For these reasons the comprehensive term "Metals, manufactures of, and machinery, not otherwise enumerated," was now relied upon rather than the original form of the intended new duties. This plan having been laid down, it became a work of considerable labour to examine the list of exemptions, the number of which was necessarily large. Moreover, some of the definitions involved a great deal more than appeared at first sight. Thus "Tools of trade" included hundreds of articles, as also did "Brassfoundry used in the manufacture of furniture," and so on. Nevertheless he believed that, with the aid of experts, the Customs department had been enabled to make it sufficiently clear which articles it was intended to protect, and which were to be let in free. It should be borne in mind that many of the items on the free list represented manufactures which were in reality the raw material of some local industry. Plentiful precautions had to be taken in this direction. The labour question having been disposed of, that of the rates of duty had to be taken up. This was naturally a most important point, for the iron masters were very impressive as to the disadvantages under which they laboured, the high rate of interest on capital, the high rates of wages, and the cost of importing their raw material. In the opinion of the Government they made out a very good case. In the first place, it was essential to the country that the ironwork required in connexion with the railways, buildings, and other works of the colony should be provided on the spot. Indeed it was not possible for Victoria to maintain its position among the other colonies unless very distinct encouragement was given to the iron

industry, which was as important as the agricultural or any other interest in the country. In fact, under the heads of hardware, software, and agriculture, the leading interests of the colony might be said to be grouped. Well, with respect to hardware, the colony had already made a great advance. No one could go through the iron workshops of the metropolis without being struck with the nature of the work done there—without becoming conscious that it represented, to a large extent, the stamina of the community. Probably coal in sufficient quantities would soon be developed within the colony, and then no real reason would exist why Melbourne, with its large population, and good industrial start, should not become the combined Birmingham and Sheffield of the Southern hemisphere. Therefore, the Government felt that they could not be too careful in connexion with their present proposals. They also considered that a sufficiently good case was made out for the encouragement of the metal industry by a comprehensive duty of 35 per cent., an even higher rate being imposed on certain special articles. In short, Ministers recognised a wide difference between other industries and the iron industry, which they regarded as possessing peculiar claims to encouragement.

Mr. WOODS said he was glad to hear from the Minister of Customs that he had taken this new step with regard to the iron trade. Certainly the honorable gentleman had not over-rated the importance of that trade, because upon its ability to meet the requirements of the colony a very great deal depended. He (Mr. Woods) had himself been connected with the iron industry, and he took deep interest in the subject. Altogether the Government were to be congratulated on their present proposals. But he would like to have a few matters explained. For example, would there be protection with respect to rolled iron girders? Again, there were a number of articles in the exemption list which were imported in a half-manufactured state, and he was anxious as to whether precautions would be adopted to reduce to the minimum the extent of the work done with respect to them before they were imported. Take the case of bolts, which were manufactured from iron bars imported in lengths. Those bars were raw material, and they should not be allowed to come in almost quite ready for use. Contractors, who knew beforehand the exact lengths they would require, often managed to take great advantages in this direction. Now, if the work of preparing bars for the particular purposes for which they were intended was not done in the colony the Customs duty would be evaded.

Mr. PATTERSON admitted that the point was a very important one, but he thought it was met, in the list of exemptions, by the use, in connexion with bar, rod, plate, and sheet iron, of the term "in the rough." The iron must be absolutely plain and unmanufactured.

Mr. WOODS contended that bar iron cut into lengths by a shearing machine should be looked upon as manufactured iron. If it was not, all that would have to be done in the colony in order to turn the article into bolts would be fitting the lengths with heads and nuts. A similar rule applied to T and angle iron. It was to be hoped there would be no misunderstanding.

Mr. PATTERSON stated that he would make a note of the point.

Mr. WOODS remarked that he would also draw attention to the exemption item, "Tools of trade not being machinery." That was all right, but what were "tools of trade"? For instance, ratchet-drills were tools of trade, but they were also machines, so were rock-drills, hand-drills, hand shaping-machines, screw-jacks, and screwing-tackle. He did not know that screwing-tackle had ever been made in the colony, but it was quite possible to make it. It was important that there should be no confusion on this head.

Mr. PATTERSON stated that he would obtain a list of the articles coming under the heads the honorable member had referred to, and consider what it would be best to do with regard to them.

Lt.-Col. SMITH said he had been asked by the Ballarat Trades and Labour Council to draw the attention of the Government to the system adopted by the Melbourne Harbour Trust of importing the iron-work required by them although it could easily be manufactured in the colony. For instance, the trust had recently decided to import dredge-buckets, which could be readily supplied by local manufacturers. Surely it was time steps were taken to compel the trust to conform to the settled policy of the country. Then how far would the Minister of Customs' proposals in respect to duties on metal manufactures comply with the views of the Victorian Ironmasters' Association? According to a circular which had been supplied to him (Lt.-Col. Smith) they desired the imposition of the following duties:—

"Metals, manufactures of, and machinery—not otherwise enumerated, and including hydraulic lifts, 35 per cent. *ad valorem.* Castings, viz.:—Bars, fire; cylinders, hydraulic; pipes, and connexions for same; plates, tank; weights, sash; H. rolled girder and channel iron, 60s. per ton. Machinery.—Gas engines, portable engines, machinery for generating cold and parts of same; machinery, dry air for refrigerating, 25 per cent. *ad valorem.*"

Another item he wished the Minister of Customs to take notice of was that of traction engines, for he was informed that if these were to come in free a multitude of other engines could be imported as traction engines. There were scores of engines which could be put on wheels and called traction engines. Thus a great door would be open to evasion. It was to be hoped the Government would reconsider their determination to include such engines in the list of exemptions.

Mr. ANDERSON remarked that a change had come over the spirit of the Minister of Customs' dream with reference to the exemptions, at all events those referring to agricultural machinery. For a considerable number of years, portable engines for driving thrashing machines had been liable to a duty of 25 per cent. The manufacture of these engines in the colony had been twice attempted, and had signally failed. (Mr. Munro—"No.") He spoke from his own knowledge. Why did the leader of the Opposition deny the statement? (Mr. Munro—"Because one of my constituents makes portable engines.") In every case the attempt to manufacture portable engines in the colony had been a signal failure, and he was very sorry for it. Honorable members were often told that a protective duty reduced the price of an article, but its effect in the case of portable engines was to increase the price of every engine by at least £60. Was it just to impose such a tax on engines used in the agricultural industry? He had hoped that the Minister had come to his right mind when he announced that portable engines would be exempted from duty, but by a very subtle amendment the honorable gentleman had not only placed them on the list of dutiable imports, but proposed to increase the duty from 25 per cent. to 35 per cent. It was impossible to understand why traction engines should be put in the exempt list, and a duty of 35 per cent. charged on portable engines, because if the one kind of engines could be manufactured in the colony so could the other. The demand for portable engines was limited, as one engine could serve for a large number of farmers, and the plant required for their manufacture being costly, it was not likely that local firms would go to the expense of obtaining it. At the proper time he would move that portable engines be included in the list of exemptions.

Mr. MUNRO said he desired to correct the honorable member for Villiers. The mayor of Geelong, Mr. Humble, of the firm of Humble and Nicholson, had sent him a letter, in which he stated that the making of portable engines had been a branch of their work for the last seven years. The firm were prepared to make portable engines better and cheaper than those imported, as the honorable member would find if he gave them an order. They had made one to his order, and it was in use now. (Mr. Anderson—"Was it a horizontal or a vertical engine?") They would make either. If people insisted on buying imported engines they had to pay duty, and they ought to be made to pay.

Mr. PATTERSON observed that the proposal before the committee must be read in the light of the list of exemptions which were to be dealt with subsequently. From all that he could learn there was no difference between the manufacture of a portable engine and any other kind of engine. (An Honorable Member—"There is a great deal of difference.") Portable engines could and would be made here. (Mr. W. T. Carter—"They are made here.") The manufacturers were indifferent with regard to a duty on traction engines; they cared nothing whatever about it, and therefore it was proposed to put traction engines in the list of exemptions. On the other hand, he was told by a large gathering of representatives of the country party that it would be no benefit to the farmers to exempt portable engines from duty, as one portable engine would serve 20 or 30 farmers. Consequently portable engines were restored to the dutiable list because they were made in the colony—he knew of one having been made at Castlemaine—and because their exemption would be somewhat inconsistent with the protective system of the colony.

Mr. RUSSELL stated that the Ballarat works could make portable engines if they had the opportunity. There was no substantial difference between a portable engine and a locomotive, except the cylinder. If no duty was imposed cheap engines would be sent here to the detriment of the trade. The Government could not do a better thing than foster the iron industry,

because, if it prospered, the whole colony would prosper. He had known property in a district in the old country rise 50 per cent. by the establishment of a foundry. While on this subject, it would be well for the committee to consider the attitude of the Melbourne Harbour Trust towards the iron trade of the colony. The trust had called for tenders in England for 50 steel-link dredge buckets, which could be made in the colony as well as they could be made at home. As the Harbour Trust was largely supported by the whole colony, the policy of the trust should be in accord with the policy of the country.

Mr. C. YOUNG remarked that it was a most extraordinary thing to require a duty of 35 per cent. on portable engines, which, according to the leader of the Opposition, could be made better and cheaper in Geelong than they could be imported. The honorable member said he had bought a Geelong engine cheaper and better than he could have got an imported engine; but if so, surely it was absurd to ask for a duty of 35 per cent. (Mr. Munro—"No; that's protection.") If there was any man sufficiently idiotic to pay 35 per cent. more for a worse engine merely because it was imported, he ought to be put into one of those lunatic asylums that were going to be built all over the country. But he ventured to say that the statement was absolutely untrue, because he knew of his own knowledge that a portable engine could be bought at from £20 to £30 and even £40 cheaper on the other side of the Murray than it could be purchased in Victoria. Portable engines might be made in the colony as good as the imported engines, but they could not be made to sell at a price which any one would give. The Minister of Customs was perfectly correct in saying that a portable engine had been made at Castlemaine. It was made by the Messrs. Thompson, and it did their enterprise every credit; but they knew perfectly well that they could not attempt to make an engine at a price that would at all compare with the price of the imported engine even with this 35 per cent. duty added. It was clear to his mind that the farmers had no chance of fair play. Sitting upon the farmers appeared to be regarded as a good game; but he wondered very much that some of the mining members did not interest themselves in regard to the proposed duty of 35 per cent. on portable engines, because numbers of these engines were used in the mining industry, especially in testing new claims, as they could be easily removed if the mine did not prove a success. The proposed duty would therefore be a very severe tax on the mining industy. However, he would leave the mining members to look after themselves. Certainly the duty would be a gross injustice to the farming community, because portable engines received a great deal of knocking about, and only lasted for a very few years. The position taken up by the Minister of Customs with regard to this matter was very extraordinary. At one time he proposed to take off the existing duty of 25 per cent.; but the Manufacturers' Association got hold of hold of him, and instead of abolishing the duty he now turned completely round and proposed to put on 10 per cent. more. One of two things was certain. Either the Minister of Customs was very much wrong now or he was very much wrong before. In his opinion, the honorable gentleman was right before and was going altogether wrong now. It was proposed to put a duty of £3 per ton upon all iron pipes. Well, that would be a very serious tax upon the water trusts throughout the country districts, who used a very large amount of iron pipes. When a duty of £2 per ton was imposed upon iron pipes honorable members were told that it would enable the local manufacturers to drive the imported article out of the market and afford a very large amount of employment for our own people. But what were the facts? The foundries absolutely could not fulfil their contracts to supply the quantities required, and in one case a water trust, after waiting four, five, or six months beyond the contract time, had, after all, to cancel the contract, and get the pipes from home. In such a state of affairs it was most monstrous to propose a duty of £3 per ton on cast-iron pipes. Considering the heavy charges for freight, insurance, wharfage, &c., together with losses from breakage, a duty of £2 a ton was more than sufficient. The honorable member for Stawell objected to persons being allowed to import bar iron or rolled iron in any lengths they chose. (Mr. Woods—"I did not object to iron from the rolls, but to bar iron being cut into lengths.") If it was cut at all it must be cut into lengths. (Mr. Woods—"I object to its being cut the length required in the colony; it should be cut here.") Well, things had come to a sorry pass in Victoria if the working men had to get their living by cutting up bars of iron. If the workmen of the colony depended for their livelihood on the wages they would earn by cutting

up bars of iron, the sooner they threw up the sponge the better. Surely a man might be allowed to specify the length he required in ordering bars of iron. If he wanted a bar 10 feet in length, was he to be compelled to order it 16 feet, merely that it might be cut in the colony, and was the other 6 feet to go to waste? If the request of the honorable member for Stawell was going to be complied with, he sincerely hoped that the Minister of Customs would come down with an amending Tariff, putting 150 per cent. duty on every article used in the colony, because by that means people would, perhaps, be brought to their senses.

Mr. KIRTON said he was sorry that the discussion had got into the old groove of artisans *versus* farmers. Some honorable members representing agricultural constituencies seemed to forget that the interests of the farmer and the interests of the mechanic were identical, mutual and interdependent. He would remind them that some of the farmers in the Ballarat district sent their sons to the Ballarat manufactories and foundries to acquire a knowledge of a good practical trade. He was glad his colleague had introduced the question. The Ballarat Trades and Labour Council had asked him to do his best in the matter. Not only in their particular interests, but also because he believed the whole question of protection was involved, he would support the action of his colleague. Despite all statements to the contrary, he must assert that portable and traction engines could be made in the colony. They had been made here, and the head of one of the largest establishments in Ballarat assured him that his firm could make both traction and portable engines. (Mr. Shackell—"But they don't make them.") He preferred to take the word of the gentleman who had furnished him with the information, and whose firm had been engaged in the manufacture of both classes of engines for a considerable time. Even if those engines could not be made here now, the duty ought to be imposed, in order to encourage the local manufacturers to make them. There was a time when locomotives were not made in the colony, but by increasing the duty to such an extent as to prevent importations, Parliament established and fostered a large and successful industry, which was carried on by such firms as the Phœnix Foundry at Ballarat, and Messrs. Campbell, Sloss, and Co., of Melbourne. He trusted that the farmers' representatives would show a little reason in the matter, and that the committee would act in the interests of the mechanics and artisans of the colony.

Mr. TRENWITH remarked that the honorable member for Kyneton had asked why a duty of 35 per cent. should be imposed if it were true, as stated by the leader of the Opposition, that portable engines of colonial make were better and cheaper than those imported. If portable engines could be made better and cheaper here, said the honorable member, why the duty? That involved the whole question of protection *versus* free trade. The reason for a duty on portable engines was very obvious. Of course it was well known that portable engines could not be made here for sale at a price lower than the imported portable engines could be sold at; but they could be made and sold here at a lower price than the imported engines had been and still were sold at. The making of portable engines in the colony would reduce the profits of the middlemen, and render them cheaper than they would otherwise be. The middlemen took the lion's share of the profits on imported articles. The Minister of Customs had told the committee that imported hats, which were sold here at from 27s. 6d. to 30s. before the hat manufacturing industry was established in the colony, were invoiced at 8s. A duty of £3 per ton was put on wire nails, and factories were established here, with the result that imported 2½ inch wire nails, which used to be sold in the colony at £18 to £20 per ton, were now sold at £16 5s., after paying a duty of £5 per ton. As to the probable influence of a duty of 35 per cent. on portable engines upon the agricultural industry, he did not believe that the farmers cared very much about it. In the minds of a very few farmers there was a natural feeling of indignation and resentment because they had not been able to get what they conceived to be just protection to themselves; but in the main the farmers were protectionists, and recognised that by advancing the interests of the artisans in the towns they were provided with better customers for their products. The articles produced in the colony as the result of the protective system were better suited to their purpose, and in many instances cheaper. They liked to have a good and cheap article, and therefore they preferred to have things that were produced in the colony. The farmers would gain another great advantage by the local manufacture of portable and traction engines. If there were manufactories

here it would be very much easier to obtain duplicate parts and get repairs done, which was an important consideration, as everybody knew who had had anything to do with machinery. Valuable machines had often to be put aside because of the difficulty, and, in some instances, the impossibility of obtaining duplicates of parts that were broken. There was really no argument against the proposed increase of the duty, but every possible argument in favour of it. German-made bedsteads were now sold in the colony 50 per cent. cheaper than the price charged before bedsteads were manufactured here, and colonial-made bedsteads of far better quality were now sold at a lower price than the inferior German article used to be sold at, prior to the establishment of the industry in Victoria. It was the same with many of the tools of trade. A shoemaker's heel-shaver, a sort of iron spokeshave, could be bought here at 3s., 3s. 3d., or 3s. 6d., whereas in free-trade Sydney for the same article, from the same maker, a shoemaker had to pay 4s., 4s. 3d., and 4s. 6d., or 1s. more. A substantial duty which could enable the local manufactories to make portable engines in competition with the cheap labour of other parts of the world, would bring down the price of the article to the purchasers, because they would no longer have to carry the middlemen on their backs. He heartily supported the proposals of the Government with reference to the increase of the duty on metals, believing they they would materially advance the manufacturing interests of the colony.

Mr. LANGRIDGE said he thought the committee might come to a conclusion on the item without entering into a general discussion on protection *versus* free-trade. The Government had consulted the various interests affected, and their proposals were the outcome of careful deliberation. He could bear out the statements of the leader of the Opposition with regard to the manufacture of portable engines at Geelong, and he thought the Government were going the right way to develop the iudustry.

Mr. W. T. CARTER asked if the Minister of Customs intended to give effect to a suggestion that the ironwork of vessels of 50 horse-power nominal made in other colonies to trade in Victorian waters should be taxed?

Mr. PATTERSON stated that all manufactured metals and machinery, not otherwise enumerated, would be taxed to the extent of 35 per cent., if the item under consideration were agreed to.

Mr. LAURENS said that the Minister of Customs had done right in proposing the imposition of a duty on portable engines. It had been stated that only the farmers used portable engines. (Mr. Anderson—"No.") He was glad to hear the honorable member say that, because the farmers were certainly not the only persons who were interested in this question. An honorable member had informed him that about 30 portable engines were used in his district, chiefly for cutting firewood. The firewood was sent to the Melbourne market, and if the proposed duty increased the price of the engines, the increase would fall upon the people of Melbourne, who were the consumers. He had also been told on good authority that very few of the farmers had purchased portable engines. In the Goulburn Valley persons who had portable engines travelled about and did work for the farmers. The honorable member for Villiers said that these engines could not be manufactured in the colony, but that statement had been made concerning many articles on which duties had been imposed, and which had afterwards been manufactured here.

Mr. McCOLL remarked that when the Minister of Customs introduced his Tariff he laid down the fair principle that only such duties should be imposed as would maintain a reasonable amount of competition between locally made and imported articles; but the honorable gentleman had since departed widely from that principle. In fact, he could scarcely have considered the Tariff proposals before they were introduced at all, and he had allowed the most extraordinary changes to be made in them. Portable engines were placed in the free list, and now, without warning, it was proposed to place a duty of 35 per cent. upon them. Although there had been a duty imposed on portable engines for the last 20 years, they had never been manufactured in the colony. He challenged any honorable member to go into any iron works in Melbourne, and point out a portable engine that was of colonial manufacture. (Mr. Munro—"Go to Geelong and you will find them.") The honorable member might travel from Melbourne to the Murray, and he would not find a single portable engine of colonial manufacture. The machine makers did not care to try to establish the manufacture of portable engines. Although there had been a duty of 25 per cent. on them for so long, no advantage had been taken of it, for there

was only one portable engine of colonial manufacture in the Centennial International Exhibition. The duty of 25 per cent. amounted to £75 on each engine, and if the extra duty of 10 per cent. were imposed, it would amount to about £105 on each engine. These engines were used largely by saw-millers, farmers, and especially in works of irrigation, and the increased duty would be an additional burthen on those classes. If the duty were not struck out altogether, it should at any rate be left at the original rate. The duty of 35 per cent. *ad valorem* was to be imposed on "metals, manufactures of, and machinery not otherwise enumerated." That meant that an extra duty of 10 per cent. would have to be paid on every machine used in the country districts. The iron trade might very properly have been divided into sections. There was a section of the trade that had done extremely well, and that had run the imported goods out of the market. There were other sections of the trade that were struggling, and the Minister of Customs should have exercised some discrimination and have given assistance to those who required it. There was no class of the community who had larger business establishments and who were more prosperous than the agricultural implement makers, and yet it was proposed to give them an extra duty of 10 per cent., which would enable them to raise their prices. Then it was proposed to levy an increased duty on pipes. These pipes were largely used, and would be still more largely used by the water trusts, and the impost was a most unfair one. The honorable member for Ballarat West (Mr. Kirton) said honorable members seemed to forget that the farming and the artisan classes were dependent upon each other. A statement that was published in the *Government Gazette* a few weeks ago showed that the machine-makers of New South Wales had larger establishments, more horse-power, and more money invested than the machine-makers of Victoria, and yet they had not been assisted by the imposition of any high duties. (Mr. Patterson—"Do you believe that statement?") It was published in the *Government Gazette*. (Mr. Patterson—"It is absurd.") He confessed it fairly staggered him when he saw it. He was under the impression that this colony held the proud position of being first in all these matters. The proposals of the Minister of Customs were very unfair, and he believed that the result of them would be to cause a revulsion of feeling which would lead to a demand being made for reductions rather than increases of duty.

Mr. W. T. CARTER stated that the question he asked previously had apparently been misunderstood. There were a number of small steamers which were made in the other colonies trading in Victorian waters. They were not intercolonial steamers, but traded principally in the Gippsland Lakes, Western Port, and Hobson's Bay. Similar steamers could be, and had been, made in the colony. The steamers to which he had referred were imported; their engines were used here and entered into competition with the locally made engines just as portable engines did, and yet under the present Tariff no duty was imposed upon them. The firms that built steamers of this class thought that they should be protected, and what he desired to ask the Minister of Customs was whether the Tariff could not be altered in some way, or a regulation framed which would make the engines and boilers of steamers built in the other colonies and trading exclusively in Victorian waters liable to a duty?

Mr. NIMMO observed that the pipes which were imported were made horizontally, and would not stand as much pressure as the pipes manufactured in the colony, which were made vertically. Besides the latter were made under local supervision, which was an important advantage. The same remark held good to a large extent with reference to engines. The engines made in England, France, Germany, or Belgium had to be shipped to the colony, they were subject to the oscillation of the vessel which carried them, and they were not as good when they arrived by 50 per cent. as the engines made here. The workmen of England could make as fine engines as could be made in any part of the world, but the engines made here were as good for all practical purposes as the engines made in England, and would stand much longer wear. Take, for instance, the locomotives made in Ballarat. (Mr. Woods—"Or the tramway engines.") Yes. About five years ago a return was obtained giving a comparison between the locally made and imported locomotives. It showed that the former consumed less fuel, were more steady in motion, and generally superior to the latter. The imported engines were well made, but the locally made engines were constructed on the rails, and were not subjected to the wear and tear of packing, shipping, and unpacking. The Minister of Customs had acted wisely in proposing a duty on portable

engines, as the effect of it would be to encourage the engineers of the colony to make them, and an important industry would be established.

Mr. TAVERNER stated that he must express his surprise at the action of the Government with reference to portable engines. When the Tariff proposals were brought down portable engines were free, and now, without the slightest justification for the change, the committee were asked to impose a duty of 35 per cent. upon them. That was manifestly unfair, and the farmers' representatives strongly objected to it. They were quite prepared to agree to a reasonable duty on portable engines, but they could not close their eyes to the fact that the farmers did not and would not use the locally made engines. If a return were called for it would be found that there were not ten portable engines in use that had been made in the colony. If honorable members would refer to the *Victorian Year-Book* they would find that the farming community had paid about £30,000 in the purchase of portable engines, which were largely used in connexion with irrigation, thrashing, and saw-milling. The farmers had up to the present time been paying a duty of about £60 on each engine. If an engine suitable for the requirements of the farmers could not be made in the colony, it was obviously unfair to impose this increased duty, and it would be wise on the part of the Government, if they were determined to take portable engines out of the free list, to make the duty not more than about 12½ per cent.

Mr. T. SMITH said he had hoped that the proposals before the committee would have been passed with very little discussion. He thought the Government were to be congratulated on having taken notice of the remarks that were made by honorable members during the Budget debate, and having made certain alterations to meet them. If they had not done so it would have been said that they were a free-trade Ministry; but now the complaint was made that they were pushing protection too far. (Mr. Munro —"We do not complain.") He (Mr. Smith) did not complain; but other honorable members had complained because the Government proposed to assist certain industries that deserved assistance. (Mr. McColl— "And others that do not.") It had not yet been pointed out which were the undeserving trades that would be benefited by these proposals. The Government were to be commended for the trouble they had taken to obtain information with regard to these particular proposals from the people who were most interested in them, and who ought to know what was required. The Minister of Customs had consulted the employers and the employed, and these proposals met with the approbation of both. The metropolitan members had been twitted with being very anxious about their own interests. But these duties affected the manufacturers of not only Melbourne, but of Ballarat, Sandhurst, Geelong, Maryborough, Castlemaine, and other places, and they should therefore receive the support of the representatives of the country districts. It was now admitted that portable engines were made in the colony. At any rate he was in a position to inform honorable members that portable engines had been made in a small place called Sandhurst. (Mr. McColl—"No, not one.") Mr. Joel Horwood had manufactured a portable engine in Sandhurst, and he knew a gentleman who had used it for seven years. (Mr. Burrowes—"It must have been an imported engine.") No, it was made in Sandhurst. But whether that were so or not, he knew that portable engines had been made in the colony; and if a little more encouragement were given to the trade more would be made here. That, however, was not the reason why the duty was asked for. If portable engines were admitted free, many other descriptions of engines used for agricultural purposes would be admitted free also. The duty covered a large amount of ground, and was really necessary. The other duties would prevent machinery in parts coming in free. He had received a letter from a manufacturer, in which it was stated that the term "raw material" in the iron trade received such a general and comprehensive definition that it was impossible to draw the line short of the thorough completion of any article. Articles had been admitted duty free which simply wanted a few holes drilling in them to make them complete; and these anomalies would be rectified if the proposals now before the committee were agreed to. He did not think that the Government would be in a hurry to make any further alterations in the Tariff. That was an extremely difficult task. If the Government had tried to please everybody they had, at any rate, not been like the old man and his donkey, who pleased nobody.

Mr. ZOX remarked that in framing their Tariff proposals the Government had not consulted the interests of the general public, but had simply endeavoured to reconcile

the interests of the importers and the manufacturers. In many instances the Government had been successful in their efforts, although they had failed to give satisfaction to some honorable members. With regard to portable engines, the committee and the country might be left to form their own conclusion upon the conflicting statements that had been made by honorable members. The honorable member for Geelong (Mr. Munro) said distinctly that portable engines could be made in the colony equal to and as cheap as the imported engines. If that was so, why, from a commercial or common-sense point of view, was it necessary to impose an extra duty upon them? It had been stated by several honorable members that the portable engines made in the colony were not suitable for the requirements of the farmers and miners, and that statement had not been contradicted. The proposed duty on water pipes called for serious consideration. Some time ago a contract was let to Langlands' Foundry Company, of which he was a small shareholder, for the manufacture of a number of water pipes; but although the Government paid a much higher price to them than they would have had to pay for imported pipes the company experienced so much difficulty in carrying out the contract that it would have been glad to have been relieved of it. Those pipes cost in England about £4 10s. a ton, the freight and other charges amounted to from 20s. to 25s. a ton, and that raised the price to from £5 10s. to £5 15s. per ton. The proposed duty would amount to from 40 per cent. to 60 per cent. on the cost price. Very often people residing in the suburbs of Melbourne were unable to obtain an adequate supply of water owing to the difficulty of obtaining pipes, and this enormous duty should not be imposed. The leader of the Opposition was leading the Government just as much as the Government were leading him. If they could read the honorable member's mind they would probably find that he was congratulating himself on being able to use the Government for party purposes. The honorable member was honestly doing what he believed would be best for those he represented. The honorable member had found that he need not advocate the claims he had to make himself as the Government would do that for him; and he was just endeavouring to squeeze everything he could out of them. He had succeeded beyond his most sanguine expectations, and the country would give him credit for it.

Mr. BURROWES asked if the plates used in boiler making would come under the proposals now before the committee? (Mr. Patterson—"Boiler plates will be free.") The committee had been informed that a portable engine had been made at a certain foundry at Sandhurst. He lived not a stone-throw from that foundry, and he had never heard of a portable engine having been made there. There was an engine in use in the foundry, but it had been imported. Portable engines were used by saw-millers, by farmers, by thrashers, by chaff-cutters, and by miners, and the fact that only one or two of them had been made in the colony was a sufficient reason why no duty should be imposed upon them. The Government should not lay themselves open to the statement that was made by the honorable member for Melbourne East (Mr. Zox), that they were being used by the leader of the Opposition for party purposes.

Mr. GROOM observed that the *Victorian Year-Book* gave the number of steam engines that were employed on farms in the colony. In 1887–8 the number was 605, and that was an increase of nearly 100 on the preceding year. The ordinary duty of 25 per cent. on an 8-horse power engine amounted to about £75, and the farmers must therefore have paid in duty on this item in one year about £7,500. The number of portable engines that had been imported was between 200 and 300, and four-fifths of these were in use in the country districts. He was surprised that the Minister of Customs had not only not been satisfied with leaving the item at the existing duty of 25 per cent. but proposed to increase it to 35 per cent.

Mr. LEVIEN said he was exceedingly astonished at the action of the Government. After, he presumed, full and fair consideration, they saw their way to place portable engines, which had hitherto paid a duty of 25 per cent., in the free list, but now they turned round and actually proposed to increase the duty to 35 per cent. What was to be thought of such a course? The Minister of Customs said just now that boiler plates were in the free list. It was true that they were in the free list at present, but who could say that they would be in the free list next night? In his twenty years' experience of the Assembly he had never before seen a Government bring down proposals one night and set them aside next night, in the manner that was being followed now. Honorable members really did not know where they

were, or what proposals the Government meant to stand by. He would be no party to any compact to fleece the farmers and make them pay very high duties on every article they required in their industry. He hoped the committee would strike out 35 per cent. with the view of substituting 25 per cent. If an industry could not get on with a duty of 25 per cent. in its favour, it was about time the duty was done away with. Boilers were made in the colony, under the 25 per cent. duty, which could compete successfully with the imported article. In fact he believed boilers could be made cheaper here than they could be imported; and why, therefore, was it desired to increase the duty to 35 per cent.? It had been said that one portable engine and thrashing machine would serve the purposes of a number of small farmers. That might be true, but still, if the price of the article was largely increased, the farmer would have to pay for the increase. He begged to move that "35" be struck out.

Mr. PATTERSON observed that he also might commence by saying that he was completely surprised. He might point out in the first place that a Minister of Customs was in a different position, with regard to getting information, before he launched his Tariff from that which he occupied after his proposals had been submitted to the Assembly. When preparing his proposals he had to take such information as existed in the Custom-house, which was not always exactly correct; but since the Tariff proposals were presented he had been furnished with much more ample information by those affected by the various propositions. He could understand portable engines being free or being dutiable, but he could not understand them being dutiable at 25 per cent. and other engines being taxed at the rate of 35 per cent. Portable engines would do the work of stationary engines, and if they were admitted at a lower duty, or free, so much would be taken from the builders of stationary engines. Both kinds of engines must be placed on an equal footing. This was all the more necessary because there was a tendency to introduce articles under false names in order to get them passed at a lower rate of duty. The fact that such a large sum of money had been paid for importing portable engines, which was adduced as an argument against the present proposal, was really an argument for increasing the duty, so that these engines might be manufactured in the colony. Victorian manufacturers said that they could make this or any other kind of engine. This was not a matter affecting Melbourne alone, because there were important foundry works at Ballarat, Castlemaine, Sandhurst, and other towns in the interior. Iron manufactures were of the highest importance to England, and if this colony was going to be behind in its ironworks it would be a reflection on the civilization of the people. It would pay the colony at any cost to maintain the great foundries at Ballarat and other places, so as to be able to repair or duplicate work on the spot. Ironworks were not to be placed on a level with other things; this industry stood out broadly as a great industry to be fostered and encouraged as a matter of paramount importance to the country. (Mr. Anderson—"Why did you not think of that in the first instance?") It had been pointed out to the Government since the Budget was submitted that it would be a grievous wrong to the local manufacturers to allow portable engines to come in free, and they were wise enough and manly enough to amend their proposal. Surely they might be allowed to improve as they grew older. He would impress on the committee the supreme importance of dealing with these proposals without delay, as the present state of things was causing a great disturbance to trade.

Mr. HALL said he would like to know from the Minister of Customs upon whose suggestion it was originally proposed that portable engines should come in free, and also upon whose representations it was now proposed that the duty should be raised to 35 per cent.? The Minister had stated that he made inquiries among the classes most interested in the matter; but had he made any inquiries among the farmers, or received any request from them on the subject? He (Mr. Hall) asked this question for the purpose of obtaining information, because if the farmers desired that there should be a duty of 35 per cent. on portable engines he would be prepared to support the increased duty. (Mr. Patterson—"What is your own opinion about it?") He thought the Government knew very well his opinion on the subject; but the way to answer his question was not by asking him another. It was said that there were few or none of these portable engines used in the farming districts, but there were at least twenty portable engines constantly at work in his own district. Portable engines were used in cutting firewood to be sent to Melbourne, as well as in farming operations,

and such engines of Victorian manufacture could not be obtained. He was sorry that the duty of 25 per cent. had not encouraged the industry, as he would like to see everything required in the colony made in the colony, if possible. Seeing, however, that the 25 per cent. duty had been in existence for a considerable period without leading to the local manufacture of portable engines, farmers, who were sincere protectionists, and had always supported protection, were now in favour of admitting them duty free. It would certainly create some surprise that the Government, after originally proposing that portable engines should be admitted free, should now actually propose to increase the present duty by 10 per cent. These "lightning changes" would afford anything but satisfaction to the country districts.

Mr. METHVEN expressed surprise at arguments which had been used on behalf of the farmers. When it was a question of cereals the committee were told that the effect of increasing the duties would be to reduce the price, but now, when it was a question of portable engines, it was urged that to raise the duty would be to increase the price. The real question for consideration was not so much whether portable engines had or had not been made in the colony as whether, with proper protection, they could be made in the colony, and he maintained that they could. The first engines and machinery that were used by the Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company were imported, and the result was that it cost about half as much money as they were worth to keep them in working order. It was alleged at the time that the articles could not be made in the colony. However, he, and some other members of the Tramway Trust made a stand, and the consequence was that since then all the machinery had been made in the colony, and the locally manufactured machinery was found to be far superior to that which was imported. There were mechanics in this colony who could manufacture anything. The other night the honorable member for Lowan said that cast ploughshares could not be made in the colony. There was a firm in his (Mr. Methven's) district who had made thousands of them, but they had been compelled to stop the manufacture owing to the protective duty not being sufficient. He desired to know whether the duty now proposed would cover the manufacture of chilled ploughshares? (Mr. Patterson—"Any manufacture of metals.") He had been requested to put the question by two or three firms. He would support the Government proposal, as there was nothing to show that portable engines could not be made here as well as they could be imported.

Mr. ANDREWS said he desired to point out that the amendment of the honorable member for Barwon was too sweeping altogether, as it would affect 50 other articles besides portable engines, and would destroy a great many industries that were now in existence and were progressing. He had a letter from the proprietors of a foundry at Geelong, who stated that they had been making portable engines for the last seven years, although they did not state how many they had made. He would remind the farming representatives that in America the protective duties in connexion with manufacturing industries had been the means of bringing the highest talent to bear on the production of agricultural implements, with the result that the American farmer had now the best and most labour-saving appliances in the world. He would support the Government, as he thought they were on the right track this time.

Mr. HIGHETT confessed that the arguments which had been used on the different sides of this question were difficult to follow. On one side it had been stated that if an increased duty were imposed on portable engines the article would be cheapened to the consumer. He would point out, however, that for many years there had been a duty of 25 per cent. on these articles, and the net result had been the manufacture of two engines which had never gone out of the shops. This being the case, how long was it likely to take before an article was manufactured which could be used by the farmers of the colony? It had also been urged that if portable engines were admitted free they would be used for stationary work, and thus seriously interfere with the manufacture of stationary engines in the colony. If this were so some remedy might be provided to meet the contingency, but he could not see why the farmer should suffer. At present a very large number of portable engines were used by the farmers; in fact, a farm was not considered complete without one. They were employed in connexion with ensilage, steam ploughing, cutting timber, and various other works necessary on a farm, and if farmers had to pay a largely increased price for their engines it would be a very serious tax on them, while so far the duty had not assisted in the manufacture of a single engine for the use of

the people. He quite agreed that where anything could be manufactured here for the general good of the community its manufacture should be encouraged, but why the farmers, who were the hardest working class in the community with the exception of the miners, should be singled out to pay a heavy tax for no good result he could not understand. He would challenge any honorable member to go through the colony and find a single portable engine at work that was manufactured in Victoria. This being the case with a duty of 25 per cent., to increase the duty to 35 per cent. would not assist the local manufacturer in the slightest degree. He had made inquiries, and he found that this was a class of work which the local manufacturers did not care about. They did not see their way to compete with the imported article with anything like a reasonable duty. It would be time enough to assist this industry in the way proposed when the local manufacturers showed a disposition to go into the manufacture of portable engines. He would certainly support the amendment.

Mr. WOODS considered that honorable members might as well doubt whether wheelbarrows could be made in the colony as doubt whether portable engines could be manufactured here. All that was required was sufficient protection to secure the local market to the local producer. A portable engine was merely a stationary engine put upon wheels, and he would undertake to say that, with sufficient protection, the Phœnix Foundry alone could turn out 50 portable engines in the year. So far as his vote would go he would always give it to secure the local market to the local producer.

Mr. G. D. CARTER said he found himself in a great difficulty. He was anxious to give a consistent support to the Government, but if one followed a drunken man down the street it was a difficult matter to keep in his footsteps. One minute he was in the gutter and the next nearly through a shop window. This seemed to be the position of the Government. They started by proposing that portable engines, which were now subject to a duty of 25 per cent., should be free, and now, apparently at the instigation of the honorable member for Geelong (Mr. Munro), they proposed to increase the duty to 35 per cent. He (Mr. Carter) wanted to know whom he was following—the Government or the leader of the Opposition? The action of the Government made it very difficult for an innocent young man like himself to follow them. He desired to do all he could to prevent the Government from being turned out by a wicked and relentless Opposition, but it required a great effort for him to keep his balance when they would not walk straight themselves. If they believed that portable engines should be free, why not say so? If they believed they ought to pay 25 per cent., why not say so? If they believed that the duty should be 35 per cent., then why in the name of common sense did they not say so at first? Were honorable members to be led by the opposition or the Government side of the House? If they were to be led by the Opposition then let the honorable member for Geelong take the responsibilities of office, but he objected to the honorable member dictating the policy of the country without any responsibility attaching to him. Men might take opium or arsenic or other poisons, and begin with very small doses, but they soon wanted a little more, and so they went on gradually increasing the dose until at last it proved fatal. He would ask the protectionists whether in these sudden jumps they were not administering the opium of protection in such large doses that they would really destroy the very thing they wanted to preserve. In 1871 the duty on woollen piece goods that was considered sufficient was 7½ per cent. The duty on the articles now under consideration was then 10 per cent. and the duty on brushware was 12½ per cent. Old members would recollect that in those days it was said that any industry that could not exist on 15 per cent. was not worthy of protection. (Mr. F. Stuart—"Those were the dark days.") The common sense of the country said it, and he believed would say it again, if the issue could be put before the people apart from other considerations. He found that in 1874 the Assembly was actually reducing 20 per cent. duties to 10 per cent. The Kerferd Government, with Mr. Service as Treasurer, proposed to reduce duties on the ground that while the country was willing to impose protection to encourage manufactures, it was not prepared to go in for prohibition. The honorable member for Stawell now wanted nothing but prohibition, and the honorable member for Geelong seemed to be going in the same direction. If the Government wished to go in for prohibition, let there be a distinct issue and have a vote upon it, but if they only wanted to encourage native industry in a reasonable manner they would do well not to be led astray by the Opposition. The

honorable member for Albert Park, speaking of water pipes, said that imported pipes were no good—that they burst. (Mr. Woods—"You could put your penknife through some of them.") The honorable member for Albert Park did not tell the whole truth; he did not state that all pipes that came to the country under contract had to be subjected to a test pressure, so that if any burst the loss fell upon the importer and not upon the country. Several years ago Humble and Nicholson, of Geelong, obtained the work of testing the imported pipes, and the result was that it was the testing apparatus and not the pipes that burst. This was the sort of machinery they were capable of producing. (Mr. Woods—"It was the boiler that burst.") Exactly, they burst their boiler, and that was what he was afraid protection would do. The country would not submit to this protection being heaped on against the miner, the farmer, and the great industries of the colony.

Mr. WOODS observed that the pipes to which he presumed the honorable member for Albert Park alluded were supposed to be tested in England up to a pressure equal to about 250 lbs. to the square inch, and they came out with an engineer's certificate. Yet, when they were lying on the Melbourne wharf a penknife in several cases was put through them.

Mr. G. D. CARTER said there was not only an officer appointed by the Government to examine the pipes before they were shipped, but they were also tested on their arrival here, and if any of them burst, the contractor had to stand the loss. If he remembered rightly the per centage of faulty pipes was utterly insignificant. Of course, pipes or engines or anything else could be made in the colony. It was only a question of expense. Pine-apples and bananas could be grown in Victoria, but they required a hot-house. If it required a hot-house, figuratively speaking, to produce portable engines here, was the farmer prepared to pay the expense? Was it not better to import pine-apples from Queensland at 6d. per dozen than to grow them here at the cost of £1? If the Victorian manufacturer could not make portable engines under a duty of 25 per cent., it would be better for him to turn his attention to something else. To show that the duty proposed was not necessary to produce these things, he might compare the position of Victoria with that of the free-trade colony of New South Wales. The number of establishments employing engine and machine makers, iron and brass founders in Victoria was 194, having machinery and plant to the value of £604,462, and employing 7,300 hands. In New South Wales there were 201 such establishments, with machinery and plant to the value of £644,745, and employing 5,882 hands. He quoted these figures merely to show that it was not necessary to impose high duties in order to encourage this particular class of industry. He had as many iron manufacturers in his district as there were in any other electorate in the colony, but they did not want 35 or even 25 per cent. on portable engines. They considered that they had ample protection already. At the same time, he was not prepared to take off duties to the injury of any particular industry. He simply asked the committee to pause before they altogether altered the fiscal policy of the country, which meant encouragement to native industry, not prohibition of importations. The honorable member for Williamstown wanted to put a tax on every steam vessel entering the port, but if that sort of thing was to be done, why not go a step further, and put a tax on imported children? Why, for instance, should children of other countries be allowed to come into competition with his (Mr. Carter's) children?

Dr. MALONEY said he would not have risen to speak but for the figures quoted by the honorable member for Melbourne, which simply told a deliberate untruth. He presumed they were Mr. Coghlan's figures. (Mr. G. D. Carter—"They are Government statistics.") He had spoken to Mr. Hayter on the point, and probably there would be some different statements later on. Mr. Coghlan described as manufactories establishments which no one in Victoria would dream of calling manufactories. In Sydney, if a visitor asked what such and such a place was he would, as likely as not, be told that it was a manufactory; and when the question was raised—"What is manufactured there?" the reply would probably be "They churn butter." There were ten manufactories in Melbourne for every one in Sydney. Being a medical man he would not speak against the production of children, but with respect to industries generally, he would say—"If such and such a thing can be manufactured here let the industry of manufacturing it be protected; if it cannot, let people be encouraged to learn how to remove the obstacle in the way." It was carrying out a principle of that sort which had made America so

famous as a manufacturing country. When he was in Sydney recently, Mr. Foy took him round some fifteen manufactories, and then put this question—"My boy, do you see any of the tall chimneys here which you see in Melbourne?" He looked around, and could not see any tall chimneys whatever. He would be glad if the Government had proposed a 55 instead of a 35 per cent. duty.

Mr. WEBB inquired if machines partly of wood and partly of iron would come under this 35 per cent. duty? He alluded to such agricultural machines as reapers and binders, winnowers, and so on.

Mr. PATTERSON replied that the present proposals did not refer to agricultural machinery. (Mr. Webb—"Not even to reapers and binders?") Not even to reapers and binders.

Mr. BENT remarked that the debate seemed to have been cut down to the question of taxing portable engines. (Mr. Levien—"No, it is whether the duty on metal manufactures should be 25 or 35 per cent.") The honorable member for Barwon seemed to have forgotten that a few days ago he voted for a duty of 33 per cent. on eggs. And what were other honorable members doing? The honorable member for Melbourne East (Mr. Zox) was continually complaining of the Government, but he was helping to keep them in office; and the honorable member for Melbourne was doing the same thing, although he just now compared them to a drunken man. (Mr. G. D. Carter—"I did not refer to the Government.") It was odd that the Minister of Customs should be putting his friends in such a position. There was a time when he acted quite differently. It was also singular that with so many advocates of protection discussing iron manufactures none of them had thought of saying a word about putting a duty on iron girders. It now appeared that it was the Thompsons, of Castlemaine, who could make portable engines, and not Humble and Nicholson, of Geelong, at all. Was it there that the secret was? As for portable engines being made in the colony, he knew where they were being made. Surely, the policy of the country being what it was, there could be little difference between a 25 per cent. duty and a 35 per cent. duty. (Mr. G. D. Carter—"You would see the difference if you had to pay it.") But he hadn't to pay it; he would let "the other fellows" pay it. That was the feeling which the Minister of Customs alluded to when he described protection as an "aggregation of selfishness." Would the honorable gentleman be good enough to state whether barbed wire would be dutiable? (Mr. Patterson—"It will not be dutiable.") That showed how difficult it was to understand this new Tariff. Taking the question before the committee to be whether the present duty should be 25 or 35 per cent., he begged to say that he had made up his mind, on this occasion, to support the Government.

Mr. McLEAN said he did not wish to act in an inconsistent manner, nor would he ask, on behalf of the industry he represented, for any concession in the way of protective duties which he was not prepared to concede to any other industry which could make out an equally good case. What was the question immediately under consideration? It was that of protecting an industry which affected three important classes of the community—the farmers, the miners, and the saw-millers—none of which had hitherto enjoyed any protection whatever. He would not, however, on that account, deny a reasonable amount of protection to the manufacturers of the machinery used by the farming industry if only they could show that they had hitherto made anything like a legitimate attempt to produce that class of machinery, and had been thwarted by the absence of a duty upon it. But, as a matter of fact, no such legitimate effort had been made, and, consequently, he would not feel justified in agreeing to the duty on portable engines being higher than 25 per cent.

Mr. RICHARDSON stated that when the duty on portable engines was first proposed he voted for it, and he intended to do the same thing on the present occasion. The observations of the honorable member for Gippsland North were very pertinent, but the honorable member failed to notice that if portable engines were allowed to come in under advantageous circumstances the simple effect would be that they would be imported to take the place of stationary engines, and that so far the policy of the country would be evaded. As for the supposition that portable engines could not be made in the colony there was not a single local manufacturer of machinery who could not make them. Then as to the farmers, the fact of portable engines being raised in price by a few pounds would scarcely cost them an extra shilling a year. Because, in what way did they use machines of that class? It was the custom for men to

travel round the country with portable engines which the farmers employed when they wanted them, so the increase of the duty on the article would, at the utmost only affect them indirectly. In certain instances it might touch the miner, but then only to a trifling extent. The great point to consider was that it would never do to let portable engines come in under an exceptionally light duty, because the outcome would be felt in a way that some honorable members appeared to have no idea of. Really the question at stake was one of national importance.

Mr. FOSTER remarked that the position taken up by the Government greatly surprised him. As long as they were moderate in their demands he would be their obedient follower, but he was not going to vote for a duty which would press very heavily indeed on the miners of his district. That district was a mountainous one; in fact, owing to the difficulty of bringing machinery to it, it was almost impossible to set up a battery of more than four stampers. It was a most tremendous task to get a stationary engine up there at all, for the cost of carrying a boiler was £12 per ton. It took 48 bullocks to do the work. Under the circumstances, he would only vote for a 25 per cent. duty.

Mr. F. STUART stated that while the farming and mining members seemed horror-struck at this proposal to increase the duty on portable engines, which, the honorable member for Gippsland West had gone the length of asserting, had already tremendously affected the farmers, the simple facts were that the duty paid last year on all sorts of portable engines amounted to only a few thousand pounds, and that the 10 per cent. extra on the portable engines used by the agricultural industry would only affect them to the extent of £1,000 a year. What occasion was there then for such strong feeling on the subject? Let honorable members look at the other side of the question, and see, not so much what the farmers were going to give, as what they were going to get. They were to have a number of railway extensions, £250,000 in grants and bonuses, their barbed wire and reaper and binder twine made free of duty, and all sorts of concessions on tea, coffee, cocoa, and kerosene. Then there was to be an increase of duty on oats and barley amounting to £40,000, and the committee were bound to give them as much more on maize. Why, for this paltry £1,000 a year they would receive hundreds of thousands in return. The Government were to be most warmly congratulated on their proposal to increase the metal duties. As for the miners, where would the mining industry be but for the iron works of the colony? Without the enterprise, capital, and skill which gave them their excellent mining machinery, how could they possibly get from the bowels of the earth the gold they were obtaining? Again, where would the farmers be but for the enterprise and skill of the Victorian agricultural machinery makers? What was the practice in America? It was this, that whenever a lot of farmers found themselves located together, and getting on but slowly for want of machinery, they clubbed together land, money, and everything they could in order to induce some one to establish an iron industry among them. He trusted he would hear no more from the farming and mining members against an important duty which would only cost them a paltry £1,000 a year.

Mr. FERGUSON expressed his regret that the honorable member for Melbourne East (Mr. Stuart) did not make his speech a few weeks ago when the representatives of the farmers' associations were holding their conference at the Town Hall. Assuredly, had he told them what he had just told the committee he would have opened their eyes. They would have had something to astonish them. The honorable member said that the miners and farmers were supported by the manufacturers, but where would the manufacturers be without the farmers and miners? Who had done more than they had to encourage, at all events, the iron industry? Why, but for them it would have been completely snuffed out. The iron men were going altogether too fast. Take the portable engines in use in the colony at the present time for different purposes; could it be shown that a single one of them was of Victorian make? Was a heavy duty to be imposed in order to encourage an industry that had never yet made a start? Was protection simply to grow heavier and heavier, year by year? Was there to be no easing off? Were the farmers and miners to carry these iron industries on their backs for ever? Surely such an arrangement would be most unfair. He was very sorry to see the Government in their present position. He announced himself at the hustings as a firm believer in them—as an opponent of the stock tax, because the duties were to be taken off portable engines, tea, kerosene, and a lot of other articles—yet here they were, without a word of consultation with the farmers' representatives, doing with respect to the

farming interest the very thing they ought not to do. How, under such circumstances, could he continue to support them? Where was their backbone? Why did they not adhere to their original proposal, and keep portable engines on the free list? Did they regard the honorable members who had stood by thom so faithfully, as mere tools? They ought to be utterly ashamed of their present attitude.

Mr. MASON expressed the opinion that had it been known at the time that portable engines, instead of being free, were to have a duty of 35 per cent. placed upon them, the result of the division on the stock tax question would have been rather different. Because it was made a strong argument, on that occasion, that although the Ministry would not increase the stock tax, they ought to be kept in power inasmuch as they proposed to give the farmers so many things in other directions. But while he, for one, was still prepared to accord to the Government a most friendly support, how would he look if some time hence, when the question of bonuses came on, they said, "Oh! the Assembly is against bonuses, so we will withdraw our proposals with respect to them"? It was quite too bad for Ministers to blow hot and cold in the way they were doing. How was it possible for the farmers' representatives to see their way clearly before them? In short, it came to this, that if the Government took upon themselves the responsibility of altering their proposals with reference to the farming interest without consulting the representatives of that interest, they must not find fault with those representatives if they, on their part, also found it necessary to exercise their own discretion.

Mr. WHEELER said he wished, as a farming as well as a mining representative, to state the exact point of view from which he regarded the present question. He had gathered from what he had read in the newspapers that the farmers had already received several concessions from the Government, and that a good many more were in store for them. Well, that being the case, they were, he was sure, prepared to give something in return. Now no farmer would object to a reasonable duty on portable engines. Therefore, what he (Mr. Wheeler) wanted was that it should be made clear to the farming members that if the words "35 per cent." were omitted from the resolution the words "25 per cent." would be inserted in their place. It was essential that, before any step was taken towards the amendment of the resolution, it should be thoroughly understood what it was intended to do in the matter. No doubt portable engines ought to bear some duty which would encourage their manufacture in the colony. It was not the same with them as it was with locomotive and stationary engines, for which there was a regular and increasing demand. It was admitted all round, in fact, that the portable engines required for the various industries of the colony were at present so few in number that it would scarcely pay any one to attempt their manufacture as a distinct line of industry unless he was protected by a substantial duty. He was prepared to vote for a duty of 25 per cent., because that seemed to him to be a fair and reasonable duty. A large number of members had distinctly stated that they wanted portable engines to be admitted free, and with such an indefinite amendment as that of the honorable member for Barwon, there was no certainty as to whether there would be a duty of 25 per cent. or no duty at all. Could not some definite understanding be arrived at?

Mr. McINTYRE remarked that the honorable member for Daylesford was mistaken in supposing that the farmers had got an extraordinary amount of protection. What was the concession made to the farming industry? A duty on eggs. (An Honorable Member—"And the bonuses.") Had the farmers got the bonuses? Did they even tell the Government they wanted the bonuses? They were offered something they did not want, and when they asked for something they did want, their request was refused. The honorable member for Daylesford would surely not support a duty of 35 per cent. on portable engines, seeing that they were used to a very large extent by his own constituents. Most of the evidence was in favour of a duty of 25 per cent. The honorable member for the Ovens had talked about the Government lacking backbone and wanting consistency, but would he have supported the Government if it had not been inconsistent? The other night the committee was told that portable engines were to be exempted from duty, and that was given as one of the reasons why the farmer should not press for the stock tax; but now the Government proposed to deprive the agricultural industry of the promised concession, and actually to increase the duty to 35 per cent. He himself had been twitted with inconsistency, and he had confessed his fault openly and fairly, and ought to receive

forgiveness. The Minister of Customs should have strictly adhered to the Government's original proposal. Once they had said a certain thing, Ministers should stick to it, no matter what might be the consequences. The Minister of Customs had himself laid it down that the Government regarded 25 per cent. as a fair duty all round, and that rate ought not to be exceeded in the case of portable engines. The policy of protection had been abandoned for a policy of prohibition, which he ventured to think would not be satisfactory to the people in the country districts.

Mr. TUTHILL observed that by this time the Government must see that they could not serve two masters. Either they should stand by their own proposals, relying on their supporters, or submit to be led by the Opposition, and not go on the principle of deferring matters night after night to ascertain the views of honorable members on the other side of the chamber. He was anxious to loyally support the Government, and he was prepared to support their proposals, but he could not understand the somersault they had taken with respect to portable engines. A few weeks ago, after careful inquiries, the Minister of Customs came to the conclusion that portable engines should be admitted duty free. Now he proposed a duty of 35 per cent. How did this change of front come about? Surely it was not because he had failed to get good and trustworthy information before? He (Mr. Tuthill) was prepared to admit that if the representatives of the farmers looked for some concessions in the way of protection to the farming and agricultural industry they must be willing to grant protection to the manufacturing industries; but he did not believe that even a duty of 35 per cent. would induce the local manufacturers to make portable engines. So that while they would not be gainers by the increase, the farmers, the saw-millers, and miners would be losers.

Mr. ANDERSON said that he wanted a little more information on the question. He saw great difficulty in the way of the Government proposal to increase the duty on portable engines to 35 per cent. He was very much surprised at the change of front on the part of the Government, and equally surprised at the way in which the change had been submitted. He had never seen a more misleading proposal put before honorable members, and if the Minister of Customs had set himself to frame an amended proposal so as to mislead the committee he could not have done it more thoroughly than he had succeeded in doing it on the present occasion. It was not in accordance with his own feelings to speak in that manner, and very few honorable members had given the Government a more hearty support, but the circumstances compelled him to say what he had said. The item read—"Metals, manufactures of, and machinery, not otherwise enumerated, 35 per cent. *ad valorem*." Not a word about portable engines. (Mr. Patterson—"And not a word about engines of any kind.") The Minister of Customs was the same honorable member who stood up in his place in the Assembly last session and denounced the *omnium gatherum* proposal submitted by the present Government, of which he was not then a member. What was the honorable gentleman's present proposal but an *omnium gatherum* duty? Perhaps it was intended to save the Minister of Customs and his officers a little trouble, but justice must be done even if it did involve a little more difficulty to the Customs department. Although he had suggested that portable engines should be exempted, he was willing to vote for a continuance of the present duty of 25 per cent.

Mr. LEVIEN remarked that his object in moving the omission of "35" per cent. was with a view to proposing the substitution of "25" per cent. He did not see any justification for exempting portable engines alone from duty, because one kind of engine would be used for the same purposes as the other, and it would be difficult for the Customs officers to distinguish between the two classes. But the Government and the committee should be reasonable. If an industry could not stand with the support of a duty of 25 per cent., the sooner it went to the wall the better for the country. He desired to support the Government, but they would drive their friends away, if they were not careful, and certainly if they continued to go on as they had been doing of late he would have to consider what position it would be his duty to take up in the Assembly. If it could be shown that any of the minor manufactures, the smaller industries, were really in need of an extra 5 or 10 per cent., there might be no objection to granting it them, because the difference in their case would not be very material, but on the great lines connected with the power which had to be used for pumping, irrigation, driving chaff-cutters, thrashing machines, saw mills, and other purposes in the national industries of the

colony, surely a duty of 25 per cent. was a sufficiently heavy burthen.

Mr. MUNRO observed that in listening to the debate one would think that the committee were in the initial stage of a discussion on the question of free-trade *versus* protection. He would remind the honorable member for Villiers of Æsop's fable about the members of the body rising in rebellion against the lazy belly, on the ground that it got all the good things and did none of the work, but they soon found that without the belly they would all go to wrack and ruin. It was precisely the same with regard to the objection raised in the present case that nothing had been conceded to the farmer. (Mr. Anderson—"I didn't say so.") The honorable member made a very wild speech against his friends the Ministers, got a little more excited than usual, and suddenly became all backbone and bristles. Other honorable members accused the Government of not sticking to their proposals, and of consulting the Opposition. Well, was it not very much better, in a matter of this kind, to consider what was for the general benefit of the whole community? It had been clearly shown to the committee that portable engines could be and were manufactured in the colony, and the question to be considered was not the mere matter of price, but the question of providing constant employment for the artisans and laboring men of the colony. With the protection of a duty of 35 per cent., the manufacturers of the colony would soon be able to produce portable engines cheaper than at present. As the country had gone in for a policy of protection why not make the Tariff as perfect as possible at the present time, and then Parliament would hear no more about it for the next five or six years? In the interests of the whole community the question should be settled for some time to come; therefore the Government were doing the right thing. The Minister of Customs committed a great mistake in joining the Government; but now that he had taken up the work of revising the Tariff he was doing his very best to ascertain the requirements of the public, and to satisfy them; and as long as the Government did that he (Mr. Munro) would give them all the support he could. That was his duty, and he intended to do it. A whole sitting had been spent in discussing whether this one small item of portable engines should be exempted from duty; and after several hours had been occupied on the question the honorable member for Barwon got up and said that it was not his intention to exempt portable engines from duty, but that his amendment was submitted with a view to reduce the duty on the whole of the produce of the iron trades and manufactures from 35 to 25 per cent., although such a proposal as applied to the other articles included in the item had not been discussed at all. A considerable amount of time had, therefore, been wasted.

Mr. STAUGHTON said he was in favour of the duty on portable engines being limited to 25 per cent., but he could not vote for the amendment if it was moved with a view to a reduction of the duty on all manufactures of metals and machinery to 25 per cent. Protection was the recognised policy of the country, and while 25 per cent. might be considered a sufficient duty on portable engines, other industries perhaps required a little more than 25 per cent. He would like to know if he could move a further amendment to the effect that the duty on portable engines be 25 per cent., and on all other manufactures of metals, machinery, &c., 35 per cent.?

Mr. PATTERSON observed that if the honorable member for Barwon would withdraw his amendment another amendment could be submitted to accomplish the object which the honorable member for Bourke West had in view.

The committee divided on the question that "35" (proposed by Mr. Levien to be omitted) stand part of the resolution—

Ayes	46
Noes	38
Majority against the amendment	8

AYES.

Mr. Andrews,	Mr. Nimmo,
,, Baker,	,, Outtrim,
,, Beazley,	,, Patterson,
,, Bent,	Dr. Pearson,
,, Best,	Mr. Richardson,
,, Butterly,	,, Russell,
,, Cameron,	,, Shiels,
,, W. T. Carter,	,, L. L. Smith,
,, D. M. Davies,	,, T. Smith,
,, Deakin,	Lt.-Col. Smith,
,, Dixon,	Mr. Staughton,
,, Dow,	,, F. Stuart,
,, Gardiner,	Capt. Taylor,
,, Gillies,	Mr. Trenwith,
,, Gordon,	,, Tucker,
,, Kirton,	,, Turner,
,, Langridge,	,, Williams,
,, Leonard,	,, Woods,
Dr. Maloney,	,, Wrixon,
Mr. McLean,	,, A. Young,
,, Methven,	
,, Mountain,	*Tellers.*
,, Munro,	Mr. Bailes,
,, Murray,	,, Clark.

NOES.

Mr. Anderson,	Mr. McIntyre,
,, Armytage,	,, Madden,
,, Brock,	,, Mason,
,, Burrowes,	,, Officer,
,, Calvert,	,, Parfitt,
,, G. D. Carter,	,, Peacock,
,, Cheetham,	,, C. Smith,
,, Duffy,	,, Sterry,
,, Duncan,	,, Stuart,
,, Ferguson,	,, Taverner,
,, Forrest,	,, Tuthill,
,, Foster,	,, Uren,
,, Graham,	,, Webb,
,, Groom,	,, Wheeler,
,, Hall,	,, C. Young,
,, A. Harris,	,, Zox.
,, Highett,	
,, Keys,	*Tellers.*
,, Levien,	Mr. J. Harris,
,, McColl,	,, Shackell.

Mr. McLEAN moved the insertion after the words "*ad valorem*" of the following words "except portable engines, which shall be 25 per cent." He remarked that this amendment would enable the committee to divide on the question that honorable members had been discussing the whole evening. It came upon him as a surprise when the honorable member for Barwon said that his amendment was intended to cover the whole ground, and substitute for the proposed duty of 35 per cent. a duty of 25 per cent. on all manufactures of metals, machinery, &c. He was certainly not prepared to vote for the reduction of the proposed duty on the products of a large number of industries, which were probably prepared to make out a good case for the higher duty.

Mr. LEVIEN said he would support the amendment, on the principle that half a loaf was better than no bread; but was the amendment in order?

The CHAIRMAN.—The amendment of the honorable member for Gippsland North is perfectly in order.

Mr. LEVIEN remarked that the proposal would be more consistent if it were made to apply all round. He did not see why other engines should be charged 35 per cent. if portable engines were to be admitted on payment of a duty of 25 per cent.

Mr. G. D. CARTER asked if the honorable member for Gippsland North would add "kerosene stoves" to the amendment? They were largely used in the country districts; they were not made in the colony, nor had he heard that any firm proposed to make them, so that there was no reason for raising the duty on them from 25 to 35 per cent. He had an invoice in his possession which showed that the duty, freight, and other charges on these stoves amounted to exactly 103½ per cent., and surely that was protection enough. (Mr. Munro—"Who uses them?") They were used very largely in the country districts. He hoped that the honorable member for Gippsland North would add kerosene stoves to his amendment.

Mr. SHACKELL moved that the amendment be amended by striking out the words "25 per cent." with the view of substituting the word "free." The farmers' representatives had given way to the protectionist members with regard to every increase of duty which had been proposed; but the increases of duty that were now being proposed on articles used by the farmers were becoming serious. He had taken great interest in political matters during the last 20 years, and he could not conceive a more mixed Assembly than the present one. The Opposition occasionally voted with the Government, and sometimes the strongest supporters of the Government voted with the Opposition. In this instance the Government should certainly stick to their own supporters. There were occasions when the supporters of the Government had to stick to them through thick and thin, even to the extent of, in a measure, sacrificing their own interests, and they had a right to expect the same consideration from the Government. If the Government did not now stick to their supporters, he would vote against them. Every farmers' representative and every consistent protectionist should vote for this amendment, and he trusted that it would be carried. He travelled from Echuca to Melbourne on the previous Monday with Mr. Whitehead, who had a foundry in the Echuca district, and that gentleman stated that it was useless to place a protective duty on portable engines, because they could not be manufactured in the colony. (Mr. Munro—"What nonsense!") It was not nonsense.

Mr. DUFFY said he had much pleasure in supporting the amendment of the honorable member for Rodney (Mr. Shackell), and he would claim the vote of the Minister of Customs for it, because the honorable gentleman had said that he could understand a proposal to place a duty of 35 per cent. on portable engines or to admit them free, but he could not understand a proposal to impose a differential duty of 25 per cent. upon them. The committee had already practically decided against a duty of 35 per cent., and therefore the Minister of Customs

had no alternative but to vote for the amendment, that portable engines be free. He hoped that the protectionist members of the committee would, as a matter of principle, and to show their friendly feeling to the farmers, agree to this amendment.

Mr. McCOLL remarked that a duty of 25 per cent. had been imposed on portable engines for several years, and they were not yet being made in the colony. The Minister of Customs, to be consistent, must vote for the amendment of the honorable member for Rodney (Mr. Shackell). A deputation from the Farmers' Protection Association recently waited upon the honorable gentleman, and in the course of his remarks to them he said—

"It had been proposed to take the duties off certain farming machinery, including portable engines. In the matter of the advantages which the Government had given to dairying and irrigation, he thought the Government deserved the approval of the farmers."

Subsequently the honorable gentleman said—

"He wanted to bring them back again to the proposal of the Government to make certain things free. He would take one thing particularly, namely, portable engines. It was proposed to make them free. The Government did not contend that portable engines could not be made in the colony; but they did know this, that without portable engines the crops would rot in the fields. He therefore wanted the association's support in the free introduction of these machines. It would be good for the farming interest. He also wanted the President to give up the idea of allying himself with those who were interested in the new scheme of duties advanced by the Trades Hall. The farmers might be certain that if they allied themselves with those people the trades would have the best of the bargain. It should be a matter of consideration at the next meeting of the association, as to whether the farmers should support the proposal that the Trades Hall people had made, which included the taxation up to 35 per cent. of things which the Government proposed to admit free. If the association accepted this as in accordance with the law of protection, and accepted it with their eyes open, well and good."

How could the Minister of Customs reconcile that statement with the proposal he now made?

The committee divided on the question that "25 per cent.," proposed to be omitted, stand part of the amendment—

Ayes	48
Noes	37
Majority against Mr. Shackell's amendment	11

AYES.

Mr. Andrews,	Mr. Nimmo,
,, Baker,	,, Outtrim,
,, Beazley,	,, Patterson,
,, Best,	Dr. Pearson,
,, Butterly,	Mr. Richardson,
,, Cameron,	,, Russell,
,, W. T. Carter,	,, L. L. Smith,
,, D. M. Davies,	,, T. Smith,
,, Deakin,	Lt.-Col. Smith,
,, Dixon,	Mr. Staughton,
,, Dow,	,, Sterry,
,, Gardiner,	,, F. Stuart,
,, Gillies,	Capt. Taylor,
,, Gordon,	Mr. Trenwith,
,, A. Harris,	,, Tucker,
,, Kirton,	,, Turner,
,, Langridge,	,, Wheeler,
,, Laurens,	,, Williams,
,, Leonard,	,, Woods,
Mr. McLean,	,, Wrixon,
Dr. Maloney,	,, A. Young.
Mr. Methven,	
,, Mountain,	*Tellers.*
,, Munro,	Mr. Bailes,
,, Murray,	,, Clark.

NOES.

Mr. Anderson,	Mr. McIntyre,
,, Armytage,	,, Madden,
,, Bent,	,, Mason,
,, Brock,	,, Officer,
,, Burrowes,	,, Parfitt,
,, Calvert,	,, Peacock,
,, G. D. Carter,	,, Shackell,
,, Cheetham,	,, Shiels,
,, Gavan Duffy,	,, J. S. Stewart,
,, Duncan,	,, Taverner,
,, Ferguson,	,, Tuthill,
,, Forrest,	,, Uren,
,, Graham,	,, Webb,
,, Groom,	,, Wilkinson,
,, Hall,	,, C. Young,
,, Highett,	,, Zox.
,, Keys,	*Tellers.*
,, Levien,	Mr. C. Smith,
,, McColl,	,, J. Harris.

Mr. MASON asked whether he could move that the duty on portable engines be 10 or 15 per cent.?

The CHAIRMAN.—The committee have already decided that the words "25 per cent." shall stand part of the amendment. Therefore no lower duty can be proposed.

Mr. McINTYRE moved that progress be reported.

The motion was negatived.

The committee then divided on Mr. McLean's amendment for the addition to the resolution of the words "except portable engines, which shall be 25 per cent."—

Ayes	73
Noes	12
Majority for the amendment...	61

AYES.

Mr. Anderson,	Mr. McIntyre,
,, Andrews,	,, McLean,
,, Armytage,	,, Madden,
,, Baker,	,, Mason,
,, Beazley,	,, Munro,
,, Bent,	,, Murray,
,, Brock,	,, Nimmo,
,, Burrowes,	,, Officer,
,, Butterly,	,, Outtrim,
,, Calvert,	,, Parfitt,
,, Cameron,	,, Peacock,
,, G. D. Carter,	Dr. Pearson,
,, W. T. Carter,	Mr. Richardson,
,, Cheetham,	,, Shackell,
,, D. M. Davies,	,, Shiels,
,, Deakin,	,, C. Smith,
,, Dow,	Lt.-Col. Smith,
,, Gavan Duffy,	Mr. Staughton,
,, Duncan,	,, Sterry,
,, Ferguson,	,, J. S. Stewart,
,, Forrest,	,, F. Stuart,
,, Foster,	,, Taverner,
,, Gardiner,	,, Trenwith,
,, Gillies,	,, Turner,
,, Gordon,	,, Tuthill,
,, Graham,	,, Uren,
,, Groom,	,, Webb,
,, Hall,	,, Wheeler,
,, A. Harris,	,, Williams,
,, J. Harris,	,, Woods,
,, Highett,	,, Wrixon,
,, Keys,	,, A. Young,
,, Langridge,	,, C. Young,
,, Laurens,	,, Zox.
,, Leonard,	*Tellers.*
,, Levien,	Mr. Bailes,
,, McColl,	,, Clark.

NOES.

Mr. Best,	Mr. T. Smith,
,, Dixon,	Capt. Taylor,
,, Kirton,	Mr. Tucker.
Dr. Maloney,	*Tellers.*
Mr. Methven,	
,, Patterson,	Mr. Mountain,
,, Russell,	,, L. L. Smith.

The resolution as amended was agreed to.

Progress was then reporetd.

LAW OF EVIDENCE AMENDMENT BILL.

This Bill was received from the Legislative Council, and, on the motion of Mr. GILLIES, was read a first time.

The House adjourned at twelve minutes past eleven o'clock.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, September 18, 1889.

New Members—Chaplains of Gaols—Standing Committees—Education Act Further Amendment Bill.

The PRESIDENT took the chair at a quarter to five o'clock p.m., and read the prayer.

NEW MEMBERS.

The PRESIDENT announced that the writs which he had issued (under the provisions of Act 995) for the election of new members to serve respectively for the North Western Province and the Gippsland Province had been returned, showing that Mr. J. M. Pratt had been elected for the North Western Province, and Mr. C. Sargeant for the Gippsland Province.

Mr. Sargeant was introduced and sworn, and delivered to the Clerk the declaration of qualification required by Act No. 702.

PETITIONS.

Petitions praying for "the introduction into the State schools as part of the curriculum (but with a conscience clause for those who object) of the Irish National Scripture lesson books as used in the State schools of New South Wales," were presented by the Hon. J. BALFOUR, from inhabitants of Alexandra, and Prahran and neighbourhood; by the Hon. S. FRASER, from members and adherents of the Presbyterian Church, South Melbourne; by the Hon. J. P. MACPHERSON (in the absence of the Hon. T. DOWLING), from inhabitants of Camperdown; and by the Hon. J. H. CONNOR (in the absence of the Hon. S. AUSTIN), from inhabitants of Geelong.

GAOL CHAPLAINS.

The Hon. D. MELVILLE asked the Minister of Justice whether it was true that the salaries of the Church of England and the Roman Catholic chaplains at Pentridge gaol were to be reduced? When travelling in a train the other day he was informed that the salaries of these gentlemen were about to be reduced from £180 to £130 per annum. He was very much surprised at this, because the salaries at present paid appeared to be very small, and he knew that the chaplains were called upon to subscribe to the relief of the distressed prisoners leaving the gaol, and often of their wives and families. The Church of England chaplain conducted 54 services every year, at which their was an aggregate attendance of about 11,000; and the work done by the Roman Catholic chaplain was about the same. Seeing that the Government had so large a surplus it did appear to be very paltry that they should propose to reduce the salaries of gentlemen occupying such positions. Their salaries should rather be increased, because the number of prisoners in the gaol was increasing, and that involved additional labour.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT said he had received a reply to the honorable member's question from the Chief Secretary's department, but after the statement the honorable member had made, he would withhold it until he had made further inquiries into the matter.

STANDING COMMITTEES.

On the motion of the Hon. H. CUTHBERT, the following honorable members were appointed members of the Standing Committees mentioned in connexion with their names :—

LIBRARY COMMITTEE (JOINT). — The Hon. G. LeFevre.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.—The Hon. S. W. Cooke.

PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS COMMITTEE (JOINT).—The Hon. G. S. Coppin.

EDUCATION LAW FURTHER AMENDMENT BILL.

The debate on the motion of the Hon. H. Cuthbert for the second reading of this Bill (adjourned from the previous day) was resumed.

The Hon. W. H. ROBERTS.—Mr. President, the question of imparting religious instruction in the State schools which has been raised in connexion with this Bill has been fully discussed in this House on other occasions, and I do not intend, therefore, to speak at any length upon it. Section 12 of the Act of 1872 states:—

> "Nothing herein contained shall prevent the State school buildings from being used for any purpose on days and at hours other than those used for secular instruction."

It has been argued throughout this debate that the Act of 1872 does not allow religious instruction to be given in the State schools; but that is not correct. Two hours in the forenoon and two hours in the afternoon of each day are to be allotted for secular instruction. At other times you may give as much religious instruction in the school buildings as you please. All that you have to do is to find a person who is willing to undertake the teaching. I am informed that sometime ago the different boards of advice were requested to allow clergymen to give religious instruction in the State schools after school hours. Permission was at once granted, but the system proved a failure. After a few weeks the clergymen who had undertaken to teach the children did not not attend, although the children were there to receive the instruction they had to impart.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT. — The children want to get away after school hours.

The Hon. W. H. ROBERTS.—I am assured that there were plenty of children willing to attend, and that the failure of the system was due entirely to the fault of the clergymen who would not take advantage of the opportunity they had of imparting religious instruction. What would be the effect of introducing the Irish National Scripture lesson books into the State schools? The effect would be to restore the strife that existed before the Act of 1872 came into operation, and to undo what we have been years in doing. That Act has, as has been stated by Mr. Zeal and Mr. Melville, worked most satisfactorily, and this colony is now, in regard to education, ahead of any of the other Australian colonies. Mr. Balfour said yesterday that religious instruction of a non-sectarian character is given in New South Wales with very good results. What are those results? There is only a trifling difference between the populations of New South Wales and Victoria, the figures for 1886 being 1,001,966 and 1,003,043, respectively; but there is an excess of crime in New South Wales, as compared with Victoria of 47 per cent. What is the cause of this excess of crime? Is it that our State school system has a tendency to prevent crime, or is it that the State school system of New South Wales, in connexion with which religious instruction is given, has a tendency to foster crime? Moral lessons are given to the children in our State schools, and they can obtain further moral instruction from the books and papers that are to be found in their own homes. It is the duty of the parents to give religious instruction to their children, and if they neglect that duty there are means of compelling them to perform it. If you wish to go to the extreme of making religion compulsory, there are means by which you can bring force to bear upon the parents, to compel them to send their children to Sunday schools. It will be generally admitted that the Sunday schools of the Wesleyan denomination are better attended than those of any other denomination. The reason is, that they do everything they can to induce the children to attend by giving picnics, and other treats of the same kind which the children enjoy. I know an instance in which a clergyman who took temporary charge of a church increased the attendance at the Sunday school held in connexion with it three-fold. He identified

himself with the children, and entertained them at his own house on different evenings with readings and other amusements. If instead of directing so much attention to the "heathens" of Fiji and Samoa, the clergy would look at the "heathens" of this colony, and do their duty to them, there would not be as much cause of complaint as there is at present. There is a clause in this Bill—clause 10—which I hope will be struck out. It provides that Richardson's temperance lesson book and Ridge's primer shall be used in the State schools. If we once let in the thin end of the wedge, it will not be long before we shall have Bible lessons given in the State schools.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—It is coming.

The Hon. W. H. ROBERTS.—I shall not live to see it.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—Yes, you will.

The Hon. W. H. ROBERTS.—I do not think so. The honorable member is anxious, I know, that Bible reading shall be introduced in the State schools. In his speech on the previous day he said—

> "If they would only give him, and those who thought with him, the Bible, and let it be read in the schools, they would allow it to tell its own tale, and let the dogma be dogma if it were so."

From that, of course, you see very clearly that the honorable member is anxious to have the Bible read in our State schools. I don't suppose there is a single member of this House who would not like to see the children receive religious instruction, but the unfortunate thing is that if you were to introduce religious teaching into our State schools you would raise class against class. If you could pacify the Roman Catholics there might be something to be said in favour of the proposal; but there is no hope of that, and we don't wish to revive in this new world the religious strife and bitterness of the old world. The Roman Catholics do not approve of the present system, but they have established schools of their own, and pay their own teachers. If we alter our system of education, in the direction Mr. Balfour desires, we shall do an injustice to the Roman Catholics. They will say—"We must receive State aid," and directly you will go back to the old denominational system. I don't think that any honorable member who has pledged himself up to the hilt to support the Education Act as it stands would violate his pledges to his constituents, and almost every honorable member in this Chamber is pledged against any attempt to interfere with the present law with regard to religious teaching in the State schools.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—What about the result of the late election at South Yarra?

The Hon. W. H. ROBERTS.—Mr. J. M. Davies would have been elected out of respect for him, whatever his views might have been, but as a matter of fact religious teaching in State schools was not made a test question at that election, because the other candidates were not firm on the question, and in reality it was never put to the electors at all.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL.—Besides, there were more votes polled against Mr. Davies than for him.

The Hon. W. H. ROBERTS.—Yes; almost two to one. But I ask honorable members would it be right to alter the Education Act by a sort of side wind? And it would be so altered if the advocates of religious teaching in State schools were allowed to get in the thin end of the wedge. It has taken us years to settle the present system of public instruction; it is working satisfactorily, and under it education has improved and crime has decreased. It is admitted that if we were to agree to the introduction of religious teaching into the State schools neither side would be satisfied, and the Roman Catholics would certainly be up in arms against an arrangement which favoured the Protestant denomination to their disadvantage. Unless you can legislate for all classes why legislate in this matter at all? Let us keep down religious strife, and not introduce a new system which is certain to annoy the different denominations and create sectarian bitterness. The present Education Act has been tried for years, and the people desire that it shall be maintained. That is shown at every election. If a candidate for Parliament were to declare that he was not in favour of upholding the three cardinal principles of the Act—free, secular, and compulsory—he would certainly be rejected, and almost every member of Parliament has pledged himself to support the Act.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—Certainly not.

The Hon. W. H. ROBERTS.—If honorable members who would be willing to alter the Education Act were to go to the country, and make it a test question, I am perfectly satisfied that some of them would lose their seats; and I don't think it would

be fair for us to attempt to alter an Act that we are pledged to support. It is the duty of the State to teach the children all that is necessary for this life, but I do not think that the State should force religion upon the children during school hours. The gentlemen who preach the gospel and take an interest in the moral and spiritual welfare of the young should go to the Sunday schools and help the clergymen to teach the children.

The Hon. S. FRASER.—So they do.

The Hon. W. H. ROBERTS.—Some do.

The Hon. F. ILLINGWORTH.—There are more Sunday school teachers than State school teachers in the colony.

The Hon. W. H. ROBERTS.—Because each Sunday school teacher has one class, while each State school teacher is required to teach many classes. How many honorable members in this Chamber go to Sunday school?

The Hon. F. ILLINGWORTH.—I do, for one.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—Does Mr. Roberts?

The Hon. W. H. ROBERTS.—I did for a long time.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—Begin again.

The Hon. W. H. ROBERTS.—I still do as much in the way of moral and religious teaching as many of those who go to Sunday school, and I am anxious to see the children of the colony brought up in a religious way; but if we desire that benefit should be derived from the moral and religious instruction of the young, let us go to work ourselves, and not alter the Education Act. Certainly I shall do all I can to prevent any alteration of the fundamental principles of the Act, and I trust that honorable members generally will most resolutely set their faces against any change of our present system of public instruction that may be calculated to sow the seeds of religious strife hereafter.

The Hon. S. FRASER.—Mr. President, I think it is only right that I should explicitly state my views in regard to the Education Act generally and in regard to the amendment which is to be proposed by Mr. Balfour. I cannot see my way to vote for any material alteration of the Education Act, not that I do not value the moral and religious teaching of the children—because I do highly value such instruction—but I know how very much the people of this country prize the Education Act. Every section of the religious community has a perfect right, an undeniable right to its own convictions in regard to the early training of children; but I see no hope whatever of making such a change in our system of education as would satisfy the claims of the Roman Catholic body and at the same time be acceptable to the colony at large. From their own point of view the claims of the Catholics are perfectly legitimate. They conscientiously believe that the education of their children should be in the hands of their clergy. They have always said so, emphatically and clearly; and how can the State give religious instruction in its schools to the children belonging to other religious persuasions without giving the Roman Catholics a solid *bonâ fide* grievance? No one would say that I would yield more to the Roman Catholics than they are entitled to get, but at the same time I am not going to be unjust to that section of the community. Until the Roman Catholics, Protestants, and others, agree to a form of moral and religious teaching that will be acceptable to all, I shall stick as firmly as a limpet to a rock in favour of the Education Act. Still, I am very sorry indeed that all references to Christ and Christianity have been eliminated from the reading books that are used in our State schools, and I think that the Ministers who directed or authorized those eliminations to be made are greatly to be blamed. Some of them are dead, and I respect them; but I think that some of them—at any rate the late Mr. Ramsay—carried out those eliminations under pressure.

The Hon. J. SERVICE.—No.

The Hon. S. FRASER.—I was a member of the Assembly at the time, and I believe Mr. Ramsay did it under pressure. If Mr. Service will read his speeches, I think he will find that Mr. Ramsay said so. That was my own conviction at the time, and I think I am right from his point of view. At any rate, I am sorry these eliminations were made, and I don't know whether any wrong would be done now by—what shall I say?

The Hon. J. SERVICE.—Restoring the eliminated passages?

The Hon. S. FRASER.—Yes; restoring the eliminations, or by adopting the Scripture lesson books used in New South Wales. I don't know that any injustice would be done to any section of this community if the books in question were introduced into the State schools of this colony. If the Roman Catholic section of the community in New South Wales offer no greater objection to the system adopted in the State

schools of that colony than the Roman Catholics of Victoria offer to our system, then I would certainly vote for the introduction of the system adopted in New South Wales. I firmly believe that good moral and religious teaching has a tendency to keep down crime. Statistics may be made to prove anything, but there are probably other reasons than the difference in the two systems of public instruction why more criminals are to be found in New South Wales than in this colony. The Education Act in Victoria is regarded, and rightly regarded, as the greatest boon that has ever been placed on the statute-book of the colony. In many countries in other parts of the world, 60 per cent. of the adult population can neither read nor write. That is the case in Spain, as is shown by statistics which I got from the public officers of that country only a few years ago; in Italy the percentage of illiterates is very little less; while in Sicily matters are still worse, and the traveller sees at the corner of every street a scribe with his little table, surrounded by crowds of illiterate persons, each waiting his turn to get a letter written. In Germany all are educated; in Norway and Sweden, only three per cent. of the population are unable to read and write, and you don't see a vagabond throughout the whole country.

The Hon. J. SERVICE.—Which of the countries you have named is the most religious?

The Hon. S. FRASER.—Spain is the most religious.

The Hon. J. SERVICE.—And the most ignorant.

The Hon. S. FRASER. — The most religious in one sense — the most superstitious—but you dare not travel through that country without a guard to protect you. The mail train in which I journeyed from the south of Spain to Madrid was guarded all the way by soldiers. All these things go to show that the people of Victoria have reason to be thankful for the Education Act, which has been of such immense benefit to this colony. And I am not going to take one step that will jeopardize that Act. If you force religious teaching into the State schools you will give the Roman Catholics a real cause of grievance. Certainly, if you do that you ought to vote for a separate grant to the Roman Catholics as an act of justice, and I would rather lose 50 seats in Parliament than be a party to that. We have a national system, and to keep it national we must keep it uniform. That is one reason why I cannot support even a local plebiscite. I would vote for a national, a Victorian plebiscite on the Education Act; but local plebiscites would create strife, ill-feeling, dissension, and all those things which, in my heart, I wish to put down. I desire that we should kill all those bitter prejudices that have been handed down to us from time immemorial, because they do a great deal of harm. Not that I don't take part in these things sometimes, because where there is a bane there must be an antidote. I go heart and soul with the words which Mr. Melville uttered last night when he said that the motto of France, "Liberty, equality, fraternity," might be written over the portals of every State school in Victoria. You see that motto almost everywhere throughout France, and you cannot but admire it—although the French themselves pay very little attention to it—because the sentiment it conveys is right and noble and true. I am sorry that I cannot support Mr. Balfour's intended amendment, for the reasons I have given. I shall support the Bill because I consider it is entitled to our support. I hold that the children ought not to be kept too long at school. There are other things for them to learn besides the three R's. I am sorry that history is not taught in our State schools, because it is a matter of vast importance to the rising generation. When a child is taught to read and write well he has got the means of gleaning information everywhere, and his eyes are always open wherever he goes. But when—as is the case with thousands and millions of our fellow-creatures in other countries—an unfortunate being cannot read, he goes about like one who is perfectly blind, and nations with a preponderance of such benighted people cannot make the same progress as an educated nation. The education of the people is what one so much admires in Germany. There, all are well educated, and throughout the whole length and breadth of the country you don't see a beggar; but as for Spain and Italy and Sicily, why the blessed countries are filled with beggars from one end to the other.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—They have the Bible in the German schools.

The Hon. S. FRASER.—But the most extraordinary thing is that the Germans are not a religious community; at any rate not after our fashion. They go to the Lutheran Church on the Sunday morning, and to a dance in the afternoon. That is a

common occurrence in many parts of Germany, and yet they get along very well. Apple trees grow in the streets, but no one touches them; in fact, speaking generally, there is not a thief in the country.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—That is because Prince Bismarck has them all locked up. Will the honorable member allow me to tell him a fact, which shows that it is a very good thing on some occasions to have a despotic Government. I was in Berlin when Kaiser Wilhelm appeared for the first time in public after a severe illness. He was received with the greatest enthusiasm, the streets were packed with people, and yet next morning we were told in the newspapers that there had not been a single outrage, not a single theft, not even a single pocket picked. But the explanation of it all was this—that, in anticipation of the event, Prince Bismarck had given instructions to the police to take in hand every old convict, every man who had ever committed a theft, and lock them all up.

The Hon. S. FRASER.—A very nice little story, and very well told. I spent a great deal of time in Germany, and I can testify that they are a most law-abiding people. The Government is a severe Government, but where it is severe it is a success; the soil of the country is poor and almost barren; there are no minerals worth speaking of, and yet Germany prospers far and away beyond many countries that are highly favoured by nature, and the people are well off comparatively speaking. That, I believe, is all attributable to the fact that they are an educated people. I am glad to find, from an investigation recently made by the Chief Commissioner of Police in this colony that only a very small percentage of children of school age in Melbourne are not receiving any education. I was under the impression that there was a considerable number who were not receiving any school teaching, but the police were only able to trace 60 such children in Melbourne, so that the Education Act, in almost every respect, is a great success.

The Hon. C. J. HAM.—It is evident that the truant officers are not doing their duty.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—Hundreds of children in Melbourne are receiving no education.

The Hon. S. FRASER.—The Chief Commissioner of Police made the strictest investigation, and had the whole of his department at command, but only 114 children whose education was neglected could be traced, in the whole of the city of Melbourne, and when their cases came to be looked into, it was found that only 60 of those children were receiving no education at all.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—Statistics can be made to prove anything.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT.—And in that case they proved a most gratifying fact.

The Hon. S. FRASER.—What hope is there of any amendment of the Act, in the direction of making religious instruction a part of the State schools curriculum? If the Council were to accept the amendment which Mr. Balfour intends to propose, the Assembly would reject it, and if the Council were to insist on the amendment, the advantages of the Bill as it stands would be lost altogether. I consider the proposal to allow children to leave school at 13 instead of 15 years of age is a decided improvement. Many children are sufficiently well educated at 13 years of age, and it is only right that they should be allowed to earn their livelihood and accustom themselves to the ways of the world. At 15 or 16 they would not be so ready to take to the occupation they were intended to follow. The son of a well-to-do person, brought up to manhood without turning to any occupation, if he suddenly lost his patrimony, was one of, the most helpless members of the community an idle, good-for-nothing fellow, not because he was inherently bad, but because of the faultiness of his early training. I am a great believer in allowing children to adapt themselves at an early age to the occupation they are to follow in after life; hence, I highly approve also of the alteration in the school attendances, proposed with a view to allow the children in the country districts to assist in harvesting, fruit gathering, and other occupations that will be so beneficial to themselves and to their parents.

The Hon. J. H. ABBOTT.—Sir, as a new member of this House, I have been astonished to find that all that this Bill contains seems to meet with approval, and that it is only in respect of matters that are not in the Bill on which this debate has taken place. Perhaps when Mr. Balfour has heard all the arguments against his intended amendment he will not propose it.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—Oh, yes, I will.

The Hon. J. H. ABBOTT.—I was in hopes that this Bill would have contained some provisions for giving more power to the boards of advice and to interest them in

the schools—provisions which would have been calculated to benefit the schools up-country. No exception has been taken to anything in the Bill, except perhaps to clause 10, which provides that Richardson's temperance lesson book and Ridge's primer shall be used in the State schools. Mr, Service suggested that these books should be sent to us. If I had not known that they were circulated at the suggestion of Mr. Service, I should have considered that it was a stratagem on the part of the enemy. I was beguiled into reading them, and when supper-time came I felt quite queer, owing to the dreadful account they gave of the physiological effects of alcohol, and some of my family noticed that there was something wrong.

The Hon. J. SERVICE.—Did you give up the alcohol?

The Hon. J. H. ABBOTT.—Yes, I did for that night. Speaking as one who has served for many years on the Common Schools Committee, and as a member and chairman of a board of advice under the present Education Act, I venture to express the hope that something will be attempted in the way of decentralization in regard to the management of our State schools. We should bring up the children so that they will try to get their living in the districts in which they were born, and in which their parents live. Technological education has been very considerably discussed of late, and although the Government think that it would be too expensive to give technological instruction as a part of the curriculum of our State schools, I venture to think it might be done by means of lectures from travelling teachers, as is done in the case of singing and drawing. In wine-growing districts lectures might be given on viticulture, in mining districts on metallurgy, geology, and mining, and in farming and agricultural districts on matters appertaining to the work of the farm and the field. The lectures should be designed to interest the children in the very occupations by which they are expected to gain their living when they become old enough to go to work. What I object to about our present system of public instruction is that we are turning out of our State schools nothing but clerks. They make very fair ordinary clerks, they understand the three R's; but they are all clerks, and those in the provincial towns and country districts seem to have no other ambition in life than to get a clerkship in Melbourne. The consequence is that the labour market is glutted with clerks, and if a clerkship is advertised, there are hundreds of applications for the post from young men in the country, who don't want to be farmers or miners, like their fathers before them. Our agricultural colleges are doing good work, and our schools of mines are institutions of which we may all be proud; but something should be done to create in the minds of the children of the selectors, the miners, and others engaged in labour, a desire to engage in the occupations which their fathers follow in their own districts. The expense of a scheme such as I have suggested would not be great, and it would prove of great advantage to the whole colony if it caused the young men in the country to devote themselves to some useful and profitable pursuit in their own districts, instead of flooding Melbourne. Something should likewise be done to induce the best men in each district to offer themselves as candidates for the boards of advice.

The Hon. C. J. HAM,—Give the boards of advice more power.

The Hon. J. H. ABBOTT.—That is precisely what is needed. At present there is very often no competition for seats on the boards of advice, and the Minister of Justice will bear me out when I say that vacancies have continually to be filled by the Governor in Council. This is greatly to be regretted, because we lose immensely when we fail to secure the services of the leading men of a city or town in the cause of education. Under the old system there was a general anxiety among the leading people of the different centres of population to do everything they could to assist the cause of education, but it seems now as though all that interest had subsided. Surely, however, it is most important to have the best members of each little community in the colony helping in the management of the local schools. I hope that some remedy will be applied in this direction. As for the religious question raised by Mr. Balfour, I am sorry it has been brought forward, because it is surrounded by difficulties which cannot, as far as I can see, be settled at the present time. We may be able to take some step in the matter some day, but I am afraid the amendment Mr. Balfour has in view would not meet the case, inasmuch as it would not satisfy the Roman Catholics, with respect to whom I would say that if we cannot do them justice we ought, at all events, to refrain from annoying them.

The Hon. F. ILLINGWORTH.—Mr. President, I have listened with great interest to the various able speeches which

have been made to us on the present question. We have heard some amusing references to clause 10 of the Bill, but, with all due deference to the honorable member who made them, I have much pleasure in expressing my entire and complete concurrence with that clause. The Minister of Justice objects to it, but he must be aware that the proposed introduction of these temperance lesson books has received the approval of a large majority elsewhere, and also that they are already on the list of lesson books in use by the Education department. All the clause asks for, then, is that what the department has already proposed to do should be carried out under the sanction of the law. I will point out further, that out of the 42 states comprised in the American Union 28 have adopted these books for their schools. For my part, I think that, inasmuch as we in this colony annually spend several millions of pounds on intoxicating liquors—more by many times over than we spend on education—it is high time our young people were taught something about the nature and chemical properties of those liquors, and also about the results, both to individuals and to the community, which follow their use. Seeing that our children are similarly taught with respect to a number of other subjects, why should they not be equally well instructed in regard to the article on which such an enormous amount of money is being yearly expended? Are those who oppose this clause unwilling that the nature and effects of intoxicating liquors should be known to the world? If they are not, what real objection can they possibly have to the clause? As to the religious question, it is surrounded by difficulties. I know Mr. Balfour and others will be surprised when I express my convictions with respect to the amendment which that honorable member has in view, but I am nevertheless bound to state what they are. Of some of the views put forward during this discussion I do not at all approve. For example, it has been urged that because a number of honorable members elsewhere are adverse to the principle embodied in Mr. Balfour's intended amendment, we ought not to adopt it; but I don't concur with that idea at all. Why, if I stood alone in advocating a principle I believed in, still I would advocate it. The only question to consider should be—Is such and such a principle a right one? No doubt we are all agreed that our children should receive some sort of religious instruction, but one great objection I have to the present administration of the Education Act is that under it too much religious instruction is given. Some honorable members may not quite grasp this, but what I wish to convey is that under that administration the word "secular" is made to mean a good deal more than I think the Legislature intended it to convey. The teachers have been made to feel as though the mere mention of the name of God, or of Christ, or of the great principles of the Bible, was somewhat of the nature of a crime. I know of teachers who have had a black mark put against them because they taught in a Sunday school. ("Name.") I could give names if I chose, but this is not the time to do so. I also know of men —their names, too, could be mentioned if it was necessary to do so—holding high positions in the Education department who have been compelled, not by direct word, but by the unwritten law of the department, to give up their Sunday appointments in respect to teaching, and so on. Why were they so compelled? Is not every other public servant at perfect liberty to give his time on Sunday to a Sunday school? Is the State going to take the stand that, because its system of education is free, secular, and compulsory, its teachers should not be religious, or teach religion out of school hours? My objection is that while teaching the Bible in the schools is strictly forbidden, secularism or free thought is allowed to be taught there. Now, there is just as much sectarianism in what is called free thought, as there is in any other form of denominationalism.

The Hon. J. SERVICE.—No.

The Hon. F. ILLINGWORTH.—I think there is. There is just as much creed in secularists as there is in any other people.

The Hon. J. SERVICE.—What is the secularists' creed?

The Hon. F. ILLINGWORTH.—That there is no God.

The Hon. J. SERVICE.—I beg Mr. Illingworth's pardon for interrupting, but he is slandering a large section of the community.

The Hon. F. ILLINGWORTH.—I was referring to a particular class, but if Mr. Service thinks my reference too wide—that it includes certain other people to whom I did not intend to allude at all—I will withdraw the remark. Mr. Service must, however, know that there are in this community, holding certain views, certain organized bodies which are just as strictly denominational in their character as any ordinary religious denomination could be.

The Hon. J. SERVICE.—That is a very different statement, and I do not object to it.

The Hon. F. ILLINGWORTH.—What I was speaking of should not, I think, be encouraged. Mr. Connor said he would like to hear some of the honorable members who have recently come from the country address themselves to this question of religious instruction in State schools. Well, I beg to inform him that I am recently from the country, and that if any honorable member of this Chamber can say that at his election he got the support of what are called respectively the religious vote and the temperance vote, I can say it. I will also mention that every time I addressed the electors I told them that I was completely opposed to the introduction of the Bible or religious teaching to the State schools. Why did I say that? Why do I repeat the same thing now? I will try to explain. There is not in this House or out of it a stronger believer in the Bible, and in its power and influence, and also in the necessity for making its contents the rule of faith, than I am; but I contend that situated as we in this country are we cannot teach it in the State schools. The Bible is not to be learnt like other books. It is not a book out of which you can teach a lesson and then have done with it. Learning the Bible cannot be made task-work. Rather is the book one for us to take from the cradle to the grave, through every phase and conflict of human life, as something to help to perfect us as we go along. Nor is the Bible a book to be studied at only a particular period of our lives. It is intended for every race of man, at all ages and under all circumstances. How could such a book be make a school-book like an ordinary scholastic manual? Mr. Balfour wants certain Scripture lesson books used in the schools during a certain period of each day, but I would say that if we are to have Bible teaching in the schools we ought to have it pure. Let us have the Bible as it is—nothing more, nothing less. I know there are people who say that certain portions of the Bible ought not to be read by the young, but I make this challenge, that with respect to every portion of the Old or New Testament which any honorable member may point to as objectionable, I can match it with a passage from, say the *Age* newspaper of the day. And consider what a circulation the *Age* has. I have made the Bible my personal study for the last 30 years, and I know what I am talking about.

The Hon. J. SERVICE.—But you would not read to your children all that you find in the *Age* newspaper.

The Hon. F. ILLINGWORTH.—The honorable member is travelling outside my meaning. The Bible is intended to teach us what life is, what humanity is, and what both have been in all ages; and what it imparts is applicable to every state of things, for it tells us in regard to the evils suffered in this world, that God above is merciful to all. Mr. Melville quoted a sentence of the Chief Justice to this effect:—

> "The Christian religion has existed for more than 1800 years; the religion of Christ has yet to be tried."

Well, what I would say is that the religion of Christ has been so far tried that during the first century after Christ some 14,000,000 of people were converted to Christianity; but soon afterwards there came about an amalgamation of Christianity with paganism which remained for a long time. What first brought again to light the true thing? Was it not the introduction of the Bible, simply and alone? I contend for the Bible by itself without any human teaching. I say let the Bible do its own work, and in order that that work may be done I would have the State present to every child going into the third class of a State school as a prize—as something which the child would greatly value—a copy of the Bible. To the Protestant child I would have given a Protestant Bible, to the Catholic child a Douay Bible, to the Jewish child a Jewish Bible, and so on. So far as the State is concerned that is the only religious instruction I would let it impart. As I have said before, I would let the Bible do its own work. Giving religious instruction in schools was a very different thing in the old days. Now, however, when the State teaches the whole of the children of the community, we have to look at possible consequences in a most serious way. If we let the State impart religious instruction I can see no other issue than that we must have a State church. There is no avoiding that conclusion. If the State teaches religion it must teach some religion, and that religion must be the State religion—that is to say, the religion of the State church. Of course a State religion, or even a State church would be all right if we had no Church of England or Church of Rome—no Presbyterians, Wesleyans, Baptists, and the rest; but, as a matter of fact, we have

these divisions, and consequently we ought not to have a State church. Then, how can we possibly look to the State school teachers in this matter? How can a teacher teach religion if he knows no religion to teach? Is the State prepared to train him to teach religion, and by that means conduct the religious education of the whole community? On the other hand, could the duty of teaching religion be imposed upon an untrained teacher? I know I would not like to trust the religious education of my children to any man who thought fit to put himself forward as a teacher of religion. How could such a man bear the responsibility? The fact is, that it is the parents who must see to the religious education of their children, for resting upon them, with reference to this great question, there is a responsibiilty which they alone can take—a duty for the discharge of which they alone can be held accountable. Religion is not like other things, and the Bible is not like other books. From what manual a child learns arithmetic is not a vital point, nor does it much matter how he is taught; but with religion the book and the manner are everything. Think of the thousands and thousands of parents who would not dream of intrusting the religious instruction of their children to a State school teacher. Yet they wish their children to have religious instruction. Then, do we not know that what is called the "higher criticism" runs through almost every branch of college training, and that it has great influence with a very large number of the State school teachers? I do not speak of this as confined to Victoria, for it is a characteristic of the age we live in. It is one of the consequences of advancing thought, of the stronger light that is thrown on everything by the discoveries of the time, and the progress made in the various departments of knowledge. What is going down in the struggle is, however, not the Bible, but the sectarianism that has been grafted upon it by the different denominations. I have no fear for religion, but the sooner denominationalism disappears the better. Therefore I see nothing to be gained by the adoption of by Mr. Balfour's proposal.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—Why?

The Hon. F. ILLINGWORTH.—Because when you teach you must teach something. If you taught the "higher criticism," or Roman Catholicism, or Church of Englandism, or Wesleyanism, what would follow? Not many weeks would pass before you would have parents objecting.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—That does not happen in New South Wales or in England.

The Hon. F. ILLINGWORTH.—The reason of that is the absence of religious teaching. The State religious teaching the honorable member refers to is merely nominal religious teaching. Now, I am no advocate for half-measures. If we ought to be firm in anything we should be firm with regard to teaching Bible religion. If we are going to teach the Bible, let us teach pure Bible, and all the Bible.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR.—The Bible facts are all we want taught.

The Hon. J. SERVICE.—Are they all facts?

The Hon. F. ILLINGWORTH.—I consider that when the State has taught a child to read it has opened the Bible to him, and that then the duty of either the parents or the other proper religious instructors comes in. There is an idea abroad—I know how it has grown up, but this is not the place to discuss the matter—that the Bible is one of the mysterious books with respect to which the student requires some special aid in order to find out what it means. Yet we are told, on the other hand, that it is written in the purest English known, and that it contains the brightest illustrations, and the most interesting narratives. If, however, special aid is required in order to learn from it, could that special aid be got in a State school? I say let the children grow up with the power to read the Bible, so that they can gather from it what God desires them to do, and what they have to render an account of to God alone. But, with all this, I want a great alteration in the administration of the Education Act. I don't want a teacher to have, because he is religious, a black mark placed against his name. I want absolute freedom for the teachers—that they should be free to exercise their own judgment in religious matters, and be able to bring their moral influence to bear on the children in their charge.

The Hon. J. SERVICE.—That is inconsistent with other things you have said.

The Hon. F. ILLINGWORTH.—I am speaking now of what may be done out of school hours. For example, I think the department is wrong in preventing teachers from teaching religion in a Sunday school, or in other ways, outside the school hours. Besides, there is the political side of the question. One-third of our population who profess a certain religious faith feel so strongly with respect to religious teaching

in schools that, in addition to their ordinary burthen of taxation, they tax themselves heavily in order that their children may get school instruction in what they regard as necessary truths. Well, supposing religious teaching were introduced into the State schools, what would happen? You could never hope by such means to please the Roman Catholics. The moment you begin to teach religion in the schools at the cost of the State, that teaching being obnoxious to one-third of the community, the natural, logical, and only issue would be a separate grant for the Roman Catholic schools. There is no escape from that dilemma. Nor would the difficulty stop there. Our Jewish friends would say, "We do not believe in either Christ or the New Testament, therefore we ought also to have a separate grant;" and in common justice a separate grant would have to be given. And that sort of thing would go on, now with this denomination and now with that, until we go back to the old system of denominational education, pure and simple. If such a change could be made the means of increasing the power of religion over the community, I, for one, would not object. But would that be the outcome? Again, would it be right to tax the people for the support of such a system? With taxation there must go representation. Sir, it is impossible in this mixed community, comprising Jews, pagans, Roman Catholics, and all the Protestant denominations, to introduce religious teaching into the schools through the power of the State in such a way as to give satisfaction all round. Then there being nothing between State religious education and a State church, and, having always opposed the latter, I must also give my vote against the former. But let me be thoroughly understood. While I object, first, to the introduction of the Scripture lesson books into the State schools, and, secondly, to State school religious training, I yield to none in desiring to see the children of the colony properly and religiously educated. I assert that a child is only half educated unless his moral as well as his intellectual nature is developed. If his moral nature is not developed he is bound to become a greater burthen to society than he would be without education at all. I repeat that to introduce religious teaching into the State schools, at all events while our State educational affairs are in their present condition, would only lead to disaster.

The motion for the second reading of the Bill was agreed to.

The Bill was then read a second time and committed.

Discussion took place on clause 5, which was as follows :—

"Half-yearly examinations shall be held by the district inspectors in each school district for the purpose of the examination of children not attending State schools. Parents whose children are educated otherwise than at a State school shall be at liberty to offer them for examination at such half-yearly examinations, and if the district inspector certifies in writing that any such child is being educated up to the required standard, such certificate shall be conclusive evidence of the same, and until the next half-yearly examination be held such certificate shall be deemed a 'reasonable excuse' within the meaning of section 13 of the principal Act."

The Hon. F. T. SARGOOD said he would like to know from the Minister of Justice what was the exact meaning of this clause. Suppose a child who presented himself for examination was not able to pass the standard, and therefore did not get a certificate, what would be the effect on the child or parent?

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT observed that the object of the clause was to afford parents whose children were being educated elsewhere than at State schools an opportunity of ascertaining, through examination by a Government inspector every half-year, whether the children were being properly instructed or not. It was quite optional whether parents sent their children to be examined or not. There was nothing compulsory about the clause, but it would be a great advantage to a parent to have a certificate from a Government inspector that his child was being efficiently educated.

The Hon. F. T. SARGOOD said it seemed to him that if a child attending a private school, or under a tutor or governess, was presented for examination and failed to obtain a certificate that he was being educated up to the standard, the parent might be summoned, and then he would not be able to plead what was accepted as a "reasonable excuse" under the principal Act—that the child was under efficient instruction outside the State school. The child might be under daily instruction, yet fail through dullness to obtain the certificate.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT observed that it was not at all likely that a bench of magistrates would convict a parent who was able to show that his child was constantly attending a private school. On the other hand, the fact of the inspector declining to give a certificate would be a warning to the parent that he had better send his child to some other school where

he would be more efficiently taught. Of course if, after such a warning, the parent continued to send the child to an inefficient school, the fact might weigh with the bench.

The Hon. C. J. HAM observed that two parents might be educating their children at a private school, and that fact would at present be accepted as a "reasonable excuse" under the principal Act. But if one of those parents, more anxious than the other to know how his child was getting on, presented him for examination by the Government inspector, and the child failed to obtain a certificate, the parent would be liable to be brought up and fined under the principal Act. On the other hand, the less anxious parent would escape by not presenting his child. Why should the anxious parent be put in a worse position than the other?

The Hon. J. BALFOUR expressed the opinion that the clause should end at the word "examinations" (line 7). It would then show that the intention was that instead of limiting the examinations to the State schools, children attending other schools could also get the benefit of the examination. If the latter part of the clause was retained it would seem that the parent of a child who failed to obtain a certificate would be placed at a disadvantage if proceedings were taken against him.

The Hon. W. H. ROBERTS said that under the clause if a child who was attending a private school or who was being educated by a tutor presented himself for examination and did not obtain a certificate, the parent could be brought before the magistrates, and they would have to fine him. The object of the principal Act, however, was not to punish those who sent their children to private schools, but those who did not send their children to any school. At present it was a sufficient answer to a summons to show that a child was being educated at a private school.

The Hon. J. M. DAVIES considered that the clause was right as it stood. The principal Act provided that it was a "reasonable excuse" if a parent could show that his child was receiving sufficient instruction elsewhere than at the State school, or that he had been educated up to the standard. If a parent was now summoned before the magistrates he would have to prove one of those excuses to the satisfaction of the bench, which, in some cases, although the state of things pleaded really existed, it might be a difficult thing to do. But if this clause became law, the certificate of the Government inspector would be conclusive evidence, and even if the child failed to get a certificate it would still be open to the parent to convince the bench that the child was being efficiently instructed. The clause simply afforded an additional and easy means of proving a "reasonable excuse" under the principal Act.

The Hon. D. MELVILLE said he desired to know whether this clause would allow what the Roman Catholics had for a long time been asking for, namely, that Government inspectors might be permitted to enter their schools, examine the children, and give them certificates of proficiency? Was the clause intended to meet this requirement of the Roman Catholics, or had it simply been rendered necessary by some discovery of the department?

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT stated that the clause would enable the children attending Roman Catholic schools to be examined if they wished, but they would have to present themselves at a place appointed by the inspector. He was informed in a memorandum from the Education department that half-yearly examinations had been held since 1872, but had seldom been taken advantage of; that Catholic parents had often complained that their children when they attended denominational schools could not be examined for certificates of exemption from compulsory attendance; and that the clause would also protect parents who were really educating their children at home from being summoned vexatiously. This was simply an enabling clause; there was nothing compulsory in it. The defence was frequently put forward in court that a child was being efficiently educated elsewhere than at a State school, and this clause would afford the parent an easy means of proving that defence by producing the certificate of the inspector. The clause would not create any additional offence, while it would be a benefit to those parents who chose to take advantage of it.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR remarked that after the explanations of the Minister of Justice and Mr. Davies he was satisfied that the clause could do no harm at all events. It would be the means of providing a document which would satisfy the bench instead of the parent having to give a lengthy proof.

The Hon. J. SERVICE stated that this clause arrested his attention in going through the Bill, and he had hoped to hear some substantial reason for its introduction into the measure. It was not sufficient that

a clause "could do no harm"; unless it was intended to do some good it should not be inserted. Would this clause prevent any of the classes of people from being summoned who had been summoned during the years the Education Act had been in existence? (Mr. Cuthbert—"I think so.") He did not think so. The persons who would present their children for examination were persons whom the truant officer would never dream of summoning, because he would know that the children were being thoroughly educated. When he found a clause with no apparent meaning he looked for some object which was not disclosed on the surface. He did not think the clause could do any real good, and he was inclined to fear that it was the "thin edge of the wedge" to introduce some system that would be objectionable hereafter.

The Hon. S. FRASER said he was inclined to take the same view as Mr. Service. No difficulties had arisen from the want of the clause, and it might lead to considerable embarrassment. Suppose a denomination were to present the whole of the pupils of their schools for examination—say even 1,000 scholars—it would be rather troublesome to the department to provide for their examination. It would be like throwing a bomb-shell or a piece of dynamite into the Education Act. (Mr. Cuthbert—"What objection could there be to it?") He did not say that there was any objection, but, like Mr. Service, he could see no apparent reason for the clause, and therefore he began to think that there must be some reason he did not see. (Mr. Service—"Whole schools might present themselves.") Yes.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT inquired what harm would result supposing whole schools did present themselves for examination? Was it not well that the State should know whether the children were being properly educated?

The Hon. S. FRASER said the clause at first seemed to him to be simple and advantageous, but on further consideration he confessed he did not like it.

The Hon. F. ILLINGWORTH observed that honorable members could not ignore the fact that a section of the community, since the Education Act was passed, had taken to educating their own children at their own schools. If attendance at those schools was to be admitted as a sufficient excuse for not attending the State schools, there was every reason why there should be examinations of the children, else, how was the State to know that the children were being educated up to the standard? He was not prepared to insist that all children attending outside schools should be required to pass the State school examination, because they might be well educated and yet not able to pass that examination, the books and the lines of instruction perhaps being different; but certainly, if those children desired to obtain the State school certificate to take out into life with them, they should not be debarred from an opportunity of securing it.

The Hon. W. McCULLOCH said he thought the clause would prove very useful. A child might be taught by its mother or sister, and the examination which the clause provided for would, if the child obtained a certificate, prevent any annoyance from visits by the truant inspector.

The Hon. D. MELVILLE observed that the clause went in the direction which the Roman Catholics had been asking Parliament to go ever since the Education Act was passed. Candidates were asked on the platform by Catholics—"Are you prepared to give us a capitation allowance for every child that passes the examination of the State school inspector?" (Mr. Cuthbert—"And what has been the answer?") The answer from the supporters of the Education Act was invariably "No." This clause was a new departure, enabling certificates to be issued to denominational schools. (Mr. Cuthbert—"To children, not to schools.") It was the first step that might lead to something more objectionable. The parents of children were often brought into court, but it was for non-attendance at school. Evidence was usually given by a truant officer, that the child, in any particular case, had been in the public streets during school hours. The magistrates warned the parents if it was a first offence, but if it was a second offence they were fined. But if the parents were able to say that the child was attending a private school, the magistrates would never interfere. Why should the State step in and offer to issue certificates to children attending private schools. Children who had been educated in a State school might, if the clause were passed, be sent to a private school for a short time, and afterwards presented for examination. A certificate might then be given to the child, and it would go forth that it had been educated at a private school, which would not be true. He objected to the clause altogether, and if the Minister of Justice

would not allow it to be postponed, he would move that it be struck out.

The Hon. S. FRASER remarked that Mr. Melville had thrown some new light on the clause. If the clause were passed, there would be nothing whatever to prevent children being educated wholesale in the State schools at Government expense, and, just when they were ready to take their certificates, being withdrawn and sent to private schools. They would then obtain the certificates as pupils of a private school. (Mr. Zeal—"What harm is there in that?") There would be this harm, that the State would be robbed of the credit to which it was entitled.

The Hon. J. SERVICE observed that the clause either referred to children educated privately or to children educated at schools other than State schools. (Mr. Zeal—"To both.") It did theoretically. Did the Minister of Justice know of a single instance in the whole history of the Education Act in which a truant officer had summoned the parent of a child who was attending a private school on the ground that the child had not been sufficiently educated? The Minister of Justice had not shown that the clause was necessary, and he could not do so. In the Assembly a claim had been made on behalf of a certain section of the community, that the children attending private and denominational schools should be admitted to the examinations, and the next that was to have been urged was that after the children had passed the examination, they should be allowed to compete for the State scholarships, and placed on exactly the same footing as the children educated in the State schools. (Mr. Zeal—"Why not?") The honorable member was entitled to take that view of the matter, but the clause involved a new departure. (Mr. Zeal—"It is simple justice.") It might be a good departure, but it was a new departure, and therefore he wanted honorable members to seriously consider it. If the State recognised private schools, then the State school system was a sham, and a delusion and a snare, and the sooner the colony returned to the denominational system the better.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT stated that Mr. Service would have made a capital cross-examiner. The honorable member put his questions so logically and clearly that one would almost imagine that he had him (Mr. Cuthbert) in the witness box. Mr. Melville, who had a wonderful imagination, thought he saw a "rift" in the clause; in fact, he appeared to be always looking for "rifts," and Mr. Fraser did not like the clause, but he did not tell the committee why he did not like it. (Mr. Fraser—"I see no good in it.") Examinations of the kind referred to had been held under regulations every half-year since 1872; and it was thought that it would be well to legalize them in express terms, so that there could be no mistake as to the purpose for which they were held. It was not intended to give a capitation grant to the private schools. (Mr. Fraser—"Such a proposal would cause the Ministry to be hurled out of office.") The clause did not come simply from the Ministry; it had received the sanction of the Assembly, and was entitled to the earnest consideration of honorable members. The clause would enable the masters of private schools, or the parents of children attending private schools, to ascertain whether their children were being educated up to the standard of the State schools. With regard to Mr. Service's question, he must confess that he did not know an instance of a parent having been brought before the magistrates because his child was not being properly educated, when the child was attending any well-established private school; but he knew of many cases of parents being summoned because their children were not being sufficiently educated, and in which the defence had been set up that those children had been sent to a particular school. In such cases it was the duty of the magistrates to say whether the instruction given at that school was sufficient. It might be said that if this clause were passed a very large number of children from private schools might present themselves for examination, and the work of the inspectors would be very greatly increased. If that were so, it would be an advantage, as it would enable the State to ascertain whether the children attending the private schools were being educated up to the proper standard. At present the State knew very little about the education given in many of those schools. It was not intended that there should be any interference with the rights and privileges of the private schools; and he could not see what harm the clause would do. Would the granting of certificates to children attending private schools justify a claim being made to Parliament for the payment of the cost of the education of those children? And if that claim were made, was it likely that Parliament would accede to it, and upset all that was good in

the Education Act? Such an idea would only enter the imagination of such a gentleman as Mr. Service. The honorable member thought he saw a little "rift." (Mr. Service—"I have seen these little 'rifts' before.") The honorable member thought he saw a "little rift within the lute," and he was afraid that it would be widened, but he (Mr. Cuthbert) could not conceive that there was the slightest danger to be apprehended from the clause of a claim being made for grants to the private schools. If any such idea had entered into the minds of the members of the Government, they would not have inserted the clause in the Bill.

The Hon. S. FRASER said he would not object so much to the clause if it were provided that the children from private schools should be examined along with the children from the State schools. But it was proposed that there should be a special examination. (Mr. Cuthbert—"They will come up with the State school children.") That was not the meaning of the clause. It provided for an examination of children not attending State schools. (Mr. Cuthbert—"On the same day as the examination of the State school children.") If the Minister of Justice would amend the clause to provide that children not attending the State schools might present themselves at the State school examinations, he would not object to it. (Mr. Zeal—"Would you object to a Roman Catholic having a certificate?") He would not object to anything that was fair, or for the good of the colony.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL remarked that he would advise the Minister of Justice to postpone the clause, if for no other reason than to allay the unfounded suspicions that existed in the minds of some honorable members with regard to it. Why did not honorable members be honest, and say at once that they were striking at the Roman Catholics? Were not the Roman Catholics of the same flesh and blood as other members of the community? Did not they pay taxes in the same way as others, and were they not entitled to the same protection as others? (Mr. Fraser—"Certainly.") Then what objection could there be to their obtaining certificates? Was there any honesty or fairness in the attempt to deprive them of certificates? (Mr. Service—"Why not give them the money of the State?") That was an altogether different matter. If the Roman Catholics chose to provide their own schools, let them pay for them. But if they desired not only to take certificates, but to participate in the benefits of the State scholarships, they should be allowed to do so, as they contributed equally with others to the cost of the State school system.

The Hon. D. MELVILLE observed that it had been suggested by the Minister of Justice that he was always looking for "rifts." He was sent into the House for no other purpose than that of looking for "rifts." He was sorry to say that the Bills which the honorable gentleman had introduced had enabled not only himself but many other honorable members to discover numerous "rifts." He altogether disclaimed any desire to do injustice to any class of the community, or to deprive the Roman Catholics, or any other religious denomination, of their rights. The clause before the committee involved an important change in the education system of the colony. He was a supporter of the Education Act, and he knew that it had a great many enemies. (Mr. Service—"Both open and secret.") Yes, both open and secret. They met together, and fired away at the Minister of Public Instruction in the most extraordinary manner, simply because he was the administrator of the Education Act. Papers were written about him; he was subjected to a great deal of vituperation, and one would really think that he was a terrible sort of fellow. The Roman Catholics had always undertaken the education of their own children; and he objected to the State interfering, either directly or indirectly, with children who were being educated by the Roman Catholics or by any other denomination. Under the provisions of the clause, the whole of the children attending any denominational school could present themselves for examination at the one time. It was evident what the meaning of the clause was. The religious denominations wanted to teach their children their particular tenets, and to present them for examination by the State, so that they might afterwards claim a share of the Government grant for educational purposes. Those denominations would do anything they could to overthrow the present Education Act unless they got what they required. (Mr. Balfour—"No, that is utterly unfair.") Had not the education system of the colony been described as a "heathenish" and a "godless" system? (Mr. Balfour—"Who said that?") He understood the honorable member to say that the children of the colony were being brought up as "heathens."

The Hon. J. BALFOUR said he was glad to have an opportunity afforded him of explaining the statement to which the honorable member referred. In the course of his (Mr. Balfour's) speech on the previous day, Mr. Service interjected that the introduction of religious instruction into the State schools, with a conscience clause, would make one part of the colony heathenish, and another part Christian. He took up the statement, and said that if it were true, the whole colony must be "heathenish" at present.

The Hon. D. MELVILLE stated that at any rate the term "godless" had often been applied to the education system of the colony. The denominations desired to teach their particular creeds, and it was the duty of honorable members, as representatives of the people, to resist any attempt to interfere with the fundamental principles of the Education Act.

The Hon. J. M. DAVIES said he could not understand the terrible fear that existed that the Roman Catholics would gain an undue advantage from this clause, in some hidden mysterious way. Lawyers generally were credited with being able to draw hidden meanings out of Acts of Parliament; but some honorable members had drawn meanings out of this clause that would never enter into the mind of any lawyer. To him the clause was perfectly plain. The Education Act recognised the fact that there were many children who were not being educated in the State schools, and the object of the clause was to afford those children an opportunity of being examined every half-year so that they might obtain certificates which would be accepted as conclusive evidence that they had been educated up to the required standard. Was it a crime for parents to educate their children at schools other than State schools? It seemed to him that, if anything, they conferred a benefit upon the State, because they helped to maintain the State system of education without adding to its cost; they bore a double burthen—the education of other people's children as well as of their own. He saw no reason why those parents should be discouraged in any way, or why, if a State certificate would be of any benefit to their children, they should be deprived of it. The public service and the University matriculation examinations were open to all classes of the community; and the examinations conducted by the inspectors of the Education department should not be confined to the children attending the State schools. The examination provided for in the clause was to be a separate examination, but not a school examination. It was to be an examination of children who might have been educated at a number of different schools, or by private tuition in any school district. It might, of course, happen that all the children sent up for examination came from one school; but the children would be sent up by their parents, and not by the teachers. He certainly did object to the argument that if the committee passed the clause they would have to concede some larger demands in the future. Surely honorable members would be able to resist any improper claim that was made upon them. He could understand the objections raised to the amendment that Mr. Balfour had indicated his intention of moving, when such an innocent, harmless clause as this was opposed on the ground that there was some hidden, mysterious meaning lurking in it.

The Hon. J. SERVICE congratulated Mr. Davies upon his maiden speech. He had known the honorable member for over 30 years, and there was no gentleman in the colony whose opinion he would prefer to his. It was well known that the Roman Catholics wanted the State to pay for the secular education they gave to their children. (Mr. Zeal—"They will not get payment.") Would the honorable member assure the committee of that? (Mr. Zeal—"Yes.") If somebody, whose guarantee the committee would be prepared to take, would endorse the honorable member's "bill," he (Mr. Service) would accept it. So far as the clause was intended to deal with individual parents or children, there was no difference of opinion with regard to it; but there was a certain section of the community who had declared the Education Act to be a "godless Act," and who would take every means, direct and indirect, of destroying the education system of the colony unless they were recognised in a particular way. They wanted the State to recoup to them the cost of the education of their children; and what he objected to was that they should obtain, by indirect means, what had been refused to them. If the clause were passed, the children attending the Roman Catholic schools would present themselves for examination, and then it would be said, "Now, how can you refuse to give us a capitation grant, seeing that we have performed a duty to our children which it has cost the State hundreds of thousands of pounds to perform in respect of the Protestant children?" There was no honorable

member to whom he would yield precedence in his desire for universal brotherhood. He would despise himself utterly if he would withhold from a Roman Catholic or any other person in the community—even a free-thinker—any advantage to which he was entitled. But if the State established a system of education, it must not allow that system to be destroyed either by a direct attack or by sapping and mining. There were occasions when they should look a long way ahead and endeavour to prevent the first insidious advance of those who openly acknowledged themselves to be foes.

The Hon. S. FRASER observed that he would not be party to any act of injustice to the Roman Catholics or any other sect, or to the vilest and meanest person in the community, but he had a public duty to perform for the benefit of the country, and he would do his duty no matter what were the consequences. He would certainly vote against the clause.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR remarked that the committee might pass the clause without doing anything very serious in the way of sapping and mining the Education Act. It did not propose any State interference, but only to empower the State to do something if the parents of the children chose to ask for it to be done. The clause contained no secret or covert design against the Act. Surely Catholic children had a right to a State certificate if they were educated up to the standard. (Mr. Service—"A right?") A perfect right. (Mr. Service—"A statutory right?") They were a part of the community, and contributed their share of the cost of inspection. (Mr. Fraser—"But this is a new departure.") And a good departure. If it had been proposed to send the inspectors into the houses of the people to ascertain by compulsory examination whether the children were educated up to the required standard, he would have considered it an act of despotism and tyranny. Mr. Melville had spoken of open and secret enemies of the Education Act, and coupled that with certain papers from the Bible in State Schools League, which he described as vituperation. (Mr. Melville—"I did not know anything about the Bible in State Schools League.") Well, the name of the league was printed in large letters at the top of the papers. If the honorable member thought that the league was a secret enemy of the Act, he had made one of the greatest blunders he ever made in his life. The league desired to have re-inserted in the school books the Scripture lessons which were in use for years after the Education Act was passed.

The committee divided on the question that clause 5 stand part of the Bill—

Ayes	13
Noes	6
Majority for the clause ...	7

AYES.

Mr. Cuthbert,	Mr. MacPherson,
,, J. M. Davies,	,, Morey,
,, Gore,	,, Sargeant,
,, C. J. Ham,	,, Simmie,
,, Illingworth,	,, Zeal.
,, James,	*Teller.*
,, McCulloch,	Mr. Balfour.

NOES.

Dr. Beaney,	Mr. Service.
Mr. Fraser,	
,, Melville,	*Teller.*
Col. Sargood.	Mr. Roberts.

Clause 7, empowering the Governor in Council to fix the dates of elections of boards of advice, and the periods of service, so that members might retire in rotation, and also to determine whether the number of members in each case should be five, six, or seven, was verbally amended.

Discussion took place on clause 10, which was as follows :—

"The secular instruction to be given in every State school shall include Richardson's temperance lesson book and Ridge's primer."

The Hon. C. J. HAM moved that all the words after the word "shall" (line 2) be struck out with a view to insert "in the case of children over nine years of age, include the teaching of lessons from some recognised temperance lesson book." The Government were not in favour of clause 10 being inserted in the Bill, but it was carried by a very large majority in the Assembly. It was desirable that unanimity should be obtained upon the question, and he believed that the amendment he now proposed would be accepted in the Assembly.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT said that the Government objected to the clause as inserted in the Bill on the ground that it was undesirable to mention the names of particular books in an Act of Parliament, and as the parties who were instrumental in carrying the clause had expressed their willingness to accept Mr. Ham's amendment, he thought it might properly be adopted. It would be a very good thing to give children over nine years of age instruction from some recognised temperance lesson book, but Parliament ought to leave it to the Minister to say what book should be used.

The Hon. D. MELVILLE observed that he objected to the amendment on the ground that it would widen the clause and introduce a new departure. Why leave the Minister to select the temperance lesson books to be used in the State schools? Why not make the proposed experiment with books which honorable members had examined for themselves? He had read the books mentioned in the clause and found nothing objectionable. (Col. Sargood—"The accuracy of the books is questioned.") The accuracy of the Bible had been questioned. It was never intended that children under nine years of age should be called upon to read the temperance lesson books, so that there was nothing in the restriction as to age. As soon as a child could read the books intelligibly there was no harm in his reading them. He would ask Mr. Ham to withdraw his amendment.

The Hon. F. T. SARGOOD remarked that he had hoped the Minister of Justice would carry out the determination he expressed in the course of the debate on the second reading of the Bill, and moved in committee that clause 10 be omitted, on the ground that no particular lesson book on any subject was mentioned in the principal Act. The amendment was an improvement on the clause, but to his mind it was open to a large extent to the same objection, namely, that it laid down in the Bill that a certain class of instruction was to be given in the State schools, and indicated that it must be given from a recognised temperance lesson book. There was no such provision in the Education Act referring to any other branch of instruction, and why should they stop at lessons on temperance? Why not go on to other matters of equal importance such as health and sanitation? (Mr. Fraser—"Both very useful.") Perhaps quite as useful as lessons in temperance, and more easily taught. The books mentioned in the clause appeared to be very unsuitable for children of nine or ten years of age. There was nothing very new in them, and one was, to a large extent, a hash up of Johnston's *Chemistry of Common Life*, published many years ago. Some of the statements it contained had been challenged by medical authorities who were quite as eminent as the writers of the books mentioned in the clause. From beginning to end Richardson's temperance lesson book laid it down that alcohol was not beneficial but absolutely detrimental in many respects; but many of the leading scientists in London and Europe entirely traversed that statement. Therefore it appeared to him that it would be a mistake to place such a book in the hands of the children. He believed it was desirable to teach temperance in the State schools, but it would be infinitely better to have some simple book written for the purpose, and containing only accepted facts, and not the so-called facts of—he was going to say bigots, but he would rather use the term enthusiasts in the cause of temperance. No good, but rather harm, would arise from introducing these books into the State schools, and he would prefer to see the clause struck out, as there was a sufficiently strong feeling in the community to cause the Minister of Public Instruction to include some kind of temperance lessons in the ordinary curriculum of the State schools. To make Richardson's temperance lesson book and Ridge's primer a part of the Education Act of the colony would be a great mistake.

The Hon. F. ILLINGWORTH observed that one of the chief objections raised by those who took sides against the temperance movement was that the advocates of temperance did not use moral means to reach the people. Now, the object of these lessons was to use moral means of propagating temperance. Richardson's temperance lesson book was written by one of the first medical men of the present age. If Colonel Sargood could suggest some other book that contained the ascertained facts with regard to the effect of alcohol upon the system, the temperance party would be disposed to accept the work as a lesson book in the State schools, but of course they would prefer the use of the books named in the clause. There was no desire to give the children wrong information in reference to alcohol. In view of the fact that over £6,000,000 worth of intoxicating liquors was consumed in the colony, it was only right that the children should be instructed as to their chemical constituents and physiological effects. The people ought to know what it was they were drinking to such an extent. If there was any good in alcohol the people should be informed of it, but the best evidence as yet obtainable had never been able to make it very clear that there was any good in alcohol. (An honorable member—"Hundreds of lives have been saved by alcohol.") And hundreds and thousands of lives had been lost through it. The gentlemen in charge of the lunatic asylums and penal establishments declared that 70 per cent. at least of the lunacy and crime of the country was caused directly by

alcohol. Even those who argued that it was useful in exceptional cases, admitted that the people drank too much of it, that they took the wrong kinds of liquors, and that the quality was not always good. It was time the people knew what they were drinking, and when and how much and what kind of alcohol they might drink without doing themselves harm. He was not in favour of Mr. Ham's amendment, because he desired to know what it was proposed to teach the children on this question. He did not want what some honorable members would call dogmatic temperance teaching—what enthusiasts had said on the subject—but he wished to have the chemical constituents of alcoholic liquors defined, and their physiological effects described for the information of the young, so that they would not grow up in ignorance on a subject of vital importance to the welfare of the people.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR said he would vote for the amendment rather than not have the clause in some form. At the same time he preferred the clause as it stood in the Bill, because if it had been adopted he would have known that he was voting for the introduction into the State schools of two recognised temperance lesson books. In voting for the amendment, which left the choice of the lesson book to the Minister, honorable members did not know what they were voting for.

The Hon. H. GORE said he could not see why the committee should draw the line at temperance lessons. Why not introduce lessons on other subjects of equal importance to the community? He was not an opponent of the temperance principle, because last year he voted for local option. The books mentioned in the clause were beyond the comprehension of children attending the State schools. A person would require to have passed the matriculation examination, and to have had some instruction in chemistry, before he could understand what was taught in those books. (An Honorable Member—"They would be Latin and Greek to the children.") Certainly. Besides that he did not wish the children of this colony to be educated in a narrow groove. He desired them to be taught so as to be able to distinguish for themselves between what was right and what was wrong. He did not object to the teaching of temperance *per se*, but he objected to one subject being singled out in preference to others of equal importance.

The Hon. W. H. ROBERTS moved that the clause be postponed. It dealt with a matter of very great importance, and affected the fundamental principles of the Act. The amendment ought to be printed and circulated so that honorable members would have time to consider the question before voting upon it.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL expressed the opinion that it would be better to postpone the clause as the matter required careful consideration. The amendment was one of very great importance, and it certainly commended itself to his mind as more reasonable than the original clause.

The Hon. J. SERVICE said he would approve of the postponement of the clause, but was quite against it as it stood because he did not think it was a function of Parliament to dictate what books ought to be used in the State schools. Parliament should determine the general policy of the Education department, but leave the Minister of Public Instruction to select the books which were to be used in the schools. The books mentioned in the clause would most certainly be Greek and Hebrew to nine-tenths of the State school children. He was an old teacher himself and knew what he was speaking about, and he did not hesitate to say that these books would create difficulty and confusion. The evil arising from the undue consumption of alcohol in the colony ought to be grappled with, and perhaps one of the most effectual aids to the accomplishment of that end would be the judicious instruction of the children in the State schools. If a better amendment was not proposed he should vote for Mr. Ham's amendment. He agreed with Colonel Sargood that there was a great deal to be said against specifying any particular subject of school instruction in an Act of Parliament; but the evil of intemperance was growing, and called for a remedy. Some few years ago there was a general impression that the young Australians would not be a drinking race, but he was afraid that the experience of more recent years tended to show that the young Australians were just as strongly tempted as the young men of other countries. (Mr. Fraser—"No.") At all events the evil was sufficiently great to call for some attempt to cope with it. He was afraid that the action now being taken might give undue prominence to it. However he did not wish to minimise in any way the evils of drinking alcohol, and he agreed that it was desirable to teach the children in the State schools the danger of tampering with intoxicating liquors. No doubt

there had been, as some honorable members had stated, many instances of the use of alcohol saving life, but at the same time he believed it to be more capable of saving life in cases where it was not habitually used than it was in cases where it was habitually used. Upon the whole, he would not be averse to some recognition in the Bill of the principle which appeared to be embodied in the clause.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT said he would consent to the clause being postponed.

The other clauses of the Bill having been agreed to, progress was reported.

The House adjourned at ten minutes to ten o'clock until Tuesday, October 1.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, September 18, 1889.

Payment of Customs Duty—Prospecting Vote: Recommendations of the Prospecting Boards: Mining Boilers—Sunday Newspapers Bill—Rabbits Destruction Bill—Merchandise Marks Bill—Melbourne Tramways Trust Act Amendment Bill—Opening Public Library on Sundays.

The SPEAKER took the chair at half-past four o'clock p.m.

CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT.

Mr. T. SMITH asked the Minister of Customs whether duty was paid on the boiler brought into the port of Melbourne on the deck of the dredge *Willunga*; and, if not, why not?

Mr. PATTERSON stated that if the boiler was imported it at once became dutiable, but if it was merely brought into the port and placed in bond for exportation it was not dutiable. No article would be dutiable under such circumstances. As a matter of fact, the boiler was still in bond, so no question as to its liability to duty had arisen.

PROSPECTING VOTE.

Mr. J. S. STEWART asked the Minister of Mines whether he would place on the Supplementary Estimates a sum of money equivalent to the extra amount necessary to give effect to the recommendations of the various prospecting boards, or whether he would take other steps in order to afford relief to the various companies and associations struck off by him from participation in the prospecting vote?

Mr. GILLIES replied that the £80,000 which appeared on the Estimates as the amount of the prospecting vote for the current year had already been allocated, and the Government did not propose to ask Parliament for any increase. A sum close on £11,000 was to be retained for expenses, but the remainder of the money would be distributed according to the recommendations of the local prospecting boards, and in the order of merit set out by them. He had accepted their suggestions in the latter respect, because they came from local bodies which had given very careful consideration to each application.

Mr. WILLIAMS inquired of the Minister of Mines whether he would devote a portion of the vote to testing the various steam boilers used in connexion with mining, in order to ascertain what description of boiler was the best for generating steam? Good information on this point would be worth many thousands of pounds to the miners.

Mr. GILLIES stated that he could not take any sum for the purpose from the prospecting vote, but if the honorable member for Eaglehawk would suggest how a competent board could be appointed to investigate the subject, he (Mr. Gillies) would gladly consider what could be done in the matter.

SUNDAY NEWSPAPERS BILL.

Mr. WRIXON moved for leave to introduce a Bill relating to the publication and sale of newspapers on Sunday.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was then brought in, and read a first time.

RABBITS DESTRUCTION BILL.

The House went into committee for the further consideration of this Bill.

On clause 24, imposing a penalty on any person "wounding, killing, capturing, selling, or disposing" of any "animal, bird, or reptile" declared to be a natural enemy of vermin, without an order from the chief inspector,

Mr. OFFICER inquired whether it had been decided what were the natural enemies of vermin? Possibly eaglehawks would be included in the number, but he would point out that it would not do to prevent their destruction, because they were natural enemies not only of rabbits but also of lambs.

Mr. MURRAY begged to mention that the native cat, which was a decided enemy of the rabbit, was also a deadly enemy of poultry. If the farmer could not defend

himself from the native cat, he would soon find it useless to keep poultry, in which case the new duty on eggs would become an unnecessary impost.

Mr. DOW said he would make a note of the remarks of the honorable members who had spoken, but it was not likely that the clause, which was taken from the existing Act, would be found productive of much harm.

Discussion took place on clause 32, which was as follows :—

"Any owner or occupier of any land within 50 miles of any inspector's usual place of abode may, by writing posted to or served at such place of abode, call on such inspector to visit such land for the purpose of ascertaining whether any vermin are on such land, and such inspector shall, within 21 days of receiving such notice, visit such land accordingly, and inspect and report to such owner or occupier whether in such inspector's opinion there are any and what vermin on such land."

Mr. ANDERSON thought there must be some mistake with respect to this clause. He could not see with what object it was drafted. Surely no owner would think of asking an inspector to come and see whether there were any rabbits on his own land.

Mr. SHIELS moved the substitution for the word "such" (line 6) of the word "any." He thought that this amendment would cure the fault of the clause, which was probably designed to enable any owner to get a neighbour's land inspected.

Mr. WRIXON stated that as far as he could understand the clause, its primary object was to enable an owner to get an authentic certificate that his land was perfectly free from rabbits, so that if any inspector came afterwards to visit his land he could meet him with—"Here is a certificate showing that my land has already been inspected." Instead of altering the clause in any summary way, perhaps the committee would be good enough to let it pass now, and come up for reconsideration on the report.

Mr. OFFICER submitted that the radius mentioned in the clause was too large. An inspector who might be called hither and thither—50 miles this way or 50 miles that way—would hardly be able to perform his duty.

Mr. LEVIEN thought the clause was a very good one as it stood, for it would enable an owner about to let his land upon the condition, among others, that it should be kept clean, to make sure that it was clean to begin with. As for the 50 miles distance which the honorable member for Dundas complained of, what was 50 miles in the mallee? A mere nothing.

Mr. SHIELS said he would withdraw his amendment for the present, but in doing so he would point out that a certificate of the kind indicated in the clause might be used to evade penalties, because land which was free from rabbits one month might be overrun with them the next month.

The amendment was withdrawn.

Mr. OFFICER suggested that the limit of 50 miles should be reduced to 25.

Mr. CALVERT expressed the opinion that the 50 miles distance would not be too great, because there would be plenty of sub-inspectors to perform the duty which the clause referred to.

Mr. DUFFY submitted that the best plan would be to let the clause pass, on the Minister of Lands undertaking to make inquiries with respect to it.

On clause 35, rendering any person obstructing the authorities under the Bill, or interfering with the notices or other proceedings of any inspector, liable to a penalty of "not less than £2 nor more than £20,"

Mr. BENT observed that the same penalty was provided in the case of interference with a rabbit-trap, as in the case of pulling down a notice signed by an inspector. Surely that would be unfair.

Mr. WRIXON thought that between the minimum penalty of £2 and the maximum penalty of £20 there would be a wide enough margin.

Mr. BENT suggested that the minimum penalty should be struck out.

Mr. WRIXON accepted the suggestion.

Mr. LAURENS expressed the opinion that it would be wise to fix a minimum penalty, say one of £1.

The clause, amended by the omission of the words "less than £2 nor," was agreed to.

Discussion took place on clause 38, which was as follows:—

"In any case where any inspector has reason to believe that there are vermin upon any mallee land, and that no steps sufficient in his opinion are being taken to destroy or suppress such vermin, he shall immediately report the same, and specify the particular mallee land to which he refers to the chief inspector, who shall then when satisfied that such report is correct notify the same to the Minister, and specify the particular mallee land referred to."

Mr. TAVERNER said he wished to urge on the committee the desirability of making all mallee lands subject to the Bill. Under the provisions already agreed to a

tremendous amount of trouble and loss of time would accrue before the Government could be in a position to deal with the mallee lands, and there was but one conviction in the minds of all familiar with the subject, namely, that the mallee country was the chief breeding ground of the rabbit. Before any mallee land could be touched, an inspector must be called upon to report; then the Minister would have to authorize him to examine; then, if he found rabbits, which he would be sure to do at all times, a *Gazette* notice, calling upon the local vermin board to eradicate the pest, would have to appear; then, after fourteen days, if nothing had been done, the inspector would have to report to the Minister; and then, at last, the Minister would be able to issue a *Gazette* notice, declaring the land to be "subject to the provisions of this Act." But all this would entail a delay of fully six weeks, and what might result in that interval? Possibly the total destruction of all the crops growing in the mallee country. If the Bill was to be a success, the Minister must be in a position to deal with all lands alike, and at the same time. Simultaneous action had been provided for, but if the present clause was not amended in some way the provisions with respect to such action would be rendered of no effect. On the other hand, it was unquestionable that without simultaneous action the rabbits could not be properly dealt with. Would it not be hard to subject the farmers on the mallee border to conditions under which they could be compelled to destroy the rabbits in fourteen days, while it would take six weeks to reach the occupiers of land inside the mallee?

Mr. MADDEN expressed the opinion that the honorable member for Donald had pointed out a very weak point in a very good measure. Neverthless he (Mr. Madden) would urge the committee to pass the clause as it stood, leaving the Minister to consider how he could make the Bill applicable to all the lands of the colony alike, and to propose a fitting amendment on the report.

Mr. CALVERT said he agreed with both the last two speakers. It was a well-known fact that it was the divided authority which existed with respect to the rabbit pest that had rendered abortive all the struggles which had been carried on for years past against it. The Government had control over one part of the country, the shire councils over another part, and the vermin boards over a third part. Consequently there was no united effort. If the Government would take on their own shoulders the whole onus of destroying the rabbits, the pest would soon be cleared off. But if the vermin boards were to be allowed a say on the subject, it would never be got rid of. They were the stumbling block, and the sooner the obstruction was removed the better.

Mr. J. HARRIS considered that it was a waste of time for the inspector to have to report to the chief inspector, and the latter then to report to the Minister. Why not enable the inspector to take prompt action, and go to work at once in clearing the mallee lands?

Mr. BAKER expressed the opinion that this part of the Bill should be struck out altogether. If the measure was to be a success the Government would have to take the power out of the hands of the vermin boards and deal with the matter themselves. It was the feeling all over the country that the Government should take charge of the whole affair.

Mr. DOW stated that he quite appreciated the feeling of the committee that the Bill should be so framed as to provide for simultaneous action, but the difficulty was that the Mallee Pastoral Leases Act provided for the appointment of committees who rated the lessees in order to collect money to keep the rabbits down. The vermin committees, as they were called, had inspectors of their own for carrying out that portion of the Mallee Act. It would be noticed that the Bill provided that if the vermin committees did not do their duty the Government would compel them to do it. However, honorable members seemed to think that this could not be done quickly enough, and he would make a note of their views, and endeavour to meet them as far as possible on the report.

Mr. DUFFY said he was afraid that making a note would hardly meet the case. According to honorable members who had local knowledge the vermin committees had been worse than useless, and if that were so—and the matter should be within the Minister's knowledge—they ought to be swept away at once. There was no use in clearing the rest of the colony if one pest-hole was to be left untouched.

Mr. BENT stated that he had been told by men of experience that it would be the greatest mistake to hand this matter of rabbit destruction over to a State department. He believed that local government properly worked would have more effect than the Government proposal. He was informed that this would be a huge State

department which would cost a lot of money and be thoroughly ineffective. In fact, instead of ridding the country of rabbits, it would be offering a premium for breeding rabbits. This would be a Bill, not for exterminating rabbits, but for increasing them. The climate and circumstances of various parts of the colony were so different that the system which would be efficacious in one part would not be effective in another. It would be much better to rub out vermin boards and State departments, and let local government, with its officers on the spot, deal with the matter. He was informed that the chief inspector's offices were in Spring-street, Melbourne, and it was difficult to see what rabbit destruction he could effect there. However, if there was to be a State department he agreed with honorable members that it should deal with all parts of the colony alike, the mallee as well as other districts.

Mr. BAKER remarked that shire councils were not able to cope with the rabbit difficulty, because the councillors were human, and were loath to reject appeals on behalf of ratepayers whom it was proposed to prosecute. A Government officer would not be subject to the same influences. Moreover, shire councils held lands, and it was difficult to get them to clear their lands of rabbits, which spread on to private properties. It would be impossible to cope with the difficulty unless the State took entire charge of the matter.

Mr. CHEETHAM observed that as the representative of a rabbit-infested district he could say that there was a general desire that the Government should take the matter of rabbit destruction in its own hands. Rabbits had no respect for shire boundaries, and it would be best for a Government department to deal with the question. It was believed that if efficient action was taken for two seasons it would be sufficient to get rid of the pest.

Mr. WRIXON stated that the feeling of the committee appeared to be that the machinery of this part of the Bill should be made more prompt, and, as the Minister of Lands had already intimated, the Government would endeavour to meet that view on the report.

Mr. TUCKER stated that the mallee lands were leased on certain conditions, one of which was that the lessees were to keep them free of vermin, and for this purpose the lessees had the right to elect vermin boards. It was now desired, without any sufficient reason being given, to override those boards, and set them aside altogether. Had there been any reports to the effect that the vermin boards were not doing their duty? Was it not, on the contrary, notorious that the mallee country was more free from rabbits now than it had been for a very long time? This was sufficiently proved by the enhanced value of the mallee holdings. There seemed to be a desire on the part of some people, after entering into a contract with the Crown, to evade their responsibilities. The Bill seemed to be a very simple one, but he ventured to predict that it would result in a very large expenditure from the public treasury. The moneys which would be expended by the inspectors would not be refunded to the State, and Parliament would be told that as this was a national calamity the whole country should bear the expense. The State was now spending £25,000 on rabbit destruction, and it would be easy to multiply that sum five or even ten fold if the Bill passed in its present form. He strongly sympathized with the remarks of the honorable member for Brighton with regard to establishing a huge State department. The Government purse was thought to be of tremendous length, and few had any sympathy with those who tried to guard it. The rabbit pest was no doubt a very dangerous one, but he thought there should be some proof of the incompetency of the vermin boards before they were set aside.

Mr. RICHARDSON said that as the Bill took away all responsibility from the shire councils and transferred it to the Government, it seemed extraordinary that the Government had not proposed to extend their control to the mallee lands, and do away with the vermin boards. The honorable member for Fitzroy (Mr. Tucker) was mistaken in supposing that there had been no complaints about the vermin boards. Honorable members who represented the mallee country had all been complaining that the boards were not doing their work, and that the rabbits were not being destroyed. It was said, in fact, that they were more numerous than ever. He thought the Government ought to make the Bill uniform, and take the responsibility of seeing that the whole country, not merely a portion of the country, was cleared of the rabbit pest, as far as possible.

Mr. LEVIEN said he took it that the object of this part of the Bill was to compel the vermin committees to do their duty; if they still failed to do it, then the lands were to be brought under the provisions of this

measure. It was not proposed to set aside local government with regard to the mallee so long as the committees performed their work. He was not at all sure that the Act would prove a success, but there was a general consensus of opinion throughout the country that the existing system was a failure, and a change was desirable.

Mr. STERRY observed that, as a rule, the local bodies had not been able to carry out the present law, and it was necessary that a change should be made. The Bill, however, should be made uniform. If it was necessary to take matters out of the hands of the local councils, it was equally necessary to take matters out of the hands of the vermin committees. The Government could treat directly with the occupiers of mallee lands in the same way as they would be able to treat with the occupiers of other lands. As to the chief inspector, who had been referred to by the honorable member for Brighton, he knew him to be a thoroughly efficient officer, who was well up in his duties.

Dr. MALONEY expressed the opinion that a paid official whose duty it was to superintend the work of rabbit extirpation was out of place in Melbourne; his work was up the country. The only rabbits he could see in Melbourne were those in the Eastern Market.

On clause 39, enabling the Minister to authorize an inspector to enter on mallee lands with such assistants "or" dogs as the inspector might think proper,

Mr. OFFICER suggested that "and" should be substituted for "or"; otherwise the inspector could not take both assistants and dogs.

Mr. WRIXON said he would make a note of the suggestion.

Mr. CALVERT remarked that he was not satisfied with this portion of the Bill at all, and the Government should give some assurance that it would be reconsidered.

Mr. DOW observed that there was an understanding that the whole of the clauses relating to the mallee lands would be reconsidered by the Government before the Bill was reported. If the amendments he would submit on the report did not meet the views of the House, the Bill would be recommitted.

Mr. L. L. SMITH asked the Minister of Lands whether he would give notice of the day when the Bill was to be recommitted? Otherwise honorable members interested might be absent.

Mr. WRIXON said he wished it to be clearly understood that the principal objection by the committee to this part of the Bill was that the machinery provided was not speedy enough in its character. If it were necessary, in order to make the machinery more prompt, the Bill would be recommitted; but he hoped to be able to meet the views of the committee on the report.

Mr. L. L. SMITH observed that the statement of the Attorney-General made it more necessary that the committee should receive a distinct promise from the Minister of Lands that the Bill would be recommitted, and that he would give notice when it would be recommitted.

Mr. DOW intimated that the Government had promised to alter the whole machinery of this part of the Bill. If the alteration submitted by the Government on the report was not considered satisfactory the House could demand that the Bill be recommitted.

Discussion took place on clause 43, which was as follows :—

"Out of any moneys available for the purposes of this Act the Governor in Council shall have power from time to time to authorize and direct the expenditure of such sums as he may think fit for the purposes of erecting and maintaining any wire netting or other rabbit-proof or vermin-proof fencing to enclose any portion of any Crown lands not owned or occupied otherwise than by the Board of Land and Works."

Mr. STERRY said that a point which caused much trouble was what were to be considered Crown lands. The clause was confined to "any Crown lands not owned or occupied otherwise than by the Board of Land and Works." There were large tracts of State forests, and also of commons in different parts of the colony which formed the breeding grounds of rabbits. The trustees of commons had not the money to carry out the provisions of this measure in the same way that private owners would be compelled to carry them out, and unless the Government were prepared to assist in fencing the commons the rabbits would continue to make inroads from them into adjacent properties. He knew the Government had to a great extent assisted the managers of commons by supplying them with poisoned grain for rabbit destruction, but under the new system to be inaugurated by the Bill these lands would require to be fenced so as to localize the pest with a view to its extirpation. The State forests were in the hands of the Government, and he presumed that the Board of Land and

Works would fence in such as were infested with rabbits. The great trouble hitherto had been from the rabbits bred on Crown lands. There were few private land-holders who could not keep the rabbits down on their holdings if the adjacent Crown lands, such as commons, &c., were kept clear or fenced in.

Mr. SHIELS remarked that the point raised by the honorable member for Sandhurst South was an important one. There were many pieces of land throughout the country held by what were called "dry trusts." That was to say, the trusts, although under this measure they would be the owners and occupiers, received no revenue from the lands. How could the trustees of such lands be reasonably saddled with the severe obligations imposed by this measure? The honorable member for Warrenheip the other night mentioned one such reserve—Mount Warrenheip—which was held for purely picturesque purposes, and there were numerous others. He thought the Government should take power under the clause to fence in such reserves as well as lands held by the Board of Land and Works. In cases where the Crown had interposed trustees for purely legal purposes, and the trust was "dry"—yielded no income—the Crown ought to take the responsibility of fencing, or at any rate give the trustees some help in discharging their duties.

Mr. FERGUSON contended that the money derived from the commons should be applied to the extermination of the rabbits. It would be useless to fence in the commons without taking steps to destroy the rabbits. Any fence that was erected would be broken down, and no good would be done by it.

Mr. WHEELER said he was afraid that the Government were proposing in this clause to undertake something that they could not carry out. There were thousands of acres of Crown lands in his district which were not held as commons. He was referring to the State forests and timber reserves. The Government could not fence in that land, and if they did so it would be useless because gaps would very soon be made in the fences, and the rabbits would find their way through them. Many of the commons were in sparsely populated districts, and little or no revenue was obtained from them. The property owners in his district were suffering greatly from the inroads of rabbits which came from the Crown lands, and the steps which had been taken to destroy the pest had not been successful. The cost of fencing in the State forests and timber reserves would be enormous, and the Government should adopt some better scheme than that proposed for clearing the Crown lands.

Mr. CALVERT suggested the omission of the words "not owned or occupied otherwise than by the Board of Land and Works." The Government would then be able to fence in any Crown lands no matter by whom they were held.

Mr. SHACKELL remarked that no provision was made in the Bill for the closing of roads. Unless some roads were closed it would be impossible to exterminate the rabbits.

Mr. CHEETHAM stated that the commons could not be dealt with by the Government unless they were made Crown lands. The commons in his district were largely auriferous, and the revenue derived from them was paid to the Government. That money might very properly be applied for a time, at all events, to the extermination of the rabbits. He did not think that it would be necessary for the Government to fence the commons at all, because, as a rule, that was done by the adjacent land-holders. With strict supervision the rabbits could, in a comparatively short space of time be cleared off the commons.

Mr. SHIELS said it had been suggested to him that the clause should be amended to provide that the Government should undertake the fencing of any land vested in trustees for public purposes which did not return any income. The object of this was to meet the case of Crown land that was held for ornamental or picturesque purposes.

Mr. DOW stated that it was the intention of the Government that all lands in the possession of the Crown should be kept clear of rabbits. The Government would take the full responsibility of dealing with the forest lands. It would pay the State to fence in those lands for the purpose not only of destroying the rabbits but of conserving the forests. The honorable member for Normanby had referred to certain reserves held by trustees that did not yield a revenue. What reserves were they? (Mr. Shiels—"Warrenheip mountain reserve.") The trustees of that reserve were obtaining so good an income already that they were fencing in the land. The trustees of commons should obtain sufficient money from their land to keep the rabbits down; but if they failed to do so, and gave up the land,

the Government would undertake to clear it. The alteration suggested by the honorable member for Normanby, that where no income was obtained from land held by trustees for public purposes the Government should do the fencing, was a dangerous one. It would offer an inducement to trustees not to attempt to raise any income from their land.

Mr. CALVERT inquired whether it was the intention of the Government, if the Bill was passed, to fence in the small breeding grounds of the rabbits on little hills belonging to the Crown, of which there were several in his district?

Mr. DOW said that if the Government could not lease or license the lands referred to by the honorable member for Korong they would take whatever steps were necessary to exterminate the rabbits upon them.

Mr. MURPHY stated that the Minister of Lands was in error in saying that a revenue was derived from the Warrenheip reserve. The Lal-Lal and Buninyong reserves were under the same trustees, and a portion of the revenue obtained from these reserves was being used to fence in the Warrenheip reserve. The land was a breeding ground of vermin, and was a cause of serious injury to the poor farmers of the neighbourhood. If it were cleared of scrub, and let for grazing it would return a good revenue.

Mr. ANDERSON observed that very little difficulty would be experienced in dealing with the small reserves or the commons. But if the forest reserves were fenced, it would be necessary to have men constantly in attendance to keep the fences in repair, as they would be damaged by cattle, by people entering the forest, and by falling timber. The forests were breeding grounds of the rabbits. Although he did not expect that much good would result from the erection of fences, he could not suggest a better method of dealing with the pest.

Mr. ARMYTAGE remarked that the only effectual way of dealing with the rabbits was to fence them in with wire netting; but it was advisable that the land should for that purpose be divided into small plots. Wire netting had over and over again been adopted by private owners, and they would not go to the great expense of purchasing it if it was not of use. There were Crown lands on two sides of his father's place, and they found that the only way to keep out the rabbits was to use wire netting. An easy means of preventing cattle from damaging the fences was to place barbed wire along them.

Mr. WHEELER said it was the easiest thing in the world to fence cleared country and private property. Commons had been proclaimed which ran one, two, three, and even four miles into State forests, and if wire netting fences were erected around those forests, they would not take in the commons which were under the charge of managers. Independently of this the proposal to fence the forests was absurd. The roots of the trees along the line of the fences would have to be cut away, and they were so close together that one could scarcely walk between them. This would be an enormous undertaking, and when the fences were erected they would be continually suffering damage by falling trees and by people entering the forests for timber. To prevent people breaking through the fences there would have to be gates at intervals of a quarter of a mile. If the Government would fence round the outside of the commons charging the municipality concerned with a part of the cost, and would keep the rabbits in the forests some good might be done. But the scheme proposed was impracticable, and the money spent upon it would be thrown away.

Mr. LEVIEN expressed the opinion that the clause was not necessary. Before any fencing could be carried out the money would have to be voted by Parliament and the vote could be surrounded by any conditions that were deemed to be desirable. But it certainly was necessary that the owners and occupiers of land should have power to erect fences, and the same power should be given to the Government. He presumed that the Government would carry out the provisions of the clause in a rational manner, and that if it was necessary to fence in the whole of the State forests that would be done.

Mr. MADDEN contended that it was desirable, from two points of view that the State forests should be fenced in. The fence would enable the Government first to deal effectually with the rabbits, and second, to take such action as might be necessary for the preservation of the forests. It was advisable that the forests should be enclosed in this way as soon as possible in order that the timber in some of them might have an opportunity of growing. It was easier to clear fenced than unfenced land of the rabbits, and he thought that a good plan to adopt would be to divide the forest lands into sections, and to let them to bodies of men who would on certain conditions undertake to keep them clear of rabbits. The

commons might be dealt with under clause 47. That clause provided that shire councils might borrow money for the purpose of erecting wire-netting fences, and the provision might be extended to the managers of commons the money to be repaid in ten years.

Mr. STAUGHTON remarked that the reason why honorable members had been so anxious that the Government should be placed in exactly the same position as private land-holders, was that the Government might be compelled to pay half the cost of fencing private lands where they abutted on to Crown lands. The Government might be left to deal with the State forests as they thought proper. It was a matter of indifference whether the Government cut up the forests into sections and let them, or put a fence around them so long as they kept them clear of rabbits. The object of the clause was to place the Government in the same position as private owners, and he hoped therefore that it would be passed.

Mr. LANGRIDGE observed that he had no objection to the Bill, but he thought the committee should be informed what was the estimated expenditure it would involve to the State.

Mr. J. HARRIS said the question asked by the honorable member for Collingwood (Mr. Langridge) was a pertinent one, and he hoped that it would be answered. There was a small reserve of 120 acres upon Mount Martha which was infested with rabbits. The trustees by whom it was held derived no revenue from it, and it would be folly to expect them to exterminate the rabbits. The Government should fence all the lands held by trustees at their own cost.

Mr. FERGUSON stated that land from which no revenue was derived should not be placed under trustees, but should be retained by the Government. It would be perfectly useless to fence in the State forests and timber reserves, as gaps would very soon be made in the fences, and the land would then be practically as open as before. The Government should let the timber reserves by contract to persons who would undertake to destroy the rabbits. A charge was made for cattle grazing on the commons. The money derived from this source should be applied to the extermination of the rabbits, and the managers should be held to be responsible for the clearing of the land.

Mr. BEAZLEY remarked that while he was prepared to support the Bill, he thought the committee should know what was the expenditure it would involve to the State. It was the duty of the State to adopt every possible precaution to prevent the spread of the rabbit pest. If the trustees of the commons were not in a position to erect wire-netting fences themselves they should resign their trusts, when the land would revert to the Crown. He objected to the commons and reserves held by trustees being treated as Crown lands unless the Government resumed possession of them.

Mr. FORREST said it would be impossible for the Government to erect fences around the whole of the forest reserves. To fence the Cape Otway forest, for instance, would involve the expenditure of a larger sum of money than the Government had at their disposal. The Government should let the Crown lands to persons who would keep them clear of rabbits ; but they should not put too large an area of land in the one tender as they had done hitherto. Whole shires had been included in a single tender, and the amount paid was so small that it was impossible for the parties whose tender was accepted to clear the rabbits. If the land was let by tender in small areas some good would be done.

Mr. DOW stated that the cost of rabbit extermination on Crown lands was, in 1884, £22,000 ; in 1885, £25,000 ; in 1886, £21,000 ; in 1887, £20,000 ; and in 1888, £18,000. It was estimated that under the provisions of this Bill there would be an extra expenditure for the first few years of from £5,000 to £6,000 per annum.

Mr. MADDEN said that if the Bill was not passed without delay its usefulness, to a great extent, would be nullified this year, as the rabbits did most damage to the crops in the month of October.

On clause 47, providing that loans for rabbit-proof fencing might be made to any shire council by the Governor in Council,

Mr. MADDEN suggested that power should also be given to lend money for rabbit-proof fencing to the local committee of any vermin district.

Mr. ANDERSON asked the Attorney-General to include "borough councils" in this provision, as there were several boroughs badly infested with rabbits.

Mr. WRIXON stated that both the suggestions would be considered, and they could be dealt with on the report.

Mr. TAVERNER observed that the Local Government Act limited the borrowing powers of municipal councils. It was to be hoped that no municipality would be

prevented from obtaining rabbit-proof fencing by reason of the fact that it had already reached the limits of its borrowing powers under the Local Government Act.

Mr. WRIXON said he would consider the point.

Mr. CALVERT remarked that the municipal councils should be allowed to purchase barbed wire with the rabbit-proof fencing.

Mr. DOW stated that a barbed wire was to be placed along the top of every rabbit-proof fence.

On clause 48, providing that application for a loan for rabbit-proof fencing must be preceded by "a petition from the owners" of the land,

Mr. MADDEN suggested that the clause should be amended so as to empower a council to apply for a loan on a petition from one landowner. There were isolated selections in many districts which required protection from the rabbits.

Mr. BAKER observed that a number of his constituents had written to him, urging that any individual selector should be enabled to get the wire netting.

Mr. DOW said the amendment was worthy of consideration, but he would draw the attention of the committee to the fact that the object of the Government was to encourage groups of selectors to apply for the wire netting.

Mr. STERRY remarked that in some places a large area of rabbit-infested country was in the hands of one owner.

Mr. WRIXON said he hoped that the honorable member for Horsham did not desire to alter the machinery of the Bill. Individual applications for wire netting should be made, like the other applications, through the municipal councils. (Mr. Madden—"Certainly.") The matter would receive consideration.

On clause 49, setting forth the statements requisite to be made in the petitions from landowners to the shire councils,

Mr. SHIELS said he wished to point out to the committee that, by passing the Bill in its present shape, Parliament would to some extent seriously prejudice all men who had lent money on land, on mortgage or lien, because this measure would give the landowner power to incur a pecuniary obligation, in respect of the purchase of rabbit-proof fencing, which was to become a first charge upon the land, and have the effect of postponing the redemption of the prior-executed mortgage. (Mr. Anderson—"The money is spent in improving the property.") Quite so, but the man who had lent money on the security of a mortgage or lien on the land would find that, by a debt incurred subsequent to the date of the mortgage and without his sanction, the redemption of his mortgage was postponed. He would like to ask the Attorney-General—because it was a legal rather than a practical point — whether it would too much encumber the Bill and take away any of its supposed efficacy by requiring that there should be some sort of consent from the mortgagee or lienee, or, failing that, some notice required before the mortgagor or lienor could postpone the prior-executed security. This was a serious matter, affecting business relations, and the committee should, at any rate, have full cognizance of its importance. Mortgages and liens were executed under the faith of an Act of Parliament, which allowed a mortgage or lien to be registered, and when registered, gave the mortgagee or lience a prior right before all other creditors to the redemption of the loan. Of course, there were difficulties to be guarded against whichever way the committee steered, but still he felt that they should not so seriously affect a matter of that kind in ignorance or in darkness. The great point to be impressed on the minds of honorable members was that the ten annual instalments were to become a first charge on the land, and had got to be satisfied before even a prior-executed mortgage.

Mr. DOW remarked that this point had received very careful consideration from the Government. When the recent Land Bill was before the Legislative Council of New South Wales, the persons who had lent money on the land were the very persons to urge that facilities should be granted to the mortgagors for erecting wire-netting fencing. (Mr. Anderson—"Because it improves the land and enhances the value of the security.") Of course. The rabbit pest had rendered the land utterly valueless, and thus destroyed the security of the mortgagee; and he ventured to say that no person in the country who had lent money on rabbit-infested lands would offer the slightest objection to the owner of the land incurring a small obligation to secure his land from the depredation of the rabbits. Accompanying the Bill was a lithograph plan showing a group of selections enclosed with wire netting fencing. The area enclosed comprised sixteen selections, of an aggregate area of 4,800 acres. The length of wire-netting required was twelve miles, the cost £312.

The average cost to each selector would therefore be £19 10s. That amount had to be paid in ten annual instalments, so that the charge on the land was only £2 a year for fencing in the whole area. No mortgagee would object to that being constituted a prior charge, because it made an actual security of land which, without rabbit-proof fencing, was comparatively valueless.

Mr. MADDEN said he was afraid the honorable member for Normanby was making a mountain out of a molehill. The average total cost per selection would be £20, and the maximum cost £40, which, spread over ten years, was a mere nothing in comparison with the improvement in the value of the land. In rabbit-infested districts land was useless without the wire-netting fencing; therefore, mortgagees had no cause for complaint in respect of the provisions of this Bill.

Mr. SHIELS said that, with a view to strengthen the powers which the shire council and the Government would have against each individual who obtained wire netting to enable them to get back the money lent, he would move an amendment to the 7th subsection of the clause, which required every petition from owners of land to—

"State that each petitioner signing the petition undertakes to pay to the council in each and every year one-tenth part of his proportion of the value of all materials for wire netting or other rabbit-proof or vermin-proof fencing which the council may obtain by means of the loan proposed to be obtained from the Governor in Council."

The Attorney-General would see that this was a parole contract. He proposed to make it equivalent to a contract by deed, by the addition of the following words:—

"And such undertaking shall, as between such petitioner and the council, be deemed to be and may be enforced as a special contract."

This would make the contract more significant and more easily enforced against any person who might seek to repudiate the loan. (Mr. Anderson—"Would any registration be required?") No.

Mr. WRIXON observed that the amendment seemed to be a valuable and useful proposal, but as it dealt with highly technical matter, it would require very careful consideration. If the honorable member for Normanby would leave it in his hands he would either move its insertion on the report or give very good reasons for not doing so. The amendment would turn the contract into a bond, and he would like time to consider whether the way proposed would be the best way to do that, or whether the amendment might not be better inserted as a separate clause. He had the greatest objection to accepting on the spur of the moment an important proposal of this kind which he had never heard before.

Mr. SHIELS suggested that the amendment should be agreed to, and if, on consideration, the Attorney-General deemed any change necessary he could propose it on the report. His own desire was that the shire councils, the selectors, and the whole country should understand that there was to be no repudiation, and that the annual instalments must be regularly repaid.

Mr. LAURENS said he regarded the amendment as a step in the right direction.

The amendment was agreed to.

Discussion took place on clause 55, requiring councils to expend the whole amount of loans obtained from the Governor in Council in the purchase of materials for rabbit-proof fencing, and also providing as follows:—

"In the month of February in each and every year one-tenth part of the amount of such debt shall be payable by the owner of such land for the time being to the municipality, until the whole debt is paid. If default is made in respect to any such yearly payment, the amount of such payment may be enforced at any time by the municipality in a summary way, or by action in any court of competent jurisdiction, from the owner for the time being of such land or any part thereof. The amount of every such yearly payment, as it becomes due, shall be, and until paid shall remain, a first charge on such land."

Mr. SHIELS drew attention to the concluding provision of the clause, and observed that it was the duty of the committee to protect every mortgagee and lienee, as far as possible. He would, therefore, suggest the reasonableness of giving to them, with respect to overdue annual repayments of the fencing loan, something akin to the power they now possessed of making the outstanding interest, after a certain time, part of the principal, and thus itself carry interest. The mortgagee or lienee should have the right, after a certain time, to pay the overdue instalments of these fencing loans, which would thus become a part of the principal which the mortgage or lien secured, and it should be governed by all the terms and conditions of the mortgage. An amendment of that kind was absolutely essential to the due protection of all who had lent money on the security of land. He begged to move the addition to the clause of the following:—

"Provided that every mortgagee or lienee shall be at liberty upon any default being made in the

payment of such yearly payments by the owner to pay the said yearly payments to the municipality, and such payments when so made shall be deemed a part of the principal sum secured by such mortgage or lien respectively, and shall be subject to the provisions, powers, and trusts thereof."

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. ARMYTAGE asked whether the liberality of the Government might not be abused by persons using the rabbit-proof fencing for purposes not contemplated in the Bill—fencing a garden, for example?

Mr. WRIXON said he thought that ample provision had been made to prevent abuses of that kind, but he would take a note of the point, and consider whether any further precaution was necessary.

Mr. TAVERNER stated that at the recent conference of municipal representatives in Melbourne, a resolution was passed suggesting that the Bill should be amended by substituting "May" for "March," and "April" for "February." The Attorney-General and the Minister of Lands might consider the matter and deal with it, if they thought it advisable to do so, on the report.

On clause 57, providing that the owners of adjoining properties might enclose the whole with one continuous fence,

Mr. BAKER asked if A. B. and C. owned adjoining properties, and A. and C. were willing to join in erecting a rabbit-proof fence, while B. objected, could B. be compelled to join them?

Mr. DOW stated that the Bill made provision for all cases of that kind.

Mr. LAURENS remarked that the clause provided that two or more owners of adjoining properties might erect a joint fence with the sanction of the shire council. Might not difficulty arise in respect of land which was partly in one shire and partly in another?

Mr. WRIXON observed that the point was well worth considering. It might be desirable to make provision for cases of the kind.

Mr. LEVIEN asked the Attorney-General to consider the position of a tenant, who, for the purposes of this measure, was the owner of the land he occupied, and could be made personally liable to repay the cost of the rabbit-proof fencing, now that the amendment of the honorable member for Normanby had been adopted. The man would have to bind himself personally to the shire council to pay one-tenth of the cost of the wire-netting fencing every year for ten years, and if his lease expired at the end of the first year, would he not still be personally liable to pay the annual instalments of the wire-netting loan? When a tenant went out of possession, his personal obligation should cease.

Mr. WRIXON said that this question only showed the necessity of very carefully considering amendments before inserting them in the Bill. The honorable member for Barwon had raised a very fine point, and he would carefully consider it and endeavour to frame an amendment if necessary.

On clause 58, providing that rabbit-proof fences might be carried across unused public roads if a swing gate covered with wire netting were erected,

Mr. McINTYRE remarked that any person who wilfully damaged a rabbit-proof fence was to be liable on conviction to be imprisoned for any period not exceeding six months, and to pay a penalty not exceeding £50, and as the Bill would be made a nullity if the swing gates were left open, he begged to move that the words "or leaves any gate open" be inserted in the list of offences provided against in the clause.

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. OFFICER observed that there was no provision in the clause for fencing main roads or roads that were sometimes used. Unless that was done the rabbits would go along the roads which the carts used.

Mr. SHIELS suggested that the clause should be amended so that permission could be given to a single individual to construct a fence across an unused road, in accordance with the amendment made in a previous clause at the suggestion of the honorable member for Horsham.

Mr. ANDERSON expressed the opinion that a new clause would be required to meet this difficulty. The consent of the council must be obtained before a road could be closed. It would be against the public convenience to have fences and swing gates across some roads, but the shire council would be the best judges as to that.

Discussion took place on clause 60, which was as follows:—

"The amount of the loan granted under this Act by the Governor in Council to any shire shall within ten years and without interest be repaid to the Secretary for Lands by the council of such shire by yearly payments received from owners of land or out of the municipal fund.

"It shall be the duty of such council to take all proper steps to recover all moneys due from any owner.

"All such moneys when received shall be paid into a separate account in some bank from time to

time approved by the said Minister, and shall be applied only for the purpose of reducing the amount of the loan.

"In the month of March in each and every year all moneys so recovered by the council of any shire during the year ended on the last day of February in such year shall be drawn from such separate account by such council and paid to the Secretary for Lands, who shall pay the same into the consolidated revenue in reduction of the amount of the loan granted to such municipality under this Act."

Mr. SHIELS observed that this was about the most important clause of the whole Bill, and he desired the House to give special attention to the 2nd paragraph. Looking at it most carefully he was bound to say that the clause was very weak, and utterly inadequate for its purpose. The question which the committee had to consider was whether the State had taken sufficient powers to get back the £150,000 which was to be lent, to get rid, no doubt, of a great national pest, but which would also have the effect of improving the property of private land-holders. First of all, he wanted to know if it was really the intention of the committee and the Government that this money should be honourably repaid? (Mr. Wrixon—"Certainly.") Very well. (Mr. Patterson—"Read this clause in the light of the following clause.") He had read it carefully, and here he thought the measure would break down. Some of the municipal councils objected to have anything to do with the borrowing of the money, and being held in any way responsible for its repayment, amongst them one of the councils of the district which he had the honour to represent in the Assembly, and whose objections he felt it his duty to bring before the committee. Under this Bill the Government proposed to make the municipal councils debtors to the State for loans for wire netting. They were casting statutory duties upon the councils, but were not taking any effectual power whatever to enforce fulfilment of those duties, and this naturally raised doubts as to the real intention and hope of the Government. If it was intended to compel the municipal councils to perform those duties under pain of certain punishment for neglect thereof, then in all fairness to the councils that punishment should be distinctly specified in the Bill, so that the shire councils, in borrowing this money, would not be liable hereafter to the exercise of any power held covertly in reserve against them by the Crown, but would know full well the obligations and the responsibilities they would have to face. (Mr. Patterson—"What about clause 61.") Clause 61 did not at all meet the case. It conferred no power to be exercised against the defaulting councils, and which by occasioning them loss would make it their interest to perform their statutory duties. He would like to know whether the Government intended to hold in reserve, and exercise in case of default, any direct power against the councils to enforce repayment of the loan. If there were any such intention it ought, as a matter of justice to the councils, to be most clearly stated and fully known. Although he had taken a prominent, perhaps a principal, share in urging the Government to include in this Bill generous help in regard to the erection of wire-netting fences, still he never concealed his belief that the precedent had elements of danger in it, which could only be justified by the exceptional nature of the rabbit question, and by taking the most ample precautions to secure the State from loss through repudiation on the part either of the shire councils or the individuals who got the benefit of the netting. What was the chief complaint of the councils on whose subsidies an embargo had been laid, on account of their default in not repaying the moneys owing the State for water trusts loans? Was it not that, when entering into their engagements respecting water loans, they had no notice that the municipal subsidy was to be held by the State as a security for due fulfilment of their duties? To prevent this reasonable objection arising in the future in this matter, and to have it determined by Parliament now, not by the Executive hereafter, he proposed to bring it to a formal issue by proposing words which will enable the State, when a council was in wilful and dishonest default, to hold back its subsidy, and then compel it to perform its obligations. Without this means, or some other which the discussion might suggest, the State had absolutely no effectual way of making councils do their duty. To test the feeling of the committee on this point, he begged to move the insertion, after the words in the 2nd paragraph, imposing upon each council the duty of taking proper steps to recover "all moneys due from any owner," of the following words:—

"And in default being made by such counci the Governor in Council may cause all or any money payable to the municipality of such shire, out of the consolidated revenue, not to be so paid until such council shall have carried into effect the provisions of this section to the satisfaction of the Governor in Council."

Unless a provision to this effect appeared in the measure, defaulting councils would be able to say that when the money was borrowed the Government gave them no intimation that any embargo would, in case of default, be laid on their subsidy; and he wanted to make it impossible to set up any such defence. It should now be made part of the compact, and be entered into by both parties with their eyes open. Otherwise repudiation would be rendered easy. In making this proposal, he felt that he was performing a public duty which exposed him to some hazard, but he was determined to perform it, even though he might lose his seat in consequence. He was one of the first to press upon the Government the need of doing something in the direction aimed at in the Bill, and he deemed himself to be under a special obligation to help them in every possible way against repudiation or default. The terms on which the money would be lent were most liberal, and if the shire councils undertook any liability with respect to repayment, they ought to be forced to fulfil their obligations. (Mr. Taverner—"The councils do not borrow the money.") Under the Bill the Government would make the councils their debtors, and, in view of the terms upon which the debt would be contracted, any council attempting to borrow money without the most honest and determined intention to carry out to the letter the covenants the Bill prescribed, would be doing a most dishonorable thing. (An Honorable Member—"Oh! let the farmers have the money.") No, that was out of the question; but that remark was very significant and ominous. The Government proposed to be most generous, and they ought to insist upon their conditions being complied with. If the outcome should be that his constituency would never return him to Parliament again, he would nevertheless urge upon the Government, on the ground of honesty and on behalf of the State credit, that they ought to take larger powers in this matter than the Bill contained, and that nothing in this direction should be concealed, but everything stated in unmistakeable terms. As a matter of fact, they would not, as the Bill stood, have a single complete remedy against any council that happened to be willing to repudiate. He had heard shire councillors, who thoroughly understood the measure, express the view that under it the Government would never be able to get back their money, or intended to get it back. He had heard something further that made him fear that certain shire councils would avail themselves of the privileges conferred by the Bill without having any intention to fulfil its covenants. They meant to take advantage of its incompleteness. (Mr. Cheetham—"Name!") Names could be given if necessary. A great boon was about to be bestowed upon certain shires, but with the conditions attached to it, the shires ought to be forced to comply.

Mr. DOW remarked that the amendment of the honorable member for Normanby had evidently been submitted with the best intentions, and no one could question the soundness of the principle on which it was based. But how could the shire councils be reasonably asked to go further than the Bill, as it stood, asked them to go? He (Mr. Dow) could assure the committee that what the shire councils would be called upon to do under the Bill was nothing less than to confer a very great obligation on the public. It should be remembered that these councils were not themselves asking for the loan of any money, or for any favour from the State. The case stood thus: the Government had determined to offer certain farmers exceptional facilities in procuring wire fencing, and they wanted to induce some local authority to act as between the State and the individuals who obtained the fencing. Under these circumstances, to whom could they better apply than to the local shire councils? Hitherto those bodies had been eager to help the Government by acting for them, so as to obtain a proper and *bonâ fide* expenditure of the money lent, but, at the same time, they were not ready to take upon their own shoulders the entire responsibility with respect to the return of the money. In point of fact, if, after going to the trouble of examining each application for fencing money, and of seeing that the funds were properly expended, and that the repayments were placed to a separate account, the shire councils were to be required to become responsible, to the extent of their respective shares of the municipal subsidy, for the return of the whole amount of the loan, the outcome would be that they would refuse to act in the matter at all. On the other hand, none of the farmers assisted in this way by the State had shown the smallest desire to repudiate, and there was no reason to suppose that they ever would repudiate.

At this stage progress was reported.

Mr. DOW moved—

"That the sessional order referring to the time when Government business shall have

precedence on Wednesdays be suspended for this evening, to enable Government business to be proceeded with, until nine o'clock."

The motion was agreed to.

The House again went into committee for the consideration of the Rabbits Destruction Bill; and the discussion of clause 60 was resumed.

Mr. MUNRO observed that the Minister of Lands had made two contradictory statements. He said that if the shire councils were required to become responsible to the extent of their respective shares of the municipal endowment, they would simply refuse to do what the Government wanted them to do; and in the next breath he asserted, in effect, that no farmer was ever known to repudiate his obligations to the State. But if the latter statement was true, and the shire councils were satisfied that no farmer would repudiate his engagements in the matter of this fencing money, why should they fear to accept the responsibility in question? Besides, what was the plan proposed by the honorable member for Normanby more than the substitution of a simple, easy, and inexpensive method for the roundabout and expensive method set out in clause 61, which related to the appointment of receivers? At all events the committee ought to be quite clear about what was going to be done. If the money was to be given away without there being any intention to get it back again, of course no further trouble need be taken about the business; but if the idea was to lend certain money without interest with the view of getting it back again within a given period, surely it would be better if, before any funds were advanced, every one concerned was made to know the precise extent of his obligations, by those obligations being stated on the face of the Bill. What was done when the town council of Geelong wanted an advance to enable them to carry a main from one reservoir to another? The Government would not part with the money until the municipal body had entered into an obligation to pay it back, and the same system should be adopted in the present case.

Mr. WRIXON stated that the Government were in perfect sympathy with the object of the honorable member for Normanby and also with the remarks just made by the leader of the Opposition. The only question was how best to carry out what they each and all had in view. Certainly the money must be got back. It would be most disastrous, in the interest of public public faith and the public credit, if there was to be any understanding that the money was not to be paid back. What then would be the best plan to follow in order to get it back? Let honorable members look at what was provided under the Bill. To begin with, the liability for repayment was placed on the land as a first charge. From that liability no landowner concerned could escape. Next came a wholly new provision which cast upon the Crown Solicitor the statutory duty, in the case of non-payment, of moving the Supreme Court to appoint a receiver to recover the money. No Minister could prevent that being done, nor could there be any political interference whatever. The Crown Solicitor must act, the Supreme Court must act, and the receiver must act, so that there could be no doubt that the money would be got out of the land. But if an embargo was placed on the municipal fund of each shire concerned to the extent of its share of the State endowment, what would result? The law would not work at all. How could a shire council be induced to allow the whole of its subsidy to be liable for the obligations of say a small portion of its territory. Or, supposing that the infested area comprised parts of two or three separate shires, how could the councils of those shires be expected to become responsible on account of what might be only a small district in each of them? Nothing of the kind could possibly be anticipated. That was why the Government made the proposition embodied in the Bill. He (Mr. Wrixon) considered that there was no need to expect any repudiation, or that there would be any dishonest attempt to escape from a clear obligation, or to suppose that the Government had done anything less than they ought to do.

Mr. LAURENS admitted that it had been shown that the remedy suggested by the honorable member for Normanby was not the right one, but he nevertheless thought that something should be done to compel the shire councils to take steps to recover money from defaulters.

Mr. BAKER stated that he was unable to support the amendment. He was sure, however, that the people of his district would meet their obligations to the last shilling.

Mr. SHIELS said he would withdraw his amendment to enable a prior amendment to be moved.

The amendment was withdrawn.

Mr. FERGUSON moved the omission of the words "or out of the municipal

fund." There was no need to have the municipal fund mixed up with the matter. (Mr. Dow—"The Attorney-General will make a note of the point.") If the Government would promise to strike out these words, he would be perfectly satisfied.

Mr. DOW moved that progress be reported.

Mr. MUNRO asked why the Government would not go on with the Bill that night?

Mr. GILLIES stated that the Government were grateful to the committee for allowing half-an-hour to be taken from the time appropriated to private members' business, with the hope that that concession would enable the Rabbits Destruction Bill to be got through committee, but inasmuch as at the last moment no less than five honorable members rose to speak, it was impossible for that hope to be entertained any longer. What, indeed, could be anticipated with the Bill hanging on night after night, while all sorts of objections were taken, and all sorts of amendments were proposed, by honorable members whose districts were in no way interested in the measure? If that kind of thing was to continue the Bill could not possibly be passed into law. Certainly no Government with other important business to attend to would be justified in allowing affairs to proceed in any such fashion. He would therefore ask honorable members all round to join together, when the Bill came before them again, in discountenancing this continual rising to make objections and suggestions which could be infinitely better dealt with on the report, and so enabling the Bill to be got out of committee.

The motion was agreed to.

Progress was then reported.

MERCHANDISE MARKS BILL.

The amendments made by the Legislative Council in this Bill was taken into consideration.

Mr. WRIXON moved that the amendments be agreed to. He said that most of them were merely verbal, only two being of a really important character. The Bill originally provided that the trade-marks it related to might be trade-marks registered in the United Kingdom, but, on further consideration, it was thought best to confine its operation to trade-marks registered in Victoria. It was sometimes difficult to discover what trade-marks were or were not recognised in the United Kingdom. That was the first important amendment. The second related to clause 4, which provided that after a certain date the possession by any person of goods of a certain character would be punishable unless it was proved that he acted without any intention to defraud. This, however, the Council had amplified by adding these words :—

"Or that the goods or things to which the trade-mark or mark or trade description has been applied were manufactured in or imported into the colony before the coming into operation of this Act, and that such goods or things were held by him *bonâ fide* and without any fradulent intention."

Another amendment of a technical character provided for the appointment of one or more persons to fill the office of Deputy Registrar-General.

Mr. F. STUART remarked that the amendments took away what he formerly described as the blot in the Bill. As a commercial man, he could say that adopting them would confer a boon on the community.

The amendments were agreed to.

In reply to Mr. ZOX,

Mr. WRIXON stated that the Bill would come into operation on the 1st January, 1890.

MELBOURNE TRAMWAYS TRUST ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. J. HARRIS moved—

"That Standing Orders Nos. 10, 11, 23, 26, and 51, relating to private Bills, be dispensed with so far as regards a Bill to authorize the Melbourne Tramways Trust to construct a branch tramway along Market-street to Collins-street in the city of Melbourne and for other purposes."

Mr. OFFICER seconded the motion.

The CLERK read the report of the Examiner of Private Bills, which was to the effect that full compliance with the standing orders referred to might be dispensed with; and also the report of the Standing Orders Committee approving of the report of the Examiners.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. J. HARRIS then moved for leave to introduce the Bill.

Mr. OFFICER seconded the motion, which was agreed to.

The Bill was then brought in and read a first time.

The SPEAKER.—With regard to the three other notices of motion on this subject standing in the name of the honorable member for South Yarra, I wish to call the attention of the House to the fact that the standing orders relating to private Bills which it is desired to suspend are

for the protection of any private interests that may be concerned, and that it may be considered to be the duty of the Speaker to point out to the House when by any such suspension any private interests are likely to be jeopardized. Whether any private interests would be jeopardized by any such suspension in the present instance I cannot say, but there can be no doubt that, unless there is urgent necessity for it, the suspension of standing orders is always undesirable, because it might form a dangerous precedent. I think that, under existing circumstances, the standing orders alluded to should not be suspended.

Mr. J. HARRIS intimated that he would postpone for a fortnight proceeding with his other notices of motion.

PUBLIC LIBRARY, MUSEUMS, AND NATIONAL GALLERY.

OPENING ON SUNDAYS.

Mr. WILKINSON moved—

"That in the opinion of this House the Melbourne Public Library, Picture Gallery, and Museum should be open to the public on Sundays between the hours of two and six o'clock p.m."

He observed that it was with great diffidence he placed this motion on the paper, as he was only a young member of the House, but as none of the older members had taken it upon themselves to bring forward the subject he had decided to do so, because when before his constituents he was questioned at every meeting as to whether he was in favour of opening the Public Library, National Gallery, and Museums on Sunday, and he stated that he was. He wished it to be understood that he did not submit the motion with any desire to desecrate the Sabbath or to detract from the sacredness of that day. On the contrary, he desired that that day should be kept as a day of rest and recreation for the people. As he only proposed that the institution should be open on Sunday between the hours of two and six o'clock in the afternoon, attendance at church services would not be interfered with. He had no wish to detract one iota from the sacredness of the day of rest, but every honorable member must know that what was rest and recreation to one man was not rest and recreation to another, and every man was entitled to enjoy his Sabbath in the way he thought best for himself. He saw by the newspapers that the previous Monday evening there was a meeting of the society known as the Lord's Day Observance Society, which was presided over by the leader of the Opposition. That meeting was a somewhat extraordinary one, because the honorable member would not hear a word from any one who was opposed to him. (Mr. Munro—"They were not members of the society and had no business there.") Then it was what was commonly called a "hole and corner" meeting. It was a one-sided meeting which would not allow any discussion except from those in favour of the views of the society. A clergyman of his (Mr. Wilkinson's) own church, Canon Langley, after the usual manner of clergymen who had their own views and would not brook contradiction, stated at the meeting that all those who were in favour of opening the Public Library on Sunday were simply "Pecksniffian hypocrites." Now, the late Bishop of Melbourne, Dr. Moorhouse, who was perhaps one of the deepest thinkers in the world, and whose departure from Victoria was a national loss—who gave as his reason for fixing the site of the Church of England Cathedral at the corner of Swanston and Flinders streets that the tramways and railways would bring the people to church—publicly stated that he was in favor of opening the Public Library, National Gallery, and Museums on Sunday—that such a step would do good to the public and enable them to enjoy their sabbath. If Dr. Moorhouse was a "Pecksniffian hypocrite" he (Mr. Wilkinson) was willing to be one also in such company. Another clergyman, the Rev. Henry Bath, stated at the same meeting that this movement was the thin end of the wedge of the Continental Sunday, and that "any one who said to the contrary was stating what was not true." This seemed hardly the way in which a clergyman should speak of those who, though holding conscientious opinions opposed to his, were just as desirous of preserving the sacredness of the Sabbath as he was. There was an old saying that people measured corn by their own bushel, and it seemed to apply to the present case. Another speaker, the Hon. C. J. Ham, took credit to himself for having placed a clause in the Railway Commissioners Bill which provided that no railway employé should suffer by declining to work on Sunday. But what was that provision in reality? That no man was to be compelled to work on Sunday, but if he did not a deduction would be made from his wages. A man therefore did suffer, notwithstanding Mr. Ham's statement. It was impossible to get on without some Sunday labour. The vergers of the churches

had to work on Sunday. The very men who talked so much about Sunday labour were those who went to church in their carriages, employing their grooms and coachmen, and when they came home had hot dinners, which involved Sunday work by their servants. These were the men who talked cant about opening the Public Library on Sunday, so as to afford the people an opportunity of reading their own books and looking at their own pictures. The Acclimatization Society's Gardens were opened free on Sundays, and people went there in large numbers. It was no harm apparently to look at a real lion or tiger on Sunday, but the people must not go to the National Gallery to see a painted one. Neither must they go to the Public Library on Sunday to read a theological work, or any other book which would improve their minds. Another gentleman at the meeting suggested that any one who wanted to read on Sunday could, in these days of cheap literature, buy a book for a few pence, but, curious to say, the gentleman who made this statement was a bookseller. Probably he wanted to get a market for his books. No doubt one could purchase a "shilling shocker" or a "sixpenny dreadful," but he (Mr. Wilkinson) was not aware that theological or standard works could be bought for a few pence. By allowing the people to go to the Public Library on Sunday they would be able to read such works there, and it was to be borne in mind that it was the people who had paid for the books in the Public Library. The Police Offences Statute permitted apothecaries to carry on business at any time on Sunday, and also allowed confectioners, pastry-cooks, butchers, and bakers, to open their shops during certain hours. What harm, then, could there be in allowing the Public Library to be open between two and six o'clock in the afternoon of the same day? Not a single argument was brought forward at the meeting to which he had referred to show that there was any harm in going to the Public Library to read a book, or to the National Gallery to see a picture on Sunday. The sole plea was, "Oh, it will entail Sunday labour." If there was such an objection to any labour on Sunday, why did not the leader of the Opposition, the honorable member for Ballarat East, and other honorable members who were opposed to this proposal, have a clause inserted in the Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Co.'s Bill when it was before the House, prohibiting the tram cars from running on Sunday? This private company employed more labour on Sunday than any other company or institution in Melbourne. What greater harm was there in going to the Public Library on Sunday than there was in riding in a tram car or a train on Sunday, as he had no doubt the honorable member for Geelong (Mr. Munro) did? It was said that owing to the eight hours system the working classes had ample time to visit the Public Library during the week, but he would point out that the eight hours system only applied to one section of the community—the operative class. There were thousands of persons employed in coffee palaces, restaurants, hotels, and shops, in Melbourne who worked from twelve to sixteen hours a day, and what opportunity had they to go to this institution at present? The eight hours system did not apply to these classes at all. Again, on Sunday afternoon young men could be seen playing pitch and toss on vacant pieces of land, or hanging about the back doors of public-houses because they had nothing else to do with themselves, whereas if the Public Library, National Gallery, and Museums were open, some of them at all events would be got off the streets. If it was only a dozen it would still be a gain. Max O'Rell, in his book, *The Dear Neighbours*, remarked:—

"Intelligent and liberal England is moving heaven and earth to get the museums thrown open to the people on Sundays. The Prince of Wales and the leaders of the whole aristocracy of the country are at the head of the movement."

These were the people who, according to Canon Langley, were "Pecksniffian hypocrites." It was said that people would not take advantage of the Public Library being opened on Sunday. But what was the experience in Sydney? On this point the *Age* of the 9th inst. said—

"We have before us the record of attendance last month at the National Art Gallery in Sydney. On the week days there were 9,118 visitors to the gallery, being an average of 337 each day. On Sundays the number amounted to 6,856, giving a daily average of 1,714. It appears, then, that in Sydney more than five times as many persons are able to look at the art collection on Sunday as can manage it in the week day, and these, too, members of the very class which a wise Government would desire to subject to such elevating and harmonising influences. Yesterday week, the first Sunday of the current month, the attendance at the Gallery was 2,339; and on the same day 1,218 persons visited the Museum, besides the customary crowd of readers at the Public Library and in the rooms of the School of Arts. In what way are the working classes of this city inferior to their compeers in Sydney, that Parliament declines to grant them similar rights?"

During the few weeks that the Melbourne Public Library, National Gallery, and Museums were open on Sundays, some years ago, there was a crowded attendance of the public. These facts showed clearly that the people were ready and anxious to take advantage of these institutions being opened on Sundays. He did not desire to detain the House, as he wished honorable members not to go away without coming to a vote on the motion. He quite agreed with the statement in the *Age* that whichever way honorable members might vote they ought not to shirk recording their votes on the question. He wished honorable members to understand that he was as strict a sabbatarian as any member of the House, and his only idea in bringing forward the motion was to enable the people to enjoy their Sabbath. He could speak feelingly on this subject. He remembered that when he was a young man, living in lodgings in Melbourne, he found Sunday the most miserable day in the week. He went to church in the morning and evening, but in the afternoon there was nothing to do to pass the time, whereas if he could have gone to the Public Library he could have enjoyed himself. In the interests of the thousands of young men and women now in a similar position he hoped the House would agree to the motion.

Capt. TAYLOR seconded the motion.

Mr. MUNRO said he did not know why the honorable member for Bourke East should have specially alluded to him in submitting his motion. The honorable member must have been glad to have the meeting which he (Mr. Munro) had the honour to preside over as the text for his sermon. The honorable member must know, however, that any society had a perfect right to call its members together, and to refuse to allow any outsiders to interfere with its proceedings. If a stranger in the gallery of the Assembly were to rise and attempt to address the House the Speaker would at once order him out. The meeting to which the honorable member had referred was the annual meeting of the members of the Lord's Day Observance Society, and although those who did not belong to that body were allowed as a matter of courtesy to be present, it would have been a most improper thing for him as chairman to have permitted them to interfere with the proceedings. He ventured to say that the Secular Society of Melbourne would act in a precisely similar way at its annual meeting. The honorable member apologized, as a young member, for bringing forward this motion, and said his reason for doing so was because none of the older members took the matter up. The fact was that old members knew that this question had been debated so often, and voted upon so often, that they would not waste the time of the House by bringing it on again. The opinion of the House had been so frequently expressed on the subject that it was well known. (Capt. Taylor—"This is a new House.") When he spoke of the House he spoke of the Legislative Assembly of Victoria, and the Legislative Assembly of Victoria had frequently given expression to its opinion on this subject. He wanted to know why the question had been brought forward at the present juncture? Had there been any public agitation on the subject? (Mr. Wilkinson—"Yes, in my district; I was returned to support it.") That might be, but there had been no indication of general public opinion, such as petitions to the House, or the holding of public meetings, to justify the honorable member in submitting his motion. Surely, if there were thousands in Melbourne, as the honorable member had said, who were anxious for the opening of the Public Library and National Gallery on Sunday they would approach the House in the usual way, and intimate their wishes on the subject. It was his decided conviction, after contesting a large number of elections, that the majority of the people of Victoria were opposed to any unnecessary work on the Sabbath day. He would give one illustration of this. Some years ago he was contesting one of the most populous constituencies in the colony—the old electorate of North Melbourne—and several gentlemen belonging to the Secular Society used to attend his meetings for the purpose of asking him questions on this subject. He invariably told them that he was entirely opposed to anything which would make any man work unnecessarily on the Sabbath day. One evening, when going to a meeting, some of them met him, and said they agreed with him on all other subjects, and would give him their hearty support if he would come round on this. He at once made an offer, which they accepted, and the terms of which, he might say, they honorably carried out. It was, that at the meeting he was about to attend, the chairman, after the business was over, should take a vote of those present as to whether the Public Library and National Gallery should be opened on Sunday or not. It was a packed

meeting—there were about 1,500 people present—and he declared on his honour that when the question was put to the vote not twenty hands were held up in favour of the proposal. (Mr. McIntyre—"That was because it was a 'packed' meeting.") It was a packed meeting in the sense that it was crowded; otherwise it was an ordinary election meeting, not called with reference to this question at all. When the members of the society saw the result they admitted that public opinion was against them, and they honorably did all they could to assist his return. The constituency of North Melbourne consisted largely of working men, who were the class supposed to be interested in this matter, and if they had wanted the Public Library opened on Sunday they would have said so, but they did not. He believed that if the whole of the working men of the colony were polled they would say they were opposed to any unnecessary work on Sunday. Take another instance. He once happened to say to an officer of the Railway department at the Geelong station that he had a fine body of men there. "Yes," said the officer, "and they are prepared to work night and day when called upon—Sunday or Saturday." "True," said one of the men, "but we are not anxious to work on Sunday; we are called upon to work on Sunday very much oftener than we ought; it is the desire of every man in the yard that Sunday work should be abolished altogether." How could he (Mr. Munro) in the face of these things feel justified in coming to the House, and saying that he would, contrary to public opinion, vote for opening these institutions on Sunday? He was not going to do it. When public opinion in Victoria demanded anything of the sort, public opinion must have it; but until public opinion so asserted itself he was not justified in interfering. His own conviction was that public opinion was dead against this proposal. The honorable member had the bad taste to say that those opposed to this motion were employing their own carriages and coachmen on Sundays, but the honorable member should not make that statement unless he was prepared to prove that it was true. He also said that he (Mr. Munro) was in the habit of travelling in trains and tram cars on Sunday. That was not true, because he had never entered a train or a tram car in his life on a Sunday. (Mr. C. Smith—"You employ your own buggy.") He did not employ his carriage on Sunday. As far as he was concerned, he had always voted against this motion, and he would continue to do so until he was satisfied that public opinion demanded it. When he was satisfied that public opinion demanded the opening of these institutions on Sunday, then he would consider whether he was justified in resisting the proposal any longer; but at present he was sure that public opinion was against the motion.

Mr. L. L. SMITH remarked that the honorable member for Geelong (Mr. Munro) seemed to dwell chiefly on the Sunday labour which would be entailed by adoption of the motion; but he was quite sure that in any of the large cities containing institutions of this sort, such as Melbourne, Ballarat, or Sandhurst, many people would be found ready to volunteer their services gratuitously in order that the public might have the benefit of the institutions on Sunday. (Mr. Leonard—"Nonsense.") He himself was prepared to devote one or two Sundays in the year to the purpose, and he believed there were many honorable members who would do the same. If they were not hypocrites, even those composing the very religious element of the House would likewise volunteer in order to afford their fellow citizens an intellectual and improving means of passing the day. He purposely visited the Public Library in Sydney on Sunday to learn how matters were conducted, and he found two attendants walking about and some 60 people sitting in silence conning the productions of some of the greatest minds of the past. How could it be said that those men were defiling the Sabbath? (Mr. Woods—"Have you seen the Continental Sabbath?") He was brought up on the Continent—he was a medical student at Paris—and he had, therefore, ample opportunities of observing the Continental Sunday. He had gone into the gardens where there was music, and even dancing, and he never saw anything which could shock the eye. In fact, the propriety on such occasions was proverbial. There were *gens d'armes* present, and everything was conducted with the greatest order and decorum. (Mr. Munro—"I spoke of Sunday work.") He did not agree with the people working on Sunday, but that was not being proposed at present. (Mr. Woods—"It follows.") He maintained that it did not follow. Only some six attendants at the most would be employed at the Public Library, National Gallery, and Museums, in order that thousands and thousands of persons might be provided with proper intellectual recreation, instead of, as

was now the case, sneaking round the back doors of hotels, or going to other places which he would not speak of. (Mr. Leonard —"Would those people go to the library on Sunday?") He believed they would. When the trustees did open the institution for a few Sundays what was the consequence? Thousands of persons visited the Public Library on those Sundays, but an outcry was raised against the trustees, who were under the supervision of the Government from whom they obtained their funds, and they were compelled to abandon the experiment. He feared that the colony was being too much governed by certain gentlemen whom he respected but from whom he differed in opinion. What happened recently when an attempt was made to run Sunday trains to certain places within the 20 miles radius? The Minister of Railways was asked by one of the largest deputations that ever presented itself at the public offices to run Sunday trains to Beaconsfield, Lilydale, and Frankston. The honorable gentleman consented to run Sunday trains to Frankston, but refused to extend the system to Beaconsfield and Lilydale. How could it be considered to be in consonance with religious principles to run the trains to the one place and not to the other?

Mr. WILLIAMS asked the Speaker whether the honorable member for Mornington was in order in discussing the question of the running of Sunday trains?

The SPEAKER—The honorable member is certainly wandering away from the subject before the House.

Mr. L. L. SMITH stated that he was endeavouring to show by illustration that a certain amount of licence was allowed on the Sundays, although the Public Library, Museums, and National Gallery were closed. He attended a very excellent Sunday concert at the Bondi aquarium in Sydney in April last. It was held in the afternoon, and the programme comprised the song, "The Death of Nelson," various Scotch songs, and also some religious songs or hymns. This was the way in which the people of New South Wales enjoyed themselves on Sundays. On the Continent the very best possible means were adopted of passing the Sundays in an agreeable manner, and men took their wives and families to the various places of recreation which were conducted with the greatest order and decorum. Some time ago an attempt was made to close the Botanic Gardens in Melbourne on Sundays, and it would have succeeded had it not been for certain action that was taken in Parliament. The honorable member for Geelong (Mr. Munro) had said that because a motion like that now before the House had been rejected year after year, honorable members should not persevere in their endeavour to secure the opening of the Public Library, Museums, and National Gallery on Sundays. (Mr. Munro—"I did not say that.") Sir Wilfrid Lawson had brought forward a motion relating to temperance reform in the House of Commons year after year, and he hoped by perseverance to be able eventually to carry it. Honorable members would remember the great fight between the American giant and the Englishman Sayers. Sayers said that the way in which he defeated the American giant was by always hitting him in the same place. He (Mr. Smith) hoped that the honorable member for Bourke East would persevere with the motion he had introduced until he was successful in passing it. There was a newspaper published in Melbourne that was continually crying out for Sunday observance. He referred to the *Daily Telegraph.* Formerly no labour was allowed on a Sunday in connexion with that journal, but it now had a little office in which advertisements were received on Sundays, and in which the representatives of the theatres might sometimes be seen handing in advertisements. (Mr. Anderson—"That must be the *Age.*") No, it was the *Daily Telegraph.* The Public Library, Museums, and National Gallery were maintained out of the public funds. They were founded for the purpose of affording the public an opportunity of obtaining enlightenment and improvement; but the Museums and National Gallery were now closed at so early an hour every day, that the working classes could not take advantage of them. That was a strong argument why those institutions should be opened on Sundays, if, not all day, at least in the afternoons.

Mr. KIRTON moved the adjournment of the debate.

The motion was negatived.

Mr. NIMMO observed that a few years ago the Assembly was inundated with petitions against the opening of the Public Library, Museums, and National Gallery on Sundays. He had been returned at six elections pledged to oppose any motion of the kind now before the House. At the last general election he was asked if he had changed his opinion on the subject, and

he replied that he had not. He was told when he first stood that he would never occupy a seat in Parliament unless he changed his opinion on this subject. His answer to that statement was that he would never upon any consideration consent to the violation of the Sabbath, and he was returned at the head of the poll. Reference had been made to the statements of members of the Lord's Day Observance Society. There was a statement made many many years ago that had always appeared to him to be authoritative on this subject. It was this—"The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt do no manner of work." That commandment applied not only to the head of every house, but to his man-servant, his maid servant, the cattle, and the stranger within his gates—all were to rest their wearied bodies on the seventh day of the week, and to contemplate the great work of creation. He claimed that day of rest, and he felt the benefit of it. The day observed was changed from the seventh to the first, to commemorate a greater work than even the work of creation—the resurrection of the Son of God from the dead. The great bulk of the people of Victoria and millions of British people in all parts of the world reverenced the first day in the week. It had been in the past and was still reverenced by men of gigantic intellect; and now honorable members were asked by a few intellectual nondescripts to obliterate that day so far as Victoria was concerned. The proposed object of the motion was to give the working men an opportunity of cultivating their minds. (Mr. L. L. Smith—"What objection is there to that?") It had been said, "Of the making of many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh." Literature was plentiful and cheap, and almost any man who was bent upon self-improvement could obtain all the books he required. Robert Burns followed the plough, and performed a man's work when he was only fifteen years of age, yet he reverenced the Sabbath and found opportunities of cultivating his mind. Hugh Miller, who was originally a plain working man, had to encounter similar difficulties; he also reverenced the Sabbath, but he succeeded, nevertheless, in making himself a master of the science of geology, and he was made an honorary member of one of the first philosophical institutes of Paris. The argument used in support of the motion was very thin. There was not a working man in the colony who had not access to plenty of books upon any subject he chose to study. The Sabbath was established by Heaven. It was to be a day of rest, and the honorable member for Mornington would admit that one day of rest in seven was necessary to man. Dr. Carpenter, in his *Comparative Anatomy* said that the Sabbath was essential to men viewed simply from a physiological aspect. (Mr. L. L. Smith—"He used to analyze on Sundays.") He was not speaking of what Dr. Carpenter did, but of what he said, and his statement was confirmed by other eminent physicians. In proportion as a nation observed the Sabbath it would prosper. Let honorable members look at those countries in which the Sabbath was not observed, and compare them with the grand old country from which the people of this colony sprang. France, after the great revolution, abandoned the Sabbath altogether. The French people inscribed on their tombstones the words, "Death is an eternal sleep; there is no resurrection." They opened their theatres and dancing saloons on the Sabbath, and devoted the day to recreation and amusement. Now they were coming round, and they were saying, "Our tables of mortality prove very conclusively that we are shorter lived than the English people, and that our institutions are less stable than theirs; we are constantly having revolutions." They were beginning to retrace their steps, and were finding out the value of one day of rest in seven. If the sanctity of the Sabbath were destroyed, human cupidity would seize upon the day, and thousands of working men would be deprived of the rest it afforded simply to increase the incomes of a few. The working men would not be asked whether they would work on the Sabbath, they would be told that they must do so, or their services would not be again required. The Sabbath was a blessing to the working man. Nobody could go to his house on that day and serve him with a writ; it was to him a day of rest, and he enjoyed it as one of God's free gifts. Those men who made war against the Sabbath incurred a very heavy responsibility, and they should think seriously of what they were about to do, before they attempted to insert the thin end of the wedge, and to unsettle that grand institution to which Great Britain was more indebted than to anything else for her greatness. He was brought up to reverence the Sabbath, and he still reverenced it. He felt that it was God's day, and that it should not be interfered with in its character as a day of rest, except for the performance of

works of mercy. The Saviour had said, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." He would not detain the House longer; but he would do his very utmost to prevent the motion from being carried.

Mr. WOODS said he had on several occasions brought forward a motion almost identical with that now before the House. On the 15th October, 1874, he proposed a motion to the effect that all public libraries, museums, picture galleries, public parks, and botanic gardens, which were supported either wholly or in part by the State should be opened to the public every day from ten o'clock a.m. until a suitable hour in the evening, due provision being made for securing to all persons employed in such institutions one clear day of rest in seven. There was a division on that motion, and it was defeated by a majority of 14 votes, the ayes numbering 25, and the noes 39. Another division was taken subsequently on a similar motion, and it came then within one or two votes of being carried. He mentioned these circumstances in order that honorable members who were not in the House then might see how great was his temerity in absolutely changing his opinions. He had no desire at any time to sail under false colours. What was it that caused him to change his opinions? Six years ago he visited India, and he was not simply astonished, he was appalled not at what was commonly called the desecration of the Sabbath, but at the work that was done there on the Sabbath. He did not advocate the cessation of work wherever possible on the Sabbath from a religious, or ecclesiastical point of view at all. Other honorable members were entitled to their own particular views on that subject; what his views were did not matter to anybody. He did, however, claim one day of rest in seven for labour, and he saw that in India capital had enslaved labour, that labour there had not a day of rest—call it Sabbath or Sunday—in seven days, or even in seventy-seven, and that work that no cessation except at the whim or caprice of capital, or when the poor Hindoo wanted to offer sacrifice for an hour or two to his God. He saw in Bombay the owners of the Hindoos rolling past on a Sunday in their barouches, with perhaps four or five natives clearing the way for them, and others whisking the flies off. The great powers that sat in those carriages had their gilt-edged books in their hands, and he supposed they were going to church to tell the Almighty that they were different from other men, but that all men were brothers. At the same time, he saw close by a building surrounded by a scaffold that he would not send a cat to climb up, and that scaffold was thick with Hindoo men and women, who were carrying mortar. He shivered at the sight, and he, who had been foremost in endeavouring to secure for labour in Victoria what he considered to be its right to visit the libraries, museums, and art galleries on Sundays, and who had alienated many a friend in seeking to carry out his honest convictions, determined that he would never again, as long as he lived, do anything that might be the means of preventing labour from having its full rest on Sunday, and cause it to become the slave of capital. Over 50 years ago he was in the city of Liége, in Belgium, on a Sunday. Early in the morning everything was quiet enough, for the people then went to church; but after ten o'clock the workshops were full, and the whole business of life was going on as usual. He thought then that the common sense of the English people would not allow them to sink to that depth of degradation; but capital would, if it had the opportunity, crush down labour, and take every hour it could from it. When the Minister of Lands and the Chief Secretary returned from the United States he asked them how Sunday was observed in San Francisco and in the other large towns there. He had been told that the condition of affairs on Sunday in San Francisco was worse than in France and Germany, and that it was a disgrace to civilization. He demanded Sunday as a day of rest for the working man. He would do so as long as he lived, and he appealed to honorable members not to remove any of the obstructions that existed to capital becoming the absolute slave-owner of labour. There was too much work done already on Sundays. Trains and trams were run on Sundays, but society was responsible for that, and not any Government. Society should lift itself out of the state into which it had fallen; but there would be less probability of it doing so if Parliament allowed the day of rest to be frittered away little by little. They might begin by opening the libraries on Sundays, then they would get on to the theatres, and after that to the dancing saloons, and when they had got so far there would be a demand for labour on Sundays. The final result would be that labour would become the bond-slave of capital.

Mr. McCOLL remarked that it was known that the honorable member for Stawell was a friend of the working man; but he had never shown himself to be a truer friend of the working man than he had done that night. The echo of the honorable member's speech would ring throughout the whole of the colony, and would have more effect on public opinion than 50 speeches delivered against this motion from a sabbatarian point of view. He would not attempt to argue the question on sabbatarian grounds, because he knew that there was great latitude of opinion with regard to it among those who were professors of Christianity. No demand had yet been made for the opening of the Public Library, Museums, and National Gallery on Sundays. The only expression of public opinion that had been given on the subject was contained in one or two articles that had appeared in the newspapers. The working classes of this colony had shorter hours of labour, higher wages, and more time for rest and recreation than the working classes of any other country in the world. They had ample opportunity of taking advantage of the public institutions of the colony. The pressure of modern life was so great that work was being crammed upon work, and if the Sabbath was frittered away human life would be shortened. This was a working man's question, because the rich could take advantage of the public institutions at any time, and could have their books, their illustrated magazines, and their pictures in their own houses. The Miners' Association in Sandhurst a few years ago made it one of their rules that no labour except such as was absolutely necessary should be done in any of the mines with which they were connected on Sunday. On one occasion it came to the knowledge of the association that certain men had broken the rule, and they told them that they must either quit the employ of the company that had required them to work on Sunday or leave the association. That was proof that the working men did not want their Sundays to be tampered with. Honorable members should let well alone, and not go further in the direction of making Sunday a day of labour. If they desired to give the working classes the benefit of the Public Library, Museums, and National Gallery they could open them at night. (Mr. F. Stuart—"The Public Library is open at night.") The Museums and National Gallery might be opened on one or two nights a week, so that the working men could visit them after their day's labour. There was no reason, also, why the Public Library should not lend books. The honorable member for Mornington had said that if these institutions were open on Sundays, the men who now went to the public-houses would visit them; but they were not the class of men who would frequent such places. If they introduced the thin end of the wedge by opening these institutions on Sundays, the result would be that the theatres would soon be opened on Sundays also. It had been stated that concerts were held in Sydney on Sundays, but he hoped that it would be a very long time before Sunday was observed in Melbourne in the same way as it was at present in Sydney, where the theatres were open at night, and dancing was carried on in the day. Those honorable members who supported this motion would not be the friends but the enemies of the working classes.

On the motion of Mr. F. STUART, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at twenty-six minutes to eleven o'clock.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, September 19, 1889.

Revision of the Tariff: Exemptions: Traction Engines Root's Blowers: Catalogues: Timber: Woollen Manufactures: Medicines: Opium: Maize: Peas and Bean Hops: Wheat: Lager Beer: Wine.

The SPEAKER took the chair at half-past four o'clock p.m.

FACTORIES AND WORKS EMPLOYES.

Mr. DEAKIN, in compliance with an order of the House (dated September 11), presented a return relative to factories and works.

REVISION OF THE TARIFF.

The House went into committee of the whole for the further consideration of the proposals submitted by the Treasurer for the revision of the Tariff.

The committee proceeded to consider the list of exemptions, which was as follows:—

"On and after the 1st day of January, 1890, the several articles hereinafter mentioned shall be exempted from the payment of duties of Customs on importation into Victoria, whether by land or sea:—Asphyxiators, for rabbit killing; carpeting, being printed felt; cocoa nibs raw; coffee beans, raw; dairy refrigerators and separators; engines, traction; gloves, othe

than kid or leather; jute piece goods; leather, viz., kid, calf kid, mock kid, patent calf, and glacé goat; machines, not including the motive power, viz., button making, eyelet, knitting, sheep-shearing, stitching; matches, wood, safety; matting, except coir and jute.

"On and after the 31st day of July, 1889, the several articles hereinafter mentioned shall be exempted from the payment of duties of Customs on importation into Victoria, whether by land or sea:—Boxes, cardboard, containing non-dutiable goods ordinarily imported therein; fruits (green), viz., bananas, guavas, mangoes, pine-apples; globes, school, mounted; slippers of straw only; types, brass, ornamental rolls and line fillets for bookbinders.

"On and after the 18th day of September, 1889, the several articles hereinafter mentioned shall be exempted from the payment of duties of Customs on importation into Victoria, whether by land or sea:—Manufactures of metals, viz.—Copper and copperware (being prepared plates for engravers and lithographers), silver-plated sheet, perforated sheet, rivets, washers, anchors, chains, hames, door fittings (except handles and plates), window fittings (except shutters, blinds, poles, and cornices), firearms, brassfoundry used in the manufacture of furniture, cast iron (being oval boilers), camp ovens, digesters, kettles); brazing, fry, maslin, preserving, sauce, or stew pans; Danish, French, glue, oval, plumbers', stock, and three-legged pots; tea kitcheners or fountains, pestles and mortars, tires of steel in the rough, buffer springs; electric fittings, viz., arc lamps without globes, carbons, incandescent lamps, automatical registers, transmitters or transformers, and storage batteries; patent roller brushes for block-making; pipes and tubes, viz., welded, brass-cased, solid-drawn, brazed copper, and fittings for same, except the cocks; caps (percussion, primers, detonators), locks, latches, bell fittings, scales, steelyards and spring balances (to weigh up to 3 cwt.), tools of trade not being machinery (except napping, spalling, and quartz hammers, picks, mattocks, gas and blacksmiths' tongs, crowbars, mauls, wedges, soldering irons), irons (box and sad), hinges (except hook and eye and T), pulleys under 4 in., brass hooks, buttons, trunk handles, screws (wood, coach, cork, galvanized, hand, and table); gimp pins; tacks, 1 in. and under; decorated tin plates, for manufacturing tinware; saws of all kinds, but not the machinery connected therewith; chaffcutter and reaping-machine knives; anvils; bells, 6 in. and under; blocks and types (printers), cornices in piece, cornice hooks and slides; curtain bands, chains, hooks, and rings; cutlery, iron or steel; spoons, iron or steel; vermin traps; wire netting, galvanized machine made; tram and railway rails; wire cloth, over 36 mesh; crucibles; lightning conductors, angle and T iron; pig, scrap, wire, bar, rod, plate, hoop, spoke, and sheet, not machined and in the rough; machinery for carding, spinning, weaving, and finishing the manufacture of fibrous material, and cards for such machinery; sewing and printing machines and presses; machinery used in the manufacture of paper, and for felting, including wire-cloth and felts; and machines for telegraphic purposes."

Mr. PATTERSON said there were a few slight amendments which he desired to propose in this list. In the item "cocoa nibs, raw," it was proposed to strike out the word "nibs," and in the item "coffee beans, raw," the word "beans." The items would then stand "cocoa, raw" and "coffee raw." Under the heading "leather," it was proposed to omit the item "glacé goat." Under the heading "woollen piece goods" it was intended to introduce the item "collar checks" for saddles. These checks were not manufactured in the colony and therefore they were to be free. It was proposed to add to the heading "manufactures of metals" the words "and machinery." It was also proposed to make free the internal fittings of gas meters, when imported in parts and not put together. These fittings could not be made here, but only put together. (Mr. Bent—"What about traction engines?") No desire had been expressed that traction engines should be taken out of the free list. He understood that the honorable member for Stawell intended to move an amendment on the subject, but as far as the local manufacturers were concerned they were not particular about traction engines.

Mr. MUNRO observed that collar checks were woollen, and they might therefore be left until the item of woollens was being dealt with.

Mr. PATTERSON remarked that unless collar checks were included in the list of exemptions they would be dutiable under the head of woollen manufactures.

The word "nibs" after "cocoa" and the word "beans" after "coffee" were struck out.

Mr. WOODS moved the omission of "traction engines" from the list of exemptions. He remarked that an ordinary portable engine could be very cheaply converted into a traction engine, and the exemption from duty of traction engines would open the door to fraud. Portable engines, which were subject to a duty of 25 per cent. could be easily converted into traction engines and introduced under that head, thus evading the duty. Under these circumstances, and as there were very few traction engines coming into the colony, it would be well to leave them out of the free list.

Mr. TRENWITH stated that he was informed by ironworkers that very few traction engines were imported, but it was pointed out that if they were included in the free list there was a probability of portable engines being converted so as to evade the duty. The omission of traction engines from the exemptions could do very little

harm seeing that so very few were imported. On the other hand, the amendment would prevent the evasion of duty on portable engines.

Lt.-Col. SMITH mentioned that the only traction engine which had been manufactured in the colony was constructed by the Phœnix Foundry, at Ballarat, for the purpose of conveying locomotives from the foundry to the railway station.

Mr. McCOLL said he could not see the force of the argument which had been urged for omitting traction engines from the free list. Was it at all likely that portable engines would be altered to traction engines simply for the purpose of evading the duty? The alteration could not be made without a great deal of difficulty, and the gain would not be worth the trouble and expense involved.

Mr. MUNRO observed that if there was no object in putting traction engines in the free list there was no reason for fighting about the matter. (Mr. Gillies—"The whole trade agreed to it.") Honorable members were now informed that there was opposition to the proposal. The Treasurer must know that while some members of a trade might agree to a thing others might not. (Mr. Gillies—"The representatives of the trade agreed that traction engines should be free.") Who was to be benefited by their being free? (Mr. Gillies—"They cannot be made here, and why load the Tariff unnecessarily?") He was not particularly anxious about the matter, but if no one wanted traction engines in the free list he would like to know why they were put there.

Mr. CLARK stated that the trade had only just discovered that portable engines might be introduced as traction engines and thus evade duty.

Mr. ANDERSON said he agreed that the matter was a small one, not worth fighting about; but if it was not worth fighting about why not let the item stand as it was? If portable engines were altered to traction engines it was evident that they would have to be altered back again into portable engines for the farmers, and it was not at all probable that the trouble and expense of these two alterations would be gone to for the purpose of evading the duty.

Mr. WOODS stated that a portable engine could be very easily and cheaply converted into a traction engine, and afterwards used either as a portable or stationary engine. (Mr. Anderson—"At what cost?") About £15. (Mr. Anderson—"Twice that, and then it would have to be altered back again.") All that was necessary was to make a through action, fix the wheels on, and with a little bit of gearing there was a traction engine at once.

Mr. KIRTON submitted that the committee should consider the interests of the local manufacturers and artisans. If portable engines were taxed, why not also traction engines? If portable engines could be made in the colony, traction engines could be made likewise, and a protectionist Assembly ought to impose duties in the interests of the colonial workmen.

Mr. T. SMITH stated that he was informed there were firms who were willing to make traction engines if they got encouragement, and there was just as much reason for a duty on traction engines as there was for a duty on portable engines. He could say on behalf of the manufacturers, that they did want a duty on traction engines. (Mr. Gillies—"They all said no.") One of the largest manufacturers had told him that an injustice would be done to the iron trade if traction engines were admitted free.

Mr. BENT observed that the other night he voted for portable engines being admitted free for the benefit of the farmer. There was no doubt that portable engines could be converted into traction engines at a very small expense. He would point out that by-and-by the farmer would not be satisfied with portable engines, but would use traction engines in connexion with ploughing and other agricultural work. If the matter was put from the point of view of letting a farmer's engine in free, he would vote for both portable and traction engines being placed among the exemptions, but if there was to be a duty of 25 per cent. on portable engines, there should be a similar duty on traction engines.

Mr. LAURENS said he thought the committee should be consistent. The other night by a large majority the duty on portable engines was fixed at 25 per cent. and he did not see why—especially as it was stated that very few traction engines were used by the farmers—the local manufacturers should not be placed on the same footing with regard to traction engines as they had been with respect to portable engines. It was admitted that portable engines could be converted into traction engines, and therefore unless the latter were subject to the same duty as the former, the decision of the committee to impose a duty of 25 per cent. on portable engines would be practically inoperative.

Mr. PATTERSON stated that he could inform the committee that the iron trade had made no request for a duty on traction engines. If the trade had desired such a duty there was no doubt that they would have made a representation to the Government to that effect. There was a great difference between a traction engine and a portable engine. The former moved along by means of its own motive power, while a portable engine had to be drawn by a team of bullocks. The two things were totally distinct, and a portable engine could not be transformed into a traction engine. (Mr. Woods—"Easily.") It was all very well for honorable members to come to the Assembly with amateur ideas of engineering, but surely the trade knew their own business.

Mr. ZOX expressed the opinion that the assurance of the Minister of Customs that the iron trade had not asked for a duty on traction engines ought to satisfy the committee. Manufacturers were keenly alive to their own interests, and if they wanted this duty they would have asked for it. As to altering portable engines into traction engines, he would ask the committee to receive with caution the opinions tendered by gentlemen who had not achieved a high reputation as engineers or in any other capacity. The committee ought not to impose an additional burthen of taxation unless there was good cause shown for it.

Mr. CLARK said he had it from representatives of the iron trade within the last hour that the trade had quite overlooked this matter, and that that was the reason there was no representation made to the Minister of Customs on the subject. There was certainly a danger of portable engines being converted into traction engines, as the only difference between the two was that the former had a fixed wheel while the latter had a fixed axle. Therefore all that was necessary was to alter the wheels and axles in order to make them alike.

The amendment was negatived.

Mr. PATTERSON moved the omission of the words "and glacé goat" under the heading "leather."

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. PATTERSON proposed the insertion of the following item—"Woollen piece goods, being collar check"—in the list of exemptions to take effect from 31st July, 1889.

Mr. BEAZLEY suggested the addition of the words "or cloth." When the article was not checked it was invoiced as "collar cloth."

Mr. PATTERSON said he would make a note of the suggestion.

The item was agreed to.

Mr. PATTERSON proposed the insertion of the following item in the list of exemptions under the head of "manufactures of metals":—"Meters (gas), the internal fittings of, when imported in parts, not put together."

The amendment was agreed to, as was also an amendment to omit the word "coach" under the heading "screws," (line 59).

Mr. RICHARDSON moved that the item "Root's blowers" be added to the list of exemptions. Root's blowers were specially used in the ventilation of mines. They could not be made in the colony, and being patented machines a high price had to be paid for them. The addition of the duty, therefore, was felt to be a great hardship, and was, in fact, a direct charge on the mining claims which had to use the machines. These blowers were very effective for ventilating mines, and were, indeed, almost a necessity in many mining claims.

Mr. OUTTRIM supported the proposal. Root's blowers were most valuable machines, and he hoped the Government would agree to the request to place them among the exemptions.

Mr. PEACOCK observed that the duty on Root's blowers was a heavy tax on the mining community, and as they could not be made in the colony there should be no objection to place them on the free list.

Lt.-Col. SMITH said he hoped the Government would not only agree to the proposal of the honorable member for Creswick, but that they would also consider the propriety of buying up all patents of this description, so far as the colony was concerned, so that the articles might be manufactured in Victoria.

Mr. BAILES stated that he had great pleasure in supporting the motion. At the immense depth at which mines were now being worked in the Sandhurst district ventilation was becoming a very serious question, and the health of the miners was suffering. Every effort therefore should be made to encourage the use of efficient appliances for ventilation.

Mr. ANDREWS said he would like to know from the Minister of Customs why such an elaborate list of exemptions under the head of "manufactures of metals" was required at all? He was opposed to these lists of exemptions, because he considered that whatever was intended to be made

dutiable should be specified and everything else admitted free. The late Minister of Customs, Mr. Walker, prepared an elaborate exemption list for every department, but that had been discarded by the present Minister. (Mr. Graves—"Because it was perfectly unworkable.") Yes. He did not know what there was special about this particular department of trade to necessitate its being treated differently from others. The enormous number of details in this exemption list would involve anomalies that would require about a thousand of those "Ministerial decisions" which had proved most obnoxious in the past.

Mr. MUNRO expressed the opinion that it was always very dangerous to allow a private member to propose an exemption of this sort without notice. He was informed that the patent for Root's blowers had expired, and that they were, at the present time, being made in the colony. If such was the case, the article ought not to appear in the exemption list.

Mr. PATTERSON remarked that the most he could do with respect to such a representation as that of the honorable member for Creswick was to make a note of it, and consider what could be done in the matter on the report. He would inquire about Root's blowers, and give the honorable member an answer on the subject one way or the other when the Tariff proposals were reported.

Mr. BURROWES stated that two or three nights ago he asked the Minister of Customs to include in the exemption list two explosives, known as gelatine and gelatine dynamite, which were very effective in wet mines, and could not be made in the colony. The duty upon them was very heavy, and he thought that in the interests of the mining industry it ought to be removed. He had no desire that any explosive that could be made in the colony should be allowed to come in free.

Mr. PATTERSON said he would make a note of the honorable member's statement and deal with it, if necessary, on the report.

Mr. GILLIES mentioned that he had had a return prepared of all the explosives that were made in the colony—dynamite of all kinds, gunpowder, lithofracteur, and the rest—and it appeared that the only explosive not manufactured in the colony was nitro-glycerine. He was told further, on good authority, that even this explosive would be manufactured in the colony next year, because the patent would expire at the end of the present year. It was very desirable that the article should be locally manufactured, because the importation and storage of explosives were attended with great danger. In fact, the officer who filled the post of examiner of explosives had given notice that in two months' time he would cease to examine them. He was only doing the work at the present time out of courtesy to the Government.

Mr. BURROWES stated that the explosives he referred to were not made in the colony, and they were the only safe explosives that could be used. Perhaps they would be made here after a time, but could they not be put on the exemption list until that time arrived?

Mr. OUTTRIM asked the Minister of Customs not to allow himself to be misled by any remarks of the leader of the Opposition to the effect that Root's blowers could be made in the colony. Only one had been locally manufactured, and four months afterwards it was worthless. The imported article was in use in every deep mine in the colony. It was to be hoped the Government would make the concession asked for, for it was about the only boon the new Tariff could confer upon the much burthened mining community.

Mr. TRENWITH said he was informed that Root's blowers could be made in the colony. (An Honorable Member—"But the colonial-made blowers are no good.") Well, he conceived that the proper ventilation of mines was of such immense importance that if there was anything in the assertion that the article could not be locally manufactured to equal the imported blowers, he would not oppose the exemption. Still the offer of the Minister of Customs, to consider the matter on the report, was a very fair one. In the meantime, honorable members on both sides ought to post themselves up with full information on the subject.

Mr. RICHARDSON begged to contradict the statement that Root's blowers could be made in the colony. In fact, the patent had not yet expired. The other day, when a certain mining company wanted a Root's blower it had to be ordered from home by cablegram. The article was known to be superior to any other of the kind. When the subject came up on the report he would be prepared with further information in regard to it.

Mr. LEVIEN thought that if Root's blowers were exempted from duty, every other sort of blower should also be exempted. Otherwise this particular patent would have

an advantage to which it was not entitled. He would ask that dynamo machines—machines used for generating electricity—which could not be made in the colony, should be also placed in the free list.

Mr. F. STUART requested the addition to the free list of resin oil, the raw material of printers' ink.

Mr. G. D. CARTER begged the Minister of Customs to make a note of the fact that kerosene stoves were not made in the colony. He trusted they would be included in the list of exemptions, together with polished bits and stirrup-irons.

Mr. GORDON stated that the honorable member for Barwon, who was formerly Minister of Mines, ought to know the great value of the Root's blower above every other blower used in mines. The question of letting this blower come in free was one of great importance, for the want of proper ventilation in mines was killing more men than anything else in connexion with mining.

Mr. RUSSELL thought that letting these blowers come in free, and so doing something definite towards preserving the health of the miners, was of more importance than even the prospecting vote. Hundreds and hundreds of miners had been ruined for life by the foul air they had been compelled to breathe in deep mines for the want of proper means of ventilation. No greater boon for the mining community could possibly be asked for than the one the Government were now requested to confer.

Mr. MURPHY remarked that he was connected with a mining company which had, some time ago, to cable for a Root's blower, because one could not be obtained in the colony. A wrong blower was, however, sent, with the result that work in the mine had to be knocked off for a time. He was a protectionist, and would be glad to see Root's blowers made in Victoria, but until they could be so made, they ought to come in free.

Mr. NIMMO stated that Root's blowers were now being made by Monteith and Co., South Melbourne. In fact, there was one in operation at their works there. (An Honorable Member—"It was condemned in a month.") Many good things were condemned by ignorant people. He would repeat that these machines were being made in the colony, and he would add that the value of the locally-made article had been testified to by a very eminent engineer. Such a blower could be seen at work any day. Let honorable members treat this subject with fairness.

Mr. KIRTON observed that it was an acknowledged fact that hundreds of miners were being injured for life by special diseases arising from the want of proper ventilation in mines. To remedy this state of things Root's blowers were being largely used in mines, but the article had to be imported. A leading legal manager had assured him that it was impossible to get such a blower without sending home for it. Were there any reasonable chance of these blowers being manufactured here, he would not dream of exempting them from duty, but he was certain that the reverse was the case.

Mr. BURROWES drew the attention of the Minister of Mines to the fact that some time ago a Royal commission sat to investigate the subject of the ventilation of mines. Surely, if their report was referred to, it would be found to contain something about these blowers. If they could be made in the colony, of course the commission would be cognisant of the fact. It was odd that whenever a mining member of old experience got up to speak on any mining question, he always found that a number of non-mining members fancied they knew a good deal more of the subject than he did.

Mr. McCOLL said there was another mining item which should be in the free list, namely, steel tanks. (An Honorable Member—"They are largely manufactured here.") They were not and could not be manufactured in the colony. Unquestionably, as several honorable members had stated, the mining industry ought to have every possible attention paid to it from a fiscal point of view, but in all these Tariff changes the miners did not seem to have been considered at all, which was not doing them justice. If any exemption could be made in their interest, it should be at once agreed to on all hands, for mining was becoming increasingly expensive every day. Still, it would be advantageous to have as many mining explosives as possible manufactured in the colony, because those articles almost always—it was especially the case with nitro-glycerine—grew more dangerous with age.

Mr. DIXON considered that the best plan to adopt, with respect to the question of blowers, was to let the Minister of Customs make a note of the suggestion of the honorable member for Creswick, and take an early opportunity of looking into the matter. If Root's blowers could not be made in the

colony, and their use was essential to the welfare of the miners, he (Mr. Dixon) was quite prepared, as a protectionist, to let them come in free. Only let no more time be wasted over the subject.

Mr. RICHARDSON said he would withdraw his amendment.

The amendment was withdrawn.

Mr. TRENWITH drew attention to the exemption item "Decorated tin plates, for manufacturing tin-ware," and stated that the work of preparing these plates was largely done in the colony. He would therefore ask that the articles in question should be taken out of the free list, and rendered subject to duty. (Mr. Patterson—"I will make a note of the point.") Then there was the item "Saws of all kinds." He believed that some sorts of saws were made in the colony. (Mr. Anderson—"No.") Well he was not quite sure.

Mr. T. SMITH called attention to the item "Types—brass, ornamental rolls, and line fillets for book-binders," and moved the omission of all the words after "brass." He stated that the articles he referred to were being manufactured in his district, and if they were allowed to come in free, the people carrying on the industry would have to close their doors.

Mr. PATTERSON asked the honorable member to let the item remain as it was until he (Mr. Patterson) had made inquiries with respect to it. He would not like to alter the line without some thought.

The amendment was withdrawn.

Mr. ZOX urged that book catalogues should be allowed to come in free, because they disseminated much useful information, and could not, from their nature, be produced in the colony. They comprised a more or less exact list of the literature of the whole world, and were distributed broadcast.

Mr. PATTERSON said he would consider the honorable member's request, but it was important, in the interests of the printing trade, to have such advertising matter as trade catalogues printed in the colony. As the honorable member was doubtless aware "advertising matter" was dutiable.

The resolutions were agreed to.

Discussion took place on the following resolution:—

"Timber and building materials:—
(Except ash, Australian and New Zealand pine, blackwood, cedar, hickory, oak, posts and rails, staves, sycamore, walnut, whitewood ...) Undressed.
Hardwood—Undressed logs, of the size of 9 in. square or larger.
California redwood, sugar pine, American white pine, undressed, 1 in. and over.
All other undressed, of the size of 12 in. square or larger.
Spokes and felloes of hickory, in the rough.
Spars in the rough.)
Architraves and mouldings, wholly or partly prepared, under 3 in., per 100 ft. lin., 4s.
Architraves and mouldings, wholly or partly prepared, 3 in. and over, per 100 ft. lin., 7s.
Boards—Flooring, lining, weather, dressed or planed, per 100 ft. sup., 1s. 6d.
Doors not exceeding 1½ in. in thickness, each, 5s.
Doors over 1½ in. and not exceeding 1¾ in. in thickness, each, 7s. 6d.
Doors over 1¾ in. in thickness, each, 10s.
Frames—Door, window, each, 5s.
Hardwood, per 100 ft. sup., 1s.
Laths, per 1000, 5s.
Palings, per 100, 9d.
Pickets—Dressed, per 100, 6s. 6d.
Pickets—Undressed, per 100, 6d.
Sashes—Window, unglazed, per pair, 2s.
Sashes—Window, glazed, per pair, 3s.
Shingles, per 1000, 9d.
Skirtings, wholly or partly prepared, per 100 ft. lin., 7s.
Spokes and felloes in the rough, per 100, 6d.
Shaves, shaped and dressed, 25 per cent. *ad valorem.*
Timber of sizes less than 7 in. by 2½ in., per 100 ft. sup., 2s. 6d.
Timber of sizes 7 in. by 2½ in. and upwards, and under 12 in. square, per 100 ft. sup., 1s. 6d.
Timber, bent, 25 per cent. *ad valorem.*
Timber, finished, 25 per cent. *ad valorem.*
Timber, cut into shapes, for making into cases, boxes, beehives, or similar articles, per cubic foot, 6d."

Mr. PATTERSON moved an amendment on the item "All other undressed, of the size of 12 in. square or larger," substituting for "12 in. square" the words "7½ in. x 2½ in." This, he said, would leave the duty the same as at present, which the trade, both masters and men, had urged the Government to do, in order that a certain amount of employment of labour should not be lost to the colony.

Mr. McCOLL thought that if it was desired to keep as much employment of labour in the colony as possible, the best plan would be to draw the line at timber of the size of 12 in. x 12 in. In his opinion the amendment was an altogether wrong one.

Mr. LANGRIDGE conceived that the men engaged in the particular branch of the timber trade in question were the best judges of their own business, and they had asked, in thousands, for the alteration proposed by the Minister of Customs. The only objection to it came from the hardwood saw millers, but surely they did not want to benefit themselves at the expense of a large number of employés in the metropolis and elsewhere. Besides they could be helped in other ways.

Mr. MOUNTAIN said the Minister of Customs was acting very well. The duty now proposed would not affect the hardwood sawmillers at all, because there were very few cases in which hardwood could take the place of softwood. He (Mr. Mountain) had made careful inquiries, and he found that drawing the line at 12 in square would operate as prohibitory with respect to importations of Baltic timber. He was much pleased that the Minister of Customs had submitted his amendment, because his original proposal would have practically put a stop to the importation of Baltic timber, so that instead of providing more work for the saw-millers of this colony it would have deprived them of work they already had, thus doing them an injury instead of giving them an advantage. He would ask the committee to omit the words "New Zealand" from the list of timbers exempted by this item, because New Zealand pine was flooding the markets of this colony in the smaller sizes, and the Victorian operatives were deprived of the work of cutting it up. A large amount of Victorian capital had recently been invested in the timber trade of New Zealand, all the available kauri timber and 28 saw-mills having been purchased, together with 146,000 acres of freehold land and 257,000 acres of leasehold land, the leases having 60 years to run. The whole of the timber that would be turned out, which was estimated at 1,503,000,000 feet, was intended for the English, New South Wales, and Victorian markets. Formerly, New Zealand timber came here in baulks, logs, and flitches, and was cut up into the sizes required by the trade, but now it was nearly all cut up in New Zealand. The amendment he proposed was necessary for the protection of the saw-milling industry in Victoria, which ought certainly to have the work of cutting up the New Zealand pine imported into this colony. Victorian operatives might be fully employed at the present time; but as the colony grew, its industries ought to grow, and the timber industries were not growing in proportion to the increase of population.

Mr. PATTERSON said he accepted the honorable member for South Melbourne as an excellent authority on timber questions, but he would like to consider the amendment, which he now heard for the first time. (Mr. Mountain—"Very well.") If the Government decided to adopt the amendment, it could be proposed on the report.

Mr. WHEELER remarked that the object of imposing a duty on timber under 7 in. by 2½ in. was to provide work for Victorian operatives, and surely it would create still more labour if the Tariff were so arranged as to ensure to the men of this colony the work of cutting up all imported timber under 12 in. by 12 in.

Mr. MADDEN observed that as the employers and the employed in the timber industry had agreed to the duties now proposed by the Government, it would be a mistake to disturb the arrangement. The fact that a large amount of Victorian capital had been invested in the New Zealand pine trade was a reason why honorable members should show some consideration to that trade and not treat it in a spirit of hostility.

Mr. G. D. CARTER said he trusted that the Minister of Customs would adhere to his own proposals. If the workmen of Victoria could not be employed in some better occupation than the cutting up of timber, the fact said very little for the productiveness of the country.

Mr. Patterson's amendment was agreed to.

On the item—"Architraves and mouldings, wholly or partly prepared, under 3 in., 4s. per 100 feet lineal,"

Mr. PATTERSON moved the insertion, after the word "mouldings," of the words "of all sorts." This amendment would include mouldings with a strip of gilt, which at present came in duty free, depriving the Victorian workmen of a certain amount of labour.

The amendment was agreed to.

On the item—"Hardwood, 1s. per 100 feet superficial,"

Mr. GROOM moved the addition of the words "and on and after the 20th September, 1889, 2s. per 100 feet superficial." The importance of the saw-milling industry could not be over estimated. It had been the means of keeping the selectors on the land in many portions of Gippsland that were covered with the finest timber to be found in the Australian colonies. For the first three or four years, the Gippsland selectors had a very hard time, and it was not until railway communication was provided, and the timber was made available for the Melbourne market that the district began to prosper. The saw-milling industry had brought into existence many thriving townships along the line of railway. For the last six or seven years, Longwarry had contributed £7,000 to £8,000 a year to the Railway department for the carriage of timber alone, and before

the saw-milling industry was established, the place was not worth mentioning. Drouin had also become a large township owing to the value of the timber in the neighbourhood and to the establishment of saw-mills, and for the first few years the prosperity of Warragul, one of the most flourishing towns in Gippsland, was entirely owing to the saw-mills started in the neighbourhood. So it had been with every township on the Gippsland line. The Railway department was receiving from £50,000 to £60,000 per annum from the Gippsland saw-mills for the carriage of timber, not including the red-gum or yellow-box saw-mills in East or North Gippsland. As to the value of the timber, he would call the attention of the committee to the reports given by the timber experts who constituted the Carriage Timber Board, which was appointed by Parliament in 1882 for the purpose of ascertaining, by visits to the timber-growing districts, and various experiments at the Government workshops at Newport, the best kind of timber grown in the Australian colonies adapted for the construction of railway vehicles. The result of these tests and investigations went clearly to show that Victoria had the finest timber of all the colonies for the purpose of railway carriage building, which required the very stongest and most endurable timber that could be obtained. According to the report of the board, the blue gum from Mirboo, Waterloo, and Corner Inlet, in South Gippsland, headed the list in specific strength. (Mr. Mason—"As against what other timbers?") As against 50 or 60 kinds of timber from all the other Australian colonies, including Tasmania. The tests were most carefully made, as might be gleaned from the report, one or two passages in which he would read to the committee :—

"The mode of testing the various specimens was as follows :—Two standards, 6 feet apart, were erected to form bearings for the specimens, which were 7 ft. long and 1½ in. square. Weight was applied at the centre, where a measure was adjusted to show, in inches and parts, the exact deflection at, and before, breakage. Three specimens of each contribution were tested, the mean result recorded, and will be found in its appropriate column in the tables. Every set of specimens bore a distinguishing mark, the key of which was with the secretary, and unknown to the members of the Board. Of the specimens officially received by the secretary there were 37 sets of three each submitted to test on seven consecutive days. Other samples sent in at the last moment were also tested.

"As this inquiry was limited to the object of ascertaining what, if any, timbers of indigenous growth are suitable to the building of railway stock, it will be unnecessary to treat here of the whole of the various timbers in detail, whatever may be their respective merits. Many of them, such as the ironbark, jarrah, redgum, tuart, &c., being, in the opinion of this Board, unsuitable for the purpose, on account, amongst other reasons, of their great weight. Of those which are suitable may be mentioned blackwood, mountain ash, blue gum, and Gippsland mahogany.

"Blackwood (acacia melanoxylon) under test presented results superior to any other timber, whether of indigenous or foreign growth. Of all the indigenous timbers this one may be said to possess in a pre-eminent degree every quality desirable for the purpose stated. It seasons without losing bulk, is of good colour and figure, and resisted the heaviest strain before fracture, whilst in cost it is less than one-half that of Indian teak, to which it is superior in most respects, and inferior in none. The most favorable conditions under which this timber obtains is in ranges displaying rock of the Mesozoic period, as at Mirboo, and the sources of the Moe, Narracan, and Morwell rivers. As this timber is being largely used in building railway vehicles, its excellent qualities may be taken to be recognised; and as these tests may be held to confirm beyond all question the wisdom of the selection of this timber by the Railway department, we have pleasure in very strongly recommending its continued use, care being taken, however, to obtain supplies from the localities where the natural conditions are favorable, and that the trees be felled in season when the sap is down.

"Mountain ash (eucalyptus amygdalina regnans).—This timber is also recommended for the purpose. Reference to the table will show that the timber in the aggregate resisted the highest strain, the average being 965·3, as against blackwood 956·3, whilst its specific gravity was 761 as against 854. The Otway Forest, Mirboo, and Narbethong were visted by a contingent of the board, and both this timber and blackwood was found in those localities to be of very superior quality—of large size and abundant. Mountain ash may be found of the finest quality in the ranges of felspar porphyry formation in the Upper Yarra district, especially those bordering the valley of the Watts.

"Blue gum (eucalyptus globulus).—The board is of opinion that this also is a suitable timber, treated in the same manner as the mountain ash. It is recommended that Corner Inlet and Mirboo should be resorted to for this timber.

"Gippsland mahogany (eucalyptus botryoides) is also a suitable timber of good colour, as strong as blue gum, but of less specific gravity."

In Gippsland there were thousands and hundreds of thousands of the very finest trees to be found in the Australian colonies, and unless that valuable timber was taken to the saw-mills and made into a marketable commodity it must go up to the heavens in smoke, because the whole of the timbered country had been taken up by the selectors, who were bound to clear their land, in compliance with the Act. Why should not Victorian saw-mills be encouraged, seeing that there was such a vast amount of raw material available? At present the timber

mills of Victoria were subjected to the unfair competition of sawn timber from Tasmania. The saw-millers of Tasmania sent their surplus timber to Melbourne, generally in their own boats, and sold it by auction for what it would fetch, taking 7s. 6d., 8s. 6d., and 9s. per 100 feet for timber which the saw-millers of Victoria could not supply, of good quality, under 9s., 9s. 6d., and 10s. per 100 feet. If the duty were increased from 1s. to 2s. per 100 feet it would keep out a lot of rubbish from Tasmania, the valuable product of this colony would take its place, and an important industry would be encouraged. Unless this concession were made, the saw-mills of South Gippsland could not keep on. In order to prove how seriously the importation of Tasmanian timber was competing with the trade of the Victorian saw-milling industry, he might inform the committee that, from returns which had been furnished to him from the Custom-house, he found that the quantity and value of dutiable sawn timber (undressed hardwood) imported from Tasmania during the last few years were as follows:—In 1885, 4,084,864 sup. feet, of the value of £18,000 ; in 1886, 4,695,287 feet, of the value of £21,489 ; in 1887, 5,109,700 feet, of the value of £23,927 ; and in 1888, 11,314,000 feet, of the value of £58,659. During the first half of this year the importations had reached nearly 11,000,000 feet. This proved that Tasmanian timber was doing an immense amount of damage to the Victorian timber industry, and as the raw material was at their very doors he thought the local men ought to be protected? Every other branch of industry in the colony had got protection, and seeing that the capital employed in Victorian saw-mills was £628,000, the number of men employed 5,150, the number of horses 1,600, the number of bullocks 9,000, and that something like £600,000 was paid in wages annually, surely, such an important industry was worth preserving. He trusted the Government would accept the amendment.

Mr. McLEAN said he would support the amendment. The saw-milling industry was one of great importance in Gippsland North, many saw-mills being established there and a large number of hands employed. He could endorse all that the honorable member for Gippsland West had said with regard to the quality of the Gippsland timber, more especially the redgum, which he had been assured by experts was the best redgum in the colony in the point of specific strength and density. That, however, was immaterial to the question at issue. He was advocating an increase of the duty under consideration, not in the interests of Gippsland alone, but in the interests of he s aw millers of the whole colony. It was a very important industry, providing a great deal of employment and furnishing a large amount of traffic to the railways; and as protection had been extended to all other industries, there could be no valid reason for withholding it from the saw-milling trade.

Mr. MASON remarked that all the members for Gippsland constituencies could corroborate the statements of the honorable member for Gippsland West, and for himself he did not see why protection should not be given to saw-millers as well as to the ironfounders and others. On the Great Southern Railway saw-mills were springing into existence every day, and in that district some of the finest trees in the colony were to be found. He and five others rode into a burnt out gum tree, and with six horses, six horsemen, and three or four others afoot there was room for three or four more. In fact it was estimated that that hollow tree would accommodate ten horses and ten horsemen without any inconvenience whatever.

Mr. FOSTER observed that if the desired increase of duty were granted, it would be the means of saving a tremendous quantity of really valuable timber from destruction.

Mr. MOUNTAIN said he must admit that the honorable member for Gippsland West had made out a very excellent case, but while he quite agreed that it was the duty of Parliament to render all possible assistance to the saw-millers in the colony, he desired to point out that there was a very serious objection to increasing the duty on every class of timber under the head of hardwood. Redgum had become scarce, and karri karri from Western Australia was being used in its place. The amendment ought to be limited to an increase of the duty on blue gum to 2s. per 100 feet.

Mr. WHEELER expressed the hope that the Government would consent to the amendment. In the previous Parliament he stood alone in advocating an additional duty on hardwood, but since then a great many converts had been made. The principal argument used against the duty was that it would interfere with Australian unity; but the ground of that argument was entirely removed by the action the Government had taken in increasing various duties

affecting the other colonies. The hardwood trade was a very extensive one, and it was natural to the colony, because there was as good timber here for building purposes as could be found in any part of the world, and labour and machinery were available to produce all that was required to supply the local market. The honorable member for Gippsland West showed that the amount of capital invested in the hardwood trade was between £600,000 and £700,000, and that the number of men it employed was over 5,000. There was scarcely any demand that could be made that would be refused to any industry of similar proportions in the city. A larger measure of protection was not being asked on hardwood than was conceded on many other articles, and therefore no objection should be offered to the amendment. The trade was subjected to a most unfair competition. Tasmania only sent to Victoria its surplus stock. The legitimate markets for Tasmanian hardwood were South Australia and New South Wales, but whenever the saw-mills produced more than was required to supply those markets, the surplus was sent to this colony. It was carried as ballast, and the rates realized for it, when it was sold by auction on the wharves, regulated prices in the Victorian market. Intending buyers met before the sale, they ascertained what each other wanted, and agreed not to bid against each other. The result was that prices were brought down to a rate at which no saw-miller in Victoria could compete. If it was contended that that was fair competition, then Parliament might as well wipe out the saw-milling industry at once. The amount paid by the trade every year to the Victorian railways was very large, and had been very considerably under estimated by the honorable member for Gippsland West. He knew of one firm alone that paid in railway freights every year from £2,500 to £3,000. It might be said that Tasmania sent very little timber to Victoria, but that was a mistake. From returns which he had seen, it appeared that the importation of hardwood from Tasmania amounted in one year to 11,000,000 superficial feet. A few years ago the importations amounted to only 2,000,000 superficial feet per annum; but they had now reached close upon 1,000,000 superficial feet a month. The timber came to this colony as ballast, and the charges upon it were very small compared with the freights paid by the Victorian saw-millers to the railways. It had been urged that the proposed duty would increase the cost of timber to the mining community. He would not contend as some honorable members did that when an extra duty was imposed, the effect of it was to reduce prices; but he could show that this duty would not in any way affect the mining community. The mines in the northern districts obtained their supplies entirely from the local mills, which were established for the purpose of meeting this demand, and which did not send one foot of their timber to Melbourne. There was no industry that had done more to develop mining in the colony than that of saw-milling. If the local saw-mills had not existed, the timber required by the mines could not have been obtained at the present low prices. These points deserved consideration, and he hoped that the Government would give way with regard to the amendment. The additional duty would regulate the trade, and would enable the saw-mills to be fully employed. On the other hand, if it were not imposed, one-half of the saw-mills in existence would very shortly have to be closed.

Mr. A. HARRIS remarked that at the last general election he gave a promise to his constituents that if a proposal were made for the imposition of an additional duty on hardwood he would support it. He could not understand the position taken up by the Government in the matter. The Government first placed portable engines on the free list, and then they suddenly proposed that a duty of 35 per cent. should be imposed upon them. They had changed front with regard to other items in the Tariff also, but he did not blame them, because of course they gained wisdom by experience. But it was astonishing now to see how firm the Government could be when it was proposed to do an act of simple justice to what was one of the most important industries of the colony. (Mr. McLean—"The Minister of Customs intends to yield.") He hoped the honorable gentleman would yield to a little gentle pressure.

Mr. GRAVES said the district he represented was now approached by railway for the first time, and one reason given by the Minister of Railways for the lines laid down there was that they would tap some very valuable forest country. The cost of railway carriage was always high as compared with the cost of water carriage. The cost of shipping timber from the Tasmanian ports to Melbourne was about 10s. per ton, and the railway freights on timber in Victoria were about treble that amount. In

view of these facts he felt bound to support the amendment. Protection was the policy of the colony, and there was no industry that was of greater importance to the colony than that of hardwood. It was an industry that was capable of large development, because as the supply of timber increased so would the demand, as building was being carried on in all directions. There was no reason at all why the locally-grown timber should not be used for building purposes. Timber was now being sent from several parts of Gippsland to Melbourne by water. There was a large trade in Gippsland mahogany from the Snowy River, and it would be handicapped by the competition with Tasmanian timber if the extra duty was not imposed. The timber sent from Tasmania was sold at nominal prices, and it was destroying the local industry because the saw-mill proprietors had no means of controlling prices.

Mr. PATTERSON observed that he was, of course, impressed by the arguments that had been used by honorable members in favour of the proposed duty; but it was advisable that the committee should understand how the matter stood. If the duty on hardwood were raised from 1s. to 2s. per 100 superficial feet, it would be subject to a higher duty than was charged on soft wood. The duty on soft wood was 2s. 6d. for sizes of from 7 in. by 2½ in., whereas the proposed duty on hardwood was 2s. for sizes of 9 in. by 9 in. If the amendment were agreed to the locally-grown hardwood would have to compete against soft wood because the duty would exclude the hardwood at present imported, while the importations of soft wood would be very much increased. The hardwood trade was, in fact, now suffering from the competition with soft wood, because oregon timber was now being employed for many purposes for which hardwood was formerly used. The inevitable result of imposing the proposed duty would be that a demand would be made for an increase of the duty on soft wood, as it would be found that no good could be done without it. It had never been contended that the two woods stood on the same plane. No honorable member would pretend that hardwood could supply all the purposes of soft wood, nor would he deny that the importation to the colony of American timber was a real advantage. The colony could not grow soft wood, and the only reason of placing a duty upon it was that it might be sent here in certain sizes, so that employment might be given to the saw-millers in cutting and dressing it. His own opinion was that the right thing to do with regard to the hardwood industry was to open up the Gippsland country by means of railways, to reduce the railway freights, and afford better facilities generally for getting the timber to market. Timber could be sent to Melbourne more quickly from Tasmania than it could from some parts of Victoria. However, he would not press his opinion against the judgment of the committee. He had told the committee what would be the consequence of imposing the proposed duty. It was not the intention of the Government to increase the duty on soft wood, and if the committee chose after what he had said to pass the amendment they would do so on their own responsibility.

The amendment that the duty on hardwood be 2s. per 100 superficial feet was agreed to, and the resolution, as amended, was adopted.

Mr. PATTERSON moved the omission of the following item :—

"Timber of sizes 7 inches by 2½ inches and upwards, and under 12 inches square, per 100 feet super., 1s. 6d."

The motion was agreed to.

The remaining items of timber duties were then adopted.

Mr. WHEELER moved the insertion of the following item:—

"Oregon timber 6 inches by 6 inches and under, per 100 feet super., 2s. 6d."

He did not think it would be wise to impose a duty on oregon of sizes over 6 in. by 6 in.; but he was fairly entitled, after the arguments that had been advanced by the Minister of Customs to ask for the duty he proposed on the smaller sizes, as it would lead to the employment of a large amount of labour in cutting the timber, and would afford necessary protection to the hardwood industry.

Mr. PATTERSON said that if the honorable member for Daylesford would give notice of his motion it could be discussed on the report.

Mr. ZOX remarked that it was unfair to submit so important a motion at a moment's notice, and to ask honorable members who were not experts in the timber trade to vote for it. He hoped that the honorable member would adopt the suggestion of the Minister of Customs.

Mr. WHEELER stated he recognised that it was due to the committee that they should have an opportunity of considering his proposal. He would therefore withdraw

it and give notice of his intention to move it on the report.

The motion was accordingly withdrawn.

The item "Watches and all parts thereof, wholly or partly made up, 20 per cent. *ad valorem*" was adopted.

On the item "Woollen manufactures or manufactures containing wool (except printers' blankets), viz.:—Blankets, blanketings, rugs, and rugging, 25 per cent. *ad valorem*,"

Mr. F. STUART said that waterproof rugs lined with wool had been overlooked, and he hoped that the Minister of Customs would endeavour to include those articles in the new duties.

Mr. PATTERSON said that he would consider the point raised by the honorable member.

The item was agreed to.

On the item—

"Woollen manufactures or manufactures containing wool, viz.:—Piece goods, whether in the piece or cut into lengths or shapes, being vestings, trouserings, coatings, shirtings, broadcloths, witneys, naps, flannels, mantle cloths, cloakings, ulsterings, plaidings, kerseys, serges, costume cloths, Melton cloths, and tweeds, 25 per cent. *ad valorem*,"

Mr. RUSSELL moved the addition of the words "And on and after the 20th September, 1889, 30 per cent. *ad valorem*." He had given notice of his intention to move that the duty should be 35 per cent., but he found that many honorable members were not prepared to vote for a duty of more than 30 per cent. The woollen industry stood second in importance only to the iron industry. (Mr. Anderson—"It stands before the iron industry.") He would not say that. The woollen mills were at the present time languishing, and he was only asking on their behalf what had already been conceded to other industries. He would be glad to learn whether the Government would accept his amendment.

Mr. PATTERSON said he was afraid that the Government could not accept the amendment. Any alteration of the duty on woollen piece goods would involve a corresponding alteration of the first item in the Tariff, "articles of apparel," on which the duty was 35 per cent. *ad valorem*. This duty was made 35 per cent. on the supposition that the duty on piece goods would be 25 per cent., as it was necessary that there should be that difference in order to protect the local manufacturers of wearing apparel by whom thousands of persons were employed. Unless the duty on wearing apparel was increased to 45 per cent. to meet the proposed increase on piece goods the amendment would have a very injurious effect. This question was thrashed out by the late Minister of Customs (Mr. Walker), and was settled to the satisfaction of all parties. Why a duty of 30 per cent. on piece goods should now be proposed he did not know, because the duty of 25 per cent. was agreed upon. (Mr. Munro—"By whom?") The increase of the duty from 20 to 25 per cent. was accepted by the woollen manufacturers, and then it was pointed out that to be fair the duty on articles of apparel should be raised to 35 per cent. in order to leave a proper margin between the raw material and the manufactured article. There was a large export trade in wearing apparel, and it would increase. The Government had fully considered this matter, and would have to oppose the amendment.

Mr. MUNRO said he was very much surprised at the statement of the Minister of Customs that an agreement had been come to in this matter. An agreement with whom? He had received a telegram from the secretary of the Victoria Woollen Mill Company, Geelong, stating that the manager did not endorse the statement of the Warehousemen's Association, that he had agreed that the mills would be content with 25 per cent., and that, on the contrary, the manager had informed the chairman of the association that he had no authority to give such an undertaking. He (Mr. Munro) would relate the history of this affair. In 1873 there were four woollen mills in the colony, and at that time there was a duty of 10 per cent. on the manufacture. In 1879, when he was chairman of and the largest shareholder in one of the woollen factories, the four mills were doing very well—paying fair dividends —and everybody was satisfied. The Government of the day, however, without consulting the companies at all, proposed to increase the duty from 10 per cent. to 15 per cent. Although he was supporting the Government, he objected to the increase, and pointed out that if it was insisted on the result would be that new mills would be started, and the competition would become so great for the small business available that the whole of the mills would be ruined. He did not actually vote against the increase of duty, but he told the committee that the result would be to ruin the companies. And what happened? The number of mills was immediately increased from four to nine. It could be easily understood that what was sufficient trade for four was not sufficient

for nine, and the result was that the company of which he was chairman lost the whole of its capital — £40,000 — and went into liquidation. He found at the time that there were a large number of persons who had given credit to the factory on the strength of his being chairman, and there was no money to pay them. He therefore got his son to go to the liquidator and buy the factory from him at the amount that was due to the creditors, and the result was that the whole of the creditors were paid the money due to them. He guaranteed the factory to go on; and he might tell the committee that he had no personal interest in the increase of the duty now proposed, because he had given instructions to have the affairs of the factory wound up, at a net loss to himself of £20,000. The mill was now taking no new orders, and was simply working off the wool in hand. Instructions had been given to have the machinery sold off and the factory wound up, because it could not pay. This was in face of the fact that this factory, at the International Exhibition, obtained the gold medal against the competition of the whole world. It could not be said, therefore, that it could not make a good article. Three years ago he pleaded hard for a duty of 25 per cent. on woollen manufactures, and if it had been granted then the mills would have been satisfied and that duty would have carried them through. But since that time all the mills had been "living on their fat,"—making no profits—the duty of 20 per cent. then granted being insufficient. It was now proposed to give the 25 per cent. asked for three years ago, but 25 per cent. now would leave the mills in just the same position as 20 per cent. left them in. With 30 per cent. the factories would pay, and this duty would not raise the price of the article they produced by one penny, while it would afford more work to the mills and their employés. At present, at the Victoria woollen mill, Geelong, the workmen were only working two-thirds time. The Barwon mill was closed two years ago, and had been idle ever since. This was an industry which specially affected the farmers, because it was from the farmers that the mills bought their wool. They could not buy large quantities of wool in the market, but purchased the small quantities sent down by the farmers; in fact, the woollen mills were the best customers of the farmers. They bought a product grown in the colony, and by colonial labour they manufactured it into an article which could not be beaten anywhere. But the difficulty was that they had to compete with inferior imported stuff, which was not wool at all, but was made up from rags and cotton. The material made in the colony could hardly be worn out, it lasted so long, so that really it was very much cheaper than the shoddy article imported. The question of this additional 5 per cent. involved the difference between success and ruin, and he was sure the committee would not withhold the extra 5 per cent. If it was granted he was quite sure that the industry would be satisfied, and he ventured to say the Assembly would hear no more about the woollen mills as claimants for further protection.

Mr. GILLIES said he desired to state the position of the Government as far as this question was concerned. After he had done that, the committee could determine what it considered the wisest thing to do in the interests of the whole country. The matter was a little involved, because this was not merely a question of an increase of duty affecting only one industry; it was a question of an increase which would also affect another industry of equal importance. There were two interests concerned—the woollen mills on the one side, and the clothing trade on the other. Honorable members would recollect that when it was first proposed to increase the duty on woollens, it was said that if that increase were made there must be a corresponding increase in the duties on made-up goods imported into the colony, and the material of which was of a cheaper kind than the Victorian woollen mills could produce. He had received a communication, which he dared say had also been sent to other honorable members, from the clothing manufacturers, signed by nearly all of them. (Mr. Munro —"Importers, you mean.") No doubt they were importers, but they were also manufacturers and exporters. The honorable member ought to be as fair to the one side as to the other. He had no doubt that the honorable member was anxious for the success of the woollen mills, and he, and all, ought to be equally anxious for the success of every manufacturing industry in the colony. On the one hand, there were the woollen manufacturers, who had expended large sums of money in bringing their manufactures to the position they now occupied. On the other hand, there were a large number of clothing manufacturers who had expended large sums of money on their trade, and who gave employment to a great number of hands. On the one side it was said that the woollen mills did not pay

because they did not get enough protection, but the clothing manufacturers said that if an increased duty was placed on woollens they also would require an increased duty to enable them to live, and they asserted that the increased duty now proposed on their industry, namely, 35 per cent., was not only ample, but was almost too much, because it would prevent them from manufacturing an article which was in large consumption not only in Victoria but also in the neighbouring colonies. The clothing manufacturers stated their case as follows:—

"Any increase of duty, especially on low-priced goods, would affect injuriously a large proportion of the 4,344 factory hands, by throwing them out of the employment they have been used to, viz., making up boys' and youths' clothing and children's knickerbocker suits. The woollen mills here provide nothing in the place of these cheap goods, the material they aim to produce being composed of Australian wool, and coming from the mills at a much higher price. In the event of the British goods being kept out, the Victorian mills cannot, for a great number of years, supply the required variety of material to keep the factories employed. Imports are necessary for variety of material and prices, therefore don't prohibit or unnecessarily load with duty, as prohibition or extreme curtailment will kill our export trade in clothing. Even under the old rate, our export trade is gradually declining. The proportionate advance of rate which would follow as a consequence on 'articles of attire' would be very difficult to tabulate, and especially for drawbacks. If the Tariff be raised, the goods now on the way for this season and next winter cannot be stopped, and, with the high rates, would be almost unsaleable. Anything that tends to cripple the clothing industry must, of necessity, damage the woollen mills gradually but certainly. The higher class of goods in tweeds and worsteds used in the tailoring trade cannot possibly be made here at the present time. The increased duties will press most heavily on the working classes."

What was the reason why the woollen mills did not pay? Take the case of the Ballarat woollen mills for instance. Last year he went over those mills with the honorable member for Ballarat East, and he was much pleased with what he saw. They produced an excellent article of clothing—an article which he thought ought to have been accepted by the Ballarat public. Yet, with all the increases of duty that had taken place, how was it that those mills did not pay? (Mr. Andrews—"The bonus business killed them.") Long before there was any bonus proposed the mills were not paying. What he desired to point out was this—that if the people of Ballarat, nine-tenths of whom at least were avowed protectionists, would only give support to the local mills by using the articles they produced the mills would pay to-morrow. He had never heard any explanation why the Ballarat people did not patronize the local manufacture, but it was unfortunately the fact that they did not. He would venture to tell the members for the Ballarat district that if they would only work locally and get the influence of the best men in Ballarat to induce the local people to use this local manufacture—which he had no hesitation in saying was an excellent manufacture—the Ballarat woollen mills would pay splendidly without any additional protection at all. He was convinced of that. When the Government was confronted with opposite statements from the representatives of two different industries—the one party saying that this duty must be increased to 30 per cent. to make their industry pay, and the other that if the duty were so increased it would ruin their industry, which was still larger than the other—this Government or any Government was placed in an unfortunate position in having to determine between the two rival claims. Unless it was perfectly clear that they would not be injuring a larger industry, which commanded so great an amount of the Victorian market, and also of the markets of the neighboring colonies—an industry which as a local industry was equally entitled to the consideration of the Assembly—honorable members should pause before agreeing to the increase of duty proposed by the honorable member for Ballarat East. This was the position the Government took up in the matter. They did not feel justified in agreeing to increase this duty even by an additional 5 per cent., bringing it up to 30 per cent., because, as far as they could ascertain, the probable result of the increase would be to injure another industry equally large and important. If it was merely a question of increasing a duty for one industry, no other industry being affected, he was sure the committee would not hesitate five minutes to grant what was asked.

Lt.-Col. SMITH remarked that the Treasurer had specially referred to his district. He could take no objection to the tone of the honorable gentleman's remarks, and he quite concurred with him that if the whole of the people of the Ballarat district were to patronize the Ballarat woollens it would be a very good thing. While this was very good advice as a matter of theory, he would point out that the woollen mills were placed in a peculiar position. They were obliged to send their goods to the large

wholesale houses in Melbourne, which supplied the retail establishments in the country. If the mills were found giving small parcels to individuals or to branch establishments, the wholesale houses would turn round and refuse to take any of their goods. He was informed by a former manager of the Ballarat mills that the only way in which the mills could dispose of their manufactures was by dealing with a wholesale house in Melbourne, which would take the whole output, and distribute the material amongst its customers. He would point out that the extra 5 per cent. asked for was not a large amount. It would not mean more than 6d. on a suit of clothes; possibly on the higher priced goods it might amount to 1s. If the farmers' representatives opposed this increase they would be going against the interests of their constituents, because the woollen mills were the best customers for the farmers' wool, and helped to keep up the price of it. The opposition to the increase of duty all came from one firm, and that firm used nothing but shoddy. It was in the interests of that one firm that the circular which was quoted by the Treasurer had been circulated amongst members. Did any honorable member really believe that this paltry increase would lead to one single hand less being employed in the clothing factories? (Mr. Munro—"Not one.") He ventured to say that more would be employed. He would ask the Treasurer not to oppose the increase on behalf of the Government, but to leave the matter an open question for the committee to decide. There was no question of policy affecting the Government involved in the matter. The committee, following the lead of the Government—to whom he gave great credit for their action—had dealt very generously with the furniture, iron, and other trades, and he would tell the Treasurer that if he let this 30 per cent. go he (Lt.-Col. Smith) at any rate would ask for no more. As far as he was concerned, the woollen mills must take their chance and sink or swim. The duty ought to have been made 35 per cent., but after consultation they had agreed to accept 30 per cent., in the belief that the Government would not offer any opposition to that amount. He would appeal to honorable members on both sides of the Assembly to let this paltry increase go. Instead of causing less employment, it would cause more. It would lead to emulation among the mills, which would be induced to improve their machinery, and would soon be able to compete with the importer with regard to the lower-priced goods, as well as the higher qualities. (Mr. Anderson—"There will be more mills established.") The more the better. He would ask the farming members to lend their assistance to carry this proposal, and, in return, he and other honorable members would do all they could for the farmers when the time came.

Mr. ANDREWS expressed the opinion that the proposal of the honorable member for Ballarat East was a very reasonable one indeed, especially in view of the fact that the woollen industry had not received the support from the Government that it should have done. If the Government had granted 25 per cent. when it was asked for, three years ago, possibly it would have served all purposes. He wished to point out that the Treasurer had placed the matter before the committee in rather an unfair way. When this question was previously before the Assembly, the wire pullers represented that the manufacturers of clothing were hostile to the manufacturers of piece goods. That was not so. There had never been any solid argument submitted to show how the clothing manufacturers were to be injuriously affected by the increased duty on woollens now asked for. It was said that the export trade would be injured, but seeing that the clothing manufacturers, when exporting made up clothing, received a draw-back equal to the amount of duty paid, he could not see how their industry would be affected if the duty on piece goods were even made 35 per cent. It was well known that the duty of 35 per cent. on clothing had been so effective that there was now no attempt to import clothing into the colony. The local manufacturers had not only overtaken the Victorian market, but were exporting to other colonies. The woollen mills wished to be placed on a similar footing. The Victorian woollen manufacturers could not compete with the long-houred labour of the continent of Europe, or with articles which were shipped hither in a speculative way with a view to realization after the market of the old world had been satisfied. It was to steady the market that this duty was required. He had the testimony of the largest warehousemen in Melbourne that the quality of the Victorian tweeds they had purchased was superior to that of the tweeds made in Glasgow or the North of England. This being the case the consumer would not suffer by the duty; in fact, any one wearing the colonial article would reap a distinct advantage. Previous

increases of duty on woollen piece goods had not raised the price of the working man's clothing a shilling. When these goods were admitted free, a suit of clothes which could now be bought for from 40s. to 50s. cost from £4 10s. to £5. He did not care to speak of Geelong, but there was a mill at Ballarat now producing an article at 2s. a yard which he would challenge the world to beat at the money. It was nonsense to talk of the consumers being victimized and black-mailed by increasing this duty. The object of the increase was to prevent the importers from obtaining the market of this colony, and then, as soon as the local producer was extinguished, raising the price to the consumer. He was pleased to find that the opponents of the duty had come out in black and white for the first time. They had issued a circular in which they stated that any increase of the duty would prejudicially affect the 4,300 hands employed in the factories. This was a deliberate attempt to mislead the Assembly. These hands would not be prejudicially affected at all, because no doubt, following the present practice, a drawback would be allowed to the clothing manufacturers who exported equal to the amount of duty paid. Thus the clothing factories could not suffer, unless there were "pickings" in connexion with the drawbacks of which outsiders were not aware. (Mr. F. Stuart—"Nothing of the kind.") Before the honorable member entered the House, the late Minister of Customs stated that he was perfectly satisfied that the evasions in connexion with the Customs were something of an extraordinary character, and that if he had his own way he would prosecute the parties criminally. Personally he (Mr. Andrews) was as much interested in the hands of the clothing factories as he was in the employés of the woollen mills, and he would not do anything to prejudice those who were engaged in the clothing factories. But, in view of the drawback allowed, he could see no reason why they should be injured in the slightest degree by the 5 per cent. extra asked for. As to the second argument in the circular — that the woollen mills here provided nothing in the place of the cheap goods imported—he had already stated that magnificent tweed was produced in Ballarat at 2s. a yard. If consumers wanted anything lower than that they would get something which would be an injury and not a benefit to them. In Geelong also they were producing an article almost if not quite equal to that produced at Ballarat. The Treasurer had said that, seeing the excellent quality of the Ballarat woollens, he thought the Ballarat people should support them; but in the case of the increase of duty on boots and hats the same argument was not applied to the people of Fitzroy or Collingwood. When Fitzroy wanted an increase of 65 per cent. on boots, the Treasurer did not object to the duty being increased beyond 25 per cent. Let the market be given to the local producer, and the woollen manufacturers have their share of it.

Mr. ARMYTAGE observed that he failed to follow the logic of the arguments used by those who supported the increase of duty. The leader of the Opposition stated that when the duty was 10 per cent. the mills flourished. Then would they not flourish again if the duty were reduced to 10 per cent. now? The honorable member also said that when the duty was increased to 15 per cent. too many mills started. Did that not imply that there were too many mills now, and that if the duty was increased as proposed the number of mills would increase again? (Mr. Munro—"No fear; they were too sorely hit.") At all events that appeared to be the logic of the position. The leader of the Opposition put it that it was a misfortune when the number of mills was increased, but, on the other hand, the honorable member for Ballarat West (Lt.-Col. Smith) said it would be an excellent thing if the number of mills was increased. It was a difficult thing to follow such contradictory reasoning.

Mr. ZOX said the leader of the Opposition had stated that the woollen mills were not prosperous; but why were they not prosperous? Woollen mills established in other colonies were prosperous enough. Let honorable members look at the extent to which, notwithstanding the duty, New Zealand woollen goods were imported by Melbourne clothing manufacturers, and disposed of at a profit. At the Centennial International Exhibition the display of New Zealand tweeds was most creditable. The honorable member for Geelong (Mr. Andrews) asked what difference would this extra 5 per cent. make? As a matter of fact, it would make an immense difference. As the Treasurer had very properly asked, were the committee going to allow their sympathies with respect to employés to run in only one direction? The honorable member for Geelong had asserted that there would not be a single sufferer from the imposition

of this extra 5 per cent.; but what did the Trades Hall people say? They said, in a circular issued by them, that if the duty on woollen goods was increased to over 20 per cent. a great amount of suffering was likely to ensue. (Mr. Andrews—"When was that circular issued?") About two years ago. It was issued on behalf of the clothing factory hands of Melbourne, and it urged honorable members not to allow their sympathies to be claimed by the woollen mill owners, because imposing a protective duty of more than 20 per cent. would deprive the Victorian clothing manufacturers of the intercolonial market, and result in thousands of unemployed persons walking the streets. That document emanated from the Trades Hall Council, and, so far, its authority could be relied upon. Again, when last year a conference was held between the woollen mill owners and the importers of the colony, what was the decision arrived at? (Mr. Andrews—"You cannot call that a conference.") Well, he had in his possession the particulars of the agreement, and he was quite prepared to hand the paper to the press. (Mr. Munro—"Who were present.") Besides the representatives of the woollen mills, there were present a number of importers, whose names the honorable member could read for himself, with Mr. Bruce in the chair; and the resolution arrived at was that the duty should not be higher than 25 per cent., which gave satisfaction all round. (Mr. Munro—"The whole thing was a Flinders-lane dodge; the conference was all on one side.") The honorable member might follow his honorable colleague's example, and try to accuse Flinders-lane of dishonorable conduct—(Mr. Andrews—"That I never did.")—but what would it all amount to? He (Mr. Zox) no more represented Flinders-lane than he did Little Bourke-street, but he did not believe that either of the representatives of Geelong could find foundation for the slightest charge of dishonorable conduct against Flinders-lane. As for the facts of the case, he held in his hand correspondence which amply proved the nature of the arrangement come to at the conference. With regard to no one suffering from the proposed increase of duty, he would ask the committee to take notice of the following letter which appeared in the *Age* the other day:—

"Understanding that there is an agitation for a largely increased duty on woollen piece goods, we, the undersigned, who depend entirely upon our factories and employ hundreds of hands; whose wages must be affected by anything that might reduce the quantity of work produced by the factories, desire to join those who are both manufacturers and warehousemen in protesting against any further increase of duty upon woollen piece goods."

That was signed by a large number of Melbourne manufacturers. (An Honorable Member—"Give us their names.") It was signed by H. Weenen, Lygon-street, Carlton; G. F. Barthold and Co., Franklin-street; the Phœnix Clothing Company, King-street; Cohen and Lyons, Flinders-lane west; Oakley and Holt, Flinders-street; Wm. Bowley and Son, Flinders-street; E. J. Bartlett, Flinders-lane; Foy and Gibson, Smith-street, Collingwood; P. and H. Opas, Nicholson-street, Abbotsford; A. W. Ferne and Co., Bourke-street; Sanders and Co., Bourke-street; Loel and Co., Bourke-street; and A. M. Isaacs, Flinders-lane. (Mr. Woods—"A regular shoddy lot.") He could tell the honorable member for Stawell that while he admired his opinions on certain subjects, he had not the same amount of respect for his views on other questions. For instance, he could remember the time when the honorable member spoke of Sir John Coode as a man of no position in England. What would be thought of the Honorable John Woods in England if ever he went there? It was to be feared that he would have to take a back seat. The men who signed that letter were all employers of labour, and they knew what they were about when they protested against a further increase of the duty on woollens on the ground that it would throw a number of hands out of employment. He would next refer to what appeared some time since in the *Herald* as the views of his honorable colleague in the representation of Melbourne East, who was unquestionably regarded as an expert as to, not only woollen mills, but also the productive industries of the colony generally, and who had given to the world some of the experience gained by him during his late visit to Europe. For example, he stated with respect to British enterprise—

"No expense is spared to find out the best and cheapest methods of making wools. Every few years the whole of the machinery in a factory will be thrown aside and replaced by the latest improvements."

It was well known that any English manufacturer who tried to compete in the woollen trade with old machinery was very soon thrown out. In fact, for the proprietors of an important woollen manufactory to spend £40,000, £50,000, or even £100,000 on

new machinery was regarded as an everyday affair. His honorable colleague was even more striking when he referred to the woollen mills of Victoria, which he did as follows:—

"This is particularly noticeable in the woollen, cotton, and iron trades, and it was not till I had ascertained personally the immense capital invested in the former business, and the vast energy and experience engaged in it, that I began to realise why the woollen mills of Victoria had not prospered. They cannot compete with the English mills, nor will they be able to do so for the next 50 years, no matter how high the duty we may impose on imported woollens."

The honorable member then gave the three following important reasons why England was so superior in this respect:—

"1. Abundance of capital is always available. If a manufacturer is hard up, some merchant steps in, finds the capital, and takes the goods produced.

"2. None but the latest and most improved machinery is used, obsolete methods being immediately thrown on one side.

"3. Instead of the various processes of woollen manufactures, from dealing with the wool in its raw state until the finished article is produced, being all performed in one and the same mill, in England one firm will wash wool, another will comb it, another will card it, another spin, another weave, and another dye and finish the goods. All these different firms have, by skill and experience, brought these various processes to the highest pitch of excellence, and at the lowest possible cost, because one firm is doing one thing constantly.

"This wise division in labour results in the finished goods being produced at a price which no other place in the world can equal."

Who would deny the truth of these statements? The honorable members for Geelong and the honorable member for Stawell talked of English goods imported to Victoria being shoddy, but was not shoddy manufactured in Victoria? If honorable members had any doubt in their minds on this point, he begged to assure them that shoddy woollen goods were produced in the colony. (Mr. Andrews—"Not in Geelong.") Still they were manufactured in Victoria. He (Mr. Zox) would do all he could to help the woollen mills of the colony to be prosperous, but if they could not prosper with a 25 per cent. duty at their back, and the raw material at their doors, they would never prosper. Under all the circumstances, if the agreement entered into between the importers and the manufacturers, to the effect that the duty should not be more than 25 per cent. was not ratified, a distinct injustice would be done to the whole community.

Mr. TRENWITH remarked that the honorable member for Melbourne East (Mr. Zox) had taken considerable pains to show that certain industries desired that there should be no increase of the duty on woollens. He also undertook to give certain names, but he refrained from giving them. Perhaps the real reason was what the leader of the Opposition alluded to when he said that the conference the honorable member spoke of was all on one side. The honorable member also read two documents, purporting to come, one from the Trades Hall, and the other from certain employers of labour. Well, he (Mr. Trenwith) had risen to let the true views of the Trades Hall be known. The firms the honorable member referred to as having signed the letter to the *Age* were simply manufacturers for the importers; therefore they dared not refuse to put their names to that letter. He (Mr. Trenwith) knew pretty well how the letter was prepared, and that it ought to have very little weight. The point to consider was that the woollen industry was indigenous to the colony, and should, therefore, be protected sufficiently to give it the absolute control of its own market. Still there were conflicting interests, and that fact placed the Government in a very critical position. On the one hand there were the woollen mill owners, and their employés asking for an increased duty in order that there should be increased employment, and on the other there were the clothing manufacturers, who wanted the duty to remain as it was in order that they might be prosperous and employ labour. Their market was, however, different from the market of the woollen mill owners. The latter were manufacturers pure and simple, while the others were manufacturers because protection compelled them to manufacture, their true sympathies and interests being with the importers, who would rather deal in imports than in local manufactures. Still there was no getting over the fact that the clothing manufacture was a real manufacture, and that it was argued that an increased duty on woollens would kill its export trade. But how could that export trade be interfered with by an increased import duty when the manufacturers were able, on exporting their manufactures, to get back in the shape of drawbacks all the duty they had paid? So far as their export trade was concerned, the imported raw material came to them absolutely duty free. Therefore the argument the honorable member for Melbourne East relied upon could only be put forward by the clothing manufacturers for the purpose of deceiving.

Mr. NIMMO said he felt very great difficulty indeed as to how to give his vote on the present question. He had to bear in mind a great many things in connexion with the matter. For instance, some years ago, when he was a member of a certain Royal Commission, he went largely into the subject of these woollen mills, and he had every opportunity of forming an opinion with respect to them. But the argument then set up by the woollen mill owners was that an increased duty on woollens would injure rather than benefit their particular industry. As a sample of that argument, he would refer to the evidence given to the commission by the present honorable member for Geelong (Mr. Andrews) who charged him (Mr. Nimmo) the other night with inconsistency. That evidence was as follows:—

"You are chairman of directors of the Barwon Woollen Mills, I believe?—Yes.

"When was your mill established?—About eight years ago.

"Do you agree with the evidence that has been given; if you do not, would you point out to the commission the points upon which you disagree with the evidence already received, and your reasons for disagreeing with it?—I may say I disagree personally with the recommendation that the duty should be increased from 15 per cent. to 30 per cent.

"Upon what ground, please?—On the ground that I believe it would injure our industry.

"On what facts do you base the opinion that it would injure your industry?—The fact that we have acquired by experience that the greater the duty the more internal competition will accrue, and any special advantage we have here will be lost.

"Then you disagree with the increase of duty upon the ground that it would encourage local competition?—That it would injure our interests here. I speak now as chairman of the Barwon Woollen Mills."

That was the difficulty he (Mr. Nimmo) had to contend with. In logic there was, he believed, such a thing as the *reductio ad absurdum*, and he seemed to be very near it on the present occasion, for when asked to increase the duty on woollens, he found himself confronted by the statement he had just read, namely, that an increased duty would injure the industry he wished to serve. (Mr. Munro—"Circumstances have changed.") What were the circumstances that had changed? That was the point. He understood the importance of progression, but he did not wish to see progression which would bring about retrogression. However, after hearing the arguments of the honorable member for Ballarat (Lt.-Col. Smith) he had decided to take the benefit of the doubt, and vote for the increased duty.

Mr. CLARK expressed the opinion that, judging from the arguments of the leader of the Opposition, what the Victorian millowners wanted was not protection but prohibition, so that they might be able to put their heads together, and charge what they liked. But let honorable members look at the case of the Queensland Woollen Company's mills, which had only a revenue duty of 7½ per cent. in their favour, but which nevertheless paid dividends amounting to 15 per cent. per annum on the capital invested. (An Honorable Member—"There are only two woollen mills in Queensland.") How did that touch the fact he had just mentioned? Surely if a 7½ per cent. did so much for the Queensland mills, a 10 per cent. duty—the 10 per cent. duty with which the leader of the Opposition would some time ago have been completely satisfied—ought to be enough for Victoria. In short, if the Victorian mills could not do with the present duty in their favour, the sooner they were closed the better for all concerned. Certainly it would be better for the mill hands, for their existence was as miserable as could be conceived. The Victorian mills were suffering, not only from local competition and a variety of other things, but also from the fact that they were in the hands of middle-men. For example, when his (Mr. Clark's) tailor visited a certain woollen mill the other day, and offered to buy five pieces of cloth, he was told by the manager that he dared not sell him a single yard, for fear of being "boycotted."

Mr. MURPHY stated that he was astonished to hear such a free-trade speech from so pronounced a protectionist as the honorable member for Footscray. Since Victoria produced the best woollens in the world, why should not its woollen industry be encouraged? Besides, was it not protection that had placed this colony head and shoulders above every other Australian colony? What every true protectionist should do was to go in for full protection all round.

Mr. KIRTON thought that, inasmuch as the committee were in a generous mood, the proposed increase of duty ought to be agreed to without a division. The question was, after all, a merely protectionist one, and protection being the avowed policy of the country, it was the bounden duty of honorable members to give the woollen mills such a measure of protection as would enable them to compete successfully with

the whole world outside. He did not know much of the history of the Geelong mills, but he was familiar with that of the Ballarat mills. What was that history? It was this: They had been in existence some fifteen or sixteen years; they had one of the best plants in the colony; they employed about 200 hands; and they paid between £13,000 or £14,000 a year in wages; but during their whole existence they had only yielded some £3,000 in dividends. Well, the other day he visited a hat manufactory in Collingwood, and found it in full swing, with 200 or 300 employés earning good wages. What was the cause of its prosperity? The fact that an increased duty had been passed in its favour. If that was the result in connexion with the hat industry, why should not an increased duty on woollens do the same thing for the woollen industry?

The committee divided on the question that the words "and on and after September 20, 1889, 30 per cent. *ad valorem*" be added to the resolution—

Ayes	48
Noes	28
Majority for the 30 per cent. duty	20

AYES.

Mr. Andrews,	Mr. Murray,
,, Baker,	,, Nimmo,
,, Beazley,	,, Officer,
,, Bennett,	,, Outtrim,
,, Bent,	,, Richardson,
,, W. T. Carter,	,, Russell,
,, Cheetham,	,, Shiels,
,, Craven,	,, L. L. Smith,
,, Duncan,	,, T. Smith,
,, Foster,	Lt.-Col. Smith,
,, Graham,	Mr. J. S. Stewart,
,, Graves,	,, F. Stuart,
,, Groom,	Capt. Taylor,
,, Hall,	Mr. Trenwith,
,, A. Harris,	,, Tucker,
,, Kirton,	,, Turner,
,, Langridge,	,, Uren,
,, Laurens,	,, Webb,
,, McColl,	,, Wheeler,
,, McLean,	,, Williams,
,, Madden,	,, Woods.
,, Mason,	
,, Mountain,	*Tellers.*
,, Munro,	Mr. Bailes,
,, Murphy,	,, A. Young.

NOES.

Mr. Anderson,	Mr. Gillies,
,, Armytage,	,, Gordon,
,, Burrowes,	,, J. Harris,
,, Cameron,	,, Highett,
,, G. D. Carter,	,, Keys,
,, D. M. Davies,	,, Leonard,
,, Deakin,	,, Levien,
,, Dow,	,, McIntyre,
,, Ferguson,	,, Patterson,
,, Forrest,	,, Peacock,
Dr. Pearson,	Mr. Zox.
Mr. C. Smith,	
,, Staughton,	*Tellers.*
,, Tuthill,	Mr. Clark,
,, Wrixon,	,, Shackell.

PAIR.

Mr. Butterly.	Mr. Parfitt.

On the following item—

"Dress goods, containing wool, up to 31st December 1889 only, 7½ per cent. *ad valorem*."

Mr. PATTERSON moved the insertion after the word "goods" of the words "not otherwise enumerated." It was proposed that dress materials not made in the colony, and mostly used by the poorer classes of the community, should be admitted free after the close of the present year. Those goods were now charged duty at the rate of 7½ per cent. There was no protective principle involved in this item. (An Honorable Member—"Yes there is.") Then the duty ought to have been 35 or 40 per cent. and not 7½ per cent.

Mr. ANDREWS said he agreed with the proposal to remit the duty, providing the item was more distinctly defined so as not to admit any article that could be made in the colony. The present wording of the item was vague and unsatisfactory, and would permit the importation of material which could be used for men's and boys' clothing, and which was similar to material manufactured in the colony.

Mr. PATTERSON remarked that he would consider the point, and take care that the item was so worded as to prevent the free importation of goods which would come into competition with the goods manufactured at the woollen mills in the colony.

Mr. McINTYRE asked why the duty should not be removed immediately? If it was not needed for the protection of a local industry, why not abolish it at once?

Mr. PATTERSON observed that whenever a duty was to be taken off, a certain period of notice was given for the convenience of trade.

The amendment was agreed to, and the item, as amended, was adopted.

Mr. PATTERSON moved the adoption of the the following item:—

"Medicines.—Consisting of two or more ingredients mixed ready for use, not being in chemical combination; drugs and chemicals packed ready for retail sale or consumption, including medical compounds containing spirits not exceeding the strength of proof by Sykes' hydrometer, and all preparations recommended as beneficial for any portion of the human or animal body, or the cure or the treatment of any disease or affection whatever, and medicine

chests or cases, with or without fittings, on and after 20th September, 1889, 25 per cent. *ad valorem.*"

Mr. WOODS asked what the Government proposed to do about opium?

Mr. GILLIES said it was the intention of the Government to put such a duty on opium, except for medicinal purposes, as would practically prohibit its importation. He had communicated with the Governments of the other colonies with a view of ascertaining if joint action could be taken in regard to the matter, and as soon as their replies came to hand, the Government would submit a proposal to the House.

Mr. L. L. SMITH remarked that if the proposal of the Government did not include morphine and other preparations containing large quantities of opium, it would be of little effect. (Mr. McIntyre—"Chinamen don't use morphine.") Why not include "other preparations of opium"?

Mr. GILLIES observed that the idea of the Government was to practically prohibit the importation of any drug containing opium that was used by the Chinese, and at the same time not to interfere with the importation of any drug of that kind used as a medicine, and sold by chemists and druggists for medicinal purposes.

The item was agreed to.

Mr. McLEAN moved—

"That a duty of 2s. 11d. per cental be levied on all maize."

The CHAIRMAN.—As this is a new duty, it cannot be submitted without the consent of the Crown.

Mr. McLEAN stated that he had the consent of the Government to bring forward this and the other proposals with respect to peas, beans and hops of which he had given notice, and he begged to thank the Premier for affording him the opportunity of putting the matter before honorable members in the simplest possible way, and enabling the committee to give a fair, honest, straight vote on the merits of the question.

Mr. GILLIES said he desired to explain that whilst allowing the honorable member for Gippsland North to bring forward his proposals, feeling that he was entitled to the opportunity of taking the judgment of the committee on the question, the Government could not see its way to support the motion.

Mr. McLEAN remarked that he sincerely trusted the Premier would see his way to support the motion before the division was taken. No argument could possibly be used in favour of protecting any local industry that could not be urged with equal force in favour of the particular industry whose claims he now advocated. All the local conditions were eminently favorable to the growth of maize. There was a very large area of land in the colony admirably suited to its production, the climate was all that could be desired, the crops were large, and the quality of the produce exceptionally good. There was not the slightest doubt whatever, that the colony could supply its own wants, indeed the farmers of Victoria would have no difficulty in supplying the requirements of the whole of the Australian colonies. For these reasons every fair and legitimate encouragement should be given to the farmers to cultivate maize. The present duty was was only 1s. per cental, and it was not sufficient to induce the agriculturists of the colony to grow maize to any great extent. There was only about 6,000 acres of maize under cultivation, and two-thirds of that area was in the shires of Bairnsdale and Campbell in Gippsland; but there were tens of thousands of acres in the same district equally suitable for its production, and of course there were large areas of suitable land in other parts of the colony. He could conceive of no possible reason for refusing the desired protection, more especially as the committee decided the other evening, by an overwhelming majority, that oats and barley were entitled to protection. Oats and barley—particularly oats—maize, pease, and beans were all used for the same purpose, namely, for horse feed, and there could be no valid reason for giving protection to the producers of one kind of horse feed and denying it to the producers of another kind. Surely the Government must have decided as to their course of action in regard to this matter without being fully acquainted with all the circumstances of the case, or they would never have consented to protect oats and barley and have refused to protect maize, pease, and beans, which were precisely in the same category. Why should the Government refuse to protect the producers of horse feed in one part of the colony and protect the producers of horse feed in another part? That was a distinction which neither the Government nor Parliament would wish to create among the people of the colony. Moreover, the protection which was accorded to the growers of oats and barley would be altogether misleading if the Government did not extend the same protection to the other cereals and pulse used for precisely the same

purpose, because its effect would be to encourage the farmers of the colony to go in for the production of oats and barley only to find the Victorian markets glutted with imported maize which would compete with their produce just as effectually as imported oats and barley. That was a position which neither the Government nor the committee would desire to take up. Indeed, such an ill-considered and unreasoned act would be calculated to bring discredit on any deliberative Assembly and induce the people to say that while Parliament gave the people plenty of law it gave them little justice. He was sure that the Assembly would not be party to anything of that kind. It had been asserted that the farmer was already fully protected; but honorable members who had made that assertion could not be acquainted with the actual facts of the case. Speaking from memory, he believed he was correct in saying that the Vegetable Products Commission reported that Victoria imported yearly £6,500,000 worth of animal and vegetable products which could be grown in the colony. In the face of that fact, it was obvious that the farming and agricultural industry could not possibly have received a fair and adequate share of protection, otherwise the colony would not be importing so largely commodities that could be produced equally well in this country. With regard to the effect of protection on the price of maize, he was not one of those who said that the effect of protection was necessarily to cheapen the cost of the protected commodity to the consumer, but he did say that if Parliament gave fair and reasonable protection to that as to other industries, it would stimulate local production to such an extent as would bring the price as low as Victorian labour could produce it. That was all that could possibly be claimed for any protected industry, and whether that price was above or below the price at which the commodity could be imported was not to the point, because the colony had already committed itself to a policy of protection, and its experience had not been such as to lead Parliament to deny the extension of the protective policy to industries that were not protected up to the present time. As a further proof that the farmers had not been protected to the same extent, or anything like the same extent as other industries, he might point out that it was only the products of about 2,500,000 acres that had any protection at all, and some of those products were only imperfectly protected. The whole of the capital invested in the balance of the lands of the colony was not protected at all, so that if Parliament gave protection to every article of agricultural produce, the largest product of the farmers would still be unprotected. He had often heard it said for years past that the farmer was not entitled to the same protection as the manufacturer or other producer, and the arguments advanced in support of that contention were that the State gave the farmer his land at a nominal price, and made that land valuable by carrying railways to his doors. Any person who had had much experience in the sale of those lands must have heard such arguments with a great deal of amusement. What was the fact? About 7,000,000 acres of the best lands, the cream of the country, were sold at auction, and therefore realized the highest value that public competition could place upon them. The State took all the steps to get the highest price for the land sold at auction that the most mercenary private individual could resort to. And with regard to the land selected. There was more than 16,000,000 areas of selected land in the colony, and if that land were to be put up at auction at the present time, notwithstanding the unearned increment that had accrued, not one-half of it would bring the original cost price plus the cost of the improvements made upon the land. He had been selling land for many years past and he had sold a very large number of selections at far and away below the cost price plus the cost of the improvements. It was quite possible to spend £12 or £15 per acre in clearing land which in the market would not be worth more than £10 per acre. The very liberal terms on which the State parted with the lands of the colony enabled people with families especially to go upon the land and convert it into a freehold by means of their labour. And that had been the inducement. It was not that the land was cheap, because everyone knew that the unimproved, or at any rate the scrub lands of the colony, would be dear at any price, if the purchaser had to pay for the improvements out of his pocket. He thought he had said sufficient to show that there was nothing in the contention that the farmers were not entitled to the same protection as other members of the community. And there were some points of advantage to be gained by protecting the farmers, which were not to be gained by protecting persons engaged in any other industry. Speaking in the most friendly and

best possible spirit towards the manufacturers of the colony—because he recognised their value as much as any member of the Assembly—he must say that the labour used in those manufactures was utilized in producing perishable commodities that did not add to the permanent wealth of the colony, although they did a great deal to support population by the large wage fund that they distributed among the working classes; but every pound sterling spent in the improvement of the land was a sovereign added to the realized wealth of the colony and that money was available for all time to come to bear its proper share of the burthens of the country. He hoped that honorable members would deal as generously with this industry as they had dealt with others.

Mr. PATTERSON observed that the Assembly had never been unmindful of or indifferent to the agricultural industry, and before the honorable member for Gippsland North talked about the farmers not being protected like people engaged in other industries, he should have looked up the figures in favour of that proposition. (Mr. McLean—"I have done so.") He had a return which he would quote for the benefit of the honorable member who, the other night, would not agree to a duty of 25 per cent. on portable engines. (Mr. McLean—"I did vote for it.") A duty of 3s. per cental on maize was equivalent to a duty of 60 per cent. (Mr. McLean—"You put a 3s. duty on oats.") The present duty on maize was equal to 20 per cent.; a duty of 2s. would make it 40 per cent., and a duty of 3s. would make it 60 per cent. The honorable member for Gippsland North said he put the demand for protection to the farmers on the same platform as other industries, and yet he asked the committee, after imposing a duty of 30 per cent. on woollens, to put a duty of 60 per cent. on maize. The duty which the honorable member desired to have on peas and beans was at the rate of 54 per cent., and he wanted the committee to increase the duty on hops to 76 per cent. (Mr. McLean—"Nonsense.") The invoiced price was 10½d. per lb., and the honorable member had given notice of his intention to move that the duty be 8d. per lb., which was at the rate of 76 per cent. (Mr. McLean—"We have sold hops this year at 20d. per lb.") Well, they were invoiced at 10½d., and the present duty was 6d. per lb. He merely rose to object to the attempt to make honorable members believe that the committee was not prepared to give the agricultural industry as much protection as any other industry. If honorable members would look at the duties all round, examine them by the value of the articles protected, and reduce them to percentages, they would find that in every case they were not only equivalent to but far higher than the duties asked by the manufacturers. Still nobody objected, and the agricultural industry was repaid for its assistance to the manufacturing industries with accumulated interest. The honorable member for Gippsland North was now on totally different ground than when talking nonsense about the stock tax. (Mr. McLean—"We will get the stock tax in good time.") Never.

Mr. LANGRIDGE said the imposition of a duty of 2s. 11d. per cental on horse feed would be a great hardship on cabmen, carters, and carriers. The Melbourne cabmen had suffered very much from loss of work consequent upon the extension of the tramway system. Some of them had very much difficulty in earning a livelihood, and it would be unfair to add to their burdens. He would ask the honorable member to limit his request to a duty of 2s. per cental, to which no doubt the Government would agree. (Mr. Patterson—"Hear, hear.") He was anxious to assist the farmers, as far as he could do so, in justice to his constituents.

Mr. BURROWES remarked that a duty of 2s. 11d. per cental on horse feed would be a heavy tax on the poorest and hardest worked men in the colony. The carters in the mining districts laboured hard for 12 to 15 hours a day to get a living, and the increase of the duty now proposed would cost each of them from 1s. 6d. to 3s. per week. A more cruel, unjust, and damnable tax had never been imposed, and to increase it would be to persecute a poor, industrious, and deserving class of people.

Mr. FOSTER observed that his constituents desired the duty on maize to be increased, and with good reason. A great deal had been said about the necessity of protecting the artizans engaged in the manufacturing industries of the colony from the competition of European cheap labour, but as things stood the farmers of the colony who grew maize had to compete against the labour of the black man. One of his constituents sent to Melbourne a consignment of 300 bags of maize, and it had to be sold in competition with a large cargo of maize from the Cape of Good Hope, grown by Hottentot labour. There were 100,000 acres

of land in Gippsland fit for the cultivation of maize. In three or four years time the tax would cease to operate, if it were effective in the meantime, because more maize would be grown here than the colony required. Under these circumstances he could not conceive of a better or a more just proposal than the one submitted by the honorable member for Gippsland North.

Mr. McINTYRE said he was astonished to hear protectionist members of the Assembly oppose an increase of the duty on maize on the ground that it would raise the cost of horse feed to the carters and cabmen. Their stock argument in favour of protective duties had always been that protection reduced the price of the protected commodity to the consumers. On the present occasion they were giving the lie to their own favourite argument. Why should they desire to exempt the carter or the cabmen from the burthens of protection? (Mr. Burrowes—"We don't object to fair protection.") Well, he did not know what protection meant if it was not to prevent the importation of articles produced outside the colony. If the protectionists wanted protection, why not go for thorough protection? The Minister of Customs had told the committee that the proposed increase of duty on maize was equivalent to 60 per cent., but where did he get his information from? Had he estimated the percentage on the present price of the grain, because a year hence it might only be one-third of that price. At the very outside he did not see how the honorable gentleman could make a duty of 2s. 11d. per cental more than 40 per cent., and the possibilities were that next year it might not be more than equivalent to a duty of 25 per cent.

Mr. McCOLL said that from the remarks which had been made it might be thought that maize could only be grown in Gippsland. That was a mistake. With irrigation any quantity of excellent maize could be grown in his district, and this question was really one that affected the whole of the colony. The duty would only affect prices for one or two years, as the local supply would soon overtake the demand, and the result of it would eventually be to cheapen the cost of the article.

Mr. LEVIEN submitted that, after the action of the committee in increasing the duties on other grain, it was right that the duty on maize should be increased also, otherwise maize would be sent here in large quantities to compete with other grain used as horse feed, which would be made dearer by the new duties that had been imposed. While he considered the proposed duty to be altogether too high, and unnecessary, he felt bound under the circumstances to support it. He believed that the colony would very soon produce more maize than would be required to meet the local consumption. The district represented by the honorable member for Gunbower was capable of producing better maize than was grown in Gippsland. Not only this duty, but the other duties imposed on grain were excessive. (Mr. Munro—"It is all right.") Of course it was all right, because the honorable member for Geelong had succeeded in getting the duty on woollens increased. He (Mr. Levien) would venture to tell the farmers that they were being hood-winked and humbugged by the representatives of the manufacturing industries. High duties were being imposed on all the articles they used, and they would find that the prices of those articles would be increased. The next proposition that was to be made was that an increased duty should be imposed on wheat. Was not that a farce? ("No.") It was worse than a farce. The colony was already producing more wheat than was required for the local consumption.

Mr. ZOX remarked that the increase of the duty on maize would seriously affect the distilling industry. Messrs. Joshua Brothers, distillers, of Port Melbourne, informed him that the Chicago quotation for maize on the 26th July last was 36⅜ cents, or 1s. 6d. per bushel. They made an offer to take from the Chaffey Brothers 3,000 tons of maize per annum at 3s. per bushel, and they received the following reply—

> "In reference to the offer made by you to accept a contract for the delivery of 3,000 tons of maize per annum, at 3s. a bushel delivered at your works, we have to say that some of our settlers were spoken to on the subject; but they all very much prefer the profits arising from fruit-growing, and, so far as this firm is concerned, we could not entertain such a proposal. This season, for instance, maize fetched a far better price at Mildura, and it will, in all probability, do so next."

Under these circumstances, what justification was there for the imposition of the proposed duty?

The committee divided on the question that the duty on maize be 2s. 11d. per cental—

Ayes ...	...	...	...	47
Noes ...	...	...	...	27
Majority for the new duty			...	20

AYES.

Mr. Anderson,	Mr. McIntyre,
,, Andrews,	,, McLean,
,, Armytage,	,, Madden,
,, Baker,	,, Mason,
,, Beazley,	,, Munro,
,, Bent,	,, Murphy,
,, W. T. Carter,	,, Murray,
,, Cheetham,	,, Officer,
,, Craven,	,, Outtrim,
,, Duncan,	,, Russell,
,, Forrest,	,, Shackell,
,, Foster,	,, Shiels,
,, Gordon,	,, T. Smith,
,, Graham,	,, Staughton,
,, Graves,	,, F. Stuart,
,, Groom,	,, Trenwith,
,, Hall,	,, Turner,
,, A. Harris,	,, Uren,
,, Highett,	,, Webb,
,, Kirton,	,, Wheeler,
,, Langridge,	,, Woods.
,, Laurens,	*Tellers.*
,, Levien,	Mr. L. L. Smith,
,, McColl,	,, A. Young.

NOES.

Mr. Bennett,	Mr. Patterson,
,, Best,	,, Peacock,
,, Cameron,	Dr. Pearson,
,, G. D. Carter,	Mr. C. Smith,
,, D. M. Davies,	,, J. S. Stewart,
,, Deakin,	Capt. Taylor,
,, Dow,	Mr. Tucker,
,, Gardiner,	,, Tuthill,
,, Gillies,	,, Williams,
,, J. Harris,	,, Wrixon,
,, Keys,	,, Zox.
,, Leonard,	*Tellers.*
,, Mountain,	Mr. Bailes,
,, Nimmo,	,, Clark.

PAIR.

Mr. Taverner.	Mr. Burrowes.

Mr. BENT asked the Minister of Customs if the duty on maize would be collected at once? (Mr. Patterson—"Yes.") Then he thought that the duty on oats should also be collected at once. Hundreds of tons of oats were now coming into Melbourne from New Zealand.

Mr. LAURENS moved that the duty on maize be collected on and after the 1st December, 1889.

Mr. McLEAN said he trusted that the honorable member for Melbourne North would not persist in his proposal. There never was a time in the history of the colony when grain was pouring in as fast as it was at present.

Mr. TRENWITH stated that the increased duty on maize should not come into force at once, because the farmers of the colony had no maize to sell. (Mr. McLean—"Oats and barley are as good for horse feed as maize.") There was very little horse feed in the colony at present. It was a blessing that large quantities of grain were being imported, because all horse feed was very dear at present. A protective duty should not be put on at a time when it could not protect. (Mr. Webb—"Humbug.") There had been nothing in his conduct in the Assembly to lead the honorable member for Rodney to suppose that he would attempt to humbug anybody. Where were the farmers who had maize to sell? (Mr. McLean—"There are 20,000 bags of maize at Orbost.") He was glad to hear it.

Mr. PATTERSON remarked that the duty on maize should come into operation simultaneously with the duties on oats and barley. The Government had not anticipated that the effect of postponing the imposition of the latter duties until the 1st December would be to flood the market, and they would, under the circumstances, re-consider the question.

Mr. STAUGHTON observed that, according to the *Argus*, a ship was to leave Lyttleton on Saturday next with 24,000 bags of oats, and it was expected that it would arrive in Melbourne on the 28th instant. Another large ship with a cargo of oats was to start shortly afterwards, and it was evident that, if the duty on oats was not imposed at once, the market would be flooded.

Mr. LAURENS said he would withdraw his motion.

The motion was withdrawn.

Mr. McLEAN moved—

"That a duty of 2s. 11d. per cental be levied on all peas and beans imported into Victoria."

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. McLEAN moved—

"That a duty of 8d. per lb. be levied on all hops imported into Victoria."

Mr. G. D. CARTER said maize at all events was an article that was not produced by the pauper labour of Europe, and the arguments that had been used in favour of the duties imposed on other commodities could not be applied to this item. If the honorable member for Gippsland North would only induce his constituents to grow good hops suitable for brewing, there would be a ready demand for them. No importer would pay 2s. 6d. per lb. for imported hops if he could get colonial hops of equal quality for 1s. 6d. The quality of the hops grown in the colony was inferior, owing chiefly to neglect in the picking and drying, and the result was that they did not realize more than

two-thirds the price paid for the imported hops. The best locally grown hops that he had seen came from the aboriginal station at Coranderrk, and they fetched a very good price. One or two of the local growers of hops always obtained good prices. If the hop-growers thought that Parliament could, by heaping on duties, protect their neglect or inability to produce a good article, they would find that they were mistaken. The committee had imposed duties that would make it difficult for the farmers to obtain a living at all, and now they were proposing to compensate the farmers by imposing other duties which would have the effect of ruining the people who consumed their produce. The difference between the imports and exports of maize was very small, and yet honorable members had been talking as if the prosperity of the colony depended on the production of maize. It was absurd to go on heaping taxes upon the people in this way. (Mr. McIntyre—"They make the article cheaper.") The honorable member for Maldon was not in his right mind; he quarrelled with his best friends, and his insane hatred of the Government was so great that he would vote against them on any question. An improper bargain was being made for the farmers, and when honorable members went to the country again they would find that their conduct was not approved. If the hop-growers of the colony would produce a good article, they could not only supply the local demand, but they could export their hops to all parts of the world.

Mr. McLEAN said that in the hop industry, as in all other industries, first attempts could not be expected to be perfect. The hops grown in the colony were of excellent quality, and the great fault was in the picking, leaves being taken that were not ripe. In this respect a rapid improvement was taking place. The industry was one that employed an enormous amount of labour. He had been told by experts that the cost of growing hops was from £35 to £40 an acre per annum, and the labour was of such a character that it was suitable to those classes of the community that required it most—old and decrepid men and women, and children. Whole families went from Melbourne to the hop-growing districts every season, and they earned very good wages.

Mr. C. SMITH remarked that he must take exception to the statement of the honorable member for Gippsland North, that the quality of the hops grown in the Gippsland district was excellent. The industry was commenced in the colony about fifteen years ago, and in 1879 or 1880 it received a stimulus owing to a great failure of the hop crops in all parts of the world. The local growers then got very high prices for their hops, as much as 4s. and 4s. 6d. being obtained. Taking into consideration freight and other charges together with the present duty, the local growers were already protected to the extent of about 9d. per lb., and that should be sufficient to encourage them to endeavour to develop and perfect the industry. The real difficulty was this, that the local growers did not pay sufficient attention to the quality of their hops, and the brewers were therefore compelled to use the imported hops. The increased duty would not be of any benefit to the hop-growers, because it would make them more careless than they were at the present time.

Mr. McINTYRE observed that he would not have spoken at all on this motion had it not been for the uncalled for remarks of the honorable member for Melbourne. He was not aware that he said anything that gave the honorable member cause to turn upon him as if he were a wild beast. There was no honorable member who had more reason to apply to himself the remarks that had been applied to him (Mr. McIntyre) than the honorable member for Melbourne, who supported the Government, although he did not believe in a single one of their proposals. With regard to the motion before the committee, all he had to say was that, as protection was the policy of the colony, it was desirable that it should go all round.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. MADDEN moved—

"That a duty of 2s. 11d. per cental be levied on all wheat imported into Victoria."

He observed that he had the consent of the Government for introducing this motion. In eight years out of every ten, no duty was required on wheat at all, because the colony was during those years an exporter, and not an importer of wheat. This year, however, after there had been a rather short crop of wheat, prices were high, and large quantities of wheat were being imported. The importations from the 1st January to the 31st August, 1889, amounted to 111,148 centals, valued at £41,231. (An Honorable Member—"What were the exports?") The

exports for the same period were 73,620 centals, valued at £27,545. There was plenty of wheat in the colony, but an inferior class of wheat was being imported, to the injury of the farmers. There was also a danger attendant upon the importation of this inferior wheat, because it had been found that it might be a means of introducing the Hessian fly and other pests, which, if they obtained a lodgment here, would do great damage to the crops.

Mr. PATTERSON remarked that the exports of wheat amounted to £502,000 and the imports to only £19,000. It would make no difference if a duty of 30s. per cental were imposed.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. PATTERON proposed the adoption of the following duties :—

"Furniture, including second-hand, 35 per cent. *ad valorem.*"

"Barley, pearl and Scotch, per cental 7s. 6d."

"Oatmeal, per cental, 9s."

The duties were agreed to.

Mr. LANGRIDGE moved :—

"That, in the opinion of this committee, the duty on imported lager beer should be increased from 1s. 6d. per dozen quarts to 3s. per dozen quarts, and in the same proportion for pints."

The CHAIRMAN.—Has the honorable member the consent of the Crown to this motion being proposed? If not, I cannot put it from the chair.

Mr. PATTERSON intimated that he would consent to the motion being proposed for the purposes of discussion, but he must oppose it.

Mr. LANGRIDGE observed that a lager beer brewery had been started in Collingwood, and £30,000 or £40,000 had been expended in connexion with it. The brewery was supplying an article which was undeniably as good as any in the market. The local industry, however, had to compete with about 150 or 200 brands of lager beer imported from foreign countries, chiefly from Germany and Belgium, but to some extent also from America. The manufacture of lager beer had been started not only in Collingwood, but also in Sandhurst, and he saw no reason why this industry should not be fostered as well as others, especially as an excellent article was produced.

Mr. PATTERSON said he admitted that the quality of the beer was everything that could be desired, but the Government felt that it was impossible to place an increased duty on lager beer and not on other beers. Both ordinary colonial beer and lager beer were protected by a duty on imported ale, but if any attempt was made to increase the duty on lager beer, that beer would be imported as ordinary ale. (Mr. Langridge—"That cannot be done.") When the time came that the Treasurer was in want of money, it was to the beer duty he would look, but no money was wanted from that source just now, and the Government felt that they could not properly or fairly give an advantage to one particular brewery without doing injury to all the other brewers of the colony. If this duty were adopted, there would be demands from all the breweries in the colony for a similar concession.

Mr. G. D. CARTER expressed the hope that the committee would not agree to the motion. This lager beer factory was started by a Mr. Foster, who had been striving for a good many months to sell it. Failing in his endeavours to get rid of a bad speculation, he came to the innocent member for Collingwood (Mr. Langridge) and asked him to try and get an extra duty on this particular product. If this were conceded, he (Mr. Carter) did not see why an additional duty should not also be imposed to protect the particular beer in which he was interested—that of the Melbourne Brewing and Malting Company. The beer industry was one of the most prosperous industries in the colony, and a protective duty of 9d. per gallon on bulk and 2s. per dozen on bottled ale, had been found ample to develop it to the fullest extent in all parts of the colony. If the duty was to be altered, it must be altered all round, so as to protect all colonial beer, and not altered simply to favour a particular manufacturer. It was stated in a circular that, as soon as this factory was started, the wicked importers at once combined to reduce the price of lager beer to a figure that would not pay, in order to drive the local manufacturer out of the market. From his (Mr. Carter's) knowledge of the facts, he could say that that statement was absolutely untrue. If this beer was to take, the people must first be got to like to drink it, and at present the people did not like it as well as the ordinary colonial beer. He protested against a particular manufacturer being singled out and given a duty in his favour.

Lt.-Col. SMITH said he hoped the committee would agree to the motion. He could

assure honorable members that this beer was the nearest possible approach to a teetotal beverage, and was a most refreshing and innocuous drink. In addition to that manufactured at Collingwood, there was excellent lager beer made at Sandhurst. This industry was carried on under most costly conditions and he could see no reason why it should not be encouraged.

Mr. C. SMITH remarked that lager beer was a totally different article from imported English beer. It was brewed at a very low temperature, and did not contain more than 6 per cent. of alcohol—an amount which was contained in many commodities consumed by teetotalers. It was admitted on all hands that the colonial lager beer was as good as that imported. There were 220 brands of lager imported from America and Germany, yet, at the late Exhibition, out of 230 different samples competing, the colonial beer took one of the eight prizes offered. Although he was generally classed among the free-traders he thought there was no difficulty in giving a little encouragement to this industry, or in making a distinction between lager beer and other beer. The honorable member for Melbourne asked—why not put the duty on all beer? For this reason—that no brewery in Victoria had ever yet been able to produce a bottled ale of a similar character to the imported English bitter beer. This factory, however, had produced a lager beer which was equal, if not superior, to the imported article. The two cases, therefore, were not at all analogous, and he thought the committee would be justified in adopting the motion.

Mr. ZOX observed that the duty and charges on imported lager beer amounted to 3s. 9d. per dozen, and this was a great protection to the local article. He hoped the Government would oppose the extra duty asked for. Mr. Foster knew, when he endeavoured to establish his industry, the exact amount of the duty imposed on the imported article, and if he had failed in his attempt to compete with the lager beers from America and Germany the fact was to be regretted, but it afforded no reason why an extra duty should now be imposed for his particular benefit.

The committee divided on the motion—

Ayes	42
Noes	3
Majority for the lager beer duty...	39

AYES.

Mr. Anderson,	Mr. McLean,
,, Baker,	,, Mason,
,, Beazley,	,, Mountain,
,, Bennett,	,, Murphy,
,, Best,	,, Murray,
,, Burrowes,	,, Outtrim
,, Cameron,	,, Patterson,
,, W. T. Carter,	,, Richardson,
,, Craven,	,, Russell,
,, D. M. Davies,	,, Shackell,
,, Dow,	,, C. Smith,
,, Ferguson,	Lt.-Col. Smith,
,, Foster,	Mr. F. Stuart,
,, Gardiner,	,, Trenwith,
,, Gillies,	,, Uren,
,, Graham,	,, Webb,
,, Hall,	,, Williams,
,, A. Harris,	,, A. Young.
,, Keys,	
,, Langridge,	*Tellers.*
,, Laurens,	Mr. Bailes,
,, Leonard,	,, L. L. Smith.

NOES.

Mr. Forrest.	*Tellers.*
	Mr. Peacock,
	,, Zox.

PAIR.

Mr. Woods.	Mr. G. D. Carter.

Lt.-Col. SMITH moved :—

"That, in the opinion of this committee, a duty of £3 per ton should be imposed on all barbed wire imported into Victoria."

Mr. PATTERSON stated that the Government assented to this new duty being proposed.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. HALL asked to be allowed to move for a duty of 12s. per gallon on all imported wines.

The CHAIRMAN.—I could not put such a motion except with the permission of the Crown, and that permission has not been given.

Mr. PATTERSON said the Government could not entertain such a proposal that night. He wanted the committee to "go steady." Just now honorable members were scarcely going soberly enough.

Mr. TRENWITH begged to be allowed to move for a duty of £4 per ton on anti-friction grease.

Mr. PATTERSON asked the honorable member to bring up his proposition on Tuesday. Meanwhile the matter would be looked into.

The resolutions were reported to the House.

The House adjourned at five minutes to midnight, until Tuesday, September 24.