

what shy manner. They do not like undertaking new concerns, and the Minister has to give special attention if he wishes them to be successful. No one can say that the present Government have neglected their duty, and I claim that they have done better work than has been done by any previous Administration in the history of the State.

On motion by Mr. Mitchell debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 10.55 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Tuesday, 9th July, 1912.*

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: 1, Annual report of Mines Department. 2, Rules and Regulations under (a) Matrimonial Causes; (b) Port regulations; (c) Medical Department. 3, By-laws of the Meekatharra board of health. 4, Papers relating to the appointment of Mr. W. E. Sudholz as manager of the State Steamship Service Department (ordered on motion by Hon. R. J. Lynn).

### QUESTION—WORKERS' HOMES ON GOLDFIELDS.

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Have the Government made any provision for procuring suitable land for the purpose of erecting

workmen's homes in or around the municipalities of Kalgoorlie, Boulder, Coolgardie, and Leonora? 2, Has any notification been given through the public Press to the residents on the goldfields that the Government are now prepared to erect and lease workers' homes?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, No; as no applications for workers' homes have been received from the districts referred to. 2, No; nor have such notices appeared in the Press in any district.

### QUESTION—SAVINGS BANK POLICY.

Hon. M. L. MOSS asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Have the Government come to any decision as to the conduct of the business of the Government Savings Bank at places in the State outside Perth and Fremantle? 2, If so, what are the proposals for carrying on the business in future at such places other than Perth and Fremantle? 3, If no decision has been arrived at, when is it intended that the matter involved in these questions will be considered?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: The matters contained in the question of the hon. member are now under the consideration of the Government.

Hon. M. L. Moss: You told me that eight months ago.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Well, the matter is still under the consideration of the Government.

Hon. M. L. Moss: It takes them a long time to get a move on.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: In the meantime they will be too late.

### PAPERS—COMPENSATION CLAIM OF E. MEAD.

Hon. M. L. MOSS (West) moved—

*That the Agricultural and the Crown Law Departments' files dealing with the claim of Ernest Mead, of Brunswick Junction, for compensation for loss sustained by him in consequence of fire escaping from the State farm at Brunswick, be laid on the Table.*

The PRESIDENT: We cannot have a debate on this motion. If the hon. member will confine himself to putting it, I will accept it as a formal matter, but if the hon. member wishes to have a debate upon the motion it must wait until after the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

Hon. M. L. MOSS: I do not wish to have any debate on the matter, it is only asking for information.

Question put and passed.

#### MOTION—FREMANTLE DOCK BORINGS.

On motion by Hon. A. G. JENKINS (Metropolitan) ordered: That the plans and sections showing the borings for the site of the Fremantle Dock be laid on the Table.

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

##### *Fourth Day—Amendment.*

Order of the Day read for the resumption of the debate from 4th July on the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply and on the amendment by the Hon. M. L. Moss—"That all the words after 'sovereign' be struck out with a view of inserting the following words: 'and to protest against the expenditure incurred by your Excellency's Ministers without an Act of appropriation, such procedure being derogatory to the privileges of Parliament and subversive of the Constitution, while in addition thereto the proposal contained in your Excellency's Speech, implying that a ratification by the Legislative Assembly of such unauthorised expenditure is sufficient in law, ignores the constitutional rights of the Legislative Council.'"

##### *Point of Order.*

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: On a point of order I want to ask your ruling, Mr. President, as to whether the amendment proposed by Mr. Moss is in order. I shall give my reasons briefly. They are—firstly, that the amendment declares that his Excellency the Governor read a Speech that in form and substance

ignored constitutional rights; secondly, that the distinct implication is that the Governor, whose duty it is to uphold the Constitution, was a party to a breach of the Constitution; thirdly, that the amendment, by implying that his Excellency has committed a dereliction of duty, casts a reflection on the honoured and respected representative of His Majesty in this State, and consequently is out of order and contrary to Standing Order 394. I am perfectly certain that had you noticed the implication, which is directly on the Governor, because it is not the Governor-in-Council but the Governor personally who read the Speech, you would before this have pointed out that the amendment is out of order, apart altogether from the taste in which it is brought forward. I ask your ruling upon this point.

Hon. M. L. Moss: I suppose it is competent for me, as mover of the amendment, to reply to the hon. member's observations.

The President: Not at present. In answer to the point raised by Mr. Kirwan I will state that the amendment to the Address now under discussion is a substantive motion which can be dealt with by amendment or by the distinct vote of the House. Reflections cannot be cast in debate upon the conduct of the Sovereign or his representative, nor may opprobrious reflections be cast in debate on the representative of the Sovereign. But, even assuming that the terms of this amendment do cast such reflection, I consider that, it being a substantive motion, it can be discussed by the House. I will go further and say that I understood Mr. Moss in his speech on this amendment, and also in an interjection which he made to the Colonial Secretary, stated distinctly that he cast no reflection on his Excellency the Governor personally, but he considered him, as the Interpretation Act says in Section 3, Subsection (d)—

The word "Governor" shall mean the Governor acting with the advice of the Executive Council.

But I go still further and say that, as the latter part of the amendment, as pointed out by Mr. Kirwan, says—

The proposal contained in your Excellency's Speech implying that a ratification by the Legislative Assembly of such unauthorised expenditure is sufficient in law, ignores the constitutional rights of the Legislative Council—

as this has given rise to misinterpretation and is open to extreme criticism, I think it would be a very gracious and tactful thing if Mr. Moss, or some of his friends, would accept an amendment to delete that last portion.

Hon. M. L. Moss: It is the fulcrum of the whole thing.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: It is a reflection on the Governor.

Hon. M. L. Moss: Nothing of the kind.

The President: Will the hon. member allow it?

Hon. M. L. Moss: No, not if I stood alone I would not; because I have a precedent for a resolution in precisely these terms, which was carried by the Legislative Council in South Australia, and is referred to in *Todd*.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: It is the Governor you have censured.

Hon. M. L. Moss: Nothing of the kind. I think, Mr. President, you put the case quite correctly when you said that I most emphatically laid it down, both in my speech and subsequently by interjection, that the Governor was acting under the advice of responsible Ministers, who must therefore take the responsibility.

The President: I cannot allow any debate on the subject. I think it would be wise and graceful on the part of Mr. Moss to delete that last sentence. However, if he will not do so, I shall call on Mr. Connor to continue the debate on the Address-in-reply.

#### *Debate resumed.*

Hon. F. CONNOR (North): In rising to speak for the first time since my re-election I desire to welcome the new members who have taken their seats among us. Following on the remarks by Mr. Moss about the late members, I also desire to regret the absence of Captain Laurie, who, I hope, at some future time

will again take his place among us. I regret also the serious illness of Mr. Pennefather who, I am pleased to hear, is now fast recovering. I have to thank the House for their indulgence to me during my absence last session. At the same time I have no apology to make for that absence, because I was trying to open up commerce which will be of importance, not only to the centres of population in the State, but which will eventually, and I hope soon, have the effect of developing and opening up one of the richest and best provinces contained within the State. My critic, the man in the street, has said a great deal about my absence. My answer to him is that my constituents have paid me the highest honour it was possible for them to do, by again returning me unopposed. In that respect I hope I will not be transgressing in referring to the fact that the member with the longest service in the House, Sir Winthrop Hackett, was also returned unopposed. I have the honour myself of being the next member in point of long service, although for the most part that service was given in another place. I think it is a compliment to the men who blazed the track in politics that we two old members should have been the only two to be returned unopposed. It points to the fact that this country is not dissatisfied with its oldest members, and taken in conjunction with the circumstance that our reduced franchise has not imposed much alteration on the personnel of this House, is, I think, highly satisfactory. I suppose I cannot deal broadly with the Address-in-reply; however, most of the subjects contained in the Speech are comprised in the amendment now before the House. I do not wish to take on the role of critic of the Government in constitutional affairs, which I hold have been well handled and explained by Mr. Moss, and, on the other hand, very lamely dealt with by the leader of the House; consequently it is scarcely incumbent on me to refer at any length to the subject. Just the same, if I may be permitted I will offer a few homely and practical remarks on the policy of the Government. As a representative of the North, I would like to say that I hope

it is not the intention of Parliament to attempt to choke or kill the pearling industry. This industry has been, and will be, of very great importance indeed to the commercial life of the State, and to the finances of the State also. Yet in respect to this industry nothing has been done except to try to choke it. I would like to point out to the leader of the House that in all this Speech, in all the proposed developments of the country talked about in the Speech, there is not a single word about the North, not an item suggested except some visionary proposal for an artesian bore. Artesian bores are all very well, but the people in the North want a little more than that, for they have industries which are capable of becoming of very great importance to the State, and which, so far as I can see, are to be wholly neglected.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Some men think that the State is bounded by the steps of Parliament House. I have myself, always been a good friend to the North.

Hon. F. CONNOR: I am not addressing Mr. Kirwan, but the representatives of the people. When he has talked to them as long as I have had the honour of doing, he will not be so ready to get up at so early a stage and attempt to jar a boy like me. I do not know whether I am in order in referring to an item which I have here, but it is not entirely disassociated from the much-canvassed question of the cost of living. There are in and around Perth certain institutions known as racing clubs; for instance there are the Helena Vale, the Canning Park, Belmont, New Belmont, Bieton, Kensington—all race-courses used for the purpose of racing. We have in all seven clubs, four of them being registered, and the other three known as unregistered. We are told that these race-courses are established for the purpose of improving the breeding of horses. Anybody who knows anything at all about horses must be aware that the animals that race three and a half to five furlongs are not of much use except for that specific purpose. These courses are there for the purpose of breeding squibs to run fast for half a mile. They are not of much use to the farmer, who has to

open up the country. Yet there is no anxiety shown by the Government to get at the root of one of the greatest evils that exist here to-day. I am speaking of something I know of, because I am an old racing man, and have been for years a member of the Committee of the West Australian Turf Club. I say if the Government would give attention to matters of this sort and see that the economic work of the country is considered, they would be doing far better work than they are in trying to get their heads into a noose. I congratulate the Government on the fact that they are going to give seed wheat and assist the farmers in other ways, and that they propose to encourage legitimate mining prospecting. The prosperity of the country depends, for the time being at least, more on the development of mining than on anything else. Probably it will not always be so, because the time will come when the farming community will be in very fact the backbone of the country. But for the present, and the immediate future, the Government could not do too much in assisting the prospectors. Another subject requiring mention is that of re-afforestation. I think myself that this is a very important matter, and well worthy of a place in the Speech. I hope the Government will not neglect it. I have just returned from the goldfields. While up there I was discussing with several working men, old friends of mine, the question of what is going to happen next September, when the arbitration court agreement in connection with mining will terminate. I was told by these friends of mine that there is a great probability of a strike occurring in September among the miners. They quoted as a reason that the men need not be afraid even if there is a strike. It seems that a Federal Minister of the Crown told the men that if the employers suggested to reduce their wages, or if the men thought they were entitled to higher wages, and the employers refused to grant it, the men were not to be afraid, because there was work for 4,000 of them in connection with the Trans-Australian Railway. To my mind this was a most injudicious thing to say,

and no member of Parliament, no Federal Minister, had the right to interfere as far as apparently was done. I think, myself, that gentleman took up an altogether wrong position, and I hope that when September comes we will be able successfully to appeal to our friend the Honorary Minister (Hon. J. Dodd), and that his influence will prevent what would be a calamity not only to the men but to the State itself.

The Honorary Minister (Hon. J. Dodd) Pass the new Arbitration Bill and the problem will solve itself.

Hon. F. CONNOR: I am not mentioning this subject in any spirit of antagonism. In reference to the State steamers, personally I have no objection to the Government having steamers, but I do object to the manner in which they have gone about the securing of these steamers. As a representative of the people, I object to the manner in which they have gone about it, and I tell the House that both in respect to the meat trade, with which I am associated, and the shipping business, in which I have held an interest, they have gone the wrong way to work. If they had bought one fast steamer and erected meat works, that is, chilling and canning works at Wyndham, they could have made a huge success of it, and, as I will try to prove, benefited the community as well as the people in the North who are now growing cattle. I may mention that the chilling of meat was recommended in this State by the Parliament, the public and the Press, as far back as 1897, the time when these unfortunate restrictions with regard to tuck were put on cattle, restrictions which decimated the supply down here. That was the time when these works should have been established. Since then the development of science, and of appliances for handling this class of goods, has increased materially, and it was during the time of the Wilson Government that these works should have been carried out. We are told it was promised to the people of the far North, and to the consumer, by that Government, that these works would be built. I blame the Wilson Government more than the Government in power to-

day, and I could blame an individual, if necessary.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Why?

Hon. F. CONNOR: Because they did not carry out the works.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: They did not have time.

Hon. F. CONNOR: We were promised in Parliament, and by members of Parliament whose business and duty it was to see that these works were carried through. Promises were made, and were broken, because they were not carried out—that is logical. However, I think before I have finished I will have convinced the members of the present Government, and of the past Government, that my arguments at least are sound. With regard to these boats which the Government have purchased I ask the leader of the House have the Government proved the necessity for them? I hold that the Government have not. I have some figures to quote, later on, which will bear out what I say. Have the Government procured the cattle to carry, now that they have the boats? Well, I know that they have not. I have a cutting from a Murchison paper relating to an address given by Mr. Drew, before his electors. He told them about the space that had been secured, and the need for four or five boats. These statements made by the Minister are misleading, because I know they are not correct. The Minister may have thought that they were correct. I will not dispute that, because I know him too well to think that he would say anything he did not believe to be true. The position is that I know, and he does not know, and I tell the House that the cattle are not available. They are available, but not to the Government to carry this year by their boats. One of the boats is to leave Fremantle in a day or two. What is this boat going to do? She is going to Carnarvon to load store sheep, which will be brought to Geraldton, and discharged there. Who are they to be carried for? Are they to be carried for the small men, regarding whom there is all this hullabaloo? No, but they are to be carried for a man named Mr. Gooch. These store sheep are to be taken to

another port, and not to be even brought to the city, and the purpose is to begin to provide cheaper meat for the people. Well, all I can say is, God help them. The next trip, I believe, is to be for another poor small man called Mr. Samuel McKay, and that will be for sheep. So far, there are no cattle. I am informed, on pretty good authority, that there will be another small man sending a shipment down—Mr. Ben Copley. I hope that, in the near future, the Government steamers will be carrying cattle down for Connor, Doherty & Durack. This is all to be done, we are told, with the object of reducing the price of meat for the people. Touching on the rate of freight, the present schedule rate for boats belonging to Holt's and to the Adelaide Steamship Company, which are better fitted than the Government boats—I think most people who know anything about boats will agree with that—for bringing cattle from Derby is £2 7s. 6d. The Government are going to reduce the price of beef to the people here by carrying cattle from Wyndham for £3. That is their quoted rate, and I do not see how this will work out.

Hon. C. Sommers: Are the Government rates higher?

Hon. F. CONNOR: Yes, higher than those existing at present, not only to Derby but to Wyndham.

The Colonial Secretary: That is not so; the rates are exactly the same.

Hon. F. CONNOR: How do you know?

The Colonial Secretary: I do know.

Hon. F. CONNOR: You do not know what Connor, Doherty & Durack are charging. I know the rate you quote, and that is 10s. a head higher than the rate we are paid, and the Government boats will not be as good or as well fitted.

The Colonial Secretary: I know the rates we were asked to pay for our cattle.

Hon. F. CONNOR: That is with insurance and fodder. I will give particulars of that later. The hon. member says there are a lot of small men who cannot get shipping space. I happen to know that is not so, because at any time my company is offering to carry the small men's cattle and sell them on commission.

That would be done at any time when arrangements were made; but it did not suit them. That is the answer to that statement. The leader of the House called attention, the other day, to the fact that all the cattle in the East Kimberley district, or 80 per cent. of them, were owned by four people, and I interjected, asking why the Government had bought the boats. If the Colonial Secretary is right, there is no reason for buying the boats, for that is the district where the cattle must come from. Statements of this character, published in the press, and in *Hansard*, should not be made, because I will prove that what the Minister stated is not so. I can give my word that no small man is debarred from shipping his cattle. I had made a note with regard to tick regulations, but I am glad to say that I was informed yesterday that these restrictions have been removed. Hon. members, however, will remember that this is done a few days before the Government steamers start. We people who blazed the track, and opened up that country, 25 years ago, and put our energy and money into it, had to put up with these restrictions, but when the Government are about to start running their boats the restrictions hurt them. I leave hon. members to judge whether that is right or wrong. We have heard a lot about a monopoly; there is no monopoly. Who would prevent anyone who desired, like the Government is doing, from going to the North? Anyone with money and enterprise can enter the trade, and the Government can take up the growing of cattle too—which they are not game to do. There is no monopoly, and there is no ring. I will give figures later on, including details of the biggest trade concerns. I will open their letters, and their figures I will hand to the Government and ask them to consent to their auditor saying whether they are incorrect. I wish hon. members to understand that I am not speaking in any spirit of antagonism. I want members to believe that I am not saying anything I do not thoroughly believe, or that is not thoroughly proved by my facts and figures. We hear talk about a meat ring; I say there is none. There

is a political ring, a caucus-ridden, hide-bound political ring; there is a workers' ring; there is a Trades Hall ring; all three combined into one ring, working against what is called the classes, and calling themselves the masses. I do not want to belong to either the classes or the masses. I want to be in a position so that when I am dead my sons and my people will be able to walk down the street and shake hands with any honest man, the veriest labourer or the greatest in the land, and call him brother. Are we tending towards that? No, we are not. Why? Because of some of the rings I have mentioned. The reference to the meat ring reminded me of the old proverb about the ass braying at the moon; all I can say is that the asses are braying where there is no moon, or in this case no ring. I am speaking of these things with the idea and object that this unfortunate feeling that is getting abroad between the classes and the masses—although I do not want to be called one of the classes—should be removed. We are here as the representatives of the people, and it should be our bounden duty to try and upset that idea, and abolish it altogether, because it will not do any good to the country. As an instance that it will not do any good to the country, I can quote names of some of the richest of our people, Emanuel Brothers, R. E. Bush, and many others, men who were making their mark, but are being hunted out, because of this cry. This is not a good thing for the country. These men wanted to stay here, and live here, and be of the people; they were men who spent money freely in Perth, £3,000 or £4,000 a year. The time will come when we will regret it; when the Government will want taxation; and blood cannot be drawn out of a stone; if the people have not the money, they cannot pay it. This idea of slinging epithets at people should be done away with, particularly by men in responsible positions. There is a policy which this Government could have initiated which would have carried out all the views which they have in mind, namely—a reduction in the price of living. That would have been the opening up of the great pastoral areas of the north-

ern part of Western Australia, and helping the northern portion of the northern territory of our State. The erection of chilling works would mean the opening up of the country, and would also mean the paying of a fair price to the small man about whom our friends are talking so much just now. It would also increase materially the revenue of the Lands office, and would mean as well an increase in the flocks and herds, and moreover it would be a statesmanlike way of overcoming the difficulty which exists. We have available at Kimberley—I will not go outside the border of our own State—at least 10 million acres of land which is lying idle, and which is equal to the best cattle country yet taken up. I refer to the country which was explored by Mr. Brockman some years ago, and also to that lately explored by Mr. Conigrave, and which is situated between Derby and Wyndham. I have been over a portion of that country and I say that the cry about the monopoly of land is too absurd, because we have there, as I have said, 10 million acres of land which is of a better quality and is better watered than that which is held at the present time. Why is there this cry about the taking up of huge areas of land in the north? It is all blather-skite. Why should not this cry be challenged? I challenge it now. Anyone who takes up the position of saying that there is a monopoly in that part of the country may think he is telling the truth, but he certainly is not doing so. Anyone who cares to do so can inspect the maps at the Lands Department and see that the land in this part of the State is described as the best pastoral country in the world, and yet it is all lying idle. Why? Because there are no freezing works in some part of that territory. If freezing works were erected in the far north the man with the small herds would benefit very largely. It is admitted that the small herds are far better than the very large ones, because it is a well-known fact that in cattle raising the larger the herd the lesser is the percentage of increase. Where a man has four or five thousand head of cattle he can double that total in about four years' time, but

where it is considerably over that the increase is very small. I do not know why this is, but the fact remains that it is so. Therefore give the small man encouragement by establishing works for chilling meat and bring it down here, and it will be found that it can be sold very much cheaper, and at the same time it will be possible to use up the waste stock which die up there. The neglect to trade this stock at the present time means a big loss because it is possible to do so much, such as the boiling down and the saving of hides. At the present time the economic waste is very considerable, because there are no means of marketing the old cows. With what result? Spaying. Hon. members will understand what spaying is. I should say that at least 5,000 young heifers are spayed in the North of Australia and that means that they cannot breed any more, and they are left to fatten and be sent to North Queensland as stores. Imagine what the progeny of these would be. That is an economic waste; it is a big loss to the people who own them, because they cannot keep them there, and there is no market for them. We should encourage the small men to open up the country, and while they are helping themselves they are increasing the herds and increasing them materially, and to a greater extent than the large holders. This would mean that in a short time there would be so many cattle there that one establishment would not be sufficiently large to treat them. The Government should think of the markets which are outside the Fremantle and Perth centres. They should look forward to the time when they will not be squabbling to get a ship load of cattle to bring down here, but consider the future and the question of sending the stock to all parts of the world. I have had the honour and pleasure of opening up a market lately, and to that market a great deal of stock has been sent, which cannot be brought here. Is that not a benefit to the State? But if we had chilling works in the far north we would not require to send the cattle as we are doing to Manilla. We would encourage our people at home. I may mention for the information of the leader of the House that last year one

station in the far north—I refer to the Bovril Estates—sent nine thousand store cattle to New South Wales and another station sent eight thousand cattle. The importance of establishing chilling works cannot be over estimated, and I would recommend hon. members to read a book called "The last word in chilling," and I am certain that no one can fail to read it without becoming an enthusiast in chilling. If such works were established at Wyndham it would be possible to carry about 2,500 head just where at the present time only 600 head are carried, and it will be possible to carry the greater number at about one-third the cost being paid now. Moreover, we would have a better quality of meat because fresh killed chilled beef is better than beef after the cattle have been put into a hot steamer and kept in a tropical climate for some time. There is a vast distinction between chilled and frozen beef, but chilled meat will not carry as frozen meat does, because it will not stand stacking. It has to be hung, and consequently the cost will be more than that of frozen meat, but chilled meat can be carried at one-third the cost of live stock. It can be chilled and handled for 18 days. The Government are placing on this trade the "Mongolia", which is a very fast steamer, and if that steamer burns plenty of coal it can cover the journey from Wyndham to Fremantle in five days; thus we would have two days for chilling, five days to come down, and there would be 13 days available for distribution. Would that not save a great deal? I may be forcing the House, but I want to go thoroughly into this question. By adopting this system there would be a tremendous saving in waste. It is safe to say that an animal loses from 100 to 150 lbs. in weight from the time it is shipped until it is ready for distribution to the consumer, and when we know that thirty thousand head of cattle are brought down here annually we can realise what an enormous waste there is. Moreover, the quality of the meat becomes inferior. If we had works erected in the far north it would be possible to utilise them also for boiling down stock,



which might not be good enough for freezing, and convert it into meat for canning, and then there would be the possibility of utilising the hide and horns, and the remainder for fertilising purposes. As I have already stated, there is a tremendous waste in connection with the handling of cattle. First of all however, there is cruelty. In America the shipment of cattle is almost an industry of the past, and they are now commencing to bar cattle from Argentina because of cruelty in transport. Then there is the waste in quality and the loss in weight. There is also the mortality on the voyage, in some cases numbering as many as 50 or 60 head or we might say two per cent. By bringing down the meat chilled, there would be a saving of two-thirds of the freight. In every shipment that comes down there is also a lot of bruising that would be saved if the meat were killed at Wyndham and chilled. Then we have to remember also the cost of feeding the stock on the voyage down which runs into a good deal. There is also attendance on board the steamer and insurance. It is only possible to insure against mortality in the event of total loss, and if we tried to insure against the ordinary mortality the rate would be so high that the trade could not stand it. And the worst feature of all in bringing fat cattle down by steamer for slaughter is the fact that when they are landed at the port of distribution, given a glutted market, which is going to happen soon, these cattle cannot keep the condition on and they become stores. Then the trouble starts; the shipper has to sell those cattle sometimes at less than the cost of bringing them down and feeding them. Only last year Mr. Macdonald of Derby brought down a large shipment of fat cattle and had to sell them at 27s. 6d. a head. These are the things which the cattle people have faced like men, and have not growled about. I have been told to-day that the Government have taken a stall in the markets, and I wish them good luck. I want to emphasise the fact that meat chilling means better quality for the consumer at less cost and a better return to the grower. It has been said that although we have a great source of supply

in Kimberley, the supply lasts only for six months. That is true; the condition of the cattle lasts only for six months, but during that six months there are plenty of cattle there. But what is to hinder freezing works at Wyndham from getting supplies the whole year through by obtaining the cattle in October and November, up to which time their condition is still good, and storing them either there or in the metropolitan area? I want to tell members that the price of cattle, when the Kimberley season is over, is going to be prohibitive.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh: The meat ring is the cause of that.

Hon. F. CONNOR: There is no meat ring. I will deal with the denseness of the hon. member later on. What I have said the hon. member does not believe, but it does not matter to me whether he believes it or not. I have told the truth.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh: I am prepared to believe the truth.

Hon. F. CONNOR: The hon. member does not know the truth when he hears it, and that is worse still. There are none so deaf as those who will not hear and none so blind as those who will not see. If the Government would take a statesmanlike stand in connection with this matter, put the proper boats on the coast, and establish chilling works at Wyndham—and not only at Wyndham but all along the coast in time, though Wyndham is the best place for a commencement—they could sell a better quality of beef at half the present price and give a better return to the producer at the other end. The Minister for Works made a trip to the North-West recently, and he gave me to understand that at Derby he found there were no cattle in the district. I said that I could not quite follow that statement. He told me that the small men had no cattle; that such beasts as they did have were all horns and legs. Apparently the Minister went there prepared to make a contract with the small men and to gather up all the small men's cattle, but he found that there were none there to buy. There will be a shipment from the Government farm—I will not call it a station—but it will not be too

good, and the Government will not be able to get another shipment in East Kimberley that I know of. The statement of the Colonial Secretary that there will be a thousand fat cattle at Derby is not true; the cattle are not there. It is true that the Government can get a thousand head of cattle there, ten thousand head, or twenty thousand, or fifty thousand, but they cannot lay their hands on a thousand fat cattle in West Kimberley. In East Kimberley they could get 200,000 head of cattle, but they cannot get fat cattle except those already bought.

Hon. E. McLarty: That is the point.

Hon. F. CONNOR: The hon. member knows what I am talking about; there are no fat cattle available. The Minister for Works said that there were no cattle available. I want to tell the House that adjacent to East Kimberley, say within a radius of 450 miles of Wyndham, there are over a million head of cattle of which I have full particulars. There is nothing in my speech to-night that I am not prepared to substantiate, and I have a list here which shows that there are 55 cattle holders within a radius of 400 or 450 miles of Wyndham and the cattle held by them represent in round numbers 600,150. This is a list made up to the 14th November, 1910, by Mr. F. C. Booty, who is an authority. There are probably more cattle now because that statement is 18 months old. Independent of that number there are a great many stations in the Northern Territory and on the northern border of Queensland, and if freezing works were established at Wyndham cattle from those places would be taken there. I can put down the cattle from those sources at from 200,000 to 250,000, making a total of, say, 800,000 head of cattle within a radius of 400 miles of Wyndham. Then again, supposing that the Government had a man with the requisite knowledge, they could, by laying down two dips, one at Hall's Creek and another at Turkey Creek, bring into the works the whole of the cattle from West Kimberley, numbering 300,000. That gives a total of over a million head of cattle available. Further than that,

when works are established at Wyndham it will be possible, until such time as freezing works are established lower down on the coast, to travel sheep from Derby and other places for treatment at Wyndham. That is a scheme which the Government could have gone into with credit to themselves. I think these figures finish the argument of the Minister for Works as to there being no cattle up there, and it will also disprove the statement made by the Colonial Secretary the other evening in this House that 80 per cent. of the cattle in East Kimberley belonged to four people. That is not the case. If these dips were established so that West Kimberley cattle could travel through the tick country without sustaining any harm, the works would be of special benefit to the Government themselves because they have a cattle station.

Hon. M. L. Moss: They want to wait till the Federal Government erect freezers at Port Darwin.

Hon. F. CONNOR: Yes. The Government station is not in clean country, and to travel cattle to Wyndham from this station they have to pass through tick country in which they would get tick fever, because they are not immune. We are told a lot about the high price of beef in Perth. I have here a statement taken from the books of Connor, Doherty, and Durack, Limited, one of the biggest trading concerns in live stock in the Kimberleys, and that statement covers four years' returns and gives absolute facts. In 1908 they sold cattle on the hoof to the number of 3,705, which were brought down from Wyndham and sold in the market here for a gross return of £31,310 10s. 2d., an average price per head of £8 9s. 7d.; in 1909 they sold 1,913 head of cattle, the gross price being £13,821 0s. 6d., an average price per head of £7 4s. That is the gross sale price. In 1910 they sold 3,332 head of cattle which realised £25,335 2s. 2d., an average price of £7 12s. 9d. per head; in 1911 they sold 3,797 head of cattle, realising £28,871 5s. 7d., an average price of £7 12s.

The Colonial Secretary: Less than 2½d. per pound.

Hon. F. CONNOR: I am giving the gross average prices and these are cattle on the hoof, alive. I have given the live stock: now I come to dressed beef. In 1908 the number sold by the firm I have mentioned was 1,667. The total amount realised was £13,328 7s. 3d., and the average price per body £8. In 1909 the number was 1,230, the total result £7,624 1s. 11d., and the average price per body £6 4s. In 1910 the number was 1,091, the gross price £7,047 0s. 9d. and the average price per body £6 10s. In 1911 the number was 1,331, the gross result £8,633 9s. and the average price per body £6 10s. These cattle were sold off the hooks, dressed and delivered in Perth.

The Colonial Secretary: What price were they sold for?

Hon. F. CONNOR: In 1908, the whole of them were sold at 3¼d. per pound, that is approximate; I have not worked it out to the fraction. In 1909 the average price per pound was 2¾d.; in 1910, 2¾d. and in 1911, 2¾d. That is the gross price, not allowing for commission.

The Colonial Secretary: Who is making the profit?

Hon. F. CONNOR: I do not know. These are facts; I am putting facts before members and I defy these facts to be contradicted. The last four years this firm handled 18,066 head of cattle and sold them here at an average price of £7 10s. per head. Where is all this great wealth and the bleeding of the poor people; where does it all come in? Wait until the Government start to bring down cattle.

The Colonial Secretary: That would be about 2¼d. per pound off the hooks.

Hon. F. CONNOR: These are facts that I am giving. The hon. member can send the Government auditor down if he likes, and see our books; I can assure him the figures are correct. Mr. McLarty knows something about what I am talking, and I am sure he will say that what I am telling members is correct. Unfortunately for me, there are not many other members in the House who know much about what I am talking. I want to make a comparison and I will give members the total for June this

year. Every beast that this firm has killed is numbered in the markets. There is the number of bodies, or quarters, or halves, or three-quarters; the price per pound is given of every beast put through the abattoirs, which I hope some day the Government will own. Here is a summary of it. For June this firm handled 162 carcasses of beef averaging 565 pounds per carcass, and the average price obtained was £8 7s. 6d. per carcass, which is equal to 3½d. per pound. That is all the wealth we are taking out of the pockets of the people. We do not get it.

The Colonial Secretary: What is that you are giving us?

Hon. F. CONNOR: Every body of beef killed by Connor, Doherty, & Duraek for the month of June, the weight, the prices they were sold for, the individual amount, and the total amount, and I will tell hon. members what is more, this is the highest price we ever got. That does not prove the contention put forward by the Minister that meat has fallen, because this is the highest price we have got for a long time, and then the price is not too high to make the business pay. Before I finish with the figures which I have here, I want to explain that there is what is called a fifth quarter, and we are told by people, who do not know much about it, that the fifth quarter is our profit. You can examine our books and see that the whole of the fifth quarter—the hide and the bones—is credited to an account against which is put the cost of slaughtering, the feeding of the cattle in the yard, while there, the transmission by rail to Perth, and the cost of selling and delivering in Perth, and it always shows a loss.

The Colonial Secretary: You make £1 5s. on the fifth quarter.

Hon. F. CONNOR: More than that. That account shows a loss every year of about £200, so there the fifth quarter is accounted for. I just want to prove to the Minister what I said, that you can carry dead meat at one-third of the cost of live meat, and I will give you my authority. I take this from the minutes of evidence taken before the Departmental Committee on Combinations in the Meat Trade which sat in England in the year

1909. Mr. G. M. Hall was being examined and he was asked his qualifications. Well, he is the expert for Messrs. William Weddel and Company, and they are the biggest handlers of chilled meat in the world.

Hon. M. L. Moss: What are you quoting from?

Hon. F. CONNOR: I am going to quote from question 2616, and it is as follows:—

2616. (Mr. Weddel.) Could you give the Committee any idea of the respective cost of bringing to Liverpool the live and dead cattle?—The cost of bringing live cattle from Buenos Ayres to the United Kingdom on a £5 freight makes it almost £10.

2617. (Mr. Field.) That is a £10 beast?—£10 a beast on £5 freight.

2618. (Sir Thomas Elliott.) Does that include insurance?—Yes, at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.

2619. (Mr. Weddel.) What would the same cost be for the same animal in the chilled trade, with the hide and everything?—For the beef in the chilled trade the cost is £3 12s. 6d., and the feet, offal, hide and tallow would come to about 2s. 7d., that is about £3 15s. roughly. If the animal was frozen it would cost about 2s. 6d. less.

2620. It would cost from £5 to £6 a head more to bring live cattle than to bring chilled beef?—Yes.

This is the best authority in the world, and he was examined before a Commission in England in 1909. Following up the price of beef, I will give the price which the animals were sold at in Fremantle on the hoof at the last four weekly sales by public auction to the highest bidder without reserve. That is the ring—by public auction to the highest bidder without reserve, whatever number of cattle is put in the yards. If there is a ring in connection with the cattle trade it exists to this extent and only this, that the principal sellers meet occasionally and arrange how many cattle they will put in the sales. You cannot put 1,000 head of cattle into a market that can only take 400. I admit that is done; it is done everywhere in the world.

The Colonial Secretary: You have not explained the present high price of meat.

Hon. F. CONNOR: I say it is not high.

The Colonial Secretary: It is 1s. 2d. per pound.

Hon. F. CONNOR: That is not true.

The Colonial Secretary: It is, I have paid that myself.

Hon. F. CONNOR: You can to-day buy good serviceable meat—good enough for you and good enough for me—at 4d. and 5d. a pound. You could buy it yesterday, to-day, and you will be able to buy it to-morrow.

The Colonial Secretary: I say I have paid 1s. 2d. a pound.

Hon. F. CONNOR: I do not deny that; for the best rump steak you may pay that. You will pay that amount in Melbourne and Sydney. I say again, taking into consideration the conditions under which the cattle are produced, the amount of working cost, freight, fodder, insurance, and all the expenditure between here and the place where the cattle are grown, the cheapest beef in the world is sold here to-day. I challenge anyone to contradict that statement, and I have given the authorities. On the hoof at Fremantle for the last four weekly sales, the price averaged from 3d. to  $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. that is for as prime stuff as was ever put on any market in the world. The highest price was  $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. and the lowest less than 3d., but I am putting the average price down at 4d.

The Colonial Secretary: Slaughtered.

Hon. F. CONNOR: This is dressed meat. This is the weight the people bought and they are good judges of weights. In Melbourne to-day beef is reported as selling up to 40s. a cwt., and in Adelaide it is selling at 37s. 6d. a cwt., with a probable rise to 45s. a cwt. before the end of July. It will certainly rise; Mr. Kidman, who is an authority, has stated publicly that beef will be 45s. a cwt. in Adelaide. I do not quote Sydney, I think the prices are lower there, but there is very little prime stuff available. Now, the cost of marketing in Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide is shillings as against pounds here. A great deal of the stuff is walked into the sale yards, and

what is not walked in goes short distances by rail, costing a few shillings per head. In a few minutes I shall show what it costs us to bring beef here, and members will be astonished when they hear the figures.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: And to hold it here also.

Hon. F. CONNOR: Yes, and to hold it also. The benefit of rail and droving, as against shipping, must surely show that shippers are under great disadvantages. I shall give full particulars in a few minutes, but just now I want to show that two or three days ago, when I went to the markets to make sure of the prices, beef was hung up and offered at from 2½d. to 4½d. per pound at the highest. Compare these prices with the price mutton has been fetching. Mutton has been abnormally high. I have seen mutton sold in the North Fremantle markets at 9d. a pound on the hoof, and the average price was 7½d. On Tuesday at South Fremantle beef sold at 3½d. a pound. On Wednesday at North Fremantle mutton sold at 7½d. a pound. Yet there is not a word about the man who grows the mutton, and gets that price. The only cry is against the "beef buccaneers." The small man, or the big man, that grows mutton, not a word about him! We hear nothing from those people who howl and blatherskite about the meat ring; we hear nothing from them about those who make huge fortunes out of sheep. Now, I shall prove that the man shipping cattle does not get very much out of it when the cattle are delivered down here. If we were dependent on the Eastern States, if we did not have the despised Kimberley to draw upon, we would be paying more than we could buy it here for, plus the cost of freight and charges in bringing it here; and then the people could not eat it, they would have to live on some of those stingarees, I think it was, that the Government steamer brought down the other day. Here are some figures in regard to the cost of marketing beef from Wyndham. The Government steamer freight is quoted at £3 a head. The average price of droving to port is 6s. a head. In some cases it costs 10s. and in some

cases it costs 3s., but I am giving a very conservative estimate of the cost at 6s. Then there is fodder on the voyage; that costs 7s. 6d. per head. Fodder in the yards costs 6s. 6d. per head. Wharfage at Wyndham, a Government charge, is 1s. 6d. per head; and wharfage at Fremantle, also a Government charge, is 1s. 6d. per head. Harbour dues, a Government charge, are 8d. per head; the dipping charge, also a Government charge, is 6d. per head. Then there is insurance on total loss, 1s. 6d. per head. We cannot insure against mortality; it would be too high, something like 10 per cent. Then we have the cattlemen's wages, 2s. per head. Added to that we have the commission on sales and handling after landing, and petty cash disbursements, 7s. 6d. per head, and that is a conservative estimate. The whole runs into £4 15s. 2d. per head.

Hon. D. G. Gawler: Are the Government to pay all those charges?

Hon. F. CONNOR: Of course. It reminds me of something I was informed of to-day, that the manager of the Government cattle station is very much afraid that he will meet a bad market and have to sell his cattle cheaply. I believe he is quite right.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: If the Government do not pay wharfage they will lose the revenue.

Hon. F. CONNOR: When I mention £4 15s. 2d. per head as the cost, it is without reckoning on mortality. It is necessary to add something for mortality.

The Colonial Secretary: Do you mean to say it costs £1 15s. 2d. to deliver at Fremantle apart from the freight?

Hon. F. CONNOR: Yes, and when the Government start to carry the cattle they will find that out.

Hon. W. Patrick: Do you have to pay freight on the cattle that die?

Hon. F. CONNOR: Yes.

Hon. E. McLarty: On every beast.

Hon. F. CONNOR: There is a sympathiser. I have a sympathiser at last.

Hon. E. McLarty: I paid freight on 50 dead bullocks in one boat.

Hon. F. CONNOR: When the Government commence I hope they will be

generous and allow us a little for the dead ones.

The Colonial Secretary: You sold at £6 10s. and it cost £4 15s. 2d. to land the cattle?

Hon. F. CONNOR: Yes. I was giving you the averages at sales. We have sold this year in Copley's yards, before 30 or 40 butchers, at £6 a head—that is in this year of great prices—and when the Government are bringing down their store cattle, as they must do, in August, they will have to sell them, some of them, at lower than £6, and will have to take six months' bills. I do not know how they are going to finance it. The Government are going to have their own Government auctioneer, and they are going to sell for cash. They cannot sell store cattle for cash. No one will buy them; no one can buy them for cash.

Hon. E. McLarty: The taxpayers will have to finance it.

Hon. F. CONNOR: Taking all these facts into consideration, all the cost added to the mortality in transit, and all the charges I have enumerated—taking all these into consideration, there is no place in the wide world where beef is sold as cheaply as it is in Perth and Fremantle; and I defy anyone to dispute these figures. Why do the Government want to go into this for cheap meat? We will sell cheap meat to the Government. When I was in Manila trying to open up an industry of this country I had the honour and pleasure of entertaining the late Mr. Batchelor and Mr. Pearce, members of the Federal Ministry; and they were very anxious indeed for the opening up of the Northern Territory. I had a long discussion with them about it, and I told them the Western Australian Government were proposing to build chilling works at Wyndham—it was then the Wilson Government—but the Federal Ministers laughed and told me that they would have chilling works at Port Darwin while we were thinking about it in Western Australia. They could easily do it. Then, what is going to happen if we do not build chilling works at Wyndham and they do at Port Darwin? What will be the price of beef then it will be hard to say, because, wherever the first works are

built, there the trade will go. Mr. Batchelor was very much in earnest about it, and I believe that if he had lived the works would have been operating at Port Darwin now. What would happen? What would be the price we would pay for our beef if works were established at Port Darwin? The supply now coming from Kimberley would not come here. The cattle growers could not afford to send the cattle here. It would have paid us better, in regard to the prime cattle we brought down to Fremantle, to have boiled them down, if we had had the requisite works at Wyndham, instead of bringing them down here. All these years, and going back to the early days of the goldfields—and the firm I have been talking about was operating there and owned a lot of retail butchers' shops—the cry was raised about the enormous price of beef, but I can tell hon. members that after four or five years of trading that firm wrote off £34,000 without charging interest on it. And that was in the good times. Then go back two or three years here and talk about butchering. Look at the firm of G. S. Yuille & Company. They came here to try to steal the trade, as people of the Northern Territory are going to try to steal our trade. What happened to them? They did not spend more than four or five years in the trade and lost £80,000. Yet we are told all this rubbish.

Hon. W. Patrick: Did they lose that in this State?

Hon. F. CONNOR: Yes. Port Darwin wants this trade. They have already built shipping yards there, and a shipment of cattle which should have come through Wyndham has gone there and been shipped to Manila. Every encouragement possible is given there. The Federal Government have canvassers in Manila trying to steal our trade, and they will do it if we do not look out and get quickly to work. The Americans say, when they are in a hurry, "get busy"; I tell this Government to get busy and to get busy at once. The Federal people have promised the Manila buyers, principally Mr. Liehaucio, the one with whom I made a big contract, that if he will bring his cattle through Port Dar-

win, they will build a railway to the base of supplies; that will be to the East Kimberley border; and it will be to steal the cattle trade from this State. Think that up and size it up. Is it not a serious position for this State? I hold it is. A ship was loaded in Port Darwin in 14 hours, it was supposed to take over four or five days, but it shows the facilities they have; the cattle had to be trucked in the yard and taken down the wharf.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Hon. F. CONNOR: Before tea I was discussing the question of the Federal Government trying to steal our trade. They are trying to steal it; that is a nice brotherly feeling. Since I left the Chamber I have learned of a wrong impression existing in the minds of some hon. members owing to the indifferent way in which I expressed myself before tea. I mentioned the name of a buyer of cattle in Manila, one Liehaneo, and from what I said it was thought that the Government were going to rail their cattle in the Philippine Islands. That was not the meaning I was trying to convey. What I meant to say was that the Federal Government have their emissaries at work, and that they have promised that if this cattle dealer or meat distributor, or beef buccaneer—whatever you like to term him—if he would guarantee that his requirements of cattle should be shipped at Port Darwin, the Federal Government would be prepared to build a railway out to the source of supply, which, as you know, is not altogether in Western Australia, but on the border of the Northern Territory of South Australia and the northern border of Western Australia. I hope that I have made that clear, and that hon. members will understand it. The proposals of the Government to build abattoirs and sale-yards at Midland Junction and at North Fremantle meet with my disapproval, and I can pay myself the compliment of saying that in that respect I am practical, because I know something of this business. I know that there is only one place which is most suitable for that particular trade. That is South Fre-

mantle, where the trade is practically carried on at present. Let us take, first, Midland Junction, and bear in mind that two-thirds of the meat supply of this part of Western Australia is brought by sea, and must therefore land at Fremantle. Surely the Government are not going to say that in any season of the year they propose to carry sea-borne stock to Midland Junction by rail, then return it again to, say, even Perth, or to go further and carry it to Fremantle, and expect that any sane man would entertain that proposition. Therefore I treat the proposition of having sale-yards at Midland Junction, not with contempt—because, after all, a certain proportion of the meat consumed is brought to Midland Junction by rail—but I treat it as being an absurd proposition, which would not be in the interests of the State if it were carried out. The Midland Junction people claim that all the meat which comes into consumption must go through Midland Junction. I would point out, however, that even in the off season—I do not mean the Kimberley season, but even in the off season—the nearest place for a very large proportion of the supplies of meat—that is not merely of beef, but of mutton, beef, and pork—the nearest abattoirs or sale-yards that could be established for, say, the Great Southern would be at South Fremantle. Because the stock will not have to come to Midland Junction, but will come to Fremantle, and there is a direct railway service between Armadale and South Fremantle. Now that, I think, in itself is sufficient to prove that abattoirs at Midland Junction would not be a profitable scheme for the Government to enter into. I come now to North Fremantle. How, in their wisdom, that was proposed, I do not know: because if there is one site more unsuitable than another for these works and for these sale-yards it is North Fremantle. I will give my reasons for this—practical reasons and not theoretical. I am inclined to think the Government are being governed by theorists. Mr. Cairns, I think, is their adviser, and although he is a very able man for whom I entertain a good deal of respect, still I think he is

a theorist of theorists. At North Fremantle, where the Government propose to put these yards, the very utmost area of land they can get is 15 acres. I believe I am correct in saying that 15 acres is the utmost they can get at North Fremantle. A very much larger area will be necessary if we are to get a congestion of stock, and we are bound to get it. If there are any practical cattle or sheep men here, they will agree with me that for the handling of 2,000 head of cattle, and from 8,000 to 10,000 head of sheep a very much larger area than 15 acres would be required. I unhesitatingly say that, unless the Government start their chilling works in the North, the time will arrive when North Fremantle with its developments cannot possibly carry that traffic. There is not the room there for it. We require nearer 300 acres than 15 acres to handle that stock. Anybody who knows that trade must know that the cost of having to truck the cattle to the sale-yards and truck them back again would be prohibitive. As for paddocking in North Fremantle, there are no paddocks there to hold the stock. It is a narrow neck of land between the river and the sea. Apart from the railway there is no means of getting the stock away unless you swim them across the river or across the sea. Some hon. members know something of the pastoral business, and I will ask any of them, if they had to handle stock, would they agree to have them twice trained? Yet that is what will have to be done if the abattoirs are built at North Fremantle, where the time will most certainly come when there will be no room at all to handle stock. There are no roads, no paddocks, no approaches, but simply bridges? You might manage to drive a few sheep across the bridges, but you could not drive Kimberley bullocks across them, because these animals are sometimes very wild. May I just refer to a letter which appeared in the *West Australian* about three weeks ago. It evidently had not passed anyone who had a right to see whether the contents of the letter were good, bad, or indifferent. It referred to the fact that beef was too dear and that the prices

were prohibitive. This letter stated that the price of cattle on that day was £11 7s. 6d. per head. I will tell hon. members that on that day at the sale referred to four very large, heavy, quiet bullocks were sold at £11 7s. 6d. per head. So far, so good. This letter appeared and went before the public, and a great number of people believed it to be true that the price of cattle on that day was £11 7s. 6d. Again I must mention my own firm to make myself clear, and I must apologise for doing so. My firm on that day put 265 head of cattle into those stock-yards, and among them were these four bullocks, but the gross average price for the 265 head, including the four at £11 7s. 6d., returned to the growers of those cattle, after paying the expenses for bring them here, was £7 15s. 9d. Yet the information goes out to the public that these bullocks realised £11 7s. 6d. I do not blame the public for believing it, but it is not my province to refute all that appears in the public Press, and I am not going to try to do it. If the public and the Press are prepared to be gulled by silly fools who do not know what they are talking about, and who write this stuff, they can. I would ask the leader of the House when the Government went in for this meat-cheapening, which I think I have proved will make meat dearer, why did they not, before entering into a big thing like this, consult Parliament, and both Houses of Parliament. When they did not consult Parliament, whom did they consult?

The Colonial Secretary: I cannot reply; you have prevented me from replying.

Hon. F. CONNOR: The Minister had enough to reply to in connection with the constitutional aspect.

Hon. M. L. MOSS: I put the same question and the Minister would not answer it. Mr. Dodd can answer presently.

Hon. F. CONNOR: What expert did they consult; what practical man did they consult? Was it Mr. Cairns? Although I like Mr. Cairns personally and think he is a very able man, still he should not be the power behind the throne in a thing like this. We should be the power be-



hind the throne; not the trades unions, not the Labour party, but the Houses of Parliament. Let me tell hon. members that I do not want for one instant to bring the House into the position of being a party House. I am of no party while I am in this House; I am here to express the honest convictions and opinions I hold towards the well-being of the public at large. The leader of the House stated in reply to an interjection while discussing the meat question, that he was paying 1s. 2d. per pound for beef. While I give him credit for having more sense, as there was no necessity for him to pay 1s. 2d. a pound, I point out also this fact, that if he sold a body of beef off the hooks there would be five pounds of that worth 1s. 2d. Yet this is the way the Minister of the Crown discusses this question, without knowing what he is talking about. It goes out to the world that the Hon. Mr. Drew in the Upper House said he was paying 1s. 2d. a pound for beef.

The Colonial Secretary: Quite correct.

Hon. F. CONNOR: I do not say you did not pay that, but I say it is not the price of beef, and the honourable gentleman, in my opinion, is not doing his duty to this country or to the people who are trying to develop this country, or to the people who are being abused unfairly, to accentuate that statement after having heard what I have told him. I have given him the figures to chew up. It is not fair to say that, and to continue to repeat it. Supposing, however, the Minister was asked to pay 2s. 6d. a pound and he paid it, would that be the price of beef? It is unstatesmanlike—I will not say ungentlemanly—and very impolitic, of the hon. member to continue to take up that position that the price of beef is 1s. 2d. a pound, because it is not.

The Colonial Secretary: I said the best steak was 1s. 2d.

Hon. F. CONNOR: You said your beef!

The Colonial Secretary: I said the best steak.

Hon. F. CONNOR: The policy of the Government, as far as I can understand, is to wipe the beef buccaneers out, to let the mutton buccaneers, or the fruit buc-

caneers, or the fish buccaneers, or the political buccaneers continue, but to wipe out the beef buccaneers. The meat ring, however, is the political cry of the moment. May I here refer to the advent to this House of new blood. The speeches of the honourable gentlemen who moved and seconded the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply, and those by the other members, the Hon. Mr. Colebatch and the Hon. Mr. Sanderson, prove that the new blood is a good thing, but let us hope—and I am referring to both sides—that it is not the starting point of turning this House into a party House. I hope that such a thing will never eventuate. Let us discuss these things on bare merits. Let members in another place discuss them on party lines if they like, but keep party lines out of this House. I can say that, because when I was in another place which is a party House. I was the first direct representative of Labour in that House. That was when the old Kimberley goldfields existed, so that I can offer advice after twenty years in politics. It is presumptuous perhaps, but I am old enough to be presumptuous. I can challenge anyone who wants to make this a party House, and who might suggest that I am against the policy of the Government, to go back in the history of politics almost since the inception of responsible Government, to read *Hansard*, and to show me any division on any Labour question in which I voted for the "Noes." Such a thing I have not done. I introduce that to show that I have no animosity against the party which is in power in another place. I would suggest that some consideration should be given to the pioneers of the industries in this country. Amongst the pioneers were the miners and the pastoralists. I am going back now to 1836, 26 years ago, when I arrived in Australia. Now, consideration has been given to the miners, and justly so, and they require even more consideration than they have received in the past if the finances of the country will allow it; but very little consideration indeed has been given to the pastoralists who arrived in the north of this State 26 years ago, and as far as the proposals of the present Government

are concerned—I am referring to the people of the far north who went there and spent their money and the best of their lives in the development of that country—there is no consideration for them. The only thing seems to be to wipe them out, to wipe out the beef buccaneers, the meat ring, which has put meat up, as the Colonial Secretary says, to 1s. 2d. a pound. That is not the correct position. I have heard it said that we cannot wipe them out. It is possible, but if we do we must first wipe out the industry. Are we prepared, as representatives of the people, to wipe out that industry, the pioneer industry, the industry that made it possible for miners to go to Hall's Creek and open up that country. That seems to be the proposal in the policy of the present party in power, and I say it is a bad policy. We want to be pioneers still. I am getting into years now, and yet I am a pioneer. I pioneered the opening up of new markets, and I am prepared still to pioneer the opening up of new markets, not only in meat, but in wool and timber, and wheat and fruit. I am told I will be doing this for the black hordes of the Orient. With that I do not agree. I prefer to believe that Brother Jonathan is prepared now and at any time to take us by the hand and to say "I am your brother." With the Americans in Manilla we are opening up a trade. Are we only to send our produce to Perth and Fremantle and the goldfields? Is that our ambition? Are we going to sit down and produce only sufficient for our own small requirements? We must live on export; we shall have to live on export. We must not remain an isolated community in the affairs of the world; if we are, I for one will try as soon as I can to get out of the country. The great question of the population of the country comes next, and the most important part of this country that we want to populate is the North because if ever there is to be an invasion from the Oriental races, those people will naturally attack the North first, because there there will be the least resistance. If we are prepared to say that we want only to produce enough cattle there to

supply our markets down here, I think it would be better to make up our minds to hand back that country to the aborigines, or to the Japanese or the Chinese, or some other of those races, at once, so that they might make some use of it. It can be made use of, and it can be made a closer proposition in time to come, but not yet. There is, however, only one way in which we can make use of the North, at present, and that is by encouraging the growing of cattle, and by giving facilities, so that we can market the stock not only here but in other parts of the world, and the only way to do that is by starting work whereby chilling will first be undertaken, and the production of meat extract, and the canning of meat can afterwards be carried out. Canning works in America are a thing of the past. Why? Because beef is too dear there now. What an opportunity there is to open up in the north of this country works for canning meat, and we must remember that canned meat is used even by ourselves in huge quantities. I am afraid I have rather wearied hon. members, but I have not many more remarks to make. I would like to add that if socialism is to be the policy then the Government must go the whole hog. There is at the present time in East Kimberley the best bred herd of cattle to be found in any part of North Australia, or probably in the whole of Australia. What I am going to say now I am afraid might be regarded by the House as a trading proposition, and I will ask your permission, Mr. President, to mention it, but I may say that I am referring to it also by way of argument. What I desire to say is that the Government can here and now purchase the best bred herd of cattle, the breeding of which has cost tens of thousands of pounds for the importation of stud bulls into that part of the State from England, Scotland, Queensland, Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia, and New Zealand. I make the offer to the Government that they can purchase this herd, and if they want to make the proposition which they are embarking upon a payable one, that herd of cattle can be purchased at bang-tail muster at £2 10s. per head.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: By whom is the offer made?

Hon. F. CONNOR: By me, and the offer is genuine. Now I desire to make another little inquiry, and perhaps the Colonial Secretary will give me the information. Are the Government going to use Collie coal in their steamers?

The Colonial Secretary: Yes, but not entirely.

Hon. F. CONNOR: Are they going to use bunker coal? Does the Colonial Secretary know what bunker coal is?

The Colonial Secretary: We intend to use a pretty big percentage of it.

Hon. F. CONNOR: Bunker coal?

The Colonial Secretary: I am doubtful about that.

Hon. F. CONNOR: That is just what I want to know; but I will not proceed with my questioning if I am out of order. Are the Government going to use it as bunker coal?

Hon. W. Patrick: The Minister has already told you the Government are going to use a large percentage.

Hon. F. CONNOR: Perhaps the Minister does not like to answer my question?

The Colonial Secretary: I think you had better give notice of it.

Hon. F. CONNOR: Then again, by way of a question, which the Minister need not answer—

The PRESIDENT: I do not think this is the proper time for asking questions.

Hon. F. CONNOR: Then I will make a statement, and I apologise for having taken so much liberty. I was going to ask the question of the Government as to whether they were insuring their steamers against spontaneous combustion, but I will not ask it now. I will only advise the Government that if they are going to use Collie coal for bunkering purposes it will be necessary to insure the steamers to the very fullest extent.

Hon. E. McLarty: Other ships are using it.

Hon. F. CONNOR: So did the "Tangier," and she took fire in four different places. With regard to the store cattle which the Government propose to bring down on their own steamers, and which

were grown by the State, are the Government going to sell them on terms or are they going to hold the cattle here until they fatten? I would also have liked to ask the leader of the House whether caucus were unanimous or not on this question, and I was going to tell him that the majority of caucus were not ruled by the majority, because added to the minority of caucus are the votes in opposition, and then you have minority rule.

Member: That is Irish.

Hon. F. CONNOR: There is nothing Irish about it. There is a caucus, and there is a majority in that caucus who decide what the policy of this Parliament shall be. Now I would like to ask the leader of the House whether he is in entire sympathy with every measure which caucus propounds, and which the hon. gentleman must, occupying the position that he fills, endeavour to pass through this House? I would like to know whether he is in sympathy with every measure proposed in caucus? I do not think I should ask that question, but I do know that the hon. gentleman is at least truthful, and that he will not answer it. We take this caucus majority which exists. Two or three men in that caucus influence the majority. Take the minority in the caucus, and add that minority to the minority which represents the Liberal party in another place, and I say, and it cannot be disputed, that at the present time we are governed by a minority. I have just about come to the end of my tether, and I must apologise for having been so garrulous. Let us see now what are the proposals of the Government, and hon. members may be surprised. Perhaps I should not say that they are all proposals, because some of them are only "in the air." All these represent a total expenditure of about eleven millions. It is proposed to spend £1,400,000 on the Transcontinental Railway, being 350 miles at £4,000 a mile; and for the purchase of rolling stock for the 4ft. 8½in. gauge £600,000 is proposed. These two items alone total £2,000,000. Then 500 miles of railway have been authorised at a cost of, say, £1,500 a mile, and this makes a total of £750,000; rolling stock

is required for these new lines, for those already constructed, and of which the Railway Department are at present very short; this is put down at £500,000. There is the Esperance railway. I put nothing down for that, and I think that is about what it will cost. There are workers' homes, half a million.

Hon. J. Cornell: Not at Kalgoorlie.

Hon. F. CONNOR: It may be more or less. I am not tied down to a million or two in this policy. There is the purchase of the Midland Railway in the air, and I think it will be purchased by this Government, if they are let loose. That will be another two million pounds. There is the purchase of the Perth electric tramways at a cost of, say, half a million; and extensions, new works, and rolling stock for that particular scheme will involve another half million. That makes a million.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: The other Government starved the country; the present Government have to do this.

Hon. F. CONNOR: Then there is the Agricultural Bank.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: They will have no Savings Bank soon.

Hon. F. CONNOR: I am coming to the Savings Bank. There is the Agricultural Bank, which at present owes to the Savings Bank anything between one and a-quarter and one and a-half millions, and in the opinion of the manager of that bank it will take another million or two millions, as the case may be, on the policy recommended by the Government, which I do not for one moment dispute is right. I say the policy is right there, and I will follow the Government in that respect, but I am putting figures before members, and I include the Agricultural Bank because I believe that the Savings Bank will soon be monopolised by the Federal Bank.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: With the consent of our Government.

Hon. F. CONNOR: They will take it in spite of the State Government because they have the machinery to work it, and we have not. They will get the money through the Post Offices, and when they

get the money this Parliament will have to find money to pay them what the Agricultural Bank owes the Savings Bank, or they will take away our Agricultural Bank and all the securities held by that institution. That has nothing to do with the further moneys required for the Agricultural Bank, in connection with which I am entirely in accord with the policy of the Government. I put the figures down at two millions, but three millions would not cover it. For State sawmills I allow another half million. Other State enterprises may be included in a lump sum. They consist of (a) ferries; (b) milk supply, (c) brickworks, (d) agricultural implements, (e) State hotels, and (f) steamers.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: What about fish?

Hon. F. CONNOR: I forgot fish, but those items bring the total up to £9,750,000. Then there is a little *bon bouche* to come at the finish. There are harbour works at Bunbury, Geraldton, and Albany, and Esperance, I believe. That is another quarter of a million, not including the new dock at Fremantle, which will run into a million pounds, giving a grand total of £11,000,000 altogether. I wish it to be clearly understood that I have nothing personal against the present Ministry, and if anything which I have said gives that impression I apologise for it; but I have no confidence in their policy. When that programme is put before the English people, and when it is shown that our indebtedness is £76 per head, even allowing for the sinking fund which is in London—when, I say, this programme is put before the English people to whom we must look for our money, it will appear to them, and it will be true, that if we borrow that money and do not get more population our indebtedness will then be £100 per head. The English people will not lend that money, we cannot get it from anyone else, and consequently the development of the country will be retarded. I repeat that I have nothing personal against any member of the Ministry, but I disagree entirely with their policy, which I say is not in the best interests of the country at large.

The PRESIDENT: The question before the House is the amendment to the Address-in-reply.

Hon. R. J. LYNN (West): As one of the last recruits to this House, and having just come from rather a strenuous election in connection with the late biennial elections, I desire for a moment to deal with, and quote some figures relating to, the last general election in comparison with the province election. The last general election resulted in a majority in the Perth and Fremantle electorates of 5,647 votes in favour of the present Administration. The province elections, held within eight months of the general elections, resulted in the Labour party, who contested every seat in the interest of the policy put forward by that party, being in a minority of 3,500 votes. During that election, and in my own campaign, I endeavoured to maintain this House as a non-party Chamber, and whilst, as the Colonial Secretary mentioned, he had many Liberal supporters opposing him in his electorate, I can also stress the fact that I had practically all the Ministers in opposition to me in the West Province. I think the figures I have quoted clearly demonstrate that the electors in the coastal districts, at least, have decided to reject the Labour party's policy for the abolition of this House. The electors have shown themselves to be hostile to the non-alienation of Crown lands; they distrust the financial capacity of the present Administration, and they are dubious of the outcome of the Government's many socialistic schemes. In connection with the purchase of steamers for the North-West coast, I can claim, after many years' shipping experience on the coast of Fremantle, that the Government, in embarking on this scheme, have apparently not received very good advice or taken opinions from experts in this matter. Their reasons for embarking on the scheme have unfortunately been given as many. The first was owing to the rates of freight quoted on this coast, and for the information of this House I desire to give members a comparative statement of the rates existing between the Eastern States and Fre-

mantle and for similar distances on our north-west coast. From Port Hedland to Fremantle stock is being carried at 35s. per head. A corresponding distance from Fremantle is Adelaide, and the freight is £3 15s. From Derby to Fremantle the freight is £2 7s. 6d., and from Melbourne to Fremantle £4; from Wyndham to Fremantle £3 10s., and from Sydney to Fremantle £4 10s. Now, I think that will clearly demonstrate to the House that the rates as quoted on the north-west coast are not excessive, and in view of the Government rates to-day being the schedule rates of the alleged shipping ring, that should be sufficient to show that the reason for embarking on this scheme is not owing to the high rates prevailing. The second reason given—and I think perhaps in this direction it would be wise if the Government were to exercise some censorship respecting the many conflicting statements appearing from day to day—the second reason is to assist small shippers who are unable to obtain freights from the alleged shipping ring; but in order to refute this I need only quote the fact that the July shipments of the "Darius" have been engaged by one of the wealthiest squatters on the north-west coast, and that only because, the feed being poor in the North-West, he desires to transfer his stock to another station in the South. The same thing applies to the August shipments of the "Darius"; large squatters in the North have secured space for the August shipments. In view of that, and seeing that the stock is not coming into consumption, can the second argument brought forward by the Administration, namely, assistance to the small shippers, be accepted as correct? If so, the only conclusion that can be arrived at is that we have no small shippers on our north-west coast. The third reason is the reduction in the cost of living. If the rates prevailing are not to be reduced, and if additional competition is unable to be brought about by the small shippers on the north-west coast, then it will be impossible, on the arguments put forward, for the cost of living to be reduced; but during my campaign it was strenuously argued that owing to the excessive cost

of living something should be done by the Government in order to bring about a reduction. I was asked on more than one occasion whether, if returned, I would support some scheme being initiated in order to carry this into effect; and although perhaps Mr. Sanderson will not agree with me on this, I said I was quite willing to enter into any arrangement that could possibly be made in order to carry this into effect. I have no desire to say that the Government have no experience. It is all very true that what one man can do another can do. Yes; but only if he has the training, aptitude, and capability. We find the first step made by the Government, not a step of good, steady progress, but a plunge into the deep in order to carry into effect a part of their policy irrespective of the consequences. The Premier has stated that the "Mongolia" cost £39,500 and the "Darius" £17,000, or a total of £56,500. To bring these steamers here and equip them for that trade, he said, would cost an additional £3,500, making a total of £60,000. Had the Government exercised that discretion they ought to have done, the first thing in connection with placing boats on the north-west coast or embarking on any scheme would be to some extent to prove the value of the trade they were entering into. This is not a trade that is being entered into irrespective of competition; and in view of the competitive nature of this scheme, certain advice should have been sought and accepted. Had they chartered a steamer for the seven months of the cattle season they would have been in the position of bringing down stock from the North-West free of charge, without spending a shilling on capital account and without creating a department, and being in the same position as they are to-day. The life of the "Darius" has been lived, the "Mongolia," with a further ten years of life, will be obsolete, and with 10 per cent. for depreciation and 4 per cent. for interest on capital, £8,400 would have provided for the charter of a boat during the cattle season and brought down stock free of charge and without any expenditure on capital account or without creating a department. This, I contend, would have given them an op-

portunity of proving the value of the trade; and if successful in this direction, then a scheme could have been embarked upon with every degree of success; but, as it is, so far as I can see from my knowledge of this coast, and of the tidal ports, and of the difficulties surrounding navigation, and of the small amount of cargo offering, and of the many numerous ports at which the steamers have to call, I think the scheme is doomed to failure. I am glad the Government propose to keep a commercial set of books in regard to this scheme. So long as they do, and so long as a proper depreciation is allowed and interest on all standing charges, similar to private companies, and so long as the boats are maintained in anything like reasonable efficiency in order to carry out the work and give them the ten years of life, then I think that, after the first year or eighteen months, the Government will probably be glad to realise on them before they go too far. But what conveyed to me the want of knowledge on the part of those responsible for this scheme was the advertisement that appeared in the papers calling for applications for the position of manager. The position was advertised at £360 to £480. If the Government, or whoever was responsible, in order to make this a success, had got the very best man they could have got and paid him £1,000 or £1,500 a year, it would not have been a penny too much to expect for the class of commercial knowledge a man should have to administer a department like this. The gentleman appointed to the position is a very estimable man, he is a very fine chap indeed, but his knowledge of book-keeping and accountancy work is not the knowledge required to run a commercial undertaking in this direction. So far as the individual is concerned I have nothing to say, but the appointment shows that it must be characteristic to some extent of the discontent prevailing in the public service of the State when an appointment such as this should be advertised at £360 per annum. Without in any way desiring to appear parochial, I wish to say something in connection with my own province, and that is in regard to the position of the Fre-

mantle harbour. I am glad to note in the Speech a reference to harbour improvements; but what is the position of the Fremantle harbour, the first port of call, the chief port of the State. Chaos ruling and congested traffic. For the year ending June, 1910, the imports were 442,407 tons; for the year ending June, 1911, the imports were 614,861 tons, a total increase of 172,454 tons, practically a 30 per cent. increase; and if we have anything like a reasonable harvest, together with the Trans-Australian railway material that must be handled, sufficient accommodation cannot be provided within the next two years in the Fremantle harbour for the trade that is likely to develop. I have gone carefully through all figures relating to any extensions in any direction that can be made within the limits of the existing harbour, and the total new berthage accommodation that can be provided amounts to 1,900 feet. As against that 1,900 feet, unfortunately, we have the mail boat jetty in such a state of disrepair that in the near future it must be taken up; and as this T jetty provides a thousand feet of accommodation, the total increased accommodation that can be provided will be only 900 feet, or equivalent to two additional berths. Now, in view of that and in view of the increased tonnage daily, I am particularly anxious to know what the present Administration intend to do in respect to the future. We see the Suez Canal being deepened to 36 feet. We see Colombo, the next port of call *en route*, 36 feet, Fremantle harbour, the next port of call, still remaining at its 30 feet. We see Sydney spending sums of money in connection with the deepening of her harbour, and Melbourne the same, and Hobart, the despised little port of this Commonwealth, actually now making arrangements with the White Star line in order to establish a coaling station so that the White Star boats can top up and leave Hobart passing the Western State bound to the old country. This appeals to me as being a very serious phase and something which I ask the present Administration to take into consideration at the very earliest date. I feel sure it is news to hon. members that

the Aberdeen White Star line have now a steamer on the stocks to replace the "Pericles." Its dimensions are 550ft. by 67ft. by 40ft., and it has a draft of 31ft. 6in. The company have written to the Fremantle Harbour Trust wanting to know from them what provision they intend making in the future for receiving the boats of their line, but the harbour trust are helpless in the matter, they are unable to reply to the communication. I hope this will bring to the House to-night the absolute urgency of the Government appointing some commission.

Hon. M. L. Moss: We do not want commissions; we want the work done.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: Well, somebody to immediately go into the question of the Fremantle harbour.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: All the information is there already.

The Colonial Secretary: There has been no estimate as to cost.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: I am sure that no member desires that any steamer should have to pass our port and go to the Eastern States because we have not sufficient accommodation for her. In this growing State we must make that increased accommodation and provide the facilities without any further delay. The work should be started to-morrow in order to be completed in time to receive the steamers that will be coming to Fremantle. Of course in Fremantle, as many members know, it is a burning question as to whether it should be an outer harbour extension or an inner harbour extension. When one looks at the waters in the outer harbour one cannot help but think that there unquestionably is the place for an outer harbour scheme, but I am not here to-night advocating any particular scheme; I am here asking the Government to take into consideration the advisability at the earliest possible moment of the work being proceeded with in order that steamers may have their accommodation at our own port. I am sorry there is no reference in the Speech to the subject of immigration. On referring to statistics for the year ended June last we find that the increased population of the State amounted to only 15,000. It does not require any great ability at figures to

see that on an annual increase of 15,000 many years will be required before this State receives the population she is entitled to.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Is that the total increase?

Hon. R. J. LYNN: Yes.

Hon. W. Patrick: And even that is going to be stopped.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: We find some of the European countries, the great nations of the world, teeming with their millions—take Germany as an instance, with her millions, bounded on every side and unable to expand—yet in face of this we, with a coastline of 3,000 miles, expect to be able to protect our shores and reserve the right to this vast area. Unless we are prepared to populate this land we have no right to retain it, and the quicker the Government set to work to devise a sound immigration policy the better for the State and the people in it. Another thing my recent campaign brought to my notice was the question of the dairying industry. Probably the House will remember that a week or two ago we had in Fremantle a referendum as to the municipalising of the milk industry. The proposal was rejected by a large majority. I am told that we have a considerable tract of good dairying country in the State. If that be so I think we should endeavour to bring about an improved state of affairs. To-day we are sending out of the State from £75,000 to £100,000 per annum for dairy produce for our own consumption. Instead of that our own dairying industry should be assisted. We should not only manufacture sufficient for our own consumption, but should be sending away a surplus in return for coin of the realm to be distributed in our own State. Another point which appeals to me very strongly is that of the State Savings Bank. It is incomprehensible to me why the present Administration have not attempted to make some arrangements in this respect. Mr. Moss, when speaking, said that it was because the Labour policy throughout Australia was one of unification. I am not going to agree with Mr. Moss in that regard, because we find that the Labour Government of New South Wales are making arrangements to trans-

fer the State Bank from the control of the Federal authorities, while, so far as we know, no such arrangements have been made here.

Hon. M. L. Moss: It is all secrecy here. They refuse to tell us anything about it.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: When we remember that the four or five millions in the Savings Bank have been advanced to the Agricultural Bank and to municipalities and other corporations, it will be realised what a serious blow the State would suffer if the Federal authorities were to take control of the Savings Bank money. I hope that in this connection the Government will make some stand, and arrange for the transference of our own Savings Bank from the Federal authorities at the earliest date. I notice in the Speech a reference to the nationalisation of the Perth trams. I believe that public utilities of this kind should be in the control either of the State or the municipal authorities. I have taken a very active interest in connection with municipal matters, and in respect to the municipalisation of trams I was one of the first members elected to the Fremantle Tramways Board. I have retained my seat on that board from the very inception, and for the past four years have been chairman. When I tell hon. members that during the five years we have been operating that service no less a sum than £30,000 has been set aside in order to wipe off the capital cost at the maturity of the debentures, and that during the same time £1,516 of profit has been handed over to the municipalities in order to lighten the burdens of taxpayers, it will be seen how important this matter is. On reference to the tram systems of the United Kingdom, we find that there are there no fewer than one hundred municipal tramways with, approximately, a capital of 42 millions, and that during their existence a sum of no less than £354,676 has been provided in surpluses in order to assist the taxpayers of the respective municipalities and corporations. I desire to say that, in my opinion, the present Administration are not justified in any attempt to take away or confiscate the rights of the city of Perth. I am in no way interested in Perth matters, but I do know that if any attempt were to be



made by the Government to confiscate the Fremantle tramway system I should put up a jolly good fight to prevent it. The Perth City Council have an agreement with the Perth Tramway Company, which entitles them to 3 per cent. of the gross earnings, and to use the tramway poles for the running of light mains, while it also provides for the purchase of the system at 14 years, or at 21 years, and that after 28 years the concern is to revert to the municipality. I should like to know if the Government regard might as a justifiable substitute for right. If they do, and intend to deprive the citizens of Perth of their rights, then in my opinion they are not justified in their action. There are many other figures I could quote in support of my contention in regard to the tramways, but presumably when the Bill comes before the House further opportunity will be given me. I regret very much that probably the first vote I shall be asked to give in the House should be in connection with an amendment such as that moved by Mr. Moss. I do believe we should endeavour to retain this House as a non-party House. I believe we should be considered and consulted in matters relating to any schemes put forward by the Government. It is not my intention to be a hostile critic of the present Administration, at all events not to any great extent, but I have been considering the position from the standpoint that if out of a contingency vote of £250,000 the Government could provide capital for the purchase of steamers, and embark on a scheme for the sea carriage of goods, there is no reason why the same Government, out of the same vote, cannot build the Esperance railway for the land carriage of goods. To me it seems a parallel that, if they can commit the State out of a vote of a contingency nature—and commit the State for part only, where large sums of money must follow in its wake—then they can commit the State in any other direction they may choose. This, I think, would be a very bad principle indeed to permit.

The Colonial Secretary: The previous Government exceeded the Treasury vote by many thousands.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: I am in the happy position of knowing that I start afresh; it does not concern me what any previous Government have done. I am considering merely what the present Administration have done. I was sorry, indeed, to hear Mr. Connor make the reference he did to Collie coal. I regret he is not here now in order that I might enlighten him respecting one of the best products and industries of the State. I happen to be indirectly connected with that industry, and it must be known that some thousands of pounds have poured into this State by the bunkering of Collie coal. The calorific values of that coal are getting better, and if such organisations as the Hansa and German-Australian companies can load coal at Newcastle and call in at Fremantle for bunker coal on their way to Bombay, I think it demonstrates that the Collie coal must be becoming a very fair article indeed. I can assure the House that that has been done during the last month or two. The steamers of that line have been calling here on their way from Newcastle to Bombay in order to bunker our own local coal. It must be of great advantage to the railways of the State. The present Government, and also past Governments, have helped to build up this Collie coal industry, and if after having built up the trade and advertised the coal as a bunker coal, they refuse to burn it, what a splendid advertisement it will be for outside coals to send forth to the world. It would indeed be interesting to read that the State-owned steamers of Western Australia refused to burn the Western Australian product, preferring the imported article. Such a state of things could not be permitted. So far as spontaneous combustion is concerned, that is a trouble easily got over. All the Government will have to do in connection with the bunkering of Collie coal will be to carry sufficient bunker coal to take their steamers to and fro. Any spare supplies that they need and intend to keep on board the ship as reserve month in and month out, I should say, for the safety of the ship, and the convenience of all concerned, should be the imported article, but the coal to be consumed could be the local article. I have no desire to say any-

thing more to-night other than to thank the House for the courteous manner in which they have received me. I can only hope my stay in this House will be one of a cordial nature with all sections in it, and anything I can do in any possible direction to assist the members of this Chamber I shall be pleased to do.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN (South-East): I had expected the Hon. Mr. Connolly to speak to-night, but it seems at the last moment he has taken pity on the House, as he would have a good deal to say, and as I do not intend to detain the House long, I will make the few remarks which I desire. I have listened with very great interest to the admirable speeches of the three new members who have spoken since the Colonial Secretary's defence, but I noticed a serious omission, that they did not honour the Minister by any reference to his defence. I presume that they estimated it at something like its value, for even the Minister himself can hardly look upon that defence as worthy of the House. His defence was this: that the Government had not gone behind Parliament by using money that had not been appropriated; that the Government had taken the purchase money for the steamers out of the Treasurer's advance vote, which was voted for entirely different purposes last session.

The Colonial Secretary: For what purpose was it voted?

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: The Colonial Secretary had gone further and said in his defence that he wished this House to believe that Ministers had no intention of insulting the Legislative Council. That disclaimer on the part of the Ministry must be accepted straight away, but it does not alter the situation one iota. Ministers have taken the course which on the plain face of it means an attempt to get behind this Chamber. However good their meaning towards this Chamber, it does not for a moment remove the offence which Ministers have committed. The singular part about this defence is that it is very different from the one put forward before the Hon. Mr. Moss made his charges. The answer before was this: the Government, as a matter of urgency,

had to anticipate Parliament's authority for the purchase of these steamers, and the Governor's Speech said distinctly that not Parliament, but one House of Parliament would be asked to ratify and approve of their action. Now, after Mr. Moss's speech, the Colonial Secretary says there will be no need to ratify or approve that expenditure. The Legislative Council need not be offended at a reference to the Assembly only, for neither House will be asked to ratify or approve that expenditure. The Government is taking the ground that the expenditure has already been approved. This is about the most manifest subterfuge that this House has ever had to listen to. I will say this, that the Minister blushed when he was putting it forward in this House. He is not a State socialist, he does not believe in these crude and rash ventures of the Government, but he has to stand by—

The Colonial Secretary: You have no right to say that.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: He has to stand by the more advanced socialistic notions of his party and I pity him. With reference to the claim of the Government regarding the Treasurer's advance, the Colonial Secretary said the wording of the clause had precedent, and that in previous Governors' Speeches there was something like the same kind of wording. It must be admitted that very frequently in Governors' speeches, the diction and punctuation leave ambiguities, but the meaning has to be interpreted by the action of the Government, and never before in the history of this country has any Government attempted to use a Treasurer's advance for any purposes but two, namely, excesses over votes that had been appropriated, or emergencies in the line of precedent.

The Colonial Secretary: You are wrong.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I am entirely on safe ground.

Hon. M. L. Moss: You are quite right.

The Colonial Secretary: The aboriginal cattle station was purchased out of Treasurer's advance and that represented an amount of £18,000.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: That was not a Treasury concern.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: The Minister has not followed me closely. I said there were only two general kinds of expenditure that might be brought under the Treasurer's advance, namely, for excesses on votes that had been appropriated, which frequently happens, or urgent matters in lines which have been covered by precedent, such as Ministers know from precedent will be approved and ratified by Parliament. Can the Minister by any stretch of ingenuity bring the purchase of steamers for this new venture under either of these heads? Will he say it was an urgent matter?

The Colonial Secretary: I have said so.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: Well, what a false position the Minister places himself in.

The Colonial Secretary: What is the use of my saying these things if you do not accept them as true?

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: What a false position the Minister places himself in, and how he ties himself in a knot by doing so. The main defence for this crude, rash, ill-considered venture of the Government is that it is a comparatively old matter and that the Government had placed it before the country fully in their election speeches, and because the country afterwards gave them a majority, therefore they have a mandate to carry it out. The supporters of the Government say it goes back to October, September, and August of last year. Now, however, it is urgent. If it were urgent why did not the Government bring it before Parliament last session? They will say, I suppose, that the details could not be worked out.

Hon. M. L. Moss: We do not know much about the details yet.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: They will say that the details could not be worked out, and that the Government would not know how much to ask for. The Minister knows that very well in connection with anything of this sort, the main matter is not the details but the authority of Parliament to embark. That is the point.

Many a work has been begun on a small vote; many of our great railway projects have been begun on a £10,000 vote from Parliament, but the voting of that £10,000 gave Parliament an opportunity to express its view and discuss the matter from all points of view. Why did not the Government bring this forward last session, or, if it was not ready then and it was a matter of urgency to buy the steamers, in consequence of the chance of a fine bargain, why did not the Government do what Ministers, when in Opposition, urged the present Opposition to do, namely, call Parliament together a little earlier? Why wait till the end of June if this was an urgent matter, or if it was not pressing upon them, why could not they have waited a few weeks longer, seeing they did not call Parliament together at a time when they used to say other Governments should summon Parliament? Would any serious trouble have arisen? There is only one explanation. The Government knew that the crudeness of their venture would not pass Parliament's judgment. The Government knew that Parliament would not endorse their scheme; therefore they waited until Parliament's doors were closed, and then they took good care to embark on the scheme before Parliament met again. That is the only possible explanation. I say that is not responsible Government. That is Government by trickery and by device. Parliament will not endorse a scheme; therefore Ministers go behind the back of Parliament, and then they throw this alternative before Parliament—either condone it or run the risk of the country's fair fame being besmirched abroad by a report that it failed to meet the obligations that the Government had made in its name. Many a father has to pay the folly-bills of his boy at school for the honour of the family, and Ministers counted on Parliament paying their folly-bills for the honour of the country. The mover of the amendment has said that in all probability this House will consent to the payment of the money which the Government have promised in its name, or ratify the purchase which the Government have made in its name. I think that is a matter we

will have to weigh very carefully and which will depend on the conduct of Ministers in the administration of the affairs of the country before the Appropriation Bill comes down.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: That is very funny.

The Colonial Secretary: It is worse than caucus.

Hon. F. Connor: Nothing could be worse than that.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: If the hon. member's futile tactics to burke the amendment put him in need of some little entertainment, and if he can take any such solace from my remarks, I have no objection whatever. I said that this House will accept the Minister's disclaimer of any intention to offend or insult this Chamber.

Hon. J. E. Dodd (Honorary Minister): Do you mean to say that the word "trickery" which you used is not an insult?

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I know of no word which adequately expresses my view of the action of the Ministry. What is it but trickery and device. If Ministers say "here is a matter of urgency and we held it back over one session of Parliament and we took care to bring it on before the next session of Parliament, and we made His Excellency say 'we will ask the Legislative Assembly to approve it instead of asking Parliament to approve it,'" is that responsible Government?

Hon. J. E. Dodd (Honorary Minister): Why not be honest instead of trying to qualify it? Stick to what you say.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I have stuck to it, and I will go further and say the Government in putting such language into the vice-regal Speech, have been guilty of conduct bordering on contempt of Parliament and Parliamentary institutions.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member must be guarded in his expressions. I do not think it is altogether right to say that Ministers "made" His Excellency the Governor say it, in the common meaning of the word "made," to compel. I think His Excellency the Governor, who is specially protected in this House, ought to be very carefully and discreetly spoken of.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I entirely enter into the view which you, Mr. President,

have been good enough to place before the House, but what is one to do when he finds Ministers so regardless of the dignity of the situation? The fault is that of the Ministers, and whilst I entirely agree with the view expressed by you, Mr. President, so far as it relates to the vice-regal position, I still cannot allow Ministers to escape the censure that they have so richly earned by their reckless attitude in connection with the statement of their policy. I say that they have been guilty of unconstitutional action in entering upon, behind the back of Parliament, a trading enterprise involving so much money and so much risk on the part of the taxpayers, when there was absolutely neither urgency nor need for it; and I also would censure Ministers for pretending to believe that any question of policy such as that can be referred only to one House instead of to Parliament.

The Colonial Secretary: That particular portion of the Speech was modelled on a previous Speech.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: That is a subterfuge on the part of the Minister. The language of previous Speeches was meant to convey a perfectly constitutional thing, that the Legislative Assembly should be asked to ratify the voting of the money. The Minister will find that in every case the clause he is relying upon opens with "the need for additional money on lines that had previously been covered by funds from the Appropriation Act." I admit that the language and punctuation leave those clauses open to ambiguity, but, as I said before, the meaning is easily interpreted in the light of the use made of those clauses afterwards, and the Minister cannot point to a single case on the part of his predecessors where an attempt was made to take money out of the Treasurer's Advance for objects that they were certain Parliament would not approve of, or that had not been on lines previously authorised by Parliament. All authorities are most expressive as regards urgent business. The Government have no authority to go to the Treasurer's Advance unless for purposes covered by precedent and unless from a knowledge of the House they are cer-

tain that Parliament will ratify what they have done. In this case, instead of being certain that Parliament would ratify what they had done, they were absolutely certain that Parliament would not ratify it if Parliament were fairly asked. They were absolutely certain that had they submitted this scheme of steamers and meat huckstering to this House, it would never have been passed. They were absolutely certain of that, so they dodged this House. I repeat that is not Responsible Government.

Hon. M. L. Moss: Government, as Mr. Colebatch said, by the Executive.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: By the Executive, with its eyes open and knowing they are going in the teeth of a co-ordinate House of Legislature. I want to ask Ministers, apart from the constitutional question, do they really think that they are going on sound lines in this steamer business and the meat business that must follow? Can they come before the two Houses of the Legislature and say that they have, as cautious, prudent men, obtained the best advice on these trading enterprises, and that, in the light of the past and the most careful calculations, they can see success ahead? Can Ministers say that? I venture to say that not only have Ministers failed to consult a single authority on the lines of trade that they are embarking on, not only have they failed to do that, but even they, with their own general knowledge of things, have not gone seriously into the matter at all. It was a popular election cry, "We will cheapen the cost of living," and that is the whole bottom of it, and they have launched into it now in the sure knowledge that before they have time to go very far their successors will come into their chairs and they will then say "Well, we would have made a success of it if we had had the opportunity," and they will not have to bear the odium of the failure that is absolutely certain to follow, whether they remained in office or not. Here is a notorious fact, and I defy anyone to contradict it, that you will never get a socialist to advise the Government to embark upon his particular line of business. It is not that he wants to keep

that for himself. I will tell the reason. During the last election campaign a candidate who was a shrewd man and a good speaker, and who did not belong to the Labour party, openly said that he commended all the trading proposals of the Government except one. He was entirely with them about the steamers, meat, fisheries, bricks and timber, but he said—"I warn the Government against touching the flour-milling business." He said—"I have been in that business, and I know what a complex and difficult business it is, and I am afraid the Government will drop money in it." Here is a notorious fact, unless the State socialist has advanced very far, he never advises touching his own particular business, for the reason that he knows there is only one way in which the Government could succeed in it, and that is by making it a monopoly. The Government cannot compete with private enterprise in ordinary business. Ministers might succeed in the steamer business if they could get a monopoly, but does it not appeal to the reason of any hon. member that Ministers, such as we know them, and with the "Government stroke" to rely upon, such as we know it, cannot possibly compete with the astute, skilled, trained business men who are now engaged in that business. Is it likely? The thing is preposterous. Strange to say, the Government are very skilful in avoiding these object lessons where they can. Ministers have lately put down their foot on all railway contractors. They have said there are a lot of fine men in this business, and they have fine plants, but there is no more work for them. The Government will not tolerate such an object lesson to the country as a contractor side by side with day labour. Only a little while ago a deputation said to the Government "You reply that you cannot build our railway because it would not be good business to create too many building organisations, well, let this one be built by contract"; but "No," said the Government, "we are not going to have private enterprise side by side with day labour." Now, in this case that will be the result, and I foresee nothing but failure for this rash, ill-considered Govern-

ment policy. I am not going to labour the position. Mr. Moss's speech dealt with it so fully, and so ably, that I am satisfied no hon. member will have any difficulty in deciding as to his duty. I am certain that the great majority of this House must condemn this policy; they must, in the dignified way of this remonstrance, indicate to the public the danger of allowing Ministries to depart from the safeguards of the Constitution and become a law unto themselves. At a later stage, when the general question is before the House, I shall desire to make a few friendly suggestions to Ministers, but I will not bring them into this speech on the amendment to the Address-in-reply. I want only to urge on all members the duty of giving a public judgment on this question. It is too serious for any hon. member to fail to indicate his judgment. I hope that when the amendment is put the great majority of this House will put on the records of the Chamber their emphatic condemnation of such unconstitutional procedure.

On motion by Hon. J. D. Connolly, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 9.32 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Tuesday, 9th July, 1912.*

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Minister for Mines: Annual report of Department of Mines, 1911.

By the Attorney General: 1, Report on the Educational organization by the Inspector General of Schools; 2, Regulations relating to education.

By the Honorary Minister: 1, New regulations under the Medical Department; 2, New port regulations; 3, By-laws of the Meekatharra local board of health.

### QUESTION—GOLDFIELDS WATER SUPPLY, FARMERS' CONFERENCE.

Mr. MONGER (without notice) asked the Minister for Works: Is it the intention to call another conference of farmers and settlers in regard to the Goldfields Water Supply Act Amendment Act, 1911, as promised on the 22nd April last, and when?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: I am getting data and I am communicating with the various local bodies at the present time.

### QUESTION—ASYLUM FOR THE INSANE, CLAREMONT.

Mr. JOHNSTON asked the Honorary Minister: 1, Is there any system of classification of inmates of the Claremont