

tions, and consequently a certain amount of protection must be taken. One naturally expects to get the reply that Mr. Cornell put forth. "Why not pay the clerks better."

Hon. J. Cornell: The gold mines do.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: These are not gold mines but mines for gold. If you had to pay the clerks better wages it would mean that greater charges would have to be made on the commercial and business people who deal with the banks. The profits of a bank are not great. Let the hon. member try to buy some shares and he will find that he will get a dividend of 5 or 6 per cent., and if you increase the cost the banks must put it on to somebody, and there will be a rise in rates and discounts, and other things.

Hon. J. Cornell: Suppose the Arbitration Court gave them a rise, who would you put it on to?

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: I think probably it would close the banks. The banks, as far as I know, endeavour to deal with their employees as liberally as they can, and most of the employees recognise that. Anyone who has any ambition, who hopes to be wealthy or rich, will not remain in a bank long. The bank is almost like a preliminary education, and when a man gets £200 or £300 a year he looks to go outside. If a commercial firm wants a new man they go to a bank because they know that the clerks there have been thoroughly trained and know the whole process of dealing with money. Therefore, one does not expect clerks to remain long in banks. I think the regulation is a fairly reasonable one. As to the reason put forward by Mr. Cornell, I go back to the original condition, and I think it is difficult indeed to live with any comfort on £3 or £3 10s. a week if a man is overtaken by illness or troubles arise, or if food becomes dearer, or anything of that kind. But this clause is not so stout quite at that. Say a man is getting 25s. or 30s. a week on a farm or a station and he says, "I am going to get married"; you cannot say to the man, "You must not, there is no accommodation for you," for he will say, "I can live in a tent." You cannot attempt to stop him or prevent

him, if you do you are liable to six months' imprisonment.

Hon. J. Cornell: The hon. member would praise the hardy pioneer who took his wife and family out in a tent and started in that way.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: That is a very different thing. The hardy pioneer does not expect to get 25s. a week; still with the man on the farm there are many etceteras, he can keep fowls and so forth. Under these circumstances I have pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill, always providing that the Colonial Secretary will give us full information as we go along in Committee.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*House adjourned at 5.55 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Thursday, 6th November, 1913.*

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

### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Premier: Water Supply Department, Exemption from detailed audit by the Auditor General.

By the Minister for Lands: Karrakatta Cemetery Board, sixteenth annual report.

### QUESTION—METROPOLITAN SEWERAGE SYSTEM.

Mr. MONGER asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is he correctly reported in the *West Australian* of the 1st inst. as hav-

ing said that the municipalities of Hobart and Brisbane have adopted the septic tank system for the treatment of their sewerage? 2, On what dates and times were the gaugings taken at Bunbury Bridge, on the Swan River, that enabled him to say that 550,000,000 gallons of water passed underneath it every 24 hours throughout the year? 3, Was this an average, or were the gaugings taken as they should have been in the driest period of the year? 4, Do the gaugings show that there was a change of water, or merely the same water passing up and down in accordance with tidal influence?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, No. The sewerage schemes at Hobart and Brisbane are controlled by Boards, not the municipalities. It is true as already reported that the Board at Brisbane has adopted the septic tank system of sewage disposal. At Hobart, information to hand since the deputation discloses that the septic tank which had been installed was being discontinued, owing to the fact that a sea outfall was found practicable. 2, The only gaugings were taken from the 9th to 21st June, 1913, and at hourly intervals in each day. 3, The gaugings represent an average of the period mentioned, which was at a time when the river flow was abnormally low, being prior to the winter rains. 4, The gaugings show that there was a movement of water to the extent mentioned, which undoubtedly represents a change of that volume of water. The data obtained does not indicate how far this movement is due to tidal influence.

#### ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1913-14.

##### *In Committee of Supply.*

Resumed from the previous day, Mr. McDowall in the Chair.

Department of Agriculture and Industries (Hon. T. H. Bath, Minister):

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. T. H. Bath): I propose, in introducing the Estimates which are under my control as Minister for Agriculture and Industries, to cover the ground included in the whole of the Divisions. I might preface my remarks by stating that in my

opinion this is the most important department of the State, because we know that the disposal of land in Australia has always been easy, and at the present time there are those who are inclined to dig up the bones of former Ministers for Lands and heap contempt on them, because they made the disposal of land easy, and did not safeguard the use of the land. It is all very well, however, to pass judgment on those who have gone before, but each of them, from the days of Sir John Robertson onward, did his best according to his lights and the knowledge of the time. After all, the use of the land, and the means by which those who settled on the land to bring it to the best possible use, are in my opinion of the greatest concern to us as a community. It is therefore, gratifying to know that during the past year there has been a big increase in the area improved, and it is more gratifying to know that the area cropped has shown a substantial advance. Not only has there been this increase in the area under crop, but members will agree that there has been a considerable improvement in the methods of cultivation. From the work of men like Mr. Sutton, the Commissioner for the wheat belt, and other officers, the results which have been achieved by practical farmers who carry on up-to-date methods of cultivation, and who are always on the look out for improvements in the method of working, the newspapers which devote a considerable portion of their space to the encouragement of the primary industries, all these have a beneficial effect in not only increasing the area under cultivation, but, what is more important, bringing about an increase in the yield. After all, it is a matter of great concern to the individual farmer, not only that he should get a substantial area under crop, but if, by improved methods, he can increase the yield per acre, it will mean more profit to him, and will be more likely to lead to the prosperity of the industry as a whole. I do not propose to repeat the figures which have been given in regard to the yield of wheat for the last year and the estimate for the forthcoming year. I think that the estimate of 12,000,000 bushels is a fair one, and while

there are those who say it will exceed this by probably a million bushels, even if it reaches the 12,000,000 mark it will mean a big advance in our production in Western Australia, and will, I think, constitute a good advertisement for the agricultural possibilities of the State. The area under potatoes was a diminishing quantity up to the end of 1911, but during 1912 it increased by 50 per cent., and up to February, 1913, it showed an increase of 100 per cent. There are now 5,280 acres under potatoes. The increase for 1913 will not be available until February of next year. There is also a greater demand for a good strain of seed potatoes, and the improved effect in Western Australia has been such that there is here at the present time a demand not only from the other States but from outside Australia for seed potatoes. The area planted with orchards continues to show a steady increase. In February, 1913, there was 19,154 acres planted with orchards, and that means a great deal in Western Australia in any comparison with the Eastern States, because our orchards have been planted at a later date, and there has been a very considerable improvement in the varieties planted in these orchards. It is probable, therefore, that when this area comes into bearing we will be able to show a better result per acre than some of the exporting States on the Eastern side. Of that total of 19,154 acres, one-half is in bearing, although I am inclined to think that included in the area of over 9,000 acres in bearing there is a considerable number of trees which are at a young stage and only in partial bearing. The export of fruit was 65,205 cases in 1912, and 71,255 cases in 1913. The increase was not as substantial as we might have expected in view of the increased area coming into bearing, but I understand from inquiries made by the departmental officers that a greater quantity was held in anticipation of better prices towards the end of the season in Western Australia. The fruit exported to European countries still maintained the premier position so far as price is concerned in comparison with other States, although the average price was not so high as in

the preceding year. The export of grapes increased to 2,000 cases, and the average price obtained was 15s. per case, which is considered a very satisfactory result. Another feature that marks a distinct advance upon which our manufacturing industries can congratulate themselves is that the increase in the export of flour has been of a very substantial character. In 1911 the value of flour exported was £53,392. In 1912 it had increased to £120,400, whilst in 1913 to the 30th June, the value of flour exported was £144,283. The Department of Agriculture still continues to issue bulletins on various points of interest to the agriculturists of the State. Those bulletins have taken the place of the *Agricultural Journal*, although personally I believe that the *Agricultural Journal* is a preferable method of conveying this information to agriculturists. However, the fact remains that there is a very great demand for the bulletins issued by the department, and the requests received for a large number of them have necessitated reprints being made. I cannot speak too highly of the work of all the agricultural commissioners. I think we can congratulate the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) on the selection he made in those three gentlemen, the Commissioner for the Wheat Belt, the Commissioner of Fruit Industries, and the Commissioner for the South-West. I want to say as a tribute to them that they have not spared themselves. There is no question of an eight hours' day for the agricultural commissioners. The aggregate mileage of journeys they have travelled for the purpose of lecturing to the farmers on matters of interest and paying visits of inspection at the requests of settlers has been very great indeed, and the large number of letters which are received appreciative of their efforts is a tribute to the work they are accomplishing. The Commissioner for the Wheat belt in connection with the branch more particularly under his control has done splendid work, although to a certain extent his energies have been utilised in connection with the work of the seed wheat board, but apart from that

he is making his influence felt with the farmers of the State, and it is a physical impossibility for Mr. Sutton to fulfil all the engagements that are asked of him. We sometimes have complaints that he has not visited certain centres, and the reply has to be sent that he is incapable of fulfilling all the requests that have been made. During the year the receipt of a notification from South Africa that a shipment of grain to that country would require to be accompanied by a certificate necessitated us having an inspection made of grain at the ports of shipment in order that the certificate might be issued. In other directions the work of the commissioner will be of untold benefit to the State, for instance, the experimental trials which are taking place at the State farms are already proving useful and providing information which will guide farmers of this State in their future efforts. At the present time we are conducting trials as to the best quantity of wheat to sow, both for hay and grain, the best quantity of fertiliser to use per acre, and competitive trials as to different varieties and results for grain and hay. Over 2,000 small samples of wheat have been sent to settlers to utilise these small envelopes of grain to build up their own supply of seed wheat. We also sent this year 42 sets of seed to the State schools situated in the agricultural areas in order that the school children might be instructed in the work of growing wheat, and more particularly in regard to the treatment of smut. In this connection I wish to say, speaking of my own farming operations, that I have found some of the results which have been obtained through this experimental work initiated by Mr. Sutton to be of very great advantage. For instance, in connection with the trials as to the best quantity of wheat to sow, these were initiated last year and the results at the Chapman, Nangeenan and Narrogin farms went to show that both for hay and grain 45lbs. of seed to the acre was best. Of course the commissioner points out that he is not prepared to dogmatise on one year's operations, and that these trials will have

to be conducted over a number of years before the results can be set before the farmers with any degree of certainty. However, I thought the result sufficiently good to follow in connection with my own farming operations, and by following the advice of Mr. Sutton in that respect I have found it to be highly advantageous. In another respect I have profited by Mr. Sutton's advice, and that is in connection with the treatment of smut. Previously the method adopted by me, following the example of those surrounding me, was to tie the wheat up in butts and soak it in a bluestone solution. This year, acting on the advice of Mr. Sutton, I bluestoned it in an open sack, skimmed off the smut balls, and then limed it, and I had splendid results, both as regards germination and freedom from smut. I mention these as instances where the work of Mr. Sutton is advantageous to the farmers, and in future I will watch the trials he is conducting as to the quantity of wheat to sow, the quantity of fertiliser to use, the best varieties of wheat, and also the depth of ploughing, with very great interest. Then, too, the work in connection with the production of pure seed wheat true to name is proceeding satisfactorily, and the commissioner anticipates that as a result of the plots sown this season he will have 10,000 bushels of about ten different varieties for supply to the farmers. Those 10,000 bushels represent in the case of each variety the result of one plant of four years ago, and that means that, with the care that has been exercised, he is able to guarantee to the farmers who purchase this seed that it will be absolutely true to name, and will not include foreign varieties. Of course, the cost of producing seed wheat under these conditions is very much higher than in the case of the ordinary supply, and the purpose of the department is to supply it in small quantities to each individual farmer and then advise him to sow it on clean new ground, or on land which he is sure is free from other varieties, and so gradually build up his own supply of seed wheat. The price proposed is 6s. per bushel in the case of two or three varieties, and 5s. per bushel in the case of others. These prices compare

more than favourably with that charged in New South Wales, where seed wheats produced from stud plots are sold at 7s. 6d. per bushel. In connection with the work under the control of Mr. Sutton, I am glad to say that we have made provision for the initiation of a scheme of agricultural education, and we propose to make a start at the Narrogin State farm. The matter has been under consideration for some time, but since the University authorities have decided to constitute a chair of agriculture and have appointed Professor Patterson to that chair we have availed ourselves of the opportunity of consulting that gentleman in connection with this proposal. He and Mr. Sutton have been in conference and have visited the farm, and I am glad to say that the scheme has the approval of Professor Patterson. The work which will be set out at Narrogin State farm will be a link in the chain of agricultural education, and if the student so desires it, will ultimately enable him to obtain the degree or diploma of the University.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Will the professor continue to supervise the work?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, the work will be under the control of the Agricultural Department, with the assistance, of course, of the Education Department, and so far as the University is concerned its sphere will be in connection with the examination of the work accomplished and the decision as to whether that work comes up to the standard required by the University. In regard to the work in the South-West, I may say that Mr. Connor is a familiar figure in that portion of the State, and I understand that latterly his enthusiasm for the introduction of a fodder plant that he regards as suitable for the South-Western area has led to his being dubbed Mr. "Berseem" Connor. However, that nickname is an indication of the enthusiasm he is putting into his labour. The result of the importation of seed was that over 170 persons availed themselves of the supply, and plots of this particular clover were grown by a number of different settlers in various parts of the State, which is an indication that it will prove of value to the development of the

South-Western areas. It is true some gentlemen in discussing the matter have told me the question as to whether it will seed itself is a matter that has to be decided before its full value is known. If they have to go to the labour, year by year, of purchasing seed and also of cultivating it, the advantages will not be so great as anticipated.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Mr. Connor says it will seed freely.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: At the State farm it seeded freely, but I do not know what has been the result in other places. We are also providing for the importation of a fairly large quantity of seed of the Western Wollth rye grass. This has resulted satisfactorily, for we have received orders for more than the quantity of seed to be imported. At the Brunswick State farm a much larger area is under cultivation this year than last year, 414 acres as compared with 260 acres last year. We have 80 acres under Algerian oats and 30 acres under various kinds of wheat in small plots. The following are the varieties:—Fairbank, Bunyip, Federation, Yandilla King, Huguenot, White Tuscan, Dart's Imperial, and Berthoud. There are 48 acres of Berseem clover, 130 acres of the land is fallowed, 8 acres under potatoes, two acres under pumpkins, two under pig-melons, 15 under maize, half an acre under Soya beans, 33 acres under lucerne, three-quarters of an acre under sugar beet, half an acre under carrots, and 60 acres under mixed grasses. In connection with the cultivation of various kinds of grasses we have also carried on certain pot culture in Perth in order that the farmers may be assisted in readily identifying the various grasses sold in the seed stores and nurseries. At Denmark we have a small area of 27 acres in all, which is utilised as an experimental or demonstration farm in that centre, and the areas under cultivation necessarily are small; it is only being utilised temporarily as a demonstration farm for the settlers. In the Denmark agricultural area we have a dairy erected and propose when the settlers are in a position to obtain cows under our scheme and have the requisite fodder, to erect the necessary machinery for treat-

ing their product and supplying butter to the local market. The experiment, of course, is a small one and the production will not be very high, but the disastrous results which occurred through the flooding of their potato crops shows that they must have some alternative. On the area the scheme has been taken up with enthusiasm, and the settlers have had the assistance of Mr. Connor and Mr. Patterson, of the Agricultural Bank, and on a recent visit these gentlemen were favourably impressed with the growth of the fodder, not only demonstrating the value of the farm, but also the advantage of following the advice of Mr. Connor. In another direction too, that of the work under the irrigation expert, a very large amount of good work is being done, and although at the time Mr. Scott was appointed there was a fair amount of criticism, I have to say in this selection the choice of the member for Northam was a good one. Mr. Scott has carried out his work with very great benefit to the settlers who have sought his advice. In this case, too, we have received many appreciative letters expressing satisfaction with the work accomplished on the settlers' behalf. There are, at the present time, about 300 small irrigation schemes in operation in the State, more particularly in the South-Western area, and this must have a great effect in increasing the production of that part of the State.

Mr. Price: Was the experiment warranted?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Absolutely. I think the results are very satisfactory, indeed so satisfactory are they that within the past two years there have been very many purchases of land in the South-West area. This land that was partially improved, in some instances not very much improved, had been held for a number of years. These have been taken over by men with capital, and the development has been of a very satisfactory character, and certainly means revolutionising the attitude of the public towards our South-West area. The Commissioner for Fruit Industries has recently attended the Fruit Growers' Conference in Adelaide. The depart-

ment has not been represented at this annual gathering for some years past, but I recognised that the fruit industry was of such a character that it was desirable that we should be represented at this annual conference of fruitgrowers, and in pursuance of that opinion, Mr. Moody attended in Adelaide recently. We have a demonstration orchard of 20 acres at the Brunswick State Farm, and although it has only been planted two years, the trees are making satisfactory progress. In connection with the planting of the orchard, at the outset Mr. Moody was instructed to keep very careful account of the cost of planting and the upkeep year by year, not only that we may have a comparison with the results obtained by private growers, but as a means of reference to those desirous of embarking their capital in the fruit-growing industry, and who are desirous of obtaining information as to the total cost of bringing an orchard into bearing.

Mr. Turvey: Have you a nursery in connection with the orchard?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, we have not. The work of tree-pulling, which has been carried on for some years past is still being continued, and as a result of the continuance of this work, improvement is effected from time to time, and the cost per acre has been gradually reduced. During last year a total area of 5,530 acres were pulled in this manner. The scrub-rolling operations have not been so successful because much of the country being rolled is not in the nature of scrub, but consists of fairly large trees, and the result is that the strain on the plants is very great indeed. However, we have rolled 5,900 acres during the year, and the results have shown that the cost of rolling with this plant is much smaller than by the old method of cutting down and burning which was previously adopted. The cold storage works at Albany were opened during the last financial year, and the trade or business being done by these works is steadily increasing. It is true that it has not yet reached the profit-earning stage, but it is hoped that with the development of the area adjacent to

Albany and the development of the fruit growing industry in that part, these works will ultimately not only be a profit-earning concern, but of greater advantage in the development of that part of the State. In connection with the implement works, which were the subject of criticism from time to time, and the subject of remarks of a facetious character as to their ultimate success or completion, I am pleased to say that the work of construction is progressing satisfactorily, and the manager anticipates that the works at Rocky Bay will be completed by the middle of January. These works, when completed, will be equal, if not superior, to any factory of the kind in the whole of Australia. The manufacture will be carried on standardising lines, everything being done to decrease the cost of manufacture. During the time the works at Rocky Bay were in course of erection, we erected a small annex to the harbour works and carried on the manufacture of implements, which were exhibited at the royal show. It is proposed between now and the time that the works will be completed, to circularise the farmers throughout the State, and we anticipate the business received will be such as to make it unnecessary to appoint agents to travel throughout the State so as to obtain orders. We have already received numerous letters requesting the supply of implements almost immediately, and when we manufacture on a wholesale scale there will be no difficulty, I am sure, in securing orders. Of course, the ultimate purpose is not only to have the main works at Rocky Bay, but to have depôts established at various centres to reach the surrounding agricultural areas conveniently. It will be necessary to erect depôts at places like Geraldton, and possibly Northam.

Mr. F. B. Johnston: What about Narrogin?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not know about Narrogin. The depôts will be fixed at centres convenient to the farmers so that renewals and repairs can be effected. As the machines will be

standardised, parts will be obtainable of any machine turned out.

Mr. Male: Will you sell on credit or for cash?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member has asked a question that has, of course, to be decided, and in that respect we will have to follow the example of others disposing of agricultural machinery. Our proposal is to provide for a payment which will be sufficient to cover depreciation through the misuse of the machine, that is a deposit of one-third down and extending the payment for two years. That is one payment down and two annual payments to complete the purchase.

Mr. George: You need special powers for that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, we do not.

Mr. George: You cannot part with the State's goods unless you get cash.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We would do exactly as we do in regard to the payment for other services rendered to settlers. For instance, we take time payment for the work which is done in clearing and scrub-rolling, and even if it is necessary to secure special power, of course that will have to be done.

Mr. George: You will have to do it, you will find.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The question as to the price at which machines will have to be sold has to be considered in relation to the cost of manufacture, and the hon. member for Murray-Wellington will recognise that in connection with big works of that kind the question as to cost is very important and vital. I realised that early, and not only had the report of the manager based upon his experience in works in the Eastern States, and the report of the accountant of the department, but I also constituted a small board. We obtained the services of an officer of the Railway Department, who, for years, has been engaged in that work, and visited various departments, such as the Printing Office, Stores Department, and obtained information as to their methods, in order that we might fix an effective and satisfactory scheme for costing.

As a result of the work of that small committee a scheme was drawn up and submitted to us. It has been put in operation, so that from the very outset we will be able to see in making up the cost of manufacture that it is done on sound lines and lines that will enable us to be absolutely sure that our costing is right.

Mr. George: Have you fixed any margin over the cost?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We have. I realised at the outset that we had to absolutely safeguard ourselves in regard to the selling price of these machines. If a price is fixed which is on the safe side, and it is found too high, it can easily be brought down, but it is a long way more difficult, if a price is fixed too low, to put it up.

Mr. Turvey interjected.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am not going to make any promises as to what we are going to do in the future. The price at present is substantially cheaper, and if we find later on that a reduction can be made it will be done, as we are not going to be Shylocks in the matter of profit. The costing will be under the control of the accountant of the department, and in that respect will be a check on the work of the manager, so far as estimates of the cost of the machines are concerned. In connection with the Agricultural Bank, I had anticipated having some details as to the work since the close of the financial year, but these have not come to hand. The Premier in the course of his Budget speech gave details and figures up to 30th June, and I do not think it is necessary for me to repeat them here, except to say that before the close of the session it will be absolutely necessary for us to approach the House for a further increase of capital. That matter is now being fixed up between the Colonial Treasurer and the managing trustee, and I hope a Bill will be introduced at an early date. I have much pleasure in introducing these items.

Hon. J. MITCHELL (Northam): It had been very interesting to listen to the speech made by the Minister and probably there never was a time when the Minister admitted anything he (Mr. Mitchell) did

was right, but in the department at the present time nothing that was done seemed, according to the Minister, to be wrong. Unfortunately, however, it would be necessary for him to criticise in some small way some of the details in connection with the management of the department, but that of course was inevitable. He had heard with satisfaction that the Minister proposed to spend more this year than he spent last year. We were told that the respectable sum of £96,000 more was to be voted, but on investigation found that £94,000 represented money to be spent on the trading concerns, which were really foreign to the ordinary work of agriculture and foreign to the work dealt with by the Minister to-day. The details of this expenditure would be covered by meat sales, stock sales, and the implement works. He noticed that the Minister proposed to spend something like £32,000 on his meat shops and expected from the sales to receive £35,000, but when we looked into the matter we found that there was no provision for loss on the purchase of stock, and there were no office charges, and nothing seemed to be allowed for departmental cost, so that it looked very like a loss in connection with this business. The loss on the Bovril Company's cattle purchased for the butcher shops alone must be fairly considerable, and would go a long way to swamp the difference between £32,000 and £35,000. He ventured to say that these meat shops had not been the success that was expected of them, and the Minister to-day had not even claimed that they were a success. Time and again he (Mr. Mitchell) had looked into the market and found that the quality of beef was certainly poor compared with what could be obtained from other stores, and the meat generally was not up to standard. If the Government were going to supply the poor working men of this City with meat, that meat should at least be as good as was procurable elsewhere. The Minister had set to work to provide cheap meat and to that end it had been necessary that he should buy steamers to bring his cattle from the North. He (Mr. Mitchell) did not wish



to discuss the State steamers at this juncture, although the State steamers were bought, we were told, in order that this business might be undertaken. The result was a considerable loss on the State steamers, and he feared also a considerable loss on the butchers' shops themselves.

The CHAIRMAN: The State steamers had nothing to do with agriculture.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It was not his wish just now to discuss the State steamers, although they were part of the butchers' shops. However, the hon. member for Kimberley (Mr. Male) would look into this matter later on. At any rate the loss on this venture must be added to the loss on the meat sales. The Government had purchased cattle for their shops apparently as ordinary cattle dealers, and it was hard to tell where the purchases for the shops left off and where the purchases for the purpose of dealing began. We knew very well that the Minister had an item on the Estimates for the purchase of stock for the purpose of sale, and incidentally he was using Yandanooka as a fattening place. The Minister proposed to spend a very considerable sum in this way, £15,000 for stock, and it was expected that his revenue would be £19,000. If we added the £15,000 he proposed to spend, with the other items, £950 for freight, and interest on the cost of Yandanooka, some £6,000, it would be seen that the Minister would have a fairly big loss on that business. The butchers' shops of course might be some advantage to someone, small consumers in Perth, but the stock dealing could only benefit fairly large holders. If the Minister was buying stock from the Bovril Company, which was presided over by Lord Brassey and represented here by Sir Edward Wittenoom, he was buying stock not from the small grower of the North but a rich company. Was it the wish of the people of this country that the Government should enter upon this business of stock dealing, that they should become stock dealers? He was sure that while many would agree to the business being undertaken for them if there was a profit, few would agree to

having the business done for them if the loss was considerable. He wanted to know why £950 was all that was allowed for freight when one purchase represented two or three thousand cattle. There must be some mistake in this item, as £950 would cover freight only on 250 head. With regard to the implement works, he believed the Minister had got a good man, capable of running these works if given a free hand. The Minister should not need to appoint a lot of little boards, one to fix the price of implements, and another terms of sale, and so on. If this man was given a free hand he would probably do something with these works, but if he was restricted in his operations and subjected to red tape the prospects were not good.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: The works are a success, and you do not like it.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: We are told that the works were a great success, but he did not know what they had sold yet. If they had sold anything it was little indeed, but of all the enterprises entered into he thought this had a greater chance of proving successful than any of the other branches. He did not wish it to be thought for one moment that the Government could run this venture successfully, and they were not likely to run it profitably, unless they changed their methods. He wished the Minister to realise that the question was not one of a low priced machine, but a machine that would mean good value.

The Minister for Lands: That is the first consideration with us.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: At the royal show there was an exhibit and he ventured to say the Minister should never have had that exhibit there. The work was hurried and they could not have had time to finish their machines properly. The exhibit that was sent to the royal show, he ventured to say, would not have been sent by any ordinary trader wishing to get custom. He had had an opportunity of discussing a machine with the hon. member for Subiaco (Mr. B. J. Stubbs) and the Minister for Works. The member for Subiaco, of course, was loud in his praise of this machine and

the Minister for Works was very satisfied with the box of the harvester.

The Minister for Works: You started to criticise it.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: There was no desire to criticise that exhibit. If it was the best that could be done by the works it ought to have been better. Still he did not think it was the best, because it had been hurriedly prepared. Let the Minister provide a harvester which would be worth the money charged. It did not matter whether it was £50, £80, or £90, so long as it was a good wheat-saving machine and would last. The Minister could give terms. The Minister need not ask one-third down. In cases where the Agricultural Department could not pay for these machines, he could give easy terms. Let him make a better article and spread the payment over three years if necessary, but not send out to unfortunate people living 100 miles from the coast a machine which would not prove satisfactory, but would result in great loss. The Minister would be subject to keen competition, not by reason of anything which the Minister did, but because during the last year or two several sellers of machinery had come on the market, and the competition would become very keen indeed. The Minister's manager would have to be keen and the implements good. If he was going to turn out a plough let it be a plough that the farmer wanted.

Mr. Turvey: Then the advent of the State works did some good in bringing down prices.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It was hoped the prices would come down. There was room for reduction.

Mr. Price: Would there have been a reduction without the works?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: There would be a reduction and a pretty keen fight before very long. Of course we were spending a good deal of money on these works, and the Minister would find it necessary to spend a good deal of money in connection with plant and stock. It would be necessary to pay his manager very much more than the £504 proposed to be paid, and it would be necessary also to employ brains to compete successfully

with the brains opposed to him. The Minister was in competition with hundreds of factories of other States and countries. The Minister had brought in a reaper and binder. Since the binder was not made in the Government works it was an imported machine, and he was afraid it would prove deficient in the heavy crops of this country. It was a very light machine and if the Minister would go to Sandover's and see a McCormack or a Massey-Harris he would see a very much stronger machine, although perhaps very little heavier. The hay crop was very heavy in this State. He himself had bought one machine which had to be thrown out of use immediately because it was not capable of doing the work. The Minister had brought in a machine which he could sell a few pounds cheaper than a good Massey-Harris, but which was not likely to do the work so satisfactorily. Let the Minister give the farmer a good machine that would be of first quality. He agreed with the Minister that the officers of the Agricultural Department were capable of doing good work, and were doing good work. This department was of the utmost importance, and its under secretary was an important official to the people. The work of that under secretary, whom he believed to be thoroughly efficient, was not confined merely to the work of production. It was his duty to watch the interests of the farmer, to watch the markets and to give opportunity to the farmer of exporting. We were exporting a considerable portion of our produce, but we were compelled to import bags and fertilisers. The Under Secretary should concern himself in both these matters. It was understood that that officer was already doing so. We required the cheapest freights to the old world, and when it came to the question of importing bags he believed we were paying more than we should do. If the Minister were to send one of the State steamers for a load of bags the steamer would be doing some good.

The Minister for Lands: It would not cheapen the price.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The Minister did not know that. It was not possible

for anyone to advise the Minister on the point unless that person had been in touch with the market for a considerable time past.

The Minister for Lands: I have looked into the question myself.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Where did you look?

The Minister for Lands: I looked up returns of the Agricultural Department in India.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: That information would be absolutely useless, for the crop varied from day to day.

The Minister for Lands: That is the trouble.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: If the Minister were to undertake this jute business he would require to have telegrams going pretty well all the time. The work of watching the market was very expensive, and the Minister had better get it out of his mind that he could profitably turn up a departmental report months old.

The Minister for Lands: I got the very latest report from the agents in connection with the jute crop.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The under secretary should be given permission to prosecute inquiries, not this year, but every year. Again, there was room for inquiry into the fertiliser supply.

Mr. Turvey: You are becoming a regular socialist.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: No, it was not socialism that was required, but merely information. We required the department to interest itself in export facilities. It was desirable that a place like Geraldton should get the wheat away very cheaply. Geraldton would be shipping between 400,000 and 500,000 bags of wheat before the next five years had passed over, and the Minister should provide reasonable facilities for shipment in order that the cost might not be too great upon the farmer, who had to meet all the disadvantages and pay the whole cost to London. The late Administration had been determined to give railways to that part of the country. They had done everything to make the place what it was to-day. Geraldton depended largely on agriculture, although of course the min-

ing industry was of great importance also in the district. The previous Administration had been determined that the district should be developed and that Geraldton should become a very important town. The late Administration had always had in mind that shipping facilities at Geraldton should be brought up to date as soon as possible.

Mr. Turvey: Do you not think the present Government are looking after Geraldton very well?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: There was not much evidence of it in the Estimates, but probably the hon. member was quite satisfied. The Minister had been good enough to say that he (Hon. J. Mitchell) was entirely right in the selection made of the several commissioners of the Agricultural Department. Mr. Jull, the Public Service Commissioner, had had an important hand in the selection of those officers. Mr. Sutton, the Commissioner for the Wheat Belt, was a very important official, and his time should not be occupied in connection with these petty boards. It was absurd to have a Wheat Commissioner on a salary of £750 a year engaged on a seed wheat board. Nor was it at all right that the Minister should ask a man of Mr. Sutton's ability, whose services were so much in demand, to act in connection with the small advances made to our settlers. Not only had Mr. Sutton to do that, but he had been receiver for all the creditors of certain farms. The Minister had agreed to have the estates assigned to him or to take security for the growing crops, and act not only for the department but for other creditors. The Minister had asked Mr. Sutton to undertake this work, so we would presently see bills made out to Mr. Sutton, who would discharge the responsibilities.

Mr. Price: Will you suggest a more competent man, since you condemn Mr. Sutton?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It was entirely wrong that a man of Mr. Sutton's ability should be engaged in this work, which should be handed to the member for Albany, whose services could be so well spared in the House. Why should Mr. Sutton be compelled to collect accounts

for the department and other creditors? The Minister would probably assist the farmers to some extent by this departure, but he would land himself in a hole over it. Mr. Sutton was not the man to be saddled with the work; Mr. Sutton had far more important work to do. Mr. Connor's work in the South-West was highly important, and it was understood that that officer was making good progress. It was gratifying that the fodder crops which he had introduced were doing so well, and it would be interesting to hear from the Minister that it was intended to buy a few more traction engines for the purpose of pulling the trees, and to go on with the work of rolling in the Katanning district, even if it involved the expenditure of more money on stronger engines.

The Minister for Lands: We have made improvements in the equipment.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It was satisfactory to know that this was so. Mr. Moody, of course, was an important man to this State. The Empire Trade Commission when in Western Australia were more interested in fruit than anything else and they seemed to think that Western Australia as an apple country was a place worth looking to, and he thought that men of capital would be coming here to grow fruit. The North was neglected altogether. The services of the Commissioner for Tropical Agriculture were dispensed with, but the reason for it no one knew as yet. He would like to know. Professor Lowrie said that no man in Australia knew more about tropical agriculture than Mr. Despeissis. It was a crying shame that the North should be so sadly neglected. The Liberal Government determined that the North should have this commissioner. The cost was not very great and the opportunities were considerable. Mr. Despeissis was the right man for the job but as soon as the present Minister got into office that gentleman's services, in common with the services of others, were dispensed with. Immediately afterwards another officer (Mr. Crawford) was sent to the North to do some work there. Mr. Despeissis had considerable information and no doubt

he could have done the work thoroughly well. However, it was presumably all in keeping with the Ministerial policy that the officers appointed by him should be compelled to give up their positions and that important work such as should have been done in the North should be neglected. The Minister ought to realise that that part of the State still belonged to Western Australia, although the Premier a while ago thought it was a little too big for us. It was his hope that a commissioner for tropical agriculture would be appointed and that Mr. Despeissis would be given the position. He believed Mr. Cairns had been doing very good work for the Minister, wasted effort he thought sometimes because, judging by some of the reports laid upon the Table of Parliament, not necessarily of this House, Mr. Cairn's advice might have been taken with great advantage to the State. The work of the department, of course, extended to drainage and irrigation, both important questions for the great south-western corner of this State. Drainage had been undertaken in many places. There were stagnant rivers in many parts and this work ought to be continued. In the district of the leader of the Opposition and the members for Forrest, Bunbury, and Albany, drainage was an essential factor.

Mr. George: What about Murray-Wellington?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Yes; he had forgotten the most important of all, and he hoped that the snagging of rivers and the draining of the country would be proceeded with. Irrigation was an important question and was progressing satisfactorily. He ventured to say that the 300 irrigationists were making a very good start. Mr. Elwood Mead had told him that the proper way to start was with small schemes, because the people were then educated up to the work of irrigation. The Minister used to criticise him because he wanted to establish dairying and because he had brought in cattle. Now, however, the Minister was supplying farmers in the Albany district with dairy cows. Everything he (Mr. Mitchell) had done seemed in the opinion of the

Minister to have been wrong, but the Minister was now bound to confess that whatever he had undertaken was right. The greatest possible compliment the Minister could pay him was to go on with the work which he had begun.

The Minister for Lands: It will not be done in the same way.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Quite so, it would not be done quite so well.

The Minister for Lands: It will be a more careful selection.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It was to be hoped that the selection would be a little more carefully conducted than in the case of the Bovril cattle. The cattle which he had purchased were not reeking with disease as were some which the Minister had purchased.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Yours were not paid for.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: They were paid for almost in full. They cost £50,000 and the amount outstanding was £5,000 a portion of which represented interest, and it comprised amounts which could have been collected. Of course there probably would be some loss, but there should not have been if the security was sound as he believed it was.

The Minister for Lands: There was tuberculosis among them.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: There was no herd in the world which was free from that disease.

Mr. Price: You do not deny that you imported cows suffering from tuberculosis?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: That statement was neither denied nor admitted by him.

It was impossible for even the wise hon. member who had interjected to say; it was impossible for him (Mr. Mitchell) to say, and he believed it was impossible to get any dairy herd which was free from tuberculosis. He believed every herd was affected in some small degree. It was quite possible that the disease was latent when the cows were purchased and became active during transit.

The Minister for Lands: They were not tested.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It was impossible to test them on account of their condition, and the Minister knew that.

The Minister would tell the public that he intended to have every cow he purchased tested and would be satisfied that there was no pleuro, tick, or tuberculosis in them, but such a statement only fooled the people because the test could not be made.

The Minister for Lands: Who said the test could not be made?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It could not be made in connection with cattle which were shipped in the condition in which those cattle were shipped.

The Minister for Lands: Do you set your opinion against that of experts?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: What he had said was correct, whatever the experts said. There were 500 cattle and he had imported them, and if he had not done so there would have been a few more tins of milk imported from the Eastern States.

Mr. Price: Were they tested before they were brought in?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: No; they could not be tested in the condition in which they left Victoria.

Mr. Price: You could have made it a condition of purchase.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It would have meant testing them seven or eight months before.

Mr. Price: You could have had them tested, but did not do so.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: You never thought of it.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The cows were expected to come into milk soon after their arrival, and a test would have been not only futile but absurd. Were the cows which the Minister purchased from the dairymen of Perth for Claremont tested?

The Minister for Lands: Yes, there was a test and some were excluded.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: If one cow was suffering from tuberculosis and was watered at a trough with others, the chances were that many of them would contract the disease. If we excluded every cow in a herd where only one was suffering, and it would be necessary to do that in order to have an absolutely clean herd, it would be impossible to buy cows at all.

The Minister for Lands: They were tested again at Claremont shortly afterwards.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: But the Minister took them from a tubercular herd.

Mr. Turvey: They did not respond.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: There was no herd in the State, nor in any State, in his opinion, which was absolutely free from the disease. The test would from time to time bring about the discovery of some cow that had developed the disease.

Hon. Frank Wilson: With all the testing they had the disease.

Mr. Wisdom: They have it now.

The Minister for Lands: That is a mere assertion.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: If they did not have it they were bound to get it. The only way to safeguard the consumers was to pasteurise the milk. When he was in New South Wales he saw thousands of gallons of milk being pasteurised preparatory to being sent to the Sydney market. That was the only method of effectually dealing with the milk. Now we found the Minister going to Albany—and the member for that district was perfectly satisfied with the arrangement—and insisting that an applicant should be able to show six months feed before he could get any of these cows. These cows were to be fed on grass grown in the district.

Mr. Price: Artificial fodder.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: If the land was cleared and broken up the Minister could supply the cows to settlers without imposing any other restriction.

Mr. Price: No.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Yes, he could.

Mr. Price: The Minister could, but he ought not to do it.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: If a man had to be able to show six months feed stored or preserved before he could get any cows, it was an unnecessary restriction, because the country there was green throughout the 12 months of the year, and was capable of growing feed the 12 months round. These cows had to be fed on grass during the whole of the year and it was not necessary that a man

should have six months feed stored for them.

The Minister for Lands: They will have to feed the cows on more than grass.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The Minister was to be congratulated upon his return to the policy which he had condemned in him (Mr. Mitchell). He was delighted to know that the Minister was going to make every effort to reduce the importations of tinned milk. The Minister had suspended his (Mr. Mitchell's) policy for two years, but to-day acknowledged that that policy was right in many respects. It was an acknowledgment that his policy was right in that the Minister had imported these cattle. In connection with the State farms, Mr. Berthoud's wheat, which had been mentioned, had proved most successful. For the last three or four years Mr. Berthoud had shown the value of his wheat called Alpha.

The Minister for Lands: Was not that from a strain by Farrer?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: No, it was developed in this State.

The Minister for Lands: Mr. Sutton assures me that it was developed from some wheat received from Mr. Farrer.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: So far as he knew it was not known in New South Wales, and it was not likely to have been sent to Mr. Berthoud. It was a West Australian wheat which was found nowhere else and Mr. Berthoud's work in that direction justified all the expenditure.

The Minister for Lands: I do not want to detract from any credit due to Mr. Berthoud, but Mr. Sutton assures me that what I say is correct.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: This was the outstanding feature of the work of the State farms. He had tried to get Mr. Berthoud to go on with the work at Brunswick, but he had declined to take up his residence there and had elected to leave the department. If the Minister could get Mr. Berthoud to go on with this work, he would be doing good for the State. The Minister would need to be very careful in introducing wheats

and selling them to farmers at high prices. There were, he supposed, about 100 varieties of wheat grown and not more than about half-a-dozen of them could be placed at the top of the list. When seed was dear it was generally because the wheat was new and not tested, or because it was a shy bearer. It went without saying that the wheat which was most prolific was likely to be the sort which could be obtained at the cheapest rate. There was a vote on the Estimates for the Avondale Estate. The Minister did not seem to know how much land he held up there.

The Minister for Lands: There is no vote for the Avondale Estate.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: There was.

The Minister for Lands: That is under the Lands Department.

The CHAIRMAN: It was dealt with last night.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: There were State farms under the Department of Agriculture and the Avondale Estate would be included. The Minister ought to tell members what he intended to do with that Estate. Was it to be added to the State farms?

The Minister for Lands: I cannot tell you on this division: I would be out of order.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Was it to be a State farm? There was a State farm at Narrogin—

The CHAIRMAN: It is not an item in these Estimates. The Avondale estate appeared under the Lands Department.

The Minister for Lands: It is under the control of the Lands Department.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: There was an item here for wheat farms, and Avondale was to be one of our wheat farms.

The Minister for Lands: I tell you it is under the Lands Department and we dealt with it last night. It has nothing whatever to do with the Agricultural Department. On a point of order I think hon. members ought to be set right. I am stating what is absolutely a fact. Avondale farm has nothing whatever to do with the Agricultural Department. It is under

the control of the Lands Department and the item is 276 under Minister for Lands.

Hon. Frank Wilson: What are these wheat farms?

The Minister for Lands: Nangeenan, Chapman, and Narrogin.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Every wheat farm should be under the management of Mr. Sutton the Wheat Commissioner. Was it the intention of the Minister to establish other farms, and if so were these farms to be 4,000 acres and not less, although the Minister said other people had to have less? We were asked to vote £2,600 for wheat farms and he wanted to know what the Minister intended in regard to this matter.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member could discuss wheat farms and not the Avondale Estate.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The Government proposed to have an Agricultural college at Narrogin, and in that they were quite right. It was a good move. We should extend secondary agricultural education to the important towns of the State and there might be a college at Northam, and probably Geraldton and Bunbury. These schools should be established as soon as possible, and if he might be permitted to advise the Minister it would be well to have one in connection with the Minister's farm at Avondale. The Minister should be able to state whether he had any idea of placing an agricultural college there or not. The position was central; the Minister had land and buildings and he had refused to sell the place, and surely he could let us know whether he intended to work it and how. The Minister had managed to make a profit there and that was something to his credit and the credit of the farm.

The Minister for Lands: The wheat and sheep realised a good deal more than was estimated.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It was a splendid estate, very cheaply bought and had paid its way well. The Minister had referred to the export of potatoes. There had been nothing wrong with the potato regulations. The Premier said so, and on the word of the Minister for Lands, he (Mr. Mitchell) had been right.

The Minister for Lands: On the word of the Minister you were very much wrong.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Ministers whenever they went boasted that the country was free from Irish blight and we could export potatoes.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: It is not free and you know it.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The South-West was free.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Unfortunately they have been digging up potatoes all round Perth lately on account of the blight.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: What he had done was to go as far as he could for the moment, and the word of the Premier given at the Agricultural show he had been entirely right.

The Minister for Lands: No, I took a very different course from what you did.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The Minister had altered the boundaries; instead of running to the east, had deviated and gone a bit to the south-east. The Minister had got down to the peeling of potatoes when the principle was involved of keeping this country free from the disease. He (Mr. Mitchell) was delighted to have it acknowledged here to-night as it had been acknowledged before by the Minister for Lands, that the previous Administration were right in keeping away Irish Blight and making this country in the position it is to-day to export clean potatoes.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: No one had made any such statement.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Hon. members opposite could crawl out and retract their words as much as they liked but the admission still remained.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: You were robbing the people of their staple food.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Such expressions as that were not premissible, and he must ask the hon. member to withdraw. Anything that imputed robbery to anyone was not a Parliamentary expression. Would the hon. member rise to his feet and withdraw the word "robbing." The hon. member used too many of these words altogether.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: I withdraw.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It was to be hoped that the Minister would see that the Agricultural Bank's capital was sufficient. The bank was doing good work and always had done good work. The managing trustee was a capable gentleman, but without money he could do nothing and he had been short of money ever since the present Minister came into office. The Government increased the limit of advances to £2,000 and forgot to increase the capital, although they were reminded that it was their duty to do so. Time and again we had protested that the bank was being kept short of money. The bank was just as hard up as the Government was; the Government had not a feather to fly with financially and the bank was in the same position. The Minister for Lands had gone around the country saying that the present Government had provided more money than the previous Administration, which was a misstatement inasmuch as because it was not explained that the present Government promised to find far more than they had found, and had promised to advance £2,000 to every man who had decent security, and yet they had not advanced £2,000 to half a dozen people, although in connection with applications the application fees had been returned, which were forfeitable if applications were not satisfactory. The Government had borrowed six and a half millions of money, and out of that they could have done all the work of any consequence that had been done to the State and given the bank two and a half million. He (Mr. Mitchell) had urged the Premier to borrow in London for this purpose, and thought he was going to do so until the Loan Estimates came out, and instead of a million he had found what was a paltry sum. The Ministry should realise that they were responsible to the people for the promises made, that they would find them money which the previous Government had not found, and that they could go to the Agricultural Bank and get all they wanted, and when the poor people went along who had borrowed elsewhere they were told that they could not be accommodated by the Minister for Lands' bank. So long as capital was available they should be accommo-



dated, whether they owed money to merchants or the associated banks. Why should they be compelled to pay 7 per cent. when the bank could lend them money at 5 per cent.? Hon. members of this House should protest, and he (Mr. Mitchell) would test the feeling of the House on the subject when the Minister brought down the proposed bill for an increase of capital. Every responsible member sitting in this House should protest against the action of the Minister in the discrimination that had been shown, not willingly by the trustees. They were willing to carry out the Act under the instructions of Parliament if the Minister would find the money. Hon. members should see that he redeemed his promise made to this House that money would be available. The Minister should face his responsibility in this connection. There was no doubt that the Minister by increasing the limit of advances made by the bank, and in delivering the speeches which he had, had set up hopes that had not been realised. He (Mr. Mitchell) had no wish to detain the Committee longer. He would like to have discussed agriculture at considerable length, but supposed very little good would come of it. He was satisfied that the organisation of the department was perfect because he was responsible for it.

Mr. Taylor: A very good reason.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: If the Minister had carried out his (Mr. Mitchell's) policy from the first he was satisfied he would have been right; but he was delighted that the Minister was going back to it bit by bit now, and so far as the Agricultural Department was concerned, all would be well in a little time owing to the Minister's change of front.

*Sitting suspended from 6.13 to 7.30 p.m.*

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin): The Minister for Agriculture was to be congratulated on the progress made by the agricultural industry during the past year, and the Government were also deserving of praise for their action in regard to what was perhaps the most important

subject at present before the agriculturists of this State, namely the bulk handling of grain. It was needless to point out that this was the first Government that had seriously tackled this important question in Western Australia, and it was one of the first Governments to take prompt action in regard to this matter in Australia. A commission had been appointed to draw up definite details for presentation to the country, and the Government would not have appointed that commission to visit the outlying districts and prepare a scheme unless they had decided that the system of bulk handling was absolutely necessary in the State.

Mr. George: Inquiries were made long ago.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: No inquiries had been made until the present time.

Mr. George: The Engineer-in-Chief made inquiries over six years ago.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: If these inquiries had been made so long ago, the hon. member could not show one Parliamentary paper dealing with the matter. The question of the bulk handling of grain was never more urgent in Western Australia than it was to-day. Wheat bags were being charged for at the iniquitous price of 8s. 6d. per dozen, and it might be news to the Minister to learn that even at that price settlers were practically unable to get them. Only last week in his district he met a number of settlers who had been to the various firms which handled jute goods, and they refused to deal with these orders because their supplies were all taken up.

Mr. Harper: That is all the more reason why we should have bulk handling.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Before we met next session, it was to be hoped that the Government would have decided on a definite scheme in accordance with the recommendations which the Commission would present. A great deal might be said in regard to the necessity for, and the advantages to be derived, from the immediate inauguration of the system of bulk handling. He had before him a report made to the Government

of New South Wales on this question by Mr. Niel Nielsen, until lately Minister for Lands in that State. This gentleman summarised the main advantages and, with the permission of the House he would read them—

Looking at the question from every point of view, I feel strongly in favour of our altering our system of handling grain so as to bring it into line with that already adopted by other grain producing countries. The initial cost will be considerable, but the greater part of it will fall upon the Government through the railway commissioners, and the ultimate gain to everyone will more than repay all parties concerned, including the Government. It will, moreover, put our grain grower in a position to fairly compete with other grain growing countries of the world. The advantages may be set out as follows:—(1) The immense saving in labour, time and cost of handling the grain. Terminal elevators in America receive, unload, store the grain for any period up to ten days, and load it into ships for a charge of half a cent. a bushel, equal to one farthing of our money. (2) The saving in shipping charges by the reduction of the time occupied in loading and unloading, and the consequent reduction in harbour and wharfage dues as well as in the ship's charter time. (3) Reduction of the area of water frontage and wharfage accommodation necessary, owing to the expedition in loading and unloading. (4) The expedition in unloading railway cars, thus doing away with the congestion at the terminal point and releasing the cars with much greater celerity than is possible at present. (5) The avoidance of the loss now accruing in handling by the leakage from torn sacks (one does not see a grain wasted round an elevator). (6) The absolute security of the grain during transportation, from any condition of weather, by its being in rain proof cars, these cars also preventing any possibility of pilvering. (7) The value of the box car over other forms of car for transportation of other

classes of goods in the off season. (8) The ease of cleaning and grading grain, thus saving carriage on dirt as well as sacks. (9) The saving to the farmer of the cost of providing sacks every season.

As far as this State was concerned this was perhaps the most important reason of all, although the next was also of great importance.

(10) The abolition of the man-killing work of handling grain in sacks.

(11) The placing of our grain upon the London market in better condition by reason of its being cleaned and graded, the saving of the handling operations at that end, and the securing of better competition among the buyers (at present many of the buyers deal only in grain coming to the Continent in bulk).

These reasons had been put before the people of the mother State by a man who was once Minister for Lands in that State and who was well acquainted with local conditions. Every one of the reasons applied with equal force to Western Australia, and he referred them to the Government in the event of there being any doubt as to the action they ought to take. The present waste in regard to the system of using bags was known to everyone in wheat districts, and the Government should introduce the bulk handling, to, among other things, do away with that waste. When he (Mr. Johnston) was in New South Wales a little while back, he met Mr. Burrell, the expert who had been introduced to New South Wales by the Government of that State as a result of Mr. Nielsen's recommendations, and Mr. Burrell's advice to Western Australia was very clear. He said "You are at the beginning of your wheat exporting era, and now is the time to enter on bulk handling. Do it now, before vested interests grow up in favour of the present wasteful system." Mr. Burrell also sent in a report to the Government in New South Wales, and in that he calculated that the loss to the farmer on 1,000 bags of wheat under the present system of handling was £50 8s. 6d. That calculation was based on bags, at the price of 7s. per

dozen. To-day bags were 8s. 6d. a dozen and this showed that the loss to the farmer would be even greater than Mr. Burrell's estimate of over £50 on 1,000 bags of wheat. In New South Wales, even with bags at 7s. per dozen, Mr. Burrell calculated the cost to the farmer for handling grain, at 4d. per bushel, and the basis on which that estimate was arrived was clearly set out in that gentleman's report. With elevators, it was pointed out, the whole cost of handling to the farmer would be  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per bushel or a saving to the farmer in New South Wales of  $3\frac{1}{2}$ d. per bushel by bulk handling. These were the figures of the American expert imported by the Government of New South Wales. To-day we found that bags were 1s. 6d. per dozen dearer in Western Australia, representing an extra  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per bushel. So that on the basis of those figures, the farmer paid 4d. per bushel more for the handling of his wheat than he would do under the system of bulk handling. Should not the Government therefore quickly take steps to put up the price of wheat 4d. per bushel to the producer, for that was what the position came to. Mr. Burrell's remarks in regard to the best method of starting the system of bulk handling were as follows:—

In order to inaugurate the bulk handling system on an economic basis, I would suggest that one terminal elevator be built at Sydney and one at Newcastle. These elevators could be completed in two years. When completed, until other matters are sufficiently advanced, wheat will have to be forwarded to the terminal in bags, I would also recommend the building of 1,000 box cars of the type as described earlier in this report. These cars could be acquired in lots of 300 to 500 per year. At the country stations I would recommend that the farmers form co-operative organisations and build their own elevators of capacities from 50,000 to 200,000 bushels in conjunction with the present grain sheds so that any surplus grain coming in that could not be handled at the elevator owing to the lack of

cars could be stored in the shed until cars are available, and can then either be transported in bags to terminal station or can be emptied in the adjacent elevator and be cleaned and shipped out in bulk. In course of time when the railway facilities are sufficient to handle the output rapidly enough, elevators of this size are ample for any station, and it would be useless expenditure to build them any larger. A farmers' co-operation, I think, is of advantage to the Government as well as to the farmers themselves, as in the first place the Government can spend more on improvement to the railway system, which otherwise would be spent on elevator buildings, and in the second place it allows the farmer to keep his grain in storage until he sees fit to dispose of it.

Right through the report attention was drawn to the shocking waste involved by the present system of handling wheat in Australia. Mr. Burrell stated—

As a result of what I have seen I am astonished at the extraordinary waste and loss evidently being experienced on all hands by those interested in the production. And the waste is apparently suffered in a peculiarly complacent manner, so much so that I can only conclude that money is made so readily in this country that wastage is a mere bagatelle. But I must say that in my country no one could possibly stand it.

Those who knew the wheat districts knew that wheat production was carried on at a very narrow profit. If the Government would institute the system of bulk handling it would mean all the difference between success and failure to many of our settlers, the greater part of whom were of a splendid type. Mr. Burrell also pointed out that under the system of bulk handling as compared with the present wasteful system a saving of £437,000 would be effected on a 30-million bushel crop in New South Wales. Mr. Paterson, the manager of the Agricultural Bank, estimated a 15-million bushel crop in Western Australia

this year. If that result was achieved it would be seen that our farmers were going to lose £218,500 in hard cash through the present system of handling their grain. That was calculated on a cost of sevenpence each for bags, instead of the present ruling price of 8½d., and as labour was a little dearer here than in New South Wales it was not too much to say that this year alone our settlers would lose a quarter of a million pounds for want of the system of bulk handling of wheat. Mr. Burrell had also pointed out that if wheat was handled in bulk it could be easily cleaned and graded at the elevators and so the wheat itself would be worth an extra penny per bushel. That extra penny was not allowed for in the quarter of a million pounds computed to be lost by our local farmer this year alone. The Government should take the advice given to them by experts and meet the wishes of the wheat producers by getting the system of bulk handling into force at once. It was far easier and cheaper to start now in a small way than to leave it for some future period. We were tired of hearing platitudes about the value of our wheat-producing areas. Those areas had been proved, and we knew we had the biggest wheat-producing areas in Australia. That being so, the Government could go right ahead and introduce the scheme without hesitation.

The Minister for Lands: So long as the cash is put up.

Mr. E. B. JOENSTON: The financial aspect was the one difficulty. However, the Government had been more successful than any other Government in Australia in raising money for essential works, and he had every confidence that the Government could and would find the money for a work of such an immediately reproductive character. If our settlers could save this extra quarter of a million of money this year how much would it mean to the production of the agricultural districts in future years, seeing that the money would be spent on the development of their holdings, and every section of the community would thus be benefited. He was pleased to be able to congratulate the Minister for

Agriculture on having decided to improve the status of the State farm at Narrogin. This farm was ideally suited for the future agricultural college of Western Australia, and he hoped that at an early date the Government would extend the functions of that farm beyond the measure outlined to-night by the Minister and make of it an agricultural college. He would urge the Government to advertise the fact that the farm was willing and able to do the work of teaching students. For some time past, although the farm had never looked better, there had been very few students there, and he was certain the reason for this was that people in Western Australia did not know of the existence of the farm. Many people were sending their sons to South Australia and New South Wales to be educated at the agricultural high schools in those States, in ignorance of the existence of the splendid institution at Narrogin. The Minister might very well consider restarting the *Journal of Agriculture*. If the Minister would again start that journal it would do a great deal to bring the expert officers of the department into closer touch with the settlers throughout the State. It was apparent that without the journal the settlers could not get the full benefit which they ought to have from the opinions of the expert officers of the department. It was gratifying to know that even the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) could see some good in the State implement works which had been established by the Government. Nothing showed the hypocrisy of some members of the Opposition more than the manner in which they criticised State assistance to other sections of the community, while willing to approve of what the Government did to help the farmer when success was assured. Possibly the main difference between the Government and the so-called Liberal party was the fact that the Government believed in State assistance to all sections, while the Liberal party believed in confining it to the agriculturist. The Government had done far more in two years than had ever before been done to give

assistance to the agricultural industry. He was proud of that fact and he hoped that hon. members opposite would try to realise that other sections of the community were equally entitled to State assistance. The State implement works would assuredly prove to be one of the most successful enterprises ever entered into by any Government in Australia. These works would be second only to the Agricultural Bank in the benefits they would confer upon the farming industry and the State. Some criticism had been levelled at the Government for having put up an exhibit of agricultural machinery at the Royal Show. In that the Government had done the proper thing, because it served to show the farmers that the Government were making a start, and it had stopped hon. members opposite from going round the country and saying that the Government were not making a success of their implement works and similar enterprises. All the enterprises of the Government were criticised until they proved successful, whereupon the criticism weakened. No doubt in the fulness of time hon. members opposite would reach the stage of declaring that they themselves had started these enterprises. One hon. member had expressed a fear that the State implement works would suffer through the competition of private manufacturers. Even if it were so he would be glad, because in the past there had been a ring in regard to all farming machines sold by private firms, who fixed enormous prices among themselves and mercilessly robbed the settlers. If the State implement works served the purpose of reducing the price of all machinery it would not worry him much if the State did make a small loss, because the Government would have done very good work for the producers by bringing down the price of agricultural machinery. The Government had done a great deal for the farmers through the Agricultural Bank, and now the State implement works were going to prove of further benefit. The next step would be to bring in the system of bulk handling of wheat; but if, in the meantime, the Government

could find any local deposits of phosphate of high value, he hoped they would add to their other good works by endeavouring to supply farmers with cheaper fertilisers. At present the two companies operating in Western Australia had absolutely combined, and were charging five shillings a ton more for fertilisers than they were doing in at least one of the other States. If the Government could do anything to help the producers in this respect he hoped they would do it. The Minister for Lands had expressed his intention of bringing in a Bill to give the Agricultural Bank additional capital. The Government stood for congratulation on that determination. It had been amusing to hear the member for Northam criticising the Government on the score that the Agricultural Bank was not sufficiently liberal. As a matter of fact last year the present Government had advanced £630,000 through the Agricultural Bank, as compared with £284,000 which was the most advanced by that institution in any one year prior to the Labour Government taking office. As far back as the 6th September, 1910, the Liberal party in Parliament had voted solidly against any liberalising of the Agricultural Bank at a time when that institution could not advance more than £750 to any settler.

Mr. George: Where did you get that?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: That appeared in *Hansard* of the 6th September, 1910, and the member for Northam had pointed out as a reason for not liberalising the bank at that time that only 13 settlers had managed to get under his administration the limit of £750 from that institution. Since then, he was glad to say, the present Government had increased the amount which the bank could advance to any one settler to £2,000, and they were advancing three times as much in the year as had ever been advanced by the Liberal Government. Yet they had some members of the Opposition— if the rules of debate would permit he would call them political hypocrites—criticising the present Government for not advancing more money, although the Government were ad-

vancing three times as much as their predecessors had done. When the Liberal Government were in power they had stopped the Labour party from liberalising the Agricultural Bank, but since that party had attained power they had liberalised the institution with the splendid results he had mentioned. Even to-day he hoped the Government would continue their progressive policy, and further liberalise and extend the functions of the Agricultural Bank. He would support the increase in the capital of the bank, as outlined by the Minister for Lands.

Mr. HARPER (Pingelly): If there was one thing which the member for Williams-Narrogin could be congratulated upon it was his back-scratching of the Government. The hon. member hardly ever uttered a sentence without eulogising the Government. No doubt he had been a very great success in that way, and had gained a good deal of kudos by so doing. Perhaps the Government were earnestly desiring to do the right thing in their various undertakings, but he disagreed with them in regard to their policy of spending so much money in the city of Perth in the purchase of the trams and the erection of workers' homes. The member for Williams-Narrogin had complained of a great many things in the agricultural areas, and it could be said without fear of contradiction that the money which had been invested by the Government in the city could have been utilised much better in giving the Agricultural Bank more money to lend out to the deserving farmers of this State. The Agricultural Bank was a great institution and one that had been established and provided for by the Liberal Government. As the hon. member had remarked, the demands upon the resources of the bank were increasing, and at no time in the history of Western Australia had they been greater than during the last year or two. Much of the money which had been borrowed by the State during the last two years had been spent in a wrong direction. His idea of the management of this country was to develop the agricultural areas first and

the development of the city would follow. There was no doubt that a great deal more could have been done by the Government to assist the settlers by establishing fertiliser works similar to those of the Mount Lyell Company and Cuming, Smith and Company. So far as one could learn, those companies were making a profit of about £1 per ton on the fertilisers used in this State and there was about 50,000 tons of fertiliser employed in the State each year. Therefore, had the Government established fertiliser works there would have been an enormous saving to those people who were doing so much to develop the country. In many cases which had come under his notice severe hardship had been caused by the banks wanting to call in the capital they had lent to the farmers. It would have been a great thing if the Government had been in a position to lend out a million pounds more than they had already lent, and if the Government had not gone in for the purchase of the trams, workers' cottages, State brickyards, State steamers, State sawmills, and many other of those socialistic undertakings which the country had to put up with to-day, and the money so employed had been devoted to the primary industries, it would have been a great boon to the farmer. He agreed with the member for Williams-Narrogin about the need for introducing bulk handling of wheat, but there again the Government were handicapped by lack of capital. Millions of money had been spent in a wrong direction, with the result that the country was only talking about bulk handling when that system ought to be in actual practice. Then again, the Government proposed an increase in the freight on fertilisers. That was another injustice to the farmers who were already taxed right up to the hilt, and could not possibly endure any more impositions of that description. The proposed increase would be a serious matter for the farmers. For the last 20 years both past and present Governments had been piling up expenses against the primary producer. Every wage earner had had his conditions improved, but every time those im-

provements certainly operated against the primary producer. Last year the present Government had increased the wages of railway servants by something like £150,000 when it was all taken into account, and now the railways were not paying and the freights had to be put up against the farmer who was least able to bear an additional burden. No citizen of Western Australia had a harder task than the farmer, and there was ample proof that, on account of the people who had the votes on the goldfields and in the towns, the position was made worse every day for the primary producers, both mine owners and wheat growers. Yet those were the people we had to depend upon to supply the State's revenue and uphold the credit of the country. As an instance of how costs were increasing, he had seen at Wandering the other day a hall which had been built 17 years ago for £250, but that same hall, if built to-day would cost more like £700. Everything was going up in the same ratio throughout Australia. It was all militating against the primary producer, and there was no possible chance of the primary producers, the wheat growers in this State, carrying any further inposition. In reference to an embargo which had been placed on the introduction of potatoes into the Pingelly district, he wanted to assure the Minister that that was not a potato-growing district and the embargo was an injustice to the people there.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: It is not on the Pingelly district.

Mr. HARPER: The embargo had been placed on the Pingelly district and also the Narrogin district. That country did not grow potatoes to send out of the district, and for that reason the residents claimed that the embargo ought to be removed.

Hon. Frank Wilson: What is the good of getting Irish blight into the district?

Mr. HARPER: If Beverley and York were exempt why should not Pingelly and Narrogin be also exempt? They were all the same class of country, which did not grow potatoes, and why should the people in those parts be obliged to pay

2s. per hundredweight more than people in other districts. He would not object to the embargo if potatoes were grown in those districts for other than purely local consumption.

The Minister for Lands: But they are handy to districts where potatoes are grown.

Mr. HARPER: The potatoes came from Albany and were stopped at Beverley, and no doubt the farmers took advantage of that and added a little to the price.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Get them from Busselton or Bunbury.

Mr. HARPER: A great deal had been heard during the last election about Irish blight, and the prohibition of the importation of potatoes from the Eastern States, and although the member for Northam had been severely criticised by people who had not understood the question it was very pleasing that the results had proved so beneficial to Western Australia. It was a good thing for Western Australia that the Irish blight was found in the Eastern States, because if it had not been for that fact the potato growing industry in this State would not have developed as it had done. The State was in a position to-day to grow sufficient potatoes for its own people. Some 14 years ago the importation of apples from the Eastern States had been prohibited on account of the codlin moth, and there had followed the same consequence of increased local production, with the result that Western Australia to-day grew plenty of apples for export. Nevertheless, at the time, Sir John Forrest had been severely criticised. The member for Northam could not have done more for Western Australia than make the people pay high prices for potatoes. He had set people thinking, they went to work, and the result was that potatoes were now largely grown in this State, at any rate enough for all the requirements of this State. Perhaps the same thing would happen in regard to other industries and the same results might be obtained for Western Australia. When once the people began to work and to think, they soon overcame the difficulties.

There was a great question regarding the land in the dry areas and in the districts which were more than 15 or 20 miles from a railway. In two portions of his electorate, north-east of Kondinin and Gnarkadilling, where the land values were double what they ought to be, he hoped the Government would see their way clear to reduce the prices. Another established district which had been settled for 10 years and in which the farmers had been living in hope of getting a railway was the Corraning district. Codjatotine and Dumbitmoony were 18 to 20 miles from any railway, and the people in those parts had been battling with the difficulties until they were almost broken-hearted with disappointment. These people should be exempted from land rents until they were given a railway within a reasonable distance of their farms. It was wicked to ask them to stand up to the present conditions. They had been encouraged to go on the land and had been promised a railway, and at present they were as far from getting a railway as ever they were. He would point out to the Minister that Pingelly was without a land agent and that town was 30 miles from Beverley or Narrogin.

The Minister for Lands: That is a matter which should have been mentioned on the Lands Estimates.

Mr. HARPER: It was a question affecting the wheat belt. From the Pingelly railway station or siding—it was not worthy of the name of a station because it was a disgrace to the country and to the railways; everyone who passed through criticised it, and presumably it had not been improved since the railway was built—200,000 bags of wheat were sent away, and yet the farmers were without a land agent in that town. This was penalising one portion of Western Australia to the benefit of another. It was a great inconvenience to the farmers who were paying rent and who had other transactions, to have to send to Perth, Beverley, or Narrogin. That difficulty could be easily overcome by appointing the secretary of the roads board to do the work, and the cost would be only about £50 a year. It was a great injustice to the people that they should be subject to

this disadvantage, and the Minister ought to see that a land agent was appointed.

Mr. MALE (Kimberley): The Minister in opening his speech in connection with this department pointed out, and rightly too, that it was perhaps one of the most important departments to be considered, and he sympathised with the Minister inasmuch as hon. members apparently did not appreciate the fact. Only about half-a-dozen members were in the Chamber devoting attention to the department and that fact was greatly to be regretted. Greater attention should be paid to such an important department.

Mr. Turvey: The benches on your side are pretty empty considering that you reckon you are the only people who look after the farmers.

Mr. MALE: The Minister dealt with several items which came under the Department of Agriculture and Industries but absolutely neglected one big portion of the State, the North. Apparently, it had been neglected as part of the policy of the Government. One of the first things the Minister or Cabinet did on taking office was to do away with the Commissioner for Tropical Agriculture, and apparently tropical agriculture and the tropics generally were not to be considered. The question seemed to be altogether too tropical for the present Government. He could well understand the action of the member for Roebourne (Mr. Gardiner) in moving a motion to the effect that it was necessary to appoint under the Government a special department for the North. It was absolutely necessary that something should be done. The Minister for Lands and Cabinet ignored the North, and unless it received assistance, either in the shape of a new department, or an advisory Minister, or something of that kind, the North would be neglected for all time. The pastoral industry was, perhaps, as important as the wheat industry, of which we had heard so much. At the present time it was far more important than the irrigation industry which was to be started, and he would like the Minister and Cabinet to take more interest than they had done in the North and in its industries and



possibilities. The question of establishing freezing works or of developing the pastoral industry, was altogether neglected. What alarmed him most was the fact that the Minister, who might be good and competent as Minister for Lands, though it was not for him to express an opinion on account of the department having been dealt with, took unto himself many other duties. Apparently the Minister considered he was an authority on the wheat belt, on the South-West and irrigation, on the fruit industry, Government freezing works, abattoirs, sale yards, markets, stock, implement works, and nearly everything under the sun, a jack-of-all trades. Every department was becoming loaded with State industries and every Minister considered himself fit and competent to run any industry. The position was absurd. It required experienced men to run such industries, and again he desired to voice his opinion that he was absolutely opposed to State industries. They could not be run economically or well, and to prove this we had the experience of other States and, unfortunately, we were having experience in this State also at the present time. Other hon. members seemed to think that agricultural implement works would be a good thing for this State.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: A splendid thing.

Mr. MALE: The fact that we were starting agricultural implement works was deplored by him. He thought we would have from them the same results as from other State industries.

Mr. Foley: Our railways?

Mr. MALE: It was to be deplored that the railways, which had been a profitable concern, were now a losing concern. This was sufficient to show that the Government were not capable of running all these State industries effectively and well.

Mr. Foley: You could not get a farmers' representative to say that.

Mr. Turvey: Would you advocate handing the railways over to private enterprise?

Mr. MALE: That question was not under discussion, but he did not believe in State enterprises being extended as they had been.

Mr. Carpenter: You are behind the times.

Mr. MALE: That was not so. The extension of State industries meant that the Government were using the money of the people to run businesses in opposition to them. There was no necessity for the State to enter into these businesses.

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot allow a discussion on State steamships.

Mr. MALE: State steamships had not been mentioned by him.

The CHAIRMAN: According to an interjection they were mentioned.

Mr. MALE: The interjection was not heard by him. He could quite understand that the matter of State steamships was sticking in the minds of members on the Government side. The only reference he could make to them would be when dealing with stock shipping, which presumably would be by State steamships. He wished to point out in the first place that the North had been neglected, and in the second place that the Ministers of any Government had no right to use the people's money to run businesses in opposition to the people. The money was required for other purposes. The hon. member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. E. B. Johnston) had spoken of the need for money to facilitate the handling of wheat in bulk.

Mr. Foley: Would you be against making the handling of wheat a State industry?

Mr. MALE: The most of the handling of wheat would be in connection with the railways and harbours.

Mr. Foley: No, it is not so.

Mr. MALE: And those concerns were dealt with by the Government, but, owing to the lack of money, money which had been expended to duplicate businesses which already existed in the State, to start butcher shops, implement works, and other industries, no funds were available for necessary developmental work. Money which was required by the Agricultural Bank to assist the settlers to develop the land was not available. Where was it? In the implement works, butcher shops, brickworks, and quarries. All

those industries had been duplicated and were quite unnecessary.

Mr. Foley: It is the duplication which hurts you people; that is the trouble.

Mr. MALE: Let hon. members examine the results of the meat business. Unfortunately, the Estimates were so drafted that it was very difficult to get all the information together into one place. We had meat sales, stock, Yandanooka estate, up-keep, steamships, and many other items, all really connected with the sale of meat; but they were all over the place, and it was very difficult for us to collect them together and see exactly what was the position. The balance sheet of course was not available. We quite understood that. We never expected that it would be available, and he believed that it was to come along as a Christmas box later on.

Mr. Allen: This Christmas or the one after?

Mr. MALE: In his opinion the Audit Department was not the right place for these balance sheets to be audited. Balance sheets in connection with our trading concerns should be dealt with and handled by auditors accustomed to auditing the accounts of trading concerns, and if they were so audited, instead of it being months, apparently six months, before we got the balance sheets, a continuous audit would be kept of all our trading concerns, a weekly or fortnightly audit as the case might require, and at the close of the financial year, within a reasonable time, possibly a few weeks, we should get our properly audited balance sheets, and be able to criticise them when the Estimates came down, and say whether they met with the approval of this House and the country. It was highly essential that that course should be pursued and that this unnecessary, and so far as hon. members were concerned, unwelcome delay should be avoided. In connection with meat sales he found under expenditure:—Purchases, etc. £26,000, incidental £2,000, fodder, etc. £2,000, wages, etc. £2,500, a total of £32,500, against which there was an esti-

mated revenue of sales, sales of meat he presumed, of £35,000.

Mr. Carpenter: Good business.

Mr. MALE: In connection with this there must be many items which should have to appear in a balance sheet, such as rent, managing charges, bad debts and depreciation, deaths of stock and losses of meat, and many other items which had to be incurred in connection with a trading concern of that kind. Therefore from these estimates it was impossible for the Committee to form a fair idea of what the results would be. Then again, under stock, he presumed that stock which was killed to supply these butcher shops, we found the items:—Travelling, freight, cartage, etc. £950; Yandanooka estate, upkeep, stock, plant, etc., £15,000; and against that there was a revenue showing of £19,000, a profit of £3,050, out of which, of course, would have to be deducted the item of management, the item of interest, interest on the Yandanooka estate, the item of deaths—there was bound to be a certain number of losses—and in connection with that he might say the Premier in his Budget advised us that some 30,000 acres of Yandanooka estate had been set aside for use in connection with the supply of meat to the butcher shops, 30,000 acres purchased at £2 or £2 5s. per acre, and here we had an item of £60,000 worth of land being reserved on which to turn the stock, which were to supply the butcher shops. It was an enormous item, and the interest must be charged up against the shops. Someone had to pay for it. As he had pointed out, these items of meat trading, butcher shops, Yandanooka estate and cattle purchase, were all so mixed up in these Estimates that it was impossible for us to arrive at any true conclusion as to the position of affairs or as to what the Government estimated would be the result at the end of the financial year; but he thought it was quite a foregone conclusion that the result would be an enormous loss to the country. Earlier in the session he had had occasion to draw attention to the purchase of stock by the Government some time ago, stock which they purchased from the Australian

Bovril Company, and in connection with that matter the Minister in replying informed him that he "might tell the hon. member the other party to the agreement would like to terminate it to-morrow if he were willing. The deal is a good one and it was made in order that we might obtain our supplies and fill the steamer space." The Minister said the deal was a good one. He (Mr. Male) would like hon. members to take particular notice of those words "the deal is a good one." He admitted the deal was absolutely a good one, but unfortunately not a good one for the Minister or the country, a good one only for the seller, and in connection with that he thought we were justified in knowing a little bit more about that good deal spoken of so highly by the Minister. Let him observe in passing that the Minister was particularly careful in introducing these Estimates to make no reference to butcheries, stock purchases, or anything in connection with the matter.

The Minister for Lands: It was referred to at length by the Premier.

Mr. MALE: It may have been; but the Premier dwelt upon everything in the Estimates, and things that were not in the Estimates. There were all sorts of things in the Premier's speech which he (Mr. Male) could not follow, questions of electric power, alternating distributors, and so on. He claimed in connection with these particular matters that he was not any more ignorant than other members; but he desired members to interpret certain things in the Premier's speech without turning up text books. Therefore, it was absolutely necessary when the items came on separately that Ministers should give us another introduction and tell us something about the matters which came under their particular control. In connection with this particular matter it was a fair thing for us and the country to know something about this "good deal," and let us take clause 1 of the agreement, which read—

Quality.—The said cattle shall have an average weight of 625lbs. per head

delivered. Such average weight is to be calculated at the time of each delivery, and cattle received by the purchaser without objection at the time are to be taken as being of the specific weight and accepted accordingly.

Let him observe in passing that there was absolutely no stipulation as to sex, no mention whatever as to whether the Government had purchased bullocks or cows, there was no qualification as to age, or whether they should be steers, old bullocks, or breeding cows, or anything else. There was unfortunately no mention of the cattle being fat, or fit for the butcher, and as a matter of fact the only condition mentioned in connection with quality was that they should average 625lbs. live weight delivered at Wyndham. That was the qualification of quality. All the seller had to do was to put in an old piker bullock of say 800lbs. weight and not necessarily in condition, and an old cow weighing 450lbs. to get the average required by the contract. They could be good steers or bad steers, it did not matter, there was nothing to say that they should be fit to kill. If we proceeded a little further and came down to the question of warranty in the agreement we found—

Warranty.—The cattle as a whole are to be of fair merchantable quality and condition and of the specified weight calculated on an average basis. Should any dispute arise with regard to the quality, condition, or weight, the purchaser shall nevertheless receive and take delivery of the said cattle and make due payment therefor as herein agreed, and such dispute shall be referred to arbitration in accordance with the provisions in that behalf herein contained.

It had been pointed out by him that there was no stipulation that the cattle should be fat or fit for the butcher, and this warranty merely said that they should be of "fair merchantable quality and condition." He had had a fair amount of experience in the buying and selling of stock, and must say that in all his experience this was the first time

he had ever seen the word "merchantable" applied or used in the sale contract note for stock.

Mr. Foley: That is no argument that it is wrong.

Mr. MALE: That being the case he had felt it his duty to look up the word "merchantable" in the dictionary and see exactly where we were. He had got Chambers's dictionary, one which he believed was accepted as reliable, and there found that "merchantable" meant "suitable for sale," further "inferior to the very best but suitable for ordinary purposes," an interpretation which could be well placed on store cattle. We therefore found that the Government was to get fair merchantable quality, that was something inferior to the best. They had not bought the best; they would not buy the best as it might cost too much. They had bought as "fair merchantable," any old stuff to do for the people down here, anything that would sell or was suitable for ordinary purposes; a wonderful agreement! "Fair merchantable" was an interpretation which could well be placed on store cattle or any cattle which could be taken along and sold. It was unfortunate after all to think that the Government should enter into such an agreement and that they should deliberately buy cattle which were inferior to the best. Then again, apparently the only thing left open to dispute was the question of weight; there was nothing about the question of quality. Admitting they were diseased and unsaleable, there might be grounds for dispute, but here the only question of dispute was that of weight. Delivery had to be taken at Wyndham, and the cattle had to be paid for. The steamer was waiting at Wyndham for the cattle when they arrived at the port and they had to be shipped. It was known to all that on the journey down cattle lost anything from 80 to 120 lbs. Assuming the cattle filled the bill at Wyndham, and they did go 625lbs., who in the name of goodness would tell us what they weighed at Fremantle. There was no stipulation in the agreement as to what would be done if a dispute arose. If there had been

any such qualification, it would have been all right, but as it was, the Government had to take delivery, they had to receive the cattle and pay for them.

The Premier: It is a pretty bony animal that weighs 625lbs.

Mr. MALE: They were pretty bony by the time they got down here.

Mr. Gill: Have you seen any in your dreams?

Mr. MALE: No, but he had seen many in reality, and so had the Government, and the Government did not like them.

Mr. Foley: How can you prove that the cattle lost weight coming down?

Mr. MALE: It would be very difficult for him to prove that the hon. member was sane.

The Premier: It requires a sane man to prove that.

Mr. MALE: It has already been pointed out by him that it was not possible to prove anything under this agreement. The only thing we knew was that delivery had to be taken of the cattle and that they had to be paid for. Who drew up this agreement? Was it the handiwork of the Minister for Lands?

The Minister for Lands: Sir Newton Moore drew it up.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Did he sign it?

Mr. MALE: The Minister for Lands signed the agreement in Perth. The draft agreement was sent to Perth, and he perused it and yet the Minister stated that Sir Newton Moore prepared it.

Mr. Foley: You said that Sir Newton Moore got the loan, now give him the credit for this as well.

Mr. MALE: No; he would give Sir Newton Moore credit for having the sense to send out a draft agreement for the Minister for Lands and the representative of the Bovril Company to sign in Perth.

The Premier: What is wrong with it anyhow?

Mr. MALE: There was no sense or salvation in the agreement except for the Bovril Company, and the Government knew that, in spite of the fact that the Minister for Lands told the House at the beginning of the session that it was a good deal. Yet the Minister to-day

was trying to crawl out of this good deal. We had heard before that the agreement had been made in London, but, on perusing the papers, it was found that such was not the case. The agreement was made in Perth and with the knowledge of the Premier and the Minister for Lands. An offer was submitted from London to Perth by cable, and in reply to that the Agent General was advised, presumably by the Premier, as to what he could accept on behalf of the Government. Even then, after he was advised, what did he do? Did he go and make an agreement and sign it in London? No. A draft agreement was drawn up and sent to Perth, and it was passed on to the officer whom we might call the butcher's shops stock buying business manager, for his criticism. Before it was signed, this officer read it and made a report on it. What did that business manager, Mr. Cairns, say in connection with the agreement? In paragraph 3 of his report, Mr. Cairns wrote—

If these cattle arrive here in as good condition as the lot from the aborigines' station, a good result will follow. Nevertheless, the changed conditions arising out of the Government taking up this business mean that we will have keen competition and the bare possibility of the market being restricted through any cause (such as pleuro) whatever, will be availed of to the fullest extent by the trade which is openly and furiously antagonistic to the whole scheme.

Further on, Mr. Cairns wrote in regard to the abattoirs—

If anything further is required to put life into the North Fremantle abattoirs scheme, it is the possibility of these animals having to be killed at the seaboard, as they are from a district rightly or wrongly held in suspicion by many experienced stockmen.

The Premier: Whose report is that?

Mr. MALE: It is the report of Mr. Cairns.

The Premier: A canny Scotchman.

Mr. MALE: Mr. Cairns pointed out something to the Minister before he signed the agreement in connection with

these cattle, and the Premier calls him a canny Scotchman, yet the Government deliberately and knowingly purchased cattle from a station outside the State, which cattle, according to Mr. Cairns, were held in suspicion by experienced stockmen, and no safeguard whatever in that connection was placed in the agreement. Delivery had to be taken. They had to be paid for whether there was a dispute or not. What was the result of the trading of this good deal so eloquently referred to by the Minister for Lands? On the 17th September, 300 of these cattle were offered for sale and realised a price somewhere about £5 7s. 6d. On the 24th September another 300 were brought down and offered for sale, realising somewhere about £4 per head. On the 15th October, another 300 came down and they realised about £3 16s. 7d. per head. These cattle cost the Government £3 15s. per head at Wyndham, and to that price there had to be added the cost of bringing them down, wharfage, freight, fodder, attendance, yarding, and sale and agency charges. Roughly speaking, therefore, these three shipments would show the Government an average loss of £1,000 per shipment. It was to be hoped that this loss would be duly shown in connection with the meat shops or stock purchases, or even the Yandanooka estate, or something or other. There were so many accounts that it was hard to tell where the figures would be found. It was impossible to follow them. Not only had we lost something like £1,000 per shipment, but the meat was admittedly of a poor quality, and some of it was unsaleable. If one only referred to the sale of Government stock on 16/10/13—it was not long ago—it would be seen that the Government auctioneer, Mr. Cairns, said that the explanation of the poor price lay in the fact that there was no demand for plain quality beef. Mr. Cairns knew what the position was. The market had been overstocked by the Monday's sale by 500 cattle, and the condition of the Wednesday's market had arisen through the desire of the Government to get the animals killed. One wondered why. The fact that supplies from the Bovril Company were more or less affected by pleuro-pneu-

monia, rendered it necessary, apparently, to get the animals ready for quick sale—quick and lively, so that they would not die in the hands of the Government.

Mr. FOLEY: Killed to save their lives.

Mr. MALE: Was he not quite right, therefore, in saying that the meat was of poor quality? The Government admitted that the cattle were almost unsaleable, and this was the stuff—it could not be called meat—which was provided for the Government butchers shops, and which was distributed for consumption in the metropolitan area. This was how we were assisting people to get cheap meat; cheap and nasty meat would be more like it. And this was the Government which prided themselves on the careful manner in which they did everything! It was necessary for them to have their own milk supply so that they might supply pure milk to the hospitals and other institutions. It was necessary also for them to have their own meat supply for the Government institutions and the public. Where, before, tenders were called for supplying the institutions, now everything had to come from the Government establishments. He had referred to the class of meat which these establishments supplied.

The Premier: That statement is about as incorrect as most of your other statements.

Mr. MALE: The price of meat might be reduced by this method, but it could only be claimed that the meat was cheap and nasty. Moreover, that meat was being brought from outside the State, and put into open competition with the meat grown in the State. He could safely say that the meat produced in this State was the healthiest in the world.

The Premier: The growers can do with a little bit of healthy competition.

Mr. MALE: If this was an example of the methods by which our finances were to be straightened out he was justified in his opposition against State enterprise. If this was an example of the capacity of the Government to run trading concerns, then the sooner the country realised it the better it would be. Notwithstanding this

the Minister for Lands came along with his State implement works.

Mr. FOLEY: Give us some criticism on that.

Mr. MALE: How was it possible to criticise something which did not exist? One item on the Estimates read, "Revenue to be derived from the agricultural implement works, £70,000." He understood that as a matter of fact not the whole of that £70,000 was to come out of the agricultural implement works. If it was, and if we were only to receive one-third cash for the implements sold, it looked as if an alarming amount of capital would have to be put into these works, which, to make such a return, would require from a quarter to half a million of money to run. This money was required for far more important purposes than to bring the State into open competition with industries already established by private enterprise. Why should the Government run in opposition to our private citizens? On the one hand we wanted all the people we could get, and on the other the Agricultural Bank and necessary agricultural railways were crying out for money. The North was being starved for money, yet we were duplicating existing enterprises.

The Premier: And the Western Australian Bank is going to close down on advances, as the manager said last night.

Hon. Frank Wilson: A most scathing indictment.

Mr. MALE: As had previously been said, the important North was absolutely neglected.

The Premier: That is incorrect; the North has never had such attention before.

Mr. MALE: The pearling industry had received attention in the sense that more revenue had been extracted from it by the Government. The squatters had had attention at the hands of the Government, who had brought cattle from outside the State to put into open competition with the locally grown cattle. Why, instead of spending money on duplicating existing enterprises, did not the Government do something in connection with the establishment of freezers in the North? For many years past the Kimberley people had been

crying out for that assistance. Private enterprise had been choked off by the fear of Government competition, and therefore it was now up to the Government to do something in this respect. And not only in the case of the freezers, but in respect to other industries in the State, private enterprise had been choked off with the same fear of Government interference.

The Premier: Who choked private enterprise off the freezers?

Mr. MALE: It mattered not at all whether it was the present or the previous Government. Private enterprise had been choked off and something should now be done by the Government. On more than one occasion the Liberal party had lost seats at election time in consequence of advocating this work, but in spite of that and even if it meant the loss of seats again, that plank would be retained in the party's programme.

The Premier: Why did you not establish the freezers when your party was in power?

Mr. MALE: If the Premier liked to take that plank from the Liberal party's platform and act upon it members of the Opposition would be prepared to assist him.

The Premier: Why did you not do it yourselves?

Hon. Frank Wilson: It was on the Estimates, but you stopped the calling for tenders.

Mr. MALE: It was unnecessary to again go over the ground and reproduce the arguments for and against the work. The world's market was open to the pastoralists as soon as their meat could be put into that market. At the very time the Government were going outside the State for cattle with which to compete against the local cattle, the growers in the North had to find a market for their meat. The Government would not give the squatters of the North a living price for their cattle, but preferred to buy at £3 15s. a head and bring the cattle down here to make a loss. The squatters of the North had the same right to get the world's price for their meat as had the farmer to get the world's price for his wheat. It was not necessary

to take up any more time. Questions affecting the wheat belt, irrigation, the Agricultural Bank, and other sub-departments had been dealt with by other members of the House better able to deal with them than was he. However, on the particular points which he had touched he could speak feelingly, and when he saw a contract made by the Government for the purpose of securing stock, a contract sent out here to be revised before it was signed, such a contract, it alarmed him indeed for the country and for the state of the finances. If contracts of that kind were continued the Premier's prediction of a £450,000 deficit would, he was afraid, be doubled.

Mr. A. N. PIESSE (Toodyay): Notwithstanding the remarks of the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. E. B. Johnston) who had assumed the role of tenth Minister, it was a pity that the Minister for Lands had not thought fit to make any definite statement in regard to the bulk handling of wheat. Presumably that statement would be forthcoming when the Minister replied. It should not be left to the member for Williams-Narrogin to give to the country this valuable information. We had of course a big burden in the cost of bags, and it was time that more active steps were taken to save this great loss. He was glad to learn from the Minister that it was intended to establish an agricultural college, but he strongly objected to that college being established at Narrogin. It should be in a more central position.

The Premier: What about Toodyay?

Mr. A. N. PIESSE: Toodyay was certainly a more suitable district. But the metropolitan youth should be considered, and for once he would sacrifice the interests of Toodyay to those of Swan. The college should be somewhere handy to the metropolitan area, where it would serve many sons of the workers. There was a great desire to make the University free, and in all consistency this agricultural college would be free, and therefore it should be somewhere handy to the metropolitan area. Narrogin seemed to be a specially favoured district. There was no valid reason why ordinary conveniences

should be stripped from other districts, as he had pointed out on the preceding evening, while privileges and benefits were piled on to districts who did not require them.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: But we have the buildings and everything ready at Narrogin.

Mr. A. N. PIESSE: The hon. member had again thought fit to cast serious reflections on members of the Opposition, and indulge in insulting epithets, such as "hypocrite," and the "so-called Liberal party." If it came to a comparison of hypocrites, the hon. member would stand a very fair chance of taking first place. The hon. member's repeated and uncalled for attacks on members of the Opposition and particularly the member for Northam, were to be deprecated. The hon. member lost no opportunity of casting reflections upon the member for Northam.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not know that this is discussing the Estimates.

Mr. A. N. PIESSE: At all events it was to be hoped the hon. member would not continue in that strain, because if the light of day were to be thrown on the official connection of both hon. members with the Lands Department, it would quickly be seen that there was little to justify the repeated insults which were hurled right and left by the member for Williams-Narrogin. It was gratifying that the Minister for Lands should have seen fit to establish wheat breeding farms throughout the different districts. That was a good work. Great credit was due to the Commissioner for the Wheat Belt in whom the State had a popular official who enjoyed the confidence of the farmers. The same could be said of the Commissioner for Fruit Industries. Both those gentlemen had done good work. He would like to see the Government go further in the way of experimental farms, and establish a State orchard or nursery. It was well known that fruit growers could not import vine cuttings, and it would be useful if there were a State nursery for raising a better class of grapes.

Mr. Thomas: You are a wholesale socialist.

Mr. A. N. PIESSE: If it was felt to be right and proper to have State farms, let us have also State nurseries.

The Premier: We have one.

Mr. A. N. PIESSE: Of what use was the orchard at Brunswick? From his practical knowledge of fruit growing he could say that the Brunswick orchard would be of little service to the industry except in that district. They might rear a plant which would suit Brunswick, but would not be at all suitable for the inland districts such as Northam, Toodyay, and Katanning. The Brunswick orchard was only of use in proving the adaptability of a particular plant to that district, whereas a State nursery would be of value to the general community, because it would possibly produce a better class of fruit tree than was obtainable at the present time.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Where would you put the nursery?

Mr. A. N. PIESSE: Not at Narrogin. Even at Brunswick it would be quite safe.

The Premier: Why enter into competition with the nurserymen?

Mr. A. N. PIESSE: Because there was a good deal of abuse and loss inflicted on the general community by the nurserymen. Considerable loss had resulted from the supply of plants not true to name, as the member for Swan would bear witness. The Government had seen fit to breed seed wheat true to name, and if that was necessary and right it was also right for the State to produce a good fruit tree. Private nurseries had scattered broadcast a very inferior class of tree, and he himself had had a very painful experience of that nature. Much stuff was sold which was absolutely unfitted for planting purposes, and the time had arrived when the present socialistic Government should go further.

The Premier: Hear, hear.

Mr. A. N. PIESSE: There was nothing of the State steamers about this proposal. It would not cost the Government anything like £1,000, and he was sure it would result in profit to the community generally. As for the agricultural implement works, he thought it would have been better had the Government taken a hand in the manufacture of fertilisers. If



there was any loss in that direction the farmer would derive the benefit, but if there was a loss in the manufacture of implements the farmer would not derive any benefit. The State implement works were a risky venture, but it was possible that the Government might get more profit out of that undertaking than out of the State steamers and sawmills. He would like to bear testimony to the good work done by Mr. Connor, the Commissioner for the South-West. That gentleman had conferred a big benefit on fodder growers by the introduction of Berseem clover, which had proved itself extremely profitable and well adapted to the country. In conclusion, he hoped that when the proposed agricultural college was finally decided upon the Government would see fit to remove the site to some place on the Swan or in the Toodyay district.

Mr. TURVEY (Swan): Whilst appreciating the anxiety of the member for Toodyay to have the agricultural college established somewhere in the Swan district, he trusted that the college would not be built in the Swan electorate because he had the welfare of the State at heart, and he felt that it would be an absurdity for any Government to think of building an agricultural college in a purely horticultural district. He hoped when the Government did take in hand seriously the establishment of agricultural colleges for equipping our youths with an agricultural education, those institutions would be established in the larger centres of the wheat belt. He was surprised at the attitude of the member for Northam in attacking the Minister for Agriculture on the ground that the Minister had not made provision for a sufficient increase of the capital of the Agricultural Bank, and had not extended assistance from the bank to the farmers to the same extent as previous Governments had done. That accusation was particularly astounding when one recalled the speech made by the hon. member some time last year, and also in 1911, when he had opposed the proposal of the present Government to increase the capital of the Agricultural Bank. On this subject the farmers were the best judges, and they knew perfectly well that the present Government had done all that

was possible to lend them a helping hand, and lift them out of the hands of the chartered banks with which many of them had become very deeply involved. The speeches made this evening by members on the Opposition benches had been somewhat confusing. One or two members had congratulated the Government on the establishment of State implement works, which those members stated they knew all along would be a success, and other members had been equally emphatic in saying that the experiment was doomed to failure. He had been pleased to hear the Minister say that it was his intention to arrange for depots at various centres when the works were sufficiently well established. He hoped those depots would be arranged for in the larger centres in the agricultural areas. It was pleasing to hear that the Minister had been already able to supply some machinery to the farmers at a substantial reduction for, after all, whilst the Government would, no doubt, turn out a good article to the farmers, it would be of little use to supply that good article unless they could fulfil the promise made to the people that they would supply implements from the State works at a much cheaper rate than they had been obtained in the past. He had been interested to hear the remarks of the member for Williams-Narrogin on the bulk handling of wheat, and he had been surprised at the opinion expressed by the member for Toodyay that the Minister should have given some definite announcement to the Committee on the subject. That remark was surprising, in view of the fact that a commission of experts had been appointed by the Government to deal with that matter, and that commission had not yet handed in their report to the Minister. The member for Williams-Narrogin had apparently omitted one or two points in his calculations regarding bulk handling. In the array of figures he had presented to the House the hon. member had made no allowance for the fact that at the present time bags were bought every year, and they would run out at about 1½d. per bag, and if bags were done away with it would be fair to deduct at least 1½d. from the present cost. Then, again, the hon. mem-

ber had quoted a statement made by American experts, but it should be remembered that even if bulk handling were established it would be many years before we could reach the standard that obtained in America, and even at the present time in some of the districts in America the farmers still utilised the bags, as they would require to do in this State for many years. The bags were sent to the elevators, either at the ports or at the district receiving stations, and they were returned to the farmer so that there was still the cost of handling the wheat in bags. The reduction was in the fact that the bags were returned to the farmer, and were used over and over again for very many years. However, he was prepared to allow the experts to gather all the evidence they could in connection with this matter and to abide by the decision arrived at by the Government when the report was received. Even in the Eastern States bulk handling of wheat was not viewed with general favour throughout the agricultural districts. He noticed in some reports from the Wimmera district that agricultural societies were carrying notions opposing the system of the bulk handling of wheat. The reason he was at a loss to know, except that probably the farmers recognised that the initial cost to them would be considerable. However, the question of the bulk handling of wheat should receive the earnest consideration of the Government, for sooner or later it must be faced. It was pleasing to note that the State last year exported flour considerably in excess of the quantity exported in previous years. The greater the attention devoted to the export of flour instead of the export of wheat, the better it would be for the State. It was estimated that at the present time we were importing £2,000 worth per month of bran and pollard, which, if the grain were gristed in our own State, and the flour exported, would be here ready to be used by the farmers and dairymen, and would give a big impetus to the dairying industry. The greater the inducement that was given by way of exporting flour, the better it would be for the State because in addition there was the enrichment of the soil which followed

from the feeding of stock on the bi-products of the grain. It was estimated that with every million bushels of wheat sent out of the country, we were sending away about £28,000 worth of fertilisers that would have been returned to the soil if the bi-products of the grain had been retained in the State. That was a considerable item and was worthy of the earnest attention of farmers throughout the State. The Minister should give very serious consideration to the encouragement of agricultural institutes, bureaux, or societies, whatever they might be called, which held meetings for the mutual benefit of the farmers. There were agricultural societies throughout the farming centres but the opinion seemed to prevail that their main function was to hold an annual show. It would be better for the farmers if these societies took a different view, and he congratulated the fruitgrowers' associations throughout the fruit growing areas on their work. These associations, instead of devoting the whole of their attention to an annual show, were interesting themselves in the improvement of orchards, the coping with pests, and in giving demonstrations. He had in mind one of these associations in the hills, the monthly meetings of which were held alternately at orchards where practical demonstrations were given by the leading fruitgrowers of the district in pruning, thinning of fruit and coping with pests, and the results were noted. Such societies ought to receive substantial recognition from the Minister. They needed, and were deserving of encouragement and when the Minister was doling out his grants to agricultural and horticultural societies, he should make it a condition that those bodies to be subsidised must show some other result than merely the holding of an annual show. Very little reference had been made during this discussion to the dairying industry. He wished to pay a tribute to the action of some of the dairy farmers who were setting a good example to many other industries by fostering and encouraging the co-operative movement. He regretted that the hon. gentlemen who sometimes occu-

pied the Opposition benches, and who posed as the friends of the farmers, were represented during the discussion on this department by one hon. member, and he, the member for Kimberley. It showed the interest of these so-called farmers' friends. On the Government side of the House there were members who were deeply interested in the department under discussion, and in the welfare of the farmers of this State. He trusted that credit would be given to the present Government and to the members supporting them for the interest they displayed in the discussion on agricultural matters. As regarded the co-operative movement, the dairy farmers of Western Australia, and particularly those in the Swan electorate, were just as earnest and enthusiastic as the hon. member for East Perth (Mr. Lander), who was regarded as being almost a fanatic, the Minister for Lands, or any man in the State, to see that the people had a pure milk supply. As an earnest of their desire in this direction, they requested the Government to establish a central receiving dépôt for milk in Perth. In order to show that they were quite prepared to submit the milk to any reasonable test they asked that, if need be, it should be tested at the dairy farm and again on arrival at the dépôt. He regretted that the Government could not see their way clear to meet the dairy farmers in this respect. The dairy farmers formed a co-operative society which was still in existence and was supplying the people of the metropolitan area with pure milk. The dairying industry in this State had had an uphill fight and would have for a considerable time, and it behoved any Government to give it every possible encouragement and assistance. Unlike the Eastern States, Western Australia had been unable to build up a dairying industry by the aid of bonuses. Victoria and others of the Eastern States established their dairying industry by bonuses, given by the State Governments. To-day it was impossible for the State to assist in this way. Still the Government could assist in other directions and he hoped the Minister

would use every effort to foster the dairy farmers in their desire to provide a pure milk supply, and to establish on a firm basis an industry which was so essential in this State. Reference had been made to the work of Mr. Sutton in connection with the fixing of standard wheats. He congratulated the Minister and the officers concerned on the assistance given to encourage agricultural education in primary schools. It was a step in the right direction. In many of the country schools the little agricultural plots were of great assistance to the farmers. In many centres the farmers took a lively interest in the school agricultural plots. The work was performed by the children under the supervision of the teacher, who, by the way, was not paid very handsomely for the work performed, but on that he would have something to say when the educational vote was reached. This work was highly beneficial to the people in the neighbourhood of the schools where the agricultural plots had been established. When the agricultural college was established, as the Minister had promised, he hoped it would stick to practical education and not become a sort of State secondary school with agriculture merely as a side line. When agricultural colleges were set up in various parts of the State, seeing that we had in connection with our University a Chair of Agriculture filled so ably by Professor Paterson, he hoped they would be utilised for agricultural education, and that attention would be seriously devoted to the practical side of agriculture. If Mr. Sutton accomplished only what he was setting out to do in connection with the fixing of a few standard types of wheat, he would in the years to come have earned the gratitude of the farming communities of the State. To-day, unfortunately, we had our farmers not relying on any particular type or types of wheat, but ready to jump at conclusions perhaps rather hastily formed by some farmer who had got some extraordinary result from a very small piece of land which had been under cultivation with some particular variety of wheat. The trouble most other countries had had in this direction was

that they had had too many varieties, and he believed that if Mr. Sutton was allowed to continue the work he would eventually bring down the varieties of wheat, which were most suitable to this State, to about half a dozen, and when he did that he would gain the thanks of the farming community throughout the whole of Western Australia. With reference to the fruit industry, he (Mr. Turvey) had been pleased to note that last year over 70,000 cases of fruit were exported from the State, averaging on the London market about 10s. a case, and upon the German markets about 15s. a case. Needless to say the good price that had been obtained on the German markets had resulted in an increased export to German ports, and a small decreased export to English ports during the past season. Then again no fewer than 12,000 cases of grapes were exported from the State and averaged about 15s. a case. The export of fruit was a matter to which the Government should give close and earnest attention, and he trusted that when the Plant Diseases Bill again came before the House we would delete from the measure the clause dealing with the exportation of fruit from orchards infested with San Jose scale. He knew the Commonwealth Government at the present time were desirous of insisting that fruit coming from orchards so infested should not be exported; but the fruit itself might not be infected. The point was that if the orchards had the slightest trace of San Jose scale, although the fruit to be exported might not, the grower would be prevented from exporting, and the result would be disastrous to the State. If such a proposal was carried into effect it would mean the greatest set-back the fruit-growing industry had ever known and he felt sure he could rely on the good sense of members to delete the clause in question. The hon. member for Toodyay (Mr. A. N. Piesse) had referred to the necessity for the establishment of a State nursery in connection with our fruit growing industry. He (Mr. Turvey) was a bit of a socialist in this direction like the hon. member, and believed something might

be done in the direction indicated. Last year we imported into this State over 200,000 young trees, and this surely was a sufficient indication of the opening there must be for an up-to-date nursery in Western Australia, and if we had a nursery established, whether State or otherwise, it must minimise the possibility of the introduction of disease into our orchards. San Jose scale was introduced into this State through nursery stock imported from other countries, and in the interests of the fruit growing industry it was essential that the Government, if they themselves did not undertake to have a State nursery, should give every encouragement for the establishment of a nursery for the production of young trees. He did not want to weary the Committee by going into the possibilities that existed in this State for building up the dried fruit and preserving industry. In jams, dried fruits, and jellies we imported over £100,000 worth last year, and he believed if sufficient encouragement was given that these industries could be built up in Western Australia.

The Minister for Lands: What about Donnybrook?

MR. TURVEY: One swallow did not make a summer. It might be that Donnybrook fell into the wrong hands, or was started by a Government that was not in sympathy. In either of those cases he could quite understand it would possibly be a failure. Reference had been made to the substitution by the Agricultural Department of bulletins for the *Journal of Agriculture*. He believed that the *Journal of Agriculture* should be re-established, as no doubt it would be welcomed by producers throughout the State. Western Australia was the only State which at the present time did not produce such a journal. He had noticed on the table of the Library that one could find the agricultural gazette or journal of every other State, and whilst these bulletins were well written and well produced, they were not in his opinion of the same value as a regular monthly journal, such as was being run by the Eastern States, and such as was conducted by Western Australia for a considerable number of years. The

hon. member for Toodyay had also pointed out the necessity for having varieties of fruit trees true to name, and that under our present system there was no guarantee given to the grower that the variety of tree he was purchasing was true to name. He (Mr. Turvey) had seen many hundreds of pounds wasted by fruit growers, particularly in the initial stage. Perhaps a man purchased some hundreds of trees—

Mr. A. N. Piesse: Thousands.

Mr. TURVEY: And might have to wait four, five, or six years before he could tell whether they were true to name, and of course he had very little recourse at law at the end of that period. Something should be done to insist that the nurseryman should give a guarantee that the trees were true to name. He remembered rather an amusing incident which occurred at one of the leading horticultural shows last year. The judge happened to be a prominent nurseryman in Western Australia and at the usual function which took place in connection with the show, this judge, who was a prominent nurseryman, in responding to the toast of the judges told those present he would like to offer a word or two of advice to the growers. One of the little pieces of advice given was that if he was to come there and judge, then it was essential, if he was to give a correct verdict, that the producers should put their fruits in the proper sections, that was to say, they should not put one particular variety of apple under a heading to which it did not belong. That judge came in for rather a warm time later on, when one of the growers happened to be proposing a toast, and he pointed out that they put them in the proper section all right, that was to say, if the apple was a Rome Beauty the grower himself in entering it for the show would put it in as a Rome Beauty, because when he got the tree from the nurseryman who happened to be judging it was labelled Rome Beauty, only to find out when that same nurseryman came along later on to judge that it was a different variety altogether, so while the latter might say that the grower had made a mistake, the fault

was really that of the nurseryman entirely. In his (Mr. Turvey's) opinion there should be a State nursery.

Mr. Allen: More State enterprises?

[Mr. Male took the Chair.]

Mr. TURVEY: Before concluding he would like to congratulate the Government on the establishment of a demonstration orchard at Brunswick, but he thought demonstrations in orchard work could be better done by the societies to which he had referred, by the various branches of the Fruit Growers' Association, and if the Minister would subsidise them they would in their particular districts no doubt do more in the way of demonstration than could any one particular orchard in a remote part of the State. He would like to pay a tribute to the Fruit Trading Association of Western Australia for the splendid exhibit of fruit they made at the recent Royal Show, and he believed he was safe in saying it was the finest exhibit at that show, and the fruit growers generally of Western Australia who participated in making that exhibit deserved the praise of the whole of the people of the State.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. T. H. Bath, in reply): It was his wish to review as briefly and concisely as possible, some of the points raised by various speakers. At the same time he could not go into all the ramifications, because hon. members had trenched on other departments over which he had no control. First, with reference to the question of providing for depreciation mentioned by the hon. member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) in regard to the meat stalls, he wished to say a settlement of this matter was the reason for the delay in the presentation of the balance sheets. He wanted to assure hon. members that in his opinion no Government or any Minister, could gain anything by withholding the balance sheets when properly prepared, from Parliament or the public; but in this particular case it must be remembered that the Trading Concerns Act was a new measure, and that the whole of the procedure had to

be initiated during the current financial year, and these matters had to be adjusted. They were referred between the department and the Treasury, and until that was done it was impossible to comply with the conditions of the Trading Concerns Act. So far as he was concerned, when these matters were decided, he felt it was his duty to place them before Parliament and the public and to abide by the judgment, and meet the criticism which their presentation might involve. In regard to the quality of the meat, if the statement of the member for Northam was correct, a large number of people in the metropolitan area must be affected with some kind of lunar madness, because they continued to buy it and there was no diminution in the trade. In regard to the Yandanooka estate, even if that particular area were not utilised, he was of opinion that some similar area should be used and, having a considerable area where stock could be fattened to be placed on the market during the off season, would have a beneficial effect in maintaining a reasonable price for meat and supplying a good article during that off season. It was true that in good seasons, during the summer months, there were supplies of stock available from the Murchison and also from the goldfields, but recently the seasons which had been experienced had limited this supply, with the result that we had been more and more dependent on the supplies from Kimberley, and on store stock which had been fattened and then placed on the market. With regard to the cost of bags, no one deplored that more than he did. It represented a severe tax on the farmer and a serious diminution in the nett price he received for the wheat. He had made inquiries in regard to the whole question and had found the position at the present time to be that although a considerably increased area was under jute in India, the resultant crop from that area showed a big falling off over that of the previous year. This decrease amounted to well over one million bales of the raw material, and as the result the quantity available fell short of the estimated requirements by nearly two million bales. Those who had not made arrangements would find a

difficulty in securing supplies even at the enhanced rate charged at the present time. The agents purchasing bags at current market rates could not be making much profit, even at the price at which they were retailing the bags to the public. The market price of raw jute was £12 a bale dearer than it was in the previous year, and that was of course due to the diminished crop in India, which was practically the sole source of supply. This brought him to the question of the bulk handling of wheat, in connection with which the members of the committee who were investigating the matter were at present engaged in preparing their report. He was afraid that the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. E. B. Johnston) had over-estimated the benefits to be secured by bulk handling. In "The Book of Wheat," by Dondlinger, a well known American authority, the subject was dealt with most exhaustively, and the writer pointed out that on the Pacific coast wheat was handled in sacks as in Australia, but on the Eastern coast it was handled in bulk. The writer estimated that on the whole the cost of bulk handling was about 4 cents., or 2d. per bushel less than dealing with it in sacks.

Mr. A. N. Piesse: Does he take into consideration the cost of the bags?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: All the facts were taken into consideration. Although the amount was smaller than that mentioned by the member for Williams-Narrogin, even that amount, it had to be admitted, meant a big sum on the total production of a farm.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: The figures I quoted were those of an American expert on Australian conditions.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: With regard to the question of tropical agriculture, it was regrettable that the gentleman who was appointed to deal with that matter was removed from the office which he had occupied for many years, to fill a position where there was not much scope available for him. After giving the matter consideration, it was felt that there was a good deal of spade work to be done before making a permanent appointment, and that was the motive which actuated the Government in abolishing

the office. What he as Minister did, was to obtain a report from Mr. Crawford on the question of the areas of agricultural land which were suitable for tropical agriculture, because after all it was useless having a staff and devising means for embarking on this cultivation unless there were areas of land available. As the result of that report notice was given to the holders of pastoral leases and areas where it was considered the Government could inaugurate those schemes, and the notices would expire early in 1914. When the areas were available, the Government could utilise the services of the officers skilled in irrigation work, and start out on lines which would make the areas available, and later on obtain the advice of someone engaged in that particular culture elsewhere, or else secure a suitable class of settlers and offer them inducements to embark on tropical cultivation in the North-West. With reference to the question of potatoes, he had never questioned the desire of the member for Northam, when Minister for Lands, to keep out Irish blight. All he had said was that the hon. member pursued a wrong method and whilst the present Government had succeeded just as well as the hon. member in keeping out Irish blight, it had further succeeded in reducing the price of potatoes to consumers. As a matter of fact, at the time of the election campaign, to which the hon. member referred, in the areas spoken of by the hon. member, the potato had become an object of worship and adoration, and the time was then rapidly approaching when it would have been only found in a museum as an article which had once been consumed in Western Australia. The Government removed the embargo and drew a line in the South-Western area which was capable of producing potatoes on a large scale. The other ports, however, were opened and, instead of the regulation which practically amounted to prohibition, and which had the effect of putting up potatoes to £35 and £40 a ton, the Government simply said that those who were sending potatoes from the Eastern States would have to pay a reasonable inspection fee, not only

to cover the actual cost of inspection, but provide an insurance fund which might be resorted to if at any time it was found necessary to deal with an outbreak of Irish blight. There had been small outbreaks recently, but these were a recurrence of the outbreaks of 1911, and were due to a peculiar feature of the disease which made a recurrence possible years after the first outbreak. In regard to the manufacture of fertilisers, we found that to the member for Kimberley State enterprises of any sort were anathema, but on the other hand the Government were exhorted and implored by other members to embark on new enterprises. What hon. members wanted to do was practically to exclude the rest of the State and say, you must only embark on State enterprises which will deal with the agricultural industry. It would be all right if we wiped out the goldfields and drove all the people into the sea and said that the only people we would have in Western Australia were the agriculturists. It had to be remembered, however, that the Government legislated for the whole population and that they had to consider all interests and endeavour not to fail in their duty to any section of the community, and that those for whom workers' homes were devised, were entitled to as much consideration as the agriculturists. The Government would be failing in their duty and showing a partiality which could not be condoned, if they devoted their attention solely to the agricultural community. With regard to the remarks of the member for Kimberley on the subject of the agreement with the Bovril Company, when he (the Minister) stated by interjection that it had been arranged by the Agent General, he had stated what was correct. It was true that the agreement was ultimately sent out to be signed, but the offer in the first place came through the Agent General. Then negotiations took place and the Government stated just what was required; not only that beasts of a certain weight and price were wanted, but information was sent that they were to be, not store cattle, but stock which could immediately be put on the market. With

these instructions the agreement was negotiated by the Agent General on behalf of the Government, and it was afterwards sent out to the State.

[*Mr. McDowall resumed the Chair.*]

Mr. Allen: Were you bound to sign the agreement in that form?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, and he was prepared to say, that perhaps in an agreement of that kind, every loophole of escape or opportunity for getting behind it was not closed. The knowledge that one inevitably gained convinced him that some scheme was necessary for utilising the large number of cattle which were to be found to-day in the northern areas of this State and also in the Northern Territory country which was adjacent and which made use of our ports. But the difficulty the Government had to encounter was that private enterprise was usually on the look-out for lucrative schemes and was not prepared to take up this scheme on an independent basis. They said they were prepared to erect the works, but they wanted to do it on such terms as would make the Government practically take all the risk and pay a substantial contribution to private enterprise. The Government had always been prepared to consider any reasonable scheme put forward by those interested in the industry.

Mr. Male: The Minister for Works condemned any scheme.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, the Minister for Works had merely condemned the proposal for freezers. The question of the utilisation of cattle was not exclusively confined to freezing. We could still continue with advantage to bring down the type of cattle which would be frozen or chilled under the proposal of the member for Kimberley. But what he had in mind were those cattle which it would not pay to bring down, which should go to canning. If such a scheme could be utilised without involving too large an outlay or the giving of unreasonable guarantees then the Government would endorse it. Even supposing that the freezing and chilling works would be of advantage, a difficulty was

encountered in regard to the provision of a water supply at an estimated cost which made it the most expensive part of the scheme. The Public Works Department had not yet been able to devise a scheme for the supply of the necessary water at a reasonable rate. As to the establishment of an agricultural college, he was personally of the opinion that Brunswick was a more ideal place than Narrogin for such an institution. We could there have a much more diverse curriculum and give a more diversified practical instruction than at any other place mentioned as a site for an agricultural college. While that was only his own individual opinion, the question must come up for consideration within the next year or two, when the opinions of those connected with the University, as well as the officers of the Education Department, would be given due consideration. With regard to the remarks of the member for Swan (Mr. Turvey) it was desired merely to refer to the question of the work accomplished by the dairy farmers through their co-operative association. He recognised the advantage of co-operation, and that they had made a practical step in the right direction. He was anxious and hopeful that they would succeed. Quite recently he had asked the Commissioner of the South-West to make inquiries and ascertain how the scheme was advancing. The question of establishing a depot was bound up with that of the establishment of refrigerating works. There were no means of providing accommodation at the existing refrigerating works, for the department was there merely on sufferance until the Railway Department should require the land. When that time came it would be necessary to establish refrigerating works, and he had promised that the dairy farmers would then be provided with a depot.

This concluded the general debate on the Department of Agriculture and Industries; votes and items discussed as follow:—

Vote—Agriculture and Industries generally, £17,003:

Item. Industries clerk, £228:



Mr. A. N. PIESSE: It was understood that this officer, with a prospect of rising to a salary of £270, was being kept at £228.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: On the closing of the Melbourne Agency this officer had returned to the State, and was loaned by the Lands Department to the Agricultural Department to look after the question of industry. His work was to assist the local manufacturers in finding markets for their produce, and generally to give encouragement to local industrial concerns. His services had been utilised also in the preparation of exhibits for the Royal Show. He was a very zealous and capable officer, and the salary was as fixed in the classification.

Item, Library, literature and bulletins, £650:

Mr. MALE: How did this compare with the cost of the *Journal of Agriculture*? Was there any saving in working it in this way instead of publishing the journal?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The cost of publishing the journal had been about equivalent to the amount against this item. While the ordinary bulletins were issued free, he had decided that in the case of more pretentious handbooks a small charge should be made. It was intended to issue a handbook of agriculture prepared by the irrigation expert, and for this a small charge would be made, which, while leading to a greater appreciation of the work, would also serve to reimburse the department for the cost.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—*Development of Wheat Belt*, £6,315—agreed to.

Vote—*Development of South-West*, £6,632:

Item, Importation and distribution of seed potatoes, £1,000:

Mr. MALE: There had been some considerable loss in connection with that importation. Did the Minister think the amount he had shown would be sufficient to cover it?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The item was in addition to a payment made

in the preceding year. This amount represented the balance necessary to clear up the account. The importation of potatoes represented a loss largely due to the fact that, owing to difficulty in securing a partial relaxation of the Federal quarantine regulations, the introduction of the potatoes had been delayed. Messrs. Sutton & Son, from whom the potatoes were obtained, had strongly advised against bringing them out at the time, owing to the condition of the potatoes at time of despatch. The firm had acted in the same way in connection with a smaller importation made on behalf of one of our larger potato growers. Although the department had not been fully recouped, largely because the shipment was a little above requirements, and because the scheme had been adopted of planting the potatoes on shares, yet the result had been of great advantage to the State in that we now had some thousands of acres planted with the progeny of these seeds. It was the knowledge that this seed was now available in Western Australia which was bringing inquiries from the Eastern States. In any future importations the department would adopt the method of having them planted on areas prepared by the department, and supervising the whole of the planting, instead of sending them out on shares. Despite the assurances of growers that the land to be planted was free from frost it had been subsequently discovered that the plants were badly attacked by frost, and a severe loss had been sustained in the Albany district owing to the crops being flooded.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—*Development of Fruit Industries*, £6,288:

Item, Commissioner of Fruit Industries, £756:

Mr. A. N. PIESSE: Once more he would impress upon the Minister the uselessness from an educational point of view of establishing an orchard at Brunswick. Such a scheme was practically worthless to the State. It would be much better if the department worked on the lines followed by the South Australian Government, and carried out experiments with different classes of fruit. He had

had the privilege of going over the experimental plots in that State, and they had an enormous number of varieties of different classes of fruit. Those plots must eventually prove of immense value to the State.

The Minister for Lands: We are doing the same thing at Brunswick.

Mr. A. N. PIESE: The Brunswick plot was referred to as an orchard, and there was a difference between an orchard and an experimental plantation. If it were carried on as an experimental orchard and nursery combined, greater benefit would be derived.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: In this matter the Commissioner of Fruit Industries was very keenly interested, and one of the objects in establishing the orchard at Brunswick was to test a large number of varieties. That was one of the recommendations which the Minister had made and which he was carrying out in connection with that orchard. He was not prepared to establish such orchards in a number of centres because he thought it was preferable to have the test at Brunswick, and then have a field day such as had been held recently at Nangeenan, and run those interested up at excursion fares in order that they might have the benefit of seeing what was being done.

Mr. MALE: Why was the item of £10,000 for advances against shipments of fruit not repeated on this year's Estimates? Was it because this provision had not been availed of?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That was so. The Commissioner of Fruit Industries had been approached with the request that the department should provide a sum for advances against fruit for export, but as there had been no response when the Government provided the amount and there had been no expenditure from that item, the idea had been abandoned, and it had not been considered advisable to repeat the item on this year's Estimates. The commissioner and he had been somewhat disappointed, but naturally the fruit grower had the right to exercise his own choice as to the manner in which he would export his fruit.

'Vote put and passed.

Votes — *Government Refrigerating Works, Abattoirs, Sale Yards and Markets*, £11,788; *Rabbits and Vermin Boards*, £17,381—agreed to.

Vote—*Stock*, £21,143:

Item, Veterinary Surgeons, £1,188:

Mr. GILL: Complaint had been made that no provision had been made for veterinary surgeons to qualify, and that there was no possibility of any person qualified in the State getting a diploma or certificate.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The University had made provision to a certain extent by the appointment of a lecturer in veterinary science, more with the object for the time being of having a gentleman with professional skill available to visit the agricultural districts and lecture to the farmers. That was the work in which Mr. Weston was now engaged. The question of extension, in the direction of providing means of instruction, had not yet been dealt with by the University, and was entirely dependent on the funds at the disposal of the University. Hon. members would understand that this would be a very expensive department to the University and would require expensive apparatus and equipment in order that instruction might be imparted in a way which would qualify students to secure diplomas. For the time being there was no likelihood of that instruction being provided in connection with the University.

Mr. Gill: But the complaint is that there is no means by which persons already qualified can be examined.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Provision had been made for the certification of veterinary surgeons under the heading of qualification as well as service, and he had no knowledge that they had not been afforded an opportunity of proving their qualification. He would note the matter and have inquiries made.

Item, *Stock, Incidental*, including travelling, freight, cartage, etcetera, £950:

Mr. MALE: Would the Minister explain what this item was for?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This item was necessitated by the fact that all

purchases of stock for Government departments were carried out through the Agricultural Department. Departments had to submit their requests through the Stock Department to him as Minister for Agriculture, and they had to be approved and provided by Mr. Weir as head of that department. This amount provided for travelling expenses as well as freight on the horses to and from various jobs.

Item, Yandanooka Estate, upkeep, stock, plant, etcetera, including wages, £15,000:

Mr. MALE: Did this amount include the cost of the stock taken to Yandanooka, as well as wages and other things?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. Vote put and passed.

Vote—*Agricultural Implement Works*, etc., £64,568:

Item, Manager £504:

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The Government should be congratulated on the work already carried out in that they had the right man in the right place. The estimated revenue was £70,000, and as the work was entirely new and there was a large capital expenditure, the manager had no small responsibility. The Minister recognised the value of this officer more than any other member of the House. He (Mr. Johnston) thought the manager should be paid at least £700 a year. In view of the importance of the position to the State he hoped a larger salary would be paid.

Mr. MALE: The title of this division was slightly misleading inasmuch as it included the manufacture of other machinery besides agricultural implements.

The Minister for Lands: That is included in the etcetera.

Mr. MALE: It had alarmed him to think that £70,000 was to represent only one-third of the sales. The Minister should explain that the works would manufacture meters and other things.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The manager's salary represented the amount at which he was engaged. Since his appointment the responsibility had been largely increased, and Mr. Davis had an assurance from him (the Minis-

ter) that the position would be reviewed and a more adequate salary would be paid. Mr. Davis was entering into the work in a very patriotic spirit and desired to have the works actually going, and probably a readjustment would be made as from the beginning of January next. It was expected that the works would be started some time during January, and he hoped to see the member for Kimberley present at the opening, notwithstanding his distaste for State enterprises. The title was somewhat misleading in that, amalgamated with the agricultural implement works would be the existing harbour works. The Works Department had intended to establish separate works with separate management and under separate control, and it was decided that the two should be amalgamated in the works at Rocky Bay. This would give more stability and regularity to the work. If there was a falling off in the demand for agricultural implements, a large number of men need not be put off as there would be work for the various departments to keep them occupied. There were two power-planting plants, one completed and in course of erection and the other half completed. Two gantry cranes and a travelling crane were being manufactured for the Harbour Trust and were approaching completion. There was considerable work to be carried out and the Government would be in a position to do it more expeditiously and economically at the works at Rocky Bay.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—*Agricultural Bank*, £17,897—agreed to.

This completed the Estimates of the Department of Agriculture and Industries.

Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 10.47 p.m.*