

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

FRIDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER 1923

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The SPEAKER (Hon. W. Bertram, *Maree*) took the chair at 3.30 p.m.

QUESTIONS.

SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES OF MEMBERS AND OFFICIALS OF COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURE AND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

Mr NOTT (*Stanley*) asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

“Will he supply the following particulars:—

1. Salaries of members of Agricultural Council and allowances?
2. Salaries of district agents and their allowances?
3. Salaries of responsible trained professional officers of the Agricultural Department and allowances?
4. Salaries of heads of departments in the Agricultural Department and their allowances?”

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Bacham*) replied—

“1. No salaries are paid. Members receive £2 2s. per day sitting fees and £1 11s. 6d. per day travelling allowance with rail and/or steamer fares. Travelling allowance and sitting fee are not paid for the same day. The following do not receive any fees or allowances:— Mr. W. J. Short (manager Bureau of Central Sugar Mills), Mr. J. W. Davidson (Commissioner for Railways), Mr J. D. Story (Public Service Commissioner), and myself.

“2. Salaries, £8 per week. The allowances paid to district agents are in accordance with the scale for officers of similar grades in the public service—*i.e.*, 17s. 6d. per day (of twenty-four hours)

'sustenance allowance' for the time necessarily absent from their headquarters on official duties, together with rail fares, and/or a mileage rate when travelling by road.

"3 and 4. The salaries of all the officers of my department will be found in the Estimates. The allowances they receive are travelling expenses, as prescribed by the Public Service Regulations."

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORTS ON STATE ENTERPRISES AND SUGAR-MILLS.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*) asked the Premier—

"Will he inform the House when the reports by the Auditor-General upon the accounts of the State enterprises and those sugar-mills that are under Government control, or whose accounts are still audited by the State audit inspectors, will be available for members?"

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE, in the absence of the Premier (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*), replied—

"The report on State enterprises cannot be submitted until the accounts are finalised by the Commissioner. The report on central sugar-mills will probably be available about the 10th proximo."

EXPORTS, IMPORTS, AND PRICE OF PINE.

Mr. BRAND (*Burrum*) asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

"1. How many superficial feet of log pine was exported from Queensland during the year ended 30th June last by the Forestry Department?

"2. What was the destination of such pine?"

"3. Will he have inquiries made as to the cause of short time worked in our local mills with its consequent unemployment, and if found to be the result of the local millers' inability to secure sufficient log pine prevent its export until Queensland firms are fully supplied?"

"4. Is he aware that sawn Oregon pine can be purchased in Brisbane, freight and duty paid, at 18s. 3d. per 100 superficial feet, while Queensland log pine is costing local manufacturers of three-ply 28s. per 100 superficial feet?"

"5. Is he aware that the Forestry's adopted policy of placing limited quantities of pine on the market is the most scientific method of sustaining high stumpage rates with its alternative high costs for building timber?"

"6. Is it a fact that the Crown holds mature pine to the value of £2,000,000 sterling, and is refusing to sell it in suitable quantities for local requirements?"

"7. Does he know of any other country where the stumpage rates on pine are as high as those existing in Queensland?"

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*) replied—

"1. 373,192 superficial feet.

"2. Melbourne.

"3. The amount exported is not the cause of alleged unemployment in private mills.

"4. No.

"5. No.

"6. No.

"7. Yes."

MEN DISCHARGED FROM TARA-SURAT RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION WORKS.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

"1. What is the number of men dismissed from the Tara-Surat railway during the past month?"

"2. What is the number of men still employed?"

"3. How many of these are—(a) local or district residents; (b) strangers?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. Larcombe, *Keppel*) replied—

"1. Thirty-four.

"2. Ninety-two."

"3. I have no information."

FODDER FROM SOUTHERN STATES PURCHASED BY GOVERNMENT FOR RELIEF OF STARVING STOCK.

Mr. EDWARDS (*Nanango*) asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

"1. What was the approximate quantity of fodder from Southern States purchased by the Government in Brisbane during the current year for the relief of starving stock?"

"2. What was the approximate quantity of such fodder forwarded to settlers of the Darling Downs and districts south and west of Toowoomba?"

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE replied—

"1. Approximately 1,000 tons.

"2. Approximately 750 tons."

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—THIRD ALLOTTED DAY.

(*Mr. Kirwan, Brisbane, in the chair.*)

CHIEF SECRETARY—MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES.

Question stated—

"That £37,064 be granted for Miscellaneous Services."

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): I want to reply to some of the remarks made by Opposition members on this vote. There was a long discussion last Friday in connection with the amount set down for the Lieutenant-Governor. Hon. members opposite took strong exception to that amount being voted, and they inferred that the appointment of the Lieutenant-Governor was a political appointment. During that discussion the hon. member for Nundah made a specialty of attacking this Government in connection with political appointments. This party have never been guilty of making political appointments to the same extent as the Tory party were in the past. (Opposition dissent.) Let me go back for a few years. My memory goes back to 1892. Strange things have taken place in this Chamber from time to time.

Mr. Collins.]

At that time the late Sir Samuel Walker Griffith was Premier of this State. So that he could take the position of Chief Justice, the salary at that time was increased from £2,500 per annum to £3,500 per annum.

Mr. MAXWELL: He was worth every penny of it.

Mr. COLLINS: Of course hon. members opposite would say that the action of the late Sir Samuel Walker Griffith was quite correct when he, sitting here as Chief Secretary and Premier, raised the salary attaching to the position of Chief Justice, knowing full well that he was the person who was to fill that position. Oh yes, it was quite right in those days. If hon. members opposite turn up "Hansard" for 1892, they will find that the Tory party at that time were quite willing to raise the salary of the Chief Justice from £2,500 per annum to £3,500 per annum, and to pass a Bill during that session reducing the payment to members from £300 per annum to £150 per annum so that working men could not get into Parliament. That was the action of the party to which hon. members opposite belong. It would be just as well if some of those young hon. members opposite would read up the history of the party that they are associated with at the present time, because they belong to the same old party.

In connection with political appointments they would not do anything wrong. Oh, no. What about the time that Mr. Andrew Fisher appointed Mr. George Ryland in 1912 to the position of Director of Lands in the Northern Territory? Mr. George Ryland was at one time a member of this Chamber, and was one of the whitest men that ever lived. He was the nearest approach to Christ of any man I have ever met in the whole of my life. In 1915, when the Cook Government took office, one of the first things they did was to remove Mr. Ryland from that position—victimisation straight out. Hon. members opposite are men who say they would not do these things! The hon. member for Nundah, who is only a novice so far as politics is concerned, would not do that. He would not have anything at all to do with political appointments. Then let him separate himself from the party that he is sitting with at the present time, because that party has done all these things.

Mr. KELSO: Do you want me to go over there?

Mr. HARTLEY: No.

Mr. COLLINS: I did not intend to allow the remarks of hon. members opposite to go unchallenged. I rose for the purpose of replying to the remarks made by the hon. member for Nundah and the leader of the Opposition in regard to political appointments.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I am pleased to observe that, notwithstanding the fact that the hon. gentleman who has just resumed his seat stated a happening of many years ago—

Mr. COLLINS: I stated a fact.

Mr. MORGAN: Yes, but I am pleased to notice the hon. member has not attempted to justify the appointment of the Lieutenant-Governor. The only thing the hon. member has done is to mention a wrong which, perhaps, was committed many years ago. If the salary of the then Chief Justice was raised to £3,500 a year and Sir Samuel Griffith was appointed, everyone will admit that he earned that salary. No one can

[*Mr. Collins.*

assert for one moment that the present Lieutenant-Governor is earning the salary set aside for his position, because it is one that could be done without.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is most unfair.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You don't know anything about it.

Mr. MORGAN: I know perfectly well that the man who should hold that position is the Chief Justice.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*): I rise to a point of order. I ask if the hon. member is in order in criticising the gentleman who occupies the position of Lieutenant-Governor of this State? At the present moment that gentleman occupies the position of Governor of this State. Whether the Governor or Lieutenant-Governor earns his salary or not is beside the question. The position is there, and I hold that parliamentary procedure forbids the discussion either of the gentleman who occupies the position of Governor or of the gentleman who acts as his Deputy.

The CHAIRMAN: The last occasion that this matter was under discussion I reminded hon. gentlemen that it was not in order to discuss any act of the Sovereign. The Governor and Lieutenant-Governor hold commission from the Sovereign, King George V. May's "Parliamentary Practice" strictly forbids any criticism of his actions. The hon. member, therefore, is not in order in discussing that aspect of the question.

Mr. MORGAN: I have not said one word respecting what the gentleman who occupies the position of Lieutenant-Governor has done. I am not questioning that; but there is an item in the Estimates under the heading of "Premier and Chief Secretary's Department" in the vote entitled "Miscellaneous Services" reading—"Allowance to the Lieutenant-Governor, £950," and I claim that the fact of that item being here, gives us this right to discuss the appointment of the Lieutenant-Governor. The salary of the Governor appears in the Schedule, whereas the salary of the Lieutenant-Governor appears on the Estimates.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order! I would point out to the hon. gentleman that the salary of His Excellency the Governor also appears on the Estimates. For the benefit of hon. members, I will read this passage from May's "Parliamentary Practice"—

"Members must not reflect upon the conduct of the Sovereign or other persons in authority."

Mr. MORGAN: In the Estimates I find these words—"His Excellency the Governor (provided in Schedule)." There is no mention in the Estimates of any salary for the Governor. There is a reference in the Estimates, though, to the allowance to the Lieutenant-Governor. I do not intend to say one word personally about the occupant of that office, but I do say that the position should be held by the Chief Justice of the day.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order! If the hon. gentleman is going to argue from that standpoint, I would point out that he is discussing the action of the King in not appointing the Chief Justice as Lieutenant-Governor.

Mr. MORGAN: I shall be perfectly in order in moving that the item be omitted.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. gentleman can do that as a protest, but I am not going to allow any discussion on the aspect of the question that he has raised.

Mr. MORGAN: Then, I beg to move the omission of the following item:—

“Allowance to the Lieutenant-Governor, £950.”

I do so as a protest, as I consider the position should be held by the Chief Justice of the State.

I say that we should establish a precedent, and that precedent should be for the purpose of saving money to the State. We are paying £950 a year and we are not getting the full benefit from the expenditure. We should save that money for the State. At the present moment we find that, owing to the shortage of funds, men are being dismissed and unemployment is becoming more rife day by day owing to that shortage of funds. I claim that I am perfectly in order in criticising this amount and in endeavouring to save that expenditure to the taxpayers of Queensland. I am sure that, with the exception of a few who look at the matter from a political viewpoint, the majority of the people of Queensland, while recognising that Mr. Lennon has rendered distinguished service to the State, consider that this money ought to be saved, and that we are not getting full value for the amount expended. That expenditure could be saved by the appointment of the Chief Justice to the position of Lieutenant-Governor.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If the hon. gentleman does not obey my call, I will ask him to resume his seat. In reflecting upon the appointment of the Lieutenant-Governor, he is reflecting upon the action of His Majesty the King.

Mr. CARTER: It merely amounts to tedious repetition.

Mr. MORGAN: I do think that I am entitled to justice in connection with this matter. I claim that, when this item occurs in the vote for “Miscellaneous Services,” I have as much right to discuss that particular item as I have to discuss any other portion of the “Miscellaneous” vote. So long as I do not bring personalities into the matter I am quite in order. You might as well say that I have no right to discuss certain matters appertaining to the different Ministers—

The CHAIRMAN: I am not going to tolerate a lecture from the hon. gentleman. The hon. gentleman can justify his protest by moving the omission of the item, but I am certainly not going to allow criticism of the appointment.

Mr. MORGAN: Then you are curtailing the liberties of hon. members.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. gentleman to withdraw that statement.

Mr. MORGAN: In deference to your request I do so, but I wish to point out that previous occupants of your honourable position have said that Parliament is supreme, and that anything done by this House is above all other matters, the Standing Orders included. In connection with this vote, I intend to ask the Committee to protest against what I consider to be a curtailment of the privileges of this Committee and against the expenditure of this specific sum of money which, in my opinion, is not justifiable. I

have much pleasure in moving the omission of the item.

The CHAIRMAN: The question is—

“That the item ‘Allowance to the Lieutenant-Governor, £950,’ be omitted from the vote.”

Those in favour say “Aye,” on the contrary “No”; I think the “Noes” have it.

Mr. MORGAN: Divide!

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Bacham*): Now that the amendment has been disposed of I want to make a few remarks on the main vote and to reply to the remarks of the hon. member for Murilla. The manner in which this question has been raised is one of the most disgraceful incidents in the history of this Chamber. It is an insult to His Majesty the King—

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): I rise to a point of order. Is the Secretary for Agriculture in order in discussing the main vote when you have not put the amendment to the Committee?

The CHAIRMAN: I distinctly declared that the “Noes” had it, and nobody called “Divide!”

Mr. MORGAN: I called “Divide!” in a very loud voice.

The CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member called “Divide!” I did not hear him.

Mr. CORSER: The hon. member for Murilla called “Divide.”

Mr. MORGAN: I notified you when I was speaking that I intended to divide the Committee, and I called “Divide!”

The CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member called “Divide!” all I can say is that I did not hear him. I would ask the hon. member in future to call distinctly. I heard him say something, but I did not hear the word “Divide!”

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): I have no hesitation in saying that four hon. members sitting around here distinctly heard the hon. member for Murilla say “Divide!”

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Question—That the item “Allowance to the Lieutenant-Governor, £950” (*Mr. Morgan’s amendment*) be omitted—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 17.

Mr. Barnes, G. P.	Mr. King
“ Brand	“ Logan
“ Clayton	“ Maxwell
“ Corser	“ Morgan
“ Costello	“ Nott
“ Deacon	“ Swayne
“ Edwards	“ Taylor
“ Kelso	“ Vowles
“ Kerr	

Tellers: Mr. Brand and Mr. Deacon.

NOES, 29

Mr. Barber	Mr. Larcombe
“ Bertram	“ Lloyd
“ Bulcock	“ McCormack
“ Carter	“ McLachlan
“ Collins	“ Mullan
“ Cooper, F. A.	“ Payne
“ Cooper, W.	“ Pease
“ Dunstan	“ Ryan
“ Foley	“ Smith
“ Gilday	“ Stopford
“ Gillies	“ Weir
“ Gledson	“ Wilson
“ Hynes	“ Winstanley
“ Jones	“ Wright
“ Land	

Tellers: Mr. Dunstan and Mr. Foley.

PAIR.

Aye—Mr. Petrie. No—Mr. Pollock.

Resolved in the negative.

Mr. Collins.]

Mr. KING (*Logan*): I would like to make a personal explanation. Early in the week the Secretary for Public Instruction came across to this side of the House and entered into conversation with the hon. member for Enoggera and myself. He said that he was leaving Brisbane and would be away from the House for some days, and asked whether, if there were any divisions, there would be any difficulty in arranging a "pair." We assured him there would be no difficulty whatever. The matter entirely slipped my memory until immediately before the division which has just been taken. I would have left the Chamber but it was too late, and I take the earliest opportunity of making this explanation.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. A. J. Jones, *Paddington*): There is an item in this vote—"Expenses of British Empire Exhibition, £10,000." Evidently the hon. member for Toowong, who spoke on a previous vote in connection with this matter, is under the impression that this £10,000 is required for a delegation to visit Great Britain at the time of the British Empire Exhibition. I want to assure the hon. member and the Committee that that is not so. The amount of £10,000 is Queensland's quota towards the general fund contributed to by the Commonwealth Government and the various State Governments of Australia, and, as hon. members are aware, the Commonwealth Government are providing the sum of £115,000 and the States £85,000 on a population basis. This amount of £10,000 is the amount required to be paid to the general fund by this State for this year; our quota amounts to something like £11,000 odd. There are other amounts required for the Exhibition in connection with incidental expenditure. The hon. member for Toowong also said that it would be a public scandal if the Secretary for Mines, Mr. Robert Joyce (the commercial representative appointed by this Government), and the Trade Commissioner (Mr. Austin), were allowed to go to England to represent Queensland at the British Empire Exhibition.

Mr. MAXWELL: With all the retinue.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: If the hon. member considers it a scandal to have a representative for Queensland at the British Empire Exhibition, then the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth, Mr. Bruce, is equally guilty of perpetrating that scandal.

Mr. MAXWELL: Two wrongs do not make a right. He is not on these Estimates.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Prime Minister has addressed a letter to all the Premiers of the States, including our own Premier, asking that Queensland shall be adequately represented at the British Empire Exhibition. How can the hon. member reconcile his statement with that letter? I can defend myself in this House against an attack by the hon. member, but I want to say that to my mind there is nothing more contemptible on the part of any member—I do not care on what side he is—than attacking a public officer who is not here to defend himself—

[4 p.m.]

Mr. MAXWELL: I did not attack a public officer.

[*Mr. King.*]

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Or any person who is giving his services, as Mr. Robert Joyce is, gratis to Queensland and the Commonwealth as commercial representative to this Exhibition.

Mr. EDWARDS: You stooped to a lot meaner than that in Nanango.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I never mentioned the hon. member's name on any platform, because I did not think he was worth it. (Laughter.) I can conduct my campaign without mentioning my opponents' names.

Mr. EDWARDS: That is not true.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The only thing I did was to reply to the hon. member's statement that I came to Paddington and promised the electors there cheap butter. I had not spoken in Paddington when the hon. member said that. I repeat that I am quite capable of defending myself against the hon. member for Toowong or any other hon. member of the Opposition; but the gentlemen on whose behalf I speak are my colleagues on the Empire Exhibition commission, and who, I say, are doing invaluable service to Queensland. I would be less than a man if I allowed the hon. member's statements to go unchallenged or without putting up some defence of men who are more capable than he of defending themselves, but have not the privilege of this House to do so. I regret that the hon. member has used the privilege of Parliament to attack them.

Mr. MAXWELL: I did not attack them.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. member said there was a scandal. I want the Committee to know that no scandal is associated with the British Empire Exhibition that we know of.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowong*): I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. gentleman in order in saying that I attacked these men when I have already stated that I did not?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You said it was a public scandal.

The CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member for Toowong denies the statement, the hon. gentleman must accept his denial.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I do not know that I can accept it, but I am quite willing to allow the incident to close.

The CHAIRMAN: Do I understand the hon. gentleman to say that he will not accept the hon. member's denial?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am not declining personally to accept the denial. I accept the denial if it is parliamentary to do so, and with that allow the incident to close. The money placed on the Estimates for this purpose can be well spent, and I am satisfied that the Committee will be wise to approve of the expenditure of the sum of £10,000 this year. The total expenditure by Queensland will be in the vicinity of £20,000. I believe that the money will be well spent in the interests and the advertisement of Australia; and I cannot conceive of any reasonable person attacking such a movement as the British Empire Exhibition, because the benefit to Queensland and Australia must be immense.

Mr. TAYLOR: Will the Queensland exhibits be paid for out of the general fund?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: No.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowong*): On the previous occasion when the vote was being discussed I had occasion to criticise some remarks that were made with reference to a certain statement I was supposed to have made on the floor of this House. I made the position perfectly clear. The hon. gentleman, however, has associated me with a personal reference to the men on the Commission. I did not attempt to make it a personal matter. I said that a principle was involved, and I went into details with reference to the Agent-General.

Mr. COLLINS: You said it was a scandal.

Mr. MAXWELL: Of course, I did.

Mr. CARTER: You denied it just now.

Mr. MAXWELL: I did not. I said that, if a retinue was going home to the old country for such a purpose, it was nothing short of a scandal in face of the fact that we had a man on the other side to do the work and in face of the other fact that the Premier was going home. I asked for certain information, and on the last occasion the Premier gave it to me. I want to say here and now, as I said before, that it was not a personal thing with me, but a matter of principle. Irrespective of what the Minister or any of his friends on the other side may say, I have a duty to perform on behalf of the people who put me here, and whenever I think money is going to be spent in a certain way I shall raise my voice against it.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): I notice in the vote an amount for the expenses of the Royal Commission on prickly-pear. I notice on page 24 of the report of the Commission the following statement:—

“We have taken evidence from biological and entomological experts, and we have inspected the work of the insects in the laboratories of the Board, as well as the work of certain insects which have been liberated in various parts of Queensland.”

During the inquiries of the Commission some rather harsh things were said by members of the Commission on the actions of an individual who was the importer and propagator of an insect called “*Dactylopius tomentosus*,” which promises so much as a means for eradicating prickly-pear. I would like to refer to the information given by members of the Commission through a Minister of the Crown. Since that criticism the Minister has prevented the further distribution of this particular cochineal insect.

Mr. HARTLEY: I thought so. Probably it is now eating cabbages instead of prickly-pear.

Mr. CORSER: Having known of its importation two years before its liberation, and having gone thoroughly into this matter, I can say that Queensland owes to Mr. Temple Clerk a debt of gratitude which would not be liquidated even if we did our duty in a monetary way.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. CORSER: It has been claimed by certain scientists—not entomologists—that this insect has been accompanied by an enemy, a mealy bug, which promises to eradicate it in this State. As against that statement we had published in the Press a letter from Mr. Walter Froggatt, the Government Entomologist of New South Wales, in

which he claims that this mealy bug is the common mealy bug. He says—

“The common mealy bug ladybird (*Cryptolæmus montroussieri*), a native of Australia, is found all over the warm parts of the coastal districts of New South Wales, from the Sydney Botanic Gardens to Cape York, and even goes inland.”

Yet Mr. Temple Clerk was accused by certain members of the Commission of having imported, not only the cochineal insect, but also this particular ladybird, which, it was held, would be likely to destroy the usefulness of the cochineal insect.

Against that information we have the letter from Mr. Walter Froggatt, Government Entomologist for New South Wales, showing that this particular insect existed in New South Wales and Queensland from the Botanic Gardens in Sydney to Cape York.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Years and years ago.

Mr. CORSER: There is the evidence of Mr. Tryon, our own Entomologist and Vegetable Pathologist, who is attached to the Queensland Department of Agriculture. I think that in 1836 he wrote a description of this particular ladybird as frequenting the coastal districts of Queensland and being, as he puts it, the friend of all orchardists, agriculturists, and market gardeners, in that it destroys all kinds of aphids and any amount of trouble that plant life has to endure. Yet, whilst we have the evidence in this State, and whilst we have it from Mr. Froggatt, that this ladybird existed in Australia, it was claimed by one member of the Commission, who was a chemist, that Mr. Temple Clerk was guilty of the very serious crime of importing a cochineal insect which is infested by a parasite. When Mr. Temple Clerk—a benefactor to this State—imported those insects, they were subjected to the most rigid examination by the entomologists connected with the Customs Department. They were later placed by Mr. Tryon in the hands of Mr. Froggatt and Dr. Harvey Johnston. If the cochineal insect, which has done and is doing such good work in the Burnett and Dulacca districts, was accompanied by a dangerous parasite, how was it that Dr. Harvey Johnston, after having them for two years, could not find any parasite associated with them? How was it that after two and a-half years Mr. Froggatt was able to proclaim them clean? How is it that this insect, which has been in my possession since May, 1921, is clean, and how is it that the nurseries in which this insect was first liberated, are clean today of all parasites? I would challenge the members of the Commission or anyone else who did not take the trouble to see these nurseries to find any parasite existing with these insects. We have that dangerous statement made against an old man who has only the Press to go to to defend himself against such a statement. The Minister of the Crown, innocent as he was of the nature of the charge that he was asked to make against Mr. Clerk, was asked to sign a certain document. At the same time a warning went out which was very unfair, and it will take some time to rectify—a terrible blunder. However, time seems to be telling, and of all the benefits that the Commission have been able to find, and of all the possibilities of clearing the pear that exist to-day, there is nothing on the horizon that can

Mr. Corser.]

approach the possibilities of these particular cochineal insects imported by Mr. Clerk. Ten years before the importation of this insect Mr. Clerk sent samples of the Gayndah pear and the Darling Downs pear to America. Ten years later he imported, not from laymen but from scientists in America, this cochineal insect. He imported it from people who had the opportunity of knowing whether it was affected by any parasite. He imported this insect clean. He cared for it, and distributed it to three or four people throughout the State, and to-day just occasionally we do get some idea of the strides that it has made. The report concerning the insects under Mr. Culliford's care at Dulacca published in the Sydney "Daily Telegraph" prior to its being available to any Queensland paper shows the great prospects of this insect and its possibilities, and the great work that Mr. Culliford is carrying out at Dulacca, but the report omitted to say that that insect is the same insect which was imported by Mr. Clerk and was secured from the same nursery that has distributed insects to other people. It did admit and mention that this insect in the West was not accompanied by any parasite at all. The Commission found that this insect in the West was not accompanied by any parasite, and that goes to prove that it was free from any parasite and the district was free from the parasite, and it was quite possible that the nurseries on the coast were clean also. If these gentlemen to whom I refer had taken the trouble in fairness to Mr. Clerk, they would have found the nurseries are clean to-day.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: How are the insects doing to-day?

Mr. CORSER: They are doing very well, and have levelled some of the highest pear to the ground. For over two and a-half years I have cared for them in the Burnett. It is no use speaking too soon on these matters, but at the same time I must say that when they were first placed in my care they had not previously touched any *Opuntia stricta* pear. There was no insect in the world at that time known to attack it. To-day the insects have become acclimatised. Two and a-half years ago five or six insects were placed out, but now, with a two minutes' view, you could say that there were millions there. They have been distributed to several places throughout the Burnett, and there are many other people who want them. The shire councils and the other authorities want some of the insects to keep operations going. To-day we are debarred from distributing the insects, yet at the same time the nurseries are there to be inspected, and it will be found that they are clean. We are debarred from distributing the insects because the Minister has warned everyone against distributing these insects because they are carrying parasites.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Did you read what Professor Steele said?

Mr. CORSER: That is the trouble. It is Professor Steele's statement that I object to. His criticism as a chemist has been absolutely denied by Mr. Froggatt, who is the New South Wales Entomologist. Since Mr. Froggatt has bowled out Professor Steele's statement, and since the truth can be shown, the Minister should—he has not yet done so—free those who have charge of these

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nurseries and enable them to carry on the distribution of these insects.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: What becomes of the parasite when the pear is cleared?

Mr. CORSER: When we clear our millions of acres of pear with this cochineal insect, the same thing will happen as happened to them when they finished the *Opuntia monacantha* pear in the North. The first cochineal insect imported was in charge of Dr. Jean White at Dulacca. When the insect finished the *Opuntia monacantha* pear in that district it wiped itself out. That is the natural result throughout the world. That seems to be the natural result with this variety of cochineal insect. It attacks no other plant life. It does not eat, but it seems to poison the little food that it derives from the pear itself. It is only in justification of Mr. Temple Clerk's efforts that I have touched on the importance of the work that that gentleman is carrying out. Professor Steele's references to Mr. Clerk were very cutting, and I hope that the professor will put the matter right before long. The professor stated that the experimental stations at Sherwood and other places are breeding the purebred cochineal insect—whatever he means by "purebred cochineal insect." In connection with the scientific station at Westwood, where the Government insects were, the Rockhampton "Bulletin" of 14th October, 1922, stated—

"Unfortunately, the cochineal later developed what appeared to be a species of its native parasite, and as the introduction of such a natural enemy to the cochineal in Australia would be certain to have fatal results, the entire consignment of cochineal insects was promptly destroyed by Mr. Alexander."

Mr. Alexander is in charge of that institution.

He promptly destroyed the whole of the Government's consignment of cochineal insects because there was a dangerous parasite thereon! It was not the parasite known as the Australian ladybird which is supposed to be attached to Mr. Temple Clerk's insects. What did these people do to replenish their stocks? As stated by the newspaper I am quoting from—

"However, Mr. Temple Clerk had some time ago conducted experiments with a species of cochineal insect, and, as there were patches of prickly-pear inoculated with it in the Westwood district, portion of this infected pear was used to inoculate a clump at the station of Mr. Alexander."

That was the Government station. Professor Steele claimed that we must wait for a purebred cochineal, but we have evidence here that the cochineal propagated at Westwood is the cochineal insect that Mr. Temple Clerk imported. What more evidence do we want of the erroneous and dangerous statement to the State made by Professor Steele which might have brought about the destruction of the whole of the cochineal insects introduced by Mr. Clerk if the latter gentleman had not had a few friends. Mr. Temple Clerk introduced the insects himself and paid for them out of his own pocket. He finally had to sell a few paintings in order to go to Sydney to look after his interests. After he has found the cochineal insect to be more successful

than all our scientists have proved we shall not allow him to be "downed" and condemned by some people in authority who made no attempt to help to see him through. I am quite sure that this gentleman is working on very sound lines and has the backing of the best entomologists. Evidence can be produced that he has not introduced anything but what has been free of the parasite; and the parasite which he is said to have introduced already exists in Australia, and in the past has been a friend to the farmer and producer because it attacks their aphides and other parasites that exist in the orchard. I am glad that Mr. Temple Clerk's cochineal insects have not been destroyed. I await the time when we shall not be regarded as criminals for distributing them and when the Minister will free those who control the nurseries on behalf of Mr. Temple Clerk, and give them an opportunity further to distribute the insects to applicants, and they are receiving applications in hundreds. The insects in these nurseries have been shown to be clean and free of the parasite complained of. When the Minister grants this permission he will enable those in charge of the nurseries to carry on the good work initiated by Mr. Temple Clerk, and I am sure it will redound to the credit of Mr. Temple Clerk and the State. That is my reason for making reference to this small but important side-line of Mr. Temple Clerk's work. It is a fairly long story, and the day may not be long distant when we shall make Mr. Temple Clerk a financial acknowledgment of his work, which has been done free of cost to the State. I am sure that every settler and pear man in Queensland will agree that he is entitled to some such acknowledgment.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. CORSER: It would not be expecting too great a consideration to ask for permission to sell these particular cochineal insects in the interests of Mr. Temple Clerk. Where Mr. Temple Clerk has distributed them he has placed no conditions on the sale, and at Dulacca he has asked that they be sold for the benefit of little children that he has named. At the nursery on my property at Wetheron, Professor Guthrie inspected the insects from the outside and was then good enough to look at them from the inside. That gentleman was able to say whether the nurseries were free from the mealy bug that Professor Steele and others say was imported by Mr. Temple Clerk. These insects have been known to Mr. Tryon, Government Entomologist and Vegetable Pathologist, for many years past.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I wish to endorse all the remarks made by the hon. member for Burnett. I have had these cochineal insects for the past two years, and I think I am the second largest grower of them at the present time. These insects were got by me from the nursery of Mr. Temple Clerk through the hon. member for Burnett. I established them in my own district on my own place. I brought down to Brisbane a sample of the prickly-pear that they had attacked. Professor Steele examined the sample with the aid of a microscope, and he could not find any sign of the mealy bug. I subsequently sent this sample on to the Bureau of Science that was established by the Commonwealth

Government. They have had the leaf for some time, but they have not discovered anything on the specimen. The specimen I brought down to Professor Steele was not from the nursery but came from the paddock out in the open, and had been in the paddock for some considerable time. The hon. member for Burnett wrote to me a few months ago and inquired whether I had discovered any parasite. I wrote back and said I had not. I used to examine my nursery daily to see if the insects had been attacked by the parasite complained of. I had them out in the scrub, and I found that they still continued to increase enormously in numbers and to do exceptionally good work. I do think the Government should recognise the services of Mr. Temple Clerk. He is a very old gentleman now, and we all know his circumstances. The Government should recognise the good work he has done for Queensland. I do not agree with the opinion of some people that the cochineal insect is ultimately going to destroy the whole of the pear in Queensland. I want to know more about it before I am prepared to go that length. I do not want to raise the hopes of people by saying that I believe the cochineal insect will destroy the whole of the pear in Queensland, although it is doing good work. I am convinced that the cochineal insect will prove the salvation of Queensland from a prickly-pear point of view. We have had the report of the Prickly-pear Commission, and I think it is a splendid one. The Commission has done exceptionally good work. I would like to know if the Government, before this session closes, intend to introduce a Bill founded on that report. I have gone over it very carefully, and, though I do not say I agree with every word of it, I do agree with the bulk of it. I hope the Government will not pigeon-hole that report, as has been done with similar reports time after time.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I give you my assurance now that it will not be pigeon-holed.

Mr. MORGAN: I am very pleased to hear that assurance. If the report is adopted and legislation founded on it is introduced, it will do an immense amount of good. Many of the things recommended by the Commission have been advocated by me year in and year out. The report recommends that the Commission should be an independent body directly responsible to Parliament. I hope that recommendation will be embodied in any legislation introduced. I also hope that the Commission will not be interfered with by party politics and that it will be responsible to Parliament only. It is there for the purpose of doing the work of destroying the prickly-pear growing on our lands in Queensland. The pear will never be destroyed by party politics. I content myself with these remarks, because at a later date, when the Minister introduces the measure he hinted at, I shall be able to discuss the matter fully.

But I could not allow this opportunity to go without congratulating the Prickly-pear Commission on its report. It is now up to the Government to prove whether they intend to make the work of the Commission effective or to allow it to go by the board.

Mr. CLAYTON (*Wide Bay*): The matter I wish to speak on is in connection with

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"Advertising the State." I notice that the vote this year has been increased by £1,000. I do not think any hon. member will claim that this money is being expended in the most advantageous way in advertising the State. Rather than see it expended in connection with advertisements and the circulation of papers and giving £400 to publicity people for writing to magazines, on the other side of the world, I think that we could expend it in a much better way in Australia. As one who visited the South recently with other members of the Country party in connection with the sugar industry—the Secretary for Agriculture was with us—I can assure hon. members that the Government would be very wise in spending this money down South in advertising Queensland. We should educate the Southern people to the necessity of doing something to preserve the sugar industry. They seem to be ignorant down there of the extensive industry that we have in Queensland and how that industry is wrapped up with the White Australia policy.

In connection with advertising the State within the State I do not think we could get a better advertisement for Queensland than we got at the recent Royal National Agricultural Show in Brisbane. Visitors to that show saw two exhibits—one from West Moreton and one from Wide Bay. Those exhibits covered not only primary products but manufactures, and I think they went a good way towards giving visitors a favourable impression as to the importance of the State. I am confident that they went away impressed with the idea that we are moving in the right direction. I would like to see some recognition given to the people responsible for preparing those exhibits. They gave their time and money to the work and made a success of it. I should like to see the Government give them some monetary assistance at a future date to enable them to bring together an even finer exhibit than they did on this occasion.

Mr. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*): I intend to say a few words on the question of prickly-pear. They will be practically on the same lines as I have spoken previously, and I will keep on repeating them until at last somebody will take notice and perhaps something will be done. I did not think much of the report of the Royal Commission. I do not say that I have read it carefully, but I did not think much of it after a perusal of the personnel of the Commission. I notice that they have proceeded on the same old lines, recommending poisons and all that sort of thing. There has never yet been any big advance made with all their poisons and experiments. If we are going to continue to get men from the University to try and eradicate our prickly-pear, I think we shall have Queensland covered with the pest before satisfactory progress is made. That is my idea of University professors. On a scientific matter I might take their opinion, but certainly not on anything of a practical nature. I notice that the Royal Commission have passed over in two paragraphs something by which some definite progress might be accomplished. They tell us what any man in the street could have told them, and what we knew when the first convicts came here from New South Wales. They say that there are two mechanical methods of eradicating pear, one by cutting and stacking and burning, and the other by means of crushing by heavy rollers or otherwise. I am going to tell hon. members of

another method, which I have spoken of before and will do so again. It is the product of an ordinary working blacksmith, who has devoted seven or eight years of his life to try and perfect the machinery and satisfactorily get out the pear, and he has achieved a great measure of success. He has had no encouragement from the Government or private enterprise. I refer to Mr. W. V. Morrissey, at present a resident of Toowoomba. He gave a demonstration with his machine showing that the pear could be taken out by the roots, ground into a dust, and thrown out behind.

Mr. MORGAN: Not into a dust, but a pulp.

Mr. HARTLEY: Well, practically a saw-dust. The result is of such a nature that the pear never germinates again. Land that has been cleared by means of this machine remains cleared. Mr. Morrissey gave a demonstration to the Government at the request of Mr. Stopford and myself some years back, and he cleared a strip of a quarter of an acre at Dulacca. It was heavily infested with pear, and he now tells me—I have not been there to see the country, but I take his word—that that strip is clear to-day. He had to give up making further experiments with the machine because he found it too costly, but he has the machine partly built up to-day. He wants capital to carry on. In the meantime he has been working on a smaller machine that is capable of clearing an acre of heavily infested country a day. If he has a machine that can clear an acre of heavily infested pear country a day, I think he can overcome the pest a good deal cheaper than can any high-toned University professor. My advice to the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock and to the big men who are always talking about private enterprise, is to get in touch with Mr. Morrissey and subscribe enough capital to build a demonstration machine bigger than the one he is at present using to clear an acre a day. You will not have to wait to see whether insects will do the work, as this machine will demonstrate its efficiency or otherwise in a couple of hours. If it is successful, let the investors who have so much money spend that money to buy more machines and lease them out. It would be a good paying proposition. If it was not successful, they would be compensated by the thought that we learn from failure. If the Government, on the recommendation of the Home Secretary, myself, and others, would think it worth while to speculate £10,000 in demonstrating whether a machine can be built to clear the major portion of the infested country, they would be doing an excellent service to Queensland. In my opinion, the soundest, cheapest, and best method of eradicating pear is by mechanical devices, and not by any humbug on the part of scientific and unpractical men.

Mr. WRIGHT (*Balimba*): I feel it my duty this afternoon, after hearing the discussion that has taken place in connection with the Empire Exhibition vote, to set on record my opinion. I do this, as I was a visitor to the Franco-British Exhibition which was held in London in 1908-9. As a visitor to that Exhibition, I can realise to the full, at any rate to a much better extent than the hon. member for Toowoong, the opportunity that Queensland and Australia have of advertising through the medium of an Empire Exhibition, and of showing the people of the British

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Empire what the people of Australia can accomplish in the way of land settlement and production from the soil.

It was an eye-opener to thousands—perhaps I would be more correct if I said millions—of British subjects who went through the Australian annexes at the Franco-British Exhibition and saw the wonderful display of produce, fruits, minerals, etc., that was exhibited there. I hope the Government will not stint themselves as to the expense. I was very disappointed at the speech of the hon. member for Toowong, and I can only attribute his remarks to the fact that he is ignorant of the excellent opportunity afforded by this exhibition to advertise our State. It is not so necessary to advertise Queensland in Australia, but it is absolutely necessary to advertise Queensland in Great Britain. In the Southern States there is still plenty of land available for all the people in those States who wish to go on the land. Should Queensland fully avail herself of the opportunity that presents itself at this British Empire Exhibition, much good in the way of encouraging the right class of immigrants can be done. I am satisfied that we are getting quite a number of immigrants into Queensland of the wrong kind. We want men who have had experience in general farming, and we are not getting those men to the extent that we should. If the Secretary for Mines deems it necessary to go to London and also to take several Queensland officers, I do not think the Opposition have anything to sneer or cavil at. It will be money well spent. I am of the opinion expressed by the hon. member for Enoggera, who said that a few thousands spent in sending representatives from Queensland to the Empire Exhibition would do no harm. I believe it would do a vast amount of good. I hope that our Government and the people of Australia in general will grasp this opportunity with both hands, and will see to it that Australia has an exhibit worthy of the name of Australia. After all is said and done, it is a British Empire Exhibition, and to a great extent Queensland and the other Australian States will be entering into competition with the other Dominions of the British Empire.

Mr. KELSO: We are not objecting to Queensland being adequately represented at the Exhibition.

Mr. WRIGHT: The hon. member for Toowong said something about it being a scandal to send the gentlemen we are sending from Queensland. I say it is necessary to send them, and I hope the Government will send them, because I realise that by having live representatives there who are able to give direct information and truthful information much good is going to be done. It ill becomes any member of this House to talk lightly or talk cheaply, or to cavil at an expenditure of this nature.

Mr. TAYLOR (*Windsor*): The few remarks that I intend to make will be directed to the prickly-pear problem which confronts us at the present time. The hon. member for Fitzroy mentioned a machine that has been invented by Mr. Morrissey, and in the second edition of to-day's "Telegraph" there appears the report of an interview with Mr. Morrissey in connection with this machine. I do not know anything about the man, but I know inventors are very optimistic men. He says it is the third machine he has invented, and, no doubt, when he invented his first machine, he thought he had a perfect

machine. However, it is only right that he should get every assistance, as it is only by a continuity of effort in the direction in which he has been working for some years that a man is likely to accomplish anything. He says he has brought a machine up from the South and he and his son have been working with it for years, and the remarkable part of the statement in the "Telegraph" is that he cleared pear in Dulacca in 1917, and he says that the acre and a-half he cleared then is still clear of pear. If that is so, it is certainly worthy of consideration, and even if the money is lost, we shall have learned something from the failure. It is something that the Government might well consider. Mr. Morrissey, in the interview, said that he can clear land for £5 an acre, which he estimates would cost £10 to clear by poison. I do not know whether those figures are right or not, but if we are going to clear the pear lands, we shall have to get out of our heads right away that we are going to clear it at anything like the value of the land. We shall have to be prepared to pay more than the value of the land per acre if we are going to be successful. The direct gain that will come to the State by increased production through the land being put to profitable use will more than compensate for any money that we spend in clearing the pear. The report of the Prickly-pear Commission bears out the statement about the tremendous inroads that pear is making in Queensland at the present time. The report states that it is increasing at the rate of from 1,400 acres to 2,000 acres a day. A statement like that is most alarming, and the question has to be tackled as a big national problem if we are going to combat or checkmate the pear. Various Governments have offered rewards for clearing pear land. My own idea of clearing pear land is that you will have to do it by closer settlement. The Government should make a gift of the land to strong, healthy young men—it is a young man's job and not an old man's job—and be prepared to pay from 30s. to £2 an acre for the clearing of the pear land, and the payment of that amount should be spread over a term of years. By that I mean that, if a man takes up 500 acres of prickly-pear country and we agree to pay him £2 an acre for clearing it, if he clears the whole 500 acres in the first year, instead of paying him £1,000 straight away he should receive 2s. 6d. an acre for clearing the 500 acres in the first year, and 2s. 6d. an acre the following year, provided it is kept clear of pear. There should be a condition that he shall occupy the land for not less than ten or twelve years, and the payment for clearing the pear should be spread over the full term of his occupancy.

Mr. DENSTAN: Some of the land is not worth 10s. an acre when it is cleared.

Mr. TAYLOR: Quite possibly some of it is not worth 10s. an acre, but any quantity of it is worth more than 10s. an acre, and up to the present we have not discovered any profitable commercial use for prickly-pear.

Mr. MORCAN: And never will.

Mr. TAYLOR: We never will, because so much of the content of the pear is simply moisture.

Mr. CLAYTON: Eighty per cent.

Mr. TAYLOR: I hope that the remarks of the hon. member for Fitzroy with regard to Mr. Morrissey will receive consideration. I do not know Mr. Morrissey, but after the

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hon. member spoke I happened to drop across the interview with Mr. Morrisey reported in to-day's "Telegraph." I think that a man who has devoted years of energy to try and invent a machine to accomplish what he thinks it will accomplish should have some assistance and encouragement from the State. (Hear, hear!)

Question put and passed.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND STOCK.
CHIEF OFFICE.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE AND STOCK (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eucham*): I beg to move—

"That £91,382 be granted for 'Chief Office.'"

The amount required this year is £11,032 in excess of last year's appropriation. Of this increase Chief Office salaries are responsible for £3,632, the principal cause of the increase being that provision has been made for a number of additional positions, 118 officers having to be provided for as against 199 last year. Fifteen new positions have been created and six abolished, showing a net increase of nine for the year.

To cope with the increase in the work of the department it was found necessary to appoint five additional junior clerks and two extra typists. The other new positions created are one Assistant Instructor in Fruit Culture at Rockhampton, a Fruit Packing Instructor, an Instructor in Pig Raising, three extra Field Assistants, one extra Entomologist, and an Inspector under the Fertilisers Act, the Pure Seeds Act, and the Stock Foods Act. The positions which have lapsed include two Instructors in Agriculture (cotton) for which provision was made on last year's Estimates, but the positions were not filled. The reason they were allowed to lapse was because we were waiting for our Cotton Adviser to arrive.

Mr. TAYLOR: When is he likely to be here?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE AND STOCK: He is here now. The lapsed positions also include one Assistant Entomologist, since promoted to the rank of Entomologist; one Assistant Inspector under the Pure Seeds Act, since promoted to the rank of Inspector; one cadet since appointed as a clerk, making one of the five extra clerks, and one Experimentalist. Mr. Williams has been appointed Instructor in Fruit Culture and Experimentalist. Salary classification increases are provided for all officers in respect of salaries not exceeding £400 per annum, the total amounting to £1,377. The £3,000 deducted from the salary vote as charged to Trust Funds is for work performed on behalf of those funds by officers in Head Office, whose total salaries are debited fully to the Consolidated Revenue. The charge is made thus—

Diseases in Stock and Brands Fund	£2,400
Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act	600
	£3,000

The vote for "Wages, Travelling Expenses," etc., shows a reduction of £950, which reduction has been made on the basis of the previous year's expenditure. The vote for the "Departmental Library" is also £100 less,

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and the "Queensland Agricultural Journal," the "Bursaries at the Queensland Agricultural High School," and "College" votes are the same as last year. Railway fares and freights, etc., have been reduced by £700. The "Agricultural Instruction, Demonstration, and Field and Experimental Plot" vote remains the same, while the vote for "Instruction in Cotton Cultivation" has been increased by £3,250. Provision has been made under this vote for the appointment of a Cotton Classifier. I might mention that the Cotton Classifier arrived a few days ago.

Mr. MORGAN: What will be his duties?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE AND STOCK: I will explain his duties later on. Provision is also made for a Cotton Entomologist, and other proposed appointments in consequence of the extension of operations in connection with the cotton industry, particularly in relation to the supervision of farming operations and to the establishment of seed plots for bulk supplies of approved seed. The vote for "Fruit Instruction, Demonstration," etc., shows an increase of £200. The vote for "Establishment of Demonstration Plot at Mulgeldie" is £400 less than last year. Two new plots have been commenced, one at Monal Creek in the Burnett district at an estimated cost of £2,900, and the other at Melton, in the Callide Valley at £2,800.

Mr. TAYLOR: Are those cotton plots?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE AND STOCK: Cotton and mixed agriculture. These two plots were really started at the request of the Department of Public Lands. The department wishes to demonstrate what the land in the Burnett and Callide Valleys is suitable for, and it was thought desirable to establish these experiment plots. I am not certain what the areas are, but I will give the information later on. They are not large areas, i.e., not on the scale of State farms. It is necessary to clear and plough them and plant crops. The provision made for the Council of Agriculture is £1,000 more than last year.

Mr. CLAYTON (*Wide Bay*): I would like to say a few words on this vote. I always look on the Agricultural vote in an agricultural country like Queensland as one of the utmost importance. I am very pleased on this occasion to see such a large increase in the vote. When we compare the vote for this year with the votes previous to 1920, we see that there has been an enormous increase. I venture to say that a great deal of the credit for the increase in the vote and in the activities of the department is due to the fact that the Country party is in the House looking after the interests of the primary producers.

Previous to the present Government coming into power, the Department of Agriculture and Stock was not the important department it is to-day, and I again repeat that, although the Country party are not in power, they are using an enormous amount of influence with the Government to see that better conditions are brought about for the primary producers.

Mr. COSTELLO: The Government do not listen to them always, though.

Mr. CLAYTON: We want to go further. We not only want to see instructors appointed and assistance given to primary producers,

but we want the Department of Agriculture, through the Council of Agriculture, to do something to improve the markets, so that the primary producers will get a fair return for the many hours which they and their families have to work to make a living. When you compare the income of the man on the land with that of the man in the city, you will find that the man on the land is very much underpaid. I venture to say that those who are engaged in the dairy industry are not making 1s. an hour for the many hours they are working to make a living. Unfortunately the dairy farmers of Queensland—I know that they regret it exceedingly—have had to approach the Government for relief. It is a strange thing that the Government have had to turn round and say that the £30,000 which was set down for relief has been exhausted. When members of the Country party approached the Minister the other day, he said that some people had not treated the department fairly in connection with that vote. I venture to say that every dairy farmer in Queensland who has been through a drought-stricken period was quite justified in going to the department for any relief he could get. Any person who has been to the department for relief without justification for doing so should be dealt with according to law. I have heard of instances of men going to the department for relief who were not dairying at all but who were in possession of race-horses, and these men and hotel-keepers have got relief, while dairy farmers who were suffering from the drought and had their cattle on relief country and had earned no income for a long time, were victimised because of these persons taking advantage of the department in connection with this relief vote.

I say it is a shame, and it is only right that the Minister should see that relief is extended to these unfortunate people. If I were in possession of a large amount of capital and dairy farmers were trying to keep their stock alive, do you not think that it would be foolish if, just at the time when they should be kept alive so that

[5 p.m.] they might produce an income in the near future, I cut off relief from them? Would it not be foolish for me to do that at the most critical period? I appeal to the Minister to extend relief to these farmers, who are in dire necessity. As I said when I was in his office, he can get from the dairy factories returns showing the incomes of the farmers, and I venture to say that he will find in many instances that, although the farmers were suppliers to the factories for many months, they have not been suppliers latterly because of the drought, that they have not been in receipt of any income, and that they have had to take away their stock to relief pastures so that when rain comes—which we sincerely hope will be soon—they will be able to get a living from them. I am sorry that the relief vote has been cut out, and I hope the Minister will do something to replenish it. We have heard members on the other side talking about the prosperity of the farmers; but, in answer to a question this afternoon, we heard that the Government had had to import 1,000 tons of fodder from the other States to feed their stock. That is an indication of the seriousness of the position in which the farmers find themselves at present.

Now I come to the vote of £4,000 for "Fruit Instruction." I think that the Go-

vernment are wise in having instructors in fruit culture, but they should not only instruct farmers about areas they have already under fruit but should go a bit further and instruct them as to the suitability of the soil they hold for fruit so that, if it should be found suitable for those crops, farmers may engage in that industry. Many farmers are not aware of the suitability for these crops of the land they own, and, consequently, have used it for the cultivation of other crops which have not been successful. The instructor, by analysis of the soil, could tell them what it was suitable for. In my electorate there are vast areas of land along Tinana Creek which are at present used for general cultivation purposes, but which, if placed under fruit, would give a very fine return. Right in the midst of the land I have mentioned, a man started an orchard, which now is a testimony to the suitability of the soil for that purpose and a credit to the man who left his home, as it were, and went out there to hew down the forest trees for fruit cultivation. As proof of what I say, I can refer hon. members to the "Queensland Agricultural Journal," where they will see photographs of the very fine fruit trees on this land and the fruit they produce. I think the fruit instructors would be well advised to go out into this district and instruct the people who are now in possession of the land, but who are not making use of it, as to its suitability for fruit or otherwise. I shall be very pleased to take an instructor out and show him the land in the district, so that he can impart the necessary information.

I notice an item of £3,000 for "Agricultural Instruction, Demonstration, Field, and Experimental Plot Work." Many farmers who are going in for agriculture are buying their experience very dearly, and I think this item is a good one, because it will enable the farmers to get expert instruction, and the Government are in a better position than the farmers to go in for experimental work. It is to be hoped that plots will be started in different districts. I hold that it will not be wise for the Government to select the very best land in a district, because in many cases the best land will grow almost anything. The Government should take an average soil and demonstrate there, so that the people can see what the typical soil of the district is capable of producing. Not long ago I was at the Sugar Experiment Station at Bundaberg, and I saw it proved conclusively that you can use too much lime on your soil. We who were there saw about three rows of cane treated with lime at the rate of 3 tons to the acre, other rows treated at the rate of 2 tons to the acre, and other rows treated at the rate of 1 ton to the acre, and it was shown conclusively that the rows treated with 1 ton of lime to the acre were giving the best results. I mention that particularly, because I have in my electorate a farmer not far from Maryborough who put in about 10 acres of plant cane. In his ignorance he went in extensively for liming, distributing it along the furrows, with the result that all the goodness of the soil was exhausted, and the unfortunate farmer will be without a crop. If the departmental officers gave instruction in the use of fertilisers and similar things, they would be working in the right direction.

I notice that only three dairy herd testers are employed by the department, at a cost of £855. It is most essential that the farmer should be educated in the matter of herd

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testing. We all know—the Minister knows perfectly well—that we have a great number of inferior dairy cattle in Queensland. The unfortunate farmer has not the information necessary to enable him to cull his herd, but the dairy herd tester can teach him which cows are producing revenue and which are what are commonly known as “culls” or “boarders.” If these testers were allowed to go through the dairying districts more frequently—and it is the duty of the farmers through their associations or individually to apply for their services—it would be of enormous benefit to the dairying industry. It is useless for them to go during the dry periods, when the cows are producing practically nothing, and, therefore, it is essential that the Government should increase the number of testers so that during the milking or flush period they may be able to do all they can for the dairy farmer. And while the testers are in a district it would be a good thing for them to hold classes at which they could instruct the farmers in the testing of milk and cream. Sometimes they stay in a district a week or a fortnight, so that there would be sufficient time, and I hope the Minister will move in that direction. Such a course would implant a lot of knowledge in the dairy farmers who, later on, could get their own testers and use them without the aid of the Government officer. A system like that would be the means of doing a great deal to improve dairy cattle in Queensland. Even under the present system, after the dairy herd tester has been in a district, the farmers can look into the matter of culling their herds themselves.

I know as a dairy farmer that, when I have had my cows tested, it does not take me very long to get rid of those that have not been profitable. I have always taken action immediately to deal with the matter. As I said on the Address in Reply, many of our dairy farmers are overstocked. If we could get the herd testers to improve the herds on the holdings they would not be overstocked, because possibly the farmer would be able to get just as good an income from half the number of cows as he is getting now, and he would be in a position to carry the smaller herd through drought periods. In a good many instances, owing to the low stock market, the people are holding their stock in anticipation of a rise in the market, consequently the holdings are overstocked and people are forced to take their cattle to relief country. There is a great deal of relief country in my district. I refer particularly to the Tinana Creek district. There is a big area of relief country there. I sincerely hope that the Secretary for Public Lands will not allow any individual to take up that land or utilise it for any purpose other than for relief purposes. A man approached me the other day and suggested that he should take up a piece of land in that district, but I immediately turned him down and I am very pleased to say that the department also turned him down, because it is essential that that land should be kept for relief purposes only. If you went out to that area to-day, you would find thousands of head of cattle there that could not possibly have been saved if they had not been taken to that relief country.

Another matter of considerable annoyance to dairymen is the method of issuing permits. If a dairy farmer wants to move a beast in any direction whatever on a Government road, he must get a permit. It seems very

hard that these people should be compelled to go long distances to find stock inspectors to issue permits. This applies in connection with taking cattle to dips or relief country. I think the Minister would be wise if he authorised the police to issue permits to allow dairy farmers to take their stock short distances. That would go a long way towards removing the inconvenience that now exists, and I do not think that it would interfere with the administration of the department in any way. For instance, there might be a cattle sale at Croydon Junction, near Maryborough. The stock inspector may be engaged in outside country districts. It is his duty to go out into these country districts and not sit in his office. If a person purchased any stock at that sale and wanted to remove that stock, he would first have to go into Maryborough and get a permit from an inspector. He would also have to get a permit from the police or the Traffic Department to take the stock out of the township. I would suggest that as these sales are advertised, a police officer should be sent out to the sales with power to issue permits for stock to travel, and to issue permits for the removal of the stock out of the traffic area. I notice that there is provision for a salary of £405 for the Chief Instructor of Dairying. I do not think the Chief Instructor is getting the salary that he should receive, considering that the dairying industry is one of the most important in Queensland. In view of that fact, I think we should have the very best man that we can obtain.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He is a good man.

Mr. CLAYTON: I would like to see an improvement in the quality of our produce. I am sure that, when hon. members read the trade report and quotation of prices relating to our dairy produce on the London market, they are not proud of the fact that our prices are generally the lowest. Something should be done to improve the quality of our produce so that, instead of being the lowest, we should at least be on a par with New Zealand. I think the Minister would be wise if he allowed the Chief Instructor of Dairying to visit the Southern States—if he has not already done so—and see what is being done there, and then slip across to New Zealand, and see the system that they have adopted there. I think that the trip would be educational, and it would go a long way towards enabling Queensland producers to turn out a better article than they are doing now.

I notice that the vote for the Council of Agriculture is a very large one. The farmers in my electorate are getting very impatient, because they cannot see the results from the Council of Agriculture which they anticipated. I always impress upon them that they should give it a trial. I am not going to turn down the Council of Agriculture; I say to my electors “Give it a trial.” Still they are not as enthusiastic as they were. I venture to say that the Minister will have an enormous amount of trouble keeping the farmers together if he allows any political interference with the Council of Agriculture.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Hear, hear!

Mr. CLAYTON: I would impress upon the hon. gentleman the necessity of keeping away from that Council all matters savouring of political interference.

Mr. BULCOCK: Yet you ask that political questions be referred to the Council.

[Mr. Clayton.]

Mr. CLAYTON: The Council is circulating a paper called "The Producer," and it is stated at the head that the guaranteed circulation is 20,000 copies. I think that the Council of Agriculture or the editor of that paper could considerably improve its contents. It is not a popular paper by any means in my district. I understand that many copies have been returned because they were not required. I know in my district a case of where five copies are going into one home.

Mr. CORSER: The same applies in the Burnett.

Mr. CLAYTON: No doubt. When the scheme was first launched every member of a family who was eligible joined up with this movement. Now we find five copies going into one home. We know, and the farmers should know, that "The Producer" is printed in the "Daily Standard" newspaper office. I understand that the farmers are going to be called upon to pay 2s. 6d. per annum as subscription to "The Producer." In the case where five copies are going into the one home the farmer will be called upon to pay 12s. 6d. per annum for the paper. I hope that the Council of Agriculture will improve the paper, so that it will be beneficial to the producers. I notice at the present time that one-third of it consists of advertisements. If a private firm was conducting that paper, and it contained one-third advertisements, it would be possible to distribute the paper free of cost amongst the producers. I sincerely hope that the Minister will move in the matter of improving the paper, because then it will be much more acceptable to primary producers. I also hope that he will do everything in his power during the coming year to see that the primary producers are placed in a different position from what they are in at the present time. I hope the Minister will do everything possible to extend relief to those men who are down and out. The farmers would not approach the Minister unless through dire necessity. Unfortunately they have had to approach him at the present time, and it is only right that he should do something to assist them.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): I would like to make some reference to a case which has excited some interest in my district for some time with regard to the death of stud dairy cattle. It is natural that it is also causing consternation to the owner and is causing a certain amount of uneasiness in the district. I understand the first beast died in the first week of July, and on last Saturday week the two last beasts died. Up to the present time twenty-four pedigree Jersey dairy cattle have died. No other cattle in that district are infected with any disease that can be connected with the trouble. The death of the first beast was reported to the department, and the stomach contents were despatched to the head office. Since then some of the paunches of the other beasts that have died have also been sent to the department, but still death after death has occurred among this valuable dairy herd, until at the present time it appears that cattle valued to the extent of £500 have been lost to this individual and the district in general. A certain amount of prickly-pear was found in the stomach of the first beast that died. On personal investigation, I found that the pear discovered in the stomach was picked out and placed there. Admittedly there was pear in the stomach of that animal together with large quantities of arsenic, but all the

other beasts that have died have been found to be free from pear when examined. After a period of some few weeks the unfortunate owner rises in the morning to find that two or three more of his stud beasts have died. They include beasts which have been hand-fed. The pear on his farm is only injected, and they have no evidence of the injected pear poisoning the stock. Robert's poison is used on the farm, and there is no evidence that these stock were eating the pear. Yet the district is troubled to that extent. The "Gayndah Gazette" of the 7th September stated—

"As far back as the first week in June Mr. C. H. A. Grevell, of Lingley Jersey Stud Farm, situated at Byrnestown, suffered the loss of several dairy cows, caused through death around which mystery was attached. A period of three months has since elapsed, during which time the number of deaths increased to twenty-four. The last death was recorded on Saturday last. But, strange as it may appear, the mystery surrounding the deaths still continues, much to the loss of Mr. Grevell, whose loss in pounds sterling must have been in the vicinity of £500. The matter has been in the hands of the Department of Agriculture and Stock during that period, and, as will be seen from the letter appearing below, the department, without solving the mystery, is inclined to wash its hands of the business, which course, it will be generally admitted, is not in the best interests, not only of Mr. Grevell, but of the public generally. Mr. Grevell makes no secret of the fact that he considers the department could have rendered him more assistance in his hour of difficulties, and, from the evidence at our disposal, we are inclined to think Mr. Grevell has cause for complaint on this score."

I am bringing this matter under the notice of the Minister, because I think it is one that should be cleared up. In the interests of stud breeders there should be a very strong, determined endeavour on the part of the Minister to unravel this mystery to the satisfaction of all concerned. It is not the first instance we have had of losses in cattle in certain districts surrounding which there is a certain amount of mystery, but a solution seems to be possible. The paper goes on to say—

"From present appearances, it appears as if Mr. Grevell's valuable herd is to be completely wiped out, and yet no one seems capable of coming to his assistance by solving the mystery. If the fault lay at Mr. Grevell's own door through the careless use of arsenic, surely the position could be made plain to him. On the other hand, if foul play is at work, it is the department's duty to come to Mr. Grevell's assistance. The uncertain position existing is causing consternation locally."

The paper claims that the last communication received from the Stock Department was from the Chief Inspector of Stock, Mr. Cory, and it is as follows:—

"With reference to the recent visit of Veterinary Surgeon McGowan to your property for the purpose of investigating the cause of death in cattle, I have to inform you that the officer referred to

Mr. Corsier.]

had advised that he proceeded to your farm in company with Police Sergeant Holden and Stock Inspector Pusey, where he found a Jersey bull calf three and a-half months old lying dead in the paddock in which the prickly-pear had been poisoned. A post-mortem examination revealed gastro-enteritis. It is understood that you have not followed the advice given by Inspector Pusey, and removed your stock to another paddock, as no other paddock is available. The veterinary surgeon also reports that a barrel of arsenic was kept in close proximity to the shed in which a quantity of hay was stored, and possibly some of the arsenic could have got into the fodder on a windy day. The sample of ingesta and walls of stomach obtained by the veterinary surgeon and forwarded to the Agricultural Chemist revealed, on examination, arsenic in apparently large quantities. It seems useless to make further tests in this connection, as the deaths of the cattle are undoubtedly due to arsenical poisoning. Enclosed herewith is a leaflet giving particulars in case of arsenical poisoning."

This gentleman sees his cattle grazing around him at night, and in the morning he wakes to find them dead. A formula for dealing with cases of arsenical poisoning would be of no avail. These losses have been investigated, and it has been proved that no pear in the locality has been eaten. If the pear was injected with Roberts's pear poison, it would not produce large quantities of arsenic in the stomachs of the beasts. Some of them were little calves five months old, which would not eat pear. The article further states—

"With reference to the non-removal of stock, Mr. Grevell said he and many others who examined the dead cattle and also the paddocks could see no reason for their removal, as prickly-pear was found in only one of the twenty-four dead animals and no indication was present of poisoned pear having been disturbed. With regard to the barrel of arsenic in the shed, Mr. Grevell said this has been in the shed for three years and has been opened but twice. As proof that the hay is not affected with poison"—

It was supposed to have been possible, in the case of the barrel being opened, by the wind blowing some of the arsenic on to the fodder—

"Mr. Grevell said he has for some time been feeding a cow and a horse on it and both are very much alive."

The only beasts that have come in contact with that hay are his very best cow and horse, which he feeds daily from this hay, and they are both alive. Those two reasons are given by the department as a solution of the mystery, and they finalise the position up to the present so far as the department is concerned, but they do not seem to be based on too much fact.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Is there no suggestion of foul play.

Mr. CORSER: I would not like to say anything in that regard. I am only talking of what I have heard of the beasts.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: There is a good deal of mystery about it.

[Mr. Corser.

Mr. CORSER: I do not mind the mystery so much, but the two reasons given by the department as the possible causes of the deaths seem to be exploded by facts. The hay is not poisoned, and has not up to the present poisoned the two beasts that have been fed on it; and the suggestion that the deaths were due to the eating of the injected pear in the paddock seems to be exploded by the fact that there are large quantities of arsenic in the stomach, that the pear has not been disturbed, and that pear has been found in the stomach of only one beast. This injected pear is lying in a heap crumpled up with prickles, showing that it is not the Downs *Opuntia inermis* pear, but the *Opuntia stricta* variety. The presence of prickles as numerous as those on the back of a porcupine would cause the beasts not to touch it with their lips.

At 5.30 p.m.,

Mr. DUNSTAN (*Gympie*), one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. CORSER: I am bringing the matter forward showing that these two theories are absolutely exploded. It is to be hoped that something will be done to try and get a solution—

"There are now twenty-four dead, one of which was worth 50 guineas. The beast won fourteen show championships and the Jubilee Cup of the Darling Downs. The cow also won at Brisbane."

I read that to show the class of cattle that this gentleman has been losing.

It further states—

"It may be useless for the department to make further tests"—

That is, with regard to the presence of arsenic in the stomach—

"but it would be to the department's credit if it were to continue its investigations. It is to the Department of Agriculture and Stock that stockowners rightly look to help them out of such serious positions as that in which Mr. Grevell finds himself, and no effort should be spared by the department to clear the matter up."

It is to be sincerely hoped that, in the interests of stockowners in the State and of this particular gentleman, the Minister will try to find the reason for these occurrences. I am sure the Minister will agree that if these statements can be borne out by facts, it is not sufficient for the department to rest content with the reasons given, but that they should investigate further in the hope of trying to find out just what is the reason. They may discover something that will enable this gentleman to save the balance of his stock and that may probably be of use to other stockowners in the State. The cattle in question are valuable, and naturally, if there is any suspicion of foul play, it is all the more essential in the interests of the people of the district that the matter should be investigated to ease their minds in that direction. Some of them have spoken to me in regard to the subject, and they are most anxious that the matter should be cleared up. It should be solved in the interests of everybody.

Getting away from that point, I notice the payment of quite a number of experts.

Experts in this department should be good, and I have always advocated the very fullest authority should be given to them. The more authority we give them the more responsible they become, and the more responsible they are the bigger value they will be to the State. We want big men, and to propagate them you must give them the confidence of their position. If you desire to have practical men at the head of departments, you must give them control of their departments. It is no use allowing the scientific man to get out of his branch of the work, or the practical man to get into the arena of the scientific man; that would not be in the interests of the State. Other countries have made a big feature of encouraging big men, and we in Australia cannot get better men for the purpose than those already here. You cannot bring men from Wisconsin and other places with as good a knowledge for the purpose as that possessed by the men in our State. The sooner you give our heads greater powers, greater responsibilities, and better pay, the sooner you will get big men in Queensland, who will compare favourably with big men in other parts of the world. The men at the head of our Treasury and our banking institutions should be the best we can get, and, when they get the expert information necessary to enable them to fill their positions satisfactorily they should receive recognition in the form of greater responsibilities and larger salaries.

I notice that funds are provided to pay for a number of experts under the jurisdiction of the Council of Agriculture. I consider that all experts of the Department of Agriculture should be a charge on the Agricultural Estimates with which we are now dealing. I am sorry to think that we should build up another set of experts, who might clash in some way with those under the jurisdiction of the head office. I trust that it will be found advisable to place all of these experts under the jurisdiction of the head office, so that all of the various branches shall be administered from the chair of the Secretary for Agriculture and will all be answerable to him.

I notice that there has been some increase in salaries throughout the department. The Minister during his term of office has gradually made slight increases. I am one who believes that there should be a very much greater amount voted for this department. The appropriations throughout the department should exceed out of all reason the amounts that we have appropriated from year to year. It should be recognised that the maximum amount of efficiency can only be achieved by a greater appropriation. I hope the Minister will be successful next year in very considerably increasing the amount to be appropriated for the department, and that he will not depend too much on the revenue coming from direct or indirect taxation of those engaged in the agricultural industry. I hope that the Minister will take this comment in the spirit in which it is made.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): I am not going to grumble about the increased appropriation for this department. It is practically the most important of all Government departments, and it is not my desire to pick holes but rather to assist the department as much as possible in its work.

Referring to the agricultural organisations, I think they are of great importance at the present time to the agricultural industry.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE AND STOCK: Hear, hear!

Mr. DEACON: I am disappointed at the lack of interest that is shown amongst farmers in connection with the Council of Agriculture and the Co-operative Buying Branch that they are instituting. It is not fair to judge the organisation simply upon what has been done. We read in the official paper an account of the small attendance at meetings. In one case the complaint was made that sufficient funds could not be raised to pay the rent of the meeting-room. That apathy is going on practically all over the State except at Cambooya, where the producers are taking an active interest in the measure.

I think it would be wise at the present time for the Council of Agriculture to go slow in regard to one of the proposals they are making. I refer to the suggested scheme for co-operative purchasing, in connection with which it is proposed to make a levy on the producers. Before they do anything like that, they should ask the producers if they are in favour of the proposal. If the Council of Agriculture enter into such a scheme and afterwards impose a levy on the producers, it will do a great deal of harm to the agricultural organisation and to any scheme put forward. It is better to go a bit slow. I am not going to say that the scheme may not be a good one, but it is better to go slowly and see that the producers know the full effects of it before they are asked to submit to a levy.

I am very sorry indeed that the fodder relief was discontinued at such short notice. I quite understand that the department may have been imposed upon to a certain extent, as there is always somebody ready to get at the department, especially if matters have to be rushed. The relief was urgently asked for, and there was hardly time to make full inquiries into the circumstances of every case before the relief was granted. I can understand that the department had to take a risk because it was not in a position to make full inquiries at the time. However, that is no reason why the relief should be discontinued. It might be a reason for making further inquiries, but the Government would be well advised if they were still to grant the relief. Let them test each case properly and, if a case is a genuine one, continue the relief a little longer. It does not interest my district very much because the greater part of my district does not need relief; but I know other districts that do need relief. Too much of the fodder was purchased in Brisbane and then forwarded to the people needing it. A lot of the stuff was bought in New South Wales and brought to Brisbane and then railed back, which meant double freight to the department and double expense to the settler, and, if the amount granted in relief is eventually to be written off, it will be a loss to the State. It would have been better to have purchased the fodder at the border and arranged the distribution from there. I am sure a lot of money has been lost owing to the fodder having been purchased in Brisbane.

I notice there is provision in the Estimate for the appointment of an Instructor in Pig Raising at £345 a year. I have no doubt

Mr. Deacon.]

whatever that a competent instructor can do a great deal of good; but, if he is a competent man he could do better himself at pig raising. It is a very small salary for a competent man. I have not the pleasure of knowing the gentleman and I do not wish to judge him harshly, but I hope the result will be better than one might expect from a man on such a low salary.

I notice that the vote for "State Farms and Gardens" includes the salary of a Wheat Experimentalist at Roma. That gentleman only gets a salary of £325. He gets less actually than the Instructor in Pig Raising, although his work is of greater importance to the State than the work of any other instructor that I know of. The wheats produced have been of tremendous benefit to the wheatgrowers of this State, and it is a work that should be encouraged. It would pay the State to expend more money in that direction, and it would certainly pay the State to give the man responsible for the work a higher salary.

I notice that the Cotton Adviser is to receive £1,250 a year. I do not know anything about cotton, but certainly that gentleman is getting a very high salary compared to what is received by the other experts employed by the department.

I would like to make some comment in regard to the stallions purchased by the Government. I have had a good deal of experience in horse-breeding. I am not going to blame the Government for what they have done in the matter of the stallions they purchased, considering they rushed into the business early. Probably they bought the best horses they could get, but they are hardly the class of horse necessary to improve the breed of horses in this State. There are as good horses already in the State. They are good draught horses, but they are not the sort one would get to improve the general standard of stud horses in the State. I notice by this morning's paper that a colt was imported into Victoria by a private owner at a cost of £1,582 and a mare was brought from Scotland for the same owner at a cost of £1,320. They are high-class stuff, and, without casting any reflection on what has been done, if the Government are going on with that work in order to improve the breed of horses in this State, it would be better to get pure stud stallions of a high class. Ordinary animals can be imported by anybody, and they do import them. Recently they have not been brought here because the business did not pay. The only way to improve the breed of horses in this State is to import absolutely the best stallions that can be got.

There are a lot of other things in connection with this department that might be criticised, but I do not wish to pick small holes in the department's expenditure. Possibly they are over-paying in some instances and under-paying in others. One cannot deny that the department has done a lot of good work for Queensland, and I hope it will continue to do good work. The greatest thing for Queensland is the encouragement of agriculture. The farmers are the most important class in Queensland. There is nothing that has such a great influence on the future of the State as agriculture, and I am really sorry to see, in spite of all we are doing, that agriculture is not increasing in Queensland as it should. We should be able to do more.

[*Mr. Deacon.*]

Mr. COLLINS: That is because of the dry weather.

Mr. DEACON: It is not only because of the dry weather, as the hon. member for Bowen says.

At 5.50 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Kirwan, *Brisbane*) resumed the chair.

Mr. DEACON: We have always got dry weather in Queensland off and on; but, if we are a little worse off than other countries in regard to dry weather, we are better off in other respects. We are in just as good a position to make this a great agricultural State as any other country in the world. We are able to show a more profitable return from agriculture than any other country. I was reading in the Brisbane "Courier" of to-day the report of an interview with Mr. Mark Harrison, a visitor from our State to America. That gentleman said that there are 2,000,000 farmers starving in the United States.

Mr. COLLINS: It is private enterprise there.

Mr. DEACON: The farmers are better organised there, yet we are told that there are 2,000,000 farmers starving there, although they have such a tremendous market in their own country.

Mr. COLLINS: Owing to private ownership of the land. Every writer on economics teaches that.

Mr. DEACON: Mr. Mark Harrison does not say so.

There is only one other matter I wish to speak about, and that is in connection with the wheat industry. I think I am more interested in that industry than any other hon. member in the House. For the last three years, at any rate, we have enjoyed rather favourable circumstances. There have been short crops in the world generally, and wheat has fetched a high price, and we have been able to hold up the local market and get a high price for wheat.

Mr. GLEDSON: And yet you find fault with the Wheat Board.

Mr. DEACON: I am really surprised at the hon. member saying such a thing. No man can truthfully say that in any criticism I have made with regard to the Wheat Board I have not tried to help them. I would not be afraid to criticise them again to-morrow if it would assist them. Everything I have done has been to assist them, and the members of the Board will acknowledge that. I want to assist them by a little more criticism in regard to pointing out the difficulties they will have to face and overcome. I shall only be too willing to make any suggestion which will help them. I recognise that the Board is a worthy body, and one which we could not do without. We have recognised that on this side from the start, and it was at our suggestion that the Board was instituted.

Mr. GLEDSON: Did you not hold a meeting in Warwick in opposition to it?

Mr. DEACON: No. If the hon. member will read my speech, he will find that I did my best to assist the Board in order to overcome the difficulties they were in. They would not listen to any suggestions at first, and in consequence they went wrong. The greatest trouble has been with regard to the delivery of wheat, and they have not over-

come that difficulty yet. The Board expect the farmers to deliver their wheat in such quantities and at such times as the Board require. In many cases the farmers have to travel all night to bring in the wheat to the railway centres. I know farmers who have worked fifteen or sixteen hours a day for a good many days to cope with the situation. A tremendous amount of time is also wasted by the teams and the men having to stand idle for so long. The only way to overcome that difficulty is to have regular deliveries of the wheat from the start, whether it is wanted for shipment or not. The Board should arrange for trainloads to suit the convenience of the farmers more than is done, and they should not have to wait so long for the money. It is not a matter of much advantage if the Railway Department makes a little more money by asking a farmer to stand about with his team remaining idle and wasting days when he could be doing work on the farm. It is much more important to consider the farmers' time than that of the Railway Department. The main objection to the pool system is that it is not actually a pool; it is a first-class selling agency. A pool puts everyone on the same level if they have the same article, but under the present system they do not all get the same treatment, as it is impossible for the Board to give it to them.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Are you against pools?

MR. DEACON: I think the Minister ought to know, if he has listened to me, that it is not a pool. (Laughter.) It is a selling agency. One delivery of wheat is arranged to take place in January from one district, while another district has to deliver in June and July, and the owners have to take all the risk. It is not putting everybody on the same level, and in consequence of that every farmer rushes to deliver his wheat when he can. As soon as the season opens he receives a notification as to delivery. The man who is last in is going to suffer, and will have to bear the greatest share of the burden. Two years ago I suggested that an allowance should be made in that direction, and that January and February should equally be months of delivery, and that an increased rate of payment should be made for succeeding months so as to place them all on an equal basis of payment. If the Board could overcome these difficulties there would be less grumbling and injustice. It is beyond us to get a perfect Board, but we can make it as good as possible. If there had been a possibility of a big crop this year—and I am sorry there is no possibility of that—there would have been a tremendous amount of trouble in regard to the market.

MR. G. P. BARNES (Warwick): The vote for the Department of Agriculture has always been an interesting one, and I should say that, at the present juncture, it is more interesting than usual, although, perhaps, I may be more sceptical than some hon. members

[7 p.m.] with reference to the vote and the intentions of the Government.

Quite a large sum of money is being voted which, if rightly expended, will do a very great deal for agriculture. The amounts I have particularly in mind aggregate somewhere about £45,000 or £46,000. Some of them, no doubt, would have appeared in any case, but much the largest sum has to do with the Council of Agriculture. What is really in the mind of the Government in con-

nection with the Council of Agriculture and the continuance of that particular vote is just an open question. I should say that it is largely carrying out the purpose and platform of the Labour party, although, certainly, the work is not being carried on just now in the formidable way we might expect. The Premier, when speaking in the North, on more than one occasion indicated that whilst the socialisation of production, distribution, and exchange was the aim of his party—

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: What do you understand by the term "socialisation of industry"?

MR. G. P. BARNES: Perhaps I might allay the hon. gentleman's anxiety by saying that the condition of things which exists in another country has produced what I have in my mind. Socialism, we are told now, has led in Russia to a direct move back to individualism, and we learn that the spirit of freedom, which we know so well, having survived there and having come to the front again, has led to the production this year of one of the finest wheat crops that have ever been known in the history of that country. Under the socialistic condition of things in that country, things went to pot; nobody cared very much what he did or how much he produced. I was about to remark that the Premier said that the socialisation of production, distribution, and exchange was something that was not likely to be attained in five, ten, or twenty years, or, perhaps, in a longer period, but nevertheless it was the aim and the object of his party.

I take the stand in matters of this kind that I take in connection with other matters. If it is something wrong and something that should be avoided to-day, it should be avoided for all time. If it is not good enough for the hour in which we live, and as an immediate thing, then it is no good in the future. The Premier plays on the susceptibilities of the people by saying that it is something in the dim distance. A bad thing is no good in the distance, nor is it good at the moment. It is therefore on that score that I take my stand. I would scotch the thing now rather than deal with it later on. I would approach it in the same way as I would a revolutionist. The man who states he is going to do something, to turn the world upside down and create all manner of things should be dealt with. It may be that he is only a faddist or a crank or has something wrong with him, but it would be better to deal with him before he reaches danger point.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. gentleman will not continue his discourse on those lines. I would ask him to link up his remarks with the vote under discussion.

MR. G. P. BARNES: I was simply illustrating my attitude towards proposals of the kind that are involved in this vote. Whilst one does rejoice to see the farming industry helped as it should be, I am distinctly sceptical as to the real motives of the Government. My real belief in connection with the various amounts in this vote and the different arrangements that have been made, and concerning the men employed and the way in which the work is being carried out, is that the Government are simply carrying out the Labour party's platform of socialisation, and on that account I am not prepared to give them any help whatever. To help in.

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the direction of fostering co-operation and leaving it to the producers' own control is one thing, but when you have a sinister aim and object and you are working for one common purpose, then I am distinctly opposed to it. I notice that the paper issued by the Council of Agriculture puts things in a different light. It says that the main aspects of agricultural activity are co-operative production, co-operative marketing, and co-operative supplying. That does not go so far as what is understood as socialisation, but it is a step forward, and, as the Attorney-General of other days used to say, they were not going to do things in a holus bolus way, but were going to do things little by little and step by step. He said that the first thing they would deal with was the land and then what the land produced. They have dealt with the land by taxation, and they are now dealing with what the land produces in the direction I have already indicated. They have schemes in hand in their initial stages, and those schemes are covered by this vote. I feel sure that, when the Minister rises in his place, he will have quite a lot to say in connection with this vote. Personally I was disappointed that he had not more to say in moving the vote. I think the Committee feel disposed to agree that the Minister should have taken the opportunity of enlarging upon the activities of the Government in various ways.

The Government are to be commended for the manner in which they are taking matters in hand in connection with the cultivation of cotton. The aid of the Government is needed in this direction. It is very hard to make a departure in any direction, and sometimes it requires all the help you can possibly give it. Votes connected with the cultivation and administration of crops and all that kind of thing are certainly required to establish this new industry firmly, which I trust and believe will be one of the great industries of the land. I am aware that cotton cultivation will have to run the gauntlet of many an evil, and it will be as liable to failure as any other crop. It will be as liable to failure, for instance, as the wheat or the maize crop; but there will be some years when the cotton crop will give a fine reward to the people interested, and be a distinct and great help to the country.

Very little has been said so far in connection with other kinds of production. The hon. member for Cunningham made some references to wheat cultivation and the matter of pools. The imaginary success which attended the Wheat Pool has led to the idea of fostering every other pool we hear and read about. If I have formed my calculations rightly, no other pool that one can think of or that is likely to be established in our time will ever be established under such favourable circumstances as the Wheat Pool. That pool was credited for the farmer having received 8s. a bushel on f.a.q. wheat. The Wheat Pool had really nothing whatever to do with that. They had to do with the administration of what was provided for them. All over Australia the selling price of wheat was fixed at 9s. a bushel. In Queensland a guarantee of 5s. a bushel was given by the Commonwealth Government. Various other States guaranteed other amounts, and the Government of the day in Queensland guaranteed a further 3s. The Wheat Pool, therefore, was started under circumstances so favourable that they

could hardly make a mess of it. They had 1s. a bushel to play with. They were protected on the one side by the price of wheat being fixed at 9s. a bushel to the buyer, and 8s. of that amount was to be paid by the two Governments. Therefore 1s. a bushel should have been ample under wise administration to cover every possible expense. As we know, some £25,000 has had to be paid by the Treasury in connection with this proposal of the Government. That should not have been the case. There was no management of the 8s. Where the real management came in was in connection with the balance of 1s. a bushel, and if their administration had been wise, there should have been no loss to the State.

The Minister will remember that in the early days in connection with the 1920-1921 crop I very strongly advocated dealing with that grain as early as possible in order that there might be the very highest realisation of the best hopes of the farmer. Indeed, I indicated to some that I thought they would not only get 8s. per bushel, but they would get an advance upon the f.a.q. quality. Unfortunately, they never received that advance on their f.a.q. wheat. They received nothing in advance, and had it not been for the good services of the Government, they would not have received the 8s. per bushel. However, I need not utter one word of complaint on account of the owners and producers of that f.a.q. wheat. Those men are satisfied with the 8s. they received. I am distinctly concerned regarding the owners of all the other wheat from No. 2 milling wheat downwards, and I say that in a year when the price of wheat was fixed at 8s. a bushel for f.a.q. wheat, it is not fair for any man to say that the men who received from 5s. down to 2s. 6d. per bushel received anything like the amount they should have got. It is a disgrace to find to-day that any man should have been compelled, in a year when production was so good and great, to receive 2s. 6d. per bushel for his wheat. I find that there were owners of—putting it in round figures—900,000 bushels of wheat who only received—it may be possible that they have another payment coming to them—an average of 4s. 1.1d. per bushel. These men would have received the 8s. per bushel but for the failure of the administration. Heaps of wheat was received and should have been passed as f.a.q., but the owners were deterred in every way from delivering by the failure of the Board to act efficiently. There are many instances in which men have failed altogether to receive for f.a.q. wheat the price they should have received. I will give an instance. I met a man at Swan Creek the other day who told me that he had had 700 bags of wheat. He was very early with his wheat, and 300 bags were sent in forthwith to the mill of Barnes and Co., Ltd., Warwick, and was passed as f.a.q. at 8s. a bushel. He asked about sending in the other 400 bags, but the Board delayed, and delayed and delayed, and eventually when the wheat was sent in it had deteriorated somewhat, and finally the man received only 4s. a bushel for it. There was a man whose second lot of wheat was identical with the first, but on account of the Board having failed to take delivery he lost 4s. per bushel on 400 bags of wheat. There are many other cases like that. I want to commend the Government very strongly for what they have done and are doing this year in order to avoid a repetition of the shocking conditions which arose in 1920 and 1921 by their erection

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of very fine grainsheds all over the land. No finer work could be done than is being done in that connection. I am not going to dwell upon the question as to whether it would have been better to spend the money on silos; but I do say that the sheds which have been erected will be of wonderful assistance to the farmers, and next time we have a wheat crop a loss similar to that sustained in the season 1920-1921 will be altogether avoided.

Reverting once more to the amount the wheatgrowers received: If the growers in 1920-1921 had received full value for their wheat, and equal to that received by their neighbours—if it had been really pooled in the full sense as we understand pooling—then they would have received considerably more. The full amount received was £184,000, and if they had received even an average of 6s. a bushel instead of 4s. a bushel what a big difference it would have made to these men. I unhesitatingly say that, if the farmers had received the attention they should have received, certainly in 1920-1921 they would have had £100,000 more in their pockets than they have received since. I would like to refer to the failure in the administration of the 1920-1921 pool. What should have been done in 1920-1921 was to get rid of the wheat as soon as possible. That should have been the policy; but when you come to the 1,000,000 bushels or less in 1921-1922, the policy should have been to hold the wheat. Instead of doing that, the Board in the latter year exported about 900,000 bushels of wheat, and for that wheat, so far as I can gather from the reports of the Department of Agriculture and the Auditor-General, all the farmers received was 4s. 7.7d. per bushel. Owing to the unwise shipping of that wheat there was a loss to the farmers of about 1s. per bushel, or about £45,000. That is a very sorry matter. I notice, by the way, that, speaking on this on one occasion in Warwick, Mr. Todd said the loss was very great and the return was only 4s. 7.7d. per bushel. Another feature of it is this: One company alone imported into the country more wheat than we exported. What a commentary upon the administration of the department! I think the Minister in charge of the department is somewhat to blame. He should have watched these things and should have seen that an error of such magnitude was not committed. The members of the Wheat Board say they know mistakes have been made, but that does not put the £150,000 back into the pockets of the men who lost that sum, and the growers certainly would have had that much more money had the administration by the Wheat Board been as successful as it should have been. I make no personal allusions. I believe the Wheat Board intended to do right, but they had not the experience to help them, and that is where we are likely to make mistakes at every turn. Men are being appointed to positions who have not the experience necessary to guide them. You could not expect a man taken from this calling in life and another man from the other calling in life to be in full touch with the markets of the world, and to know how to handle them wisely. They have to learn from experience.

The bell indicated that the hon. member's time had expired.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I am very sorry that the Minister has not adopted the standard laid down by the Premier, and supplied

the Committee with the amount of his expenses during the past twelve months. The Premier told us that during the discussion on the Estimates we could obtain the expenses of the different Ministers, and he set an example by letting us know what expenditure he incurred during the past twelve months.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I will do that.

Mr. MORGAN: I am pleased to hear that; I thought it was an oversight and that the matter only needed to be mentioned.

I want to speak upon one or two important matters in connection with this department. I am not going to cavil at the increased expenditure, because for very many years during the regime of previous Governments I criticised them about the starvation of the Department of Agriculture. I am very pleased to see that the Government are year by year gradually increasing the amount on the Estimates in order to develop the agricultural resources of the State. What I want to know is whether the money is being wisely expended and whether we are getting full value for the expenditure. If it is being wisely expended, we have nothing to complain about; but, if it is not, we are expending money without any real advantage. I notice that in connection with the new offices which have been created we have a Cotton Adviser at a salary of £1,250. A Cotton Adviser may do a great deal of good. He may be the means of teaching the inexperienced cotton-growers of Queensland—because we must all admit that we are more or less inexperienced in the growth of cotton—and by his advice he may be able to increase the yield of cotton considerably, and thus more than earn the amount of money which is placed on the Estimates to meet his salary and other expenses. I notice that we are also to have a Fruit Packing Instructor. Will it be necessary for that instructor to continue in work for more than twelve months? It appears to me that in regard to the packing of fruit cases it is only necessary for the Instructor to go round and show the fruit-growers how fruit cases should be packed, after which the work need not be continued. Once a man knows how to pack a case of fruit—and he may be taught in five minutes—there is no necessity for the continuance of the Instructor. Three or six months will be all that is necessary in order to teach the fruit-growers of Queensland how to pack fruit. Then I notice that we have an Instructor in Pig Raising. That may be very good, but I do not know how instruction in pig raising is going to benefit the farmers to any very great extent. I think the introduction of good new pig blood into the country would, perhaps, be more beneficial than to have an Instructor in Pig Raising—the introduction of sires from other parts of Australia or of the world. The money expended in that direction might have a more beneficial effect than the employment of a man to teach us how to breed pigs.

With respect to cotton-growing, I notice that the Minister for the coming season has reduced the amount which is going to be paid for cotton to the growers in the State. The hon. gentleman may say that that is not correct, but I say it is correct. He is stipulating that the cotton must be of 1½-inch

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staple in order to obtain the full market value of 5½d. per lb.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: How do you know what the market value is?

Mr. MORGAN: We know that up to the present we have not received more than that. Let me say the minimum market value, if that will suit the Minister.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The growers have received more than the market value.

Mr. MORGAN: The point I want to make is that, had the Government decided last year to pay 5½d. per lb. for 1¼-inch staple only, very few farmers would have received 5½d. per lb. for their cotton, and [7.30 p.m.] I venture to say that next year very few cotton-growers will receive 5½d. a lb. It is just as well to let the cotton-growers know that they are only likely to get 5d. a lb.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: They grew it for years at 2d. a lb.

Mr. MORGAN: Does the hon. gentleman want to go back to the days when they grew it for 2d. a lb. and paid labour £1 a week, when to-day we have to pay award wages?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: How much do you pay?

Mr. MORGAN: Perhaps I pay more than the hon. gentleman. I am one of the biggest cotton-growers in my electorate, and I paid my cotton-pickers 1½d. a lb. and keep. If the hon. gentleman will take advantage of the information in his possession, he will see that I am a grower of cotton. I take a keen interest in cotton-growing, and I have done all I possibly could to establish it in my electorate, not only by urging the farmers to plant cotton but also by setting the example. I had 70 acres in last year, but unfortunately it was a bad season and we were able to pick only about 14 acres.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You would not have done that without the Government guarantee.

Mr. MORGAN: Only about one cotton crop in every four was picked. The rest of the farmers unfortunately had no cotton, so that every pound for which 5½d. was paid cost the growers as a body 9d. a lb. to grow. The result is that, as a State, we have been the losers in cotton-growing this year, and the Minister cannot deny the fact. I do not want to put a damper on cotton-growing. I know that the season was to blame; it was such as to prevent us from growing cotton as we can, and as I believe we shall eventually, grow it in this State.

Mr. W. COOPER: Did you get anything?

Mr. MORGAN: Unfortunately three out of every four farmers got nothing. I admit that a greater percentage of those who grow wheat did not get a straw, owing to the unfortunate weather conditions.

The Minister has thought it advisable to stop the relief granted to unfortunate settlers suffering through the drought. After the work had cost £30,000 he discontinued the grant the very day that rain fell or the day after. Whether the rain caused the Minister to come to that decision, whether the vote had been exhausted, or whether it was because some men had been receiving relief dishonestly, I do not know. If it was

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the first-mentioned reason that caused him to discontinue it, the Minister should know, as an experienced farmer, that for a week or ten days after rain has fallen on drought-stricken areas there is not a green shoot and more stock die during that period than before. At no other time do stock require more hard food than during those eight or ten days, but the Minister stopped relief immediately. A great many people were on the starvation line. They needed food—flour, tea, beef, and sugar. The Minister knows that when unemployed men were getting doles and a number of them managed to get them who were in receipt of wages so that they were not entitled to them, the Minister in charge of that department did his duty and prosecuted them. If a similar reason caused the Minister to discontinue the relief of men on the land, why did he not do as his colleague did and institute inquiries and prosecute in any cases in which it was shown that men had been receiving relief to which they were not entitled? Nobody on this side stands for the man who will take relief when he is not entitled to it.

I want to take this opportunity to point out that the farmer who is receiving fodder from the Government for the relief of starving stock does not know what he is paying for it. We have been told on this side on very good authority that the fodder is going to cost him £12 or £12 10s. a ton. If that is so, profiteering has been going on in the dealing in that fodder, because I have here the "Australasian" to show that in the last week of August—and, in fact, throughout July—wheat chaff could be bought in Melbourne for £5 10s. a ton and the best lucerne chaff for £8, and the wheat chaff could have been landed here at less than £8. What have the Government been doing? The State Produce Agency has been buying the fodder locally instead of sending to Melbourne and bringing it over themselves. To-day we were told that 1,000 tons of fodder from the Southern States have been purchased by the Government in Brisbane, and the fact of the Government going on the market for that quantity would increase the price to the people here. The Government, instead of getting it from Melbourne for £8 or £8 10s. or less, have been buying it here and allowing the produce agents to make a profit of £1 or £1 10s.; and instead of the farmer paying £8 10s. or £9—allowing for the profit of the State Produce Agency—it has been costing him £12 or £12 10s. a ton. There has been profiteering at the expense of the poor unfortunate, drought-stricken, down-and-out farmer. Does the Minister stand for that? It was the duty of the Government to get the fodder at the lowest price possible, but, instead, there have been several profits, and the down-and-out farmer has to pay them. The leader of the Country party tells me that Mr. Tait, who purchased the stallions for the Government, bought 2 tons of fodder in Melbourne at £5 10s. a ton to feed them on the way over. That bears out my statement. The Minister will perhaps be able to tell us whether it is true that the farmer is to be asked to pay £12 or £12 10s. a ton.

Mr. W. COOPER: Do you know a specific case where it has been charged?

Mr. MORGAN: No farmer knows what he will have to pay. The Minister will be able to answer that question later on.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If you do not know, why do you make the statement?

Mr. MORGAN: I make it on very good authority.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What authority?

Mr. MORGAN: Let the Minister say later on.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: State the charge definitely first.

Mr. MORGAN: The State Produce Agency will have to charge £12 10s. a ton if they are buying it at £12 a ton.

At 7.40 p.m.,

Mr. F. A. COOPER (*Bremer*), one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. MORGAN: That is sufficient proof that what I say is correct. I want to draw attention to the fact that the area under cultivation in Queensland has not been increasing as it should. Perhaps the reason is that we are over-producing and markets are not available, and it may not be advisable to go on increasing our production. Why should we be opening up so much land for selection if that is so? We are insisting upon the plough being used, but evidently we are producing more than we have markets for. Then why should we go on over-producing? The hon. member for Brisbane the other night endeavoured to prove that the area under cultivation in Queensland has increased to a greater extent than in any other State in Australia, but unfortunately the leader of the Opposition proved conclusively that the hon. member was in error in the statement that he made. I have figures to show that the area under cultivation in Queensland in 1916-17 was 885,229 acres, and in 1920-21, 779,497 acres, or a decrease for that year over the year 1916-17 of over 100,000 acres.

Mr. BULCOCK: That was a very dry year.

Mr. MORGAN: I want the hon. member for Brisbane to listen to these figures. The figures relating to the total area under cultivation per 1,000 of the population in 1920-21 are—

	Acres.
New South Wales	2,155
Victoria	2,938
Queensland	1,036
South Australia	6,578
Western Australia	5,456
Tasmania	1,397

We had a lower proportionate area under cultivation in Queensland than in any other State.

Mr. BULCOCK: Because the other States are wheat-exporting States.

Mr. MORGAN: There is always some excuse. Why are we not a wheat-exporting State?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Yes; why are we not?

Mr. MORGAN: Perhaps it is not a payable crop to grow. The hon. member for Brisbane stated that we had increased the area under cultivation to a greater extent than any other State, but he made a mistake in dealing with percentages. A 50 per cent. increase in the area under cultivation in Queensland, where there is a small area

under cultivation, would be nothing like an increase of 20 per cent. in the area under cultivation in Victoria, where there is a large area under cultivation. The figures relating to the increase in area under cultivation for 1920-21 are—

	Acres.
New South Wales	693,675
Victoria	488,633
Queensland	215,735

Those figures show that Victoria increased its area under cultivation to double the extent of Queensland, and New South Wales increased its area to an extent three times greater than Queensland.

Mr. BULCOCK: With four times the number of farmers.

Mr. MORGAN: That may be all very well. The figures given by the hon. member for Brisbane were not correct. I do not say that he gave wrong figures intentionally.

Mr. BULCOCK: His figures were not proportionately wrong.

Mr. MORGAN: In Queensland, where we have a large area of land unalienated and unsettled, the increase in the area under cultivation has not been equal to the increase in other parts of Australia. That is something to be deplored. I am not here to indulge in any carping criticism or to try to humiliate the Minister or the Government, but I am here to do all I possibly can to increase the prosperity of Queensland, and more especially the prosperity of the people who live in the country parts of Queensland. My own opinion is that those people deserve more consideration than those who live in the larger centres of population, because they have to suffer greater hardships than those more fortunately situated. I do hope that in the future the Government will be as lenient as possible, and that they will not stop at a paltry expenditure of £30,000 to keep the rural population from starvation. The other night I drew attention to the fact that the Government were paying £62,000 a year to keep a few miners in work at Mount Morgan. Will the Minister say that those miners at Mount Morgan are more important than the people who are cultivating the soil in other parts of Queensland? A sum of £62,000 can be expended each year to keep a few miners in employment at Mount Morgan in order to keep that town from bursting up, and at the same time we have country people starving who do not know where they are going to get the next bag of flour or the next pound of sugar, and just at that critical moment the Minister stops their allowance. He cuts off their allowance just at the time when it is most needed. Is that humane administration? I say "No." The Minister made a huge blunder, and, even if the Premier or the rest of the Cabinet compelled him to take action, he should have taken a stand and fought them and said to his colleagues, "No, these men are entitled to that relief, and, until something happens to enable them to do something to keep the wolf from the door, we should continue this relief."

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Last year we granted to the farmers £200,000 in the way of railway concessions.

Mr. MORGAN: I suppose included in that concession was the allowance made on the freights for the cattlemen. There was an increase of 63 per cent. in the freights,

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and then there was a decrease of 30 per cent. That is what the Government call a concession!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: You cannot get away from the fact that we granted concessions.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The Meat Board thanked me for the concessions that were granted.

Mr. MORGAN: When we got that concession I thanked you, too. It was something to get.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It was a lot.

Mr. MORGAN: The freights were increased 63 per cent. above the 1914 level, and then they were knocked back 30 per cent., but they were still a great deal above the 1914 level.

Mr. BULLOCK: Our cattle freights are the lowest in the Commonwealth.

Mr. MORGAN: Yes; and so is the price of our cattle. The price obtained for cattle in the other States is 300 per cent. higher than the price obtained for cattle in Queensland.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is your own fault.

Mr. MORGAN: A bullock sold for £6 in the Enoggera yards last Wednesday would realise £18 in Sydney, £24 in Melbourne, and £22 in South Australia. The Minister cannot deny that.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: You must consider the cost of carriage.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It is because of your own incapacity to deal with the situation.

Mr. MORGAN: It is not. We do all that it is possible for men to do, but we cannot get the Government to come to our assistance.

Mr. TAYLOR (*Windsor*): The discussion on the Estimates of the Department of Agriculture is always very interesting. In dealing with these Estimates I desire to refer to a few matters in the report by the Agent-General, of which I think the Department of Agriculture should take note. Probably the department is not to blame for some of the matters discussed there. I shall come to that a little later on. It is very gratifying to note from the Agent-General's report that at an exhibition held in London on 20th October last, where 100 points were awarded as first prize for salted butter, that prize was secured by the Logan and Albert Co-operative Company. The second prize went to the Maryborough Co-operative Company with 99½ points, and the third prize to the Goombungee Co-operative Company with 99 points. That is very satisfactory, indeed, as those are three Queensland companies. Another matter I wish to touch upon is the matter of cheese. The Agent-General in his report states—

"Generally speaking, cheese prices might be expected to move in sympathy with the butter market, being largely subject to the same conditions of supply, although not altogether to the same conditions in relation to demand. The consumption of cheese in Great Britain, although to some extent seasonal, is fairly constant, whereas the consumption

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of butter, owing to the existence of an acceptable substitute—margarine—continually varies according to the fluctuations in the market prices.

"Though the imports of butter are still behind the pre-war level, cheese comes in greater supply than ever, despite the fact that the average price has been about 50 per cent. higher than in 1914, thereby indicating that the consumptive demand for this article is still in a very healthy condition.

"Compared with New Zealand and Canada, the export of cheese from Australia is almost negligible, but the bulk of it comes from Queensland, and there is a gratifying rise in the exports—nearly 100 per cent. increase. Even so, it is only about one-thirteenth of the New Zealand exports."

Still, compared with Canada and New Zealand, our exports of cheese, notwithstanding the fact that Queensland is the largest cheese-producing State in Australia, were a long way behind the exports of cheese from those two Dominions. What I want to draw attention to is this—

"A curious difference of opinion between State and Commonwealth graders, which is by no means calculated to help the Australian product, was evidenced during the year by the arrival of certain boxes from Queensland graded as both first and second quality on the same crates."

It is a remarkable thing that cheese should leave Queensland with one grade marked on the crates by the Commonwealth grader and another grade marked on them by the State grader. That cheese should never have left Queensland. There is no doubt about the prime quality of the cheese, but apparently the Commonwealth and State graders held contrary opinions as to its grade as the two grades were marked on the same crate of cheese. As the Agent-General points out, it was a great blunder that that cheese should have gone forward with those two brands on it. It should have gone into consumption locally or it should have been sent to the other States.

Another matter that the report refers to is an industry which we have not touched in Queensland yet, but which evidently there is scope for, because there is a large business done in it by New Zealand and Victoria—I do not know whether New South Wales has embarked upon it yet—that is margarine. The Agent-General, in this connection, states in his report—

"Owing to the lower prices of butter, the consumption of margarine was curtailed, and, as the margarine manufacturers are the largest consumers of dried milk, the demand for that article fell seriously, and stock accumulated while prices fell."

The Agent-General points out that there is a market for that commodity, and the Minister might take the matter into consideration with a view to seeing how far we might enlarge the scope of the dairying industry in that direction. The Agent-General also mentions the market with respect to canned pineapples.

We know what a difficulty we are having in our State in regard to canned pineapples.

I take it that the Agent-General made inquiries before he sent out this report—

“There is no reason why Queensland preserved pines should not, with proper care and attention, become a feature of the English market.”

If we are going to make a success of the pineapple industry in Queensland, it is absolutely necessary that foreign markets should be secured, because each year the production is increasing. The Agent-General tells us in his report that the price is falling—

“But it must be remembered, right from the start, that prices have fallen considerably, and for the year under review the average price of the total imports was £3 1s. 7d. per cwt., compared with £4 18s. 6d. per cwt. in 1920.”

He also points out that the imports of canned pineapples have increased from 270,000 cwt. in 1920 to 440,000 cwt. in 1922. There is a market there.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The difficulty about canned pineapples is that the price in London is 7s. 6d. f.o.b. Brisbane.

Mr. TAYLOR: We want to find some way of cheapening our production and transport costs.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: There is nothing in it at 7s. 6d. f.o.b. Brisbane.

Mr. TAYLOR: I do not suppose there is. The Agent-General then deals with Queensland arrowroot; but, as the consumption for that article in Great Britain only amounts to about 500 tons, we cannot look forward to a great deal of development in that line. I also wish to call attention to the packing of citrus fruit that was despatched from Brisbane to the London market. In this connection the Agent-General says—

“Some important pioneering work has been done by Queensland during the year in the above connection, the first experimental shipment of oranges and mandarins, consisting of 103 cases of oranges and 60 trays of mandarins, coming to hand about the beginning of August. The consignment was made by the Department of Agriculture in conjunction with the Southern Queensland Fruit Growers' Society, Limited, on the understanding that no freight would be charged if the fruit was not landed in good order. The freight was paid.

“It would therefore appear that for the present Queensland growers must look more to oranges than to mandarins for the export market. If this should be done, there is no reason why Queensland fruit should not command a fair share of the business.

“Stencil plates should be used in the marking of cases indicating grower, brand, variety, and counts. Marking in pencil should be strictly prohibited.

South African oranges arrive on the London market perfectly packed. Expert Californian packers have gone to South Africa to teach the shippers how to pack their fruit, and it may be worthy of consideration whether Queensland should not copy an example that has had such beneficial results.”

We ought not want to copy South Africa or any other country. We ought to be able to send our fruit away packed as well as any

other country. The Agent-General then goes on to say—

“While the flavour of our oranges is considered to be better than the South African flavour, the packing is in no way comparable.”

It is very evident that the officers of the Agricultural Department were not connected with that consignment of fruit. It is not a good advertisement for the State when we have the Agent-General reporting the faulty packing and grading of that consignment.

Another matter that I wish to direct the notice of the Minister to is one that I referred to a year or two ago in criticising the Estimates of the Agricultural Department. At that time I referred to the cultivation of the cocoa bean in Queensland. I do not know whether anything has been done in that connection. I hope something is being done. I referred to “Cultural Industries for Queensland,” by Mr. L. A. Bernays, in the course of which he says—

“The cocoa bean flourishes best between the 17th parallels; but, as it has been cultivated with success as far as the 25th, there is good reason to suppose that under favourable conditions a home may be found for it in Queensland. The tree will adapt itself up to an elevation of not far short of 2,000 feet.”

That should suit the Atherton Tableland. I do not know what the altitude of that country is, but Mr. Bernays points out that the cocoa bean can be grown at an elevation of 2,000 feet. The article further stated—

“As an instance of the blunders into which writers, otherwise accurate, will permit themselves to fall, I may mention that among the cocoa-producing countries named by a quite modern authority on the subject is ‘Australia’; but it is only fair to add that he qualifies the statement by saying that the yield is ‘quite unimportant.’ That Queensland may become a producer I have no doubt, and I hope, for its own sake, that it may; but the first cocoa fruit has yet got to be produced in this or any other part of Australia.”

Why I draw attention to that is because further on I referred to the remarks of Mr. Massy Greene when the tariff was going through the Federal Parliament a year or two ago and an alteration was being made in that direction. He said this—

“In 1913 cocoa beans were imported totalling 1,408,509 lb. In 1919-1920 the importations had grown to 9,277,591 lb., confectionery importations prior to the war amounted to 10,660,518 lb.; the value of the imports of confectionery in 1913 was £571,956, and in 1919-1920—”

This is when this big importation of cocoa beans came into the Commonwealth—

“it had dropped to £9,975.”

[8 p.m.]

Further on Mr. Bamford interjected—

“We should put a bonus on local production of cocoa beans.’ He entirely agreed with that, if they were to endeavour to establish the growth of the industry in North Queensland. Mr. Massy Greene had further stated that the trees grew from 12 to 16 feet high.”

There are other matters that I spoke of on

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that particular occasion, but now we are on the lookout to establish and maintain all the industries we possibly can, not only in Queensland, but throughout Australia. If we can possibly establish the cocoa bean in North Queensland, I certainly think the attempt should be made, even if we have to co-operate with the Commonwealth and pay a bonus for the establishment of the industry. It would be only a few years before we know whether we could grow it successfully or not. If we could do so, the market is there.

During the last few years the largest manufacturers of confectionery in the world have established factories in Tasmania; I refer to Messrs. Fry, Cadbury, and Pascall, and Messrs. Nestlé's have erected a factory on the Parramatta River in New South Wales. Of course we would like to have such factories established in Queensland. The more we have here the better, but the establishment of those factories affects Queensland principally through our great sugar industry. A tremendous amount of sugar that is grown in Queensland will be used in the manufacture of confectionery by those firms, and as we have, during the last few years, outgrown the sugar consumption of the Commonwealth, we have to look to some means for absorbing that surplus. In a short time we shall be going on with the construction of a sugar mill on the Tully River—

Mr. PEASE: It has already been started.

Mr. TAYLOR: That means an increased production of the sugar grown in that district. I have brought along with me and will make a present of it to the Secretary for Agriculture—for I am sure he will be interested in it—a sample of confectionery made in Melbourne by MacRobertson and Sons, Limited. I suppose that you could not find a better container in the world than this; it is artistic and neat. However, we are most concerned about the contents. The contents consist mostly of Queensland sugar. I feel that Australia is going to be the great exporting confectionery manufacturer of the world. I am confident that Australia will not be able to absorb all that the great houses which I mentioned this evening will manufacture, and that a market will be found on the other side of the world. I believe the establishment of those confectionery businesses in Australia will be of the very greatest assistance to our sugar industry in the future. The contents of that tin are of first-class quality, and I have much pleasure in putting it on the table for the Minister to inspect and sample, and I am sure he will bear me out in my contention. I want it to be known that we in Australia can produce confectionery equal to the product of any other part of the world.

The cocoa bean that I have been advocating should be cultivated in Queensland has to be imported by the large confectionery manufacturers in England and the other parts of the world. Those manufacturers also import their sugar, except perhaps in Germany and France, where a considerable quantity of beet sugar is grown. We have the sugar, and all we have to do is to assist in the establishment and maintenance of this great industry by experimenting with the cocoa bean.

I would like to dwell for a moment on one or two of the items under the heading

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“Chief Office.” The hon. member for Murilla spoke with regard to the Instructor in Pig Raising. I do not know how that innovation is to be worked, especially in view of the abolition of the Agricultural College. I am not going to wear sackcloth and ashes on account of that abolition.

Mr. BULCOCK: Hear, hear!

Mr. TAYLOR: I do not know that the College was a great benefit, because for a number of years I have had the feeling that it has not been fulfilling the function for which it was established. If an improvement can be effected in the methods of teaching the science of agriculture in Queensland, a very good thing will have been done.

I am very pleased to see the increase in the salary of the Director of Agriculture. He deserves it, and the increase is well warranted. Regarding the Officer in Charge of Seeds, Fertilisers, and Stock Foods Investigation Branch, I consider that this activity of the Department of Agriculture has done excellent work in improving the quality of the seeds sown throughout Queensland. There is a tremendous amount of difficulty in securing seed of specially pure varieties, but I understand that the department has been doing excellent work in that direction, and I believe that any money spent in this regard will be well spent and the results will be for the benefit of the State.

I would like to refer for a few moments to the cotton industry. My opinion is that, if the dreaded boll-weevil or anything similar to the boll-weevil ever attacks the cotton industry of Queensland there will be only one way of dealing with it and that is to act as they acted in Victoria in connection with the phylloxera with which their vineyards were attacked some years ago. They destroyed the vines and compensated the owners.

Mr. BULCOCK: Even that has not been successful.

Mr. TAYLOR: Probably not, but I do not think we could do anything else if these pests became established. The only measure of prevention would be the destruction of the cotton. We have all a considerable amount of faith in the cotton industry.

Mr. BULCOCK: It is obvious that you do not believe in ratoon cotton.

Mr. TAYLOR: I do not want to go into the question of ratoon cotton, as it is a very difficult problem.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The question you are dealing with now—pests—is very much involved in the question of ratooning.

Mr. TAYLOR: It is unfortunate that we cannot ratoon, as it means a considerable extra cost in cultivation. If the Minister has the information I would like him to say just what it costs per acre to root out the old crops of cotton and replant. It is quite evident that it is not a bit of use attempting to grow ratoon cotton if the people on the other side of the world will not have it. That seems to be the end of the matter if they say they are not prepared to accept ratoon cotton. We have to grow the article they want, and if we are not prepared to do that we shall have to go out of the business. I do not think there will be any necessity for us to go out of the business, because so

long as the British manufacturers and the Australian Cotton Growers' Association are prepared to back up their opinions by the expenditure of money—which they have been doing now for quite a long time—I think our duty is to go right ahead and endeavour to foster the industry as much as we possibly can. When we get oil mills established—they are being established at the present time—it will provide a profitable use for that by-product that does not exist at the present time. It is rather remarkable to read of the ups and downs that this industry has had in the State. If hon. members like to turn up "Hansard" for 1892, they will find that a discussion took place in this Parliament in connection with the cotton industry. In 1888 the then Government offered a bonus of £10,000 for the manufacture of cotton fabric in Queensland from Queensland grown cotton. However, the industry never appears to have had a fair "go."

Mr. BULCOCK: Until the Labour party got into power.

Mr. TAYLOR: You want to give the Labour party credit for everything. There is one thing I notice you do not take credit for, and that is the drought.

Mr. CLAYTON: Do you accuse them of causing the drought.

Mr. TAYLOR: I would not accuse them of it.

The HOME SECRETARY: I accuse you of helping to cause a drought here after 8 o'clock. (Laughter.)

Mr. TAYLOR: We all realise the great value of the agricultural industry to Queensland. The Government, at the present time, are spending a tremendous amount of money on the Council of Agriculture, and I only hope that their wishes in that direction will be fulfilled. I do not like the idea of socialism or communism, and I hope the men associated with that Council of Agriculture will retain control of the industry in their own hands. So long as they do that I am not at all afraid of the result. It was mentioned this afternoon that it is a difficult matter to organise the farmers. It is a most difficult matter. The organisation has been in existence only for twelve months, and, of course, we cannot expect very much in that period. They have ample time yet to demonstrate whether they are going to work for the benefit of the farmer, as we all hope they will, because there is nothing more heart-breaking than for a man to be engaged in primary production in Queensland, or in any other part of Australia, and at the end of twelve months find after all his work and after he has produced his crop that it has to be placed on the market and sold at a loss to him. I notice in one part of the director's report in connection with the Council of Agriculture that mention is made of some scheme of hail insurance. I think possibly in a short time we might be able to introduce some system of crop insurance—not to insure the whole prospective value of a man's crop, but we might possibly introduce a scheme of insurance by which it would be possible for a farmer to insure the cost price of his labour and the cost price of his seed, with probably a 10 per cent. addition, so that at the end of the period instead of experiencing a total loss he would be recouped for the money expended. At the present time when a drought comes along he cannot get anything and he suffers a total loss.

Mr. LOGAN (*Lockyer*): There is no doubt that the Department of Agriculture is one of the most important departments that we have in Queensland, and in this connection one likes to see the very best results obtained. The main question that I would like to discuss now is the scheme for the conservation of fodder which the Government propose to launch at some later date. We have in the director's report a certain scheme laid down whereby fodder is to be brought into certain centres and stacked in huge quantities. I do not think that is a wise thing to do. By having fodder such as hay and chaff stacked in bulk in any centre there is a big risk of loss by fire. This fodder is subject to fire, and if a huge stack of fodder happened to catch fire there would be too much destroyed. The best means of conserving fodder is, in my opinion, to stack it on the farm on which it has been grown. If the farmers themselves are not able to conserve their fodder in a proper manner, they should receive a certain amount of tuition through the department and they should be instructed how to stack their hay so that it will keep. If that were done, and the farmers were made certain advances on the fodder stacked on the farm, the risk in connection with fire or other means of destruction would be very greatly diminished. It must be remembered that under a scheme such as is proposed by the director, a farmer who sent fodder to the centre where it is proposed to be stacked would at a later date have to draw supplies from that stack for his own stock. That would mean an additional cost for transport from the farm to the stack and back again. That is why I do not think it is a wise policy to conserve fodder in large stacks as is proposed. We have had evidence of what is likely to happen in regard to the storing of wheat in bulk at various centres along the railways. While I admit that it is practically necessary to have wheat stacked in bulk so that it can be transmitted to any centre where it is required from time to time, we have experienced very great losses through the stacks breaking away, perhaps through mice eating the bags and so forth, or through wet getting in. In these cases the farmer is the man who has had to pay for the loss. I certainly do not think it a wise policy to conserve fodder in big stacks, as proposed by the Director of Agriculture.

I would like to refer to the stallion question. The Lockyer district is noted for its good brood mares. We have there some of the finest class of Clydesdales you will get in the country. It seems an extraordinary thing that the Government at the very time they are introducing sires of the Clydesdale type into the State take away the only horse we have available in the Lockyer district and send it to some other centre.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: There is still a horse there.

Mr. LOGAN: Not a Government horse.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: There is still one at the College.

Mr. LOGAN: He must be young.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, but he is very well bred.

Mr. LOGAN: At the Laidley Show quite a number of farmers complained about this matter, and wanted to know when they were going to get another horse. I told them that I understood that there was one coming to the Rosewood district, but they feel that

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that is altogether out of the question. I feel sure that you are not going to get the best mares from the Lockyer district to go over the range to Rosewood to a horse there.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: North Queensland is not getting a horse either.

Mr. LOGAN: I recognise that, but at the same time North Queensland has not got the number of good brood mares that we have in the Lockyer district. The farmers there are going in for a good type of farm horse. It may not be a heavy draught horse such as is required for the city, as that type of horse is not the type required on the farm. Farmers do not use the dray much; they are inclined to use the German wagon and tabletop wagon, and those vehicles require a medium horse of good quality—not a heavy Clydesdale. I hope that the Minister will recognise the importance of the Lockyer district, and keep a good horse available there. I have heard that some twenty of the mares at the Gatton College have also been sent away. I do not know whether that statement is correct, and I would like the Minister to tell me.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not think so.

Mr. LOGAN: I am glad to hear that. I sincerely hope that they have not been taken away, because they are a good type of mare, and I hope the authorities will breed from them there and circulate their progeny in the district. I recognise that Gatton College comes under the Department of Public Instruction, and I do not propose to discuss that matter at length just now.

There is one very important matter which affects us seriously at the present time—that is the question of relief, which has been referred to at length to-night. At the show at Laidley yesterday I was approached by three different farmers who asked me if it was possible to get relief from this department. They told me that their credit was absolutely gone, that it was not possible for them to obtain relief anywhere else, and that they were naturally dependent on the Government to assist them in their time of distress, which is quite a reasonable thing. I understand that at the present time miners in the Mount Morgan district are getting relief to the extent of £1,000 a week, although they are working under award rates of pay. If that is so, I think it is quite a reasonable thing for the farmers to get relief too. It is interesting to note the form of application which the farmers have to make for this relief. While the worker is able to obtain relief without having to sign any promissory note to repay in the future, the farmer has to sign a promissory note.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is not so. The scheme of relief at the Home Office is open to every citizen in Queensland.

Mr. LOGAN: In the Department of Agriculture the farmer has to fill in a form of application for relief, and he has to sign a promissory note to repay what he possibly can. At the present time a good many of the farmers in my district—and I know that my district is only similar to many others—are in such a state that they are absolutely down and out. We know that there are many workers in the city who are down and out, and it is quite a reasonable thing that the Government should stand behind them in their time of need.

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But why consider one section of the community to the detriment of the other? This relief should be extended to the farmers, who have helped to build up the credit of the State. It is the farming people in the State who made it possible for the Government to borrow money. Even though the farmer may be down and out and require assistance to keep him going in bad times like he has just now, it is only a matter of time when with good seasons he will be able to make good and meet his obligations. When his credit is restored the State will be infinitely better off than it is now. I have here an article from the "Daily Mail" of 31st May last, which gives the form of application which it is necessary for a farmer to fill in before he is able to obtain relief. The article states—

"While people in the city can go to the relief depot and get rations at Government expense and never are called upon to make repayments when, say, work is obtained, it is a different story with the farmer suffering from the ravages of drought, under the Government's relief scheme.

"At least that is the conclusion reached after reading the forms provided by the Government for applicants for relief. The disadvantage under which the settler will labour is best shown by a quotation from the official 'declaration and application for relief.' This sets out—

"I WILL REPAY.

"I, _____, owing to the drought and to the heavy expenditure incurred thereby, have been unable to secure from my holding or other methods sufficient returns to maintain my family in fair comfort, and I hereby apply for monetary assistance for a period of _____ weeks at the approved schedule rates as set out hereunder, which I undertake to expend solely in purchasing food or clothing for myself and family and for no other purpose. I undertake also that I will not apply any portion of the amount advanced towards the acquittance of any debt already incurred, and will repay such amount to the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock within twelve months of the date of the last instalment to me, and for which I will give a promissory note if called upon to do so."

That is the form of application which it is necessary for a farmer to make for relief. I do not say that it is a wrong form of application, and if any farmer at the end of twelve months should be able to repay it is quite a reasonable thing that he should do so, but in the event of the applicant not being able to meet his promissory note at the end of the twelve months, what is going to happen to him then?

Mr. WEIR: The same has happened in connection with seed wheat.

Mr. LOGAN: The article in the "Daily Mail" further states—

"The rates of assistance are set out as follow:—

Occupier of a holding 15s. a week, each dependent over sixteen years of age 10s. a week, each dependent child under the age of sixteen years 4s. 6d. a week.

"Admitting that in every instance where relief is granted by the State at the relief depot, the case is a genuine one—these recipients are not called on to repay what they received in the form of rations, though they may receive rations over a period of months. Yet the unfortunate settler is being called upon to repay all that he receives from the Government, and within a stated period."

Now, if at the specified time the farmer can pay, it is quite reasonable that he should pay. But if an employee in any industrial occupation, who may have been in a fairly good position for a time, has his [8.30 p.m.] services terminated and so gets out of employment and has to get relief from the Government, he is not called upon, when he gets employment later on and is perhaps able to do so, to refund what he has received. If it is not fair for him to make a refund, it is not fair for the farmer; there is no difference. I know just how the farmer works, and I think that the man on the land is just as much a worker as the man in the city. I appeal to the Minister to make available more money for the extension of relief in the drought-stricken areas. By so doing he will help to keep people on their holdings, and, after all is said and done, it is the right and proper thing for the Government to do.

Reference has been made to the refusal of the Government to countenance the growing of ratoon cotton. I have had experience of cotton-growing, and, whilst it is true that we have not gone in much for ratooning, I certainly cannot see that we are going to gain any great advantage by discontinuing the production of ratoon cotton. Of course I know the intentions of the Government, but I regret very much their decision. It is very important to men in my district, where farmers have grown cotton considerably and have been obliged to cut out their ratoons. They have planted their seed twice, but owing to dry weather it did not come up, and consequently they got no crop, but they would have had a crop of ratoon cotton if the Government had allowed them to grow it.

Mr. BULCOCK: If they had ratoon cotton they could not have sold it.

Mr. LOGAN: That is the point I want to raise. We know that the Government gave a guarantee of 5½d. a lb. for all cotton grown for three years, but the Government broke their contract.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is wrong.

Mr. LOGAN: It is not wrong. They guaranteed a price for all cotton grown, but before the three years were up the British delegation came along and made certain representations to the Government with respect to ratoon cotton, and the price for ratoon cotton was dropped. The guarantee was for all cotton of good quality.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The first guarantee was for good quality cotton free from disease.

Mr. LOGAN: That would include ratoon cotton.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Ratoon cotton is not good quality cotton.

Mr. LOGAN: It is. It is equal to, if not better than, plant cotton.

Mr. CARTER: The experts say that they cannot tell the difference.

Mr. LOGAN: I have seen cloth made from ratoon cotton that was grown forty-five years ago, and you cannot get better quality cotton to-day. However, I recognise that the Government have made up their minds, and I merely wish to say I regret their action, because I believe, from my own knowledge, that there is ratoon cotton equal to the plant cotton.

With reference to the experimental plots in the Burnett and Callide districts, I agree that the Government would be well advised to analyse every block before any man is settled on the land, because there are many areas in which the farmers do not know what their holdings will produce, and before any body of men are settled in a new district they should be told exactly what the land is capable of producing. I notice that various demonstration plots are to be started. I think that is a very good idea, and, judging from the experience of the success achieved at the State farm at Roma, for instance, one can appreciate the usefulness that such plots will have. If the Government are able to get men of similar ability to the man at Roma for the other State farms, the State is going to derive a very great benefit indeed. I had the pleasure some time ago of visiting the State farm at Roma, and, although I am a practical farmer I had my eyes opened very wide indeed. The man in charge of that farm is certainly not getting pay commensurate with the work he is doing; it is hard to estimate the value of the services of a man like that to a State like Queensland. If the Government are fortunate enough to get similar men to direct these experimental plots and put their hearts into their work as that gentleman at Roma has done, then I feel sure that the farmers will derive very great benefit indeed from them.

I do not wish to speak further, but I repeat that I hope efforts will be made to extend the relief in the drought-stricken areas. There is no doubt that the settlers in them are deserving of our sympathy and of our help as well. As I said on the Financial Statement, there are farmers in my district who are not likely to receive a penny of income for the whole twelve months, and it depends on whether the relief is going to be continued whether they will be able in some instances to remain on their farms.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): We are told that all wealth comes from mother earth, and that therefore our primary industries should be fostered. I am one of those who agree with that statement. One of the sins of past Governments was that the Department of Agriculture and Stock, which was established especially to look after our primary industries, was not subsidised or financed to the extent it should have been. Notwithstanding that the revenue has practically doubled under the administration of this Government since 1914, we find that the increase in the money spent on the Department of Agriculture and Stock has not been in similar proportion. Moreover, notwithstanding that the vote for the department this year is £201,448, as compared with £155,992 last year, if you analyse the figures you will find that there are some extraordinary items which make the increase very marked.

Mr. Vowles.]

A large sum of money is required for the supply of fodder on account of the drought conditions which obtain at the present time and which, unfortunately, have obtained for some considerable time.

There is one subject which I am particularly interested in, and that is the subject of cotton culture. I think that we as Queenslanders cannot give sufficient attention to the development of cotton culture, because I feel that cotton is one of the crops that is going to bring Queensland into its own again, and is going to put the State in a position to cope successfully with the biggest curse, next to the Government, and that is the growth of the prickly-pear. There are districts in the Dalby electorate where the quality of the soil is everything that could be desired. I recollect particularly the Chinchilla district, where some twenty years ago the quality of the natural grasses was so good that the butter which was made from the product of the stock on those natural grasses received the first prize in the competition, but unfortunately the bulk of that land has gone under prickly-pear. I do not know of any crop which can be more profitably grown on the Northern Downs and which will give better results per acre than cotton. Notwithstanding that many persons who prepared their land were disappointed as the result of the season, there were others in the same locality who were more fortunate. I have been privileged to see the returns that they got from that land. That land is not regarded as having very high quality soil, but it is land which can be purchased at a very small sum per acre. The sum is so small that it is almost of no value at the present time. To prepare it for crops that it is capable of producing would cost so much to clear the prickly-pear that the expenditure is not commensurate with the value of the land. If the returns, or even only a portion of the returns, that I saw can be got off some of the better land now under prickly-pear in the melon-hole country and the brigalow scrubs, then that would present a solution of the biggest problem that we have got, and that is to clear of prickly-pear the good land adjacent to our existing railways. I would like the Minister, in dealing with the question of cotton culture, to take into consideration whether some scheme should not be evolved whereby the youth of Queensland would be given an opportunity of placing themselves in a position of earning those big fees and salaries which will naturally be paid in cotton manufacture in the future in Queensland. Cotton companies have spent large sums of money in the establishment of gineries. They have carried out their part, and they have got the plant necessary for the handling of the crop when it comes along; and when that crop justifies itself then it is their intention to create manufactories. I would offer the suggestion to the Minister that he should consider some scheme whereby the youth of Queensland will be able to take advantage of these manufactories, and I suggest that in the meantime he should see that young Australians have an opportunity of making themselves proficient in all the various departments of cotton manufacture, so that they will be in a position to take up that work when the opportunity offers. There is an item in this vote for fodder for the relief of selectors who are suffering as a result of the drought. I am very astonished that any Government should be so unbusiness-like, after having expended such huge sums

of money as they have already expended on fodder for starving stock, as to cease supplying the fodder for the protection of the very cattle which are now going to die and which are the only asset whereby these loans for fodder are going to be repaid. I refer to the loans in respect of fodder already consumed. When we heard that there was a likelihood of the department stopping that supply, the Country party sent a deputation of its members to the Minister, and I sincerely trust that the representations of that deputation will be productive of good. After you have expended £30,000, or whatever the sum is up to date, is it not better to go a little further and protect this stock, or is it good business to let the stock on which a considerable sum of money has been expended die? How is a man going to carry on? How is a farmer going to carry on, and, what is more important, how is he going to pay the debt in respect to the fodder which has already been supplied to him? I have spoken in the past about the Department of Agriculture being the Cinderella department; but I see that there is a sum of £26,000 being added to the vote as a result of the establishment of the Council of Agriculture. Up to date we have not seen very much practical result from the establishment of that Council. We are living in the hope that it will be productive of good; but one thing we are afraid of is that the Council of Agriculture is going to come into conflict with other branches of the department, and that there will be jealousy, rivalry, and duplication of services. I ask the Minister to take that suggestion for what it is worth and see that that position does not arise. We have to realise that the old officers in the department who have been there for many years have had increased duties and increased responsibilities placed upon them as a result of the legislation passed by this Government. In some instances the staff has been depleted instead of being increased. The officers have not been given any encouragement. The expert officers in this department are underpaid as compared with the expert officers in similar positions in other States. If we are going to have a department which is capable of carrying out the responsibilities that exist in a tropical country such as Queensland, we should have the very best experts; and you can only get the very best of experts by paying the very best salaries. When I say that, I do not speak in any disparaging way of the existing officers. I say that the area of the country is too big, and the centralisation of the authority in Brisbane does not give the scope or the chance to officers to go round and cope with our pests in particular in a way in which they should be coped with.

I spoke a little while ago about the fodder for starving stock. I think that the department made a mistake in regard to the methods which were adopted for the distribution of that fodder in country districts. I do not think that there is any district more entitled to relief than my own electorate, or any district that has suffered the ravages of drought more. I do know that many men who wanted to protect their dairy stock in particular reserved their applications until the very last hour, and the delays which have taken place in connection with their applications are unthinkable. There is too much red tape. I do not see why the department could not place police officers in the various districts, and allow them to witness applications and certify to the bona fides of the

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applicant. The police officers are constantly round the farms in connection with electoral matters; they know the individuals and their circumstances, and they are able to certify as to crops that are being grown and the conditions generally that are offering. Any man could tell at a cursory glance whether the stock on a farm is going to die from the effects of drought or whether it is not.

I know of cases where men have made applications for fodder, and they have not even received a reply to their applications four weeks afterwards. A man came into my office and said to me: "I made an application for fodder. A month has elapsed, and during that time thirteen head of my dairy cows and two head of draught horses died." I was told it was the fault of the State Produce Agency, and that the matter would be accelerated. It was, and the fodder came along, but too late. I had another instance from another district where exactly the same thing happened. The man lived in the country, and could not leave his stock. He omitted to put in 2s. 6d. worth of stamps with his application, and it was held up. That man lived some distance from the town, and it would have cost him two days going in and out, during which time his stock had to be watered. The delay caused by the omission cost the man seven head of dairy cattle. One has only to realise what an asset these stock are to-day. I do not know how these people who are losing their cattle are going to finance themselves in the future, or where the stock to replace the losses in their dairy herds is to come from. Men in that unfortunate position to-day who have lost their dairy herds, as they have done in the Warra, Brigalow, and West Dalby districts, are up against the financial position when the time comes for them to replace them. If they manage to get them they have to wait twelve months before they come into profit, but in the meantime they have to carry on. The effort to save the dairy cows is one of the big problems now facing dairymen. If they can be kept alive now they will be brought into productivity earlier than if the dairymen have to restock.

Another matter which has exercised the people in my district is one which the hon. member for Lockyer referred to in connection with the State stallions. These State stallions have been allotted to various districts. One has been allotted to Oakey, on the Northern Downs. I am told by persons who know the districts well that there are sufficient mares in the Dalby district for the purpose of that horse without going further afield.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Southern Queensland got the lot.

Mr. VOWLES: That is not the point.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is the point.

Mr. VOWLES: The point is there are people in my district who have some of the best mares possibly on the Northern Downs, and if the Government are going to do something in that direction why should they not do it properly? I asked the Minister when he brought this matter forward how many mares would be allotted to each horse, and he told me fifty would be sufficient. I asked him what would happen if the demand was greater, and he did not reply. It is only

a matter of getting more horses. The bringing in of new blood is a good move. If the Government are going to get new blood they should do so from Scotland and the Old Country, possibly leaving New Zealand alone, and getting a new strain altogether.

Mr. FOLEY: What type do you advocate?

Mr. VOWLES: The Clydesdale pure and simple, although I am not an authority on Clydesdales. I am giving the Minister the position as I find it in my district, and giving him the result of my discussions with people who are breeders. These are their suggestions, and if the Minister will put them before his adviser, whoever he may be—presumably Mr. Tait—I am sure he will come to the conclusion that my suggestions are worthy of consideration and very sound.

There are one or two small matters—they may appear small so far as the vote is concerned—around which much interest to this State centres. One matter is in connection with the fruit industry, and the other is connected with the markets. The Agent-General, in his report, lays great stress on the fact that if we want to obtain a market for fruit and other products we must market them in a methodical way, especially as regards display, grading, packing, and having the proper markets. The amount of money we would expend in appointing a man to show our fruitgrowers how to pack their commodities would be money well spent. I trust the producers will take advantage of the opportunities the department offer in this respect. If they do so they will be rewarded a hundredfold.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): I listened very attentively to the remarks of the hon. members for Lockyer and Dalby. Both members complained that the stallions bought by the Government had not been sent to their respective districts. So far as I am aware, North Queensland was not allotted a single stallion.

Mr. LOGAN: I was complaining about one being taken away.

Mr. COLLINS: Only one was sent to the Central district. I represent a district which has a fairly large number of horses. According to the latest returns issued by the Department of Agriculture and Stock—that is, for 1921-1922—in the petty sessions district of Bowen there are no less than 15,561 horses. Then, if we come to the petty sessions district of Proserpine, we find there are 5,788; while in the petty sessions district of Ayr there are 10,810. In other words, we have over 30,000 horses in these three districts, or one twenty-fifth of the total number in the whole of Queensland. I do not know why these stallions should have been sent into the various Tory electorates. I claim that my electorate and North Queensland in general are just as much entitled to have a good breed of horses as Southern Queensland. Our principal agricultural industry is the sugar industry in North Queensland. While they may be using tractors, they also want to use horses in certain districts. I therefore do not see that Southern Queensland has anything at all to complain about. North Queensland has cause for complaint if there is a complaint. I am merely mentioning these few facts in order to let the Minister know that there is a fairly large number of horses in the Bowen district.

I want to thank the Minister in connection with the good work he has done in my

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electorate in assisting the farmers, mainly on the Inkerman Estate. They have had to go through a drought just the same as the farmers in the Lockyer electorate. Although they have been up against it they have not moaned and groaned, but have stood up and faced the situation like men. Neither did they want me to moan and groan for them. The Minister has always been good to them in that direction. Whenever they asked for cane plants they received them and gave a lien over their crops, but they always paid back what was advanced to them. That is a feather in their cap.

Mr. LOGAN: You will always find the farmers willing to do that.

Mr. COLLINS: I am glad to hear that the hon. member for Lockyer represents the same class of farmers as I do, and that they repay their just debts to the Government.

I also want to congratulate the [9 p.m.] Minister on the subject of the experimental farm at Home Hill under the supervision of C. G. Munro, a practical farmer with good and long experience in North Queensland in connection with sugar-growing and other crops. They are carrying out several systems of irrigation on that experimental farm—the Hawaiian and five or six other systems of irrigation—to try to educate the farmer as to the best system suited to that locality. It may be interesting to hon. members to know that this experimental farm sold cane to the value of £1,377 last year. I don't know whether the farm is self-supporting, but I take it that the word "experimental" does not suggest that it should be. It has done good work, and I hope it will do still better work when the irrigation scheme gets into full swing on the farm. I have seen it operating myself. I make it my business every time I am in the district to go over the farm with the manager, Mr. Munro, to see what is being done. I am satisfied that the 200 odd acres that we have there are a very valuable property.

Regarding cotton, I am one of those who believe, like the leader of the Opposition, that people should not go in for ratoon cotton. What is the use of growing this cotton if there is no demand for it? It is no use the hon. member for Lockyer pushing the matter because he has half a dozen disgruntled farmers in his district. I have half a dozen or more farmers who occasionally get disgruntled, but we should not sacrifice a crop of great value, which the leader of the Opposition said was going to bring about good results, for the sake of half a dozen or even 200 or 300 men who want to grow ratoon crops. Let me point out to the hon. member for Lockyer the result of the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act, which has educated the farmers to receive payment on analysis. It has done away with the poor varieties of cane that were grown before the Act was passed. Farmers now grow cane of high density because they are paid on the basis of density. There is no difference between this question and that of ratoon cotton. People should not be allowed to grow rubbishy cotton that is not required. I met farmers in my district who, after the passing of the Cane Prices Act, still wanted to grow cane on a weight basis. That is all very well, but it has been proved that density is the best paying proposition, and these people have been educated to the fact that they are best paid for their cane by

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analysis. They had to be educated to that.

Mr. LOGAN: I agree that it is the duty of the Government to educate the farmers. Can you tell me why an expert cannot tell the difference between ratoon and ordinary cotton?

Mr. COLLINS: I am not an expert, but that is not my fault. At any rate, I cannot hear the hon. member's interjections. My experience in connection with the Department of Agriculture is that it is always sympathetic towards the man on the land and does all it possibly can to assist him. In my district we passed through just as severe a drought—in fact it is on at the present time—as any experienced in the Lockyer district. Once more I congratulate the Secretary for Agriculture upon the sympathetic way in which he administers his department.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE AND STOCK (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I shall be very brief in my reply. First of all, I desire to thank hon. members on both sides of the House, particularly the hon. member for Bowen, for their complimentary references. Although I shall not be able to reply in detail to all the suggestions and charges made, I desire to say that the suggestions made from both sides of the House will receive my very careful and sympathetic consideration. I will run briefly over some of the matters referred to.

Probably the matter which has received most attention, and which is no doubt the most important matter—I make no apology for saying that—is the question of the continuation of the drought relief. First of all, with regard to the criticism—for there has been some criticism with regard to the methods of administering this relief. Comparisons have been made between the treatment by this Government of city workers and of farmers under the drought relief scheme. I want to say right away that the drought relief scheme to farmers supplements the relief scheme open to all citizens. Any citizen in the State who is up against it and wants food can go to the police in any district and get relief. I have said time and time again—and the hon. member for Lockyer has admitted it—that the farmer is not looking for charity. If he was, he knows that charity would be available to him just the same as it is to city and country workers who cannot get food. The farmer merely wants relief.

I admit that the conditions governing this relief scheme are not business conditions. We recognise that if this form of relief were to be carried out it would have to be done expeditiously. We realise that if we relied on the ordinary channels of information delay would have occurred, and this would have detrimentally affected the already harassed farmer. There is no doubt that we have been imposed upon, and I am going to give some examples, as the matter is an important one. I am not going to give the names, because that would not be a fair thing to do. I am satisfied that some of these people were not entitled to relief under the scheme, but that they worked on the assumption "It is the Government; the Government are strong and have plenty of money, and I might as well put in for it the same as the rest." In order to find out just how this scheme is working all over the drought areas—you must bear in mind that it does not

apply to North Queensland and a large portion of the State not affected by drought—I will run over brief extracts from reports of our inspectors dealing with cases where relief was granted—

“No. 1.—This person should be in a position to purchase his own fodder. His family are all grown up and in good positions, and he can procure credit anywhere in Toowoomba.

“No. 2.—Has sufficient means to purchase fodder on his own account.

“No. 3.—Not a bona fide farmer; is the owner and licensee of a hotel.

“No. 4.—One of two brothers, one, a dairy farmer. Is engaged in driving a motor lorry. The farm is mortgaged to a firm of solicitors. Should not require assistance to purchase fodder.

“No. 5.—Is in a fairly sound position financially, and should be able to provide for his stock without assistance.

“No. 6.—Appears to be in a fairly financial position, and should be able to provide for his stock without assistance.

“No. 7.—I certainly would consider this applicant financially able to provide for his stock without assistance.

“No. 8.—Not entitled to relief.

“No. 9.—When questioned by the inspector about getting relief, this man stated, ‘What . . . fools we would be to purchase it—we are all getting our fodder through the L.P.A. at a much cheaper rate.’

“No. 10.—Is in a position to afford a motor-car. Not in need of relief.

“No. 11.—A single man earning good money—not in need of charity.

“No. 12.—Perfect failure on the land—not worthy of assistance.

“No. 13.—Proprietor of — hotel. Has no dairy cattle, pigs, or working horses.”

That may be the gentleman who owns race-horses—

“No. 14.—Is financial and can afford to purchase fodder without the aid of Government assistance.

“No. 15.—Employed on contract work. Was paid £20 for ten days' work and is still working.

“No. 16.—Received £120 for his cotton. Only has a wife to keep; personal relief unnecessary.”

Another one reads—

“Sold 200 acres land recently. No one residing on his farm. Man independent means. In a position to provide for his stock.”

Another one says—

“A blacksmith employed at his trade for some time, while his two sons work on the farm.”

Here is another one—

“Has two large motor lorries daily on the road carting cream.”

Another one—

“In good circumstances financially.”

Another one is described as the most prosperous farmer in the district. I have quite a long list, and I just mention these to show that the Government have been imposed on, although I do not want to say that that would be a justification for the Govern-

ment closing down. The real cause of the Government closing down when they did was because the fund was exhausted, and it would not be exhausted had it applied only to those who had neither cash nor credit.

Mr. MORGAN: Could not the Government institute prosecutions in some of those cases?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is worthy of consideration. I am bound to say that, while it was a fact that the Government were imposed on, that is no justification for causing innocent people to suffer, and I am certainly going to see that they do not suffer; but it has been the cause for our having to close down when we did, because the fund would have lasted a great deal longer had only those who were qualified under the scheme applied for relief.

Mr. CORSER: It would have been far better to be more careful in the distribution.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Had we taken ordinary business precautions and insisted on a full inquiry by an officer of the department, it might have meant delays. Those delays would have caused suffering, so we accepted the suggestion of the Council of Agriculture that the chairman or secretary of the Local Producers' Associations should be allowed to certify to the justice of the claims. We know farmers are only human, and I suppose, when they heard that other people were getting the relief, they thought they might just as well be in the swim. It is very difficult for a neighbour to refuse to certify to a claim that is brought under his notice. No doubt there has been some carelessness on the part of people who should have known better. I want to show that we have administered this relief sympathetically and judiciously, and in this connection I desire to quote one or two testimonials sent along voluntarily to the State Produce Agency. I also desire to quote from the Toowoomba “Chronicle” of 4th August, which is not a Labour paper by any means. Dealing with the question asked by the hon. member for Murilla in this House, this paper says—

“Regarding Mr. Godfrey Morgan's (M.L.A.) inquiry of Mr. Gillies re delay of delivery of fodder for starving stock (as per to-day's ‘Chronicle’), I am afraid he will not get a specific instance in this district of any undue delay in the delivery of fodder ordered of the Agricultural Department. On the contrary the local branch of the Local Producers' Association has written and complimented those who were responsible for the delivery on their promptness of despatch.”

Mr. MORGAN: A correspondent wrote that. It was not written by the editor of the paper?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is from the Columboola correspondent.

Mr. MORGAN: He is a strong Labour agitator.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Anyone who speaks truthfully of the Government must be a strong Labour agitator.

Mr. MORGAN: I know he is.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not know him at all. I now want to quote from letters that have been received by the State Produce Agency. I am not going to quote the details, but will just run over

them hurriedly to show the testimonials sent in by the various correspondents. Mrs. Briant writes—

“Just a word to say that the fodder as applied for has arrived safely, for which many thanks, as this is going to be a very hard winter. . . . Again thanking you for your prompt attention.”

Another correspondent writes—

“I am grateful to you for your prompt attention in securing this fodder for me as it means a lot to me.”

Another one writes—

“I received the eighty-six bags in good time. Very pleased with same.”

Another one writes complimenting the State Produce Agency, and says—

“Very pleased with the fodder supplied. Very excellent chaff and many thanks.”

And so they go on. I have quite a sheaf of letters showing that we have carried out the scheme sympathetically. Here is one from the same place as the correspondent who wrote to the Toowoomba “Chronicle.” The secretary of the Local Producers' Association from that district has this to say—

“At a meeting of the Columboola Local Producers' Association to-day I was instructed to inform you of this association's appreciation of the administration of relief. I was also instructed to say the quality of the fodder sent on was A1.”

I do not think I need quote any more, but I have quite a number in my hand that I could quote if it were necessary to do so.

The hon. member for Burnett had something to say about a peculiar outbreak in some cattle in his district. I may say that the department have not allowed that matter to drop. They are following it up, and in order to make sure that the cause of the death of the cattle was arsenical poisoning we shall endeavour to have the analysis made by Mr. Pound checked by Mr. Henderson, the Government Analyst. He will probably clear the matter up.

Mr. CORSER: Will he try and find out how the arsenic got into the stomach?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not think that is the duty of the Department of Agriculture, but we shall certainly do all we can to assist this farmer. We are very sorry to hear of his very serious loss, and it is certainly a loss to the district. There is something of a mystery surrounding it, which we shall endeavour to clear up. The hon. member for Burnett advocated that experts should have authority, and that with that authority they should have responsibility. That is an argument I preach myself. I am afraid that the Opposition do not always practise that, because they criticise the experts when they do not perform miracles. The hon. member for Cunningham was disappointed with regard to the progress made by the Council of Agriculture. The same remark was made by several hon. members. I want to say that the Council of Agriculture has justified its existence. There is one thing which the Council has succeeded in doing in my electorate. When the Federal Government wanted to tax the war-time profits in connection with the co-operative butter factory at Atherton, I brought the matter under the notice of the

Council of Agriculture. The Council got busy with the Federal Government, with the result that that war-time tax was wiped out. Had that tax been insisted upon, the Atherton butter factory would have had to close down.

Mr. CORSER: What year was it wiped out?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: A few months ago. The war-time profit tax amounted to £2,176.

Another very important matter is the attitude the Council took up with regard to the anti-dumping duty, and its success in getting a measure of relief for the maize-growers, which is worth something like 7d. per cental. I gave a list of the bigger things attempted and accomplished by the Council already.

Mr. CORSER: We claim that the Federal members did that.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Hon. members opposite who criticise should recognise that the sins of fifty years of a bad system cannot be abolished, reformed, or improved out of sight in the short space of twelve or eighteen months. The Council of Agriculture is only just starting out, and it behoves every citizen of Queensland who wants to see Queensland a great State—and recognises that agricultural development must be largely instrumental in making it a great State—not to condemn that organisation but to give it every assistance. I am satisfied that the farmer who carries out the advice of the Council of Agriculture will succeed. If the Council fails it will be due not to the farmer but to the politician who is going about making the farmers dissatisfied because they do not get everything in the space of twelve months.

One hon. member said that money could have been spent in a better way than in connection with the appointment of an instructor in pig-raising. The bacon industry in Queensland is worth about £1,000,000, and Mr. Skelton, who has been selected from the applicants for the position, comes from New South Wales. He had ten years at the Hawkesbury College, and he then went into private employment in Sydney. We have not had an instructor in pig-raising before, notwithstanding that there are six bacon-curing establishments in Queensland with an output of £1,000,000 a year. I think we were behind the times. Mr. Skelton will, I think, justify his appointment. It seems to me that no matter what the Government do hon. members opposite say they should have done something else, or that they are going too quickly, or have been too slow. That seems to be the form of criticism adopted towards the Government by the Opposition. If the Government do a thing this year they should have done it last year; if they spend £10,000 on a particular thing, they should have spent it on something else. The appointment of an instructor in pig-raising is warranted, and the cost is small when compared with the value of the industry, and when you recognise the great possibility of expansion in regard to pig-raising in this country.

Something was said about over-production, but in my opinion there is no danger of over-production either in pig-raising, dairy farming, or cotton production. There are unlimited possibilities for the expansion of production in Queensland. I think the hon. member for Murilla said that the fruit-packing instructor could probably do his

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work in three or four months, and that it was hardly necessary to make the appointment permanent. The leader of the Opposition, very wisely in my opinion, pointed out that a fruit-packing instructor is necessary in regard to oranges and other fruits. The great advantage of having a fruit packer was brought home to me on my recent visit to Tasmania, where I met Mr. Rowlands in the Huon Valley. The policy was carried out there of teaching the school children in the fruit-growing districts how to pack fruit. Mr. Rowlands is teaching the children the same thing on our North Coast, and I am satisfied that his appointment will be more than justified. As the leader of the Opposition said, we must pack our fruit and present it in an attractive form. Mr. Rowlands was first sent by the Council of Agriculture to pack fruit in the Stanthorpe district. I was able to borrow him from the Secretary for Agriculture in Tasmania when I met him there. Perhaps it was not a creditable thing, after borrowing him and finding out what a valuable man he was, practically to purloin him and take him away from Tasmania. However, Tasmania's loss has been Queensland's gain. I am satisfied that the appointment of Mr. Rowlands as fruit-packing instructor in Queensland at a salary of £370 a year is a good investment.

Mr. COSTELLO: Is it a permanent appointment?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He has passed his probationary term and is permanently appointed, and I think his appointment will be a good investment for the State.

The hon. member for Warwick made some criticism with regard to the Wheat Pool. He was complimentary with regard to the action of the Government and gave them great praise for establishing the wheat sheds. He pointed out that under the guarantee of the Commonwealth Government, which fixed the price of wheat in 1920 at 9s. per bushel, no Wheat Board could fail. The Wheat Board in Queensland started under very unfavourable conditions. The hon. member for Warwick himself admitted that the building of the wheat sheds, with the assistance of the Government, will enable the Wheat Board to carry out its business in future in a more businesslike way. The Board started off with no storage provision in Queensland to speak of. The Government guaranteed a price, but it was a new Board and knew little of the work. I think, as I said about the Council of Agriculture, that we should be charitable and be prepared to give the Board a fair deal before criticising it. The Board has done good, and has benefited the farmers. The millers may not be satisfied with its operations, as they have been compelled to pay higher prices for their wheat. They have no reason to be pleased with the Wheat Board having been brought into existence, but the Wheat Board and the wheat-handling scheme of Queensland, in my opinion, are better than the system which obtains in any other State of the Commonwealth.

The hon. member for Murilla said something about the Cotton Adviser, Mr. Wells. We had some considerable difficulty in securing a man with the knowledge required to enable him to act as a Cotton [9.30 p.m.] Adviser. First of all, there was no one in Australia who knew anything at all about cotton, at any rate with

sufficient expert knowledge to act as a specialist, though Mr. Daniel Jones has certainly done remarkably good work for cotton-growing in Queensland. He has achieved a great deal in calling attention to the possibilities of the crop and the great market in Great Britain, where Queensland's share of millions of pounds sterling is waiting for her. It was essential that we should start right. We inquired in America to see if we could get a man qualified to give us the advice we wanted—we thought America was the right place to go—and the result was that Mr. Wells was appointed. Let me just read Mr. Wells's history—

“Mr. Wells entered the services of the United States Department of Agriculture at the Experiment Station at San Antonio, Texas. This station devotes three-fourths of its energies to cotton problems, for Texas is the largest cotton-growing State in the Union. Mr. Wells from the beginning specialised in plant-breeding matters, and worked through all the various enterprises of the United States department as a plant-breeder. He next became the plant-breeder in charge of a station devoted to Pima (Egyptian) cotton. He also worked and bred upland varieties in the Government station in Arizona. It may be stated that in Arizona cotton is usually grown under irrigation conditions. Mr. Wells subsequently undertook demonstration work for his department in various sections of Texas, California, and Arizona. In March, 1920, he resigned from the department and joined the South-west Cotton Company, which is a subsidiary to the Goodyear Tyre Company. This latter company grows its own cotton. He worked with this company as a fieldman and demonstrator, and at the time of his engagement with the Queensland Government was in charge of one of their ranches growing cotton in Arizona.”

So that, in addition to having the technical knowledge, he had also the practical experience of a cotton-grower, and I think we were particularly fortunate in securing his services for Queensland. Since then we have obtained the services of a cotton grader, whose principal duty will be to teach young men in Queensland how to grade cotton, and I am hopeful that next season, when the ginning takes place, we shall have a cotton-grading system. Just as we have found it necessary to establish check chemists at the sugar-mills to look after the interests of the sugar-cane growers, so I think it will be necessary to institute a system of Government graders at each ginnyery.

The hon. member for Murilla wanted to know something about the travelling expenses of the Secretary for Agriculture for the current year. They were as follows:—

	£	s	d
Allowance	308	14	0
Hotel expenses, self and guests	241	9	0
Motor-car, cabs, fares, etc.	200	14	2
Porterage, etc.	51	6	8
Miscellaneous	58	7	6
	£859	11	5

That, of course, may appear a pretty large sum, but I think I need not apologise to anyone for what I cost Queensland, for even those who oppose me politically will say that

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I have not been a bad investment from the point of view of this State. These expenses are due particularly to the Cotton Delegation and conferences in the South on sugar and stock questions. On that point I should like to say that I do not know how long it is since the salary of the office was fixed, but at any rate it was certainly fixed when the cost of living was considerably lower than at present. I know that my immediate predecessor of the anti-Labour party only put in an average of three hours a day for five days a week. I can honestly claim that I put in forty-five hours a week practically all the year round, except when I am away on public business.

Mr. CORSER: What did your predecessor do outside?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I am not going to make reflections on the late Hon. John White, but I do not think that I shall ever be able to leave my relatives the sum of £43,921. But that is by the way. In those days a Minister's position was only regarded as a part-time job, something to which he devoted part of the day. Under Labour Government we devote the whole of our time to our Ministerial duties. We have no private business, no private income, so far as I know. A Labour Minister has to rely on his salary. My net salary last year was £805 17s. 1d., or £112 less than that of the Hon. John White. If I were paid according to the cost of living it would be £1,350, and if it were paid on the basis of hours worked it would be £2,750, whilst if it were paid on the basis of the results of the work I have done for Queensland—well, I leave that to Queenslanders.

The leader of the Opposition spoke about grading our cheese for export, and I agree with him, but I would like to point out that we have not been grading for export at all. As Mr. Graham points out, the State officers are not in any way responsible for what is happening. They do not at present, and they have not during the last two years, marked any dairy produce for export. I think my attitude on dual grading is well known. I agree that the grading of dairy produce is a domestic function and a duty of the officers of the Department of Agriculture. We have to keep our instructors in order to educate and instruct and advise the farmer, and there is no argument in favour of why the Commonwealth should duplicate the staff and have their graders in the various States. It is a well-known fact that Mr. O'Callaghan, who is the Chief Commonwealth Dairy Officer, was an officer of the New South Wales Government, and he was then the loudest and strongest opponent of what he called "Commonwealth interference," but as soon as he got the opportunity of getting that job with the Commonwealth Government he did all in his power to get control of the grading, and unfortunately, owing to the fact that the Federal Ministers allowed him to have his own way, we have been fighting the Commonwealth Government ever since. I endeavoured on two occasions at conferences, once in Sydney and once in Perth, to get the other Ministers to agree with me that the States should control the grading of dairy produce, but unfortunately, because I was the only Labour Minister there, it would not have done for any anti-Labour Ministers to allow me to have my way, although they knew very well that there was no getting away from the argument

that I put forward that the States should control the grading of dairy produce. They are capable of doing it, particularly as the officers doing it for the Commonwealth Government were once in the service of the States. The leader of the Opposition had something to say about growing cocoa and the manufacture of confectionery, etc. I quite agree with him. Anything that will make possible the expansion of the sugar industry, either in the way of fruit-canning or the manufacturing of confectionery, should be encouraged in every possible way in Queensland; but, although an attempt was made to grow the cocoa bean at the Kamerunga State Nursery and in various other parts of North Queensland, unfortunately, like many other things, it had to give way to sugar. Sugar was the only tropical product that the people would grow at the time, because it was the most profitable.

Something has been said in connection with the State stallions. It is a very difficult thing to allocate those stallions. I have found it so difficult that I have handed the stallions over to a Board. The Board consists of practical men—namely, the Under Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Mr. Cory (who is a veterinary surgeon), the Director of Agriculture, together with Mr. E. Baynes and Mr. Tait. The latter gentleman purchased the horses in question. That Board has been set up to control the stallions and decide where they shall be kept. The policy that they have laid down is that the stallions will be sent to the districts where the best mares are obtainable. The districts are being allocated, and the stallions are being advertised. If the required number of mares are not forthcoming in those districts, the stallions will be transferred to other districts. North Queensland may have a grievance in this respect, because none are being sent there. Only one is being sent to Central Queensland. All the other stallions are being stationed in Southern Queensland, which shows that the Government have not considered the political aspect of the matter at all. All that we desire to do is to make the very best use of these good horses, which have been imported at considerable expense in order to breed good horses from the very best mares. We want these horses to meet the very best Clydesdale mares in order to get the best results for the State. Hon. members on this side have approached me in regard to their districts, but I have told them the same as I have told hon. members opposite—that we cannot make five stallions go all over Queensland. There would be more satisfaction if we had ten or twenty. Next year I hope that the Treasury will make more money available to purchase more of these stallions, because I think it is money well spent. We recognise that this is the motor age, still draught horses are required. The great cotton industry will require a lot of draught horses for ploughing the land, and the Government should be commended instead of being criticised for not pleasing everybody. We cannot expect to please everybody. The hon. member for Lockyer complained about a horse being taken from Gatton College. That horse has been at the College for some years. I do not see why the people of the district should have a monopoly of a State stallion. We have there a two-year-old horse, and we are sending the other horse to another district

[Hon. W. N. Gillies.]

where it is required. I do not think the hon. member for Lockyer need have any complaint on that score. There were several other minor matters mentioned, but I think they can stand over until later on.

This afternoon I gave notice of the introduction of a Cotton Bill, and on that Bill the question of ratoon cotton will be fully discussed. During my second-reading speech on that Bill I shall place before the House what in my opinion is an unanswerable argument in favour of an embargo against ratoon cotton. I shall support that by quoting from other countries where legislation has been passed, and I shall be guided by the experience of those countries and by the advice of cotton experts. If we are not going to be guided by the cotton experts, what is the use of paying them high salaries? They are in a position to advise the Government what is the best to be done. They have no axe to grind. If the Government are not to be guided by them, by whom are we to be guided? Are we to be guided by a few men growing cotton on scrub land under great difficulties? I sympathise with the troubles of those farmers, but we must take a broad view. We must start the development of the cotton industry in Queensland in such a way as to produce the very best article. There are great possibilities for the industry if we start on right lines, but we must produce the very best article and keep it free from pests by adopting methods which have succeeded in other countries.

Question put and passed.

CHEMICAL LABORATORY.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I beg to move—

“That £3,702 be granted for ‘Chemical Laboratory.’”

The amount provided is £364 more than last year. The staff has been increased by the appointment of two cadets; their combined salaries total £275. Salary classification increases amount to £205. The £50 to be charged to Trust Funds is a charge to the Sugar Experiment Stations Act of 1900, for services performed by Mr. Brünnich, the Agricultural Chemist, as chemist under that Act. The amount set down for Contingencies is the same as last year.

Question put and passed.

DAIRY PRODUCE ACTS.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I beg to move—

“That £15,433 be granted for ‘Dairy Produce Acts.’”

The vote this year is £22 less than the vote on the 1922-23 Estimates. Salaries show an increase of £273, while Contingencies have been reduced by £300.

Question put and passed.

DISEASES IN PLANTS ACT.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I beg to move—

“That £6,035 be granted for ‘Diseases in Plants Act.’”

Question put and passed.

SLAUGHTERING ACT.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I beg to move—

“That £11,542 be granted for ‘Slaughtering Act.’”

Question put and passed.

STATE FARMS AND GARDENS.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I beg to move—

“That £22,554 be granted for ‘State Farms and Gardens.’”

Question put and passed.

MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I beg to move—

“That £50,800 be granted for ‘Miscellaneous Services.’”

Question put and passed.

At 9.44 p.m.,

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: By agreement, and under the provisions of Standing Order No. 307, I will now leave the chair and make my report to the House.

The House resumed.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN reported progress.

The resumption of the Committee was made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

The House adjourned at 9.45 p.m.