

FEDERAL EXTRAVAGANOE.

The Department of Commerce and Labor has recently published statistics of the cost of government in this and other countries from which the statistician of that department has drawn the unwarranted conclusion that the government of the United States is more economically administered than any other government in the world.

We certainly have a right to expect that the cost of government in this country should be less than in most, if not all, other countries, but the figures presented come far from showing this to be the case.

Unlike other countries with which comparison is made as to the cost of government, the United States are a federation of States, in which the national government bears but a part of all the expenses of government for which our people have to pay.

Whether or not our national government is run extravagantly at the present time can be best determined by a comparison of its present cost with that of former periods.

According to the figures of the Department of Commerce and Labor the present annual cost of the national government amounts to \$604,323,000, the per capita cost being \$7.97.

Referring now to the official figures as given in the United States statistical abstract, we find the total expenditures of the United States government in 1890 to

have been \$358,618,514. This shows that in these few years there has been an increase in expenditure of almost 80 per cent., with an increase in population of less than 28 per cent.

Further reference to official figures shows that the per capita cost of the national government 20 years ago was but \$4.44.

Thus, since 1884, there appears to have been an increase in the per capita cost of government of 79.5 per cent. Within the last three years, that is, since 1901, the increase amounts to 30 per cent.

This showing is precisely the opposite of what it should be; for it is a well-known fact that large concerns can be conducted with relatively less cost than small ones. It might be borne cheerfully could it be shown that the affairs of government are better conducted than formerly.

HENRY L. BLISS.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

AUSTRALIA. (See p. 213).

Corowa, N. S. W., Aug. 26. — The principal amendment to the arbitration bill, carried against the ministry, provided that preference should not be given by the court to trade unionists without the approval of a majority of those affected by the award.

Mr. Watson, the prime minister, then asked the governor-general to dissolve the House. As this was refused, the ministry resigned. Mr. G. H. Reid, the leader of the Free Trade party, being sent for, he has formed a ministry—by a coalition of the Free Traders with most of the Protectionists.

For the first time, there are only two parties in the Federal House, the Labor party, joined by the extreme Protectionist wing, being in opposition. Reid's ministry is the first to command an ab-

solute majority of the House; but with parties so nearly equal, it seems probable that there will be a dissolution before long.

The New South Wales state elections were held on the 6th inst. with the following result:

Table with 2 columns: Party and Votes. Opposition (reform party) 46, Labor 25, Ministerial 15, Independents 4.

This will mean the return to office of the old Free Trade Democratic party which was led by Mr. Reid before federation, and will practically reduce the number of parties to two, as in Victoria.

Within the last nine months elections have been held for the Commonwealth and for all the States. The following list shows the growth of the Labor parties:

Table with 3 columns: Region, Previous, Present. Federal House 17 to 23, Federal Senate 11 to 15, West Australia 7 to 22, Tasmania 0 to 5, Victoria 12 to 19, South Australia 7 to 6, Queensland 22 to 24, N. S. Wales 25 to 25.

In New South Wales the previous House consisted of 125 members; the present has only 90.

In West Australia a Labor party is in office. Probably because mining is the chief industry in West Australia, and there is little agriculture, the Labor party is very strong there.

Dalgety, in the southeast corner of New South Wales, was selected on the 9th inst. as the site for the Federal capital, by the Commonwealth parliament. It also recommended that the area should be not less than 900 square miles, but the New South Wales government may not agree to part with so much land.

ERNEST BRAY.

NEW YORK.

New York, Sept. 26.—The world-famous Broadway "bread line" is receiving more than ordinary notice just now because the founder of it, Louis Fleischmann, is so seriously ill that he is not expected to recover.

One night more than ten years ago Mr. Fleischmann noticed a crowd of men with craving looks, drinking in the odor from the fresh baked bread in his basement. He proffered some bread to the nearest man, who received it so appreciatively and thankfully that he continued to hand it out; and so a line was formed. Every night between 11 and