

done good work in connection with water supplies and many other things to help the settler on the land, and I hope that the Minister for Lands, in his zeal to protect the public from land speculators, will not desire to see those men who are on the land lose their holdings, or forfeit their land if they do not comply strictly with every provision laid down in the Act.

On motion by Mr. Munsie, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.23 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 17th July, 1912.

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

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: 1, Public Works Act, 1902; by-laws regulating traffic over the North Fremantle High Level Bridge. 2, Roads Act, 1902. Special by-law of the Black Range Road Board. 3, Annual report on Prisons for year ending 31st December, 1911. 4, Plan showing test bores at Fremantle Dock (asked for by Hon. M. L. Moss).

MOTION — WONGAN HILLS-MULLEWA RAILWAY SELECT COMMITTEE.

Extended powers.

Hon. R. J. LYNN (West): In the motion as handed to the Clerk yesterday, in

which Mr. Sommers moved for the appointment of a select committee to enquire into the Wongan Hills-Mullewa railway, no authority was given to the committee to adjourn from place to place. I beg to move—

That the Committee appointed by this honourable House yesterday, to enquire into the Wongan Hills-Mullewa railway, be authorised to adjourn from place to place.

The PRESIDENT: When I put the motion to the House I included these words "from place to place," but they were not on the paper that was handed to the Clerk.

Question put and passed.

SUPPLY—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew): I wish to make a statement for the information of hon. members so that they may not be taken un-awares. I propose to hold a sitting of the House to-morrow in order to introduce a Supply Bill, and I desire that it shall be passed through all its stages to-morrow.

Hon. M. L. Moss: Cannot you introduce it to-day?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Consequently, I think I should notify members of the House beforehand. The object of the Bill is to enable advances to be legally made to departments to pay salaries and wages per medium of field orders, and also to make payments on behalf of other Governments as requested, including the Home Government, such as the payment of Imperial pensions. Previously, such consent has never been obtained by our predecessors, they have gone on and spent the money, and practically it was illegal expenditure, but everything we do we propose to do constitutionally, and with that object in view, we will submit this Bill to-morrow for consideration.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: What are field orders?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Field orders are orders sent out for signature. There is an amount of money for the Railway Department, which may require

£40,000 placed to their credit. As the wages are paid the receipts come in and the account is revived. It does not interfere with the state of the account eventually as the account is balanced.

Hon. M. L. Moss: Is that the only business for to-morrow?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: So far it is.

Hon. M. L. Moss: Have you not got the Bill to-day?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Bill has to be submitted to another place. I could bring it down to-day, but I advised the Colonial Treasurer not to submit it to this House until members had had proper notification. Several members have returned to their homes and it would not be fair to bring the Bill forward without giving some notice at least. I beg to give notice that to-morrow I shall move for the suspension of Standing Orders, in order to enable a Supply Bill to be passed through all its stages.

QUESTION—FREMANTLE DOCK, CEMENT.

Hon. M. L. MOSS asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Was a contract made for the supply of cement for the Fremantle Dock? 2, If so, the quantity already delivered? 3, What is the quantity still undelivered? 4, What is the intention of the Government with regard to the quantity still undelivered?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, Yes. 2, 19,000 casks. 3, 51,000 casks. 4, There is sufficient demand in other Government works to absorb the balance in twelve or eighteen months.

QUESTION—LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ELECTORAL ROLLS.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Is it the intention of the Government to instruct the Chief Electoral Officer to enrol on the Legislative Council rolls of the respective Provinces the names of all persons whose names appear on the electoral lists of any Municipality or Road Board District, in respect of property within such province

of the annual rateable value of not less than £17, as provided by Subsections (5) and (6) of Section 15 of the Constitution Act Amendment Act, 1899? 2, If not, why not?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1 and 2, No instruction is necessary, because all persons having a ratepayer's qualification, as prescribed by Section 15 of the Constitution Act Amendment Act, 1899 (as amended by Act No. 31 of 1911), are enrolled on sending a claim to the registrar in accordance with Section 42 of the Electoral Act, 1907.

QUESTION — STATE STEAMSHIP SERVICES.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH asked the Colonial Secretary: Will he lay upon the Table of the House the file relating to the purchase by the Government of steamers for the North-West trade, and containing the opinion of the officers of the Crown Law Department on the constitutional aspect of such purchase.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: If the hon. member will move for the information in the usual way, the matter will then receive consideration.

QUESTION—WORKERS' HOMES.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, How many applications has the Workers' Homes Board received for advances under Part IV. of the Workers' Homes Act (freehold homes)? 2, How many of these have been granted? 3, How many refused? 4, Total amount advanced to date under Part IV. of this Act.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, Ninety-six. 2, Six up to date. 3, Two. 4, Three hundred and fifteen pounds.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eighth Day—Conclusion.

Debate resumed from the previous day on the Address-in-reply which had been amended on motion by Hon. M. L. Moss, to read as follows:—"May

it please your Excellency, We, the Legislative Council of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to protest against expenditure incurred by your Excellency's Ministers without an Act of Appropriation, such procedure being derogatory to the privileges of Parliament and subversive of the Constitution, while in addition thereto the proposal contained in Your Excellency's Speech, implying that a ratification by the Legislative Assembly of such unauthorised expenditure is sufficient in law, ignores the constitutional rights of the Legislative Council."

Hon. F. CONNOR (North): I promise not to detain the House very long as I think hon. members desire the motion to go to the vote, but when I was speaking on the amendment I omitted to refer to these new enterprises into which the Government are entering. I believe it is the fashion now to call them socialistic enterprises but I prefer to call them new enterprises. I think that when the Government get these ventures going, an alteration or an amendment of the Audit Act will be necessary. I hope the Government will bring down an amendment to the Audit Act whereby a balance sheet and an independent audit for each and every one of these enterprises will be available to both Houses of Parliament.

Hon. B. C. O'Brien: What do you call an independent audit?

Hon. F. CONNOR: A public audit. It means that we employ an auditor, or a firm of auditors, entirely independent to the ruling powers, which are the Government. Satisfaction would have to be given in the carrying out of these enterprises and the public should be satisfied as regards what is happening in every one of them.

Hon. B. C. O'Brien: Goodness gracious! What will you do with the Audit Department?

Hon. F. CONNOR: I ask that an independent audit should be provided for, and I hope that if the Government fail to do this, they will not take offence if any private member of either House

brings it forward. An amendment will be brought down by somebody, and if the Government will not do it, that is their province. Personally, I do not want to interfere with their province, but I think such an amendment should be a Government measure when it does come, and I hope that it will be carried. In my remarks the other night I referred to the price of cattle and the cost of marketing them, and I told hon. members the prices which cattle had brought on this market for the last few years. I shall now come nearer home, and tell hon. members what cattle brought at the sales at South Fremantle yesterday. Yesterday was the usual sales day, and cattle were marketed and sold under the hammer to the highest bidder. The lowest price for fat cattle was £6 7s. 6d. and the highest price was £10 17s. 6d. the average being £8 6s. 8d. per head. In the shipment of cattle to which I am referring, there was 629, and out of that number, quite 33 per cent. were inferior cattle or stores. None of these inferior cattle were included in the figures I am quoting at present, or I should say practically none of them. There were cattle in that shipment which had to be sold on long terms and at low prices. Taking the gross price at which the firms of Dalgety, and Elder Shenton sold this shipment yesterday, and taking the cost of the Government freight at £3 per head, the cost of bringing these cattle from the station and marketing them here will run into £4 15s. 2d., that gives the price for prime fat cattle at yesterday's sales as £3 11s. 6d.

Hon. B. C. O'Brien: Roughly speaking what was the weight of the cattle?

Hon. F. CONNOR: Close on 600lbs. Will hon. members tell me how the Government are going to cheapen the price of meat under those conditions, and when the stores are sold and the averages of the shipment made up, it will be found that the price will be considerably below £3 per head, and for better cattle, too, than the Government can bring down. It was the higher price that I quoted when I spoke before, the average having been £7 10s. during the past four years, and it will be seen

now therefore that the price has risen. If the Government succeed in bringing down the price of beef, what are they going to give the small man for his cattle. The steamers were not bought so much to reduce the price of meat as to help the small man, and it looks as if the small man were going to get about £2 10s. for his cattle on the station. If the Government reduce the price of beef materially the small man will get nothing. Hon. members who have studied this question will know that I am talking facts. There was one lot of fat cattle sold yesterday, good prime beef, at £6 7s. 6d. per head, and it was a comparatively good sale. How much is the grower going to get? He pays £4 15s. to bring the cattle down and market them, and he will receive £1 12s. 4d. per head, and that is if there is no mortality, but the mortality risk has to be taken off. The whole thing is absurd, and will not hold water to work on; yet that was the position yesterday. Now I come to to-day, when sheep sales were held at the Government yards at North Fremantle, and, I think, judging from the results, I would feel inclined to patronise the Government Yards at North Fremantle in future, because mutton fetched there up to 10d. a pound. The lowest price paid was 7½d., and the average 8½d. If prime beef sells at 3½d. a pound and mutton fetches 7½d. and as much at 10d., I want to know why there is a row about beef and no row about mutton. I have said this before, but it will bear repetition. There have been five steamers purchased, the "Wexford," the "Una," the "Darius," the "Mongolia," and the "Euryalus," and on this subject an excellent leading article appeared in the goldfields paper, the *Kalgoorlie Miner*, commending the purchase of the ships, which the article went on to say might be useful in case of war. I am going further, and will ask the Government to purchase plates in order to armour-plate the ships, and then we shall have the commencement of a Western Australian navy. When that takes place very little will be required to arm the vessels, because our trades hall guns and political guns will be numerous

enough to assist in equipping the fleet. I think the best purpose to which this fleet can be put, and certainly the most effective way of making the vessels useful will be to convert them into submarines. I was walking along the street with a friend of mine, and while passing a butcher's shop, I thought of the quotations for beef which the leader of the House told us about the other evening, and I asked my friend to accompany me into the shop and look at the goods which were for sale. I have wrapped up here something of what we saw.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I rise to a point of order. I think the hon. member is out of place; he should be in the dining room.

The PRESIDENT: I have a precedent for the introduction of an exhibit in debate, in the famous dagger scene of Edmund Burke in the British House of Commons, and the production of that dagger as an exhibit proved a failure in the debate. There is no point of order.

Hon. F. CONNOR: This will not prove a failure because it is very eatable. I went into the shop with my friend and we looked round but did not take the best or the worst of the exhibits. We saw this particular exhibit in the shop marked for sale. It was 5½ pounds, of very prime brisket beef, and the price of it was 1s. 10d. and here is the ticket. I paid for the beef and borrowed the ticket.

Hon. R. G. ARDAGH: What did it cost to produce that beast at Kimberley?

Hon. F. CONNOR: I have told hon. members the price of beef at Kimberley, and also informed them that the prices did not pay the grower.

The PRESIDENT: The exhibit can be placed on the Table.

Hon. F. CONNOR: I was going to ask for permission to place it on the Table, but I thought I might have been ruled out of order. I have said all I wanted to say, and I have proved the figures which I gave the other night by making comparisons. I trust now that the Government will bring down an amendment of the Audit Act, so that the people may see, in the manner which I have already explained, what each of these

individual enterprises will cost the country, and show what profit, if any profit there is to be, has resulted. It would be altogether unfair for the Government to embark on enterprises of this description without having to pay income tax. Would that be fair competition to people who have put all their capital into the development of similar industries in this country? I do hope that if a profit is made that at least the people who are in similar businesses will be placed on a similar footing as the Government.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN (South-East): I am sure it must be gratifying to the mover of the amendment which was carried last night to find that there have already been results. The Colonial Secretary has informed this House that though previous Governments expended certain moneys without Parliamentary authority, his Government have decided that everything shall be done constitutionally. It is exceedingly gratifying to find that this order dates from our debate on Mr. Moss' amendment. When speaking to the amendment I mentioned that I had a few things to bring before the House and especially before the leader of the House, which it would not be well to mingle with contentious matter. I want first to ask the Minister to impress upon his colleague, the Minister for Lands, two or three things, for some of which, there is no blame attachable to the Minister or to the Government. A case came under my notice a fortnight ago in which a very great improvement could be made in administration. Lands were classified for sale, and thrown open; the selector took up two portions adjoining, the one classified at 5s. per acre and the other at 13s. per acre, largely because it had a fine supply of jam timber for fencing. When he got his approval he went to take possession, and found that all the jam trees had disappeared. A man claiming to have a permit from the forestry department to cut timber had cut and removed the jam timber between the date of the selector's application and the date of approval. Now, I do not think it would be possible to prove blame either on the part of the department or on the part

of the selector, but I want to point out that it would be well, and a very simple preventive, if when lands were classified they were to be closed against timber cutting. It would mean little or no hardship upon anybody, and it would prevent such injustice to the settler as happened in this case. The selector has placed his case before the department, to see what remedy there may be; if it is proved that the cutter held the permit, there is no remedy against him, and if he did not hold a permit there might still be no remedy.

Hon. M. L. Moss: Does not a permit authorise a man to cut anywhere in the State?

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: Anywhere on Crown lands?

Hon. M. L. Moss: Then you would never be able to proceed against him.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: No, but a simple remedy lies in removing classified land from the permit; that could easily be arranged by regulation. Another suggestion I wish to make to the Minister for Lands, through the leader of the House, is that he should give attention to the Denmark settlement. I have recently been there, and looked into the distress of many of the settlers on that concession. I am not blaming the Government; the time for blame is past, or rather the mistakes are over, but unless some relief is found for the settlers on that estate I do not see how any of them, certainly very few, will be able to retain their holdings. The first trouble was that such high prices were placed on the lands that only men who knew nothing of values would take them up, and most of the selectors were of that stamp—new-comers, who knew nothing about the land, and goldfields men who had not been acquainted with land before, and who, in such circumstances are always incapable of judging land values. Now this concession was largely settled from those two sources, and lands were taken up at fabulous prices, but to-day, the whole estate is in this condition—that unless the Government interpose it is impossible for any but a very few of those men to maintain themselves on their holdings. There is an

other feature; the Government own nearly the whole of the township, and all those buildings, with perhaps two or three exceptions, have been condemned by the health authorities; rightly so, but the government simply sit back, and take no action.

The Colonial Secretary: Are they occupied?

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: Some of them are occupied and some are not, but I do not say this is a case for careful inquiry with a view to doing justice and rectifying a wrong in connection with that estate.

Hon. F. Davis: On what grounds were they condemned?

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: As being unfit for habitation.

Hon. F. Davis: For what reasons?

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: On account of their dilapidated condition.

Hon. F. Davis: They must have become dilapidated very quickly; I saw them at Christmas, and they were all right then.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: That is the position now, at any rate; and I, in a most friendly way, commend the matter for inquiry, in order that the best may be done for settlers who have been wronged, and most of whom are doing their best. I want to say a further word to the Minister for Lands, through the Colonial Secretary. I find on the Table his new regulations with regard to town and suburban lots. It is hardly necessary to point out to this House that these regulations mean an unwise straining of executive authority. The Government, it appears, have made up their mind to terminate the granting of freehold, and to bring about leasehold estate; had the Government brought down a Bill amending the Land Act, and put their policy in a manful way before Parliament, well and good; it would then have rested with Parliament, and public opinion behind Parliament, to say that the Government were wrong, but the Government, instead, by a new regulation, stopped the sale of town and suburban lots. That is a high-handed action, and I hold an illegal one. I maintain that if anyone who desires to

purchase a town lot chooses to put down his deposit and ask for the lot to be put up for auction, it would have to be put up, or the Government would be liable to very serious litigation. Now the Government, gratuitously, without urgency or need, tabled new regulations, gazetted them, and acted upon them. In view of the announcement of the leader of the House about constitutional procedure, why did not the Government submit their proposed change to Parliament? What was the hurry? If a few town and suburban lots were sold in the meantime, what great harm could be done by a little further acting under the old condition of things? Would it not be the only manly course to bring down a Bill covering the change that the Government desired to effect? I want to say that the Government should now, as soon as possible, deal with this matter.

The Colonial Secretary: They propose to do so.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: If the Government can get Parliament to approve of the change from freehold to leasehold as the policy of this country, well and good; but while the thing is in suspense an immense amount of injury is being done in the way that the Government do not appreciate. The champions of the Government have said, "Why, in spite of our announcement of the leasehold policy, there have been quite as many applications for country lands as before." Can we not understand that their announcement might even cause a rush of applicants to get in before the change could be made? This undoubtedly has been one effect of their announcement that they would, at some time, bring in a Bill to end the sale of Crown lands, and substitute a leasehold system. The first impulse would be for those who intended to select land to rush in and get the freehold while they could; that, no doubt, accounts for the fact that the applications for country lots have not, in the aggregate, fallen off. But what about the effect upon those who do not know the circumstances? When news of the intended change went to the Eastern States and Great Britain, the people there would

conclude that, before they could get to Western Australia and select, the change might be effected. I am satisfied this has had a considerable effect already in the other States and in the Motherland. "But," Ministers say, "look at the number of immigrants we are still securing in spite of our policy." But nearly all those immigrants were contracted for before any fear of disturbance got abroad.

The Colonial Secretary : Oh, no.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN : Nearly all. One Minister has boasted, "Why, we have more applications for nominated passages than ever before ; there is a most unprecedented rush to nominate immigrants." But, the Minister did not add, "I brought that about by announcing that after a certain date the passage money would be multiplied by three." Would not the natural effect of that be to bring about a rush for the time being ? Surely Ministers can understand that any condition of uncertainty must have a damaging effect, especially on populations at a distance. People who hear rumours of revolutionary changes, and are not near enough to gauge how much they mean, naturally say they will take no risks, and people who have been contemplating coming to our shores or investing in our country have been prejudiced against coming. I hope the Minister is right in saying that soon Parliament will have an opportunity of saying yes or no to their proposed change. Now I want to say a word for the Minister to convey to the Railway Department. Most people think that as time goes on life grows faster ; now in the Railway Department we become more and more leisurely, and I want the Minister to ask the department to let us have a little more activity, and a little more time-saving. Speaking of our old railway service, we had a daily train that ran from Perth to Katanning in eleven hours, and back again in eleven hours. There were frequent complaints about late trains ; and it would appear that the Commissioner must have asked, "How much are they late," and the answer was, "Sometimes as much as two hours," and the Commissioner brought in a

remedy. / What was it ? It was to lengthen the time table by two hours. I have heard of a boy in school who was kept in twice for being a quarter of an hour late, and he suggested to the teacher that the trouble could be got over by opening the school a quarter of an hour late. That is the policy of the Commissioner of Railways. He has put a couple of hours on to the time table ; and instead of an occasional train being late, now they are all late this two hours. Really people have not the time. It is all very well for life insurance agents or commercial travellers, because they can do a lot of business on the way—there is time at most of the stations to run in a few clients—but the customers of the railway, the general travellers, would like to have a little more expedition. Now I am coming down to a small matter. I want the Minister in the interests of the health of the passengers to say to the Commissioner that the time has come when every train must have at least one lavatory on it. Not only is it a matter of health, but in some cases it is a matter of life. There are a number of journeys, especially on the agricultural lines, which occupy a considerable part of the day. This matter is a small one, but it is a serious one. Along with that I would like to ask what idiocy has come to play to make the sanitary compartments padded cells without pads. One would think that the passengers had gone mad. They are put into little cells absolutely without any reason whatsoever. Now one other matter in connection with the railways. I think the time has come for a further general reduction of freights, especially on the agricultural lines.

The Colonial Secretary : We have made a big reduction already.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN : There is a reduction in the shilling terminal charge which had some rhyme or reason about it because it represented a real expense in working the district lines, but that is such a trivial thing, that 1s. per ton terminal charge ; it is practically an unappreciable reduction to the bulk of those using the railways.

The Colonial Secretary: It is a big item to the farmers.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: It means the merest fraction on each invoice, and it represented a real expense to the department, because otherwise these railway extensions were treated as part of the whole length of the line, which was a great thing for us on those agricultural lines. What I am pointing out is, however, that it is a long time since freights were reduced. Every year brings such an increase in the volume of business as to justify periodical revision of freights. What I am afraid of is that the profits that have been made—and, I think, unduly made; because freights have been unduly kept up—are apt to go to other things though the first claim upon them is the lowering of freights. I have no sympathy with the common talk about helping this man and helping that man; but here is a true business arrangement that the customers of the railways have the right to demand. The railways are not merely common carriers, they are Government instruments for the opening up of the country, and on those lines no profits should be made; that is to say, all freight and charges should be cut to the lowest that the service will allow. Now the time has come for the further revision of freights, and that is the best possible way to encourage settlement of the country, that is, to carry the produce of the settler at the lowest possible rate. Now I am coming to two or three general matters. First, I would like a little light with regard to the management of the Government steamers. The Government, in starting a new service, on which the eyes of the whole country will be, will naturally say, "We must have the best possible manager we can get." I do not say they have not a good man; but if they have, it is by good luck rather than by good management. In the first place, they offered a salary which warned off capable men in the country. The manager, according to the advertisement, was to begin with £360 with a maximum, no matter how good he might be, that would never be more than £480. That was the advertisement, £360 with

the utmost hope that he might rise to £480. What kind of manager did the Government expect to get for that?

Hon. J. Cornell: A pretty good man. He had opportunities.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: Did the Government consider what salaries were being paid to men in corresponding positions in private enterprises? Did they consider this for a moment? No. The Government are from the forecastle, rather than from the bridge, and they fixed the salary accordingly. That is their idea of management. They offered this manager a clerk's salary. I do not know how many applicants they had, I do not know how good the man they got may be, but I know, and everyone who knows anything of business knows, that if they had offered a proper salary there would have been many applicants that would never dream of going in for £360. But the most remarkable part of it has yet to come. The papers are on the Table of the House, and what do they show? They show that on the 13th June the Government notified the manager of his appointment, not at £360, but at £480. Now, I say this was an utter injustice to other applicants, or other qualified men who would have been applicants. They go behind their own offer, with no notification to the public, and they offer this man the maximum sum of £480.

Hon. J. Cornell: They thought he was worth it.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: That is bad enough, but there is worse still behind it. The officer received the appointment in that first letter I mentioned for six months on probation, subject to medical examination. That was on the 13th June. On the same day—indeed, it is doubtful which letter reached him first—he got another letter saying this:—

In pursuance of my letter of even date, advising you of your appointment as business manager of the State Steamship Service Department, I beg to inform you that the Government guarantees—

No Public Service Commissioner about it, "Government guarantees"—

that if your services prove satisfactory

your appointment will at any time during the term of probation be made for a period of not less than five years at an increased rate of salary.

Now, I say that this is a breach of the Public Service Act ; it is utterly unjust to other possible applicants ; it is an unheard-of piece of usurpation of power by Ministers of the Crown.

The Colonial Secretary : He is not under the Public Service Act.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN : How can the Ministers of the day promise a five years' appointment ?

The Colonial Secretary : How did the James Government promise it ?

Hon. J. F. CULLEN : Two wrongs do not make one right, even if it be proved that the James Government did wrong.

Hon. W. Kingsmill : They did it by legislation.

Hon. M. L. Moss : If we admit that principle, Ministers can appoint a man for 20 years, and for breach of contract he may land the country into thousands of pounds for compensation.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN : The leader of the House has said this man is not going to be under the Public Service Act. How does he know ? At present he has no Act protecting him or covering him whatever. Who is to guarantee him his next year's salary, supposing the present Government are out of office ? Not the Ministers. I say it is a high-handed and gratuitous and foolish over-stretching of the powers of Government, and an utterly unjust over-stretching ; because they first limited the applicants by offering a clerk's salary, and then, after they fixed on one man, they gave him very much more than had been offered to the public. Altogether it is a piece of gratuitous blundering, and I do not see how any explanation or defence can be made for it. Now, I want to take up this excursion of the Government's into State socialism on somewhat broader grounds. Why cannot Ministers have the courage of their policy ; and why can they not in a manly, open way tell Parliament and the country what they are really aiming at ? What are we to expect by this hasty and rash purchase of steamers ? May we take

Mr. Cornell as a fair exponent of the Government's mind and intentions ? There is no beating about the bush with Mr. Cornell. He tells the House that every action by a union is only a stepping stone to more. That is to say there is to be no limit. In other words, they are going for the abolition of the employer.

Hon. J. Cornell : Certainly ; I repeat it.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN : That is honest. It may be stark foolishness, but it is honest and emphatic. They are going for the abolition of the employer. Now, are the Government going for that ?

Hon. J. W. Kirwan : I think you should give notice of that question.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN : If they are not, how are they going to justify this little excursion into the steam carrier industry ? It has already been proved by speakers opposing the Government's point of view that the real difficulty in the trade is not between Fremantle and Wyndham, but between Fremantle and Perth. It is not on the sea, but on the land. Are these steamers going to be fitted with wheels so that they may do the land business ?

The Colonial Secretary : I will show you that it is on the land too.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN : So far the speakers on the Government side have not shown very much, and least of all have they attempted to show any difficulty at sea. The difficulty is between Fremantle and the consumer. What could be less contestable than the case put up by Mr Connor ? Would the Government have beef sold at less than from 2½d. to 3½d. ? How is the grower to live ? Would the Government enter into the business to kill the grower ? Could they give the grower less than from 2½d. to 3½d. ? It appears to me the Government have started on the sea, and that they are considerably at sea when they ought to be on the land. The funny part of it is that this urgent rush to get boats has only this result : that while the bullocks are being fattened somewhere, the first boat ready has to go on tramp and carry for a boss buccaneer. I do not think the hardest fate could have been more cruel to the Gov-

ernment. The rash beginning has come to the humiliation of tramp service to a boss buccaneer, not in bullocks, certainly, but in sheep. However, any little episode of that sort is only serious by what it means. Are the Government really settled in their policy of State socialism?

Hon. J. Cornell: State capitalism.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: Have they really studied the question? What is going to come of it? Are they hoping that they may get legislation to secure them in the market and kill the private employer in one act, or do they seriously think they can compete with the private employer? In the matter of railway building they have taken the bull by the horns and said "We will ensure our own safety. We are taking care that we will never be beaten by the private capitalist. We will never let him have any railways to build, and so we can say, look how cheaply we build these lines, there is nothing to compare with it." Are Ministers prepared in connection with brickmaking, sawmilling, and steamer running, are they going to bring in legislation to give them a monopoly, and if not do they really dream of being able to compete with private enterprise? They can only do it by charging the deficit to the general taxpayer, not openly, but under cover.

Hon. J. Cornell: What is your authority?

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: It is always done. Even in connection with the steamers we have it openly said that it would not seriously matter if, for a time, they were run at a loss; that is to say, the general taxpayer would have to pay. It is the only chance for State socialism on a small scale, that its faults and deficits can be hidden and covered. There has not been a single work carried out by day labour by any Government in connection with which the public have had the full facts. Parliament may call for returns, and when the returns come most vital items are missing from the pages, specifications have been watered down to suit, or items of expenditure omitted altogether. It stands to reason that the private employer can do better than the

Government every time. He will always get more work done than will the Government, and I suggest to Ministers that they will do much better with a little bit of State socialism than with a lot; because while they have the general taxpayer to come to the rescue and bear the brunt they can cover up the faults and deficits. But the dream that if all were in the Government pay, a few hours per day would suffice for working, and we would all do what we pleased, and be as happy as Larry, is the most childish, puerile and hopeless delusion that any man can cherish. I am not going to further labor this position, but I ask Ministers to very seriously consider what they are entering upon and to be very careful of what they are in for. They might run the steamers on tramp service, carrying a cargo of coal now, and a cargo of the boss buccaneers' sheep another time; but how paltry and humiliating a come-down from what was put before the electors as a catch-cry last September and October—the cheapening of meat—the Government of the country coming down to tramp service to the boss buccaneers! The thing is humiliating. I want to say a few words as to the defence of their policy put forward by the Government. It is always wise for Cabinet, whatever they decide to say, that all should agree to say the same thing. That is the first canon of safety. The amusing part of the Government's defence just now is that the Governor's Speech declared that steamers had been purchased, and that one House of Parliament would be asked to ratify and approve that purchase. The Speech practically admits the need for some ratification. It does not say where the money is coming from, but it says distinctly that the Government would not be quite comfortable until they got ratification and approval. When the Colonial Secretary answered Mr. Moss, he said that this was a mistake.

The Colonial Secretary: I did not say it was a mistake.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: No, not in those words. What the Minister said was that the Speech did not mean what anybody would think it meant; it did not mean

that the Government were asking for ratification or approval at all of this steamer purchase.

The Colonial Secretary : I said it was not asking for an appropriation.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN : We are told that it referred to consequent expenditure, upkeep, oil, cotton waste and the like—that that was what it referred to. This is exactly the force of the Colonial Secretary's defence. He said it did not refer to the steamer purchase at all, that that had been passed ; that it referred to anything the Government might want later, and that they would like an appropriation for oil and waste, but not for steamers, that they were a mere detail. Now, when the hon. Mr. Dodd came to follow after the Colonial Secretary, he knew, because he has some clearness of head, that this defence would not hold water. So he set to work on the lines followed in the Speech, and admitted that there would have to be a ratification. But the funny part was his quotation. He quoted from an eminent authority. There is no disputing that. But so is the multiplication table an eminent authority—and the one has about as much application to Mr. Moss's charge as has the other. Mr. Dodd read extracts giving precedents for the using of contingency money or Treasury advance, whichever you like to call it, for the very things it was intended to cover, unforeseen expenditure, urgent demands on lines that Ministers knew Parliament would approve. That is all right. No one disputes that. But the point here was that Ministers used that Treasury advance for a big object which they knew in their hearts Parliament would not approve, and it was because of the knowledge that Parliament would not approve it they sneaked the money from the Treasury advance and put it to their unlawful and unconstitutional purposes.

Hon. M. L. Moss : Are you sure it was paid out of the Treasury advance ?

Hon. J. F. CULLEN : Well assuming that it was. Neither the Minister in charge of the House nor Mr. Dodd attempted to answer the gravamen of Mr. Moss' charge.

Hon. J. Dodd (Honorary Minister) : You made the accusation, and it is for your party to prove that it is unconstitutional. That they cannot do.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN : To my satisfaction Mr. Moss proved it, and no Minister has attempted to answer Mr. Moss's arguments. They have tried to slip away by quoting something applicable to something else, merely because it was a good author quoted from. I have some suspicion that the same accident happened to Mr. Dodd with these extracts as in the case of that other one which he desired to quote from the late Mr. Throssell's speech, namely, that his typist turned over too many leaves and read the wrong page. Now, I think the preparer of his brief was preparing him to answer something very different from the charges made in the House. Everybody admits the Government must have a contingency vote, and must use it for excesses over votes.

Hon. J. Dodd (Honorary Minister) : It is a very paltry statement to make.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN : Well, every member is entitled to his own opinion. It is essential that the Government should have contingency money at hand for excesses over votes, for urgent and unseen demands on lines that Ministers know from precedent Parliament could not reasonably object to. No one disputes that. But they have not answered Mr. Moss's charge at all. Knowing that one House of the Legislature would not approve of the expenditure, why did Ministers go behind the back of Parliament, why allow the first session to go by without submitting the trading Bill ? And when Parliament closed, why go behind the back of Parliament and take the Treasurer's advance money for something they knew Parliament would object to. There has been no answer to that. Furthermore, the real gravamen of the charge which one hon. member tried to burk by a point of order, is this : that the Government pretended to believe that it would be only necessary to get ratification from one House of Parliament instead of from both. Remember, it was not the spending of £60,000 but the introduction of an

absolutely new policy contradicting the whole policy of the country in the past. There has been no attempt to answer that except by the hon. member who tried to burk it, and who really suggested that Ministers might hide themselves under the vice-regal table. Possibly, when the leader of the House gets up he may be able to give an answer to Mr. Moss's charge.

The Colonial Secretary: It is too late now.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: Not to the country if the Minister has any answer. I have heard a Minister who knew he had no answer to a charge, take a lot of trouble to get himself ruled out of order. The leader of the House will not do that, I am sure. If he has an answer let him bring it before the House and the country. Why do the Government, knowing this House would not endorse the steamer policy, let a session go by and start in the recess. Why did the Government say, "We do not need the approval of this from the Legislative Council, but only from the Legislative Assembly"? What has the Minister to say in defence of these two gross breaches of constitutional practice? Possibly the Minister will tell us that, although the steamers cannot possibly reduce the price of carcase meat at Fremantle, the Government may get their point by opening butchers' shops. I hope Ministers, if they have any such idea, will not, without very grave consideration and consultation of Parliament, become traders in butchers' meat. I heard to-day that one shop had been taken—I do not know whether that is true—and I actually had a copy of the Ministerial notice, or what purports to be a copy, supplied to me. I do not know whether it is authentic.

The Colonial Secretary: A dodge.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: Yes. I do not know if it is authentic, but I will give the House the benefit of it. It reads this way—

O Yes! O Yes! O Yes!

Stop ye wago-slaves. Look both ways at once:

Bullock beef for the million at million prices

Best fish in the world; Stingray always on hand.

Roll up ye women and men,
Cockies, swaggies, mothers-of-ten,
Fatten your £5 girls and boys
On Government sausage, tripe, and
saveloys.

Our motto: Sell under cost and live on the volume of trade.

There might have been a better motto: Sell under cost and charge the cost to the tax-payers. It goes on to say—

N.B.—Whilst the first shipment of bullocks are fattening, the "Kwinana" will go on "tramp" under hire to a boss buccaneer.

Hon. J. E. Dodd (Honorary Minister): Who is the author?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew): An analysis of the debate which has been in progress during the last fortnight ought to convince any un-biassed person that if the Government have been guilty of any sins of omission or commission they cannot be of a particularly heinous character. There has been wholesale condemnation of certain phases of the Government policy, for instance, there has been very strong condemnation of the steamer purchase. We have also been accused of an attempt to make an inroad on the rights and privileges of this House, but apart from these, the charges levelled against us have not been of a very serious nature. The Trades Hall grant has been criticised, but members have forgotten the fact that the question will be submitted for consideration in due form. A lot of irrelevant matters have been imported into the discussion, for instance, Mr. Justice Higgins received a certain amount of notice, and a very refined phrase, which was first uttered by a gentleman who is extremely biassed against the Judge, was given circulation in Western Australia. Mr. King O'Malley's experience with the lumpers was trotted out, and some members dealt at length with the Brisbane strike and Andrew Fisher's Administration. We had newspaper cuttings of what this Labour man had said in the Eastern States, and what that Labour man said, all having

absolutely no bearing on the question under discussion, so that anyone who has studied the matter impartially cannot but come to the conclusion that when members resort to material of this kind they must have very few sticks indeed to throw at the Labour Government in Western Australia. Mr. Moss was very severe in his treatment of the Ministry. He laid himself out to state his case with all the vigour, energy, and eloquence at his command. He was caustic enough in all conscience, but what of Mr. Cullen? That honourable gentleman strove to blast and wither us up with one breath. He gave Mr. Dodd and myself clearly to understand what we might expect in this Chamber if the administration of the Government was not according to his particular ideas. I do not know whether he was speaking from inside information, or whether he had consulted other members of the Chamber, but there was a clear indication from his remarks that unless we applied our pens to our departmental files in accordance with his own ideas, we should receive a very hot time from members of this House. That is a very peculiar attitude for any member to take up, and it is a very ugly sword indeed to be hanging over myself and my colleague in this Chamber. Should the thread break and the sword fall, I only hope the consequences will not be so serious as we might be led to apprehend. Mr. Moss has repeatedly asked in this House for information as to what the Government propose to do with reference to the Savings Bank, and he has received on every occasion a somewhat similar reply—

Hon. M. L. Moss : A somewhat evasive reply.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : That the matter was under consideration. I very much regret indeed that I cannot at this stage supply any further information to this Chamber. Negotiations are still pending with a view to a friendly settlement, and it would be a great mistake if any statement were made as to the nature of the negotiations in view of the fact that such statement might lead to a rupture in the negotiations. I can assure members

that the Government are even more closely interested in the matter than the members of the Legislative Council. We recognise that it is of the utmost importance that we should have under our control the funds of the Government Savings Bank, and we intend to take every possible step in order to preserve the rights of Western Australia in that particular respect. Should we lose control of those funds, there is not the slightest doubt we should be very severely handicapped in carrying out our policy. If the Federal Government take charge of these funds and we have not a large share in the control of them, it will be a very serious matter for us as a Labour Government.

Hon. M. L. Moss : I am glad you recognise the gravity of it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : I will give an instance of the value of the Savings Bank funds. During the last four months £193,000 was lent by the Agricultural Bank and the whole of that money came from the Government Savings Bank, and 445 persons participated in the loan. Should any hitch occur in the negotiations, and, so far as we can see there is not much probability; but should any hitch occur we are prepared, with a week's notice or a fortnight's notice, to enter into competition with the Federal State Bank; but I do not think members require me to give every detail. It is undesirable at the present stage, but if it becomes necessary we are fully prepared to meet the situation. It was stated during the course of the debate that the Labour party in Western Australia were unificationists. That statement was made by Mr. Moss, and it was a most unwarranted statement, from my experience. I know hundreds of Labour men in Western Australia who are strongly opposed to unification. They feel that the Federal authority should have control of national affairs, but when it comes to matters of domestic concern the State Parliament should have full control. If the Federal Parliament had full control of the whole of the Australian States, I am afraid the development of the resources of the States would not have full attention.

There is no doubt, however, that the feeling in favour of unification is growing in Western Australia, and it is growing right through Australia, and the reason for it has been clearly explained by Mr. Dodd. The attitude of the various Legislative Councils towards the various democratic measures has given a greater fillip to the feeling in favour of unification than anything else I know of. Mr. Lynn pointed out the necessity for deepening the Fremantle harbour. This matter was brought before my notice by the Fremantle Harbour Trust, and I at once recognised the necessity for taking steps, and I have asked the Public Works Department to supply me with an estimate of the cost of the work. When that estimate is received the matter will be presented to Cabinet, and will receive prompt consideration. Mr. Connolly spoke in defence of the establishment of the aborigines cattle station. There was no necessity whatever for that. I uttered not one word of condemnation of the action of the Wilson Government in purchasing that particular property, but at the same time I will say that it was purchased altogether without Parliamentary authority, and up to the present the sanction of the Legislature has not been secured for that purchase. Mr. Connolly stated that the establishment of this station had put a stop to the wholesale imprisonment of natives. We have no evidence to prove that that is the case. I can tell members what put a stop to the wholesale imprisonment of natives. The previous Government introduced an amendment to the Aborigines Act during the year 1911, and made provision that no plea of guilty should be accepted from an aboriginal native who was being tried for an offence except with the consent of a protector. The result is, although cattle stealing is going on, it is useless to prosecute in view of this particular amendment unless pastoralists whose cattle have been killed will come and give evidence. I strongly approve of the action taken by the previous Government, because I recognise, and have discovered, that if a native is accused of an offence in a Court of Justice, in nine cases out of ten whether innocent or

guilty, he will plead guilty. The Wilson Government decided to amend the law, and wisely so, and the position now is, that before an aboriginal native can be convicted of an offence, evidence must be given against him establishing his guilt beyond all doubt. That is the reason why the gaols in the North-West are empty, and why the country has been saved, as Mr. Connolly stated, no less than £4,000 a year.

Hon. R. D. McKenzie: Is cattle-spearing as prevalent now as it was?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is very prevalent, but not in the immediate vicinity of the station, and only recently I decided to establish another killing dépôt, within about 150 miles of Moolabulla station. Judging by the speeches of some members, there seems to be a suspicion that the Government is hostile to immigration, but I can assure them there is no justification for arriving at that conclusion. During last year 4,617 nominated immigrants arrived in Western Australia, and 4,984 assisted immigrants were introduced into the State, or a total of 9,601, with a capital of £67,168. During the previous year, 1,442 nominated, and 6,164 assisted, or a total of 7,606 immigrants, with a total capital of £42,784, arrived in the State. Members might say that a lot of these had been arranged for by the previous Government, and that the present Government would not have brought them out. I want to meet that position. The nominations now reach an average of 160 a week, or at the rate of 8,320 a year, with our sanction, and with our approval.

Hon. M. L. Moss: Has the passage fare been increased?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It has been increased, in order to make it uniform with the rates agreed to by the other States.

Hon. M. L. Moss: Why?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: We were approached on the matter, uniformity was desired, good grounds were stated for adopting a uniform rate, and we fell in with the proposition.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: How much is the increase?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I can not give the amount. There was a discussion at the Premiers' conference, and as a result a conclusion was arrived at, and we fell into line with what was agreed upon by the various Premiers at that conference.

Hon. F. Connor: Why did you close the Melbourne agency?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: At present there are 4,370 nominated immigrants awaiting shipment.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: That is under the old rate, I presume.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Partly under the old rate, and partly under the new rate. I want to point out the accumulation when we took office, and the accumulation to-day. The accumulation at present is 4,370, or 234 more than when we took office. Members might say that we are simply bringing out immigrants arranged for by the previous Government, but the position is that we have an accumulation of 234 more than were arranged for on the 7th October last. We are not opposed to immigration, but we have thoroughly decided that we will not create an unemployed difficulty. While it is possible to absorb these immigrants, and while they are being absorbed, we shall have no hesitation in continuing the policy inaugurated by the previous Ministry, but at the same time should an unemployed difficulty be threatened, or should we clearly see that there is a danger in introducing large numbers of immigrants into Western Australia, we shall not hesitate to take proper action.

Hon. F. Connor: Will you send for King O'Malley?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The meat question created a considerable amount of discussion, and Mr. Connor asked why the Government have bought these boats; he also said that the small man is not debarred from shipping cattle, and that there is no monopoly in the business. I will tell the hon. member what used to occur and what would probably have continued to occur if the influence of the Government had not been felt. The big men used to charter boats; they had full control of the space; they

made contracts with small men, and very one-sided contracts they were; they would make these contracts twelve months in advance, and would have the option to take a certain number of cattle, or to take none at all if it did not suit them.

Hon. F. Connor: That is not true.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: They could take them at their own price.

Hon. F. Connor: That is not true.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That was the position, and I say it was a very one-sided contract. Only five months ago we had 500 head of cattle from the aborigines' station, and we wanted to bring them to Fremantle. Connor, Doherty & Durack, Ltd., offered £3 7s. 6d. per head for these cattle, at Wyndham; Phillips offered us £3 10s., at the same place, and endeavoured to arrange freight, but Connor, Doherty & Durack quoted £4 a head, although I think Mr. Connor stated, in the course of his speech, that a fair rate was £2 7s. 6d. However, Connor, Doherty & Durack's quotation to Phillips, for bringing down our cattle, was £4 a head, and consequently the deal between the Government and Phillips was declared off, and the cattle had to remain in the East Kimberley district, and they will have to stay there until the Government boat brings them down next month. That is our experience, and, from information I have gleaned from a responsible officer in the department, that has been the experience of small holders in the Kimberley district. Mr. Connor advocated freezers, but in his evidence given before the Royal Commission on meat supply, in 1908, he stated that the large holders had 125,000 head of cattle in the East Kimberley district, and the small holders only from 30,000 to 50,000 head of cattle.

Hon. F. Connor: That is ancient history, anyhow.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is not so long since—only 3½ years. The freezers contemplated would cost not less than £100,000, a water supply would have to be provided, large buildings would have to be erected, and triplicate parts provided for.

Hon. F. Connor: That is wrong.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That is taken from the evidence given by Mr. Cairns, who is an expert. Suppose we went to the expense of erecting these freezers at Wyndham, what position would we be in? We would be at the mercy of the large holders, who control the great bulk of the cattle in the East Kimberley district. The small holders would not have sufficient stock to keep a freezer that would cost £100,000 going, and the erection of a freezer of that magnitude will be necessary because canning operations will have to be carried on. Supposing the large holders refuse for some reason or other to patronise the freezers, what position would the Government be in? Members might say that they will not do it, but how can we say definitely that they will not? The question of erecting freezers at Wyndham is one for very serious consideration, and the Government will require something more than an assurance of support from the large holders of cattle in that part of the State.

Hon. F. Connor: It is not serious to buy steamers, oh, no!

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Previous Governments were considering the matter for about seven years, but it is strange no action was taken by them in the direction of attempting to carry that part of their policy into effect.

Hon. F. Connor: Yes they did; they had their arrangements made.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: People want cheap meat, and the Government intend to do all in their power to provide it. Mr. Connor and Mr. McLarty provided stacks of statistics with a view to proving that meat was cheap in the metropolitan area, but it will require more than all the statistics they can furnish to convince the housewives of Perth that what they represent is an actual fact.

Hon. F. Connor: That the price of beef is 1s. 2d.?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The price of meat distributed in Perth ranges from 7d. to 1s. 2d. a pound.

Hon. F. Connor: That is wrong.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Sevenpence is the price for cuts off the neck and 8d. for corned beef.

Hon. F. Connor: No, no.

The PRESIDENT: There is too much interruption.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Ninepence is charged for steak, and 1s. 2d. for the best steak.

Hon. F. Connor: Mr. President, if mis-statements are being put before the House, cannot I as a member interject to say that they are mis-statements?

The PRESIDENT: Yes, in moderation, but it is a continual rain.

Hon. F. Connor: It is a continual rain of misrepresentations.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member must sit down, and allow the Minister to proceed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Beef is retailed in Perth at from 7d. to 1s. 2d. a pound, and I will prove it by invoices. I will leave these invoices for any member who cares to peruse them.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: When the sitting was suspended I was dealing with the price of meat as retailed in Perth, and I stated that it was sold at 7d. for inferior, 8d. for corned beef, 9d. for steak and 1s. 2d. for the best steak.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: That is in some shops.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Those are the prices that I have had to pay, and if hon. members are inquisitive I would like to lay an invoice I have on the Table of the House side by side with Mr. Connor's exhibit of beef, so that it might be perused.

Hon. A. G. Jenkins: Are they cash or booked prices?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Booked, although the terms are weekly.

Hon. A. G. Jenkins: That makes a difference.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That is the price of meat in Perth beyond a doubt, 7d. to 1s. 2d. per lb.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: The hon. member admits the evidence on the Table of the House.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I will deal with that, by and by. There is no doubt that during the last week or so prices may have come down. Only the other morning I received a dodger by post announcing a reduction in the price of meat. Mr. Connor has laid his exhibit on the Table of the House, and I propose to read this dodger, and then place it beside the exhibit of beef. I will read it without giving the name or the address of the butcher.

The bloke that broke the meat ring.

Under patronage of the Labour Government. The old firm often bent! You know the rest; turn over the next leaf—never broke. 3lbs. steak, 1s.; 4lbs. roast, 1s.; 3lbs. rump steak, 2s.; chops, 6d.; legs, 6d.; corned beef, 3d.; Ballarat bacon, 6d.; shins, 1s.; corned beef, 17s. per 100lbs., delivered railway station; 2½ sausages, 1s.; 12lbs. German, 5s.; saveloys, 1d. each. Tram fare paid to any part of Perth to the purchaser of 3s. worth of meat. Train fare paid one way within 15 miles of Perth to any purchaser of 5s. worth of meat. No more robbery. This business is for sale. The conditions are purchaser must sell 3lbs. steak for 1s. Nuff said.

This is one of the direct results of the attempt of the Labour Government to break up the meat ring. Mr. Connor stated that the cheapest meat in the world was sold in Perth. I think it will be a difficult matter for him to convince the people of Perth that that is the case. There is one point on which there is no dispute, and that is that the cattle are sold at Fremantle from £6 to £6 10s. per head; that means 2½ per lb., with something like £1 per head profit. The cost of slaughtering is 6s. and the value of the fifth quarter is £1 6s. 9d.; consequently there is a profit of £1 on every head of cattle that passes through the abattoirs, and besides that, on the face of it, with cattle weighing 650lbs. sold for £6 10s. a head, it should be possible to sell all the meat wholesale at 2½d. The question is, who is making the profit? Someone must be making it. If the price of meat is from 7d. to 1s. 2d. a lb. and it passes from the

abattoirs at 2½d. per lb., someone must be making a huge profit. It is someone between the abattoirs and the consumer. Hon. members might say that there is the cost of distribution. The Royal Commission which sat in 1908 heard the evidence of a number of experts, who stated that a fair sum to charge for the distribution was 1d. per lb., and the bad debts had to be taken into consideration, and it was estimated that ½d. would be a fair amount to provide. If we take 1d. per lb. as the cost of distribution and ½d. as the provision for bad debts, even then someone will be making an extraordinary profit, a profit to which he is not entitled, and a profit which warranted the Government in embarking on the present undertaking.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: How will the steamers help that?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have said there is a ring, and there is every indication that the ring still exists. The Royal Commission which sat to inquire into this matter was not such as would lead anyone to believe that the members comprised those who were entirely in sympathy with the Labour cause. Mr. R. W. Pennefather, a member of this House, was Chairman, and the other members were the hon. Robert Laurie, M.L.C., Mr. H. Daglish, M.L.A., Mr. W. D. Johnson, M.L.A., and Mr. W. B. Gordon, M.L.A. Mr. Daglish and Mr. Johnson were the only men on that Commission who advocated the Labour cause. What did the Commission report? After exhaustive inquiry—the report of the evidence takes up no less than 410 printed pages—and after sitting for months and giving the matter every consideration they say—

The prevailing practice in regard to the wholesale disposal of meat is extremely unsatisfactory. The trade is almost entirely in the hands of six wholesale firms, three of whom control the largest pastoral interests in Western Australia.

These are men who cannot be considered biassed in any respect.

These firms distribute nearly all the meat consumed in the Metropolitan District, the retailers purchasing from them at prices fixed by a grader employed and paid by the sellers.

Is there not strong evidence of a ring there? This, too, is stronger language than ever I have used.

The ability of these firms, working in conjunction, to fix and maintain prices is largely due to the fact that during one half of the year almost all the beef supplies are drawn from the Kimberleys, where the principal pastoral interests of the three wholesale firms referred to are located. Up to the last few months, although the wholesale price of meat was fixed, the retailer had entire freedom to determine his own retail charges. All this has been changed in Perth and the principal suburbs by the establishment of a Retailers' Association, consisting of almost all the butchers within the area it covers, from the managers of Messrs. Holmes Bros., Ltd., and Messrs. Fuller, Naughton & Co., Ltd., down to the smallest retailer. The principal if not the only object sought when this organisation was established was to make an increase and create uniformity in the prices charged for meat, so that the butchers might make a profit in the future, and make good any loss incurred in the past. The first work accomplished by this Association was the framing of a scale of charges, which all retailers were asked to enforce, and which has been closely adhered to during the last four or five months. There have been instances in which firms were alleged to have sold at lower rates, and to deal with such the association has provided for heavy penalties in proved cases.

I have made an investigation and I think the same state of affairs exists to-day, although in a more intensified form.

Hon. F. Connor : That is not true.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : The remainder goes on to say—

There can be no doubt that the wholesale firms have refused supplies

to certain retailers whose prices were lower than those agreed upon by the Retailers' Association. Whilst the control of supplies remains in the hands of a small number of wholesale firms, it will always be possible for them, by arrangement, to squeeze out a retailer whose methods or prices are objectionable to them.

This report was presented on the 18th December, 1908. That was the state of affairs at the close of 1908, and from the evidence in the possession of the Government it is the condition of things existing to-day. Owing to the reports made to us backing up this report, and which showed that the evil still existed, we decided to embark upon an undertaking which has elicited so much criticism in this House. It was unforeseen expenditure. We were only about two months in office when the Estimates were submitted. During the recess, however, we gave the matter very close consideration, and we discovered evidence which led us to the conclusion that there was a meat combination and we tried to do our best to break it up. The first step was to get some control over the shipping. What would have been the use of making any attempt to break up that combination if we had been in the hands of the shipping companies? We tried to get cattle down from the Aborigines' station, but were blocked. They wanted £4 a head and led us to believe that urgent steps were necessary in order to overcome the position. This expenditure was certainly unforeseen. It was never contemplated when the House closed down last session, but we felt that we could justify our position when Parliament met again. We have done nothing illegal. In the past there has been expenditure which was illegal, but we did not commit an illegal act. The provision of a Treasurer's advance to legalise that which a Government might consider necessary is, I believe, without precedent in any other part of the British Dominions. Hitherto there had been no appropriation provided for unforeseen expenditure. There was a report from the Auditor General that that expenditure in the past was il-

legal because it had been incurred without the authority of Parliament. In order to get over the position, the Government of the day secured from Parliament last session a lump sum to provide for unforeseen expenditure. We brought down a Bill, and both Houses of Parliament granted an appropriation of £250,000 as "an advance to the Treasurer" to use as he pleased. Parliament had so much confidence in the Treasurer that they entrusted him with this quarter of a million of money to apply in any manner he considered wise and necessary, of course within the corners of the law. Hon. members showed great confidence in the Government in granting this amount, but they have done it, and now they turn round and state the Government committed an illegal action. By doing that hon. members stultified themselves, but they will discover before many months are over that what the Government have done is perfectly justifiable. Hon. members may condemn our action and say that they do not feel inclined to trust us in future and that we should not have used the money for that purpose. They may ask us why we did it, and tell us that they will think twice before trusting us with a similar amount again. They would then, I say, be on safe ground; but when they say that we acted illegally they are saying something which is not correct, and it will be proved before long that they are taking up a wrong attitude and are on rotten ground, if I may use the expression.

Hon. F. Connor: That is a nice threat from a Minister.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is not a threat.

Hon. M. L. Moss: On a personal explanation, I wish to correct a mis-statement which the Minister has made. The hon. member has said that never before had an advance been made to the Treasurer under an Appropriation Act. I knew that it was wrong and that it had been done in every Act.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: What is the personal explanation?

Hon. M. L. Moss: I am addressing the President just now.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: On a point of order, I want to know if it is competent for any member of the House to interrupt another member unless it is to make a personal explanation.

The PRESIDENT: I have not up to the present noticed anything personal in it.

Hon. M. L. Moss: I am making a personal explanation because I said this expenditure had been incurred illegally. The Minister said that this appropriation under the Appropriation Act gave a quarter of a million to the Treasurer with which to purchase these steamers. I said that it was unlawful and the Minister said this appropriation had never been made previously.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Outside of Western Australia.

Hon. M. L. Moss: But I find on page 154 of the statutes of 1910-11 a vote of £400,000 odd for the Colonial Treasurer and in regard to which is attached a footnote—

Including "advance to Treasurer, £200,000." to enable the Treasurer to make advances to public officers, on account of other Governments, etcetera; also to pay expenses, which will be submitted in detail for Parliamentary appropriation during the year 1911-12.

So that the statement I made previously, which the hon. member is now contradicting, is absolutely borne out, not only by the statute I am now quoting, but by every one for years past.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I said it had not been done in any other portion of the British Dominions and that it has only been in force in Western Australia for about two years. That is what I have been advised. About two or two and a-half years ago it was adopted on the recommendation of the Auditor General, and I think the first Treasurer's advance asked for by the Wilson Government was £150,000; in the next session I think it was again £150,000. Last year the Wilson Government had made provision for an advance of £250,000. We discovered that when we went into office but we did not see fit to make any alteration. If the Wilson Government thought themselves

fit to be entrusted with a quarter of a million, we did not think any less of ourselves; therefore, we did not interfere with the Estimates and Parliament approved of them. But it is only during recent years that this method has been adopted and the object of making this provision is to legalise any expenditure by the Government in connection with the Treasurer's advance. Mr. Connor laid great stress on the mortality of stock. He said it was a matter which had to be taken very much into consideration in connection with the price of meat.

Hon. F. Connor: Quote Mr. McLarty also.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Mr. Connor, when giving evidence before the Royal Commission in 1908, said that he had allowed 4s. per head for mortality as an average: sometimes there was no mortality, sometimes a little of it, and at other times many of the beasts were lost, but at any rate he considered if he provided 4s. per head he was covering all possible loss. That amounts to about one fifth of a penny a pound, so that item cannot be regarded as an important factor in the direction of increasing the price of meat. Mr. Cullen said that the Government were embarking on the undertaking and bringing down store sheep from Carnarvon and engaging in other enterprises which will not have the effect of decreasing the price of meat; but we are only making a start, and we discovered that the whole of the contracts for the next seven or eight months, until next season, have already been fixed. We recognised that that would be so when we made the purchases, and it is impossible for our action to have any important effect upon the price of meat until next year.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: I thought it was already down to 4d. per lb.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am very much surprised to see that it is, but the people in the ring are so much alarmed at the action of the Government that they have decided to drop the price of meat forthwith, and, later on, when our steamers are in operation they will say that the meat was always cheap. When we see members coming forward

and producing an exhibit such as that we have on the Table, to prove that the beef is selling at 4d. a pound, we can readily realise that eight months hence, when we succeed in dropping the meat 4d. or 5d. all round, they will say it has never been above that. Mr. Connor said he was prepared to offer all his cattle on a bang-tail muster, at £2 10s. a head, but, what about the station?

Hon. F. Connor: Subject to arbitration.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: All the vested interests must be taken into account. Hon. members must realise that the offer of the stock without the station is worth nothing.

Hon. F. Connor: I will give you the station in.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Will the hon. member sell his stock at the price mentioned and let us have the station also?

Hon. F. Connor: I make you a straight-out offer to sell the stock at £2 10s. per head with the lease thrown in.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Very well, the matter will receive consideration at the Cabinet meeting to-morrow. Mr. Lynn said that we had taken a plunge in the dark. Apparently hon. members want us to unfold our policy so that the people we are fighting shall know exactly what we are going to do. Do hon. members expect us to publish our plans broadcast? Would that be a businesslike proceeding? Certainly not, and we are not going to do it. We have studied the thing carefully and we are satisfied that we can make a success of it: if we make a loss we will be the sufferers.

Hon. M. L. Moss: No; the people will be the sufferers.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The reputation of the party will be at stake, and it will be for us to see in connection with this undertaking that the country shall suffer no loss, and I am satisfied from my brief experience that there will be no loss. We have evidence of that in the stern opposition shown by those against whom we are fighting—I might almost say the vindictiveness of the hostility they are showing towards this enterprise. It is not so with the business pub-

lie. We are receiving the hearty support of the business community outside the shipping people; they are rendering us every help, and I am certain that the undertaking is going to succeed. It is not mere imagination; we have the solid facts to go on, and we have the contracts. When the meat season is over these vessels will not be inactive; we will find plenty of work for them to do, in fact, the difficulty now is to decide which work is to be done first. Mr. Lynn said that the steamers would be obsolete in ten years. Now, the "Kwinana" is only 20 years of age, and the s.s. "Ferret" which until recently was carrying the Government mail on the south coast, is 41 years of age; the s.s. "Bullarra" is 22 years of age, and she weathered a cyclone in the North-West some time ago; the "Buninyong" is 29 years of age and the "Burrumbidgee" 27 years; and these vessels are all still in commission with many years of good service ahead.

Hon. F. Connor: What age is the "Darius"?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have a report here in connection with the "Darius," which says—

Mr. Butcher, the engineer-surveyor to the Harbour and Light Department, was sent to the East to make all necessary inquiries and personally conduct a survey of the engines, boilers and hull of the vessel, and recommend or otherwise the purchase of the vessel. He made an exhaustive examination of the whole of the vessel, both afloat and in dry dock and as the inquiries made showed that the vessel was due for her No. 2 special survey, the passing of which was necessary in order that she should maintain her 100 A1 Class (which is the highest) in Lloyd's, it was then made a condition of the purchase that the cost of all repairs arising out of this special survey, as well as Lloyd's fees, should be paid by the vendors. The vessel was therefore put through Lloyd's special survey, the annual survey of the Navigation Department of New South Wales, in addition to being personally surveyed by Mr. Butcher. The cost of the repairs arising out of

the two former surveys, approximating £2,000, was paid by the vendors. The position now is that the "Darius" has Lloyd's guarantee for her hull for four years and for her engines and boilers for one year (this being the longest period for which they issue a certificate for machinery after it is 6 years old). She has also a certificate for hull, machinery and boilers from the Navigation Department of New South Wales, in addition to Mr. Butcher's favourable report. It is perhaps hardly necessary to mention that the vessel was docked, her bottom and rudder examined, and the propeller shaft drawn, the latter being granted the customary certificate for two years. Full details of overhaul for Lloyd's No. 2 special survey are hereto attached.

With regard to the "Wexford," we paid £10,000 for that vessel, and within three weeks of the purchase we were offered £13,500. For the "Mongolia" there were many competitors, and some of them were grievously disappointed. We just purchased her in the nick of time.

Hon. F. Connor: Is that the Adelaide Steamship Company you are referring to?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not wish to advertise any shipping company in this House. Mr. Connolly stated that the previous Government had left us a legacy of 600 miles of new railways to complete, and that we are restricting their construction to 200 miles per annum. "A legacy" was, I think, an unfortunate term for the hon. gentleman to use, for it was a legacy of a liability. They passed the Bills in a few hours in this Chamber, and we have to find the money to complete the lines. That is the legacy which the previous Government left us, and the hon. gentleman is now complaining because we are not building more than 200 miles of railway per annum. What did the previous Government do? Did they come up to our record? I will give hon. members some particulars. We are outstripping all the records of previous Governments in the matter of railway construction. In 1908-9 the Public Works Department handed over to the Commissioner of Rail-

ways 102 miles of railway, this representing not only those works completed by the Works Department but also those constructed under contract. In 1909-10 there were 102 miles handed over, and in 1910-11 there were 231 miles of railway handed over. In 1911-12 we handed over 284 miles of railway.

Hon. C. A. Piesse: The previous Government had nearly all that finished.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Nothing of the kind. They were just started on the eve of the election. I know that in my district the Ajana and the Yona extensions were started on the eve of the election, and in other parts it was just the same. The average for the three years of the Wilson Government was 145 miles a year, while our record was 284 miles in the year.

Hon. C. A. Piesse: That is not fair.

Hon. M. L. Moss: Very inaccurate.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is strictly accurate. I have obtained these figures from the Engineer-in-Chief.

Hon. R. D. McKenzie: It is not a fair comparison.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is fair, but it is disappointing to the hon. member, and to other hon. members. Some hon. members would like the figures to be less. They are disappointing; therefore they must be inaccurate.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: They are very wrongly used.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: How can I wrongly use figures supplied to me. There is a definite statement made that in the last twelve months we constructed 284 miles of railway, whereas the previous Government in the three years averaged only 145 miles.

Hon. R. D. McKenzie: You did not construct them; you took them over in that period.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Mr. Colebatch raised an interesting point in connection with the Constitution Act. I had noted it previously to the hon. member asking the question. Section 15 of the Constitution Act provides that all persons entitled shall be registered, and the contention of the hon. member was that the Electoral Act could not override

the Constitution Act. The section of the Constitution Act reads—

Every person of the age of twenty-one years, being a natural born or naturalised subject of Her Majesty and not subject to any legal incapacity, who shall have resided in Western Australia for six months, shall, subject to the provisions of this Act, if qualified as in this section is provided, be entitled to be registered as an elector and when registered for six months to vote.

It is not necessary to read further. They "shall be entitled to be registered." I thought it was a matter of great public interest and concern, and as I was in sympathy with the action taken by Mr. Colebatch, I at once submitted the matter to the Crown Law Department for an opinion; and this is the opinion given by Mr. Sayer, the Solicitor General—

There is nothing in the Electoral Act to affect the ratepayers' qualification, as prescribed by Section 15 of the Constitution Act. If the name of any person (not otherwise disqualified) is on the electoral list of any municipality or road district in respect of property of the annual ratable value of £17 he is entitled to be enrolled on duly sending in his claim. The Constitution Act does not provide for the automatic registration of ratepayers—it merely gives the £17 ratepayer a qualification. If any person seeks enrolment on a ratepayer's or any other qualification he must make his claim. There was provision under the Electoral Act of 1904 for the automatic registration of ratepayers, but this was repealed in 1907.

Hon. M. L. Moss: Would you look at the proviso to Section 15?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am not qualified to pass an opinion on the point.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: Are you aware that electors whose names appeared on these municipal and roads board lists have sent in claims claiming to be enrolled and claiming that to be a qualification, but they were refused on the ground of its being an insufficient qualification and not complying with the claim cards of the department?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That appears to be wrong. I filled in claims as a £17 ratepayer, and I am not aware that they have been rejected. Now, with regard to the finances. Hon. members have said that the finances have got beyond our control, but I do not think that the figures published recently tend to prove that what these hon. gentlemen said is correct. The finances have not got beyond our control. The estimated shortage on the year's transactions by the Treasurer was £103,000. Deducting £13,929 surplus on the 1st July, 1911, it leaves a deficit on the 1st of this month of £121,111. So the Treasurer was simply £30,000 out in his estimate. When we take all the circumstances into consideration we easily discover it is no wonder indeed he was out in his estimate. We sustained a loss of £50,000 on the carriage of water over the railways last year.

Hon. C. A. Piesse: You will get some of that money back.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No, it is a direct loss. There was £90,000 in increases to public servants, and about £10,000 less in land rents, owing to the extensions of time given to the settlers. So members will see the Government suffered a very serious handicap. In addition to that there was £50,000 carried over from the previous year, representing obligations which should have been met by the previous Government, and which were not included in the previous year's accounts.

Hon. M. L. Moss: That has been distinctly refuted.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not care whether there has been an attempt to refute it or not, it has been further investigated and that is the position of affairs. There are matters that will always be outstanding each year, but £50,000 is a huge amount. Previous to the close of this financial year our Treasurer took steps to notify all the responsible officers in the service connected with the expenditure of money to send in a return of it in order that he might present a fair statement to Parliament, and I think that statement will prove a record as regards accuracy. Altogether there

was about £200,000 handicap on the Government; all being unforeseen expenditure except as regarded the increases to public servants.

Hon. M. L. Moss: Give me one word of explanation. In that deficit is the cost of the steamers provided for?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No, except in regard to the purchase of ferries.

Hon. M. L. Moss: What is the purchase of steamers charged to?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That comes from the Treasurer's advance.

Hon. M. L. Moss: Do you mean to tell me in regard to the Treasurer's Advance that where there are excesses they are not shown?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: They are not shown, and they never have been shown. Mr. Hamersley said that Mr. Bath's regulations affected the farmers' security, and that the banks were refusing overdrafts and calling up advances.

Hon. C. A. Piesse: That is a fact.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: But it is not only the case in connection with the farmers, it is also the case in connection with thousands of people generally, and it is not even confined to Western Australia, but it is right throughout the whole of Australia, particularly in Victoria. The banks are calling up overdrafts. Why? One strong reason is the establishment of the Federal State Bank. The banks recognise there is something like £150,000,000 of the people's money in the banks, and that when the Federal State Bank starts a large proportion of this money will be transferred to it, especially the credit balances of current accounts, because the Federal Government propose to pay 3 per cent. on these balances. That is responsible, and not Mr. Bath's regulations. The drought last season also has accentuated the matter in Western Australia. Eighteen months ago the banks were sending round canvassers asking people to get overdrafts, but in the last few months they have been sending round circulars asking those people, to whom they offered sums ranging from £1,000 to £1,500 last year, to pay up this money, and they have come down on them like a ton of bricks. That is the

experience of most people who have been in the power of banks, that in times of stress, when they really need assistance, they cannot get it, and the banks put the screw on.

Hon. R. D. McKenzie: When is the situation going to be relieved by the Federal Government?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member had better get some Federal member to ask a question in the Federal Parliament. Mr. Connor said that racecourses were a great source of evil not entirely disassociated from the high cost of living. He wants the Government to undertake the crusade against the racecourses, yet he admits he was a member of the W.A. Turf Club. It is a peculiar attitude for the hon. member to take up.

Hon. F. Connor: You are ratty.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: If betting on racecourses is an evil the hon. member is doing all he possibly can to propagate it. He was a member of the W.A. Turf Club committee. It seems to me something like Satan reproving sin, or perhaps it is on a par with a burglar censuring the police force for not acting energetically in the prevention of house-breaking. But that is the sort of thing we have to encounter in the House. It seems on some occasions we cannot take some members too seriously.

Hon. F. Connor: You had to take me seriously all right.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Mr. Connor and Mr. Lynn endeavoured to score points by saying we were bringing down sheep for wealthy squatters. We were approached by Mr. Gooch. He said he was in an awkward position. He had stores at Gascoyne and it was necessary that he should get them down to Geraldton without delay, or it would be a serious matter. Supposing we had refused Mr. Gooch's request on the ground that he was a wealthy man, what would be done? There would have been another amendment to the Address-in-reply, indicating that the Government were showing gross impartiality in administering their transport services. The Government are out to boycott no one, but out to do their best to crush out this ring.

Hon. F. Connor: You are only out for the "beef buccaneers."

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: To use the words of Governor Bowen in a despatch to the Imperial authorities in 1877, we are "being assailed" per medium of this Chamber—"by beaten minorities." The Liberal party went to the country last year and were defeated. Now they propose, or are endeavouring to change the battle-ground to the Legislative Council, and they are receiving every assistance. I remember prior to the general election when the Redistribution of Seats Bill came down here, it was received almost unanimously. Only four opposed it, while 20 supported it, and, although I attempted to secure the adjournment of the debate the House refused to favour me, and passed the Bill through with speed. What was the result? The country gave their answer on the 3rd October last, and it should prove a lesson to the Legislative Council. The stand the Legislative Council propose to take, and will take, I suppose, to-night, is untenable, and will be proved so. All I can say is that he who laughs last laughs best. I have nothing further to add, except to say I hope hon. members will endeavour to treat us with a greater degree of justice. I am sure many hon. members are, at any rate unconsciously, biassed against us; I feel pretty certain of that, but I trust before long they will be prepared to give us a fair show, and treat our measures with the utmost consideration, and not adopt the lines suggested by Mr. Cullen when he said that if we failed to administer our departments to the satisfaction of the Chamber, Mr. Dodd and myself would have a bad time in the House.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: I did not say that.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is the only construction to be placed on the hon. member's remarks. I hope every opportunity will be taken to give the Government all assistance in the direction of carrying out their policy. If that policy fails, if it does injury to the country, the party must suffer; the coun-

try may suffer to a certain extent, but the party with which the Government are connected will suffer perpetually. I hope that all will show sympathy, and co-operate with the Government in their endeavour to advance the best interests of the State.

Question (Address as amended) put, and a division taken, with the following result :—

Ayes	..	..	..	10
Noes	..	..	..	7
				—
Majority for	..	..	..	3
				—

AYES.

Hon. F. Connor	Hon. R. D. McKenzie
Hon. J. F. Cullen	Hon. M. L. Moss
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. C. A. Plesse
Hon. R. J. Lynn	Hon. C. Sommers
Hon. C. McKenzie	Hon. H. P. Colebatch
	(Teller).

NOES.

Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. J. W. Kirwan
Hon. F. Davis	Hon. B. C. O'Brien
Hon. J. E. Dodd	Hon. R. G. Ardagh
Hon. J. M. Drew	(Teller).

Question thus passed; the Address-in-reply as amended adopted.

House adjourned at 8.22 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 17th July, 1912.

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

QUESTION — RAILWAY ROLLING STOCK REQUIREMENTS.

Mr. DOOLEY asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Has the Commissioner of Railways made any estimate of the probable amount of extra hauling power and

rolling stock which will be required to meet the demands of the forthcoming harvest, the construction of the Transcontinental railway, and the various State enterprises about to be inaugurated by the Government? 2, If so, what is the amount of such estimate? 3, In what way is it proposed to meet such extra demand?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Yes. 2, For rolling stock already authorised, £598,000, of which £252,000 has already been spent, and for future requirements to March, 1914, £690,000. 3, As explained in answers 1 and 2, and, if necessary, by reducing the time limit for loading and unloading, and by quickening the transit of goods trains by shortening the sections. Reasonable despatch should be possible to the extent of keeping both shipping and flour mills going, provided the balance of grain is stacked, and transport arranged as required during the year, as is the practice elsewhere. Transport of material for the Transcontinental railway will depend to a large extent on the date we have to commence to handle same.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. FRANK WILSON, leave of absence for two weeks granted to Mr. Nanson on the grounds of ill-health.

On motion by Mr. HEITMANN, leave of absence for two weeks granted to Mr. Bolton on the grounds of ill-health.

BILL—WHITE PHOSPHORUS MATCHES PROHIBITION.

Introduced by the Premier and read a first time.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eighth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day. Mr. MUNSIE (Hannans): I rise to say a few words on the Address-in-reply. I wish at the outset to take the opportunity of saying a word or two in connection with the attitude of the Government towards the purchase of steamers for the North-