

ing clause, if anything has been done that requires to be validated, I shall support it. I once sat on a sandalwood board representing the pullers, and received expenses for each sitting.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Ah!

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I hope I am not giving anything away.

Hon. E. H. Harris: I refrained from telling members what you are now telling them.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: That interjection is irrelevant. Still I do not mind saying that I received 30s. a day as expenses. I asked whether I was entitled to take that money. I did not regard it as an office of profit under the Crown; I was merely being paid my expenses to attend the board meetings. I would be sorry at this stage to learn that because I accepted those expenses I would have to resign my seat in Parliament.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Who is collecting the fee now?

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: A man named Geddes, I think. Mr. Clydesdale is in a similar position. I was assured at the time that I was not contravening the law.

Hon. E. H. Harris: You might now have Mr. Hughes looking out for you.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: Mr. Hughes himself conducted sweeps for different people for a long time, and because he was prevented from continuing to do so, I suppose that is the reason for the action he has taken. Anyway, I think I can safely drop him. I am pleased to know that a majority of the members will endorse the clause in the Bill that will make Mr. Clydesdale's position right, if there is need to do so. Personally I think that any member of Parliament who accepts a seat on a board is somewhat of a mung, because he may incur displeasure by giving too much to one district, and not enough to another. He is making a rod for his own back. I will give the Bill my blessing as I gave it last year, and I am pleased to know that the public have faith in the existing commission, a fact that is proved by the manner in which the consultations have succeeded.

On motion by Hon. E. H. Gray, debate adjourned.

RESOLUTION—STATE FORESTS.

To Revoke Dedication.

Message from the Assembly received and read, requesting concurrence in the following resolution—

That the proposal for the partial revocation of State Forests Nos. 4, 14, 15, 22, 23, 24, 27, 29, 30, 33, 37, 38, 39, and 42 laid upon the Table of the Legislative Assembly by command of His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor on the 7th November, 1933, be carried out.

House adjourned at 9.33 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 8th November, 1933.

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

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1. State Transport Co-ordination.
Introduced by Minister for Railways.
2. Reserves.
Introduced by Minister for Lands.

MOTION—STATE FORESTS.

To Revoke Dedication.

THE MINISTER FOR FORESTS (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.3]: I move—

That the proposal for the partial revocation of State Forests Nos. 4, 14, 15, 22, 23, 24, 27, 29, 30, 33, 37, 38, 39, and 42, laid on the Table of the Legislative Assembly by command of His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor on 7th November, 1933, be carried out.

The motion covers the detailed proposal laid on the Table yesterday, including plans, in continuation of the policy of recommending for excision from the State forests any sufficient areas of agricultural land located in course of forest assessment work, etc., or following upon application received by the Forests Department or the Lands Department. The Conservator of Forests has recommended the excision of the 25 areas mentioned in the proposal, involving an area of 2045 acres. Numbered plans are attached to the proposal. For the information of members I may say that the schedule included in the papers on the Table shows the various areas dealt with. No. 1 is near Allanson townsite. About 48 acres, which has been ring-barked. Soil is of a sandy and swampy nature and the area is not required for forestry purposes. No. 2 is $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of Shotts. About 320 acres, of no value for reforestation. Application made by local settlers. No. 3 is two miles south-east of Shotts. About 174 acres of cultivable land applied for by a resident in the vicinity. No. 4 is $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles east of Inglehope. About $4\frac{1}{2}$ acres carrying no marketable timber. Being made available to meet the requirements of the adjoining settler, who is in need of winter land on his holding. No. 5 is six miles south-west of Quindanning. About 300 acres of poor wandoo and third-class jarrah country. Applied for by a local resident. No. 6 is four miles south-east of Jarrahdale. About 14 acres of swamp land, which has been applied for as a market garden area. No. 7 is three miles south-west of Marrinup. About $10\frac{1}{2}$ acres, being an isolated piece of State forest, retention of which is not desired. Application made by the holder of adjoining locations. No. 8 is $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of Muja. About 38 acres, being the State forest portion of an area of 145 acres of cultivable land applied for by a local resident. No. 9 is two miles north of Bowelling. About 294 acres, containing an open flat. Area poorly timbered and not suitable for re-forestation. No. 10 is one mile west of Bowelling. About 12 acres, comprising a flat, which is being made available as an extension of an adjoining holding. No. 11 is seven miles west of Donnybrook. About 160 acres of non-jarrah country on the fringe of State forest, for which application has been made. No. 12 is two miles

south-west of Wilga. About 54 acres timbered with marri and poor jarrah. Application made by an adjoining settler. No. 13 is one mile west of Benjinup. About 25 acres applied for by the holder of adjoining locations. Not required for forestry purposes. No. 14 is $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles north-east of Wilga. A small area of about 19 acres on the edge of State forest, for which application has been made by the adjoining land holder. No. 15 is near Hester townsite. About 20 acres applied for by the holder of a small well-improved property adjoining. No. 16 is six miles south-west of Nannup. About 36 acres carrying no timber of value. Application made by the holder of an adjacent holding. And so it goes on; I need not continue. The whole point is that they are small areas of land suitable for agricultural purposes, but not of any value for forestry purposes. These small areas we are excising from the Class A Forest reserves. It is not advisable to hold up these small areas suitable for agricultural purposes and adjacent to settlement, but of no value for forestry purposes. They are all recommended by the Conservator of Forests, and it does not in any way interfere with the forest policy of conserving our forest areas for forestry purposes. There are many others on the list, but I need not go through them. It is well known that the department jealously guards the timber areas of our State. These small areas might well be made available to settlers, since they are not of any value at all for forestry purposes.

MR. LATHAM (York) [4.40]: I have no objection to the motion; it usually comes down every year. In most of the cases cited, there have been requests by adjoining settlers for additional lands, so as to build up their holdings. I took an opportunity to peruse the papers laid on the Table by the Minister yesterday, and to see the plans, and I noticed that all these lands are near roads or railways, and so are very suitable for selection by those who desire them. Most of these blocks are pieces left over after providing for the wants of earlier settlers. No doubt the Conservator of Forests is a very careful officer, and watches closely the interests of his department; he will see to it that no land suitable for forestry purposes shall be made available to settlers. I am glad to know that so many small pieces of land are to be made available to increase

the holdings of men who require more land. It is always said that if we give small areas like this, we shall have to add to them in future. However, that does not matter very much, and I am glad this motion has been brought down so as to give the settlers an opportunity to increase their holdings.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [4.42]: Like the Leader of the Opposition, I have no objection to the motion: I only regret that, instead of these few acres being made available, there are not many thousands, and I think that is the regret of the Minister for Lands also. I wonder when the House will realise that we should have a thorough classification of the whole of this re-dedication country. There are along our existing roads and railways in the South West, thousands of potential farms that should be made available for land settlement. The settlers who are to have these pieces of land have made application for them, and have had to go through a number of processes and attend to all sorts of detail. And the Lands Department cannot accept the applications, but must pass them on to the Forests Department, and after a great deal of trouble receive the land. And even after the land has been passed over, the Conservator of Forests holds the right for any number of years to take the timber off the land. A settler may take up an area, and still the Conservator of Forests holds the right to the timber. In consequence, the settler cannot ring-bark his land with a view to sweetening it. However, I am pleased that the motion has been brought down, and I hope that some day we shall have a similar motion covering thousands of these blocks.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [4.44]: I agree that the revocation of these areas should be approved, but I really think it is time that consideration was given to the policy of holding up big areas of country for timber purposes. I am not criticising the department, which is only working in accordance with the policy that was adopted long ago. This policy should be reviewed. There are areas of country which have been cut over time after time, and many decades will elapse before marketable timber is available from them. In the meantime, those who desire to secure forest country for orchard or garden purposes are prevented from

doing so. The motion constitutes a step towards the desired object and I have no objection to it, but I do think it is urgently necessary that the policy in respect to the restriction of areas for forest purposes should be reviewed.

MR. BROCKMAN (Sussex) [4.47]: I support the motion, and feel much as the member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) does. A great deal of this dedicated country is suitable for agriculture, but has never grown marketable trees. It is a very unwise policy to shut it up when it is more adaptable for agricultural purposes. I am sorry the Government have not brought down a motion to cover a larger area to be thrown open for selection. In many parts of the South-West there are blocks of 100 or 150 acres of beautiful land. The Forests Department are building homes throughout the dedicated areas. Most of the occupants have large families. Why cannot these homes be built in a good part of the forest country so that the settlers may become forest farmers, as is the case in other parts of the world? They could carry out their work for the Forestry Department in their spare time, and develop those areas of land that are suitable for agriculture.

Question put and passed, and a message accordingly transmitted to the Council.

BILL—ENTERTAINMENTS TAX ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

BILL—AUGUSTA ALLOTMENTS.

Recommittal.

On motion by the Minister for Lands, Bill recommitted for the purpose of further considering Clause 7.

In Committee.

Mr. Sleeman in the Chair; the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

Clause 7—Certain allotments of land may be dealt with and disposed of as unalienated Crown land:

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Last night the member for West Perth suggested an amendment to this Clause. I have now

received a copy of his suggestion, and, if he will move the amendment, I shall accept it.

Mr. McDONALD: I stated yesterday that the Bill as drafted gave the Minister power to issue a Crown grant for this land only in cases where there was an occupier. I suggested it was possible there would be a claim in respect to which there might not be an occupier at the time. I have therefore prepared an amendment to enable any person who claims to be entitled to an allotment of land, of which there is no occupier, to submit a claim to the Minister, and receive such consideration as the Minister may think he deserves. I move an amendment—

That in Subclause 1 all the words in that subclause, after the word "Act" in line 3, be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu:—"or where any such allotment was occupied at the commencement of this Act but no grant is made in relation thereto, to an applicant or claimant under Section 4 or Section 5 of this Act, the Governor may deal with and dispose of such allotment of land as unalienated Crown land under the provisions of the Land Act, 1898; provided that notwithstanding that any allotment aforesaid was unoccupied at the commencement of this Act any person who believes he is entitled to an estate or interest in fee simple in the said allotment may claim to be entitled to such estate and interest, and in such case Section 5 of this Act shall mutatis mutandis apply as if the said allotment were occupied at the commencement of this Act."

The effect of the amendment is to provide that where an allotment is not occupied, a person may come in and claim the estate in fee simple in the same way as under Clause 5 he would be entitled to come in and claim it in competition with the person who is the actual occupier. It gives the right to any claimant to come forward in the case of land which is not occupied at the commencement of the Act. I referred the amendment to the Crown Solicitor, who considers it will meet the situation, I propose that Subclause 2 should remain as it is.

Amendment put and passed; the clause as amended, agreed to.

Bill again reported with an amendment.

BILL—FORESTS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. LATHAM (York) [4.56]: I have no objection to the Bill. It means the paying into revenue of a certain sum of money

that is set aside under the Forestry Act for forest purposes.

Mr. Marshall: It is confiscating the money.

Mr. LATHAM: No. Probably most of it is already spent. A Bill of this nature usually comes down every year, although it was missed last year. There is no doubt the money is paid into revenue account. It is necessary to enact legislation of this kind, and there should be no objection to it.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [4.58]: I appeal to the Minister for Forests who is also the Treasurer, to see whether it is not possible to do something with regard to other royalties that are being paid. The Government are fostering every other primary industry, but are crimping the timber industry by every possible means. The Government are charging a high royalty, amounting to from 7s. 6d. to 15s. per load for the right to work in the timber industry. For every load of timber that is exported from the State, wharfage dues amounting to 3s. 9d. are charged.

The Premier: We are not dealing with that point.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I have to talk around the matter a little in order to arrive at the conclusion I want the House to come to. The royalty on sandalwood to-day is very high. The royalty, however, instead of going into the revenue of the country is being paid to the Conservator of Forests, who has complete control of it. Is it not possible to reduce the royalty in order to give the industry a fillip? If the royalty went into general revenue, then the money would be doing some good.

Mr. SPEAKER: I hope the hon. member is not going away from the subject matter of the Bill.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: That is the only point I desire to make.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—LAND TAX AND INCOME TAX.*Second Reading.*

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [5.5] in moving the second reading said: This measure is identical with that introduced last year and in many preceding years. It has been an annual measure for the past 15 years or more. It is not proposed in the Bill to make any alteration whatever in the existing legislation; that is to say, the rate of land tax and the rate of income tax will be the same as last year. It is also proposed to continue the exemptions that have been allowed in the past; those engaged in agricultural, horticultural, pastoral or grazing pursuits will be exempt from payment of land tax. Those exemptions mean the sacrifice of a fair amount of revenue, but in these times it is thought that the people engaged in those pursuits are in such a parlous condition that they are unable to pay land tax. There has been a marked falling-off in the revenue derived both from income tax and land tax. In 1929-30 we received for land tax £219,000; in 1932-33, £130,000. That is a very large decrease. The estimated receipts for this year are £135,000, only £5,000 more than was received last year. In 1929-30 we received from income tax £340,000; in 1932-33, £169,000, while the estimate for this year is £160,000.

Mr. Stubbs: That is a big decrease.

The PREMIER: Yes, more than half. The loss of this revenue has, of course, very considerably embarrassed the Treasurer, who has found it extremely difficult to carry on in the circumstances. The measure is not a debatable one; it is usually passed without discussion. I feel there is no need for me to labour it. I therefore move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Latham, debate adjourned.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1933-34.*In Committee of Supply.*

Resumed from the previous day. Mr. Sleeman in the Chair.

Department of the Minister for Agriculture (Hon. H. Millington, Minister).

Vote—Agriculture, £61,635 (partly considered).

MR. FERGUSON (Irwin-Moore) [5.8]: The Minister for Agriculture duly impressed members last night with the fact that the department under his control is the most important one in Western Australia, as we in this State are dependent to such a tremendous extent upon the welfare of the industry controlled and directed by his department. Of course that is so. In my opinion, the officers of the department have done all that is humanly possible to assist the industry in the difficult times through which it is passing, and they are deserving of every commendation for their efforts, more especially because they are working under rather difficult conditions. It will be remembered that not very long ago we had a visit to Western Australia by Dr. Rivett, who is the head of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research. He was entertained at Parliament House by the Government, and most members had an opportunity of listening to what he had to say. He drew attention to the difficulties under which the officers of the department were labouring, and one could gather from his remarks that similar difficulties were not experienced by officers in other Agricultural Departments in Australia. He referred somewhat sarcastically to the historic old building in which our Department of Agriculture is housed, and also to the equipment with which the scientific officers were provided to enable them to carry out their research work. While I would be the last person to advocate the expenditure of money on elaborate buildings in which to house civil servants, still I consider it the duty of the Government to provide proper facilities for these officers to carry on their work. The building in St. George's-terrace is a tumble-down affair. At one time it housed all the civil servants of the State. It is one of the public buildings that should long ago have been replaced by a modern structure. During recent weeks it certainly has been made a little more presentable by the addition of a coat of paint. From my close knowledge of the building I got the impression that it is the coat of paint that holds it together. The Public Works Department have prepared plans and specifications for the erection of a new building in front of the old one, and I express the hope that in the not very distant future it will be possible for the Minister for Agriculture to persuade his Leader, the Treasurer, to provide sufficient

money to enable him to proceed with the erection of that building. I understand it is estimated to cost in the vicinity of £10,000, and it has to be remembered that most of that money would be expended in Western Australia. I believe greater benefit would accrue to Western Australia from the erection of that building than from the erection of other buildings that are being proceeded with at the present time.

Mr. Wise: It would be a valuable asset.

Mr. FERGUSON: Pending the time when the State can afford to erect that building, I suggest to the Minister that when the time arrives for the returned soldiers to vacate the building at the back of the Department of Agriculture—which I take it will be in the near future, when Anzac House is completed—he should see that the building thus vacated is made available for the officers of the Department of Agriculture. Whilst it may not be entirely suitable, it would at least give the officers a little more accommodation, particularly the scientific officers of the department, whose accommodation at present is particularly poor. In various branches of the department, and I need not particularise them, in fact, in nearly every branch of the department, the officers are cramped. There is no room for the carrying on of research work as it should be done. As Dr. Rivett pointed out, unless proper facilities are provided for these officers, neither the agricultural community of the State nor the Government can expect to receive the same help they have been receiving in the past from the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research. Dr. Rivett pointed out very clearly that unless we were prepared to help ourselves, it was not likely that the Council would help us. Anything that the Minister can do to increase the facilities available, particularly for the scientific officers of the department who are carrying out such important research work, will be greatly appreciated. It appears from what Dr. Rivett said, we cannot expect to get much assistance from the body with which he is associated, unless that work is encouraged in this State. Many problems confront us to-day and, in view of the fact that provision for that work is quite outside the possibility of financing by the State Treasurer it will be patent to everyone that every £1 we can get from the Federal authorities will be most welcome to the

Minister for Agriculture and those in whose interests his officers are operating. It does not seem quite fair that in a new country like Western Australia, where we are endeavouring to establish the agricultural industry in all its branches, we should labour at a disadvantage as compared with the agriculturists in the older-settled States, where there are greater facilities available, and where greater advantage can be taken of the activities inaugurated by the Federal Government. I desire to pay a tribute to the work accomplished on the State farms, to which the Minister for Agriculture referred last night when he introduced his departmental Estimates. I have had an opportunity to see each of those farms, and, with him, I know the great value to the wheat-growers and the sheep men of Western Australia of the work that is being carried out there. The assertion that the continuance of the bulk wheat plots on the State farms was not justified in view of the existing state of the finances, is, in my opinion, wrong. As the Minister pointed out, there is no doubt that the wheat-growers of Western Australia anxiously seize every opportunity to secure a bag or two of the stud wheat, which they prize so highly. I venture to assert that at present, if the Minister had at his disposal five times the quantity available, he would have no difficulty in distributing it. He has had, as I have had, opportunities to appreciate the value of the stud seed wheat in various parts of the State. It is patent to every practical farmer that he has no opportunity to rear stud wheat on his own farm. He cannot afford to carry out the work; in many instances he has not the necessary facilities, and in other instances he has not the knowledge. On the other hand, farmers appreciate the variety of wheat that is most suitable for their respective districts and are only too pleased to secure supplies of stud wheat, with the backing of the Agricultural Department, so that it will be known that that particular wheat is suitable for their particular conditions. Moreover, a farmer is anxious to get the first bag or two from the department, so that if possible he can sow the wheat on the best part of his holding and make use of the wheat secured from that plot for his next season's seeding. I hope nothing will be done to curtail the bulk wheat plots grown on the State farms.

The additional cost of producing the bulk crops is not great, because of the fact that the necessary plant has to be maintained on each farm in order to carry out experiments, and to do the work required year by year. Therefore the maintenance of the plant, with the small additional amount of labour necessary, would not increase, to any great extent, the cost incurred in the work. The improvement in the dairying industry mentioned by the Minister is also gratifying, especially the increase in the quantity of our pastures in the South-West, combined with the results obtained from the conservation of fodder. Those two factors have increased the output of butter fat per cow. If our dairying industry is to assume large proportions in the South-West, as I believe it will, there must be a still further increase in production per cow. In my opinion that is the principal way by which dairy farmers will be able to discharge the obligations they have incurred to the State and to financial institutions. I believe we will gain that end more quickly by the extension of the system of herd-testing that was introduced a year or two ago. I noticed a report in a Victorian paper recently giving the results of the test carried out by the Wallwa Herd Testing Association in that State. That body was inaugurated in 1928, in which year the average production of butter fat per cow per annum was 150 lbs., whereas in 1931, or practically four years later, the average production per cow per annum had increased to 256 lbs., an increase of 106 lbs. per cow. If we take the average price of butter fat to be 1s. per lb., that represents an increase of £5 6s. per cow per annum. That might easily represent the difference between success and failure in any section of the dairying industry. I hope that, as far as finances will permit—I understand half the cost of the herd-testing activities is contributed by the owners of the cows—herd-testing will be extended, because nothing but good can result from such a movement either to the State as a whole or to the individual dairyman. I notice that the Minister did not indicate during his remarks last night what the intentions of the Government were regarding the continuation of the bull subsidy scheme, which has also had a marked effect on improving the type of heifer we have produced in this State. It has improved the yield of butter fat from tested cows. I hope the Government will be

able to provide the small amount of money necessary to continue the bull subsidy scheme, which has been in operation for several years. The Minister and the officers of his department are to be commended for what they are doing regarding stock diseases. I have particularly in mind their work in connection with toxic paralysis, a dread disease that, in my opinion, has caused the death of a larger number of sheep in Western Australia than is attributable to all other diseases grouped together. What has been done by the veterinary branch of the department has been greatly appreciated by the sheep owners, and I hope the work of the officers will be extended still further. Despite the recommendations made by the veterinary officers of the Department of Agriculture that certain steps should be taken as a preventive measure against the disease, many sheep owners and farmers who have small flocks of sheep, do not know anything about that advice. Although one may tell them, or they may read reports in the Press, the fact remains that many sheep owners and farmers are not taking adequate steps to counteract the spread of this dread disease. Everything that can possibly be done to give wider publicity to the advice of the veterinary officers should be adopted by the Government and I am sure if that course were adopted, it would be greatly appreciated by the farming community. We cannot emphasise too much the necessity for the use of suitable phosphatic licks in order to minimise the losses farmers have sustained, as a result of toxic paralysis. I was glad to note last night that the Minister corroborated the remarks I had made during the discussion on the Land Estimates, regarding the activities of one of his departmental officers, Dr. Teakle. I do not propose to say any more on that matter at the moment beyond expressing my appreciation of the Minister's attitude. A gratifying feature of the agricultural industry in this State is the appreciation in wool values that have been recorded recently. I notice in to-night's "Daily News," that at Geelong a record price of 33¼d. was realised for super wool. Probably, this is the finest type grown in the world. That is an indication that the rise we experienced last week gives promise of being maintained. Should that be so, it will mean that the wool growers of Australia will once more be able to stand on their own

fect. They will not be in need, to a large extent, of governmental assistance, in which case funds available from either the State Government or the Federal Government can be used to assist the wheat-growers in a greater measure, and goodness knows, they want it badly enough. The extremely gratifying reception of "Swandown" lambs on the markets of the world indicates that the right lines were adopted by the Department of Agriculture and the lamb committee who have been operating for some time. That committee consists of officers of the Department of Agriculture and some of the breeders. The proposal originated at a field day on the State farm at Wongan Hills, when the suggestion was made by Mr. Lefroy of Moora, a man who is keenly interested in the production of high-grade lambs for export, and the proposal was taken up by the Director of Agriculture. When a committee was formed, Mr. Lefroy became a member of it as well as other well-known lamb producers. They have worked hard and in harmony, and have placed before the potential lamb growers of Western Australia what they considered was the most suitable type of lamb to produce for the London market. I am glad that a large proportion of the lamb growers have taken the advice of the committee, all of whom are experienced men, able to advise because of knowledge gained after a close study of the problem. A report that appeared in "The West Australian" recently dealing with the lambs sent to the Old Country, served to indicate how highly they were thought of there. The Agent General (Sir Hal Colebatch), in the course of his report, said—

Authorities say that these lambs were the best which have yet come from Western Australia, and expressed the opinion that if this quality were maintained the "Swandown" brand would soon acquire a very high reputation.

He also said—

The consignment was expected to average 8d. a pound, which was higher than the prices obtained for Victorian lambs. The price paid for the "Swandown" lambs was 8½d. a pound, plus exchange.

Later on he stated—

There is no doubt that the "Swandowns" were a most attractive lamb.

If we in Western Australia are to develop the fat lamb industry and send forward large quantities to the markets of the Old Country,

we must produce lambs of a type that appeal to people in the Old Country, a type that the people desire to buy. It is useless for growers here to say that such and such a type of lamb is suitable for production in their district. We have to produce the lambs that our customers desire to buy, and experience has shown that the "Swandown" lamb is what they require. I hope that efforts will be made by our lamb growers to produce the right quality of lamb, so that they will be able to retain the market in the Old Country. I trust the Minister, in his reply to the debate, will give members a little further information regarding the investigations carried out by Dr. Turner of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research in Queensland. Dr. Turner has initiated what is known as the complementary fixation test in connection with pleuro in cattle, which is a matter of vital importance to Western Australia. With very great reluctance we have been compelled to prevent the transport from the Kimberleys of cattle that might possibly be affected with pleuro—one of the worst cattle diseases known to veterinary science—and have had to restrict their movements in the areas south of the Kimberleys. One or two of the stations have been very hard hit as a result of the prohibition. I refer particularly to the Anna Plains station. I should like the Minister to do everything that is humanly possible to enable the Anna Plains cattle to be overlanded to the southern areas, provided it can be done with safety. In my opinion, no risk should be taken, because it would be far more economical for the Government to purchase all the cattle on the Anna Plains station and prevent them from coming south if there was any risk of their being affected with pleuro. If the investigations of Dr. Turner at Townsville are reliable, surely they might be utilised on the Anna Plains cattle to determine whether they are affected, and whether there would be any undue risk in bringing them down. When the cattle were prevented from travelling overland, it was contended by the Royal Commissioner, who inquired into the matter, and by the veterinary officers of the department, that the risk was too great, but the march of science continues, and the investigations of an officer like Dr. Turner might, in course of time, produce a reliable method by which the cattle may be tested to determine whether or not they are pleuro infected. The latest information I have on the subject indicates that the method of detection would

be effective in about 75 per cent. of the cases. If we can detect the disease in only 75 per cent. of the cases, the risk of allowing these cattle to come south would be great, but if, with the progress of science, Dr. Turner can prove that his test is 100 per cent. efficient, the time has arrived when we should place no more additional burdens on stations situated as is Anna Plains. If we could take such action with reasonable safety to the bigger cattle industry south of the Kimberleys, we should do so. I would be glad to have the latest information in the Minister's possession, so that members and the stock owners of the country may realise whether their interests would be safeguarded if the cattle were brought south and fattened in the Midland or Murchison areas as obtained years ago before the pleuro got so far south as it has reached today. The matter is one of great importance to the cattle industry. The attitude of Belgium in resenting the fiscal policy of Australia is likely to react to the detriment of the cattle industry in the Kimberleys, particularly East Kimberley, and unless something can be done to relieve the position, I am afraid the pastoralists there will find themselves in a very bad way. Still we cannot afford to have the Kimberley cattle brought south at the risk of the rest of the industry, which is ten times as great as that part in the Kimberleys.

MR. GRIFFITHS (Avon) [5.33]: I wish to deal with one or two items that I have not mentioned in my previous speeches on the Estimates. I was pleased to hear the remarks of the Minister about the State farms, and particularly the State farm at Merredin, and also his reference—I had previously heard it in the district—to a certain farmer, Mr. H. W. Teasdale, and the valuable return he got from stud wheat procured from the State farm—a return of thirty-fold.

The Minister for Agriculture: I think it was seventy-fold.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I believe that is correct. The department of Agriculture is one of the most important, having almost a score of sub-departments. Engaged in the research work of the department are some very capable officers, amongst whom I might instance Mr. Gardiner, Mr. Pitman, Dr. Teakle—to mention his name once more—and Mr. Newman. This brings me to a

point mentioned by the member for Gascoyne on a previous occasion, but it will bear repetition. I refer to the housing of the specimens collected by those experts, some of whom have devoted a life-time to their work of research. I believe that Mr. Newman is 55 years of age and joined the department as a boy. Allowing that he was probably 15 years of age when he joined the department, he must have been there about 40 years. I believe he has thousands of specimens which, housed as they are, might go up in smoke at any time. Already two fires have occurred in the building, but fortunately have been extinguished before serious damage was done. One might fill a page of "Hansard" in lauding the work of the various officers, but if provision could be made for the better housing of their thousands of specimens, they would be more pleased than they would be with pages of "Hansard" eulogising their efforts. The previous speaker mentioned the disease of toxic paralysis, which has created a very live problem in the Avon and neighbouring electorates. When the member for Irwin-Moore was Minister he gave me a recipe for a lick which I caused to be widely distributed through my electorate. That lick has been the salvation of many flocks in my electorate. It is quite a cheap preparation, and I am sure that a good deal of trouble could be avoided if farmers generally made the lick available to their sheep. It would have the effect of countering the depraved appetite for bone-chewing which is the cause of most of the trouble. Last night, while listening to the arguments for and against the work of Dr. Teakle, I could not help thinking that if we had had that officer in charge when the Agricultural Bank authorities were advising men to cultivate the wodjil country, scores of thousands of pounds would have been saved to the State and to settlers. At that time we needed experts to tell us something about soil content, and to warn settlers not to sow wheat on ground containing poisons. When one considers the numerous and varied departments controlled by the Minister, one cannot but feel how interesting his work must be. Starting at the head office he has the tropical fruit section ranging from paw-paws, pineapples, and bananas to the homely potato. Then there are sections devoted to honey, and veterinary work covering the diseases that affect cattle in the Kimberleys and sheep and

wool in the southern areas. Doubtless the member for Swan will have something to say about bees and honey. So one could continue to quote the long list of activities with which the Minister must occupy himself. I wish to express appreciation of the help I have received from officials in connection with the various problems I have placed before them. Particularly have I in mind the weed, wild-turnip, a serious pest that is spreading rapidly in the newer districts. Its eradication will need to be tackled seriously. I am satisfied that if the settlers will follow the directions given by the departmental officials, they will succeed in overcoming a very deadly pest.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [5.40]: A subject of very great interest to producers is parasitology—those minute particles of insect life which, breeding so rapidly, bring devastation and ruin in their train. A great fight is being waged between man and insects. The insects of the world are multiplying in number. There are thousands of known varieties, while of many, it is said, there is no definite knowledge. Some are so infinitesimal as to be invisible to the naked eye, but many of them definitely are the enemy of man. It would appear that the highly developed quality of fruit and other produce has caused a physical weakness in the trees or plants, and consequently they are apt to fall victims more readily than would similar trees or plants in their original state of development. Fruit, vegetables, etc., in their first know stages, contained very little food value while in size and quality the product was almost negligible. Only by the careful development of those products has increased quality been obtained. Through recent ages efforts have been made to secure improvement. That has been so, not only in English-speaking countries but in all countries where a true and proper view of the subject is taken. I recall having had the privilege of inspecting an agricultural school garden out from Ottawa where were to be seen the homely carrot, turnip, pea, cabbage, cauliflower, etc., all under close scrutiny by students and others, the object being to improve the growth and produce a better article for human use. It was possible to see native berries, indigenous to certain parts of Canada, that in their wild state were almost worthless from the standpoint of food value, but efforts were being made by selection,

pruning, and other methods, to make the berries of great use. Diverting for a moment from the product of the orchard or garden, let me refer to the milch cow. The cow has been developed to such an extent through the desire of man to secure as much milk as possible from the animal that, in common with fruit trees and other producing media, it has become weakened, and has to be watched closely to prevent its falling a victim to some disease. So, in the efforts the producer is putting forth to secure a greater return, a change is being effected; the balance of nature is being overturned, it may be because of the insect pests which are causing the entomologists so much worry. These pests are multiplying to an alarming extent. It is claimed that if on the 1st April one tiny female cabbage aphid lays her eggs, then by the middle of the following August, provided all the mother aphids live, her descendants will number 560 quadrillion. The prolificacy of the aphid is almost inconceivable. Another interesting fact is that the common polyphemus moth is capable of eating for a 56 day period, 86,000 times its own weight. Only sometimes are the entomologists able to win out in their fight against the rapid multiplication of enemy insects. In 1928 the United States Congress spent over two million pounds on the corn borer campaign. It is stated that this ravager has cost the United States 23 millions sterling. It usually attacks wheat, cotton, tomatoes and tobacco, and the figure I have just quoted is rapidly increasing. Its extermination appears to be impossible; at the most, control is hoped for. The position with regard to most of these insects is that they are multiplying at a terrific rate and becoming acclimatised in almost every country.

Mr. North: The effect will be to raise prices.

MR. SAMPSON: The trouble is that the best of the products suffer from the ravages of the pest. It has been stated by one scientist that Lindbergh, the famous airman, picked up scores of new insects on one of his great flights. This may sound like fiction, but I am assured it is correct. The statement was made by someone on whom reliance can be placed.

Mr. Griffiths: Did Lindbergh pick up the insects on his body?

MR. SAMPSON: No, on the plane. The cotton weevil in the United States costs that

country 36½ million sterling a year. The question is asked in all countries whether insect pests are receiving attention and whether man is succeeding in his effort to control them. In America the termite does damage to the extent of 6½ millions annually. There also, cattle of a value of £7,700,000 are destroyed by the heel fly. The Colorado beetle costs the United States 6½ million pounds, that being the extent of the damage done to potatoes annually. Twenty-three million pounds worth of damage is the result of the depredations of the chinch bug peach borer and clothes moth. The figures I have quoted relate to America only and it all goes to show that in the final analysis we must depend upon the entomologist and the natural enemy of the pests must be found. There are also lady-birds.

Mr. Marshall: They are always pests.

Mr. SAMPSON: The lady-bird is a parasite and the name we give it is really a compliment, because the lady-bird is a bug. It may be that this name has been given it because it is a useful insect as far as we are concerned. Coming nearer home, I draw attention to the fact that in spite of world-wide difficulties, which exist also in our midst to a lesser extent than elsewhere, we find that the vote for the entomologist remains the same this year as last year, namely £442. It is clear that in view of the rapid multiplication of insect pests, more money must be found to cope with the trouble. The vote for fruit and orchard inspection is shown as £1,550, an amount which is £55 less than that of last year. How the Government can justify these figures I do not know. It is certain that there is widespread anxiety regarding the increase in the insect pests and the growers are worried over the position. Every known product almost is liable to be attacked by some pest or other, and some of the products are subject to attack from many pests. The question of inspectors in the department is one about which members are concerned. I notice in the Estimates that the amount for the travelling inspectors this year is £1,350 against £2,000 last year, while freights and fares this year total £1,600 against £1,700 last year. The amount for motor hire, etc., remains the same, but in the instances quoted the figures this year are lower than those of last year.

Mr. Cross interjected.

Mr. SAMPSON: The hon. member is usually right, but he is not correct this time. Everywhere we see there has been a cutting down. Consider what that means. Already throughout the fruit-growing districts there is widespread anxiety and discontent over the lack of inspection. If it is impossible for the Government to provide funds for necessary inspections, the question of appointing honorary inspectors might be considered. I know it is not a very nice thing for an honorary inspector to examine his neighbour's orchard.

Mr. Marshall: How would you like to accept an honorary office and then inspect an orchard where you knew insects were multiplying rapidly?

Mr. SAMPSON: It has been done in the past and it looks as if it will have to be done in the future. The inspectors have not sufficient transport to enable them to do their work. The department is not provided with sufficient funds to enable them to do their job properly. Inspectors should be travelling all the time, advising orchardists and helping them to clean up the trouble that is always present.

Mr. Moloney: What did the previous Government do?

Mr. SAMPSON: They did not do nearly as much as they should have done.

Mr. Latham: What can you do when you have not the money?

Mr. SAMPSON: It is a bad policy to cut down inspectorial expenses. It is futile to expect our growers to compete with other countries unless they receive the assistance they require.

The Minister for Agriculture: Will you mention the name of one man who does not receive travelling expenses.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am not here to answer questions submitted by the Minister. But to that one I can reply by asking the Minister whether any inspector is provided with the means to enable him to reach orchards which are known to be affected.

The Minister for Agriculture: Certainly.

Mr. SAMPSON: The Minister has been misinformed. Not once or twice, but over and over again have I told this story that inspectors are very rarely seen in certain parts of the country.

The Minister for Agriculture: Not one complaint has reached me. The people are very well satisfied with the inspections as they are carried out to-day.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am not complaining about the personnel of the inspectorial staff.

The Minister for Agriculture: They are provided with motor cars.

Mr. SAMPSON: A little while ago regarding fruit fly I asked the Minister whether any prosecutions had been launched, and the Minister said he was unable to find particulars in respect of any prosecutions. That is an admission that the inspectors are not carrying out their duties.

The Minister for Agriculture: No, the inspectors are keeping the orchardists up to scratch.

Mr. SAMPSON: They may be doing their best, but I have been told there is fruit-fly throughout those districts. I know there is, and that in a week or two we shall be hearing of it. The very time when this job should be tackled is rapidly passing.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is the orchardists' job.

Mr. SAMPSON: I know it is. We have plenty of legislation, and all that is needed is that it should be carried into effect.

The Minister for Agriculture: I will see to that.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am glad to hear that, because the fly has been unduly protected, not only in the orchard districts but in the metropolitan area, where there are backyard orchards and week-end orchards which, as the season advances, will be found to be reeking with flies. There has been too much loving kindness lavished on this insect, and very little action is ever taken against it. When we find that for 12 months no action has been taken, it is time to criticise the department: and I criticise it, first through the Treasury, because the money has not been found with which to provide means for the proper inspection of orchards. Even so, some action should have been taken, because it would not cost much to send a couple of men through the metropolitan area. I again refer to that flagrant case in Adelaide-terrace, where 4,000 flies were trapped. It is unfair to the real orchardists. The fact that a man is a good orchardist does not mean that he is protected from the fly, for one careless grower may breed enough flies to contaminate a whole district, as frequently happens. I hope the Minister will agree.

The Minister for Agriculture: I do not know what it is you wish me to agree with.

Mr. SAMPSON: That this work needs to be done, that there should be inspections, that action should be taken when fruit-fly is discovered; in other words, that the existing legislation should be administered. I have told the ex-Minister for Agriculture that the Act was more than less a dead letter.

The Minister for Agriculture: Not the Plant Diseases Act? That is administered better in this State than in any other State. That is why we have no codlin moth.

Mr. SAMPSON: The other night I submitted figures regarding officers working in this State and in New South Wales. There is a marked distinction.

The Minister for Agriculture: One would look for a marked distinction in a wealthy State like Victoria.

Mr. SAMPSON: The Minister will admit that there is no difficulty about an inspector going out, securing some cases and launching prosecutions. We want prosecutions for the non carrying out of the provisions of the Plant Diseases Act, and punishment of those who do not carry out what is required.

Mr. Ferguson: If it were done without any prosecution, would not that be better?

Mr. SAMPSON: No; we want the publication of the fact that the department is wide awake, after which, no doubt, the public will do what is necessary. Why not make the provisions of the Plant Diseases Act known to the suburban orchardists? It would be possible for some posters to be printed and copies sent to each school in the metropolitan area and the outer suburban area, showing the life history of the fruit-fly. Also small handbills could be printed and particulars given as to the means by which the fly can be controlled. If that were done, and the handbills distributed throughout the schools, it would mark a definite step forward.

Mr. Lambert: You know it is impossible to police that Act. It would cost thousands.

Mr. SAMPSON: No, the leaflets need be but small and would contain only essential particulars. That would not cost very much. A few weeks ago I was delighted to hear the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie give notice of motion regarding the fruit-fly. When we find a member whose chief duty lies in the metalliferous areas, the gold mining districts,

realising that little or nothing has been done to combat the fruit-fly, it is time members associated with fruit-growing districts took up the matter and demanded that the Act be administered. That is all I ask for.

Mr. Marshall: You must know that I have four young trees on my place.

Mr. SAMPSON: With that strict regard for the law which characterises the hon. member, no doubt he will look after them. If it be impossible for the Government to see that the Act is carried out, perhaps honorary inspectors might be appointed. However, I hope that will not be necessary, that the Minister will carry into effect the duties he has accepted. I am told the fly is becoming acclimatised and has been hatched out at as low a temperature as 22 degrees of frost.

Mr. Lambert: Centigrade or Fahrenheit?

Mr. SAMPSON: It is amazing to think that a fly accustomed to hot countries can be hatched out at that temperature; it proves the hardy nature of the insect and that it is becoming acclimatised. It may not be long before Mt. Barker and Bridgetown have the fly in thousands.

Mr. Lambert: You sought to amend my motion so as to make it inoperative.

Mr. SAMPSON: Nothing of the sort; I sought to amend it to make it reasonable and practicable.

Mr. Marshall: A very good amendment, too.

Mr. SAMPSON: It will be just as well to carry the amended motion, for it will be a further suggestion to the Minister that something should be done. I know the Minister is keen on doing whatever may be possible and, on looking at the figures in the Estimates, I realise that the money he requires is not being provided. But it would be possible to send out one or two men to tour the metropolitan area and take action wherever they find any evasions of the Act. I am told we are unable to send fruit to New Zealand because of the scandal of the fruit-fly, although the Murray River districts and South Australia generally are permitted to send citrus to New Zealand. This is a very grave position for Western Australia, for it means that our markets are becoming more and more limited. It is generally recognised that our citrus is equal to the best Californian citrus, for Western Australia, like California, is specially adapted to its production. Speaking of markets, let me

refer to the position in Palestine, where the Back-to-Palestine movement has brought about special activity in the cultivation of citrus.

The CHAIRMAN: Is Palestine mentioned in this Vote?

Mr. SAMPSON: It has a definite association with the Vote.

The CHAIRMAN: Very well.

Mr. SAMPSON: Last year Palestine exported over 4,000,000 cases of oranges, each containing 1.1/3rd bushels. The other day I received a letter from a brother-in-law travelling in Palestine.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. SAMPSON: Before tea I was referring to a visit paid to Palestine by a brother-in-law, and I propose now to read an extract from a letter he has sent me:—

We motored through Palestine for a few days. It is making rapid headway, and millions of cases of citrus fruits are exported. Over 200,000 people are now settled there, and provision to house 250,000 more from Germany. Some 600 shops, factories, warehouses and dwellings have been built during the past seven months at a city called Tel-a-viv, which now has 100,000 inhabitants and 20 years ago was a sand dune.

Fortunately, the oranges produced in Palestine do not reach the English market at a time when they are competitive with Australian oranges. The Palestine fruit is well advanced to maturity by May. A suggestion has been made that a date should be fixed when the marketing of navel oranges should cease. That is worthy of consideration. The date suggested is between the 15th and 20th November. By that date navel oranges start to dry out, and the fruit is not as good as it is earlier, and Valencia oranges could come in. That is important in view of the great competition, and consideration should be given to the suggestion. It is gratifying to note that the recent trial shipment of oranges to the Old Country turned out so well. The future of the citrus industry is fraught with grave anxiety. Five proposals have been advanced which it is believed are worthy of consideration and which it would be beneficial to carry out. They are—

(1) The necessity for a conservative policy in regard to new plantings; (2) The outstanding importance of the maintenance of a high standard of efficiency in production; (3) the

importance of early action to explore the possibilities of developing a more extensive export trade, particularly with Canada and the United Kingdom; (4) the need for a more representative organisation of the industry to render possible the extension of export; (5) the dependence of the industry upon Government co-operation in the exploration of markets and the conduct of scientific research, in cultural and irrigation practices, and problems associated with conditions of transport and the preservation of fruit during transport.

All will have learned with regret the serious loss which apple growers recently suffered. Despite the criticism which has so often been levelled at controlled marketing, it is clear that something along these lines is necessary. Excessive quantities of apples should not be put on the market at the one time. An improvement in that respect might be effected by better organisation in respect to shipping. That is an important question and is causing apple growers a lot of anxiety, and is costing a lot of money. New Zealand has adopted a wise practice in regard to distribution in the Old Country, and an extension of that principle might be considered in view of the shipping difficulty that exists. Many growers advocate the package charge for local markets. They claim that the present method, whereby commission and account sales charges are made is unfair. A charge at so much per case, crate, or bag, would have the effect of improving the quality of the product sent to market. It is essential, if fruit growing and the market gardening industries are to pay their way, that only the best products shall be offered for sale. Some growers appreciate the fact that quality pays, but all do not adopt the correct practice. Before tea I was referring to the amazing fecundity of the cabbage aphid. I stated that some insect pests are so microscopic that it is believable that many exist which cannot be discovered even with the aid of a magnifying glass. The question I was asked was as to the number of descendants of one female cabbage aphid. The descendants would number 560 quadrillion, conditional on the whole of the eggs being fertile and all the resultant insects living.

The Minister for Employment: If people do not believe that, they can count them for themselves.

Mr. SAMPSON: That reminds me of the old quatrain—

Little fleas have other fleas
Upon their backs to bite 'em,
And other fleas have smaller fleas
And so ad infinitum.

MR. WISE (Gascoyne) [7.40]: I was very interested in the remarks of the Minister on the operations of his department. I can well understand his feelings of pride at being in charge of it. The same thing applies to the remarks of the ex-Minister for Agriculture, who played a big part in the activities of the department. One member has already touched on the housing of the officers. As I said during the general debate on the Estimates, it is deplorable that they should have to work under such restrictive conditions. The room where the scientists are forced to do their work could be covered by a sheet of blotting paper. The accommodation of the plant pathologist and other officers is so small that it would not be possible to swing a cat there without serious injury to the animal. The accommodation is out of keeping with the activities and the very good work of the department. The ex-Minister said it was a historical building. If so, let us keep it as such, for it is out of keeping with the work the officers are doing. The ramifications of the department have been traversed by previous speakers. I hope the Minister listened attentively to one of the suggestions made by the member for Swan, seeing that it might bring in a lot of revenue to the department. He suggested that the Minister should launch wholesale prosecutions in the Swan electorate against those who are evading the provisions of the Plant Diseases Act.

Mr. Sampson: You might be sure there is no fly in the Carnarvon bananas.

Mr. WISE: The hon. member has not been there.

Mr. Sampson: I have.

Mr. WISE: The hon. member would probably assist the Minister by acting as honorary inspector. Of course he would not do any electioneering as he went along.

Mr. Sampson: Do you not think prosecutions should be launched?

Mr. WISE: The suggestion is not a bad one, and the Minister might take note of it.

Mr. Sampson: Why suggest electioneering?

Mr. WISE: Further provision should be made for inspectors in the North-West.

Mr. Ferguson: Why not advisers?

Mr. WISE: In the North-West there is one veterinary surgeon and one stock inspector to cover an area larger than two of the Eastern States. Both are excellent men. Carnarvon at one time had a permanent stock inspector stationed there, but the office has been empty for a few years. It is unfair to the district and the North-West in general that only one officer should be available to cover that large territory. Stock Inspector McDonald, who is stationed at Derby, is an efficient officer and did excellent work when temporarily engaged in the district. I hope the Minister will study the people of the North-West, and acknowledge that one veterinary surgeon and one stock inspector are insufficient to cover that territory throughout the year. On the general discussion on the Estimates I briefly touched upon the terrific losses in sheep through the blow-fly pest, and I said that that was a matter calling for serious and urgent attention. On one station alone this year, the loss was not less than £4,000. Unfortunately, in some seasons the flies breed quite as rapidly as the aphids mentioned by the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson). It is almost impossible to cope with this trouble by crutching or adopting the usually recognised means, for the simple reason that it is not possible to muster the sheep during the greater portion of the year. The department might well explore every avenue possible when experimenting with the blow-fly pest. In Queensland, in open country, the blow-fly pest has assumed serious proportions. In this State, with the scrub and brushy growth peculiar to the country, the fly presents an entirely different problem from that in the Eastern States. Our Department of Agriculture is differently constituted from the Agricultural Departments in the other States; that is something which perhaps time may alter. Singling out one particular item, I venture to draw the attention of members to the salary paid to the very efficient officer who is designated the secretary of the department. In almost every other department in the State there is an under-secretary who is paid from £700 to £800 per annum. The officer I refer to, Mr. Jones, is a wonderfully capable officer. He has a thorough grip of every sub-department under him. He carries tremendous responsibility. He is the director's adviser in very many matters. He controls the whole

of the staff, and yet he is paid but £461 per annum. In every respect but name, Mr. Jones is the under-secretary of the department. I hope that before long it will be possible to alter his classification. Perhaps the Minister will make a recommendation that this officer should be paid a salary commensurate with the value of his work. I am very pleased at the recent appointment of a tropical adviser for the North-West. When the gentleman who has been appointed to the position arrives, I am sure the department will render him all the assistance possible to carry on the wonderful work that it is possible for him to do in the North-West. Not the least important part of that work will be the introduction of new plants from other parts of the world. That is a phase of North-West development which must be recognised and respected. It is possible to introduce plants into the North-West from other countries with a similar climate. The introduction of such plants would mean the addition of vast sums to the revenue of the State. If we could introduce but one plant to the State, the advantage to the State would be very great. Many members do not realise the startling and striking differences between the tropical parts of Western Australia and the tropical parts of Eastern Australia. In Eastern Australia in the same latitude as Onslow, I think the rainfall is ninety inches. We have a 9-inch rainfall. The same applies throughout the whole length of our tropical coastline. Therefore, it is not possible to compare Western Australia with Eastern Australia in that respect.

Mr. Sampson: Do you think it is commercially possible to produce fruit in the North?

Mr. WISE: Yes, in places. There are some areas in the far North adjacent to Wyndham, and perhaps at Port George and other small places, where many tropical fruits can be grown. I am very pleased that the appointment I refer to has been made, and I am sure every facility will be given to the officer concerned to carry out his important duties.

MR. SEWARD (Pingelly) [7.52]: I had not the opportunity and the pleasure of hearing the Minister introduce his Estimates last night, but I would like to congratulate him, and through him, the officers of the department upon the work they have been doing since he assumed office. Generally

speaking, since the Government have taken control, they have not met with much criticism, probably because members were desirous of giving them an opportunity of sizing up the position in which they found themselves, and bringing down the policy which they desired to put into operation during their tenure of office. At the same time, one cannot but view with some apprehension the fact that recently the Premier stated we were approaching the end of the present session. One is inclined to view that position with a little alarm from the point of view of the agriculturist. We have had rather lavish expenditure of money in the city to provide work for those who, unfortunately, have not been able to find it, owing to the depression, but not very much money has been made available to such an important department as the Agricultural Department. Previous speakers and others have made reference to the buildings in which the department is housed. One likes to see a department well housed, and one would probably think it a matter for congratulation that the present premises have been recently painted and improved.

Mr. Marshall: They look like some of our flappers—a bit flash for the time being.

Mr. SEWARD: I am sorry the building has been painted, because it will mean a prolongation of the term of occupancy by the department. I would like to see the department's occupancy of the premises terminated, because, as the previous speaker said, it is impossible for the officers to give of their best while housed in that building. I was on of a deputation that waited on the Minister a few days ago. There were only five or six of us, but when we got into his office, the director and the Minister himself being also present, there was no room for anyone else. What that room must be like in the middle of summer one can easily imagine. The director and other officers occupy small cubicles, in which they are expected to carry on their work. I hope the time will soon arrive when the department will be removed from those premises altogether. Suggestions have been made that they can be enlarged and that a new building can be erected in front of them, also that the department could take over the premises now occupied by the returned soldiers. I hope that proposal will not be carried into effect, because I think it unsuitable

to have laboratories, where experiments are being carried out on animals, situated in the heart of the city. The Minister, the head of the department, and administrative officers should be in the heart of the city, but the laboratories should be situated some distance from the centre of the city. I hope this suggestion will be given effect, so that the important work upon which the scientific officers of the department are engaged can be pursued to the utmost limit. Another matter upon which I desire to touch concerns the operations of the vermin boards. I have already brought this matter privately before the Minister. At the present time bonuses of certain amounts are paid for the scalps of vermin, £2 for dogs, 10s. for foxes and so on. Foxes have been increasing at a very alarming rate. Only last Sunday a party in the Great Southern district came across a fox with eight young ones. The party were unable to catch the pests, but in any case it was said the bonus did not make it worth while to catch them. Hitherto, when the vermin board have been asked to increase the amount of the bonus to be paid for foxes, the reply has been that there was not sufficient money to permit of the bonus being increased. On looking through the accounts of the vermin boards for last year I find the collections amounted to £21,506, while the amount paid out in bonuses was £23,302, so that the collections were only £2,000 short of the bonuses paid. Under the present system the fox skins are destroyed. Would it not be possible for the skins to be treated, placed on the market and sold? The proceeds could be paid into the vermin fund for the purpose of increasing the amount of the bonus. At present the skins are simply slit right down from the head to the tail and so ruined.

Mr. Ferguson: Is the skin of any value?

Mr. SEWARD: I think so. I hope the Minister will give the suggestion careful consideration. Another matter which is at present very serious is toxic paralysis, with which, of course, is closely allied the rabbit question. I know many owners of properties are refraining from poisoning rabbits by the cart because of their liability to lose sheep owing to the sheep eating dead rabbits. It is possible to kill the rabbits by fumigating the burrows. I know of many instances where the cart has been run round the paddock, but there was no poison laid. I hope the officers of the

department will pursue their investigations into toxic paralysis with a view to overcoming that disease. While on this subject, I congratulate the Minister on the letter which I received recently giving details of the department's proposed investigations this year. There is one point in that letter, however, which has raised a little doubt in my mind. It relates to the experiments at Avondale. Avondale is not what one might term an average farm. The feeding properties of the pastures on Avondale are probably richer than those on an ordinary farm and therefore experiments carried out at Avondale would not give the same results as if carried out on a farm which is actually known to be so deficient in pastures that the sheep on it are dying from eating dead rabbits. If it were possible to confine the experiments to such farms, the results would be much better. The rabbit problem is much more serious than many farmers in the country districts appear to realise. Last week-end I was speaking to a man who told me he had been fumigating throughout the year and also had a man going round with a poison cart, and yet there were more rabbits on his property than there were at the beginning of the year. The rabbit problem is reaching a point at which the Government will have to consider convening a conference of delegates from various parts of the State to formulate a policy to deal with the invasion. I do not know what the position in the South-West is, but should the rabbits invade the South-West and the Great Southern areas, I cannot see how we will be able to cope with them because feed and water will be available for them throughout the whole year. It will be an entirely different proposition there compared with the problem in the wheat belt with its drier season.

Mr. McLarty: The rabbits do not increase in the South-West.

Mr. Mann: But they will.

Mr. SEWARD: I was in Gippsland at a time when the rabbits invaded that part of Victoria. I went on to one property where one could not see the bellies of the cows because of the tall growth of clover, rye grass and other feed. I asked the farmer what he was going to do in anticipation of the inroads of rabbits. He told me he was not going to net his property because the other farmers surrounding him were netting their holdings. Twelve months later I again visited the property and there was no more feed to be seen than there is in St. George's

Terrace. The country in the South-West may be regarded as somewhat similar and I am afraid the rabbit problem will be an extremely serious one in that part of the State. I hope that the question of the mesh to be adopted for wire netting purposes will receive the consideration of the Government. I have seen many cases going to prove that the 1½-inch mesh is not small enough. A business man told me that what purported to be 1½-inch mesh netting was really 1½-inch mesh. If that is so, it can hardly be wondered at that rabbits pass through the mesh. One of the departmental officers has come in for criticism—I refer to Dr. Teakle. I shall not say anything about that matter; Dr. Teakle is a scientist and I presume he knows his subject. I appreciate the fact that he has done very good work, but I wish to give the Committee figures dealing with the other side of the problem. They show the results obtained from the country areas that have been referred to in connection with the alkali question. The country I refer to is east of Hyden Rock and then south-east along Lake Camm and Lake Barlee. The blocks average a distance of 35 miles from a railway and in some instances the farmers are carting for 60 miles. In the year 1931-32 8,343 acres were under wheat and produced 36,353 bags, or an average of 15 bushels to the acre. There were 54 acres under oats, which produced 116 bags or an average of 12 bushels per acre. In that year there was no fallow provided for the subsequent season. In 1932-33, 14,024 acres were under wheat and produced 68,446 bags of wheat, or an average of 14.57 bushels per acre. Regarding oats, 208 acres were under crop and produced 1,156 bags, or an average of 16.2 bushels per acre. In addition, 2,350 acres were under fallow. For the present year, 1933-34, 14,755 acres are under wheat and 735 acres are under oats. If that country is not worth preserving and encouraging, then Western Australia must have some very valuable country to throw away. I do not say that Dr. Teakle's investigation should not be undertaken; far from it. On the other hand, I say that the country should not be condemned, but the farmers who are there should be assisted in order to prove the country. There are 43 settlers in occupation of blocks, and there are 28 abandoned farms. Exactly just how far assistance should be rendered is a matter to be determined, but

in order to prevent any rush to take advantage of assistance authorised by the Agricultural Bank, it would be better to retain the 45 settlers on their farms and give them all the necessary assistance to enable them to prove, from a practical standpoint, whether we should persist with that part of the State. Some of the agricultural inspectors who know the country well, consider it is eminently suitable for big stock. We have not much land of that type in that portion of the State. They also say it is good sheep country, provided the holdings are netted. I have nothing further to say beyond congratulating the Minister on the steps taken by his officers to combat the various diseases that are prevalent, and to reiterate the hope that the time is not far distant when proper accommodation will be provided for the officers of the Department of Agriculture.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford-Midland) [8.6]: One who is interested in agriculture could listen with appreciation to the speech made by the Minister in introducing his Estimates. It is quite true, as the Minister indicated, that, generally speaking, the department is officered by men who are enthusiastic in the work they undertake. I trust the Minister will see that they do not become too routine in their operations. The Minister devoted much time to outlining the activities of departmental officers. They have become largely routine; they are doing valuable and necessary work. It is true that, without the opportunity to avail ourselves of the advantage of the State experimental farms in replenishing our exhausted seed wheat, oats and other cereals, it would be difficult for our wheat-growers and agriculturists generally to progress without diminishing their yields to a large extent. I have been farming for a good while and I know that one has to keep his yield up, otherwise one will not farm for long. The only way the yield can be kept up is by means of careful cultivation and seeing that one has proper stud seed, or replenishing supplies with improved stud wheat from the State farms. While we recognise the splendid work that is being done, we must appreciate the fact that agricultural development throughout the world has been revolutionised during the past few years. I am inclined to believe that Western Aus-

tralia has lagged woefully behind in the competition for the world markets. I shall not weary members by dealing with a question I have frequently discussed in this Chamber, but I am sorry that a Marketing Bill is not to be introduced this session. I have devoted much time to the problem of marketing and I am associated with an organisation that does a lot of work in that direction. Year by year we have experienced great difficulty because we find, with our ramifications and the extent of our capital, that the limitations regarding competition make it difficult to market our commodities and to feed the market so as to get results that would be possible if the producers were able to organise here as they can in other parts of the world. Throughout the world, countries that are big producers of what the world needs in the form of foodstuffs, have developed organisations on a State basis. The Governments concerned take an active part in the marketing of the commodities, subsidise the producers and interfere with the marketing of other nations that buy their commodities. We have had the sad experience of Western Australia, and Australia generally, losing the possibility of marketing large quantities of wheat in the Far East as we were able to do in former years. Western Australia profited by operations in those markets and was able to get rid of a lot of our surplus wheat. Unfortunately, America has stepped in, not through individual growers or through a special organisation, but as a nation itself. Under the American recovery plan, the Government have taken a hand in the marketing of American wheat, with the result that the Government have arranged to render financial assistance to China. As a result of the negotiations with the Chinese Government, if there be any such body in China, or, at any rate, with an organisation in China, America arranged for the financial assistance not in the form of money, but in an equivalent supply of wheat to meet Chinese requirements. The only way Australia can continue to compete in the Chinese market is to proceed along similar lines. It is impossible for any one organisation to do that or for any one State. It is a matter for national operations and to accomplish that, an entirely different organisation is required from those that exist to-day. From that standpoint, I am

disappointed that more has not been done to help the producers. We all recognise what is being done by the various experts in the aid of industry. We appreciate the fact that they have relieved producers of a certain amount of anxiety and have prevented the extension of difficulties. But the problems of production can always be overcome by a combination of producers. Experts can assist them in their difficulties, but the fact remains that much can be done by local co-operation and exchange of opinion. I will not discount what the expert officers of the Department of Agriculture are doing in that direction, but that is not the problem of to-day. The problem now is to get rid of what we are producing. It is not a matter of increasing our production, but of marketing what we are now producing. That can be done only by Western Australia getting into line with other nations of the world and organising the marketing of her products on a State basis. By that means, one farmer will not compete with another farmer in exploiting the markets available. Instead of one farmer competing against another, we will have a multitude of producers getting together and, by mutual arrangement, seeing to it that they feed the markets available on a supply basis rather than on a competitive basis as we are doing to-day. I hope the Government will take up the matter seriously. I know they proposed to do so this session, but it has been impossible in the time available to introduce a measure. I hope a measure will be introduced and that it will take into consideration the successes and failures of other places. I hope we shall profit by their experience and that we shall get a measure that will help the producer to help himself in the marketing of his product, just as we help him to-day in producing his commodity. The Minister very proudly and rightly pointed to the wonderful expansion of the dairying industry and mentioned the fact that we must become larger exporters of butter. It will be some time before we shall be in a position to export other commodities being produced as a result of dairying activities, but the exportation of butter must be a regular thing. Regarding that, there are difficulties which the Minister could assist to overcome. I favour herd testing; it plays an important part in dairying, but the breeding of herds has been improved. Every dairyman recognises that he must have the

highest grade of cow and the prolific milker on a quality basis. His trouble is to ensure that his product is sold on a basis to give him the maximum return. To secure the best return, quality is essential. There is a great difficulty in maintaining a standard of high quality butter due to the fact that the Dairying Act is not policed to the extent that the industry warrants. The Act is quite effective, and, if only we had more inspectors, a more uniform quality of butter would be produced. The public gain an idea that locally produced butter is not of a consistently high standard because now and again inferior butter reaches the market. This is due to the fact that some of the factories can take a risk because of the limited number of inspectors, and they get away with a certain quantity of inferior butter.

Mr. Ferguson: Could not the factories themselves overcome that?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The competition amongst factories makes it difficult to cope with the problem on a factory basis. I think the present Minister and the ex-Minister will agree that the co-operative factories have maintained a standard of 16 per cent. moisture content. That standard should be observed generally, but butter reaches the market containing considerably more moisture than that.

Mr. Latham: From the factories?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes, now and again. The explanation is that there is more profit in selling water than in selling butter fat. When a factory gets away with that sort of thing, it is able to pay the dairy farmer a little more than his cream is actually worth. That sort of thing could be regulated under the Dairying Act if the inspections were made more rigid, and if Mr. Baron Hay devoted more of his time to that phase and less time to other activities of dairying. As with other commodities, so with this commodity—we need to do less of that which the farmer can do himself and more of that which the farmer cannot do. That is where the officers of the department have got a little out of hand. They do not appreciate that that which was essential years ago is not so necessary now. Owing to the world's condition with regard to the marketing of that which we produce in abundance, the officials should devote more attention to the placing of the commodity than to its production. I wish to give the Minister a little encourage-

ment. I was gratified to hear his reference to the necessity for doing something to relieve the position of the cattle growers in the Kimberleys. Their position is most alarming. The member for Gascoyne (Mr. Wise) has referred to the ravages of the blowfly, and there is no doubt that sheep raisers in the Gascoyne and further north are having a most anxious time owing to the ravages of the pest. I recently had a trip along the coast, and met a pastoralist who told me he could not do anything on his run to protect his flock; the whole of his time and that of his staff was occupied in looking after the high-class rams depastured in the paddocks close to the homestead. He stated that, even with constant attention, it was impossible completely to protect the rams against the blowflies.

Mr. Ferguson: Where was that?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: In the Gascoyne district. He gave an illustration. A blowfly was seen hovering around a ram—a clear indication that there was some deposit in the ram and that it was suffering. They caught the ram and it took a considerable time to locate where the maggots were deposited. Ultimately, in one of the crevices in the neck, a small hole was discovered, and on exploring it they found that the maggots had got to the root of the tongue and were active there. That indicates the great difficulties confronting the pastoralists. It is difficult enough to locate the pest even when the sheep is kept under observation, but what must be happening on the runs where active protective measures cannot be taken? I know something of the difficulties in a huge territory of that kind, and I think the Minister should take serious notice of the conditions in the Gascoyne—the trouble is extending further north—and see whether some of the experts could not go there and lend a hand to combat the pest. Amongst the cattlemen of the Kimberleys, pleuro is the problem of the moment. The member for Irwin-Moore (Mr. Ferguson) has mentioned what is being done by way of experiment to relieve the anxieties of the people in charge of Anna Plains station. That is purely a measure for the relief of Anna Plains. It may or may not enable that station to market its cattle. The great problem, as the Minister pointed out, is to relieve the difficulties in all the Kimberleys regarding marketing, not so much the marketing of the fats that are brought to the metropolitan area, because they can be marketed under existing regula-

tions, but to get rid of the stores. As the member for Irwin-Moore pointed out, the store cattle for many years were depastured under regulation in quarantined areas or in areas recognised as being available for such cattle. While those areas still exist and are recognised as being available for the purpose, the regulation demands that the cattle being transported to those areas must not touch the ground. That makes it utterly impossible to take advantage of the areas, and I am told the Dandaragan people and the New Zealand Land Co. are quite anxious to take store cattle as they did previously. They are cattle people who for years have operated by buying stores during the Kimberley period and fattening them for the lean period that we suffer in this State.

Mr. Ferguson: The hon. member is wrong in saying that applies to the Dandaragan people. It applies to the New Zealand Land Company only.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I have not been there.

Mr. Ferguson: I have.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I have been told that there are no very grave objections to the cattle being transported there, and that the Minister could so arrange matters as to enable Kimberley growers to get rid of their store cattle.

Mr. Latham: The department wanted a double fence erected.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Departmental experts have always been the same, and I can quite appreciate their attitude. I also appreciate the difficulties confronting the Minister. I have been up against experts and it is hard for a Minister to differ from alleged experts. If he does, they immediately say there is a grave danger of the disease spreading and causing infection generally, and they tell the Minister definitely that they will not accept the responsibility.

Mr. Doney: Do not you think that danger exists?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am not prepared to agree that the danger is anything like so great as the experts assert.

Mr. Doney: But nevertheless it is great.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I believe we could define certain areas and that it would be perfectly safe to transport store cattle from the Kimberleys to those areas. I know there would be a danger of infection if such cattle were sent to the congested areas of the South-West, but I am assured by experts

that danger exists only where infected cattle meet and come into contact with others.

Mr. Ferguson interjected.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is not a grave objection. Pleuro has existed there before to-day. It was found in one beast in Kondinin, but that beast did not come from the Kimberleys. It developed the disease at Kondinin. That case was magnified to try to justify what I claim are unfair regulations. Though experts point to that case as an illustration of the danger, the fact remains that the beast did not come from the Kimberleys but simply developed the complaint there. Apparently a case of the kind would be liable to arise in any part of the State. We must recognise that unless we do something to relax the regulations and are very sure of our ground, we shall put the Kimberleys out of action.

Mr. Marshall: Absolutely.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I want the member for Irwin-Moore to appreciate that we can carry such regulations too far. It is very hard for a Minister to turn down his expert officers. I was closely connected with the rinderpest outbreak. There is not the slightest question that the action of the experts was outrageous. The whole thing was magnified; producers were ruined, and had not we challenged the alleged experts, demanded compensation and made it abundantly clear that the cattle would not be destroyed at the dictates of men who had not thoroughly studied the question, goodness knows what the cost to the country would have been. The experts were steadied by a Minister who recognised that he had the backing of the public, and who was satisfied that no grave danger would be incurred by turning down the experts and exercising a little common sense. Many cattle were destroyed that should never have been destroyed, and so a lot of wealth was wasted that should never have been wasted, all because an expert took the course of least resistance and said "Quarantine and destroy the whole lot." If we had destroyed the whole lot, there would not have been much evidence against that officer; but we did not destroy all, and it was proved that the whole thing was a gross exaggeration of an outbreak of alleged rinderpest. I know the Minister will not rush into the suggestion I have made, because he is not built that way, but I believe

he will go into the question of trying to provide the Kimberleys with an outlet for their store stock. I am sure it can be so arranged as to relieve the Kimberleys to a great extent. From my study of the question, and from what has been presented to me as expert opinion from other parts of Australia, I am satisfied that we shall not be taking undue risk in seeing that the people in the Far North get an outlet for their cattle. Previously, pleuro appeared but it was coped with, and I am satisfied that in the event of a recurrence it can again be coped with.

Mr. Ferguson: That was not the opinion of the Royal Commissioner.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The hon. member was very fortunate in his selection of a Royal Commissioner.

Mr. Ferguson: I did not select him.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Whoever did select him was fortunate. The Commissioner had previously expressed his opinions in accordance with his findings. Those opinions were expressed before he investigated the question. Then, being supported by the departmental officers, he took the line of least resistance and submitted a report which I consider should not by any means be accepted as the last word on this important question. The matter is so serious that I urge the Minister to go closely into it, and not be led away by decisions of the expert officers. The Minister could take business risks and study the stockmen's opinions in regard to pleuro extending. Another matter I would like the Minister to look into is in regard to the sale of products from the State farms. For some reason or other the Agricultural Department constantly give all their support to private firms, and none at all to the co-operative organisations which belong to the producer. It is purely the farmers who own the marketing organisations, and it is quite a reasonable proposition that those organisations should receive some support from the department. The profits, whenever they occur, go to no one but the farmers, and it is reasonable to suggest that in the marketing of wool from the State farms, where State sheep are kept and where shearing takes place, some of the business should go to the co-operative concerns. The Minister would not say that private firms give better service than do Westralian Farmers Ltd.

Mr. Ferguson: And Westralian Farmers' shareholders are all Western Australian people.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Exactly. Now that the question has been raised, I trust the Minister will see that some of the business goes to the co-operative organisation.

Mr. Doney: What is the reason for the preference to the private firms?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I do not know that the question has ever been raised. I assure members that in this matter I have not been prompted by Westralian Farmers. I am aware that the department's wool last year was sold by Elder Smith's or Dalgety's, and all I am suggesting now is that, in the interests of the co-operative movement, which is worth supporting, that movement should receive a share of the department's patronage. There is still one other matter on which I can briefly touch. I do not like singling out special men for eulogy, but I should like to refer to the good work that has been done by the sheep and wool inspector, an officer who deserves commendation. A wonderful improvement has taken place in farmers' sheep and the clips. The advice that is given, particularly about the sheep that should be kept by the average farmer, sheep that can be adapted to the farmer's purse, has proved of great value. To-day we have mixed farming being carried on to an extent greater than ever before, and the encouragement that has been given to settlers in this direction has made them very keen. The visits of the experts to the sheep yards and their work of demonstrating in the presence of the farmers has been greatly appreciated. In this way the farmer has obtained practical knowledge. In my own place there has been a great improvement in the flock, principally because now and again the department's experts demonstrate to those in charge exactly what must be done in the way of culling sheep, with the idea of building up a flock of higher standard, and so improving the clip. This is the kind of work that I trust the Minister will encourage. I hope also that the Minister will realise the need there is of helping the producer to find a market for his product, so that he may successfully compete with other parts of the world.

MR. McLARTY (Murray-Wellington) [8.42]: There is no doubt that the Department of Agriculture has become more important every year. Its activities from the country man's point of view are full of interest. Last evening the Minister gave us an interesting resume of the work performed by the department during the past year, and he also referred to the position of our principal industry. He was able to express his pleasure at the success that has been attending the wool sales, and I am sure we all join him there. I am hoping that those who are engaged in the production of coarser wool, those engaged in mixed farming, will also within the next few months receive the benefit of the increased price of wool. It is regretted the Minister was unable to express his pleasure in other directions. He referred to the dairying industry. The growth of this industry is no indication that those engaged in it are becoming prosperous, or are enjoying prosperity. Butter fat has fallen to 10d. a lb., or 2½d. lower than it was 12 months ago. As a result, growers are finding it exceedingly difficult to carry on, particularly those growers who have an interest bill to meet, as most of them have to-day. However, there is this one bright spot in connection with dairying, that there has been an exceptionally good season, and as a result the dairymen will be able to conserve fodder to see them through the lean period of the year. I am convinced that very few dairymen to-day can make their business pay with butter fat at 10d. a lb. The Minister states, and I agree with him, that the dairymen must improve their methods, particularly in regard to their herds and pastures. When we come to deal with the position of the pastures, I feel that the Minister's remarks concerning Mr. Burges were, to say the least of it, alarming. I think Mr. Burges is admitted to be one of the best farmers in this State, and when he declares that his wool production has decreased 50 per cent. owing to the ravages of vermin, we cannot fail to recognise that the position is serious indeed. There is no doubt about it that the farming community will be looking more and more to the Department of Agriculture to help them to combat these pests. I do not wish to be pessimistic, but in my own district these pests, both animal and insect, are increasing. Not long ago one never heard of a fox, but now it is a common thing to hear frequently of some-

one or another coming in with a fox. Also we are still troubled with the red mite and the lucerne flea. I was glad to hear the Minister say that every effort was being made to combat those pests, but they are still very active in my district. Then there is the green bug, or Rutherglen bug, which is creating tremendous damage. Not only does it attack vegetables, but it is attacking fruit as well. A little while ago I saw them in an apricot tree loaded with fruit, which they rendered entirely valueless. I hope money will be made available to the department to carry on its research work. I do not think there is any better way of spending money, and I agreed with the member for Irwin-Moore (Mr. Ferguson) when he expressed the hope that the department would soon have better office accommodation, with rooms for laboratory work. I wish to deal briefly with herd-testing. If we are to improve our herds, herd-testing is essential. The position to-day is that officially only three breeds of stud herds are tested, namely, the Australian Illawarra shorthorn, the Jersey and the Guernsey. I do not know why that should be, why we cannot get an official test for any herd except the three I have mentioned. Men have put a tremendous lot of money into other herds, the Ayrshire, and the Freesian. Quite a number of men are breeding stud Freesian, and a few are going in for the red polled breed. It is not possible for those men to get an official herd test. As a result, if a man wishes to go in for one of those breeds and requires a stud animal, he has to send to the Eastern States: because it is essential if you are going in or stud-breeding that you should be able to provide a pedigree and a record of butter at production. I hope the Minister will extend the herd-testing to those other breeds. The men concerned are prepared to pay for it, and without it they are suffering in injustice. We have in this State a breeder of Ayrshires who has exported cattle, sent them right out of Australia. Unless a man like that, who shows such enterprise, is given opportunity to have his stud cattle tested, it is unlikely that he will be able to compete with Eastern States breeders and keep up his export. The Royal Agricultural Society has been most active in this matter. They claim that any breeders who wish to breed good stud stock and prove that their cattle are useful, should be given an opportunity. At all events I hope the Min-

ister in his reply will tell us that the department will agree to this procedure in future. Now I come to the zone system. The time has arrived when we could wipe it out with advantage. I do not say the system has not served a useful purpose, but I believe it has outlived its usefulness. If one goes into the shorthorn zone and attends any of the numerous sales held there, he will see just as many Jerseys as shorthorns, probably more. The reason is that many of the dairymen are on small holdings, which the Jersey cattle suit. Generally speaking, they are the heavier butter fat producers, and so it is only natural that dairymen should wish to go in for them. Again, it is desirable that any breeder should be permitted to go in for the breed he likes best. I am not saying the department has ever forced a man to go in for a certain breed, but he cannot obtain from the department help in purchasing a stud bull unless he purchases a bull of the breed specified for that zone. I hope the Minister will see that it would be wise to help any breeder at all to procure a stud animal, no matter which zone he may be in. I should like to ask the Minister if it be the intention of the department to start an irrigation experimental farm in the irrigation areas. An announcement was made some time ago by Mr. Munt, chairman of the Irrigation Commission, that certain lands had been secured in the irrigation areas for the purpose of starting such a farm; but that is a considerable time ago, and we have not heard of it since. In order to prevent loss and to assist farmers. I think it would pay the Government many times over to establish that farm as soon as possible. We have some 60,000 acres of new country coming under irrigation, and many of the farmers in those areas have not had any experience of irrigation. If there were in their midst a farm to which they could go and see the experiments on pastures, and how the water is put on, rotational grading, etc., it would be a tremendous help to them. I read in "The West Australian" a few days ago that a recommendation had been made to the Minister for Agriculture to establish a dairying school at Muresk College. I hope that if a dairy school is to be established—and I think one should be established—it will not be at Muresk. I quite understand that Muresk is an agricultural college, but I do not think it will ever be a great dairying

district. Again, I contend that the tremendous sum which has been spent in the irrigation districts has been spent with the main idea of encouraging dairymen and establishing a great dairying district.

Mr. Thorn: There is every facility for the school at Muresk.

Mr. McLARTY: Yes, they have every facility, but they will not have hundreds of families of dairy farmers closely settled with all their sons around them. It is that aspect which I put forward to the Minister: If a dairy school is to be started in Western Australia, surely it should be in the dairying district. If it were situated in the irrigation areas, we would have hundreds of dairy farmers closely settled with their sons around them. If the school were to be established at Muresk, it would be a great distance away from the dairying district, and only those farmers who could afford it would be able to send their sons to Muresk. For this experimental farm in the irrigation areas, I understand the Government have had some offers to make land available. I do not know whether those offers are such as the Government would be justified in accepting, but I do hope the farm will be established in the near future, for it would be in the interests of the settlers and of the Government as well. I will not say very much about the position of butter factories, for I have said it all on previous occasions, but I hope the Minister will enforce the Dairy Act up to its hilt, and will prevent butter factories from buying cream, classing and grading it as first-grade, and then turning out a second class butter. It is the duty of every butter factory in the State to take its fair share of export, and produce only the best butter. Certainly at a time like this we require to give the dairymen every penny we possibly can, and it does seem remarkable that despite the fact we have butter factories throughout the South-West, we find trucks going right into the far South-West and carting cream to the metropolitan area, there to be manufactured into butter. This means added expense which the producer has to pay, and the Minister will be justified in ascertaining why this is so. The Minister briefly mentioned that we were manufacturing cheese. I hope he will take an early opportunity to inspect that factory. It is working full capacity at present, two shifts per day. It is getting 1,600 gallons of milk, and there

is an excellent demand for every pound of cheese it can turn out. The success of the factory is assured. In conclusion, I hope veterinary officer will soon be stationed in the South-West again. We have Mr. L Souef at the Margaret, but I think we require another officer in the Bunbury area for it is impossible for Mr. Le Souef to deal with the whole of the South-West.

MR. COVERLEY (Kimberley) [8.58] Like previous speakers, I agree that the Agricultural Department is one of the most important in the State. My object in rising tonight is to say a word of encouragement to the Minister in respect of his efforts to relieve the position of the cattle grower in Kimberley. The Minister in the course of his remarks said the scientific staff of the Stock Department had investigated a certain procedure which the department hoped would relieve the position. I am surprised that the department are so slow in acting. These investigations have been going on for some time. The only staple industry or which the Kimberleys depend, is retrogressing rapidly. I doubt whether members realise the hardships the pleuro restrictions impose upon the cattle growers, particularly in the West Kimberleys. They do not want their cattle to be allowed to go all over the southern portions of the State with consequent risk to the cattle herds there, but they do think they are entitled to some consideration. Members who understand the predicaments that beset these people will agree that some relief should be given to the industry. The Government are losing revenue in many directions through the absence of sales of store stock. This means a lot to the cattle growers, for it retards their progress and hampers their business. These restrictions have reduced the shipments of cattle from about 18,000 to 11,000 head a year. That represents a substantial loss to the Harbour and Lights Department in wharfage dues, etc. It also means a big loss of business to the State Steamship Service. A good deal of unemployment is being caused in the cattle-growing districts. Stockmen are being thrown out of work because their services are not required, and station owners are prohibited from moving cattle from one place to another. There are periods of the year when the metropolitan area depends upon Kimberley beef. If the

restrictions are not modified so that store stock can be brought down, the Government will be forced to import frozen or chilled meat from the other States.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: We are doing that to-day.

Mr. COVERLEY: There is always a certain amount of frozen or chilled beef imported from the other States.

Mr. Ferguson: And yet the price of beef is still low.

Mr. COVERLEY: That is caused by other influences. I do not say that the restrictions are wholly responsible for that. The wages of the working classes have been reduced, and they cannot buy as much meat as they did two or three years ago. The price of wool has encouraged my spring-union friends to keep sheep that prior to the rise they were glad enough to sell. If these restrictions are not modified, the price of beef must rise in the near future, because the increase in the price of wool will keep lambs and sheep off the market. Pastoralists have no desire to place the herds of the dairymen in any danger, but surely there is enough land available outside the cattle areas, say on the goldfields, where a prescribed locality could be set aside on which to agist store cattle from the North. It is within the power of the Minister to have that done in the interests of all concerned. Unless the cattle growers are given some relief, they might as well allow the West Kimberleys to revert to the blacks. The Government should not allow that part of the State to be treated in such a cavalier manner. The department have been considering things for too long. During the period when they have hampered the industry no serious outbreak of pleuro has occurred. It seems that the position is not as serious as the officials have made out. The Minister should have statistics from the abattoirs and other places to prove the number of stock which have died on the way from the Kimberleys to Fremantle, and he should know that the situation is not as serious as he has been led to believe. The member for Irwin-Moore said that the people in the Dandarragan area were not prepared to buy store stock from Kimberley. We are not confined to one area or one particular grazier. Other parts of the State would cater for these cattle, and could do so without fear of spreading pleuro there.

Mr. Patrick: They can take them at Mingenew.

Mr. COVERLEY: The New Zealand Land Coy. would be only too glad to get them. It is their business to buy store stock and fatten them up for the market. Store cattle are inspected by the officials at Derby, and are inspected again at Fremantle. They could also be kept under supervision in the agistment area. If there was an outbreak of pleuro, it would soon be discovered.

Mr. Ferguson: The store stock would come overland.

Mr. COVERLEY: They would come to Fremantle by boat. I ask the Minister to consider that aspect of the matter. Up to three years ago between 5,000 and 10,000 head of stock were shipped from West Kimberley to Fremantle, sent into country districts, and fattened up for the market. I do not say these cattle should be sold in such a manner that they will spread all over the State. They should be sent to a prescribed area, no matter where it is, so long as it is in contact with the railway. It is said that things would be all right so long as the beasts did not set their feet to the ground.

Mr. Marshall: Is it expected that they shall walk on their heads?

Mr. COVERLEY: It may be expected they should go by aeroplane or that the bullocks should be taught to fly. I venture the opinion that as pleuro is a lung disease, it will inevitably show itself after a beast has been stirred up. Most of the cattle that are shipped have to travel 200 miles on the hoof before they reach Derby. They are then rendered nervous and are frightened by the electric light and the sight of so many people walking about. The fact that they do not show up as affected by pleuro suggests that the position is not as bad as it is made out to be.

Mr. Ferguson: It may not show up for six or 12 months.

Mr. Withers: Some cattle are carriers.

Mr. COVERLEY: We are crippling the cattle industry in the West Kimberleys for the sake of the group settlements, where so many millions have been spent. Most of the cattle the Government bought for the groups came from quarantine areas in the Eastern States. The officials say they came from certain prescribed areas upon which there has never been an outbreak of pleuro.

Mr. Latham: A Government certificate was given for their removal.

Mr. COVERLEY: If a man was in a known pleuro area on which there had not been an outbreak for some time, and he sold his heifers to a neighbour who was in a clean area, and they were then passed on to other purchasers—

Mr. Latham: They could not be shifted from those areas.

Mr. COVERLEY: They could be shifted on a certificate from the Stock Department.

Mr. Latham: There are local inspectors.

Mr. COVERLEY: Like ourselves, they are not over-burdened with inspectors.

Mr. Ferguson: There are hundreds of them.

Mr. COVERLEY: One reason why the ex-Minister for Agriculture did not want to break down these conditions was that he would have had to pay the salary of experts. That would have been as nothing compared with the assistance that would have been given to the cattle industry. I hope the Minister will not delay in this matter otherwise the Kimberley people will have to go out of business. They have asked for very little assistance at the hands of the Government. They have never been given wages, such as the group settlers are asking for. I have listened to the grievances of group settlers who have talked about their wages, and it has amused me. Individualism appears to be conspicuous by its absence on the groups. If the cattle industry is hampered much longer, I am afraid we shall lose all individualism amongst the growers in the North.

MR. LATHAM (York) [9.13]: The Minister will have some trouble in sifting out the advice which has been tendered to him this evening. I hope he will not carry out the requests which have been made for the appointment of more inspectors. If he does, the Treasurer will have to find a great deal more money for the department. We have too many inspectors already. People ought to rely more upon their own efforts. The industries cannot afford the payment of the salaries of all these inspectors. I am not in favour of what the member for Swan advocated. He thinks the people ought to be prosecuted. The department's job is not to prosecute the people; it is to help them. As I said before, I think we have too many inspectors.

Mr. Lambert: If any people in the Swan district were prosecuted, the member for

Swan would be going, cap in hand, to the Minister to have the prosecutions withdrawn.

Mr. LATHAM: I agree with the member for Kimberley. It was very callous of the departmental officers to draw an imaginary line across the southern part of the Kimberleys and to declare that no stock should go over it. The department is responsible for finding out what can be done to relieve the situation. It must become the department's responsibility to assist in finding markets, otherwise the whole of the western portion of the Kimberleys will become depopulated, especially if that policy is insisted upon by the department.

Mr. Ferguson: It is not the function of the Agricultural Department to find markets.

Mr. LATHAM: No, nor is it their function to draw a line and say, "No stock shall cross this line." The department ought to advise and assist, not harass. That is where I disagree with my friend on my left.

Mr. Ferguson: You are wrong.

Mr. LATHAM: Of course I am, because I disagree, but that is the only reason. The member for Kimberley is right. Do members think Queensland would make progress under such conditions? Would the northern part of New South Wales, which is the most important part of that State, and probably of Australia, be able to carry on under such conditions? Of course not. Our stock inspectors should advise and assist our settlers, not simply draw a line and say, "Thank goodness, I have accomplished something." All they have succeeded in doing is to drive people off the land. The people who have been settled on those lands for years find their present position disheartening. It is indeed sad to see the position they are in. I believe that we can attribute the loss of one of our pioneers there to the fact that he found his case was hopeless. There was no future at all for him, so he ended his life. Anything we people of the south can do to assist those people should be done. If Dr. Turner is provided with means to test these cattle, so much the better.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: But that will only help one station.

Mr. LATHAM: No; it ought to help them all. They cannot fatten their cattle on the west coast; they have to depend upon fattening areas. Those fattening areas can be found in the northern parts of our agricul-

tural areas. I am not setting myself up as an expert, but I know this, and the House ought to know it, that there was an imaginary disease here called swine plague.

Member: No, swine fever.

Mr. LATHAM: No, swine plague. The department quarantined all the Great Southern, but immediately the scare was over the whole thing ended. In my opinion, the disease was simply brought about by the fact that the pigs were allowed to remain in wet sties. I do not know whether the position with respect to pleuro-pneumonia is changing. When I was living in New South Wales, thousands of head of cattle came from Queensland and passed through on their way to the Melbourne market. They went through our dairy herds. Cattle were left behind dying of pleuro-pneumonia, but I never knew any of our dairy cattle to develop the disease. That disease, however, has suddenly become a very contagious disease.

Mr. Marshall: How did the people get on in the dairying districts of the Eastern States?

Mr. LATHAM: When I last went to New South Wales I found the State divided into districts. In the southern part of the State I believe there was some outbreak of infectious disease amongst stock, but the whole of the dairying industry was not closed down on that account. It is time our departmental officers ceased playing with the business and set to work to see what they can do to relieve the position. We sold the people this land, so that they might get a living from it. If State inspectors discover that cattle are suffering from pleuro-pneumonia, they should recognise that the owners did not wilfully infect the cattle. The inspector should say, "Your cattle have that disease and it becomes a State responsibility to help you to eradicate it somehow." That is sound advice. I do hope that the Kimberleys will receive more consideration from departmental officers. The officers ought to go there and see for themselves what the position is, and whether justice is being done to the people of the North.

MR. PATRICK (Greenough) [9.22]: I join with other members in congratulating the Minister on the excellent work done by his department. I am also pleased that he, like his predecessors, recognises the

necessity for maintaining and even increasing the expenditure upon research work. As the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) has pointed out, there is no doubt that the farmer is constantly at war with nature. To some extent this is due to artificial conditions, such as the improvement of stock. When we consider that Australia over a period of years has trebled the wool on the sheep's back, we must realise that that animal is no longer normal and therefore is more liable to attacks from pests than it would be in its natural state. There are other pests which affect pastures, such as the red mite, which is getting a hold on our northern pastures. It has only appeared there during the last year or two. I notice this year in my own pastures quite a number of bare patches. Another pest has become, as the member for Pingelly (Mr. Seward) has pointed out, a national question. It has got beyond the farmer. I refer to the rabbit pest. The State cannot afford to allow its land to be entirely ruined by rabbits. There are light lands at the northern end of the Midland country which, although fenced and partially improved, have been abandoned to the rabbits.

Mr. Cross: Are they inside the fence now?

Mr. PATRICK: They are on this side of Geraldton. I am speaking of the light land, or sand plain country, which has now been practically abandoned because the rabbits have eaten it out. The only method to cope with the rabbit pest is to net the properties. There is no better way in which the Government could spend money than by utilising the services of unemployed men in netting these farming properties. It has been said the State farms have been criticised because they have been producing bulk crops of wheat, but the only criticism I have heard was that the State farms are not producing enough wheat. For instance, last year they produced only 8,000 bags of seed wheat, while 27,000 bags were applied for. That shows the farmer appreciates the work the State farms are doing and is prepared to take seed wheat in increasing quantities from those farms. It is a pity that a larger area cannot be put under cultivation in order to meet the demand. As a farmer, I have often been asked what I considered to be the best system of farming. The best

system is that which produces the best results.

Mr. Latham: To the farmer concerned.

Mr. PATRICK: Yes. I have been farming for a great many years and must confess that I am still learning something new every day. Had I known as much ten years ago as I know to-day in regard to the working of my own property, I would probably have been much better off. I have the advantage not only of a theoretical knowledge of farming, but of a practical knowledge also. The Agricultural Department, of course, can only lay down what I call broad principles. The farmer has to adapt those principles to meet his own conditions. It may be necessary to employ different methods even in the same district and even on the same property. For instance, we can say as a general rule that fallowing is the proper system in this State for wheat growing, yet there are parts of my district where year after year ploughed land on particular farms has beaten the fallowed land. Naturally, those farmers maintain that fallowing is no good. However, that is not proof that fallowing is no good, but simply that fallowing is not suitable on that particular farm. We in the country hear a lot about experts. I had a proposition put up to me once in my own district in regard to the experts of the Agricultural Department. The Minister may appreciate it—I do not know whether he will or not—but this gentleman considered that the experts of the Agricultural Department should be appointed for only five years and then should be placed on land reserved for them in various parts of the State, so that the farmers would have an opportunity of observing how farming should be carried on. In a way, that is probably an excellent suggestion.

Mr. Lambert: Instead of giving them a pension.

Mr. PATRICK: Yes. In certain branches of science there must be continuity of work to get the best results. There are experts and experts. I remember once visiting a certain district with Ministers; I can tell the story because it does not concern my own electorate. We interviewed the settlers there. They were engaged in a branch of farming. Perhaps it could not be called farming, but at all events a branch of agriculture. One of the settlers stood up and laid down the law on

every branch of the industry. I turned to a man standing alongside me and said, "That man seems a pretty good spruiker. I suppose he knows a lot about the industry." The man replied, "He is the biggest dud on the settlement. He has been a failure ever since he has been here. See those two men there, who have not opened their mouths! They are the two most successful men in the district." In that instance the successful men were not articulate, but the man who was unsuccessful laid down the law on everything connected with the industry. I do not like to be unkind, but I sometimes think that that might apply on occasions to this House. It is a very true saying that we find in an old book, wisdom is often to be found in quiet places. The Minister for Lands referred the other night, and rightly so, to the necessity for diversified practice on our farms. We hear a lot about other countries becoming self-contained; but there is no place more self-contained than a farm. I know that in my young days we produced practically everything we consumed on the farm. We cured our own hams and bacon and made our own jams and preserves. To a large extent I have followed that practice here. In fact, it has been said that a farmer can produce everything he needs except tea and sugar, and that if he were put to it, perhaps he could find a substitute for those commodities. For instance, honey is an excellent substitute for sugar, and in the old days men drank home-brewed ale.

Mr. Lambert: There is nothing wrong with that.

Mr. PATRICK: It might be a beverage superior to tea. We have heard a great deal about the South-West and I believe that if we had spent in the Midland area and the country north of Geraldton a fraction of the money lavished in the South-West, the State would to-day be producing three times its present output of butter, and at a much greater profit. Farming is not a matter of saying that this or that is the more suitable district; it is a question of the district that can produce the more profitably. In the districts I have mentioned in the North we can produce butter much more profitably than is possible in the South-West. The land can be cleared for a fraction of the cost and, with pastures, can carry a tremendous number of stock. I shall quote one instance in support of my

contention. A man in my district has 160 acres of land and, on the natural pastures, is able to carry 45 head of cattle. He is making a good living out of dairying. His land originally cost 20s. an acre to clear, so that he has no tremendous capital expenditure to weigh him down. I do not know what the land will carry in the South-West, but if I may judge from the doleful tales we have heard regarding group settlers, it will not carry anything like the land in the North.

The Minister for Agriculture: The man you refer to would make a good living in the South-West.

Mr. PATRICK: I do not know that he could.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: At any rate, he has a better market than he would have in the South-West.

Mr. PATRICK: We have to go in for different methods of farming. While much has been said about the work carried out by the experts of the Department of Agriculture—and I agree they have done excellent work—we must also pay a tribute to the work to the credit of many practical farmers in Western Australia. Let us consider the position regarding the lupin. When I started farming, the lupin was regarded as a noxious weed. I do not know what the views of the officials of the Agricultural Department were at that time, but I know that farmers were pulling up the lupins whereas now they are planting them. It was a practical farmer in that district who discovered the nutritive value of the plant and it is pleasing to know the Department of Agriculture is carrying on the good work. It was a practical farmer who discovered the value of top-dressing in areas with a lower rainfall. I know that policy was advocated in the South-West, but its adoption in the Geraldton district made a tremendous difference. I know of one instance where a block has been top-dressed for many years and the farmer is now able to carry four head of cattle to ten acres throughout the year. In addition to the four head of cattle, he carries, from time to time, large flocks of rams. The pastures there have resulted from the application of 1 cwt. of super to the acre over a great many years. If that land were scratched over, it would give a crop of from 30 to 40 bushels of oats without any trouble.

That is on account of the high fertility of the soil owing to the continuous application of super over so long a period. Even with the application of the best system of farming, there are some men to whom the Department of Agriculture would be of no assistance. Instances could be cited in Western Australia but I shall quote an example from South Australia, which is a State that has dealt with agricultural education longer than any other section of the Commonwealth, and it possesses the oldest agricultural college in Australia. According to the Auditor General's report last year, the results obtained by one farmer were as follows:—1927, no return; 1928, no return; 1929, no return; 1930, an average of $2\frac{1}{2}$ bushels; 1931, two bushels; 1932, $1\frac{3}{4}$ bushels. That farmer had received assistance from the Government amounting to £3,000, and he owed roughly £3 4s. 6d. per acre. No Agricultural Department or any expert officer could assist a farmer of that description. I am afraid there are instances in this State tending to show that we have gone beyond the fringe of good wheat farming country and we shall have to resort to the amalgamation of some properties or to change over to stock.

Mr. Ferguson: But Western Australia has no averages to quote like those you have given.

Mr. PATRICK: That is probably a particularly bad instance. I will give what the South Australian Auditor General seems to regard as a rather better example. In that instance the farmer's averages were as follows:—1927, $\frac{1}{2}$ bushel; 1928, four bushels; 1929, two bushels; 1930, $12\frac{3}{4}$ bushels; 1931, seven bushels; 1932, $4\frac{1}{2}$ bushels. In that instance the farmer owed £5,695 to the Government, or slightly under £4 an acre. That would represent an impossible proposition and no Department of Agriculture nor any expert could assist him.

Mr. Hawke: Some of the years you quoted were not favourable for wheat production.

Mr. Lambert: Perhaps it was due to bad farming.

Mr. Hawke: Some of the years you quoted were drought years.

Mr. PATRICK: I have quoted the records for six years and some were good years.

Mr. Needham: Four of the years were the worst in the history of South Australia.

Mr. PATRICK: At any rate, those records were mentioned in the Auditor General's report. The point I want to make is that we have gone too far with wheat settlement in Western Australia, just as they did in South Australia, and it is asking too much of men to produce wheat crops in some of those areas, even with Government assistance. We shall have to go in for larger areas or possibly change over to stock. Of course, Western Australia shows up to great advantage over a period of years because we have enjoyed remarkably good rains. We have had, practically speaking, an unbroken series of good years since 1914. I would not like to see economy practised in connection with the Department of Agriculture. It would be false economy because no other department can secure a better return for its expenditure. In many directions, it is doing far more useful work than the University of Western Australia, which costs such a lot of money. Canada is an agricultural country and the universities there make agriculture their main feature. That is not the position in Western Australia. I think the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) complained that our University did not possess a Chair of Veterinary Science. I know the work of the experts of the Agricultural Department and regard them as a fine body of men. With others, I hope that the time is not far distant when they will be provided with much better accommodation than they enjoy at present.

MR. LAMBERT (Yilgarn-Coolgardie) [9.40]: I was pleased to hear the remarks regarding the necessity for making additional provision for experimental work in the Department of Agriculture. It lends force to my own remarks the other night, when dealing with another institution, which has cost a vast amount of money and which is housed in a very fine building. By way of comparison, we have heard the complaints made regarding the accommodation of our scientists connected with the Department of Agriculture, and the House has heard me say something about the usefulness of another institution, namely the Observatory. We have connected with the Department of Agriculture the plant nutrition and research officers, a veterinary surgeon, a botanist, a

plant pathologist, an economic entomologist, a viticulturist and so on, all performing useful research work, yet carrying out that work of infinite value to the State in semi-hovels at the Department of Agriculture. We have that beautiful building on the hill which could be utilised for that purpose. I hope the Minister will impress on the Treasurer the respective claims of those two departments. Even if we could utilise the Observatory building only for a few years for research work, a good deal would be achieved. We are all seized with the importance of research work in this State, it little matters whether it be work on the red mite or on the fruit fly or any other pest. All the work of the plant pathologist and the outfield man, Dr. Teakle, and the entomologist and the bacteriologist should be carried on in a suitable building. It is remarkable that we in this State can afford to overlap the Commonwealth and provide a Government Astronomer when the State has not been able to appoint an agricultural chemist. With the soil salinity so evident in many portions of the State, involving work that can be carried out only by the highest authorities on soil development, and particularly that connected with soil alkalinity, we are unable to provide the necessary money for an agricultural chemist. What hope is there before us when this Parliament so lacks the sense of proportion and comparison that we overlap a Federal department especially stated in the Constitution as one for the control of the Commonwealth; when we make provision year after year, as we have made for the past 30 years till the cost aggregates some £50,000, and with the millions we have spent in every direction, through the Agricultural Bank and on developmental railways and water supplies and so on, yet no Government have had sufficient sense of proportion to appoint an agricultural chemist, who could be of signal service to the State. It is a shameful disgrace, and it is to be hoped that not only the agriculturists outside, but the people who have a serious sense of the future of this country will realise what successive Parliaments during the past three decades have not done in this direction. Recently I had the pleasure of being in the company of the Minister of Agriculture and the Director of Agriculture. The Minister spoke of plant pathology and of the bacteriological studies connected with the Department of Agriculture, and the entomological work being carried out there; and

after I had listened to the Minister and to Mr. Sutton I was beginning to wonder who exactly was the Director of Agriculture and who was the Minister; for I was half convinced that if by some misdirection of Providence Mr. Millington should be at some future date relieved of his duties here, he possibly could get a job as Director of Agriculture in some other part of the world.

Mr. Latham: You mean to suggest, where he is not known.

Mr. LAMBERT: It is a tribute to the serious side of the activities of the Minister in control of this department. I was equally seized with the manner in which the Director of Agriculture approached all the problems connected with his department.

Mr. Hegney: What would you think of him in the Minister's job?

Mr. LAMBERT: That is another story. All in the department are doing good work. We have in my district an experimental farm on the outer fringe of the wheat areas. I can support the view expressed by the member for Greenough (Mr. Patrick) when he said we had developed during the last few years a wheat hysteria and a land hysteria. Unfortunately there has not been given to our land development policy a calculated and balanced judgment. But the depression has forced on us the necessity of viewing the possibilities of our land development policy and particularly the pushing eastwards of our wheat areas. I believe that in my area, embracing the eastern fringe of the wheat belt, we shall be able in normal conditions to produce wheat as economically as it is produced in any other part of the world. But we are always pushing our settlers farther out into the danger zone, and unless in those areas side by side with wheat growing there can be embraced some of the allied industries so as to make mixed farming possible, we must inevitably fail in bad seasons. I hope that the Premier, with his practical mind, will appreciate the relative merits of not being able to afford an agricultural chemist and of indulging in the luxury of a Government Astronomer. I hope that we shall be able to get the agricultural scientists away from the ramshackle buildings in which they are located. Fancy the entomologist and the plant pathologist trying to work in a bit of a hovel as big as a blotting pad, as one member described it, and expecting them to do their work efficiently under such conditions! Their work

is exacting and they have to keep records from year to year, and if by any mischance, such as fire, those records were destroyed, it would throw back their work a couple of decades.

The Minister for Agriculture: The loss could never be made good.

Mr. LAMBERT: Their work is continuous, like the writing of history. We should enable them to carry on their scientific work under the best conditions, and that can be done only by showing a sense of appreciation of its importance.

MR. CROSS (Canning) [9.52]: I wish to address the Chamber on this important department. For once I find myself in agreement with the Leader of the Opposition, when he emphatically stated that he was totally opposed to the appointment of additional inspectors. I venture the opinion that the fruitgrowers, not only of Canning but of Swan, do not entirely share the views of the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) when he advocated additional prosecutions under the fruit-fly regulations. The fact that prosecutions have not been instituted is evidence of the efficiency with which the inspectors of the department have carried out their difficult duties. After having had a discussion with one or two inspectors whom I met in the fruit-growing areas, I am satisfied that the savings that will be effected will be entirely due to the more effective methods of inspection adopted under the present administration. One important item in the Estimates is that relating to the rabbit-proof fence. I expected to hear from the spring onion section of the Chamber some information as to whether the rabbits inside the fence had increased much during the last couple of decades. East of Wagin and of Katanning 20 years ago there were more rabbits inside No. 2 fence than outside it. If that state of affairs has continued and the rabbits are still more numerous inside than outside the fence, the department might consider the advisableness of pulling up the fence.

Mr. Marshall: And letting the rabbits go back to South Australia.

Mr. CROSS: The maintenance of the fence is an expensive item involving a cost of over £10,000 a year. I do not know whether the wire has deteriorated too much to be of further use, but I know the opinion was held years ago that more good would

have resulted had the fence been pulled down and the wire given to settlers to enable them to fence their own properties.

Mr. Patrick: If the fence were pulled down, the wire would be of no value at all.

Mr. CROSS: Probably the wire has so deteriorated that it would not be of much value for other use.

Mr. Patrick: The fence has been of tremendous value to the north in keeping out emus.

Mr. CROSS: When I was on the rabbit-proof fence 20 years ago, we wondered whether the fence was erected to prevent the rabbits going back to South Australia. On the No. 2 fence, all the rabbit traps were placed inside the fence and not outside it. I suppose the idea was to prevent the rabbits from getting back. It is a fact that 16 years ago rabbits were caught as near to Perth as Maylands and were exhibited in shop windows in Perth. Something should be done to make cheap netting available to settlers in order that they might protect their holdings. I know something about the rabbit pest, which was a menace 20 years ago, not only outside but inside the fence. The rabbit problem is one that should be tackled seriously, and a conference of all concerned should be convened to permit of collective action being taken. The rabbit menace is more serious than is realised by people in the metropolitan area. I am hopeful that effective measures will be taken to combat the pest, and that the department will do everything possible to make available to the settlers cheap supplies of netting so that they can protect their own holdings.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. H. Millington—in reply) [9.57]: I think the discussion that the Estimates of the Department of Agriculture have inspired has been most comprehensive; the criticism has been generous and the advice tendered has been most helpful. Members will not expect me to reply to all the suggestions made or to all the questions raised. They will be referred to the departmental officers, who will give attention to them. There are one or two matters, however, with which I wish to deal. First there is the question of the housing of the departmental officers and the expert advisers. I should say that only a depleted Treasury would enable the Premier to withstand the impor-

tunities of the well-wishers of the department. There have been deputations on the subject and there has been a good deal of discussion in the Press, while advice has been received from men in a position to advise. I think ways and means might be devised to provide better accommodation for the officials. They should not be hampered in their work by restricted office and laboratory accommodation, and something will have to be done to give them improved accommodation.

Mr. Marshall: Why not put Government House to some use?

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am taking up with the Premier the question of the housing of the officials, and I am satisfied that he will do his best with the means at his disposal. A question was raised by the member for Irwin-Moore (Mr. Ferguson) regarding the bull subsidy. I understand that the money for that purpose was provided by the Rural Credits Branch of the Commonwealth Bank. So far the only money they provided this year has been the stallion subsidy. We are negotiating with them for the full subsidy grant that was made last year. For herd testing £1,200 was also found from that source last year. I hope we shall be able to get from the rural credits branch the amount required. The member for Pingelly suggests that the Avondale farm is not suitable for the experiments dealing with toxic paralysis. The main research work is not being done there, but on the farm at Meckering where the stock are actually infected. It is proposed to go to the heart of the trouble, and to carry out the experiments where the conditions exist. On none of our State farms has there been any evidence of toxic paralysis. This is probably due to the manner in which the stock has been looked after. It is seriously suggested that a good deal of the trouble is due to starvation.

Mr. Latham: To feeding. Last year we did not lose a sheep from that cause.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The pasture on the Avondale farm is good. The idea will be to create the conditions that appertained when the cattle become infected, by giving them dry feed in which there is not much nutriment, when stock may be expected to acquire the bone chewing habit which denotes the disease. We want to see if the requisite conditions can

be set up at Avondale. It is agreed that we shall have to go in for the fencing of holdings to combat the rabbit pest. The Minister for Lands is doing his utmost to secure additional amounts from the Commonwealth Government, and is endeavouring to get better terms of payment. At present the rate is 7 per cent., being 5 per cent. interest and 2 per cent. sinking fund.

Mr. Latham: The same as we pay the Commonwealth.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Except that we must have an administrative charge. If the amount can be reduced to 5 per cent. it will mean a slight loss to the Commonwealth Government, but it is not asking too much that they shall assist us in what is one of our greatest problems. The Premier has provided money for field laboratory work, and that work will be proceeded with. In respect to the vermin tax, and the administration of the Act, the member for Pingelly suggests that the skins of foxes could be utilised. The department do provide facilities for this, and people have to send the skins down with the scalps attached. Some difficulty may be experienced because the skins must be treated before they come to Perth, but if that difficulty could be overcome the department would have no objection to handling the skins afterwards. I will ascertain if fox skins can be commercialised.

Mr. Ferguson: They would have to compete with the skins of the Canadian foxes.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I was very much struck by the statement of Dr. Rivett on the blowfly pest. He said that the harm done by this pest was almost incalculable. The matter is being taken up by the department. The manager at the Ghooli State Farm, who has the necessary technical knowledge, dealt with it. He gave a very informative address to farmers, and I believe it was much appreciated. He said that in the Eastern States, where the pest is prevalent, attention was being given to the breeding of sheep. The wrinkly sheep are those which are first affected. People there have statistics to show the kind of sheep that have become affected. Very close attention must be given to the flock. All the advice the department can give will be of no avail unless that attention is given by the flock master. The department are in a position to advise as to the treatment that ought to be given, and have experimented with various poisons. One has to

be careful lest the poisons are administered too strongly. The officers have all the requisite technical knowledge on the subject. The blowfly trap devised by our entomologist, Mr. Newman, is recognised as the best in Australia. The matter is receiving the close attention of the department. There must be a considerable amount of propaganda if the public are to get the best out of the knowledge of the Government experts. The member for Guildford-Midland raised the question of marketing. The department exists mainly to deal with methods of production.

Mr. Mann: That is their job.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Marketing is involved in their work, but the officers of the department are not necessarily closely in touch with the world's marketing conditions. They are in a position to advise as to the best methods of production. That is their mission. The hon. member would set the State an enormous task if we are to carry out his suggestion regarding the market which has been commandeered by America in China. I do not know that we could take a hand. It seems that the Commonwealth would have to do that. I do not even know whether the Commonwealth Government or the Commonwealth financiers could take on a work of that magnitude. It appears, however, that one of Australia's markets has been stolen, but I do not think we are in a position to stand up to the great American nation because of it. It is suggested that the officers have not administered sufficiently stringently the Dairy Products Act. A great deal can be said for the work of the co-operative butter factories in this State. Prior to their advent, Western Australian butter was practically unsaleable.

Mr. Patrick: They built up the export trade.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes. It would not be possible for us to export butter unless it were manufactured in the factories. The factories, however, cannot claim to be above criticism so far as the moisture content of the butter is concerned. That remark applies to the Bunbury factory; it was the Department of Agriculture that straightened them out. So with the other co-operative factories; where one would expect them to be mainly concerned with the quality of the article they were producing, the commercial element crept in and, undeniably, our butter production for some

time was retarded because the butter was not up to standard as far as the moisture content was concerned. If any member can convey information to me—members can be honorary inspectors if they like—that the butter factories are not complying with the terms of the Act, then the department will proceed against them. We will do our utmost to police the Act in the interests of the industry. I am surprised to know that any factory is now guilty of the practice mentioned, and I shall make inquiries. I was certainly under the impression that that matter had been remedied. The member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) referred to widespread discontent amongst the orchardists. I have never heard of it, and orchardists generally are not the people who submit quietly to an injustice, or to any neglect by the department. Instead of waiting to spring this matter on the House, the member for Swan might have passed the information on to the department. However, the member for Swan, in his spectacular way, springs the information on the House; and so would lead members to believe that the inspectors, particularly in the fruit branch, were not doing their work in the way they should.

Mr. Sampson: I said they were unable to get about because they had no conveyances.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: There is only one way to reply to that. It is a lie.

Mr. Sampson: It is not a lie; it is the truth.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The inspectors have motor cars.

Mr. Sampson: Not at all.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: They have. They are paid on a mileage basis.

Mr. Sampson: The Minister may say it is a lie, but it is true.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: You have not given one instance. It is just so much blather.

Mr. Sampson: It is not; it is a fact, and it is generally known.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The inspectors are doing their work properly. The hon. member is defaming the inspectors and the department by making such a statement.

Mr. Sampson: Not at all. I am stating they have no means of getting about the country.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I should say that if an inspector has a motor car, and is paid on a mileage basis satisfactory to him, that he has the means of getting about the country.

Mr. Sampson: The Minister says that, but where is the evidence?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Will the hon. member suggest that a motor car is not good enough to get about the country in?

Mr. Sampson: Of course it is, if it be provided.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I shall leave that subject.

Mr. Sampson: Yes; you are very wise to do so.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: You very unwisely referred to it. In future, you should take the advice of the University professor and verify your references.

Mr. Sampson: My evidence is right.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. Sampson: I have it from the growers themselves.

The CHAIRMAN: I must ask the hon. member to keep order and the Minister to address the Chair.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: This trouble has arisen because facts were not observed. The member for Swan also stated that the fruitgrowers desired the introduction of a general marketing Bill. I know the fruitgrowers of this country—I mean the genuine fruitgrowers—and they and their organisations do not desire it.

Mr. Sampson: I did not refer to the general marketing Bill.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: A recent conference at Bridgetown did not ask for it. When there is a legitimate demand by the orchardists for the introduction of such a measure, consideration will be given to it.

Mr. Sampson: I did not refer to the general marketing Bill.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Then it is the only time in your life when you missed an opportunity of referring to it.

Mr. Sampson: The Minister is imagining things.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: With regard to herd testing, the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. McLarty), while agreeing that herd testing was beneficial, suggested that it should be extended to other

breeds. I think he is aware that it was decided, in conjunction with the Royal Agricultural Society and the Stock Breeders' Association, that it would be an economical method to concentrate on three main breeds as far as herd testing was concerned. The same practice is followed in other countries. In this State it can be said the three main breeds are the Australian Illawarra Short-horn, the Jersey and the Guernsey. It was recognised that they provided for the needs of the State. It must be remembered that the Government were called upon to render assistance to the dairying industry, and to help in building up the necessary stock in the State. No one has ever suggested that there is any advantage in having a multiplicity of breeds. The thing was to decide which breeds were good enough and met with general approval, and then to do our best to concentrate on getting the very best from those breeds. That was encouraged and the zone system introduced. I am not suggesting the zone system will continue, but I do suggest it is a good one. It must also be borne in mind that if a stock breeder has the necessary capital, he can purchase what stock he likes; but where the State is called upon to back the industry and help to build it up, it is justified in adopting the economical method which has been adopted. I believe as a result that we have progressed more quickly than if there had been a greater diversity of breeds.

Mr. McLarty: That is very doubtful.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No. In any case, the difficulty now is to find the money even for the limited herd testing we are able to conduct. Those who depart from the recognised policy of the State do so with their eyes open and they can have no grievance. They know perfectly well that it was the State's policy to concentrate on the three main breeds I have mentioned. Furthermore, the stock are kept purer, and people have a better opportunity of getting that particular stock.

Mr. McLarty: It is a matter of opinion whether they are the best breeds.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I think it is. If you want me to express an opinion, I think those three breeds are certainly equal to, if not better than, the others suggested. We are not stopping anyone from bringing other breeds in, but up to date we have not been able to assist them. I do not know whether we shall be able to

alter that policy. That question is being investigated. Representations have been made to me by the Royal Agricultural Society and by stock breeders, but, for the time being, I cannot promise that any extension will be agreed to.

Mr. McLarty: You will help them if possible.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes. I do not think it is economical to extend the breeds, from the standpoint of departmental recognition. A member representing a South-West constituency spoke about the establishment of an experimental farm in the irrigation areas. It is true that some time ago Mr. Munt made a statement to the effect that it was proposed to establish such a farm. What happened was that the question was referred to the Department of Agriculture for advice and, at the present time, negotiations are in progress with the Works Department. We have spent so much money on irrigation works in the South-West that it appears advisable to the Government to establish such an experimental farm. However, difficulties have arisen regarding the question of control. Offers have been received from outside bodies and from private individuals, but if the Department of Agriculture is to control the farm, it will be necessary to have complete control. The advantage of an experimental farm, such as we have established in other parts of the State, is that we are able to dictate the policy and all records are above reproach and beyond private interference. I agree it is essential to establish an experimental farm in that part of the State, and I trust that means will be found to finance the work. In the meantime, we are assisting with the establishment of experimental plots in different districts. It will be recognised that it is difficult to obtain an area that will be typical of the whole of the irrigation areas. However, negotiations are proceeding and I hope, not only that finance will be available, but that the work will be put in hand shortly. References were made to the establishment of a butter factory at Muresk. I did not make any statement regarding that matter; the question was discussed by the board and one of the professors of the University is a member of that board. All professors are propagandists and the professor naturally expressed his views in the Press.

So far as I am aware, we have no means by which we can restrict the declarations of professors.

Mr. McLarty: He made representations regarding the matter.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, but it did not represent any declaration of policy from the Government. I have asked the representatives of farmers and producers whether they would seriously recommend the establishment of a commercial butter factory associated with Muresk College. When I get their replies, there may be no need for me to criticise the declaration of the professor, which appeared in the Press. What I have really asked is whether Muresk is a district suitable for dairy farming.

Mr. McLarty: That is the important point.

Mr. Patrick: Of course it is.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Cream production can be carried on there profitably for eight months in the year, whereas in a dairying district it should proceed over a longer period. If it is necessary to demonstrate what can be done, I do not know that Muresk will be a suitable site for that purpose. The Government are not committed to it, or to an extension of the Agricultural College in that direction.

Mr. Latham: You are testing cows in an area quite close to Muresk, and the period must cover nine months.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The position is that the commercial concerns are experiencing difficulty in competing with private enterprise and if that is the position, I want to know how the agricultural college can be expected to run a butter factory not only against the co-operative concerns, but against the shrewd private individuals engaged in the industry. Cream can be taken from near the co-operative butter factories to Fremantle and even then the company can compete successfully against the co-operative concerns. I do not know how that can be done, but if it is possible to do it, I do not know how the Muresk College could stand up against that sort of competition. However, the matter is still subject to negotiation. If we are advised that the establishment of a factory at Muresk will be of advantage to the dairying industry, it will become a question of ways and means.

Mr. Ferguson: Could it not be established in connection with the irrigation farm that has been suggested.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not know.

Mr. McLarty: That would be a good idea.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The negotiations I have referred to are in regard to the site and control; I do not know anything about the policy yet.

Mr. Ferguson: I hope you will retain the control in the hands of the Department of Agriculture.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I hope so. With reference to the position of stock in the North-West, the member for Irwin-Moore (Mr. Ferguson) wanted to know what information was available regarding Dr. Turner's complementary test in connection with pleuro. The information I have goes to show that several of the stations in the North-West are apparently free from the disease, but the difficulty is to determine whether they are actually free. While the disease may not have been discovered on a station, the fact remains that pleuro has been prevalent in the Kimberley areas for a number of years. The whole difficulty is in respect to the carriers of the disease. When in Sydney, I asked Mr. Max Henry how it was that cattle could be overlanded from country affected by pleuro without the disease being detected. He replied that that was quite simple because the difficulty was in connection with the carriers. Dr. Turner's complementary test is directed to the detection of the carrier. He is not quite satisfied yet, but I understand that before the end of the year he will be able to announce whether or not his test is 100 per cent. efficient. Naturally scientists have to be sure before they will state that they are positive about the results. We sent the Chief Veterinary Officer to Sydney and Queensland and he consulted with Dr. Turner and other well-known veterinary officers, including some associated with the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research. On his return, I could see that he was more hopeful than previously. Now we propose to send Dr. Bennetts to the East and he will visit the Glenfield Research Department, which is operating outside Sydney. The head of that department visited Queensland to familiarise himself with the tests and Dr. Bennetts will also proceed there and see how the tests are carried out.

Then if they are satisfactory, there is every reason to believe that Dr. Bennetts will be in a position to set up a laboratory in the North-West and test those cattle before they are shifted. To-day only the Anna Plains cattle are affected. That is because it is assumed to be a clean station, and also because that stock cannot go north on account of the tick, and is not permitted to come south because of pleuro. They are quarantined effectually and cannot get out, and we cannot sit quietly and think we are doing our duty to those people and the industry by simply drawing a pleuro line and saying we have accomplished our duty. The policy of the Government is that if that stock can be shifted with safety, it must be shifted. We are not satisfied to sit tight and think that will solve the problem. As for the departmental officers, it must be remembered in respect of the Chief Inspector of Stock that I am not going to assume his position. We make very clear what we desire in the interests of the industry, and we then say it is the duty of the officer to conform to our policy, which is that if the stock can be safely shifted, it must be shifted. I do not wish the stock-owners of the South-West to become nervous; there is no need for it. It should be possible to shift that stock more or less under quarantine conditions and, after the test has been applied, it will be definitely determined whether the cattle can be shifted, but not necessarily to come into contact with the cattle of the South-West.

Mr. Ferguson: Will they be able to state definitely whether the test is effective?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It takes a certain time to develop, but in the end they must be satisfied.

Mr. Ferguson: They will have to get every bullock into the race.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: They will have to set up a fully equipped experimental station. It is worth while, with 12,000 head of stock involved. If it be demonstrated that the stock can safely be shifted, we shall have solved the problem, and then perhaps it will be possible to shift the store cattle of the North. There is a number of representative men in the Midland district and the Geraldton district who say they will be quite prepared to take that stock. And it is considered that the Midland and Geraldton districts constitute good fattening country. Only the other day a

good mob was sold in Fremantle, realising £8 8s., but by the time all expenses were paid, only £2 17s. per head remained. The stock I have seen there are certainly a long way from being first class beef cattle. If we are to get full advantage of the North-West cattle, they will have to be fattened near the market. It seems to me that primarily the North-West is stock country, and the Kimberleys cattle country. Therefore, although there has been tropical culture to a limited extent, the main industry for the North-West is stock-raising. To help that industry we shall have to overcome difficulties, and the way will be to devise safe means of moving the stock so that it can be brought to the fattening districts. That will give us an advantage, because, when it comes down by boat, the loss is such that it has to be a pretty good mob even to pay expenses. The mob I mentioned as showing, not a profit but a surplus, of £2 17s. per head was supposed to be a good mob. So we shall never assist the industry to revive unless, as I say, by the means set out here the stock can be shifted, either by boat or overland. With that object, the departmental officers have those instructions, namely, that it is their business to devise ways and means of safely shifting the stock. I do not know of any other matters calling for a reply to-night. Other questions raised will receive attention. I am very pleased with the reception of these Estimates and the undoubted interest the Agricultural Department has created. The knowledge displayed by certain members is only what we would expect and will be most helpful to the department.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—College of Agriculture, £6,887—agreed to.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.33 p.m.