Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 27th August, 1913.

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

QUESTION—FOOD AND DRUGS REGULATIONS.

Criticism of Patent Medicines.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Whether, in view of the fact that criticisms by the Government Analyst and the Deputy Commissioner of Public Health of certain patent medicines, the formulæ of which have not been lodged with the Health Department under the proposed Food and Drugs Regulations, have been published in the *Government Gazette*, instructions will be issued to those gentlemen to deal in a similar manner with those patent medicines, the formulæ of which have been so lodged. 2, If not, what are the reasons for such differentiation?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, It is proposed to analyse and investigate patent medicines irrespective of whether formulæ have been deposited or not. The fact that a formula has been deposited does not confer on the medicine any recognition or guarantee of efficacy whatever by the Department. In cases where formulæ have been deposited and manufacturers have in that manner indicated their confidence in the Department, it is intended, should there be, upon analysis and investigation, grounds for criticism of the formula, or of the claims put forward, to first communicate with the manufacturers with a view to affording them an opportunity of rebutting the official criticisms. The exhibition of confidence on the part of a manufacturer warrants the exhibition of similar qualities on the part of the Department. 2, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTION—PERTH TRAMWAYS, SALE OF TICKETS.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Whether the attention of the Minister for Railways has been drawn to a certain notice appearing in the *West Australian* of 23rd inst., relating to an alteration in the sale of tram tickets? 2, Whether, in the interest of public convenience, the said Minister will take steps to set aside this order, which provides for the discontinuance of the sale of these tickets on the cars? 3, If not, why not?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, Yes. 2, It is not considered that the public will be inconvenienced by the new arrangement, seeing that tickets are obtainable at the car barn, the town hall office, and the various railway stations adjacent to the tramline; but it will greatly facilitate the work of the conductors. 3, See answer to No. 2.

MOTION—ELECTION FOR WEST PROVINCE IN 1912, TO INQUIRE.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS (Metropolitan) moved—

That a Select Committee of the House be appointed to inquire into and report on the statement made by the Hon. R. J. Lynn, in the Legislative Council on the 5th August, in regard to the counting of the votes and examination of ballot papers in the West Province election in June, 1912, after the poll had been declared by the Returning Officer, such Committee to consist of the Honourables F. Davis, R. D. McKenzie, and the mover, with power to call for persons and papers, to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned, and to report on Tuesday, 16th September.

He said: As hon. members will recollect, in the speech made by Mr. Lynn on the 5th August, startling allegations were made with regard to the interference with the ballot boxes after the result of the election had been made known. In my opinion that statement certainly justified an investigation. If true, something must be done; if untrue, then that fact should be set forth publicly throughout the Press of Western Australia. If Mr. Lynn's allegations be true, then someone, to put it mildly, blundered and blundered very greatly. There has been a gross interference with the rights, one might say, conferred under the Electoral Act, and if this practice is to be pursued one wonders where it will stop. Personally, I hope the allegations are not true, but I move this motion so that any doubt there may be on the matter may be effectually cleared up, and I understand the leader of the House will not oppose the motion.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN (South-East): I second the motion.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew): I have no objection whatever to the motion. I did intend to move an amendment with the object of extending the scope of the investigations, but I feel certain that the committee will not be satisfied with probing one case alone. I feel sure they will be anxious to secure information for the House from all possible standpoints. They will call, I presume, the Chief Electoral Officer, and I desire that they shall fully investigate the matter with the object of ascertaining when this practice was originated, also when the first precedent was established, how many similar cases there are, and what Governments were rsponsible. I have here a minute addressed by the Chief Electoral Officr to the Attorney General, which will assist the committee in their investigations, and I desire to place it on record—

> The Hon. the Attorney General. West Province Ballot Papers. Notice of motion by Hon. A. G. Jenkins. In connection with the notice of motion in the name of the Hon. A. G. Jenkins, on the Notice Paper of the Legislative Council for to-day, for the appointment of a select committee to inquire into and report upon statements made in the Legislative Council on the 5th August, by the Hon. R. J. Lynn, with regard to the alleged counting of the votes, and examination of the ballot papers in the West Province election of June, 1912, after the poll had been declared by the Returning Officer, I beg to submit the following statement: Under the provisions of the Electoral Act, the ballot papers are in the custody of the Returning Officer from the time the ballot boxes are opened at the close of the poll, and until they are finally sealed up by the returning officer, and transmitted to the Clerk of the Assembly or the Council, which, under the provision of Section 150 of the Electoral Act, is to take place "as soon as practicable after the day of polling at any election." At the first general election for the Assembly in 1908, held under the 1907 Electoral Act, with "optional preference provisions," it was found, so far as could be gathered from the Statistical returns, that a very large percentage of voters must have refrained from exercising their preferences, which pointed to the desirability of altering the provision of the Act so as to make preferential voting compulsory, either right through the list of candidates, or at least up to a certain fixed number. At the invitation of the then Premier, Sir Newton Moore, I discussed this matter with him, and also with the Hon. the then Attorney General (Mr. Nanson), and it was decided to obtain evidence as to the full extent of the practice of "plumping" in order to guide Ministers when consideration was given to the subject as to whether or not it would be necessary to amend the Act in this respect. Albany By-election, held on the 17th September, 1909. When it was found that Mr. Price had been returned by a minority vote, I was asked to obtain the statistical details of the voting, and consequently wrote, on the 20th September, to Mr. J. H. Wright, who was then returning officer, to obtain the information for me, and enclosed a form to be duly filled up. Not having, at the time, sealed the ballot

papers, he complied with my request, and the result was submitted by me to the Hon. the Attorney General on the 12th of October, who directed that the particulars should be attached to the file dealing with amendments to the Electoral Act. Metropolitan-Suburban by-election, held on the 23rd March, 1910, was the second election at which statistical particulars were obtained in a similar manner, the returning officer, Mr. Charles J. Lee Steere, then Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, being asked by me, in letter of the 5th April, to furnish the details on a form attached. He complied with the request, no doubt by re-examining the ballot papers for the statistics required, as no other means were available. Beverley by-election, held on the 15th August, 1910, furnishes a third instance of a similar occurrence, Mr. T. G. Walker, the returning officer, at my request supplying the requisite particulars. At this stage the amendment clause making preferential voting compulsory, came into operation, and therefore no further evidence was necessary, and no further returns were asked for, until in connection with the West Province election, 1912, and then for quite another reason. The West Province ballot papers for the election held on the 14th May, 1912, were, as I have previously reported, examined at my instigation on the 31st May—Mr. Dowley, the returning officer, being asked to carry out the re-examination, and a clerk (Mr. B. J. Smith, the statistical clerk of this office) being supplied to assist in the count. The reason for the re-examination of these ballot papers is to be found in the fact that on the previous day I was notified by the Hon. the Attorney General that the Honorary Minister, Mr. Angwin, desired particulars as to the second and third preference votes cast for the candidates in the West Province election, held on the 14th May in that year, with a view to ascertaining the value of preference voting when all votes are counted. I communicated with the returning officer, who informed me that the second preferences only were available so far as Mr. Allen's votes were concerned, on account of these preferences having been examined in order to complete the count in compliance with the Act. No third preferences, he informed me, nor any second preferences for the two other candidates were available, as they had not been called into requisition for the completion of the count. As, however, the returning officer informed me that the ballot papers had not then been sealed and despatched to the Clerk of the Legislative Council, I was instructed to obtain the particulars, which I did in the same way as on previous occasions, namely, by extracting the statistical particulars required from the ballot papers. The question as to the value of second and lower preferences is one of great importance in connection with most systems of proportional representation, and is therefore necessarily of concern to all who desire to see a workable system introduced. In connection with the statements already made in the Legislative Council, I beg to submit the following points:—(a) At no time have any seals been broken to obtain the statistical particulars asked for from time to time. (b) No "Recount of Votes" of the nature suggested has ever taken place at the re-examination of the ballot papers for the extraction of statistics. (c) Statistical particulars only have been obtained which could have no possible bearing on the result of the election already declared, but have been of importance as evidence in favour of, or against, the necessity for the amendment of the Act. (d) After ballot papers have been sealed by a returning officer no use has of course ever been made of them, so far as this department is concerned. (e) In each case where ballot papers have been re-examined, the re-examination has been made at my request, particulars having been asked for on a blank return submitted for such purpose. No doubt the returning officers, in view of the wording of Section 150 of the Act, have considered themselves acting in conformity with the Act in complying with such requests, but on

account of the fact that the instructions came from me, and therefore returning officers had every reason to believe that I had ascertained that the action contemplated was not a violation of the law, if any doubt existed on that point, I feel that I must accept all responsibility in this matter. This I feel all the more anxious to do as two of the returning officers are no longer in the public service, and Mr. Dowley, the returning officer for the West Province, who is directly concerned in connection with Mr. Jenkins' motion, is at present out of the State, and cannot therefore give evidence on his own behalf. (f) It is perhaps not necessary for me to add that had I considered that the Act, as it at present stands, did not permit of the action taken, I should not have asked for the particulars, but this point was never raised by the various Ministers concerned, nor by the returning officers, nor by myself. (g) These returns are of no value to the returning officers or to myself, personally, and they can only be of use or interest to Ministers as statistical information, in the form in which they were supplied. (h) Should the integrity of the returning officer be in doubt, it becomes not only necessary to provide that he shall seal up the ballot papers at once after the completion of the count under the eyes of the candidates and the scrutineers, but the candidates and scrutineers themselves must place their seals on such packets, as is done in the United States of America, as otherwise the returning officer could, of course, as easily break and replace his own seals as if the packet had not been sealed at all. E. G. Stenberg, Chief Electoral Officer.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN (South-East): I think it is a pity that this minute has been placed before this Chamber. I will go further and say that I think it is very doubtful taste, if not doubtful wisdom, that a civil servant, the Chief Electoral Officer, should have ventured into this disputable matter. At this stage I think the proper course for the Chief Electoral Officer would have been to await the decision of this House——

The Colonial Secretary: It is a minute addressed to the Attorney General.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: Exactly; a minute that discusses a matter which is coming on for discussion on a direct notice of motion in this House.

The Colonial Secretary: It is giving the House information that is required.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I think the proper place and time for the Chief Electoral Officer to move would have been after this House had appointed its committee and that committee had offered an opening for any and all witnesses who chose, including the Chief Electoral Officer, to come and give such information as they desired to give. It might be construed into an attempt to influence the decision of this House and to place in advance information which should legitimately come to the committee appointed to inquire. I do not like this apparent anxiety to excuse this officer. I think there is an error of judgment in this matter; furthermore, I challenge his statement that the returning officer had not been troubled with doubts in his own mind on this question, that he had accepted the fact that his chief was moving in the matter as sufficient justification for the action required at his hands. As a matter of fact, Mr. President, the returning officer demurred to the course he was asked to take. When the Chief Electoral Officer asked him for the information which the Honorary Minister in another place had suddenly conceived a desire to acquire, the returning officer as in duty bound and as his own knowledge of the law would guide him said, "This is beyond my power."

The Colonial Secretary: Which returning officer?

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: Mr. Dowley.

The Colonial Secretary: Who said so?

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: The Minister read it out just now, that when the returning officer was referred to in the first instance he replied that he could not make available the information required, that only the second votes given to one candidate could be made available. The Chief

Electoral Officer overrode the objection of that returning officer, sent his official down, I suppose with directions that the returning officer, notwithstanding his objections, notwithstanding his knowledge that he was doing contrary to the law, must make this information available, and the clerk sent down by the Chief Electoral Officer was allowed in the presence of the returning officer to go into information which the law seals up and makes unavailable to anybody except by order of the Supreme Court. However, I am not going to delay the House to discuss points of that sort. I simply wish to enter my protest against what I think is bad taste——

The Colonial Secretary: You are trying to influence the House.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: There is no need to influence the House, the House is practically unanimous. Even the Minister himself consents to the motion. The House is unanimous in regard to the motion, and that is the only question before the House just now. I again enter my protest against what I think is a matter of bad taste on the part of a civil servant and an error of judgment, in which I think the Attorney General should have guided the officer very much more wisely. The trouble so far as I can see is this: an avowed partisan, a political fighter in this West Province contest, from some motive which I need not inquire into, uses his influence with the Attorney General to override the objections of the returning officer, and perhaps the objection that he expected from the Chief Electoral Officer. He applies to the Attorney General to use his influence to secure for him certain information which under the law was not available to him. Evidently this bitter partisan in the fight conceives a desire to know what the law forbids him to know and uses his influence with the Attorney General to secure it, and I am sorry that, whether from want of good taste or want of wisdom, the Chief Electoral Officer has fallen into what I think is an error in entering into the discussion at this stage.

Question put and passed.

[28]

BILL—NORTH FREMANTLE MUNICIPAL TRAMWAYS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew), in moving the second reading, said: This Bill is introduced for the purpose of remedying an obvious defect in the North Fremantle Tramways Act. That Act gave the municipal council of North Fremantle power to raise money for the construction of tramways, but it gave no power to raise another loan to meet the whole or any portion of that loan when it became due. Five years ago the council borrowed £3,000 in order to complete their tramway system. This loan falls due on the 1st September next. The sum of £400 has been contributed towards a sinking fund and £2,600 remains to be met. In June last the council advertised for the money and it has already been fully subscribed; then the lawyers discovered that there was no power in the Tramways Act to permit of the money being borrowed to pay off a loan, consequently the whole transaction is hung up. It may be remarked that under similar circumstances a municipality would be able to borrow, for all the powers now asked for are given in the Municipal Corporations Act. There is no sound reason whatever why these powers should be withheld from the North Fremantle municipal tramways system; it was purely an oversight that they were not included in the original Act, and I beg to move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

In Committee.

Bill passed through Committee without debate. reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL—GAME ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan): It might perhaps be thought that

as the author of the Game Act I would have taken some objection to so early an amendment. However, that is not so, for reasons which I will have much pleasure in explaining to hon. members. In the first place, when the parent Act was brought in, I recognised that there would be in this session a necessity for amending it in one part, which the Minister has touched upon; that is, for the purpose of allowing persons to kill kangaroos for food. The provision enabling people to kill kangaroos for food purposes was left out of the previous measure by me purposely, and it was done in order that the public might realise to what a great extent they have been erring in the past. It was done in order that the public might be made aware that under the guise of killing kangaroos for food purposes they were exporting from the prohibited part of the country scores of thousands of kangaroo skins, that a traffic was being carried on with these skins, and that the kangaroos were being killed, not for the purpose of food, but for the skins, which people were selling. From my own personal knowledge I know where a man killed in one day 15 kangaroos, and not the most Gargantuan appetite, I think, could account for so large a number of kangaroos as that. That is one reason why this amending Bill has been brought in, and it is well that it is brought in, for the reason that under the old system a very lax method of administration has grown up. In the first place these permits to kill kangaroos for food were granted for indefinite periods, granted apparently for any term which the licensee might like. So long as he kept away from too keen observation he could go on killing kangaroos without the justice of his having obtained the permit being brought up for re-consideration. That is not supposed to be the case. Under the amending Bill the Minister is not entitled to grant a license for any term exceeding twelve months, although he may grant one for any shorter term; so that, we may take it, each individual case will get an opportunity of re-consideration at least once a year. This, I think, is as it should be. I understand that the department intend to exercise, and indeed are now exercising, every care in order that the bona-fides of those persons who apply for permits should be indisputably proved. I have known of persons who, certainly, keep away from centres of civilisation: I know to-day of one family, consisting of a man, his wife, and their son and daughter, who are travelling round unfrequented parts of the country, and have done for some years past, existing on nothing but the killing of kangaroos for the purpose of selling their skins, and that within the prohibited area proclaimed under the Game Act. The other reason why this amending Bill is brought in is because since the parent Act has come into operation a new development in the nature of the cultivating and farming of these animals and various sorts of native game for the sake of their skins and furs has come into being. That has started practically altogether since the parent Act came into effect, and it is necessary that a provision should be made to recognise what, I think, is going to be one of our most important industries. It has been found necessary by the administrative heads of these departments to make these provisions since this question has arisen. Experience in other parts of the world seems to show that in having in Australia a large number of fur-bearing animals, we have a source of wealth which we have hitherto very little appreciated. Indeed, the opportunity of appreciating it has not been forced upon us, as it has been forced upon others in other parts of the world where fur-bearing animals are found. These animals, due to hundreds of years of trapping without proper restrictive legislation having been passed for their protection, are gradually disappearing from other countries. When I say gradually disappearing perhaps I am using too mild a term, for the disappearance has been completed in respect to many of them. That fact is brought into prominence in other parts of the world where fur-bearing animals exist. Amongst our fur-bearing ani-

mals the opossum takes a large place in the fur markets of the world. The idea of opossum farming is this: that while it is hoped that just as many opossums will be exported from Australia, and Western Australia, as has been done in the past, still by taking the proper methods to protect these animals and to ensure that whenever an opossum is killed at least one shall be put in its place, the numbers shall not be decreased, but rather increased. I hope the department administering this Act will take every care that this is done. A good deal of caution will be necessary in this respect, and I hope, and indeed I feel sure, knowing as I do the officers of the department, that that precaution will be exercised. Now perhaps I may be allowed to mention a subject which, I hope, the leader of the House will make a note of, and will, if he replies to this debate, give us some information in respect to, In the main Act and in this amending Bill we have powers which suggest that the department administering the Act may expect to obtain a reasonable amount of revenue. Hitherto the department has been run at a loss, run without any revenue whatever. I am not exaggerating when I say that through licenses to be taken out under this Act, and other sources of revenue, this department may expect to be at least £1,000 a year richer than in the past. I think that is a very moderate revenue to estimate.

Hon. C. A. Piesse: Is it to come out of the pockets of the farmers?

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: No, not necessarily. It will come out of the pockets of all sorts of people. It will come out of the pockets of skin merchants and merchants who pursue kangaroos for the sake of their skins. Only to a very small extent indeed will it come out of the pockets of the farmer who kills kangaroos for food. I do not think the public will find that they will be very much overtaxed in this connection. If this is the worst that is going to happen to them, they are very lucky indeed. But if the public are going to pay an extra £1,000 a year into the revenue, they may reasonably expect to get something for it by having the game protected. The Minister will agree that it is absolutely necessary to appoint a travelling inspector in order that the provisions of the Act may be properly carried out. There are various clauses in the Bill, and one or two sections in the parent Act, which almost demand that such an appointement should be made. Section 21 of the parent Act reads as follows:—

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

Well that, I understand, is a very frequent occurrence, and that is why this section was put in to the Act. While game is protected in some parts of the State, in other parts the same game is an absolute nuisance, and it was to meet these cases that this section was put in. But how is the Minister to satisfy himself that injury is being caused by the game if he has not some expert evidence on which he can rely? I do not think it is fair to get reports from an already overtaxed police force. Indeed, the policeman in the country has already so much to do that I am certain this last straw would break the back of that particular camel. The Minister will agree that it is a fair and reasonable proposition that such an appointment should be made, and that the duties of the inspector should be to travel over so much of the State as he can, and to see that the provisions of the Act are being carried out. If he is paid a decent salary —and I certainly think that such a man should be paid a decent salary—I am quite sure he will more than earn that salary by the license fees and other charges which he will gather in for the department. I hope the Minister will give some attention to this, and be able to inform the House that he is satisfied with the suggestion I have made. On the subject of licenses: I understand a great deal of exception is being taken in some parts of the country to these licenses required

before obtaining kangaroos for their skins. The proposition at present is to charge £3 per annum for licenses issued to those who shoot kangaroos for their skins. I am inclined to think this is rather a heavy charge. If the leader of the House, who is politically responsible for the imposition of this charge, would refer to the report of the select committee which inquired into this Act when it was a Bill, he will find that that committee recommended that kangaroo hunters should be charged a license fee of £2 per annum.

Hon. F. Connor: What is the date of that?

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: It was laid on the Table on the 14th December, 1911. Of course, the Bill did not pass that session, but was passed in the session of 1912. I think that £2 a year is a fair thing to be paid by these people. Possibly if the department were to reconsider that regulation and make the charge £2 instead of £3 it might have the effect, not only of qualifying the angry feelings at present being exhibited, but also it might really serve to increase revenue derived from this source.

Hon. R. D. McKenzie: Where will you get the £1,000 from?

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: I am reckoning these licenses at £2 per annum. In the past these people have been paying nothing whatever. I think it is a very fair proposition that if these men shoot thousands of kangaroos which, after all, are the property of the people of the State, they should be made to pay some little portion towards the revenue. There are one or two minor amendments which I should like to see made in the Bill, and I should be pleased if Mr. Connor will move an amendment for me, as I will not have an opportunity of so doing when in the Chair. Most of the amendments which I think are required have been rendered necessary more by accident than by design. For instance, in Clause 4, in the 24th and 25th lines of page 2 of the amending Bill, occur the following words:—"whenever any person shall have obtained a valid lease of any lands for a farm for any kind of native game." I do not suppose it was in the minds of those who gave instructions for the drafting of the Bill that the benefits of the measures should be confined altogether to leaseholders. Although I know they are somewhat enamoured of the leasehold system of holding land, I do not suppose they would carry the principle into so insignificant a measure as this, and I would suggest that the words, "shall have obtained a valid lease of" be struck out, with a view to inserting "in lawful possession thereof." Because it is quite possible that persons possessed of freehold land should wish to avail themselves of the benefits of the Bill; and why should they not have that opportunity, which would be specifically denied them if the Bill became law in its present form? There would be one or two other consequential amendments in the same clause which would not offer any difficulty, and which could be easily carried out.

Hon. E. M. Clarke: Would you not allow a person holding land to have opossum farming on his land?

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: Certainly, that is the object of the amendment I suggested.

Hon. E. M. Clarke: And the power to lease it to another person?

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: Certainly, that is all right, but when we find the clause worded "when a person shall have obtained a valid lease of any land" we naturally conclude that it refers to land obtained from the Crown. If anyone possesses freehold land suitable for the purpose—and land which is suitable for this purpose would be pretty nearly unsuitable for any other purpose—he would be debarred from putting it to this use. I think it is an unintentional mistake which the leader of the House will have no objection in rectifying. When the hon. Minister speaks in reply, if he does so, I would like him to amplify and explain a little more fully the meaning of the proviso to Clause 6 and the reason why it is inserted.

Hon. F. Connor: Which proviso?

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: The proviso I refer to reads—

> Provided that in the case of any such proclamation which shall have come into operation before the first day of

September, nineteen hundred and thirteen, the foregoing provisions of this section shall apply as if such proclamation had come into operation on the said first day of September.

It seems to me to be a somewhat involved piece of drafting. There is another matter in regard to Clause 8. This clause consists of an amendment to Section 23 of the principal Act, and that section deals with the consignment of game. It reads—

The Railway Commissioner may refuse to carry or allow to be conveyed on any Government railway any game which shall have been or shall be reasonably suspected to have been illegally bought or sold or illegally in the possession or control of any person, or as to which the consignor or proposed consignor or his agent shall not on demand furnish a statutory declaration that the same has not been illegally bought or sold or is illegally in the possession of any person.

It is proposed to amend that section by striking out the word "is." I am prepared to admit that the section as it stands does not meet the case, but I am also prepared to maintain that if the action proposed is taken, it will make confusion worse confounded. If the Government insert between the words "is" and "illegal" the word "not," then they will achieve the object which I believe they have in view, but to strike out the word "is" will only make things worse. I hope that before the Committee stage is reached the leader of the House will refer this clause again to the Parliamentary Draftsman and ask if my suggestion to insert the word "not" would not meet the case, and carry out the object which the Government desired to achieve. With these exceptions, and one other, to which I will allude, I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill. There are, if I may be pardoned for attempting to classify Acts of Parliament, two kinds of Acts of Parliament, those with which the public are more intimately or personally concerned, and the second class is what we may call lawyers' Acts. Taking as examples of the first class, I may mention the Game Act, the Fisheries Act, and the various Mining Acts which come right home to the daily life of those engaged in the various pursuits with which these particular Acts deal. On the other hand a common example of the other kind of Act to which I might point is the Companies Act, one with which the legal people deal and in which it is undoubtedly competent for any draftsman to use purely legal terms, but I do object to terms which are purely legal, and which are so purely legal that they have disappeared from the English language, being used in a measure such as the one under consideration. It is not necessary; it is not advisable; I do not think it is good draftsmanship. Here we have the word "enure," and I point it out for the benefit of hon. members who may have regarded it as a misprint for the word "endure," that it is not so. The word "enure" is a purely legal term and should have no place in an Act with which the public come into constant touch. It means "shall be available," and I say if it means that why should not the wording of the clause say so? It is very little economy in printer's ink.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Where does that occur?

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: At the bottom of page 2 in the proposed new Section 12b, Subsection 4, which reads—

Every license granted hereunder shall enure for the benefit of the lessee, his executors and administrators, and such of his assigns as the Minister shall approve.

Hon. F. Connor: I thought it was a typographical error.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: Other people have thought so too. We have met the same word in one or two other measures, and while it gives a very pleasant little archaic touch to any Bill, the public who have to read it do not appreciate these archaic phrases and would sooner have more up-to-date phraseology. Another example of the same phraseology occurs in another portion of the Bill where the word "condemnation" is used in a sense which is totally foreign to its present-day meaning. The word "condemnation" occurs in the proposed new Section 17b at the bottom of page 3. It seems that the

latter end of the page is fatal to the wording of these measures. It reads—

> When any person has been convicted of any offence against this Act, then any game with respect to which the offence was committed, and which was in his possession at the time when he was arrested or proceeded against for such offence, shall be forfeited to His Majesty and the conviction shall operate as a condemnation thereof.

The sense in which that word is used is quite foreign to its modern use and I venture to say that it is quite foreign to 90 per cent., nay more, 99 per cent. of the people who will be affected by this measure. The word as printed here means forfeiture. If it is forfeiture why not say so? It seems to be one of those pre-Raphaelite touches——

Hon. F. Connor: No, that is caucus phraseology.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: One of those pre-Raphaelite touches which undoubtedly betrays the hand of the artist but requires a trained intelligence to appreciate it. I would like to see these little alterations made if the Colonial Secretary is not too pre-Raphaelite, and if he will sacrifice his artistic sense and become Philistine enough to make the alterations suggested the measure will operate greatly to the advantage of the public who will come into contact with it. With these explanations and remarks I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM (North): I only propose to say one or two words in connection with this Bill. I think a great deal of care should be exercised as to how far this protection is extended. We must not allow sentiment to run away with us simply because of the fact that people living around the towns rarely see a kangaroo or emu and that when they do they consider it ought to be preserved. That might be all very well in the vicinity of these towns or cities, but there are a great many parts of the State where these animals amount almost to a nuisance, where there are thousands of kangaroos and hundreds and hundreds of emus. These kangaroos continually eat up the pastures that should be available for more valuable animals, such as cattle and sheep, and therefore it becomes a question, if we carry protection to too great an extent, whether it is better to keep the kangaroo or to have the pasture available for the more useful animals. I am of opinion that a Bill of this kind is very useful, but the proclamations must be issued with a considerable amount of caution and after a good deal of careful consideration so that we shall not be protecting those parts of the country which are over-run with these animals and so much over-run as to make them a nuisance. If we wish to preserve these animals as specimens of their particular kinds, the Zoo is the place to deal with them and there we can keep the finest specimens; but at the same time I am one of those who, while sympathising with the object of those who have been instrumental in having this Bill introduced, and who think it is good to see these animals in their native state to a limited extent, still I hope that those administering the Act and the proposed amendments to it, will take every precaution to see that the proclamations do not extend to those areas where these animals amount almost to a nuisance.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE (South-East): I have just a few words to say in regard to this matter. The Hon. Mr. Kingsmill has dealt with it so exhaustively that there is very little left for me to say. But I want to point out that we often suffer loss in connection with the destruction of game so far as opossums and kangaroos are concerned. To-day the greatest enemy of these animals is the conditional purchaseholder. The moment a man takes up conditional purchase land he is compelled under regulation to ring the timber and prepare as much as possible for cultivation. The opossum and kangaroo cannot live and thrive on areas on which the timber has been rung or where cultivation has been carried on. I always like to see kangaroos about, but I can say from my own experience that they will not do well under the conditions I have mentioned. I had a number in some open fields where the timber was rung. They

were enclosed with a good fence nearly five feet high over which they could not jump, but they grew discontented, and in three or four years they had not increased in numbers and in the end they threw themselves against the fence and sustained injury on the barbed wire. They wanted to get away into the green country again. However, that is just in passing. I am very glad some attempt is being made to preserve this game, but care should be exercised as was pointed out by Sir Edward Wittenoom, because there are portions of the State where the game become pests. We have no need to go very far to find out that this is so. We have no need to go very far from Perth. Only last week I read a letter in which a settler complained that the opossums and kangaroos were most destructive. Yet, under the provisions of this measure, a man has to account for every kangaroo he shoots. He is not allowed to sell a skin, although the animals may be destructive and a source of great loss to him. The time when a man suffers most is when the young fruit trees are starting to bud. The opossum is fond of the young growth of eucalyptus trees, but it prefers the young shoots of fruit trees, and the settler in question complained that he had lost heavily last year through this cause. I am living in the midst of cleared fields at Wagin and a long distance from any timber, and it is not generally known that the parent opossums drive their young away as soon as they have grown to a certain size. They have to seek new habitations. Already I have four knocking about my verandah, which has been built only eighteen months and they continually increase. These opossums have done a considerable amount of destruction to the plants, fruit trees, and vines about there. My sympathies go out to those who live in the bush, and who are afraid to destroy them, because many people seem to think they will almost be sent to prison if they do so.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: They can get permission under the parent Act. There is not much trouble in asking for it.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE: I am not a betting man, but I am game to bet in this instance that this permit to shoot will carry taxation with it.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: The fee is 5s. a year, but in the new Act it has not been fixed yet.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE: The farmers, however, will shoot without the permit, and more power to them. I do trust that the venture specially referred to will prove successful. I take it that if it can be done in a large way it can also be done in a small way.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (in reply): I have listened to the speech made by Mr. Kingsmill with a considerable amount of interest. He stated that very little or no revenue is derived from the administration of the Game Act, and that is so. I went into the matter recently and discovered that the total amount obtained from the issue of licenses for the killing of kangaroos was £200 a year.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: I did not think it was as much as that.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Since then regulations have been adopted, and the fee has been increased from £1 to £3 a year. No fewer than 120,000 skins are exported every year from Western Australia. I feel certain that under proper administration the revenue obtained from licenses will considerably increase. We propose to do what Mr. Kingsmill suggests, that is, appoint at least one travelling inspector, and the result of his efforts will be that many more persons will be obliged to take out licenses.

Hon. F. Connor: You should offer subsidies to get rid of the wallabies in the far North.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: With regard to Clause 4, the word "lease" appears. In the first instance, when this Bill was drafted it was provided that the Minister for Lands could grant under Section 152 of the Land Act a lease up to 5,000 acres. We discovered that no such amendment could be made in this Bill, because it would be foreign to the title, and the parliamentary draftsman was instructed to prepare a Bill accordingly. The fact that "lease" was left

in the clause was overlooked. I have no objection to the suggestion made by Mr. Kingsmill. With regard to the word "enure," in paragraph 4 of the same clause, it is a recognised legal word, but "shall be available" will do just as well. I cannot, however, permit "condemnation" to be excised. That is necessary because it means more than forfeiture, it means the disposal of the native game. If the word "condemnation" is not inserted it will involve the inspector going before a Justice of the Peace and getting the requisite authority in order to dispose of the skins. There have been other points raised, but I do not intend to take the Bill through Committie to-day, and I will take the opportunity of further consulting the parliamentary draftsman.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—FISHERIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan): I have very few remarks, and all appreciative, to make with regard to this Bill. I have no fault to find with the phraseology except in one or two places.

Hon. F. Davis: That is Irish.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: This Bill has been prepared under the supervision of an expert. I am alluding to the Chief Inspector of Fisheries, and there is no doubt whatever that he has adopted what is after all the best system of regulating the size of fish, that is, to take as a criterion the length and not the weight, for the reason stated by the Colonial Secretary. Not only is that the case, but I know for a fact that we are reaping in the second schedule the experience of years, not only of the gentleman who now directs the Fisheries Department, but also the experience of Mr. Dannivey, I believe the greatest expert in this direction who ever came to Australia and with whom Mr. Aldrich, the present Chief Inspector, served a great deal of his time. There is another thing, too, in the schedule to which I desire to refer, and it is that certain differentiations have been made which are greatly to the advantage of the public, or that section of them, engaged in fishing for a livelihood. For instance, it will be seen that whiting are split up into no fewer than four species. That is as it should be. It will be impossible to provide in the schedule for weight or length in regard to whiting which would apply to all species, therefore, they have been split up into four different divisions. With regard to the phraseology, I must say that I do not like the names given to some of these fish. For instance, North-West Schnapper is all right, but when we call that fish "pig-faced bream" it sounds like a term for which one should appear before Mr. Roe. As a matter of fact, this fish is never known as "pig-faced bream," but is known as North-West schnapper, black schnapper or rock schnapper, and "pig-faced bream" is just a little remnant of New South Wales experience which Mr. Aldrich has had, and it is also noticeable in the schedule, that we are to class the river king fish, as the jewfish. The garfish, too, I am glad to see, has been divided into two species. There are too available here, the sea and the river garfish, and the public have been deprived of consuming one of the most delicious fish by the fact that all river garfish are under weight or schedule measurement as expressed in the Act which has hitherto obtained. That being so, it is a good thing that there is a different standard set down for sea and for river garfish. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL—RIGHTS IN WATER AND IRRIGATION.

Received from the Legislative Assembly and read a first time.

BILL—FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister) in moving the second reading said: This is a short Bill to give a certain amount of relief to the friendly societies. For sometime past the friendly societies have been asking the Government to bring in a measure on the lines of the Act in force in New South Wales, whereby a certain amount of relief may be extended to them in the way of giving benefits to their old-age members, or in helping towards the contribution to old-age members. However, the Government could not see their way clear to introduce a Bill of that kind at present, and this State has hardly reached that stage when there are so many old-age members in the friendly societies as there are in the friendly societies in the other States. There is a greater percentage of young members here than is to found in the other States. However, the societies have asked the Government to endeavour to assist them in some way, and we have introduced this short Bill in order to provide that the interest earned from any one fund should be reduced to 4½ per cent. That is, under the existing Act a society cannot transfer any excess interest from one fund to another unless it has earned 5 per cent. The societies asked that the amount of interest be reduced to 4 per cent., but the Registrar of Friendly Societies was not favourable to that course, but he thinks that the amount of interest can be reduced to 4½ per cent. with safety. Any fund that has money out at interest may, after earning 4½ per cent., transfer the balance to any fund it wishes to. The societies have exceeding difficulties with the management fund. A large number of these funds have a deficit, and it is found difficult to make ends meet. In addition, they desire that some of the interest may be transferred to meet the benefits which old-age members claim. The Government have decided to introduce this short Bill in order to reduce the amount of interest from 5 per cent. to 4½ per cent.; also in paragraph (c) of Clause 2 it is provided that when any funds are invested in Government stocks or debentures, or any debentures or other securities of any municipality, and is only earning 4 per cent., that 4 per cent. should be regarded as earning 4½ per cent. It does not seem fair in connection with money invested in stocks of that kind at 4 per cent. that the fund from which it is invested should be compelled to pay 4½ per cent. If 4 per cent. is earned in these stocks it is to be regarded as 4½ per cent. There has been an increasing tendency on the part of friendly societies to invest funds in mortgages and securities that are not altogether too sound. I do not mean to say in reckless investments, for up to date, the friendly societies' investments have been fairly good and sound, but there has been an increasing tendency to invest in mortgages which cannot be looked upon as altogether good investments—investments made on houses at times that may be shifted in a night. Consequently some encouragement should be given to friendly societies to put their money into sounder investments. Any member who is desirious of getting a little more information on this matter can look up the friendly societies' report of last year and he will see the registrar's views on this question. The Bill is a very short one and it is desired to give some relief, small as it may be, to the friendly societies, and it is what they have been asking for. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. F. DAVIS (Metropolitan-Suburban): I should just like to add a few words to what the Honorary Minister has said. It gives me pleasure to support the Bill. It is one that has been needed for many years. I remember some four or five years, perhaps six years ago, I was at a social at Midland Junction in a reportorial capacity, and this social was attended by the Colonial Secretary, when this phase of the society's workings was referred to very prominently at that function. On that occasion I remember very clearly the then Colonial Secretary, Mr. Connolly, expressed surprise at the friendly societies having worked so many

years under such great difficulties, and he promised that as soon as possible the wishes of the friendly societies should be given effect to in the form of legislation. For some reason or other that has not been done. I am pleased to say, however, that at last this measure has been brought forward to remove this difficulty. I have a vivid recollection of many of the difficulties that friendly societies have in carrying out their operations, in consequence of the narrow margin allowed by the contingent or management fund. It has been so small that many of the societies constantly are in debt as far as their management is concerned. They have quite sufficient for the sick and benefit part of the business, but for the management of the lodge or society itself they are often in great difficulties. I had rather a peculiar experience on one occasion. I became, many years ago, a member of a friendly society and directly after I was made a member I was also made auditor. I do not know for what particular reason, but the fact remains that about two months after I became a member I was called on to complete the half yearly audit of the books of the society. When I inquired from the treasurer whether the cash shown on the balance sheet was actually in hand, and asked him to show me the bank book and point out the amount, he was unable to do so. When I asked him to explain the reason he said that it did not exist. As a matter of fact, they financed one half year's work with the funds obtained from the next half year. They carried forward all the debts until the last week or so into the first fortnight of the next half year and with the funds of one half year they financed the management of the other half year. The reason was that the management fund was so short. I may say I refused to sign the balance sheet because I contended it was not correct. A good deal of trouble ensued over the business. I mention that to show the difficulties that some friendly societies are in in carrying on their operations. I have been in other societies where the position was just as acute but they adopted more reasonable and safe methods of getting over the difficulty. Still, this difficulty is felt by many friendly societies. I attended a deputation from Midland Junction to the Minister asking that some relief should be granted to the friendly societies in this connection and I am pleased to see that the request of the deputation is endeavoured to be given effect to by means of this Bill, and I hope it will go through in the form in which it has been presented to the House.

On motion by Hon. H. P. Colebatch, debate adjourned.

BILL—ROADS CLOSURE.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew) in moving the second reading said: Some time ago the Government acquired the Henty estate under the provisions of the Lands Purchase Act. It is proposed to cut up this land into small blocks when the Irrigation Bill, which is now before Parliament, becomes law. There is a number of private roads within the estate, and as will be readily recognised by members, it will be necessary to have a readjustment of the roads before the estate can be subdivided. If these were public roads they could be closed under the Roads Act, but the Solicitor-General has advised that they do not come under that definition and it is necessary to close the roads by Act of Parliament. Unless that is done it will not be possible for the estate to be revested in His Majesty as of his former estate. Until the roads are so closed it will be impossible to subdivide the land and sell it.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Where are the roads? The Bill does not say in what part of the State.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: They are running through different parts of the estate, and the proposal is that the whole of the roads shall be closed.

Hon. W. Patrick: Where is the land situated?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I believe in the Harvey district. The effect of the Bill will be to close the whole of the roads and they must be closed before

the land can be subdivided and sold under the Lands Purchase Act.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: What land?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Henty estate.

Hon. E. M. Clarke: Will the Minister give a locality plan showing the roads intended to be closed? There has already been some slight objection to the closing of the roads. I know this estate well.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I will be only too glad, if the hon. member thinks it necessary, but no matter where the roads are they must be closed.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: But the Bill should locate the roads.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The land will have to be surveyed and new roads provided. Clause 2 reads, "that all rights-of-way on and over the roads described in the schedule to this Act shall cease from the passing of this Act, and His Majesty may deal with such roads as if the same had never been subject to such rights." Then the schedule reads, "The surveyed road passing along the South-Eastern and South-Western boundaries of subdivisional lot 140 of Leschenault location 9. The surveyed road passing along the South-Eastern and South boundaries of subdivisional lot 50 of Leschenault location 9. The surveyed road passing along the East boundaries of subdivisional lots 55 to 59, inclusive, and 114. 115, and 118 of Leschenault location 9. The said roads being delineated on Titles Office plans 2842 and 2843." The object of the Bill is to formally close the roads. It is not intended to block them up straight away, and thus prevent people passing through the estate, but to enable the Government to deal with the lands under the Lands Purchase Act.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Is it all Government land?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is a repurchased estate. The fact that it is a repurchased estate makes it necessary that the Bill should pass and every private road in it must be closed. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE (South-West): Knowing this locality well I want to assist the Government, and I want the Minister to provide us with a locality plan, therefore I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

I do not want to embarrass the Government but to assist them.

Motion passed; debate adjourned.

BILL—WAGIN AGRICULTURAL HALL TRANSFER.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew), in moving the second reading, said: The object of this small Bill is to enable the registration of the transfer of Wagin town lot 63 from the original trustees to the Wagin municipality. This lot was set aside some years ago by the Western Australian Land Company as a site for an agricultural hall in the days when the company owned the Great Southern Railway, and on the purchase of that property by the Government the land was reserved for agricultural hall purposes and was vested in certain trustees. By those trustees the land was mortgaged for the purpose, I am given to understand, of enlarging the building, and subsequent financial embarrassment induced the trustees to negotiate with the municipal council to take over the property. This the council undertook to do, and at the same time to assume the liability of £500 which was already on the building. When, however, the transfer was submitted to the Registrar of Titles, registration was refused on the ground that the trustees had no legal power to make this transfer. Members will probably recollect that a similar case occurred in connection with the Coolgardie recreation reserve, and it was necessary in that instance to secure the passing of a Bill to enable the transfer to take place. The Bill now before the House is somewhat belated. It was promised many years ago, and the Government decided to introduce it, but eventually it was not introduced in consequence of the stress of legislative business. It is now brought forward at this early stage of the session to ensure that it will not be overlooked.

Consequently this very necessary little Bill is submitted for the consideration of the House. I beg to move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE (South-East): I did not intend to say anything in regard to the Bill, further than to remark that it is a very necessary measure, but the Minister touched on one or two little matters which raked up old memories. In the first place let me say that when the Government gave this block to the present trustees it was not the property of the Government to give. The history of this transaction is a little story worth telling, because the conditions it discloses may come as a surprise to those of the present day who complain of the difficulties under which they labour. About 24 or 25 years ago when Wagin was quite a new town this site was absolutely given to the agricultural community by the Western Australian Land Company. The only condition of the gift was that the residents should subscribe the cost of the transfer, which was about 32s. It is a strange coincidence that, although I did not know that this Bill was coming on, only last week I came upon the old minute book in connection with this very matter. Some of the residents of the town guaranteed to find the 32s., and it shows the poverty of them in those days that, although they included the storekeeper, the policeman, a farmer, and somebody else they could not muster even that small amount, and eventually one of the gentlemen named in this Bill did find the amount by taking it out of his daughter's savings account! It is recorded in the minute book that that gentleman, in making the amount available, expressed the hope that he would not be kept waiting too long for the money. There was some little delay about the obtaining of the title owing to a mistake in the number, which, in those days, was either 20 or 21, and not 63. At any rate, the transfer was in process of being granted when the Government purchased the whole of the property of the Western Australian Land Company, and they took it upon themselves to re-present the district with this lot. The money paid for the transfer fees was never refunded, but the company's books show that they, and not the Government, gave us the site. Only recently when the Minister for Lands was in the district, he said to me, "Where is your agricultural hall? We gave you a site and we gave you a building. Let us have it for a school." I said to him, "You did not give us either; the land did not belong to you to give, and you did not give us the hall." The Government gave a small donation of £250, I believe, and other amounts were contributed by several people. At any rate, the reason why the building was subsequently mortgaged was that at that time we had no member of Parliament to represent the district, and it was a most difficult matter to get justice at the hands of the Government of that day. The consequence was that we had to mortgage the building. In later years the municipal council took over the hall and the liability, and they have a site and a building to-day valued at from £1,800 to £2,000. I did want to make clear my conscience in connection with this matter, because I know that the site belonged to the agriculturists of the district and not to the municipal council. The Government of the day had no right to re-present that block to the people of the district, because it had already been given to the agriculturists by the land company and the transfer fee had been paid. As I said before, the transfer was well on its way to completion when the company were bought out by the Government. I hope now, however, we have turned the final pages in connection with this matter, but I do think it would be well for the people who complain to-day to remember the financial circumstances of the people who pioneered that district a few years ago.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL — FREMANTLE HARBOUR TRUST ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

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

> 42. The Customs shall have the right to require and take securities for compliance with this Act and generally for the protection of the revenue of the Customs, and pending the giving of the required security in relation to any goods subject to the control of the Customs may refuse to deliver the goods or to pass any entry relating thereto.
>
> 43. Where any security is required to be given such security may be by bond or guarantee or cash deposit or all or any of such methods so that in each case the security shall be approved by the collector.

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

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

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

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

Question passed.

House adjourned at 6.15 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 27th August, 1913.

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

PETITION — AGRICULTURAL SETTLERS' LIABILITIES.

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

Petition received and read.

Mr. A. N. PIESSE moved—

That the petition be printed.