

1905.

## THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

No. 90.

## VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

THURSDAY, 21ST DECEMBER, 1905.

1. ARRIVAL OF MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL ANNOUNCED.—The arrival of a Message from His Excellency the Governor-General having been announced—
2. Mr. Speaker took the Chair.
3. PAPERS.—Mr. Deakin presented, by command of His Excellency the Governor-General—  
 High Commissioner in London—The Office of.—Memorandum by the Agents-General, furnished at the request of the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth.  
 Defence Scheme for the Commonwealth.—Copy of Telegram to the Secretary, Imperial Defence Committee, London, and reply thereto, respecting the preparation of a general scheme of local Australian Defence.  
 Severally ordered to lie on the Table and to be printed.  
 Mr. Deakin presented, pursuant to the direction of an Act of Parliament—  
 Audit Act 1901—Transfers of amounts approved by the Governor-General in Council—  
 Financial Year 1904-5 (dated 19th December, 1905).

4. MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL.—The Message from His Excellency was then delivered by the Usher of the Senate—

MR. SPEAKER,

His Excellency the Governor-General desires the immediate attendance of Members of this Honorable House in the Senate Chamber.

Accordingly Mr. Speaker, with Members of the House, went to attend the Governor-General, when His Excellency was pleased to notify the Royal Assent to the following Bills, viz. :—

“ *An Act to appropriate further sums for the service of the years ended the thirtieth day of June One thousand nine hundred and four and the thirtieth day of June One thousand nine hundred and five.*”

“ *An Act to amend the Law relating to Parliamentary Elections.*”

“ *An Act relating to Copyright.*”

After which His Excellency was pleased to make a Speech to both Houses of the Parliament as follows :—

GENTLEMEN :

It is my privilege to release you from arduous labours, which have resulted in the passage of an unusual number of useful and important measures, including the legislation for the Session promised by my Ministers on assuming office after the Session had commenced. They will now be free to devote their attention for the remainder of this Parliament to the progressive Australian policy which they announced five months ago.

The difficulties inseparably connected with the Federation of six separate and independent States into one federal union are being gradually overcome. There is good reason to hope that a time is arriving when the Commonwealth and the States will be found in active and harmonious co-operation in their respective spheres of authority in promoting the welfare of Australia.

21st December, 1905.

I am happy to congratulate you upon the fact that the country has rapidly recovered from the losses sustained by the drought a few years ago, and that our financial position has been greatly improved by the increased volume and prices of our products. The Commonwealth has entered upon an era of prosperity. Trade is flourishing. The last two years are unexampled in the yield and value of our primary productions.

The agreement made with the Eastern Extension Company in 1903, subject to the ratification of Parliament, the consideration of which was postponed to permit of the holding of a Conference in London of the partners in the Pacific Cable, has now been ratified by Parliament, subject to the expressed condition that the separate State contracts with that Company, made prior to Federation, are terminated, and that the federal agreement shall determine on 31st December, 1915.

Contracts with the Orient Steam Navigation Company for the conveyance of mails between Australia and Europe, *via* Suez; and with the Union Steam-ship Company of New Zealand for an extension of the Vancouver Mail Service for a further term, have been approved by you.

An appropriation of £25,000 has been made to allow the people of Australia to join with their fellow countrymen in Great Britain and other parts of the Empire in the erection of a memorial in London, in grateful recognition and affectionate remembrance of the personal worth and beneficent reign of Her late Majesty Queen Victoria.

A valuable report relating to the representation of the Commonwealth in London has been laid before you, and will be carefully considered by my Advisers during the recess, with a view to taking such action as may be desirable in the interests of Australia.

GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES :

Unfortunately, the definition of the territory of the Seat of Government has not been completed, but it is hoped that the pressing question involved, which has been the subject of prolonged enquiries and exhaustive debates for several years, will be determined by this Parliament.

The Representation Act completes the machinery of the Constitution relating to electoral representation by making provision for definite periods at which the determination of the number of Members for each State in the House of Representatives shall be fixed.

My Advisers regret that the Bill for the encouragement of manufactures by means of the duties inserted in the Tariff conditionally upon the iron industry being sufficiently established, and the Bill for the preservation of Australian Industries recently submitted did not become law during the Session. Measures similar in character will be introduced as early as possible. In the meantime, my Advisers will take such action as is possible and necessary to secure the interests of Australian producers and consumers against the unfair encroachment of foreign or domestic Commercial Trusts, which operate to the detriment of all classes of the community.

Standing Orders have been passed which, while recognising the right of every honorable Member to the full expression of his views, have diminished the opportunities for the obstruction of public business hitherto possible under the Temporary Standing Orders.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE AND OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES :

I thank you in the name of His Majesty for the liberal Supplies which you have granted for the services of the Commonwealth.

An urgent need of the Commonwealth is the adoption by Parliament of a definite and comprehensive scheme of defence adapted to the special circumstances of Australia. For this purpose it is necessary that the proportionate strength of our Naval and Military Forces should be determined in relation to the protection of our coasts. Advice upon the latest methods of port and harbor defence has been sought from the highest authority, and I now have pleasure in informing you that the Imperial Council of Defence has consented to assist the Government in this regard with expert opinion.

Public interest is being generally manifested in the efficiency of our land forces. Steps have been taken which it is confidently believed will place the Cadet and Senior Cadet Corps of the various States of the Commonwealth upon an uniform and satisfactory basis. A large consignment of new rifles is being obtained, and the number of citizens connected with Rifle Clubs is being considerably augmented. The supplies of cordite have been supplemented.

The Immigration Restriction Act, embodying the policy of a White Australia, has been amended so as to insure more effective administration while removing unnecessary discriminations in its terms.

The regulation of the introduction of contract labour is now provided for in a separate Act, which, while offering a special exemption favoring immigrants of our own blood, insures to all who arrive here under contract the benefit of Australian conditions, and safeguards them against misrepresentation.

The encouragement of desirable settlers from the Mother Country by conjoint action in association with the States as proprietors of the soil will continue to be a principal aim of the Commonwealth. A practical method of accomplishing it should be devised at an early date.

The passage of the Bill extending the period for which a Bounty upon Sugar will be paid to the growers of cane who employ white labour must assist the settlement upon our rich northern coasts of a larger population of our own race.

The Act providing for the acceptance of Papua as a Territory establishes a Constitution for its Government which, for the first time, places its administration and development under the effective control of the Commonwealth.

The Secret Commissions and Commerce Acts will materially assist in promoting the fair dealing that fosters production and facilitates trade.

21st December, 1905.

The former forbids any secret loading of expenses by which the fruits of the producer's labour may be diverted to the illicit profit of his agents, and at the same time supports the honest action of agents who deal justly with their principals.

The latter enactment will assist to prevent the exportation of inferior goods to the detriment of our export trade, and to protect the public by requiring a proper description on goods or packages containing imported articles.

The Census and Statistics Act will enable the Commonwealth to establish a central bureau of statistics, collect the census, issue returns with respect to the matters under its special jurisdiction, and collate information as to the progress of Australia.

A measure has been passed providing for a uniform law for the registration of Trade Marks and their protection throughout the Commonwealth, thus doing away with the complexity and expense occasioned by the necessity of dealing with them in six States under six different laws. The enactment extends equal consideration and rights to all who participate in the production of Australian commodities, represses fraud in relation to trade marks, and provides better guarantees to the public of the origin and quality of merchandise.

A valuable Amending Electoral Act has been placed upon the Statute Book, which provides appropriate machinery for perfecting administration for the co-operation of the Federal and State Governments in electoral matters and for more effectively carrying out the intentions of Parliament.

The Copyright Act contains a uniform copyright law which covers literary, musical, dramatic and artistic copyright throughout the Commonwealth. This measure, framed with due regard to the latest English drafts for legislation and the international aspect of the subject comprises numerous advantages that will be appreciated by authors, artists, and publishers, as well as the public.

Among other useful measures that have been passed may be mentioned those relating to Life Assurance, Wireless Telegraphy, and providing for the incorporations of amendments in all reprints of Acts.

I now declare this Parliament prorogued until the 31st day of January, 1906.

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MEMBERS PRESENT.—The following Members were present :—Mr. Carpenter, Mr. Chanter, Mr. Chapman, Mr. Hume Cook, Mr. Crouch, Mr. Deakin, Mr. Fisher, Sir Frederick Holder, Mr. Isaacs, Mr. Knox, Sir William Lyne, Mr. Mahon, Mr. Maloney, Mr. Mauger, Mr. McLean, Mr. O'Malley, Mr. Phillips, Mr. Ronald, Mr. Skene, and Mr. Tudor.

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C. GAVAN DUFFY,  
*Clerk of the House of Representatives.*