

# BILL—FREMANTLE HARBOUR TRUST ACT AMENDMENT.

## Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew), in moving the second reading, said: This Bill is introduced for the purpose of enabling the Fremantle Harbour Trust to comply with the provisions of the Customs Act of 1901, and give a bond for the security of the revenue of the Customs in connection with all goods landed at Fremantle. The demand was first made in 1904, and now it has reached a stage of insistence. There does not appear to be much reasonable ground for the action of the Federal Government, inasmuch as all goods entering Fremantle are kept in sheds which are under the control of the Customs officials. A Customs officer holds the key, and no goods can be removed from those sheds without his authority. That, one would think, would be sufficient protection for the Federal Government, but the Federal authorities do not think it sufficient; hence we are obliged to introduce this Bill in order to enable the trust to give the bond required. Sections 42 and 43 of the Customs Act of 1901 read as follows:—

42. The Customs shall have the right to require and take securities for compliance with this Act and generally for the protection of the revenue of the Customs, and pending the giving of the required security in relation to any goods subject to the control of the Customs may refuse to deliver the goods or to pass any entry relating thereto.

43. Where any security is required to be given such security may be by bond or guarantee or cash deposit or all or any of such methods so that in each case the security shall be approved by the collector.

It has long since been discovered that the Fremantle Harbour Trust have no power to give this bond, and it is for the purpose of providing the requisite authority that the Bill is introduced. I beg to move—

*That the Bill be now read a second time.*

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

## ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew) moved—

*That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, 2nd September.*

Question passed.

*House adjourned at 6.15 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Wednesday, 27th August, 1913.*

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

## PETITION — AGRICULTURAL SETTLERS' LIABILITIES.

Mr. A. N. PIESSE presented a petition signed by 97 settlers in the Eastern agricultural areas praying for an inquiry to be made into the financial distress prevailing in those districts.

Petition received and read.

Mr. A. N. PIESSE moved—

*That the petition be printed.*

Mr. TAYLOR: Before the House decides to go to the expense of printing the petition I would like to ask if it is the intention of the mover that the petition should be discussed in this House for that, I take it, is the object in having it printed.

Mr. A. N. PIESSE: It is my intention to give notice of motion that a select committee be appointed to inquire into the position.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): There has been a committee already dealing with the question, has there not?

Question put and passed.

## QUESTIONS (2)—STATE STEAMSHIPS.

### *Disbursement from Loan.*

Hon. FRANK WILSON asked the Premier: How much of the £100,000 for steamships, being Item 55 in the Schedule to the Loan Act, 1912, has been disbursed, and what are the particulars of such disbursement?

The PREMIER replied: To date the sum of £105,634 2s. 4d. has been spent on Loan and Loan Suspense Accounts, made up as follows:—"Western Australia," £63,632 16s. 4d.; "Kwinana," £18,982 8s. 9d.; "Eucla," £13,651 8s. 2d.; "Una," £3,998 18s. 5d.; stock fittings, £2,502 14s. 5d.; plant, stock, etc., £2,865 16s. 3d. Total, £105,634 2s. 4d.

Mr. George: Have you any authority for that excess?

The PREMIER: Not from you.

### *Transfer of Management.*

Mr. GEORGE asked the Premier: In view of the statement made by Hon. Mr. Drew, and appearing in Tuesday's *West Australian*, in regard to the management of the State steamships, and the reply he gave to my question on the subject last week, does he propose to make an explanation of same to this House?

The PREMIER replied: I find that the hon. member has not submitted any question, in the usual manner, but if he refers to his remarks during the discussion on

the Fremantle Harbour Trust Act Amendment Bill, and my interjection, he will find upon carefully reading the statement made by the Hon. Colonial Secretary that the Minister particularly points out that it is not intended to place the Steamship Service under the Fremantle Harbour Trust, but, with the consent of the Commissioners, to make use of some of their officers in connection with the management of the State Steamship Service. Thus my reply, viz., "that the hon. member's imagination was running riot," is correct.

## NOTICE OF QUESTION.

Mr. GEORGE (Murray-Wellington): I do not know whether I am in order, Mr. Speaker, but I hope I am. I gave notice of a question to the Premier for the following day and he said he would answer it at once. He did give an answer—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order. The hon. member cannot discuss this question.

Mr. GEORGE: Have I no right, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order unless his intention is to ask another question.

Mr. GEORGE: Having given notice of a question to the Premier and passed it on to the clerks, have I not a right to ask why it does not appear on the Notice Paper, together with the answer given?

Mr. SPEAKER: Certainly. I have no knowledge myself of the question.

The Premier: I have no knowledge either.

Mr. GEORGE: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I shall make inquiry and if the hon. member has put a question of that character, though I have no knowledge of it personally, I shall give him the satisfaction he desires to-morrow.

Mr. GEORGE: Are there no means by which it is competent for a member of this House to ask for something more definite than the Premier has given in the sneering remarks he made use of just now. It seems to me, if I may be allowed for one moment to explain, that the undoubted privileges of this House are that

a member may ask a question. Having given notice of that question, and the Premier having elected to reply at once, I think it should have appeared on the records of the House, but it does not appear on the records. That the question was asked and the answer given, the local newspapers provide ample proof, and yet neither *Hansard* nor the Notice Paper contains any reference to it. I do not wish to complain of the clerks because I consider they are very assiduous in their duties, but I am entitled to some explanation, and I have not had it yet.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. D. Johnson): I would like to mention that I had a complaint that was similar. A question was asked by an hon. gentleman without notice and I replied. I observed that the Notice Paper on the following day contained no reference to it, and on making inquiry I found that it is not the custom of the clerks to record questions when they are asked without notice and are replied to at once.

Mr. GEORGE: The difference between the hon. member's case and my own is that I gave notice of a question asking for an answer on the following day, and if the Premier chose to answer it as he did at the time, but in terms not quite respectful to me, it is no reason why that should be left out of *Hansard* or out of the Notice Paper.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member did give notice of a question, but the Premier promptly answered it, and I understood that the hon. member was perfectly satisfied with the answer, and I have no doubt that the clerks thought the same. I quite recognise that unless notice is given of a question no reference is made to it in the Minutes, but when a question is asked it must certainly appear in *Hansard* and be reported there.

Mr. GEORGE: With all due respect, if the Premier elects to answer at the time a question of which notice has been given for the following day, some record of that should appear upon the general notice of Votes and Proceedings, and in this instance nothing does appear; at least, I have not been able to find it. The question was of some importance because sub-

sequent events have proved that although the Premier was pleased to treat the matter lightly, the information upon which I asked that question was perfectly correct and it seems to me that this is too big an item to be left to anyone's discretion as to whether it shall be omitted from the Notice Paper and from *Hansard*. At any rate, I protest most vigorously against it. If you, Mr. Speaker, will make inquiries I will wait for the explanation, but I shall want a very good explanation to be satisfied.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan): I do not want the hon. member to go away with any misunderstanding. I recollect that he gave notice of a question and I gave him his answer, "No," and I still adhere to that answer. I cannot find any record of it in *Hansard*. The only question I can find any record of was that which the hon. member submitted across the Chamber and which I answered by way of interjection.

Mr. GEORGE: No, I handed it in to the clerks. The hon. the Premier's answer was that I must have a vivid imagination.

Mr. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret): Am I to understand, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. member for Murray-Wellington gave notice of a question which he intended to ask on the following day, and that the Premier promptly answered it?

Mr. GEORGE: That is so.

Mr. TAYLOR: Is that the reason why it does not appear on the Votes and Proceedings of Parliament?

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to make inquiries respecting that. I have a very lively recollection of a question having been asked by the member for Murray-Wellington and of the Premier promptly replying to it, and I have no knowledge of what has happened since, but I shall make inquiries and let the hon. member know the result of my inquiries in due course.

Mr. GEORGE: Thank you.

#### QUESTION—RAILWAY SERVICE, MAYLANDS AND MT. LAWLEY.

Mr. LEWIS asked the Minister for Railways: 1. Is he aware that passen-

gers joining trains at Maylands and Mt. Lawley are subjected to much inconvenience and delay through overcrowding? 2, Will he take immediate steps to remedy this, by providing a better service?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, No. 2, It is considered that the accommodation provided is sufficient for the traffic offering.

#### QUESTION—HANSARD STAFF.

Mr. UNDERWOOD asked the Chairman of the Printing Committee: 1, How many reporters and typists were employed on the *Hansard* Staff during last session, and for the preceding four sessions of Parliament? 2, What was the total expenditure for each year?

Mr. PRICE (for the Chairman of the Printing Committee) replied: 1, In 1908, 9, 10, 11, five reporters were employed on the *Hansard* Staff, and in 1912 six reporters. The number of typists employed varies according to the sittings of the two Houses. Up to 1910 typists were only casually employed. In 1911 the Printing Committee decided to employ four permanent typists at £120 a year each as the basis of the typing staff; other typists are employed as the exigencies of the work demand. 2, The expenditure for reporters and typists in 1908 was £1,986; in 1909, £2,157; in 1910, £2,265; in 1911 (system of permanent typists inaugurated), £2,308; in 1912, £2,791. The work of the staff has increased in greater proportion to the cost. In 1908, *Hansard* comprised 2,099 pages; in 1909, 2,554 pages; in 1910, 3,773 pages; in 1911 (7½ weeks session), 1,567 pages; in 1912, 4,723 pages.

#### BILL—RIGHTS IN WATER AND IRRIGATION.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

#### RETURN—STATE STEAMSHIP SERVICE, S.S. "EUCLA."

Mr. MALE (Kimberley) moved—

*That a return be laid upon the table of the House, showing—1, The cost of*

*running the "Eucla," including the amount which has been expended in repairs. 2, The amount earned by the "Eucla" in freight and passage moneys.* He said: After my experience of last week at the hands of the Premier it seems to me futile to either waste my own time or the time of the House in asking any questions regarding the State Steamship Service. We have it now laid down by the Premier that absolutely no information will be given us respecting the steamers and, therefore, it seems to me that having that laid down it will be simply wasting time to try and extract information from the Government.

The Premier: Are you annoyed?

Mr. MALE: Yes, I honestly admit I am annoyed. The questions I asked last week in connection with the State Steamship Service were reasonable and were questions to which I expected a reply, and to which a reply could have been given, and if the reason raised by the Premier, that it would be giving information to other companies, had been of any consideration at all, there might have been, perhaps, some excuse for the refusal. But the information asked for would have revealed nothing to other companies, or, at any rate, nothing which would have been of use to them. It would, however, have disclosed information to the country which would have been valuable, and of much use to us in knowing what was being done in connection with the State Steamship Service.

The Premier: I think we disposed of that matter last week.

Mr. MALE: My reason in moving the motion standing in my name this afternoon is to try and get a little—I cannot say more information, because we have had none—my object is to try and get a little information in respect to these steamers. I want to find out, if I can, what justification there is for running the "Eucla." It was given out when the State Steamship Service was being inaugurated that the object was to reduce the price of meat in the metropolitan area, and the steamers would be running for the purpose of assisting the small squatters in

the North, to enable them to market their stock. Now, I do not think that the Premier, or any hon. member on the other side of the House, can say that the running of the "Eucla" is justified by that. It has had no influence whatever on the price of meat in the metropolitan area, and I am certain that the running of that steamer will not benefit the small squatters in the North.

The Premier: I agree with that.

Mr. MALE: If rumour speaks correctly, as it sometimes does, and there was a certain amount of truth in the rumour quoted by the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George) the other evening, it seems to me that the trade offering for that particular steamer does not justify the running of the boat, and I believe the people in that part of the State could have been just as well served—

Mr. Gill: By the Adelaide Steamship Company.

Mr. MALE: And the country would have been better off if the old conditions had been permitted to continue. I want, if possible, to get information which will show us what amount of freights and what amount of passage money has been earned by the "Eucla." We should also have some idea of the volume of business that vessel is doing and some idea as to whether the continued running of that steamer is justified or not. If not, why should we continue the service? If it is justified, well and good, and then we may let it continue.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Why not say the same thing about spur railways?

Mr. MALE: If rumour speaks correctly, it would have been impossible for the Premier to answer my questions last week, and I think it will be impossible for the Premier to answer my questions this week, inasmuch as I doubt very much whether the books of the State Steamship Service have been written up to permit of the Premier getting the information required.

Mr. Bolton: Have you some more inside information?

Mr. MALE: Last week the Premier referred to the colossal ignorance of the hon. members of the Opposition. Let me tell the Premier that our colossal ignorance is

not as colossal as the bungling in connection with the State Steamship Service. We find that the manager has had to resign, that an acting manager has been put in his place, and now the steamers are to be passed on from that man to someone else.

Mr. Green: You are the agent for another steamship company.

Mr. Bolton: And you should not discuss this matter.

Mr. MALE: I think I have every reason for discussing it.

Mr. Bolton: Golden reasons.

Mr. MALE: I have a good reason to discuss it when I consider that I am a non-consenting shareholder in this wretched company. The Premier objected to giving information last week because it might reveal something to other people which might be useful to them. As there are no other steamers running in the same trade as the "Eucla," the Premier cannot raise the objection, that if he agrees to my motion, someone will be getting information that should not be disclosed.

Mr. Price: Do you wish the people of Hopetoun and Eucla to get this information?

Mr. MALE: Yes, I am trying to get the information for them.

Mr. Price: They could not get their mails before, and now you wish to stop them.

Mr. MALE: What I want is to find out if the initiation of this service was justified, and if the Premier can prove the justification for it, well and good. The information I am seeking will, to a very great extent, show us what justification there was for the service.

Mr. Bolton: Would you stop it?

Mr. MALE: I would stop it if it were not paying, provided equally good facilities were given to the people in that part of the country, and by such means save considerable expense. The people in that portion of the State had other facilities before the advent of the State Steamship Service.

Mr. Lander: What sort, coffins?

Mr. MALE: A subsidy was paid for the conveyance of mails and they had their cargo delivered to them, and the justification that the Government claimed in the

first place for the initiation of the service was for some other purpose altogether, namely, the cheapening of meat in the metropolitan area. The Government have certainly shown their incompetence, and it is my firm belief that the people, not only in that part of the State, but elsewhere, would be better served in every way if they were served entirely by private enterprise. We find to-day that the rates are equally as high as they were before.

Mr. Underwood: That is absolutely incorrect.

Mr. MALE: It is not absolutely incorrect.

Mr. Underwood: It is.

Mr. MALE: I have applied to the State Steamship Service for rates and freights and have found that they are higher this year than they were last year. We know, as a matter of fact, that the service on the coast is no more and no better than it was before.

Mr. Price: It is better.

Mr. MALE: Although I have not the figures, I think it is quite possible we shall find that less stock will be brought to Fremantle this year than was brought down last year.

Mr. Price: The "Eucla" is not dealing with stock. Will you tell me this—

Mr. MALE: No, I will not. I shall address the Speaker and hon. members through the Speaker.

The Premier: You know the "Eucla" is not carrying stock.

Mr. MALE: The only justification there was for the initiation of the State Steamship Service, as given to us by the Government, was for other purposes, and now I want to find out by figures or by some other information, whether this service is justified, and whether the running of the "Eucla" is justified by facts and figures. If we get the figures we can judge for ourselves whether the facts are sufficient to warrant the continuation of that service. It is due to the country and to us as shareholders to know what is going on, and to know how our money is being spent. So far as I can see this service is going to run on for a couple of years before we shall get a chance of debating it with any facts before us. If the books

of the State Steamship Service have not been written up and are not kept up to date, what chance have we of seeing the accounts before the end of this session, and if we do not see them before the end of this session, what chance have we of debating or criticising, or dealing with these figures before next session. And that will mean that the service will have been running a couple of years before we get a chance of assenting to it or making a protest, or doing anything else. We are fully justified in knowing what is going on. I trust the Premier will give us some information in connection with this particular service, although he would not give us the information with regard to the service about which I moved the other night. It was not my intention to speak much on this particular motion, inasmuch as my friend the leader of the Opposition, had motions tabled before mine which would have covered the whole ground, but unfortunately he was not here last week, and my motions came on first. I think my friend, the leader of the Opposition, will have a fair idea of the manner in which these motions will be received from the way in which these motions are being treated. It was, as I said before, laid down by the Premier that no information whatsoever was to be vouchsafed to us about the State steamers. I do not intend to worry for the information. I have asked for plain figures, and if the Premier will give them to us, so much the better. We shall know to what extent the service is justified, and whether the expenditure incurred in connection with the steamers is justified. He has told us this afternoon that the loan moneys granted in connection with these boats have already been exceeded. It is known in regard to one steamer which cost £39,000 in England that the expenditure in connection with the boat is now up to £63,000 odd. I cannot conceive how the value of that steamer has been increased from £39,000 to £63,000.

Mr. Bolton: What steamer?

Mr. MALE: Not the "Eucla." In connection with the "Eucla" I have no

figures, but I believe it now stands to cost £13,000. We want some information to find out how this capital cost has been made up. We want to know what accounts the renewals and alterations have been charged to. Apparently, the figures given this afternoon show that renewals and alterations have been charged to capital account. If that is the case it is a monstrous proposition because we know, as business men, that renewals and alterations will not add one penny value to the boats. If we wished to realise on the boats we would not get any more for them than what was paid; I doubt if we would get as much. We would be very fortunate indeed if we did get as much. I move the motion standing my name.

MR. LANDER (East Perth): These steamboats seem to hurt the member for Kimberley. The hon. member knows as well as any other member why the "Eucla" was put on the coast between Albany and Eucla. He knows that it was put on by the Premier, and if the Premier had not put that boat on he would not have been worthy to occupy the honourable position which he does to-day. The boat was put on the coast to stop one of the biggest swindles ever tried to be perpetrated in connection with the mail contract along that coast. The contract for carrying the mail previous to fresh tenders being called for was £4,000 approximately, but what do we find took place? A tender was put in for carrying the mails for £6,000 odd, and the Federal Government gave us to understand that unless the tender was reduced no mail would be carried by water, but that they would have to adopt the overland method of conveying mails; and the hon. member knows as well as any other hon. member there was a tender sent in for £1,118. Will the hon. member stand up and say the Premier was not justified in stopping a swindle like that? Does the hon. member or any other hon. member protest against a railway being run because it does not pay from the start? Do we expect railways to pay from the very beginning? The "Eucla" was not put on to carry

stock, but to assist the struggling selectors at Eucla and down that coast. When the hon. member wishes to put forward a case he should put up an honest one and not bluff the public with what I may call misleading statements.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan): The attitude adopted by myself on the previous motion submitted by the hon. member certainly covers the present motion submitted to this Chamber. This is information that will be duly supplied in accordance with the provisions of the Trading Concerns Act, and the hon. member is not one of those who having been a Minister, is likely to agree to any proposal that would mean giving premature information, or information not assured to be absolutely correct. The hon. member knows very well that when an Act of Parliament has certain provisions which are binding on the Government it is a direction from Parliament that no Minister or Government can overlook, and the provisions of the Trading Concerns Act will be given effect to. The cost of running the "Eucla," including the amount for repairs, will be duly shown in the profit and loss account, and the amount earned in passage money and freight will also be shown. The hon. member expressed himself by saying that he was very annoyed. I followed the hon. member very closely to find out whether he was annoyed because he was a shareholder in this "miserable concern," as he termed it, or whether it is the interest he has in the shipping companies of which he is agent. I am led to the conclusion it is rather his interests as a shareholder or agent in some other shipping company rather than his interests as a shareholder in this public concern that is annoying the hon. member. Any action on the part of the Government that interferes with the privileges enjoyed by a few at the expense of the many always annoys those interested. I suppose that will go on for ever. The fact that the hon. member and those interested with him is annoyed does not concern me in the slightest. The Government will do what they believe to be in the best interests of the community, and because the hon. member is annoyed

will not concern us in the slightest, and will not make us leave the track along the road to success for the benefit of the taxpayers generally. I need not deal with the point of view that this new concern should be given a fair chance before it is condemned, but I would say on behalf of the "Eucla" that it has already rendered valuable service to the State of Western Australia by preventing what undoubtedly would have happened, the closing altogether of the South-East coast from proper mail communication. The hon. member knows that settlement was the primary object and that was the reason why the "Eucla" was purchased for that trade. As the hon. member for East Perth pointed out, when the then existing mail contract between the Adelaide Steamship Company and the Commonwealth Government expired fresh tenders were called. We did not submit a tender. We took no interest in the matter; we knew nothing about it as a matter of fact until the tenders were opened. We were then informed by the Postmaster General and the Prime Minister that the tender submitted amounted to £6,500 or £6,250, whereas they were then paying £3,250 and the State Government were contributing £750 for the carriage of mails along the coast, which meant a sudden increase from £4,000 to £6,500 for the purpose of carrying the mails. One has to admit that it was not merely for carrying the mails for which the subsidy was paid. It was pointed out by the Postmaster General that the mails could be carried to the various points along the South-East coast overland if that was all that was necessary, but he pointed out that rendering assistance to the settlers was not so much a concern of the Commonwealth as it was of the State, and it had been the concern of our predecessors when they gave £750 to the Adelaide Steamship Company and obtained nothing for it, excepting the acceptance of the tender by the Commonwealth Government for the carriage of the mails along the coast. The "Eucla" was never purchased for the purpose of carrying stock from the north part of the State to Fremantle or any other port. It was never considered from that point of view

at all, but from the point of view of taking up the running between Albany and the South-East ports. I claim on behalf of the Government and the settlers there concerned that we have just as much interest in the settlers in the South-East as in any other part of the State. The hon. member would obtain a similar answer no doubt if he made the same speech to the settlers as he has made this afternoon. What does the hon. member propose? If it were found that the "Eucla" was not paying he would immediately remove the "Eucla." I suppose he would sell her and then make the Commonwealth find other methods of taking the mails along the South-East coast. The other method adopted would be that he would either accept the tender of £6,500 or take the mails by land and if he did either of these things it would be unjust to the taxpayers to pay that exorbitant amount to the steamship company for carrying the mails; and if the mails were carried by land quite a number of settlers in that district would be absolutely ruined. Does the hon. member suggest that we should ruin the settlers for the sake of a few pounds? Although I am not in possession at the moment to say that is the case I admit at once that the trade along the South-East coast does not warrant the use of a vessel of the type of the "Eucla," and I have made representations to the Federal authorities on that point. But when we put the "Eucla" there the trade did warrant it. We are not responsible for the falling off of the trade in that district, but our friends opposite are responsible.

Hon. Frank Wilson: What nonsense.

The PREMIER: I say yes.

Hon. Frank Wilson: But I say no.

The PREMIER: I say yes, because our friends opposite sold the smelter which was erected by private moneys in the Ravensthorpe district to a private company, and the private company have closed down the works and the district is hardly known as a producing district today. Not only is that the position, but may I submit this question to our friends opposite. If it is a correct thing to take the "Eucla" off that running because she is not paying, shall we also close our rail-



way from Hopetoun to Ravensthorpe because that railway is not paying interest, much less working expenses. If my friend has any argument at all we should close that railway as well, and take the boat off and allow that part of the State to go without any assistance at all. That may be the policy of our friends opposite, I do not say whether it is or not, but it is not the policy of the Government of the day. That part of the State should be encouraged so far as it can be done in the interests of the State as a whole, and I say even if the "Eucla" is running at a slight loss, we are encouraging the development of that part of the State, and undoubtedly it is well deserving of such encouragement.

Mr. George: If it is showing a loss, why not admit it?

The PREMIER: I am not admitting anything about a loss. I said that even if such were the case—

Mr. George: Well, if she is making a profit, why not say so?

The PREMIER: I told the hon. member that all the particulars he requires will obtainable in due course, and they will be supplied in accordance with the law. The hon. member for Kimberley said that he was annoyed because he was unable to obtain the information. The hon. member apparently forgets that only a few minutes previous to his moving this motion, I gave some particulars to the leader of the Opposition in regard to the capital expenditure on these particular boats; that information was more in the nature of a return than an answer to a question, but as there was no difficulty in supplying the information, I readily gave it. As I pointed out previously, the information required by the leader of the Opposition in his question is totally different from that required by the hon. member in pursuance of his motion. I have no objection to supplying information that is really required in order to enable hon. members to know exactly what it is costing the country to carry on our various trading concerns. The hon. member knows that every month we submit the receipts and expenditure of the various State enterprises, and he has

an opportunity of criticising them from time to time, and has not failed to utilise that opportunity. The hon. member is apparently mixing the running of the "Eucla" with the running of the steamers trading on the North-West coast. As I said before, the "Eucla" was never purchased for trading with the North-West, but for the purpose for which she is now used, and the matter of reducing the price of meat or giving assistance to the small settlers in the North-West could not be assisted so far as the use of the "Eucla" is concerned, or so far as concerned our intentions when we purchased her. We never had those purposes in mind, and therefore, I agree with the hon. member when he said that the "Eucla" cannot affect the price of meat or the development of the North-West in the slightest degree; he is quite correct in his statement. But the hon. member is not concerned so much about the "Eucla," because he was continually introducing matter about other steamers which are trading under conditions different from the "Eucla," and this is the first occasion I have heard any public man or anybody else complain of the action of the Government in running the "Eucla" from Albany to the ports along the South-West coast. I would advise the hon. member to get into touch with the people there and the traders at Albany in order to see whether they will agree with him that it is not desirable to continue the operations of the "Eucla" along that portion of the coast. I would even commend him to the member for Albany, who will tell him some of the advantages to the settlers on the coast and the traders of Albany accruing from the running of that vessel. I am not going to concern myself at this stage about the fares and freights charged by the Government on the State steamers, more than to say that the hon. member was not correct in his statement that the charges are higher than those charged by private companies.

Hon. Frank Wilson: The hon. member said that they were the same.

The PREMIER: The hon. member said they were higher.

Mr. Male: I said they were higher than they were last year.

The PREMIER: That is not correct. Some charges may have been raised, but generally speaking the charges levied by the State steamship service are lower than those charged by the private companies.

Mr. Underwood: They are lower absolutely.

The PREMIER: The hon. member for Kimberley can accept my assurance on that point, I hope; if he will not, the hon. member for Pilbara, representing portion of the North-West, will be able to give the hon. member for Kimberley some evidence to show that my statement is correct. I can see no reason why these particulars asked for should be supplied at this stage: as I previously stated they will be supplied in due course. I have been unable to discover, although I have followed very closely the remarks of hon. members on the Opposition side during this discussion, why they are so anxious to receive this information at this stage.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Why are you so anxious to keep it back?

The PREMIER: I assure the hon. member we are not anxious to keep it back, I am just as anxious as the hon. member to know the true position of all our trading concerns.

Mr. Male: They make up their accounts after every trip.

The PREMIER: So do we; we publish every month a statement of our revenue and expenditure in connection with all the Government trading concerns, and we will, in due course, in accordance with the law of the land, produce a proper balance sheet and profit and loss account for the information of hon. members and the public generally, and even for the information of the shipping companies who are so strenuously opposing this enterprise of the State to assist the producers of the North-West and the consumers of the metropolitan area. Therefore, in due course, the hon. member will be supplied with all the information he requires in this direction and in every other direction as well.

Hon. FRANK WILSON (Sussex): I have a motion on the Notice Paper, which would practically cover the grounds of this motion; at any rate, so far as the

cost of running and the revenue earned by the steamers are concerned, and of course I would much rather have treated the whole matter than refer to one steamer, as the motion now before the House does. However, the remarks of the Premier necessitate that one should give some little reply, even on this motion. The motion of the hon. member for Kimberley is a perfectly innocent one and it is a reasonable one: all he wishes to know is the cost of running a certain steamer which belongs to the State steamship service, the amount which has been expended in repairs, and also what the boat has earned. The question is whether members will, in their wisdom, refuse to give the hon. member that information, and, of course, get it for themselves at the same time, or whether they will say that it is reasonable information to ask from the Premier and the Government and pass the motion instructing the Government to provide these figures. I cannot, for the life of me, see why this information should be withheld. The hon. member has pointed out that the public require the information. I can emphasise that, and later on when moving my own motion I can emphasise it perhaps in much stronger terms than at the present moment. The public are anxious; they want to know what these State steamers are doing and what they are costing the country, and the sooner that information is forthcoming the better it will be for all concerned, both Parliament and the public.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: You will then rake up some other bogey.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Hon. members opposite are all bogies, and I will knock them down one after the other until I have cleared the deck of the whole lot. The Premier, unfortunately, takes this as a personal matter. Always when an hon. member on this side asks for information, the Premier takes the matter as a personal one and hits back at once. It is a public duty, so far as the members of the Opposition are concerned, to ask for information, and no one knows it better than the Premier. He exercised his right to the fullest extent when he occupied the position I now occupy. It is a public

duty of the members of the Opposition to seek for such information as they deem it to be in the interests of the public to know. If we were asking for something which it was impossible to provide at reasonable cost and at reasonable trouble, then I could understand the Premier and his colleagues refusing to grant that information. Such refusals have been made on many occasions when it has been pointed out that the information when given would not compensate for the extra cost to the State in getting it. But to-day we are asking for something which ought to be on record month by month, week by week, and voyage by voyage in the office of the State steamship service.

Mr. Underwood: Give us this day our daily information.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The hon. member must refresh his memory and repeat his prayer in proper language. It is not information he wants but intelligence, although I would not go so far as to accuse him of colossal ignorance, as the Premier has accused members on this side. The Premier said that he was surprised at our colossal ignorance regarding the Act governing trading concerns, and said that under that Act he is going to satisfy all comers, in due course. What does that Act provide? It provides that the books of each trading concern shall be balanced on the 30th June unless the Government otherwise prescribe. Well, assuming that these accounts were balanced on the 30th June, is it not time that Parliament had them?

The Premier: We need not supply all last year's accounts unless we choose.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The Premier has no choice in the matter. He is responsible to the people and to Parliament, and he must give the information. I dare the Premier to refuse. Let him keep the thing in darkness and mystery for another 12 months, and hear what the people will say. The Act only provides that the accounts shall be balanced on the 30th June in each year, and it gives power to the Government in Council to name some other day, if they think fit. It further provides that annually accounts and balance sheets shall be placed on the

Table of the House. So the position is that we may very well go through this session of Parliament, close down, and never see those accounts.

The Premier: When should those accounts commence in compliance with the terms of the Act?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Since the Government commenced running the steamers.

The Premier: What about all the other trading concerns? Why were they not brought under the Act?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I do not know what the hon. member is referring to.

The Premier: The accounts of your trading concerns were never kept.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The accounts of all our trading concerns were kept in accordance with the Act or laws of the country, but even if we broke the law a thousand times that would not justify the Premier in following our lead. What is the use of this childish attitude of saying "You did something worse"—insinuating that we did something worse, not proving it?

Mr. Munsie: The public proved that at the last election.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Well, if the public did, they made a mistake, and they are going to rectify it at the earliest possible moment. They cannot rectify that serious error so far as the State is concerned until they get another opportunity by means of a general election.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Are you anxious for it?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Let the Premier have an election at the earliest opportunity. I am ready for it.

Mr. O'Loughlen: And the country is ready for you.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The country is quite ready for me. There is no difficulty about giving this information; in all steamship companies' offices trip accounts are kept with regard to vessels under the control of the management. There is a balance sheet prepared of the running expenditure, and the revenue earned on each trip, and that is embodied later on in a general balance sheet for

the 12 months, or six months as the case may be. I have only to refer to the evidence given by our own steamship manager before the Royal Commission the other day to prove my contention in this respect. Of course I cannot expect, and I suppose it is too much to expect, that the members of the Government will credit me with any knowledge of this subject. Taking the evidence of the State steamship manager, we find the following questions and answers:—

Mr. Holmes: Has a profit and loss account been made out for each trip?

Mr. Sudholz: It has been made out for each trip separately. We call them working accounts. The earnings and disbursements of each steamer are kept separate and the disbursements are classified under three headings which are again sub-divided. The three headings are the running charges which comprise the payment made by the owner in the case of a chartered vessel, the charges incidental to any voyage, such as port dues, and the third items are the charges which are the direct results of the carrying of cargo and passengers.

Mr. Holmes: Is an account such as you say is made up in your office made up in the Adelaide Steamship Company's office?

Mr. Sudholz: We have adopted the Adelaide Steamship Company's system. This shows at once that the information is easily obtainable, and it is of no use for the Premier to hide himself under any Trading Concerns Act or the Auditor General's performance of audits, as all this information can be got by a simple journey to the State steamship office.

Mr. Green: You ought to be pleased that they have such good bookkeeping.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: We were not so foolish as to have State steamers running which have cost this country a total loss approximate to the total value of the steamers.

The Premier: You promised to do the same.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: If there is anything that should make the Premier hide his head for all time it is the administration of this department and the results of socialistic enterprise so far as the

State steamers are concerned. Thirty thousand pounds was lost last year as shown by the Treasury accounts, and the amount will probably be £50,000 when we get the accounts next month. The Premier says it is a new concern, that we must give it time, and that it will be all right if we give it time. I say that if they keep going on as they have done the position will be like that of the old woman who was selling eggs at 1s. a dozen for which she had paid 1s. 1d., and saying "It is the big turnover that makes the profit." The Government are going deeper and deeper into the mire in connection with these steamers, and the loss will be increased until the people take the matter into their own hands and say "So far, but no further; we are tired of these State enterprises and you can get out and make room for someone else to clear up the mess."

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the hon. member is anticipating his motion.

Mr. Underwood: He is not doing it out of ignorance.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I am replying to certain interjections thrown out time after time and to the Premier's remarks. Am I out of order, Sir? I do not want to be deprived of moving my motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member will have to be careful, otherwise he will deprive himself.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I am replying to the Premier's remarks.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Premier confined most of his remarks to the South-East service.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: He referred very strongly to the State steamship service as a whole.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think it is wise, except in a limited sense, to pursue that subject further.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I want to point out that the excuse of the Premier was a certain Act we passed last session, the Government Trading Concerns Act, and that excuse is not sufficient. The year closed nearly three months ago and it is time that this House had information concerning an enterprise which hon. members know, from remarks that have been let

drop by the Premier time after time and figures published by the Treasury, is on the wrong side of the ledger. We want to know where we are. It is no use burking a thing and saying, "You must not have the information." It is in the office to-day and I guarantee I could go there and if the books are properly kept I could take it out in a couple of hours. To say that the information should not be supplied to this House is insulting to its intelligence.

Mr. George: It is very evasive.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The Premier referred to the good this steamer "Eucla" was doing on the South-East coast. I have no doubt she is to the limited few who can avail themselves of the facilities she offers. The Premier says she is too good for the trade, which is tantamount to admitting an error of judgment, and it is practically admitted that it would have been better to have gone on paying the subsidy.

The Premier: The "Eucla" is better than paying the subsidy, they required us to pay £3,250 per annum.

Mr. Male: And you will pay £5,000!

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Very probably the Premier will. I have a vivid recollection of the engineer's report when it appeared in the Press regarding this steamer, some time ago, and if it is a correct report it goes to show that the depreciation on this steamer will be something enormous.

The Premier: Are you sure you are not mixing things up?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I expect to mix the Government up very considerably before I am done with them. I will tie them up in a knot.

Mr. Underwood: It would be a granny's knot.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It will be a pleasant surprise indeed if the loss on the running of these steamers is not more than the subsidy which the Premier would have to pay for a private system. The smelter which has been referred to could never have been worked unless there was ore to work it with. Even if it were to-day under the Premier's control he could not work that smelter because of the impossibility to produce that ore. The

smelter was got rid of because it was a losing concern, and because there was a company which absorbed most of the mines down there, and took it off the Government's hands and ran it themselves.

The Premier: You are speaking without your book.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: And just as that smelter was got rid of in the interests of the State, so no doubt will the "Eucla" have to be got rid of in the very near future, because the State will not bear the burden of the State steamships month after month. It is a steamer which ought not to be run while other people are providing the necessary service. It seems to me that the Premier wants to hide the results of his mal-administration of this service as long as he possibly can, and for that reason he puts off the fatal day for producing a proper report and balance sheet and supplying the information which we have been trying time after time to get, but without avail. I hope the House will see it is a reasonable request that the member for Kimberley (Mr. Male) has made in this motion, that it will not cost any expense, and that the information should be made public.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara): The leader of the Opposition says it is a reasonable request that this information should be given to the hon. member who has just asked for it, and to the public generally. I agree with the leader of the Opposition in that regard; only it should be given when it has been duly audited and proved to be correct by the Auditor General of this State, according to the laws of the country.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You do not want this balance sheet audited.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I would feel absolutely satisfied if the hon. member were audited. He was audited less than two years ago, which accounts for his present position. I want to say a few words in regard to the State steamers.

Hon. Frank Wilson: It is the "Eucla" that we are discussing.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Exactly; we will discuss the "Eucla." The hon. member for Kimberley in discussing the "Eucla" has stated that the freights

have not been lowered on the North-West coast. I want to state, as a matter of absolute and positive fact, as the hon. member knows, that the fares have been reduced by 10 per cent. all round, and if the other companies come down to that we will reduce them another 10 per cent. As a matter of fact the Government boats are trading and carrying passengers for 10 per cent. less than the companies represented by the hon. member for Kimberley were. The hon. member says the freights have not been reduced. He can get bullocks shipped now from Broome or Port Hedland at £2; the companies are charging £2 10s. He can get them shipped from Derby for £2 2s.; the companies are charging £2 10s. These are plain, straightforward facts which the hon. member must be aware of.

Mr. George : What has that to do with the "Eucla"?

Mr. UNDERWOOD : Nothing. If it did, the hon. member would not understand it. With reference to the statement that fares have not been reduced, the hon. member knows absolutely that they have. With regard to the purpose for which these vessels were put on the coast, there are different opinions. Some hon. members on the opposite side of the House have put up certain statements and say, "This is what they were put there for." In my opinion they were put there to assist the settlers in the North-West and on the South-East coast. In regard to the South-East, I have not the slightest shadow of doubt that the "Eucla" is giving a better service than has ever been on that coast before. With regard to the North-West, I can say that we found particularly, on the down trip, that one could not ship anything from any of these ports. I came through Port Hedland just after last election and one could scarcely get on the Port Hedland wharf for wool. The companies trading there then would not call in and take the wool on the south trip. There was tin, any amount of it, lying on the Port Hedland wharf for months and months, and steamers have run by and left it there. As soon

as the Government put a boat on that coast the other companies would come in for a shearer's swag. We have never been short of a ship at Port Hedland since the "Kwinana" started running, and so far as the settlers of the North-West are concerned I am quite prepared to leave the case to them.

Mr. Male : So am I.

Mr. UNDERWOOD : Yes, and your next opponent will be prepared to do so too. The statement that we were only to carry the small squatters originated in the imagination of the imaginative members opposite. There has never been any such statement made. It arose out of the extraordinary imagination of members opposite. Those ships in my opinion—and I had as much to do with them as any man in the House; I have always advocated them—were put on the coast for the benefit of settlers on that coast, whether large or small. There is this to be said to the credit of the Government—

Mr. Male : You are hedging now.

Mr. UNDERWOOD : Do you not wish I would.

Mr. SPEAKER : The hon. member must address the Chair.

Mr. UNDERWOOD : I am endeavouring to do so, but the ignorant remarks from opposite take me off my course occasionally, just as a stray dog would disturb a flock of sheep. In regard to those ships, I want to say that the Opposition have endeavoured by every possible means to detract from the benefits the ships have given to the people of the coast. They know that they are going to get a balance sheet. This Government passed an Act making it law that a balance sheet should be distributed. They know they are going to get that balance sheet, and they are afraid it is going to be in favour of the steamers. They are afraid it is going to be against Holt's line, which employs black labour on the North-West coast. They are afraid that when this balance sheet comes forward the people of Western Australia will be satisfied that white men can run the ships on this coast and that black men can get off it; and those influenced by the companies,

and those making profits by being agents for these companies, naturally want to discredit these ships before the properly audited balance sheet comes down. It has been provided that the balance sheet shall be issued—

Mr. George: When?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: When it is made out. In doing that, we provided something which the Opposition were afraid to provide.

Mr. Munsie: Which they refused to provide.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The hon. member says we are going to do things in a hurry. There is one thing we did in a hurry—we put him in his place.

Mr. George: Who is that?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: You.

Mr. George: In what way?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Now, in regard to this proposition of trading concerns, the previous Government had trading concerns, several of them. They never made the slightest provision to have the accounts audited or presented in anything like a proper condition. They never gave us the slightest information in regard to them.

Hon. J. Mitchell: We never denied you information.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You did not even ask for it.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: When the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) is finished I want to say the system of book-keeping adopted by them would not permit of their giving information. They did not know themselves. This Government desire that these things should be tried on their merits. We want accounts to be properly kept and properly audited, and therefore we passed a measure providing that they must be audited and properly taken out. But one of the difficulties which the Government have to face is that there were previous trading concerns, balance sheets of which should have been brought forward years and years ago; and those trading concerns, through the mismanagement of the previous Government, through their neglect-

ing to get out balance sheets, make it most difficult for this Act to be applied.

Hon. J. Mitchell: You did not have your books written up at all.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Why did not the previous Labour Government do something of the sort?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: As I said, it is impossible to go back. The leader of the Opposition endeavoured to make some capital out of the evidence given by Mr. Holmes before the Royal Commission. I just want to express the opinion that J. J. Holmes is a pimp.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. Frank Wilson: I object to that expression; it is most offensive.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The hon. member says it is most offensive. Just a while ago he used the old worn-out platitude, and referred to my ignorance.

Hon. Frank Wilson: I never mentioned your ignorance.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Oh no, you did not know about it, did you. I say that J. J. Holmes has acted the part of a pimp.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I have allowed hon. members a good deal of latitude on this question, but I find it always leads to difficulties in ultimately restraining the debate. If I insisted upon hon. members strictly discussing the motion, hon. members would complain of being gagged, and so I have to allow latitude; but immediately I allow a little latitude still more is taken. I ask hon. members to respect the latitude I give them, and to help me in keeping them as close to the motion as they can be kept.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: As a representative of the North-West the hon. member who moved this motion was absolutely out of order when he referred to the North-West at all, and as another representative of the North-West, I say that if you give him latitude I am entitled to it also.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member who moved the motion may have exceeded the terms of his motion when he referred to the North-West, which undoubtedly he did; but very frequently an hon. member exceeds the terms of his motion for the purpose of applying his remarks to the motion, for the purpose of

making illustrations, and it is very difficult for me to know when to pull him up if I am to be strictly fair to him. But because in this instance the mover of the motion referred to the North-West, I have allowed other members to refer to it also, and the hon. member who now complains has not been backward in making remarks in regard to the North-West, either. But I would ask him to restrict his remarks to the motion.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The leader of the Opposition has referred to the evidence given by Mr. Holmes before the commission.

Hon. Frank Wilson: I have not.

The Premier: You read the evidence.

Hon. Frank Wilson: I did not; I read the evidence given by Mr. Sudholz.

Mr. O'Loughlin: And the questions put by Mr. Holmes.

Hon. Frank Wilson: I read the evidence of Mr. Sudholz in regard to accounts.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! After all, the explanation is unnecessary. The hon. member can apply himself to the terms of the motion. I intend to make no further restriction in his case than I have done in the other case, but I want the House to help me to keep order and carry on the business in a proper manner. If they fail in that respect, I shall be compelled to insist that no divergence whatever be made from the strict terms of the motion. I ask the hon. member not to discuss Mr. Holmes, because Mr. Holmes has nothing whatever to do with the motion.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I was only making a passing reference to Mr. Holmes, and I am sorry to have had to do so. I just want to say that in regard to the Royal Commission on the State Steamship Service mentioned by the leader of the Opposition, that commission, to my mind, inquired really as to the ability of one particular man, namely, Mr. Sudolz. All I can say is that I have met Mr. Sudolz, and I rather appreciated him. I regret personally that he has seen fit to resign from his position. I sincerely trust that those who have been instrumental in having his removal brought about are now satisfied.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: And ruined his health.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I am not counting his health, but when one has a man shifted I think we ought to drop it. I would, anyway, and I would be ashamed to mention it. The leader of the Opposition said that his Government was not so foolish as to attempt to run State steamers.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Such as these, was what I said.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I have a lively recollection of Acting Premier Gregory coming along at one time, and with a great outburst of splendour in the way of oratory and verbiage, announcing that he was going to have an inquiry, and that if as a result of that inquiry it was found that the people of the North-West were not getting a fair deal, he would run State steamers. I have another recollection, so late as the last election, of the leader of the Opposition and his party coming forward and claiming that they were going to run these ships.

Mr. George: Not these ships.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: But other ships. Of course the hon. member will tell us directly that he has always been in favour of karri; but it was not the same karri as we are dealing with. If we have to listen to the experience the hon. member had it must lead us to the conclusion that he came out of the Ark. I have very little more to say. I trust the Opposition will be able to restrain themselves for a few weeks in regard to this motion. They will then get the information brought right up to date, and will know that it is absolutely sound, because it will have been audited by the Auditor General, over whom the Government have no control.

Mr. GEORGE (Murray-Wellington): If the hon. gentleman who has just resumed his seat wants about the shortest reply that can be given to his maunderings, it is supplied in his last sentence, when he says that if the Opposition will only wait a few weeks they will have the accounts brought up to date, and properly audited. If there is any reason for applying any weight to the Premier's remarks, the hon. member who has just spoken is, in his own favourite simile, knocked into a cocked hat. The



Premier stated that under the Trading Concerns Act it is necessary to furnish accounts to the end of June. We do not want to wait until October to get accounts for June. We are asking for accounts for June, and we have a right to get them. If a man in business troubled himself as to how his accounts were going only at the end of twelve months instead of looking into the position each month, he would very soon find himself in the Bank parlour, and afterwards in its correlative stage—the Bankruptcy Court. Any man knows, hon. members supporting the Government know, that in ordinary daily life they balance up, as traders and bankers balance up, whether they have a pound or whether it is a matter of a few thousand pounds. They do not wait for properly audited accounts, but they put their hands in their pockets and find perhaps a stiver. If they have not got it they know they cannot “shout,” and if they have, they know they can try to dodge it. The motion has nothing to do with the hon. member or with the promises of the Opposition, but with the performances of the present Government. Surely the present Government in their strength, supported by their mighty majority, buttressed up by the Trades Hall and the Labour Congress are absolutely afraid to put before the House, apparently too cowardly to show to the country the result of this enterprise.

The Premier : You are the biggest coward I know.

Mr. GEORGE : I am only speaking figuratively.

Mr. SPEAKER : Order ! The hon. member must not use that language. It only provokes retaliation.

Mr. O’Loghlen : It is one of his usual spasms.

Mr. GEORGE : I am not referring to the personal courage of the Premier. I should be foolish to do that.

Mr. Heitmann : If a man is a coward politically, he is a coward personally.

Mr. GEORGE : As far as the hon. member for Cue is concerned—

Mr. SPEAKER : The hon. member must drop those terms.

Mr. O’Loghlen : Is this your peroration ?

Mr. GEORGE : When I was so inconsequently interrupted by a lot of interjections which have very little sense on their face, I was pointing out that the hon. member for Pilbara and the Premier were not in the same street. The Premier has told us that we shall have properly audited balance sheets in due course. We are not asking for them. We are asking for what the Premier must have in his possession. I refuse to believe that the Premier is such a poor man of business as not to have this information; he must have it in his office up to the end of the month. If members of the House have any rights, I am beginning to believe that we have not, we should certainly have a right to this information. Will the Premier be frank and face the situation and tell the Opposition straight out that he will not give them any information whatever and let the country understand it ? If so, I shall be perfectly satisfied. I will not waste my breath and my honest indignation on a brick wall.

The Premier : What ?

Mr. GEORGE : I know the hon. member cannot understand the honest part.

The Attorney General : Neither of these things is here.

Mr. GEORGE : I can believe the Attorney General. Neither of those things is on the Government side. Both are on this side.

The Attorney General : The brick wall.

Mr. GEORGE : I am trying to get the Premier to face the situation. He will have to face it sooner or later. Is he going to tell the people of the country that in his position as Premier he refuses to give to their representatives in Parliament any information which they are entitled to have ? Is he going to tell the country that he knows this particular ship has lost money to such an extent and is losing it every day, every week and every month to such an extent that he is too

timid to let the country know how it is being bamboozled?

The Premier: Your imagination is running riot again.

Mr. GEORGE: Is the hon. Premier going to have the front to bring into the House next week a Land and Income Tax Bill imposing taxation on the people, the amount of which is governed and considerably affected by the loss which is being made on these nonsensical steamers? The hon. member for Sussex wanted to know the cost of repairs. I was down in Albany last April and saw a most interesting sight. It was worth paying to see and was more interesting than a picture show. There was our beautiful ship the "Eucla," and four men were engaged in chipping the funnel to get the rust off. There were nine persons and one officer engaged in bringing along the wharf a pair of steps which two men could have carried with ease and neither would have needed liquid refreshment if he had carried it alone.

Mr. O'Loughlen: What were you drinking?

Mr. GEORGE: There was the Government steamer "Eucla" at Albany—

Mr. Harper: And the Government stroke.

Mr. GEORGE: And as I said the men were chipping the funnel. I was on board the steamer "Karoola" and it occupied an hour to berth her at the wharf.

Mr. Heitmann: I suppose those men would be the crew.

Mr. GEORGE: And the amount of rust which these men chipped off the funnel in that time could hardly have been covered by the papers of the cigarettes they consumed.

Mr. Heitmann: That is a statesmanlike utterance.

Mr. GEORGE: I do not know about it being statesmanlike. If it were I should be casting pearls before swine to place it before the hon. member.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will withdraw that statement and apologise.

Mr. GEORGE: Well, sir, I only mentioned a quotation from Scripture. May I not be allowed to—

Mr. SPEAKER: No.

Mr. GEORGE: Then I regret that the Biblical authors—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will take his seat. The hon. member must not refer to another hon. member in these terms—casting pearls before swine. The very strong inference is that the hon. member for Cue, well—the hon. member will withdraw.

Mr. GEORGE: If I have hurt the feelings—

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not care whose honour has been hurt. I ask you to withdraw and apologise.

Mr. GEORGE: I withdraw and I regret that I allowed my honest indignation to run on biblical lines.

The Premier: Take the hair off your head.

Mr. GEORGE: Nature has done that for the Premier, but has been more kind to me. Well, I withdraw the remark and apologise. I hope the hon. member will understand that interjections such as he makes cause me to retaliate. I am sorry. Regarding this ship, I say that without fear of contradiction, there is not a member of this House but if he had seen the same thing, would be absolutely satisfied that there is a great waste of money and time going on.

Mr. Heitmann: Would you condemn the service altogether from that incident?

Mr. GEORGE: No, and I am not condemning the "Eucla" because I do not know enough about her, but what I want to know and am condemning is the unnecessary secrecy shown by the Premier and his desire for secrecy when he refuses us this information. I have said and I repeat it again, that one half of the troubles which the hon. gentleman brings upon himself, troubles which tend to lower the dignity and office he occupies—

The Premier: Do not worry about me.

Mr. GEORGE: One half of his troubles, I say, arise from the fact that either he mistakes his position or else evades his responsibilities. The responsibility of the Treasurer of this State is to be free and above board in his various statements.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Are you suggesting that he is otherwise?

Mr. GEORGE: And the Premier can do no good by keeping this information in a pigeon-hole. That the hon. member has the information is beyond question. I am satisfied he has too many brains to ever allow these concerns to go on without having information regarding their position brought before him every month. He knows that he receives a daily balance from the Under-Treasurer regarding his funds and that he gets a daily report from the Railway Department and from other sources—I do not know about the butchers' shops, though they also ought to supply one—and why cannot he give us this information? To put us off with the excuse that it ought to be audited is to throw a reflection quite unwarranted upon the capabilities of the accountants who have to deal with the accounts. Turning back the old records of the proceedings of this House we can find almost every week instances of returns having been given by the Railway Department. Some hon. members wanted to know what had been earned in certain excursions and others wanted to know what had been paid in wages in a particular direction, and so on. What course was then adopted? The Government did not wait for the Auditor General to audit the accounts. The Commissioner had the figures obtained from his books and sent to the Premier and all the Premier has to do in connection with this request is to send for the accountant dealing with the steamship affairs and ask for the figures and present them to the House. If I were in the Premier's shoes, which God forbid—

The Premier: Hear, hear!

Mr. GEORGE: If I may explain what I was going to say, it was God forbid that I should be in the circumstances in which the hon. Premier now is. If I were in the circumstances in which the Premier is at present—

Mr. Thomas: Do not worry.

Mr. GEORGE: I will not be worried by the hon. member. The country is entitled to the fullest information regarding these enterprises and the more so because

there have been on all sides of political opinion a considerable amount of anxiety in regard to them. If they are not paying it is open to the Premier to say that he has not had a fair time and that in starting all businesses there must be a loss and a heavy expenditure to begin with, but let the Premier take the people into his confidence. From his experience he must know he has never got over any big trouble by trying to hide his head beneath a pillow, or, like the ostrich, in the sand. A man faces the situation and if the Premier does so, the country will like him the more for it.

Mr. Bolton: Like your redistribution.

Mr. GEORGE: I never redistributed.

Mr. Bolton: You had a bit in it.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must stick to the question.

The Premier: He has not touched it yet.

Mr. GEORGE: I have touched the Premier on the raw anyhow. What does the hon. member for Kimberley ask?

The Premier: You do not know after reading the motion.

Mr. GEORGE: I do not know what constituency the Premier represents or misrepresents.

The Premier: I represent the State.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! What has this to do with the question?

Mr. GEORGE: Nothing at all.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member—

Mr. GEORGE: I could not help the interjection.

Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot allow the hon. member to go on like this. He is embellishing his remarks with a lot of matter not apropos of the subject. He is asking for information and is alleging that the Premier is refusing the information as far as this question is concerned, and he is resenting the Premier's refusal. I must say that he is in order, so far as that is concerned, but I hope he will get back to the question some time.

Mr. GEORGE: I did not remember the constituency which the mover of the motion represents.

The Premier: Do you remember your own?

Mr. GEORGE: I do not know the Premier's.

The Premier: And the constituents do not know you.

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

Mr. GEORGE: Before tea I was trying to impress upon the Premier how baseless was the opposition that he was making to the return moved for by the hon. member for Kimberley. I showed that it was absolutely unnecessary that he should keep the House waiting for these figures on the plea that it was necessary to have a fully audited balance sheet. If it was necessary to give a concrete example to contradict the Premier, I need only refer to the figures which he gave to the hon. member for Sussex (Hon. Frank Wilson) today when that gentleman asked a question regarding the expenditure on steamships, and how much of the £100,000 mentioned in the schedule of the Loan Act, 1912, had been disbursed. The Premier gave certain figures but he gave no certificate that those figures had been audited by the Auditor General. He knew perfectly well that that was not necessary, and there is no necessity that the figures asked for in this motion should be other than ordinary trading figures which the Premier must have every month placed before him, and about which, no doubt, he consults his colleagues. I maintain that if this attitude on the part of the Government to refuse reasonable information is continued in this way, it proves to the country that there is something of which the Government are ashamed, something of which they are not proud, and which they desire to hide and keep secret.

The Attorney General: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. GEORGE: I have the word of the Attorney General that it is nothing of the sort; then let the hon. member get up in his place and repair the omissions of his leader, and give to us the figures which he knows perfectly well it is desired should be given to the House and the country.

The Attorney General: You know that you will get the figures as provided for by Act of Parliament.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Next year.

Mr. GEORGE: We are not all trained legal men, thank the Lord, and we cannot

all get on to these subtleties which occur to those trained in this particular profession, but we can understand the figures that we are asking for, and we are not asking for them from any paltry motive, but because we know the great anxiety (there is throughout the whole of Western Australia, and that anxiety is not confined to the ranks of the Liberal party.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Is there a Liberal party now?

Mr. GEORGE: The whole of the people of Western Australia want light thrown into these dark places. Where the Government are anxious to hide things only one inference can be drawn, and it is not good for the Government, and is unworthy of the traditions of this honourable House. What do we ask for? The cost of running the "Eucla," including the amount which has been expended in repairs. All that is necessary is to state £10,000, £15,000, or £50,000 as the case may be. We do not ask for shillings and pence. We also ask for the amount earned by the "Eucla" in freight and passage moneys, and the members of the Government with their uneasy consciences think that if they give this information they will be subjected to the criticism which they know very well they deserve.

Mr. Foley: They are getting it whether they deserve it or not.

Mr. GEORGE: Because they know perfectly well that they deserve it, they are trying to put off the day of reckoning. It is idle for the Premier to state that the leader of the Opposition, when leader of the Government, did not keep proper trading accounts. What does it matter to the country what the hon. member did?

Mr. Underwood: I admit that.

Mr. GEORGE: The country is not concerned with what was done many months ago, except that the people are now suffering a somewhat tardy repentance and are preparing for a reformation which will land my honourable friend, the member for Sussex, in the seat of power very soon. I have only one more thing to say, and that is I regret very much a remark made by an hon. member opposite in reference to one of the chief witnesses in connection with the Royal Commission.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I will not allow any discussion on that matter. I ask the hon. member not to refer to that.

Mr. GEORGE: I was not going to say anything objectionable. May I refer to the "Eucla" as one of the steamships included within the scope of the Royal Commission?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member can do so provided that he keeps within the rules of order.

Mr. GEORGE: I am desirous of keeping within the rules of order. When a Royal Commission is appointed in reference to any State matter, such as one was with reference to these steamships, of which the "Eucla" is one, those who come forward to give information as witnesses in connection with such a commission should at any rate be protected from the condemnation which some of them have received during the present session.

The Attorney General: You are very sensitive on their behalf.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): The leader of the Opposition gave the reason when speaking on the Address-in-reply, because of something he thought had taken place.

Mr. GEORGE: May I ask the Honorary Minister to put his question through you, Mr. Speaker, then I can reply to it. I wanted to point out that this House should, above everything else, see that those who are called, or are likely to be called, as witnesses before a Royal Commission are protected from any charges that might be made against them in this House. Those witnesses, if they come forward fearlessly and give their best, whether it suits the people in power or not, in the interests of the State in connection with a matter of this sort, should, at any rate, be protected against statements from which, if those statements were uttered outside this Chamber, they would be protected by the law. I do not think it is necessary to say anything more than the few remarks I have made. I naturally felt very indignant that the Premier by his statement should take up the attitude of deferring the giving of information which members on this side have a right to ask for, and when the members of the Government resume their place on this

side of the House, which they will do before long, I hope that they will profit by the lesson they have tried to give to the Opposition.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): I disagree with the hon. member for Murray-Wellington. I say it is not advisable to give figures until one has a properly audited balance sheet of accounts. I want to give a comparison to show the inadvisability of doing so. During the last year in which the hon. member for Murray-Wellington held the honourable position of Commissioner of Railways—

Hon. Frank Wilson: What has that to do with it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): I am going to explain the reason why accounts should be audited. The hon. member presented an account on the 30th June, 1906, showing that he had stores in hand valued at £239,113 6s. 10d. During the year from the 30th June, 1906, to the 30th June, 1907, the storekeeper presented a report to the hon. gentleman and showed in that report, which was not an audited report, but purely a statement made to the hon. member, that the whole of the stores and material received through the Agent General during that year amounted to £28,486 2s. 5d.; the value of stores and material which he received from local merchants and purchased from the Eastern States amounted to £225,669 14s. 6d. That means that for the stores in hand when he presented his balance sheet, with the stores received as stated by his storekeeper, there would be a total amount of £493,269 3s. 9d. During the year the storekeeper in his report, an unaudited report, stated that he had issued material from the stores to the total amount of £346,831 13s. 11d., which would leave him, in the ordinary way of thinking, stores in stock on the 30th June, 1907, to the value of £146,437 9s. 10d. But, Mr. Speaker, the auditor's balance sheet came out as presented by the hon. member to this House—it was the last balance sheet presented by him as Commissioner of Railways—and instead of showing stores to the value of £146,437 9s. 10d., it showed stores in hand to the

value of £244,475 9s. 1d., or £98,037 19s. 3d. more than the other figures would prove to be the value of the stores in stock at that time. Therefore, it shows that to give information until the accounts are properly fixed up is likely to lead anyone in a wrong direction. Those latter figures showing stores in hand are taken from the annual report which, I take it, is an audited statement. The other, the storekeeper's statement, is not.

Mr. George: The books are all audited.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): One is a statement from the storekeeper such as is asked for by the member for Kimberley. The hon. member asks what is the cost of running, and the amount of money received, in an exactly similar manner as the information which was presented to the member for Murray-Wellington when he was Commissioner for Railways, relating to the stores he received, and the stores he issued, and then when the annual balance sheet came out it was found that he showed he had over £98,000 worth more stores than the figures which had been supplied by the storekeeper. This is not the first time I have mentioned this incident in the Chamber, but after that the storekeeper's report was kept out of the annual report altogether.

Mr. George: Am I responsible for that?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): I never said the hon. member was. These statements I have made are old, but they show the inadvisability of acceding to a request such as that made by the member for Kimberley. There is no doubt that the hon. member will have all the information that he desires at the earliest possible moment, that is, immediately the accounts are made out under the Trading Concerns Act; then information not only in regard to the State steamships but to all the other trading concerns will be supplied in the form of a duly audited statement. That ought to satisfy hon. members opposite or reasonable members of the community, but I know that whatever information we supply will not satisfy members opposite.

Mr. MALE (in reply): I do not think it needs many words from me to reply to the discussion which has arisen on the motion I moved in the earlier part of the evening. I quite thought from the attitude of the Government last Wednesday that any thirst for knowledge I might have in regard to the State Steamship Service would be resented and refused. The only palpable reason put up by the Premier is the fact that the accounts have not been audited, and this point has been emphasised by the Honorary Minister, who also declared that it was not safe to give figures unless they were audited. I take it from that, that from now on it matters little what we ask for in the way of returns, we shall not get any information until the accounts are audited. That seems to me a very weak reason and a very poor one too. We have the right to certain figures, and certain returns can be made out without having been audited. As the leader of the Opposition pointed out, in connection with the books kept for the State Steamship Service, each trip has practically a profit and loss account of its own, and after each trip it ought to be possible to ascertain what the cost has been, the amount of wages, the quantity of coal consumed, and other charges. There is also the manifest which gives the correct return of the cargo carried, and the freight collected. There is also the return of passage money, and all the figures and the facts that are required, and what I asked for was a return of certain of these figures. I did not ask the Premier to furnish me with a profit and loss account. I knew it was not in his power to do so at the present moment, but I was entitled and the House and the country were entitled to have certain figures in connection with the trading concerns, or any other concerns that it might have been desired to seek information about. The Premier tried to get very heroic in his remarks and wanted to reflect on this side of the House by stating that we would deprive the settlers in the South-Eastern portion of this State from getting a mail service or getting a steamer service of any kind. The Premier knows very well that nothing of the sort is in

the minds of hon. members on this side of the House, but I still contend that we are entitled to certain figures to endeavour to ascertain for ourselves whether the country and the settlers and the people in the State generally would not have been better off to-day if we had continued to pay a subsidy instead of running a service of our own.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is bringing in new matter, which will not be allowed.

Mr. MALE: I think the Premier referred to the fact that too large a subsidy have been asked by a private company in connection with the carrying of mails from Albany to Eucla, and the fact that this subsidy was asked by a private company rendered it necessary for the State Government to bring along a steamer to save the situation. The amount of the subsidy the Premier said was some £6,000—I am not certain of the actual figures. Our proportion previously was, I believe, £750 per annum. Even supposing we had to pay a similar proportion, we would have saved—

The Premier: Supposition again.

Mr. MALE: The Premier only had had supposition to go on.

The Premier: I had facts before me.

Mr. MALE: Even supposing our subsidy had increased from £750 to the difference which would have brought the figures up to £6,000. I still feel that we should have made a much better bargain if we had paid the subsidy. The Premier refuses to give us any figures and the chances are that we shall not get them until after the House adjourns. I still contend that we have a right to these figures, so as to see for ourselves what the position is, and I firmly believe that had we paid the additional subsidy the country would have been better off.

Mr. Hudson: Do you know what subsidy the Adelaide Steamship Company asked for a renewal of the contract?

Mr. MALE: The Premier has already told us and if the hon. member will not listen I do not intend to repeat the information. We have a right to the in-

formation which is asked for in this motion so as to make comparisons, but apparently from the Premier's remarks, and those of the Honorary Minister, it will be useless in the future for us to ask to be supplied with figures because the reply will be that the figures have not been audited, and that the figures contained in the books of the different trading concerns cannot be relied upon until they have been audited; so that, therefore, we shall get no information at all.

Mr. Munsie: Anything bar the State steamers.

Question put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	12
Noes	..	..	..	27

Majority against .. 15

#### AYES.

Mr. Allen	Mr. Nanson
Mr. Broun	Mr. A. E. Plesse
Mr. George	Mr. A. N. Plesse
Mr. Harper	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Lefroy	Mr. Male
Mr. Mitchell	(Teller).
Mr. Monger	

#### NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. McDowall
Mr. Bath	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Carpenter	Mr. O'Loghlen
Mr. Collier	Mr. Price
Mr. Foley	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Gardiner	Mr. B. J. Stubbs
Mr. Gill	Mr. Swan
Mr. Green	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Thomas
Mr. Johnston	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Lander	Mr. Walker
Mr. Lewis	Mr. Heilmann
Mr. McDonald	(Teller).

Question thus negatived.

#### RETURN—DIAMOND DRILLING SUBSIDIES.

On motion by Mr. HARPER (Pin-gelly) ordered: "That a return be laid upon the table of the House showing the amount spent on subsidising diamond drilling on the goldfields for the financial year ended 30th June, 1913."

# PAPERS—BALLA BALLA JETTY, LEASING.

On motion by Mr. GARDINER (Roe-bourne) ordered: "That all papers in connection with the recent leasing of the Balla Balla jetty be laid on the table of the House."

Resolved: That motions be continued.

# RETURN—AVONDALE ESTATE, RE- VENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

Mr. BROWN (Beverley) moved—

*That a return be laid upon the Table of the House, showing: 1, The amount of money expended in live stock, seed, manure, insurance, management, wages, and other requirements, other than improvements on the Avondale estate during the year 1911-1912. 2, The total amount of revenue received from the above estate during 1911-1912, irrespective of revenue derived from the sale of stock despatched to the Avondale estate from other State farms.*

He said: In regard to this motion I may explain that the Minister for Lands has approached me on the subject and pointed out that it would be very tedious for the officers of the department to go through all the items and give me every little detail in connection with each of them. In consequence of this I am prepared to amend my motion by restricting its application to a balance sheet showing the receipts and expenditure for the year 1911-12 of the Avondale estate. My object in doing this is to save the officers of the department so much trouble as would be entailed in getting out the whole of the information. I would like the Minister to allow me to reserve the right to ask for details in connection with any particular time about which I may desire the fullest information. If the Minister will do that I will agree to amend my motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member can only amend his own motion with the unanimous consent of the whole House.

The Minister for Lands: With the permission of the hon. member, and in

order to facilitate the matter, I will move the amendment.

Mr. BROWN: Perhaps that will be the better method.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. T. H. Bath): I move an amendment—

*That all the words after "a" in the first line be struck out with a view to inserting "balance sheet showing the operations of the Avondale farm for the financial year ended 30th June, 1913, be laid on the Table of the House."*

I may say that although this is not one of the concerns gazetted under the Trading Concerns Act, we have a balance sheet prepared. I informed the hon. member of that, and suggested that it would probably meet his desire with regard to the information asked for in the motion. In the event of his desiring any further information I will be willing to supply it, as far as possible, to the hon. member. I have the balance sheet prepared and will lay it on the Table at an early date.

Amendment (that all words after "a" in the first line be struck out) passed.

Mr. PRICE (Albany): There is just one question I desire to ask the Minister. He proposes to insert in the amendment the date 30th June, 1913, whereas the original motion makes mention of 1911-12.

Mr. BROWN: I asked for 1912-13, although it appears on the Notice Paper as 1911-12.

Hon. J. MITCHELL (Northam): I understand the motion as amended will require the Minister to supply information in regard to the working of the Avondale estate, that is to say, to supply a profit and loss account in connection with the cropping and stock.

The Minister for Lands: It is already prepared.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Of course the Minister will see that we get information which will show a credit to the farm for the stock belonging to the Government which has been running on the farm. I understand the Government have paid-docked a good deal of stock there from time to time since the estate was pur-



chased, and the Minister will require to credit the estate with a fair amount for paddocking the stock. Otherwise, the accounts will not show a true statement as between those cattle and the actual stock bought and sold on account of the estate.

The Minister for Lands: The balance sheet will show the whole of the operations. The balance sheet is a complete statement of the operations on the estate.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Then again, the estate has been held up from sale for the past two years, and, naturally, interest on the purchase money for the blocks that have been reserved will require to be debited.

The Minister for Lands: It has been debited.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I would like to point out that I am very hopeful the work of this estate will show a profit, and for that reason I am glad that this balance sheet has been asked for. But the Minister has, I think, exceeded his powers in the reserving of the estate for the purpose of cropping. In my time, it is true, I determined that the estate should be utilised, and crops sown in order that interest might be earned; but I did not propose to refuse an application for any block within the subdivision.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! That is not within the scope of the discussion.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: This estate is being worked, and a balance sheet is asked for in connection with the working of the estate. I desire to point out that this estate has been held up from sale, and, it having been held up, the interest on the whole of the unsold portion of the estate will have to be charged against the profit of the farm. Whilst I hope that the operations will show a profit, it is undesirable that the estate should be held and worked. Unfortunately, we are asking for a balance sheet because the estate might long ago have been sold. I understand the Minister is now selling the estate.

The Minister for Lands: Not all of it.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Well, I hope the Minister, when he presents the balance sheet, will let us know what he intends to do with regard to this farm in the future.

It is desirable that repurchased estates should be dealt with as soon as possible.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! That is entirely beyond the scope of the discussion.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I hope the result of the balance sheet will be that the estate which the Minister has in his hands at Avondale will be dealt with as it should be dealt with, and not continued as a farm, not under present conditions at any rate. If we have earned a profit, it has to be remembered that this is not one of the ordinary State farms. It is permissible, I think, to discuss this aspect of the question. It will be very satisfactory to find that we are making a profit, and I want the Minister to realise that if he is going to run the estate as a State farm the House should be taken into his confidence.

The Minister for Lands: I have already done so. I have given the House the reasons for retaining it.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I know the Minister said something in the House about growing seed wheat, but I do not know what the Minister intends to do in regard to the reserved portion of this estate. I have heard that the intention is to run it as a State farm.

The Minister for Lands: I have told you already the reasons for retaining it; I have given them to the House.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I do not know what the Minister intends to do, but if he is going to run it as a State farm the House should be told.

The Minister for Lands: You have been told.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It should be made quite clear to the House what he intends to do in regard to the farm. However, we are to get a balance sheet showing the actual profit made. The Minister has denied us the right to get any of the details. Of course, he has told the member for Beverley that he will supply details of any single transaction; but it would have been better to let the motion go through in its original form. It is desirable to have a profit from the farm, and as we are to get a balance sheet we have something to be thankful for.

Mr. LANDER (East Perth): I would like to have seen this motion go right back to the inception of this estate. This is one the black "spees." that helped to put some hon. gentleman in the position they are in to-day. What is wanted in connection with this estate is a correct balance sheet, a balance sheet in connection with this estate, and, if it were permitted, I might say, in connection with the purchase of it. This would be something worth placing before the electors of Western Australia, the whole business in connection with the Avondale estate. The only thing I regret is that I have not a similar property to hand over to my friends, the same as this estate was purchased by the previous Government from their friends. It is one of those black marks which always tend to the discredit of any Government.

Mr. BROWN (in reply): My object in framing the motion was to have some idea as to whether the Avondale estate was being run at a profit or not. I did not think hon. members would wish to go back so far as the purchase of the Avondale estate; because it is a well known fact that the estate could have been disposed of long ago if the Minister for Lands had been desirous of disposing of it. My reason for asking for this information is, as I have already stated, that I want to see a balance sheet in order to know whether the estate is being run at a profit, and I hope that in showing a profit and loss account the Minister will take into consideration the whole of the details, including interest, the profits made on the paddock and the stock, and the profits the Agricultural Department have made out of growing wheat and other crops. The Minister has already informed me that the whole of these details will be considered when the balance sheet is being framed. Therefore, I am quite satisfied to take the balance sheet as produced by the Minister, more especially as he has promised me that if there is any item I wish to go into in detail I may do so.

Amendment put and passed.

Question, as amended, agreed to.

#### RETURN—POWELLISED TIMBER: ROYALTY PAID BY RAILWAY DEPARTMENT.

Mr. GEORGE (Murray-Wellington) moved—

*That a return be laid upon the Table of the House, showing the total amount to June 30th, 1913, paid by the Railway Department to the holders of the powellising process as royalty on—*  
(a.) Sleepers used by the department itself; (b.) Sleepers treated for other State departments; (c.) Bridge and building timber used by the department itself; (d.) Timber used by the department for car and wagon construction and repair.

There should be no objection to the information asked for being given. The reason for desiring the particulars was that in connection with the State enterprises the Government were venturing on rather a new departure in regard to the powellising process, and he wanted to satisfy himself as to what was likely to be the cost of the process in connection with those enterprises.

Question passed.

#### RETURN—RAILWAY EMPLOYEES' VISION AND HEARING TESTS.

Mr. LEWIS (Canning) moved—

*That a return be laid upon the Table, showing:—1, The number of employees in the Transportation Branch of the Railway Department who were examined in vision and hearing for the 12 months ended 30th June, 1913. 2, The number of such men who failed in such tests.*

The object in asking for the return was to ascertain the effect of the new method recently adopted by the Railway Department for testing men's eyesight. In the past it had been the custom to subject the men to a practical working test, but now a new system had been adopted by which the men were tested by a card with various lights close together, and several had been rejected although they had subsequently succeeded in passing a very severe examination before a doctor. This

was a most important matter, so far as the officers were concerned, because some men after years of faithful service had risen to a higher grade and increased pay, and then on being subjected to this eyesight test failed and were reduced to a lower grade. Whilst it was absolutely necessary that the department should have men tested so that they would be absolutely competent to read signals, especially men engaged in the running of trains, still he contended that all that was necessary was a practical working test as to the candidate's ability to distinguish one flag from another in the day time at distances of 300, 500, and 800 yards, and one light from another at night.

Question passed.

#### PAPERS—HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE, CLAREMONT.

##### *Case of Rudolph Hein.*

Hon. FRANK WILSON (Sussex)  
moved—

*That the petition of certain inmates of the Hospital for the Insane at Claremont, forwarded to His Excellency the Governor on the 22nd May last, as also a letter, dated the 23rd June, 1913, from an inmate named Rudolph Hein, addressed to the Hon. the Premier, be placed on the Table of the House.*

There was no need to speak to the motion because the Premier was quite agreeable that the papers should be placed on the Table.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan): There was no objection to the letter and the petition referred to in the motion being placed on the Table, but it was desirable that the whole of the papers in connection with the detention of Rudolph Hein in the hospital for the insane should be placed before members, so that they might understand the position better than if they had only the petition and the letter of 23rd June. Hein had been given all the consideration that it was possible to give. In fact the Government had gone out of their way to see that he, being a foreigner, was given consideration that

was not extended to any other inmate in the asylum. They had endeavoured in every possible way to satisfy him, but apparently that would be impossible. He moved an amendment—

*That all the words after "also" in line 4 down to and including "Premier" in line 6 be struck out and the following inserted in lieu, "all papers in connection with the detention of Rudolph Hein."*

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara): This was a familiar case. Hein had been known to him when he was tin mining in the North-West, and since then he (Mr. Underwood) had seen him several times and gone through his papers. The Attorney General had also had the papers before him. The case was an unfortunate one, with which he and the Attorney General had the utmost sympathy, but they had to admit that Rudolph Hein should be detained in the Claremont asylum.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: He writes very lucid letters.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: And he talked very lucidly in an interview until one knew the exact case that was on the unfortunate man's mind. He knew many of the circumstances in regard to which Hein complained in connection with the deep lead worked by Jack McDonald at Moolvella, and the charge against the late Dr. Durack, formerly acting warden of the Pilbara goldfield. When one entered into that question with a knowledge of the circumstances he discovered that Hein was not correct, that he had something pressing on his brain, that he was not absolutely sane. One sympathised deeply with the man because as a prospector he had been a man amongst men, but there was no possible doubt that his mind was unhinged. What was to be done with him was a difficult question. He was not a person who could be reasonably allowed at large, and he could do no good for himself if he were liberated. On the last occasion he (Mr. Underwood) had seen him he was worn to a shadow, and was not likely to do any harm to anybody except himself. If it were possible to send the man back to Germany to be cared for by his people that course should

be followed, but having a personal knowledge of Hein and his case, he was of opinion that the Government could not possibly do anything for him except treat him well in the Claremont asylum.

Hon. FRANK WILSON (on amendment): There was of course no objection on his part to the amendment moved by the Premier. The notice of motion had been put on the paper and moved at the request of the inmate, Rudolph Hein, who wrote to him in the following terms under date 28th July, 1913:—

Sir,—On the 22nd May last thirteen inmates of this institution sent a petition to His Excellency, Sir Harry Barron, K.C.M.G., the Governor of this State, to order his Ministers to appoint a Royal Commission presided over by a judge of the Supreme Court to investigate the administration of the Lunacy Act, 1903. We gave the reason why a public investigation should be held. On the 12th June last His Excellency informed me that he had transmitted my letter of the 22/5/13 to his Ministers. As the Scaddan Government have done nothing in the matter, I beg you to ask the Premier to lay on the Table of the House our petition and a letter of mine of the 23/6/13 to the Hon. the Premier dealing with my own case, so that hon. members may judge for themselves if a public investigation should be held. Thanking you in anticipation, I remain, yours respectfully, Rudolph Hein.

That was a letter which, on the face of it was couched in proper language. It simply asked that Parliament should be made acquainted with this petition, and whilst realising that this was an exceptionally sad case, as evidenced by the hon. member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) and from some recollections of his own of the papers on the file, he was very much struck by the manner in which this inmate had composed his letters and felt it his duty to acquiesce in the request contained in the letter, and after mentioning it to the Premier, had tabled the motion. His one object was that Parliament should be seized with the contents of the petition. Whether it was desirable that the whole

of the file should be placed on the Table, he did not know; he did not remember sufficient of the papers. The Premier mentioned that he thought he would put them on the Table together with the petition, and the Premier must use his own discretion. If it was deemed advisable that the whole of the papers in connection with this unfortunate case should be brought before Parliament and made public, he must bow to that decision, but the least we could do was to agree to the course set forth in the letter that the petition which could not by any means expose anything that ought not to be made public, and the letter written to the Premier which did not contain anything which ought not to be made public, should be open to hon. members so that they might, if they deemed it desirable, take further action or confer with the Ministers as to what further action should be taken in this case. Hein alone was not affected. There had been several inquiries into his case at the hands of the Government. He (Mr. Wilson) was not making any complaint at all, but the petition affected 13 inmates.

The Premier: He is making a complaint and members may be easily misled by the petition and the letters.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It would be agreeable to him if the whole of the papers or any papers which the Premier thought necessary were laid on the Table, so that members would be satisfied that everything that ought to be done had been done in connection with this lamentable case. He was constantly being bombarded with letters of this kind and no doubt other hon. members had had the same experience. The Attorney General had received many such letters, and had discussed the matter with him.

The Attorney General: They are written to all the judges.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The time had arrived when some of these papers—a sufficient number—should be made available to hon. members, and he was only acceding to the request which seemed a reasonable one, contained in the letter he had quoted.

Mr. GILL (Leederville) : It was pleasing to him that the Premier had suggested laying the whole of the papers in connection with this case on the Table. Like other hon. members, he had received letters from Rudolph Hein on several occasions and if he was not mistaken, a petition from that inmate had been presented last year. The one under discussion was presented this year. On reading the first letter received from this inmate he, like the leader of the Opposition, was impressed. This inmate certainly could write a very sensible letter and he had thought that a man who could write such a letter did not appear to be a fit subject for this institution. On making inquiries, however, he had found that the Government had been previously bombarded with letters and had taken all steps they could possibly take to investigate his case, and had come to the conclusion—and, in his opinion, rightly—that Hein should be detained in the institution. Consequently, it was pleasing that the Premier had suggested laying the papers on the Table so that hon. members, some of whom he knew had received letters, could peruse the papers and see what steps might be taken to investigate the case. This would clear away doubts and convince hon. members that all steps possible, and in fact more than were generally taken, had been taken in this case. He hoped the Premier would take an early opportunity of laying the papers on the Table so that hon. members could look through them for themselves.

Amendment put and passed.

Question, as amended, agreed to.

#### MOTION—GAME ACT REGULATIONS.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara) moved:

*That an address be presented to His Excellency the Governor praying that the regulations made under The Game Act, 1912, and appearing in the "Government Gazette" of the 11th July, 1913, be disallowed.*

He said: The particular objection I have to the regulations is that they provide that a license fee for killing kangaroos shall be £3 and that a license fee for selling kangaroo skins shall be £1. Now, I hold that kangaroos are to a very great extent in many parts of this State a pest, and that being so, we should not place any restrictions upon people killing these animals. I do not know what reason the present Government have for increasing the license fee. It has been suggested that it is with a desire to secure revenue. It seems to me there are many ways which would be more productive of revenue than that of increasing the license fee for shooting kangaroos. There may be, say 100, possibly 200 kangaroo shooters' licenses taken out in this State and if we increase them from £1 to £3 each, and also charge them £1 for selling the skins after they have obtained them—a matter that is open to argument—it would only amount to a few hundred pounds. I want to point out that it is only a few years ago since the State was paying £1,000 a year for the destruction of kangaroos because it was found that they were destroying the grass and drinking the water which the pastoralists required to feed and water their sheep on. It is right enough to talk of getting revenue, but I contend it is not a fair and legitimate proposition to try to get revenue from persons engaged in killing a pest. It has been stated that a good deal of money is obtained from the sale of kangaroo skins. I think the amount last year was something like £20,000. The amount obtained in Victoria for a similar period in respect to rabbits and rabbit skins was something like a quarter of a million pounds; yet nobody has ever suggested that people should be licensed for obtaining rabbits. I would also like to point out that there are many other opportunities for increasing license fees as well as those of kangaroo shooters. For instance, there is a license for cutting firewood. Some thousands of pounds, and possibly millions of pounds worth of fuel is being cut in the Kalgoorlie and Eastern Goldfields districts to supply the

mines with fuel and the license for cutting the wood is 1s. a month, whereas, when it comes to shooting kangaroos the Government ask people to pay £3 or £4, I am not exactly sure which, but I can quite understand that by the time the policeman has had an argument with the kangaroo shooter the man would pay £4. A man can get a license to look for gold and other minerals all over the State in the form of a miner's right for 5s. a year. Some tens of thousands of pounds are obtained by fishing in this State and a man can get a license to fish for £1 a year and I think if he applies later than the 30th June he can get it for 10s. Coming to the question of kangaroos, I am forced to the conclusion that there has been a very great deal of what might be called maudlin sentiment in regard to the preservation of Australian game. As regards Australian game, I submit to no man in my desire to see that game preserved, but there is no possible chance of the kangaroo being exterminated. We provide in our present Act that no one can take certain game, including kangaroos and opossums unless they have a license and where there are restricted districts these animals must not be killed at all. Those men who have been endeavouring to grow a bit of wheat a little further out than anyone else has been, know perfectly well the enormous damage that can be done by kangaroos, and those who know human nature as it is displayed in Australia, are aware that whether the law forbids it or not, if a kangaroo or anything else destroys a man's wheat he will shoot it. I defy the Hon. Mr. Kingsmill, or any other run-mad sentimentalist, to prevent the settlers of this country from shooting kangaroos when they are undoubtedly destroying a wheat crop, or are interfering with a man's prospects of getting a living.

Mr. George: Why should they be put under a penalty as they are under the Act?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: There is another proposition. It was stated in the previous Act that people could kill kangaroos for food. Of course, I sympathise, after serious and long experience, with any-

body who has to eat any part of a kangaroo except the tail, and I want to say I do not care for too much tail.

Mr. George: It is not too bad for a change.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Not as a change, but tinned dog is better than kangaroo.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Oh!

Mr. UNDERWOOD: There we have the suburban bushman again. There is no doubt that the hon. gentleman has been through King's Park and has plucked some kangaroo paws. As a matter of fact, I was born in the bush, and was reared there, and had my share of kangaroo before I was as high as one of these chairs.

Mr. George: What about pork and kangaroo?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I will admit that to eat pork cooked with kangaroo does not spoil the pork. We know, so far as the South-West is concerned, so far as the wheat area is concerned, that the settlers in that area are going to shoot any kangaroos they find damaging their crops, and those who like them to eat are going to shoot them for food, while those who do not care about them for food, will possibly shoot them for fowl feed; but looking at the matter fairly and squarely, we know that the kangaroo, so far as the wheat areas of the south-western districts are concerned, must become extinct. If we retain the kangaroo in the South-West area the only place to do so is on a reserve. We have a considerable flora and fauna reserve and we could increase it. As a matter of fact it would not matter much to the settlement of this country if we reserved the whole of the Darling Range, and on that reserve we could grow all the fauna desired, but when we come into the settled parts of the country, where men are trying to get a living, we must recognise that the kangaroo is going to be exterminated. So much for the South-West. Let me tell hon. members that in the North-West we have an entirely different proposition, and I am surprised indeed that the Hon. Mr. Kingsmill, who knows that country, should altogether overlook this point. In the North-West we have millions, tens of millions, hun-

dreds of millions of acres of land which will never be closely settled, and on that land it is not possible to exterminate the kangaroo. The kangaroo shooters will only follow that occupation when kangaroos are plentiful. While they are scarce it will not pay them to follow it, and there is no possible or earthly hope of the kangaroo ever being extinguished in Western Australia.

Mr. Swan: Agar Wynne extinguished him.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Agar Wynne extinguished Charlie Frazer's kangaroo, but it is a different kangaroo I was speaking of. I want to say that this House has never had a fair chance to discuss this proposition.

Hon. J. Mitchell: We have discussed it often.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I think that in 1907 the hon. member for Northam, who who was then Honorary Minister, brought down a Bill providing that kangaroos should not be shot in prescribed areas, and he promised that the Bill would not apply in the North-West. This particular Bill in 1907 came before the House in the last day or two of the session, and at an early hour in the forenoon, about 11 o'clock. At that time the then member for Geraldton (Mr. T. L. Brown) moved an amendment to insert the words "and areas" after the word "conditions." The object was so that the Act would not apply in the North-West. It was recognised by every man in the Chamber that the kangaroo was a pest in the North-West. The then member for Gascoyne (Mr. Butcher) made a statement as a pastoralist of some experience that he had found the kangaroo caused very considerable damage. He found that a kangaroo eats about twice as much grass, and drinks about twice as much water as a sheep, and if there were a number of kangaroos on a man's run it simply meant that he could not keep so many sheep upon it. The then member for Geraldton moved his amendment, seeking to provide that the measure should not refer to the North-West. The Minister said there was no necessity for the amendment, as the object desired

thereby was attained by the provisions in Clause 2 of the Bill. He said, "Under the clause it was provided that certain areas should be proclaimed. This would meet the object of the hon. member."

Mr. Butcher said—

The Committee would be safe in allowing the clause to pass now that the Minister had given an assurance that he would frame regulations not preventing the free shooting of kangaroos in the North. A squatter told him that more kangaroos watered at certain wells on his run than sheep. He was strongly opposed to licenses being issued to kangaroo shooters in the North-West portions of the State, for persons should be encouraged to destroy kangaroos there.

Mr. Brown then said—

After the assurance of the Minister the Committee could safely leave the matter in his hands. If men had to obtain licenses fewer kangaroos would be shot. He asked leave to withdraw his amendment.

The amendment was by leave withdrawn. In saying that he would leave the matter in the hands of the Minister was where Mr. Brown made the mistake. In that case we had the assurance of the Minister that there were not going to be any license fees charged in the North-West. Immediately we got into recess out came regulations putting the license fee up to £1, and that license fee was enforced throughout the North-West. The Minister did not know it, I have told him before. We members of the North-West were victims of misplaced confidence. When this Bill came before the House last session the hon. member for Gascoyne (Mr. McDonald) hung it up to a considerable extent, and eventually it was knocked out on a point of order. It was introduced again and we struck it again in the morning after an all-night sitting; and on that occasion we had the assurance of the Premier that it was not going to apply. The debate was resumed as follows, in connection with Clause 10—

Mr. McDonald: It was his intention to move an amendment to this clause.

and he had the consent of the hon. gentleman who introduced the Bill in another place.

The Premier: I cannot agree to it.

Mr. McDonald: We could vote against the clause and throw it out. He was bound by the people he represented not to allow a clause like this to go through without making some protest.

The Premier: You will kill the Bill.

Mr. McDonald: Whatever might be the fate of the Bill, he would be compelled to move that provision be made in accordance with the terms of the second schedule that the law referring to marsupials should be struck out for all portions of the State north of the twenty-seventh degree of latitude. That would not interfere with the intention of the Bill so far as the preservation of marsupials was concerned.

The Premier: I will give you an opportunity at the beginning of next session to adjust the matter if you like.

Mr. McDonald: On that understanding he would not press the request.

The clause was put and passed. They took Mr. McDonald down just as they did Mr. T. L. Brown.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Gascoyne.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The hon. member for Gascoyne just as previously they did the hon. member for Geraldton. I will say this for the Premier that a Bill has been introduced, but in the meantime instead of giving heed to the protestations of members from the North-West, representing the country where kangaroos are an undoubted pest, instead of allowing things to go on until that new legislation was enforced, they have raised the fees for shooting kangaroos from £1 to £3, and have put in an extra license of £1 to sell them. Of course, they claim that that does not apply, but I can imagine the position with a reasonably well educated policeman and a kangaroo shooter in the North-West. The latter pays £3 for a license to shoot, then goes to sell his skins, and the policeman asks him whether his license is for selling, and although the Attorney General may be able

to explain matters, notwithstanding that the Hon. Mr. Kingsmill may be able to explain that a man has not to have a license to sell as well as to shoot, I am of opinion that it will work out that those attempting to obtain kangaroo skins in any part of the country will have to pay £4 for the privilege of doing so.

Mr. George: That is quite right.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I want to say, in conclusion, in regard to the South-West that kangaroos will be shot, and we have this position, that if it costs £4 to sell those skins they will be allowed to rot. There is no possible shadow of doubt that the people in the South-Western districts, in the wheat areas, will kill the kangaroos if we put that charge on them. It simply means that they will either break the law, which is highly probable, or they will let the skins rot. I think it is inadvisable to have laws of this description. It is inadvisable to have laws which result in an absolute loss to the State, by reason of those laws being responsible, as in this case, for the skins of kangaroos being allowed to rot, or having laws which the people are inclined to break. In regard to the North-West, it is absolutely impossible for kangaroos ever to be exterminated by ordinary process. There are millions of acres of land where the kangaroo is at home and where he will always be at home. In regard to the pastoralists selling skins of kangaroos which have been shot by natives, I understand that the member for Gascoyne intends to deal with that aspect of the question. I trust that the motion will be carried and that the regulations will be disallowed. I might explain that I have discussed this matter with the Premier, who said that the House ought to discuss it and come to a decision on it. I desire to submit the motion standing in my name.

Mr. GEORGE (Murray-Wellington): I have listened with great attention to the speech of the hon. member. As it happens, this question has created a certain amount of interest in the south-western districts, owing to the increase in the number of kangaroos to the detriment of the settlers there. As the House is well aware,



in the Darling Ranges, or that portion of the Darling Ranges which has been given up to the timber workers, these workers are closing in, and for a hundred miles or more, they are driving the kangaroos from out of the timber country to the settled lands, and to every word which the hon. member has uttered, I can give my personal corroboration. This matter became so serious that I was asked by some of my friends to see what could be done. I wrote to the department and put a number of questions to them. The first was

Can a land owner kill opossums on his own ground where they are a nuisance and depredatory to his orchards? The experience there is that opossums nip off young tree shoots; they get on to the fruit spurs of the apple trees and play the mischief with them. They take off the young bark which they regard as good food, and when they get into an orchard they do a considerable amount of damage all round, and it takes time to get rid of them. The answer I received to that question was—

Not unless special permission is given by the Minister under Section 21 of the Game Act, 1912.

That section states—

The Minister may, in writing, authorise, for a stated period, any person or the servants of any such person, to kill or destroy any imported or native game found on his property, and committing any damage or injury, provided that the Minister is satisfied that such injury is likely to arise through the presence of such game.

Hon. members would think that that in itself would be nearly all that was wanted. But I went a little further with my questions and asked—

If so, can the land owner sell the skins?

I hold that whatever animal it may be that is doing damage, the land owner, if he kills that animal, and finds that there is a possibility of getting a little return by selling the skin, should be able to do so. The answer I received was—

Not under the existing legislation.

It may, however, be possible should the amending Game Bill, which it is antici-

pated will be introduced to Parliament this session, be passed.

In the meantime the orchards are being damaged and owners who may take steps to protect themselves will incur the risk of coming under the penalty provisions of the Game Act. I agree with the hon. member who moved the motion that when a man is acting in defence of his property, when he is seeing the fruits of his labour attacked, and that his time and money are going to be wasted, and he is taking drastic action, he should not render himself liable to a prosecution. Then in my letter to the department, I went further and asked whether the same thing applied in regard to kangaroos both large and small. The answer I got, which I think was very unsatisfactory, was as follows:—

The taking of the kangaroo proper within the kangaroo reserve is strictly prohibited, but an amendment to the Game Act, 1912, will, it is anticipated, be introduced this session, which will permit of licenses being issued to take kangaroo for food purposes on the kangaroo reserve to bona fide settlers who, owing to the isolated position of their homesteads, are unable to obtain reasonable supplies of fresh meat. This license, it is anticipated, will bear a small annual fee.

I am certain that hon. members would never have agreed to passing that measure last session if they had had any idea of the extent of the kangaroo reserve. This reserve in question is—

That portion of the State bounded on the south and west by the sea coast, and on the north and east by a line starting from North Point on the sea coast and running in an easterly direction through Mount Lesueur to a point north of the Kellerberrin post office; thence south till it intersects a south-easterly line extending from Mount Stirling to the mouth of the Fitzgerald River; thence along the said line in a south-easterly direction to the mouth of the Fitzgerald River aforesaid, including the islands adjacent to the sea coast aforesaid.

Hon. members will see that this is making practically a third of Western Australia a reserve for kangaroos. If it is to be said for the sake of sentimental reasons that kangaroos are of more importance to the State than settlers or orchardists, I think it should be distinctly understood when we are inviting people to come and settle here, that they do so at the risk of growing their crops for the sake of keeping native game.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Does the kangaroo do much damage to an orchard?

Mr. GEORGE: No, I have been referring to opossums, but I shall come to kangaroos directly. Then comes the amusing part of the whole thing, the reply from the department goes on—

Relative to the small or brush kangaroo, there is no prohibition against the taking of these for food purposes only, except on reserves for native game, provided their skins are not disposed of for sale or barter.

I have already drawn the attention of hon. members to the fact that the reserve covers about a third of Western Australia. The reply of the department goes on—

Should it be desired to sell or barter the skins of the animals so taken, a license to take and kill native game will have to be taken out, the fee being £3 per calendar year, or 30s. to the 31st December if taken out after the 30th June.

The hon. member asked me just now if kangaroos did much damage to orchards. I was referring more particularly to the destructive work done by opossums in orchards, and my friend the member for Albany will confirm my remarks because there are a large number of orchards in his district. So far as the kangaroos are concerned they are with us and there are boomers from 4ft. 6in. to 6ft. in height, and we know that one of these will eat as much grass as half a dozen sheep, and we know also what damage they will do if they get into a crop.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Are you not making them rather tall?

Mr. GEORGE: I have seen them that height, and I have shot one in this State quite as tall as myself. I can show the hon. member plenty of them 4ft. 6in. or 5ft. in height. They go into a crop and feed on it and dance around until one is led to think that they are going mad. If an hon. member went to a cornfield where ten or fifteen of these kangaroos had been, he would wonder what on earth had taken place there. I saw a field last week where kangaroos had been, and it looked as if something had been dragged right over it. I am pleased that this question has come up, because if it had not been brought forward, I should have thought it necessary, in the interests of my constituents in the South-West and also in my own interests, to have brought the question under notice. I consider that the Game Act has gone too far altogether. The regulations the Government may make may be very full indeed, and may enable reserves to be made wider, as has already been done, than Parliament ever contemplated. I am certain that the House would never have agreed to the measure being passed if this position had been placed clearly before members. As the member for Pilbara has stated, we are not likely to exterminate kangaroos.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You will in the South-West.

Mr. GEORGE: I would be very pleased if they were exterminated. I might draw attention to a great danger that those who run sheep in the South-West incur where there are kangaroos. There are some people who shoot kangaroos, possibly for the skin and possibly for food. If it is for the skin, they leave the carcass, and if it is for food, they take what they require and leave the rest. Anyone who has to do with sheep knows that the greatest enemy the sheep has is the blow-fly, and it comes along and breeds where these carcasses are left, and afterwards attacks the sheep. That is a very serious danger, and causes great anxiety amongst those who run sheep. I hope the House will pass the motion. So far as the charging of a license fee for shooting kangaroos on one's own ground is concerned, it ought to be borne in mind that the kangaroos in

such instances are shot so that the crop might be protected. If a land owner is permitted to kill these pests when they are doing damage to the crop, I think the question of charging a license fee is entirely wrong.

• Mr. O'Loughlen: Could you not trap them?

Mr. Price: You are not allowed to do so.

Mr. GEORGE: We could trap them, but we are not allowed to do so. If we trap them we commit an offence under this Act, and render ourselves liable to penalties which should not be imposed upon us. I hope the House will pass the resolution, and that the Government will give effect to it.

Mr. McDONALD (Gascoyne): In rising to support this motion, I must say that I regret the occasion. When the Game Bill was passing through the House I said—and it is my opinion still—that in my desire to preserve the native fauna I take second place to no member of either House. But, as has been pointed out by the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood), certain provisions in that measure did not meet the views of those of us who represent the North-West, more especially Clause 10, dealing with licenses. The member for Pilbara dealt with pretty nearly every phase of the question. He pointed out that a short time ago the Government of Western Australia were paying £1,000 a year for the destruction of kangaroos, notwithstanding which their numbers were not decreased. Shooters went into various parts of the State outside of the prohibited area, and made fairly decent livings while engaged in that avocation. Yet, paradoxically, the kangaroos seemed to increase, despite the shooting. To give an idea of how great a pest these animals are in the Upper Gascoyne district, I may say that although three tons of skins were brought down the river to Carnarvon after the first rains, there were still remaining seven tons of skins awaiting opportunity of being brought down. Taking the fair average weight of a dry skin, it may be reckoned that those seven tons represented 25,000 kangaroos, and that in only one small portion of a con-

stituency. The other North-West constituencies, larger even than the one to which I refer, are in a similar position. The kangaroos are undoubtedly increasing in those districts, and are a serious pest to the pastoralist. The member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George) said that a certain species of kangaroo would eat as much as would five or six sheep. We may safely take it for granted that any kangaroo will eat as much grass and drink as much water as will any one sheep. Therefore, these 25,000 skins show that the kangaroos had been destroying food and water enough to maintain 25,000 sheep. When the Bill was going through the House I mentioned to a station owner at Roebourne that a kangaroo shooter had killed 10,000 kangaroos. He joyfully remarked, "That makes room for 10,000 sheep." Yet, notwithstanding that fact, he had an advertisement in the local paper stating that any one shooting kangaroos on his station without permission would be prosecuted.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): I suppose he was alive to the value of the skins.

Mr. McDONALD: I do not think it was that; I think it was merely that he might have certain rights over the country comprised within his boundaries. However, that will have to come under another amendment, and I hope before long an amendment will be made so that the anomaly may be removed. The member for Pilbara referred to my predecessor, Mr. Butcher. Two months ago Mr. Butcher was paying a man 30s. a week and all the skins so that he might retain him there to help get rid of the pests. I was down driving a short time ago along a rabbit proof fence which takes in pretty well half the constituencies of Roebourne and Gascoyne. Within a hundred miles of a run along that fence were the bodies of 2,000 or 3,000 kangaroos. Those bodies were plainly visible, and the bones scattered about might have represented another 2,000 or 3,000 of the animals. It is said of an Englishman that it is his custom to remark, "It is a fine day: let us go and kill something." He is always looking for some-

thing to kill; Governments, on the other hand, are always looking for revenue. It does not matter what Government may be in power, whether Labour or Liberal. revenue is the first thing in the mind of every member of that Government, and I can picture a Cabinet meeting held in Perth within the last two or three months. The Treasurer is sorrowful, and on being asked the reason replies that he must have revenue, that he must increase taxation. Possibly somebody says, "What about a land tax?" "Oh, no, that won't do, there are too many cockies in the House; we would never get it through." "Well, what about an income tax?" "Less hope than ever for that. It would meet with opposition in both Houses." "Can we do anything with the goldfields?" "No, the goldfields members are too strong." Then a ray of light breaks in on one of them and he asks, "What about the North-West?" The member for Pilbara pointed out how confiding the North-West members are and how easily they are gulled. This seemed the best way out of the difficulty, or at least a certain means of raising a certain amount of revenue.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): While Ministers want revenue, members want expenditure.

Mr. McDONALD: That is only fair. The point I want to make is this: It is hardly fair to tax the lowest paid man, or the man at the lower end of a particular industry, and let the others go scot free. When the Pearling Bill was going through I pointed out that, while general licenses cost £4 a year, exclusive licenses cost £1 a year. There is the same distinction. A hard-working man with nothing but his labour is taxed to the extent of £4 a year, while others who have their banks, which may accumulate and increase in value, and with no labour conditions to act against them, are let off with £1. I pointed it out to the Minister in charge of that department, and pointed out that in Shark Bay, where the revenue was large in comparison with that of Broome, they were paying £4 in comparison with £1 in the other place. The Minister said, "It is not fair;

I will alter that." At this I rejoiced, because I thought that the price would be reduced. But the Minister evened things up by increasing the license fee in the North. They could not tax the pearlers in the North-West any further, so they decided to get something out of the kangaroo shooters, who already had certain difficulties to contend with. When recently visiting my own constituency I had brought under my notice some of those very difficulties. I pointed out that we were in recess and that nothing could be done until Parliament met, but that the Premier had promised to bring in new legislation which would relieve them to a certain extent. Yet the first thing we find are these regulations on the Table, whereby the license fee is increased from £1 to £3. And what does this license fee give, what privileges does it confer? The member for Pilbara has shown that a wood cutter may go anywhere on Crown lands or on pastoral lease and cut wood. The sandalwood cutter similarly has the right to go and get sandalwood on any land. The miner's right enables a man to prospect from one end of Western Australia to another, but this license gives a man no right whatever, except to shoot kangaroos on unoccupied land. A man paying a license fee in Carnarvon to shoot kangaroos, unless he get permission from the owners or the managers of stations, might have to travel 400 or 500 miles before he found unoccupied land on which to shoot.

*[The Deputy Speaker (Mr. McDowall) took the Chair.]*

The Premier: They should be glad to have him to shoot on those stations.

Mr. McDONALD: In certain circumstances they should be. That was the reason for raising objection to that particular clause. They have refused to give this permission, and cases have been recently tried for trespass on pastoral leases. Men who had licenses to shoot kangaroos, and who were following that occupation on different areas, were summoned before the police court and fined

heavily, fined savagely in one instance. The prosecutor was manager of the station, while the owner of a neighbouring station and the manager of another were the two justices. The witnesses also were connected with the pastoral industry. This kangaroo shooter was brought before that court so constituted and fined £10 and £2 10s. costs for merely a nominal trespass, no damage at all being proved. However, on it being pointed out to the justices that the verdict was a savage one, they reduced the penalty to £5. I may say that on representations being made subsequently to the Attorney General he remitted the fine altogether on condition that the defendant paid the cost. When we see these people charged a license fee without being given the right to shoot we realise that it is a particularly ridiculous situation. Of the conditions in the South-West I have but little knowledge, but in the portion of the State which I represent, I know perfectly well the difficulties under which those men suffer, and to my mind the regulations should be disallowed, and the license fees done away with altogether. Speaking to a Nor'-Wester only yesterday on this question I learnt that the manager on one of the stations on the Gascoyne, owing to the long dry season they had experienced, would not pay much attention to his sheep for the time being, but that he, and all his hands, were out shooting kangaroos for the revenue to be derived from the sale of the skins. On another station my informant had been brought into the wool shed, where the manager said to him, "When you were here last you saw 700 bales of wool. There is no wool here now, but 7,000 kangaroo skins instead." His men, with a big tribe of niggers whom he had on the place, had gone out shooting these kangaroos for the skins, paying no license fees, although there were a dozen men in the same district who had paid for licenses to shoot kangaroos, and who were not allowed on that or any of the surrounding stations for the purpose of shooting kangaroos. In that way we give a monopoly of all the native animals, as far as any revenue derived from

the sale of their skins is concerned, to the landholder. At the same time we give the man who takes out a license the right to shoot, but allow the station owner or manager, as the case may be, to prevent him going on to the holding to shoot. But, as I said in the beginning, that is another question. This Act cannot deal with that at all. But because of the fact that the license gives a man no power, although other licenses give powers in other directions, I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin): I have much pleasure in supporting this motion, because there is no doubt that this new regulation has done great injury to those people in the North who now find themselves called upon to pay an exorbitant license fee, but I wish to say that in the South the settlers are feeling very much the effects of this new game regulation. From the very earliest days of settlement in Western Australia up to last June there was a law that allowed any person to kill a kangaroo *bona fide* for the purposes of food. That law came to an end some two months ago. In parts of my own district there have been public meetings, at which every house in the locality was represented, strongly protesting against this prohibition being placed on the settlers' food supplies, and in letters I have received from progress associations it is pointed out that in some parts to many families kangaroo flesh is a necessity, and if settlers in a poor way are prevented from shooting the kangaroo they will be obliged to starve.

Mr. O'Loughlen: How does it stop them shooting?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: In the North they are prohibited from shooting the kangaroo unless they pay a license fee of £4 per annum. In the South the shooting of kangaroos is now entirely prohibited. Under this new regulation settlers cannot kill the kangaroo even for food.

The Premier: The regulation has nothing to do with it.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Well, under this Act.

Mr. Underwood : The most absurd Act ever passed in any country.

The Premier : We had nothing to do with the Act.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON : I know that. The Bill was a private one and it slipped through without anyone knowing anything about this provision, but I congratulate the Government on the fact that since the matter has been brought under their notice they are taking steps to give settlers the right to once more kill the kangaroo for food.

The Premier : I do not know that we are.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON : The Colonial Secretary assures me that the Government are, and I understand that a Bill to that effect has been introduced in another place. If the killing of the kangaroo is to be prevented, that prohibition is going to do great injury to the small sheep farmers west of the Great Southern line, because there particularly a number of the fences are old and merely wire ones; the kangaroos can walk right through them and they become a perfect nuisance in the paddocks, to the detriment of the small sheep farmer, unless the settlers are allowed to kill them. The question arises as to whether the sale of skins should be continued on the present basis, and I understand that the Government have under consideration the necessity for stopping people from killing kangaroos for the sake of their skins, whilst pretending that they require the flesh for food purposes. It has been suggested, and I think wisely, that perhaps the best means would be to limit the number of skins that any one man can sell, or else that the Government should either buy or supervise the sale of skins where the sellers do not hold licenses. I hope that something in this direction will be done. I have merely put forward the matter from the point of view of my own district, but I wish to say that I resent the action of the hon. member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) on a matter upon which I am in complete agreement with him, in taking the opportunity to pass round some of those uncouth remarks for which he is notorious.

I think he might have left those remarks out of an otherwise nice speech on a subject of which he showed some knowledge.

Mr. PRICE (Albany) : I do not intend to take up much time of the House on this question, but it is one that affects very closely a large number of the people I have the honour to represent. Some time ago a settler in the Albany electorate, living nearly sixty miles away from any centre of population, had occasion to apply to the department for permission to shoot kangaroos for merely food purposes and his application was absolutely refused. To-day that man goes in fear and trembling whenever he shoots a kangaroo for food purposes that he will be proceeded with under the Act, which provides for a maximum penalty of £20 for the first offence.

Hon. J. Mitchell : He does it all the same.

Mr. PRICE : But if a policeman catches him, he is liable to pay a penalty of £20. I am not concerned with the plea of the member for Pilbara that kangaroo shooters have to pay a license fee of £4, so much as I am with the fact that a large number of people are prevented from getting fresh meat. Attention was drawn early in the debate by the member for Murray-Wellington to the fact that considerable damage is done by the marsupials in the South-West. That is the case right throughout the district and it applies not only to kangaroos, but also to the opossums. Attention was drawn by the hon. member to the fact that orchards are severely attacked by these pests—they are nothing but pests—yet we find to-day that trappers and even the owners of orchards are absolutely precluded from trapping or in any way interfering with them. If a person does interfere with the pests, he is liable under Section 14 to a fine of £20 for the first offence and for a second offence imprisonment for six months or a fine of £100.

Hon. J. Mitchell : He can get permission.

Mr. PRICE : He cannot get permission. Will the hon. member take my

assurance that applications have been made for permits and they have been refused?

Hon. J. Mitchell: Well, the Minister is wrong.

Mr. PRICE: I have made application on behalf of a resident in my own district and it has been refused.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Then I apologise for the Minister.

Mr. PRICE: The only object I had in rising was to draw attention to the fact that the harm which is being done to the kangaroo shooters in the North-West is quite a minor matter compared with the harm that is being done to the settlers away from the centres of population throughout the South-West portion of the State, where first of all they have to put up with all the terrible damage done by the kangaroos to crops and fences, and then are precluded from shooting the game or using them in any way for food purposes. That is a position which I think should be altered by the Government at the very earliest possible date. The present Act is out of all reason, so far as the penalty clauses are concerned, in its application to the protection of this native game.

Mr. Heitmann: It has not effected much.

Mr. PRICE: I can assure the hon. member that the Act does affect the settlers much. The penalty sections are some of the most severe that can possibly be imagined for what is, after all, a trivial offence, when they provide a fine of £20 for the first offence and for the second offence a fine of £100 or six months imprisonment for shooting a kangaroo. But not only is the Act severe in regard to penalties. Subsection 2 of Section 13 reads—

In every prosecution under this Act an averment in the complaint that the person charged with the offence was an unlicensed person or employed an unlicensed person, or that the native game was taken or killed for sale or barter shall be deemed to be proved in the absence of proof to the contrary.

In other words, the very fact that a man is found with a kangaroo or a portion of a kangaroo in his possession is to constitute proof that he is guilty of an offence under this section.

Mr. Heitmann: It is as bad as sheep-stealing.

Mr. PRICE: It is worse than sheep-stealing. Then Section 14 provides that the very fact of a person having native game in his possession shall be taken as evidence of guilt, and for the first offence he may be fined £20 and for the second offence sent to prison for six months or fined £100.

The Premier: When was that Act passed?

Mr. Heitmann: In 1912.

Member: At seven o'clock in the morning.

Mr. PRICE: I may add that when it went through I was not present in the House. However, I hope that now the actual position in regard to the Act has been put forward, the Government will take an early opportunity of not only repealing the regulation, but of also repealing the Act and dealing with the preservation of native game in something like a rational manner.

On motion by Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister) debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 9.43 p.m.*