

ance canvasser is pushing his trade, and doing his utmost to secure commissions. Then there is the man in similar employment who, say, is trying to sell sewing machines. If such people were confined to 44 hours a week, they would never earn the money that they make to-day. I know of three men who joined a certain sewing machine firm in Perth, one two years ago, another three years ago, and the third only 18 months ago; each of these men to-day is driving his own Dodge car. Two have paid for the cars and the other has paid 50 per cent. of the cost. I challenge Mr. Gray to assist me to exclude canvassers from the provision of the Bill if I can show they are earning upwards of £10 a week under present conditions. Mr. Gray is agitated about the domestics. I do not think it is in the mind of any member to deny the right of organisation to domestics, but some special provision should be made for the matter of inspection. Reference has been made to the sanctity of the home. This is not merely a hackneyed phrase. The home is the centre of social existence, and it would be unthinkable if it were made subject to the same system of inspection as is a factory. There is no analogy whatever between the two places. Organise the domestics to the highest pitch, if you will, but hands off the sanctity of the home!

Hon. J. J. Holmes: We know what the policeman comes to the kitchen for, but we shall not know what the inspector comes for.

Hon. E. H. Gray: The insurance agent comes to the home.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: But he comes to see the boss.

Hon. G. POTTER: The insurance agent has a right to go to the home in order to earn his living, but an emissary of the Government should not be permitted to enter the home. It is the sincere desire of every member that the nurses should receive what is due to them.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Then why did you not give it to them long ago?

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Why do not your Government give it to them now?

Hon. G. POTTER: There is no excuse for not giving them what is due to them. The private hospitals have led the way in the payment of nurses, and no person would grudge the nurses the full measure of recompense for their skill and personality. When there is a proposal to ameliorate the conditions under which nurses work, we shall be united in our desire to give them what they wish. I support the second reading.

On motion by Hon. J. R. Brown, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.19 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 5th November, 1924.

	PAGE
Messages from the Governor	1664
Bills: Fire Brigades Act Amendment, 1R. ...	1664
Treasury Bills Act Amendment, 3R. ...	1664
General Loan and Inscribed Stock Act, Continuation, 3R.	1664
Dividend Duties Act Amendment, report ...	1664
Trust Funds Investment, Council's Amendment	1664
Roads Closure, 2R.	1665
Bunbury Electric Lighting Act Amendment, 2R., Com., report	1665
Carnarvon Electric Lighting Amendment, 2R., Com., report	1666
Road District Act Amendment, 2R.	1666
Reserves (Sale Authorisation), 2R., Com., report	1667
Annual Estimates: Votes and Items discussed ...	1669

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

MESSAGES FROM THE GOVERNOR.

Messages from the Governor received and read recommending appropriation in connection with the following Bills:—

- 1, Treasury Bills Act Amendment.
- 2, General Loan and Inscribed Stock Act Amendment.

BILL—FIRE BRIGADES ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Premier and read a first time.

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

- 1, Treasury Bills Act Amendment.
- 2, General Loan and Inscribed Stock Act Continuation.

Transmitted to the Council.

BILL—DIVIDEND DUTIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—TRUST FUNDS INVESTMENT.

Council's Amendment.

Amendment made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Lutey in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2, Subclause (1).—Add a proviso as follows: "Provided that prior to the issue of such debentures the Under Secretary for Public Works shall have certified in writing—(a) that seventy-five per

centum of the ratepayers of the district have paid all rates due by them for rates imposed by the road board for the then last preceding financial year; (b) that the total annual rateable value of the road district shall disclose an average increase of at least one per centum per annum during the immediately preceding five years."

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is exceptional to name a public servant and require him to certify to certain things. That duty could reasonably have been left to the Minister. I do not take great exception to the other part of the amendment, but I am not agreeable to the Under Secretary being named as the certifying authority. I move—

That the amendment be amended by striking out "Under Secretary" and inserting "Minister" in lieu.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is really a matter of book-keeping.

The Premier: But it is unusual to mention an officer in that way.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Minister has to certify that the road board is sound, and that should be sufficient. If the other matters are to be certified, it should be done by the Minister.

Amendment on amendment put and passed; the Council's amendment, as amended, agreed to.

Resolution reported, the report adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL—ROADS CLOSURE.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle) [4.47] in moving the second reading said: This is one of the Bills which usually come down towards the close of the session. Hon. members will see that it consists of five clauses, four of which deal with roads in various parts of the State. Clause 2 refers to Fitzgerald-terrace, Fremantle. The terrace faces the sea, and an area allotted to baths causes the alignment to be out of line with the street. A proper survey has been made, and now it is asked that that portion of Fitzgerald-terrace which is not within the alignment shall be closed in order to make the alignment regular throughout.

Mr. Taylor: Is it a long street?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No; about three blocks. Clause 3 proposes a slight alteration in a street in Collie. It appears that there is a site for a trades hall facing Throssell-street, which is the main street of the town, and also facing Patterson-street.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Isn't there an exchange of land in connection with this matter?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No. The proposal is to cut off a small corner, and to close that portion of Patterson-street, so as to give a better frontage. In speaking on a measure yesterday I mentioned the proposal referred to in Clause 4, dealing with the Perth-Fremantle-road. The object of the proposed alteration is to remove a dangerous angle on the river road. The proposal has been agreed to by the Vice-Chancellor of the University, the City Engineer, and the State Gardens Board. The suggestion is that the road shall be altered in order to remove a danger to the travelling public. Clause 5 refers to certain streets in the Perth Road Board district. It appears that some considerable time ago, when plans of subdivision referring to the land which is affected were lodged in the Titles Office, certain roads were shown, but that in some places where roads were shown the lots were sold, and that on this account the roads were not declared at the time to be public roads. Accordingly it is impossible to give titles in respect of the land covered by the roads that are closed. The Bill proposes that certain roads in the area shall be closed, other land having been granted, by arrangement with the local road board, to open new streets in the place of those which are closed. These matters are of small importance to the general public, but they cannot be arranged without Parliamentary approval. I have here plans of all the proposals, and I shall ask leave to lay those plans on the Table of the House for inspection by hon. members. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. Sir James Mitchell, debate adjourned.

BILL—BUNBURY ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Mr. WITHERS (Bunbury) [4.52] in moving the second reading said: In 1911, when the parent Act was passed, the revenue of the Bunbury municipality was about £3,500 per annum. At that period the municipality had borrowed about £26,000, and, their borrowing capacity being only £35,000, and they wishing to borrow a sum of money for the purchase of electric lighting plant, it was necessary to get an Act passed extending their borrowing powers, inasmuch as the additional sum they wished to raise would have brought their total indebtedness up to £38,000, or £3,000 beyond their limit. But for the existence of that Act this Bill would not be necessary, seeing that the revenue of the Bunbury municipality is now about £7,000 per annum. The town has

progressed, and the electric lighting has extended considerably; moreover, the plant is deteriorating. Therefore the powers asked for under this Bill are necessary. The proposal is that the borrowing limit under the parent Act shall be extended from £15,000 to £25,000. During the time the council have had control of the electric lighting they have raised considerable revenue under that head. Particulars of the capital of the electric light department of the Bunbury municipality are as follows:—Raised from loans, £17,000; revenue invested, £9,897; less redemptions, £500, leaving a balance of £26,397. Sinking fund investments in the Treasury amount to £4,980 8s. 10d., and accumulated profits at the 30th April, 1924, total £844 18s. 5d. The fixed assets stand at £20,741 13s., less depreciation £7,248 18s. 1d., giving a net value of £13,492 14s. 11d. If the proposed electric scheme for the South-West comes into operation, it will still be necessary for the Bunbury council to borrow as here proposed in order to connect with the scheme. If the scheme does not come into operation, the council will be in still greater need of the proposed borrowing power in order that they may extend their plant. They have already borrowed £2,000 beyond the amount they are strictly entitled to raise. In respect of that £2,000 a validating Act might be required. However, if this Bill passes the validating measure will not be necessary.

Mr. Taylor: I think it will.

Mr. WITHERS: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. SAMPSON (Swan) [4.58]: I fully agree with the mover that further borrowing powers, as proposed by the Bill, are necessary for the Bunbury municipality. It is an indication of the progress of the principal port of the South-West that this additional sum is needed. Its provision will mean greater facilities in the way of power both by day and by night. I do not intend even to ask that consideration of the Bill be deferred. I support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

BILL—CARNARVON ELECTRIC LIGHTING AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Mr. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [5.0] in moving the second reading said: The Carnarvon Electric Lighting Act of 1919 validated the purchase by the Carnarvon Municipal Council of the assets of the Carnarvon Electric

Light and Power Company, Limited, and also ratified a loan the council had raised of £3,000 for the purchase of the assets of that company. Section 4 Subsection 1 of the Act gave power to the Carnarvon council, for so long as the £3,000 remained unpaid, to strike a special rate to meet the interest and sinking fund thereon. Subsection 2 provides that all the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act of 1906 relating to the striking, levying, and recovery of rates are incorporated in the Act, and shall be applicable to the special rate. That means that the Carnarvon Municipal Council have had to rate every block within its area. No provision was made for the exemption of any blocks. It will be seen by the plan of the town of Carnarvon that its boundaries are extensive, approximately five miles by three miles, whereas the principal dwellings are all within a small central area. In consequence a lot of people living away from the centre of the town have been taxed for a benefit they have never been able to enjoy, for it has not been possible to supply them with electric light. Consequently they have appealed to the Municipal Council, and it is found that the only way to give them redress is by a special Act. The Bill does not ask for any extra powers. It is merely to give relief to those who are unable to participate in the benefits of the electric lighting scheme. The municipal council has been able to pay interest and sinking fund in respect of the loan, has paid off a portion of the original loan, and has in addition improved its plant. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Mr. SAMPSON (Swan) [5.5] in moving the second reading said: Under the Road Districts Act road boards have powers to make by-laws and regulations. They have many powers, but there is one that has not yet been conferred; I do not think that up to the present it has even been asked for. In the outer suburban areas residents in townsites are under a disability in that it is competent for anybody holding a block of land to open up a gravel pit quarry and make excavations thereon. This means that a permanent scar is inflicted upon the landscape and serious injury done to the district. Two road board districts particularly affected by the practice are Greenmount and Armadale-Kelmscott. Both road

boards are anxious to have power to refuse permission for the opening of a gravel pit or the making of excavations in this way.

The Minister for Lands: Are you trying to give them power over private property, or merely over Crown lands?

Mr. SAMPSON: Over both. It appears from the advice given that it is competent to give the boards this power. Under the Bill anybody desiring to open up a gravel pit in a townsite or prescribed area must make application to the local authority, and the board thereupon shall decide. In the event of permission being refused, the person desiring to open up a gravel pit—

The Minister for Lands: Do you think that I, as Minister for Lands, or that the Minister for Works would give a local authority such power over Crown lands?

Mr. SAMPSON: The Minister is inferentially complimented by the Armadale-Kelmscott Road Board. Let me read a paragraph from a letter received from the secretary of that board on June 6th last:—

It has long been felt by the chairman of the board and others taking an interest in the district that a huge blunder has been made in allowing such disfiguring excavations throughout the townsite. Up to the present, however, we have not known how we are to intervene. It is not the fault of the Lands Department that these pits are here, for the land so utilised is privately owned.

I submit the Bill, not as an offering to the æsthetic, but as a utilitarian measure well justified in the interests of those outside centres that are rapidly becoming populous. It is impossible, without great expense, to repair the damage done by these excavations. Moreover, they become a serious menace to the children of the district, for in winter time they fill with water. Other examples of the effect of this indiscriminate excavating are to be seen at Parkerville and at Mt. Helena, two beautiful spots that have been injured by this practice. The public are well protected, because in the event of the local authority refusing permission to open a gravel pit, the applicant may appeal to the Minister for Works, whose decision becomes binding. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Minister for Works, debate adjourned.

BILL—RESERVES (SALE AUTHORISATION).

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle) [5.15] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is to enable road boards and other bodies to sell and transfer certain lands, the proceeds of sale to be applied to the improvement of the districts concerned.

This Bill, like the former one, deals with many reserves in different parts of the State. The first part deals with a racecourse at Albany of which a 999 years' lease was granted to the trustees in the matter of location 839 for the purpose of a racecourse. There is only one surviving trustee, Mr. John Moir. The local authorities are of opinion that it would be far better to improve the ground they have nearer Albany under the control of the local council, and that they should be able to sell this racecourse, which is a considerable distance from the town, transfer any buildings that may be on it, and use the proceeds of the sale for improving the recreation ground, some 27 acres near the centre of the town. This arrangement, subject to the approval of Parliament, has been agreed to between the Albany council and the trustee. In the township of Quairading there is an old building used as a road board office. The land was granted many years ago for this purpose. The district has now greatly improved. The office is found to be unsuitable and the local road board are anxious to sell and transfer this land and to use the money for the purchase of other Crown land, and the erection of suitable offices and buildings on the new lot that would be acquired under the Bill. At Dalwallinu there is another lot similarly situated.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They do not seem to have another block of land yet.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: In Dalwallinu it is proposed, if the local authority obtains power to sell the old site, to erect buildings at a cost of £2,300 on lot 154. The present building is unsuitable for the requirements of the district, and it is found necessary to provide larger premises. It is encouraging to find that various districts in the State are increasing in size and population to the extent that it is found necessary to improve the public buildings. This is the reason why the districts I have mentioned require the alterations that are sought in the Bill. At Bencubbin, Lot 50 is held by trustees on a 999 years' lease for an agricultural hall site. It is desired that the land and building should be handed over to the Mt. Marshall road board and the proceeds of the sale devoted to the erection of suitable buildings on Lots 82 and 76 in the locality. At Albany there are several lots transferred as education endowment land, but there happens to be one lot which runs through from the main street to another street, breaking the line of the land held as endowment land. The trustees have been enabled to make an exchange whereby they will give the back portion of one of the lots to the endowment land and provide an entrance to the street, and obtain a frontage along one street so that all the land can be joined together. I think there is a brewery on the land and that it is close to the high school. I have seen the

place and agree that the transfer is necessary.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Have you seen the brewery?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, it is opposite the school. It will improve the land considerably for the trustees and will make no difference to the private ownership of the land. There was a block of land granted at Geraldton for a trades hall. This faces a narrow street. Power is sought in the Bill either to sell or exchange this block for other land belonging to the Crown facing the main street. This alteration would be of great benefit to the hall and, no doubt, would be of great advantage to the town.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Is there a hall on the land now?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is not yet built, but preparations are being made for the construction of a hall once the exchange is effected. The Lands Department is satisfied, after investigation, with all these proposals and has no objection to the arrangement with regard to the various road boards and public bodies I have mentioned. I have put all these things into one Bill; otherwise it would have been necessary to bring down separate Bills dealing with each one. I am following the line taken by the Leader of the Opposition in a matter of this kind. Previously we used to get separate Bills for each one of these matters. We can now deal with all these things at one time instead of separately. I feel confident that the passage of the Bill will give great satisfaction to the people concerned. It is at the request particularly of the road boards, municipalities and public bodies referred to that it is brought down. The Lands Department have no objection to the transfers for it will make no difference to the State, and will tend to improve and beautify the towns in which the various lots are situated. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [5.25]: I have no objection to offer to the second reading of the Bill. It is a pity to reduce the number of reserves in the towns, no matter how they are held or how they are vested in trustees for various purposes. Albany, for instance, will some day be a big town and I think that will happen before long. The people will want a good deal in the way of reserves. By this Bill we are reducing the number of reserves there by one.

The Minister for Lands: There is plenty of Crown land outside Albany.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am not going to oppose the wishes of the Albany people, but they must remember that they will want more reserves before long. At Bencubbin one lot is to be sold and the money is to be expended on one or two

other blocks elsewhere. The blocks held by the board are in the main street, and, I understand, will be wanted for business purposes. I am glad the land is being sold. The Education Department are wise to make the exchange at Albany. I know the high school is close to the brewery. It must be a small brewery.

The Minister for Lands: It is either a brewery or a bottling works.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It does not matter to this House whether the trades hall people at Geraldton have power to sell or not, but this Bill is certainly giving a grant to trades hall.

The Minister for Lands: They have to buy the land.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is the same thing as giving them a grant of money. The Minister has not provided that the money obtained from the sale shall be held in trust by some public body until the new land is bought and the hall is built. They get power to sell provided the proceeds of the sale shall be applied to the acquisition and improvement of another site, but I do not see how the Minister is to enforce the investment of the money.

The Minister for Lands: I do not think it will be necessary to sell, for I think an exchange can be effected.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not suppose it matters much, but it is really giving a bonus to the Trades Hall. Would the Employers' Federation get a block of land if they applied?

The Minister for Railways: The farmers and settlers have a block in every big town.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is not the same thing. I dare say the Employers' Federation at Geraldton will apply for a block of land.

The Minister for Lands: I think you gave the Trades Hall the land there.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: All good works come from this side of the House. I do not object to the Bill, but I think when the Employers' Federation ask for a grant, they should get it. The proposals contained in the Bill are reasonable and are backed by the local authorities. This should satisfy members.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle—in reply) [5.30]: The Geraldton block is in a narrow street and is not suitable for the purpose for which it was acquired, and permission is sought to exchange it for another, or for permission to sell and purchase another. It makes no difference so far as the Trades Hall is concerned because the site which they purchase will have to be used for a Trades Hall and the other site will revert to the Crown if it is not sold. I think we can make arrange-

ments whereby the exchange may be effected with the municipality so that the site will not be sold. That is the reason why the Bill was drafted in this manner. As a matter of fact there is some doubt as to whether the Bill was actually necessary, but in order to make the position clear, the Solicitor General expressed the opinion that it would be advisable to submit the matter in this form.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

ANNUAL ESTIMATES.

In Committee of Supply.

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

Department of the North-West, Hon. J. M. Drew, Minister (Hon. S. W. Munsie, Honorary Minister, in charge of the vote).

Vote—Department of the North-West, £21,371:

Mr. TEESDALE (Roebourne) [5.35]: There has been a little decrease in this vote, but it is not very serious, and I am not going to cavil at it. The decrease is made up of a lot of small items, and nothing appears to have been seriously cut down. During the short period that the Labour Government have been in power there has been a good deal of examination of country in the Kimberleys, which to my mind is very satisfactory. In that connection I am pleased to think that we have a sympathetic Minister in the person of Mr. Drew. That Minister has been a resident of the lower North for many years, and although possibly he has not had much experience of the North itself, he has met many northerners and in that way has learned a good deal about the importance of that part of the State. It is preferable to have people with experience, assuming control of a big district such as the North. I notice that agricultural land has been inspected and classified, and will be thrown open next year. It is very difficult to speed up matters of this description, because the North is a district of tremendous distances and it is difficult, and it takes time, to get officials backwards and forwards. I am not going to take exception to any delay that may unavoidably occur, because I would rather have the matter attended to properly, than to see it rushed through. I hope to see some tangible result next year. By what we have been able to read in the reports,

the ground appears suitable for the purpose for which it is intended to use it, and a big consideration is the fact that the area is adjacent to the meat works at Wyndham. Those works will be advantageous for cotton ginning, fish drying, chilling pork, and anything that may be required to be sent overseas, and which may need storage pending the arrival of vessels. We have regular steamer connections between that part of the State and the far East, and no doubt in time we shall be able to export something that those countries may require. I do not think there will be any difficulty in growing certain products in the far North that we may be able to export in time. On the occasion of my recent visit to that part of the State, I saw about 450 miles from the coast, patches of land that positively astonished me. I saw beautiful bananas growing in profusion and learnt that the owner had no difficulty in selling them at 10d. a dozen. Down here in the South we would be glad to buy such a splendid quality of banana at 10d. a dozen. Those of us who have to pay 2s. a dozen for an inferior fruit would be very glad to secure them. I also saw growing there, again in great profusion, dates and coconuts. The place is certainly inaccessible, and one would scarcely dream that it existed. I came across it quite accidentally. No one seems to take much interest in it except when the owner goes to Hall's Creek and to other places to hawk the bananas. It is pleasing to be able to say that the owner is a white man and that with the exception of two or three natives he has no other help. One can travel 30 or 40 miles without coming across any sign of life. There is a dead silence, and not even a cricket to disturb the stillness. I assure the House I am not exaggerating when I say that in those parts one drops across splendid springs that would irrigate 20 miles of land without any difficulty. There is one called Mudspring, 45 miles from Hall's Creek, and in regard to which Dr. Jack, who was a well known scientist, gave it as his opinion that it was part and parcel of a very big artesian basin. But no one appears to take any interest in what Dr. Jack had to say about it. At present it is so neglected that cattle cannot get a drink from it. The water is trickling away half a mile across the country. It could be conserved and could be made to water 300 or 400 head of cattle without much expense. It seems to me criminal neglect to see these beautiful heaven-sent springs neglected in this way. There are scores of them between that particular place and the station called Soakage Creek. This particular station is in the vicinity of the border, but it is in Western Australia, and the ground is covered by a series of springs. Within a five-mile radius of this station there are 30 known springs, known be-

cause they bubble naturally to the surface. No attempt whatever has been made to open them up, and the water goes to waste. Thirty miles from there magnificent feed is to be seen and not a hoof of stock to eat it. The drought in those parts has taught a lesson, and I saw abundant proof of that. There is more boring and water conservation going on now, in both East and West Kimberley, than ever in the history of those two districts. I made inquiries and learnt that more windmills had passed through Derby in the last six months, than in the whole period of the port's existence.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Evidently they are waking up.

Mr. TEESDALE: The drought has proved an unmixed blessing. I also came across wagons conveying eight and nine tons of bed logs, and between 40 and 60 donkeys yoked up, a sight seldom seen in that part of the State. Most of the development is taking place on Vestey's stations, where they are extending boring and other operations. Vestey's are removing obsolete plants and substituting others of a heavier type. Generally, they are carrying on the work of development energetically, and I am glad to say it is not confined to that particular firm. I think I am safe in saying this is the worst drought that has ever struck the Kimberleys and the lower North. I am speaking now generally of the country from Onslow right up to the Territory border. In reply to an unfriendly correspondent of mine, who printed a statement that we had confined ourselves to the beaten tracks, I point out that we went right inside the Territory; and anyone by looking at the map will see that that embraced a rather long trek, especially as we called in at every centre of civilisation from Derby up to the Territory and round by the Ord to Wyndham. There were a few places inaccessible with the car, and in two or three instances the natives had gone out mustering, but those were the only places we missed. Even then we wrote and asked whether there was anything of interest to report to the Health Department. To give an idea of the drought on one station, while we were there they shore 4,000 sheep, and the next morning 2,000 of those sheep were lying dead outside the yards. Members will appreciate that although wool is bringing a very fine price now, it needs to bring a fine price when the producers of the wool are found lying with their toes turned up in that way.

Mr. Marshall: What about next year with all that stock gone?

Mr. TEESDALE: Yes; in thousands of instances stock that has produced this high-priced wool is now lying dead. This means those particular sheep have produced their last lot of wool. Without being pessimistic one expects a depletion of at least 50 per cent. in the flocks. At the same time we

are not despondent. Let me not be misunderstood. We are not whining or weeping about the drought or the losses. There is no place which, given a few inches of rain at the proper time, can make such a wonderful recovery as can the North. It is hard luck that the drought should have hit us so hard, but we are going to see it through, and it will not be long before members hear of the land being grassed and stocked up again, and everything as prosperous as it was in years gone by.

Mr. Chesson: There is nothing like humidity to produce growth.

Mr. TEESDALE: That is so. I should like the Stock Department to see that the stock routes are in good order next year when the small mobs are being brought down for the market. It is most important that there should be no smashes next year with the few stock available. I am afraid we shall be short of fat stock next season for the Wyndham Meatworks. The stations have run down their fats pretty low, and consequently there is only young immature stock on the stations. But small mobs will be sent South in order to secure better prices, and I hope the wells on stock routes will be in good order. While I was in Broome a small deputation asked me to take particular note of the wells on the Ninety-Mile Beach. I did so, and noted down any replacements required, for the information of the North-West Department. To show the way in which my suggestions were received, the requisite material for the repairs has already been despatched to the North, and the Commissioner has been instructed to see that the repairs are effected. I was pleased to find that, although in East Kimberley the position with the stations is very serious, salaries and wages had much improved since my previous visit. I was surprised to hear some of the rates that pastoralists are paying at present. They indicate that matters are not quite so bad as perhaps some of the absentee owners who run stations from St. George's-terrace would have us believe. Pastoralists are paying to stockmen and yardbuilders £3 6s. 8d. a week and their keep; cooks cooking for over 15 men are getting £12 to £15 per week and their keep—

The Minister for Railways: Where?

Mr. TEESDALE: Drovers are getting £5 6s. 8d. a week and half wages on the back trip—

The Minister for Railways: Where?

Mr. Lamond: Do you think £3 6s. 8d. sufficient for a stockman?

Mr. TEESDALE: I am quoting figures, and the Minister is querying whether these men are drawing so much; consequently he would be pleased to know they are getting it. Transport difficulties make it very hard for cattle men up there. They have had pretty hard times these last three years in the matter of the price obtained for their stock. The Wyndham

works have been a godsend to the small cattle owners.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: And to the big cattle owners, too.

Mr. TEESDALE: Perhaps most of the reflections cast upon the works have emanated from owners who were in the habit of sending their stock south by boat. It is possible they have the capital to enable them to ship their stock, whereas the small owners have to run their mobs to the works. It is very satisfactory that the small owners get the full market value at the works, instead of having to sell to the big owners for practically what they like to offer. Though the price paid by the works seems low, the small owners recognise they are getting the highest price the Government were in a position to pay, considering the very low figure obtained for meat in the world's markets. To illustrate the transport difficulties in the Kimberleys, one important piece of machinery lying at Wyndham and required on the Okes-Durack field was four months on the road. It weighed 680lbs. and cost over £70 before it was placed on the ground where it was required. When members talk about the wonderful fortunes made in the North and about pastoralists being able to retire, they should remember the great expense involved in transport. Do not the Government consider it a fair thing to spend a little money to provide water on the main arteries leading out from the coastal towns? There is one road via the Ord that caters for a tremendous number of stations, and another via the Fitzroy. The mail coach runs from Derby to Moola Bulla and the horses have to be watered with a soup plate out of a sand soak. I saw 48 horses so watered, and the operation took two hours, after which they had another 30-mile stage to go. Better conservation should be provided on these main arteries. When teams have to work on such a shortage of water, it is calculated to stop all progress.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Are those wells east of the road?

Mr. TEESDALE: They are not wells; they are only sand soaks scratched out of the bed of the creek. It took me over three-quarters of an hour to fill a two-gallon bag at one of the soaks. I was lying at full length dipping down four feet with a small enamel pannikin. I could not use a larger utensil, because it would have caused the side of the soak to break down and cave in. That indicates how scarce water is. To give an idea of the cost of living in the North-West, I saw local jam marked 1s. 9d. a tin, and side by side was South Australian jam at 1s. 5d. a tin. That is something for our fruit friends to think about. There is a considerable discrepancy between the prices obtained for fresh fruit and the price

charged for fruit in the form of jam in two-lb. tins in the Northern townships.

Mr. Lambert: The merchants boycott the local article up there.

Mr. Thomson: Why should there be that difference?

Mr. TEESDALE: The merchants apparently get the same profit on both lines. I cannot explain the difference unless the imported article is landed at a cost that permits of its being sold at a lower price. To land a ton of chaff at the tram sheds 12 miles from one of the ports costs 22s. 6d. How serious it is to have an article like chaff at famine price, members can realise. Petrol and chaff are the two important items being sent to the North-West. To cart petrol the same distance costs 20s. 10d.

Mr. Thomson: Chaff should be carried more cheaply than petrol.

Mr. TEESDALE: Those figures have been carefully compiled, and are correct. When people down here talk about the heavy freights on railways, they should be reminded of the rates that have to be paid in the North. I consider the Government have acted somewhat harshly in increasing the freight on petrol and chaff. If there are two lines that are positively vital to the North during this fearful drought, they are petrol to enable us to get about the country, and chaff with which to feed the starving stock. Scores of stations work only two or three hacks; they cannot afford chaff at the present price. Most of the station hacks have been turned out into the scrub to take their chance, and only two or three are kept to do the work about the stations. Here is another illustration for our fruit friends. I saw a 28lb. case of South Australian peaches which cost 25s. 6d. per case and alongside it a case of local fruit at 12s. 6d. The imported peaches were in much better condition than the local fruit. There is something very wrong that, with only half the distance to transport our fruit, we cannot land it in the North in anything like the condition that South Australian growers can land theirs. The South Australian case was a nice, neat, lined case with five trays, the exact height of the peaches. Each peach was carefully packed in wood wool, so that not one atom of the weight of the upper tray rested on the one beneath. The result was that not a single one of these South Australian peaches had been bruised. Our local fruit had been sent up with one sheet of the "West Australian" or the "Sunday Times" between each two layers, and the boards were rough, jagged jarrah. No doubt these were beautiful peaches and in splendid order when packed and also when delivered at the port of shipment, but they had been spoilt by being sent forward with no more protection than a few sheets of newspaper. It

made me sore at heart to see our splendid fruit reduced to a mush of pulp and newspaper. Is not this country full of timber and cannot we make light trays of wood? It would not have mattered how the South Australian peaches were knocked about, because there was a pad of wood wool to take the jar. The South Australian case was made of either oregon or white pine. These facts are interesting as showing why there is no local market for our fruit. Our fruit has no market in the North because our growers will not take the trouble to pack properly. Local grapes, which cost 13s. per case in Fremantle, cost 16s. 6d. per case landed at the ports of the North. That means 1s. a pound for grapes. I weighed a case, and netted it, and found that its cost, landed in the store up North, was 1s. per lb. to start with. Parents with ordinary pay in the North cannot afford to buy their children many grapes at, say, 1s. 6d. per lb. Again, Western Australia flopped in a jarrah case containing 28lbs. net of plums and costing 16s. 6d. landed at the store. That fruit, too, arrived in a condition which reflected no credit on the packing methods of our growers, and which did not give our fruit-growing country a chance. I hope the member for Swan will bear in mind some of these illustrations, and try to galvanise our growers into adopting better methods.

The Premier: That's the way to talk to him!

Mr. Sampson: There is a fruit conference on Wednesday next.

Mr. TEESDALE: I was amused to see on the local counters a large stock of what was described as "South Australian spring lobster." Being a little curious, I purchased a tin, and found the contents to be our good old friend the crayfish. Fancy Western Australians buying South Australian crayfish as lobsters while our coasts are teeming with thousands of tons of fish! In spite of that fact we find a market here for South Australian "crays." That sort of thing is simply deplorable. While I was in the North it was reported to me that Chinamen were supplying the local hospitals with stores. If that is a fact, no doubt the Minister will put a stop to it in about two minutes and a half. We do not want any of our public institutions to be served by Chinamen.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Did the supply by Chinamen apply generally?

Mr. TEESDALE: No; in only one institution. I will give the name of the town to the Minister when I see him outside the Chamber. Again, the Chinese cadet business has been very much overdone, and the Minister might look into it. Too many young Chinese are coming here from China in the guise of cadets for the purpose of education. I have been carefully noting the procedure in a certain northern store with regard to four of these young fellows. They

have been taken in hand by the local schoolmaster at night, and are showing great promise. Incidentally, at one of the northern schools the chief prizes were won by Chinese scholars—a fact which makes one wonder a bit. However, as regards the cadet business, the Chinese in the North are in the habit of getting young men over from China. They are supposed to be allowed to remain here 12 months. The moment they arrive, they begin to act as assistants in the Chinese stores. That is unfair competition, because three or four smart Chinese boys work all hours for no pay, while the unfortunate white storekeeper has to pay perhaps £6 a week to an assistant and £5 to a teamster. The Premier might make a mental note of this matter, and see what actually is the law. I have inquired of Customs and police officials, but am unable to understand how these men are able to get extensions of their permits. One of them, I know, has been three years in Western Australia. The Chinese employers get in touch with the Federal authorities, and they make up plausible tales for the young fellows to tell. The white stores are trying to observe the White Australia law, and pay fair wages to white men.

Mr. Withers: The same sort of competition is encountered by the State Shipping Service.

Mr. TEESDALE: I presume that is so. During the election campaign the present Premier expressed the opinion that the development of the North is partly a Federal matter. I am very glad to think the hon. gentleman concurs in the view which I expressed in the course of one of my speeches on the Estimates. The North is very vast, and the distances there are enormous; and it is up to the Federal Government to help us in the tremendous contract we have on our hands. Our endeavour should be to establish small settlements in the coastal towns, with a view to popularising the North, which at present has rather a bad reputation as to extreme heat and other drawbacks. That bad reputation is due principally to tourists and others who have visited the North and have been disappointed. Upon their return to the South they have spread extraordinary yarns calculated to react disadvantageously on North-Western settlement. We want to get the back country taken up first, and then I do not think there will be difficulty in getting small settlements established on the coast, since there will be work for settlers. Certain facilities must be furnished to them in the shape of decent agricultural land, and seed, and sustenance while the crops are coming to maturity. Under those conditions we shall certainly have progressive little settlements along the coast, and these will help to attract attention from capitalists, and especially from industrialists, who may tackle the thing on a large scale after seeing that the small settlements are successful. Great diffi-

culty is being experienced throughout the North as regards water supplies. Recently the western pearling fleet, which works south of Broome, had to go into Cossack because all the natural waters from Beadon, or Onslow, right up to Point Samson, had gone dry. All the pearling boats had to be sailed into the port of Cossack to fill up with water. These are matters which are heard of only once in every year, when the North-West Estimates are being discussed.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. Taylor drew attention to the state of the House.

Bells rung and a quorum formed.

Mr. TEESDALE: Before tea I was dealing with some of the problems of the North. I have heard members remark that people are getting sick of hearing about the North. If any member here to-night feels like that, I give him warning to get out, for I am going to talk about the North for a long time. Perhaps the finest concrete structure in Australia is on the point of completion at Beadon Point. We shall have an important opening up there in the near future and I trust the Premier, the Minister for the North-West and the ex-Premier will make a point of attending. The jetty is a great credit to Western Australia. Although it has proved an expensive work, yet when one remembers the cost of maintenance of wooden jetties up there, it is seen that the extra money involved in this great structure is a mere bagatelle. Some of those old jetties have cost £5,000 or £6,000 per annum in maintenance, notwithstanding which their condition is as bad as it can be.

Mr. J. H. Smith: What is the reason?

Mr. TEESDALE: Teredo. I have seen splendid jarrah piles put into the Wyndham jetty and at the end of three years have taken out from them handfuls of decayed wood. So one can imagine the excessive cost of maintenance in such circumstances. However, there will be no such expense in respect of the Beadon jetty. It is only just to that district, the oldest in the North-West, that it should have such a jetty. At one time that and one other district supplied practically the whole of the beef and mutton for the south, so it is only right that the district should have facilities for sending away its surplus stock, which in a time of drought cannot be removed by road. It is about three miles from the old jetty to the steamers' anchorage and the lighting fee is 5s. per head. So we can imagine the cost that meant to the squatters; 5s. per head when they would have been glad to get 5s. for the whole carcass!

Mr. Taylor: It was a big price for sheep 25 years ago.

Mr. TEESDALE: It was. I am glad to know that the Whim Creek copper mine is likely to resume operations again in a

few months, when the necessary capital will be forthcoming. All will be glad to see that mine and its surrounding settlement again prosperous. A very fine exhibit of copper, estimated to contain 50 per cent. of metal, was purchased by the Government for £75, to be sent Home to the Wembley Exhibition. However, that parcel practically disappeared in transit. Instead of its being sent Home through our own department it was sent via Melbourne, and some of our very fine ore exhibits were positively spalled up, and only parts of it reached the exhibition.

The Minister for Lands: I am going to make investigations into that business.

Mr. TEESDALE: I am pleased to know we have a Minister who will look further into it. Some of our finest samples were left in a Melbourne warehouse, and so far as I know are still there. I remember the day when, sitting on the opposite side of the House, I called attention to the possibilities of what might happen. It has happened. No care was taken. It was nobody's trouble. It was only West Australian stuff, and so it could be dumped in anywhere. I have made inquiries of friends to see if any State was specially mentioned at the exhibition of minerals, but I was told "No," that it was all marked "Australia." What a scandal that is; for the samples were specially selected and £75 was paid by the Government for that special exhibit, illustrative of a very fine body of ore that had just been struck. It is scandalous to think that part of it is still lying in Melbourne. I do not know what happened the coal exhibit from Collie.

Mr. Marshall: They used that to stoke the ship taking the stuff Home.

Mr. TEESDALE: Special samples of gold ore were taken from Kalgoorlie, but I do not believe they got Home in anything like a decent condition. I trust that if there should be another exhibition, members will object to having our exhibits dumped in with those of other States to our disadvantage. To revert to the Beadon Point jetty, I want to say we have some very desirable workmen up there. Except for about 20 minutes, there has not been any industrial trouble amongst them since the work started. On such a big job this is remarkable, and I feel that the House should know it. Notwithstanding the many disadvantages and hardships under which the men were working, the job was put through without any trouble. Also we have up there some very fine women. As an illustration, I want to relate an episode.

The Minister for Lands: Be careful. Don't tell us too much.

Mr. TEESDALE: About half-past eleven one morning a very fine woman plodded down through the sand and clambered over balks of timber and concrete piers with her husband's lunch. She returned to her humpy and in about five hours' time an-

other little soul was added to the population. Five days afterwards that woman was up and about, doing her housework. That little baby was born in a 14 x 10 tin humpy, and with the temperature ump-teen in the shade. That is the sort of women we have up there; no whining, only a general recognition that the conditions are hard. That is the sort of woman we want to make settlement in the North successful. What would some of our dames down here think of those conditions? Yet hundreds of such instances happen, and nothing is said. The women there just go on with their work.

Mr. Richardson: How often does it happen?

Mr. TEESDALE: Not often enough for us up there, for we want as many as we can get. If only we could establish some small industries up there and so give our women and kiddies employment, it would be a great improvement. When one thinks of the vicissitudes of the pearl shelling industry, one wonders whether it would not be possible to start a pearl button factory in the North. We should manufacture these buttons ourselves. We supply nearly all the commercial shell product of the world from the North-West. It is well-known that our shell is the finest. Instead of getting the full benefit from this product, we pack it in cases, obtained in Singapore for 10s. each, send it to London, sell it there, where it is manufactured at tremendous expense into various articles, and bring it back to this State in its new forms. It would be interesting to know what a ton of shell from Broome can produce in the shape of buttons. Shell is now worth about £230 a ton in Broome, packed for export. Out of that ton of shell there can be produced 2,240 gross of buttons, valued at about 10s. a gross in this State. After deducting one-third for waste we find that a ton of shell produces £1,120 worth of buttons. I have gone carefully into the figures. When Dr. Hicks was Minister for Labour in England for about 20 minutes I went into the matter fully with him and we got these figures out. I have never given up hope of this industry being started in the North. It would give employment to the families we need so badly up there. I am sure no Australian woman would neglect to ask for Australian buttons. There is no place in the world where shell can be obtained more cheaply than in this State. Why should we not derive some benefit from it? In allowing for the waste I overlooked the fact that the heels of the shells are used for handles for manicure sets, scissors, knives, etc. This part of mother-of-pearl brings a big price and is really the finest part of the shell. The buttons are often made from the extreme rim of the shell. The back of an ordinary shirt button is often coloured, because it comes from the extreme lip. Nothing is wasted. The thick part is cut off before the shell

goes to the button factory, and is sold to special factories in Sheffield for manufacture into handles. With the two freights on the shell and the duty, there is no possibility of the imported button competing against the locally made article. No one would bother to import buttons if they were made here. An inexpensive plant is all that is necessary to start the industry. A unit that would give employment to a hundred persons, women, boys and girls, could be landed here for about £3,500. I suppose it would be preferable to start the industry at Broome. It would be a fine thing to do this, for it would give employment to a number of women and children. It would take women's minds off the loneliness of the lives they live in the North. The pity is that our womenfolk in the North have very little with which to occupy their minds outside their domestic work, and they can have too much of that. The button-making industry is only light employment, and soldiers who are almost crippled could work in it. In several branches of the industry one hand only is required. All the branches, such as drilling, polishing, beading, carding and boxing are light. There is nothing heavy about any of them.

The Minister for Lands: If you paint it in colours that are too glowing we might start a State industry.

Mr. TEESDALE: I would not care who started it so long as it was started.

Mr. Angelo: Why do not the pearl-ers start it?

Mr. TEESDALE: Because they have not the initiative. They think only of grabbing the shell, sending it to London, and putting the price of it into the bank. Numbers of the pearl-ers are non-resident, and have not the interest of the State at heart. I would not object to the Government starting the industry, but would not like them to go in for it too extensively. It would be a good thing for the State to illustrate to those pearl-ers what can be done, and say to them, "If you have any interest or faith in the industry, put your money into this and keep it going now we have proved it. We will hand it to you for the price it cost us." We must have industries in the North to employ the people who go there. We do want something with which to settle these lower parts of the coast, particularly people with families. I wonder how many members know the huge wealth that lies along our North-West coast in the shape of fish. Has it occurred to them that here, indeed, in an industry worth starting? My home in the Old Country is not very far from the Dogger Bank, which is one of the largest fisheries in the world. We also possess some of the most valuable shell fisheries there, apart from the edible fish. We keep a small army of inspectors watching the bank to see that immature fish and shell are properly protected. In this way a wonderful mine of wealth is kept always at the producing stage. It cannot be pirated or destroyed.

Steam trawlers and fast cutters are employed to rush the catches to the markets. A large army of men is employed in the industry. Through my native town as much as ten thousand tons of cockles are passed in one season, from about 35 banks. Hundreds of tons of whelks are sent all over the country by the early morning trains, because they cannot be procured elsewhere. About 1¼ millions of huge crabs, some of them weighing 4lbs. each, are also sent away annually from the banks. This shows what can be done when proper protection is given to marine life. Some of the hauls of prawns and shrimps run into 100 and 150 pecks per haul. Five thousand tons of mussels have been taken in one short season. There are 40 smacks, similar in size to our luggers in the North-West, used for shrimping purposes alone. I know of no place, however, where the prawns and shrimps are as plentiful as they are in our North-West. One can sit on a jetty at night with a hurricane lantern and net a bucket of the finest prawns up to 6 inches in length in a few minutes.

Mr. Corboy: They are not Dongara crayfish, are they?

Mr. TEESDALE: Sometimes shoals of fish are so plentiful on the Dogger Bank that they have to be sold as manure to farmers. We are very jealous of our fishing banks, and see that they are carefully watched over. At one time the shrimpers and cockle men used the small edible crab as bait. This caused the banks to be depleted of crabs. A regulation was passed, and in four years the banks were carrying crabs to their full capacity. I believe that Lincolnshire produces some of the finest shell fish procured in England. The banks are let in much the same way that we lease allotments in Australia. They are pegged out into certain areas, and a man with a small capital can take up one of the banks. He then puts down his own shell fish, after buying the small mussels, cockles and whelks, and when they are mature sells them to shipping owners who can take them to the nearest market. There are also thousands of tons of cod fish on the Dogger Bank. It is a wonderful sight to see the thousands of cases of this fish going away on the night trains to all parts of England. It is a popular fish, and these banks have been yielding it for the last 70 years. The supply of fish there is practically unlimited. In the summer the fish are packed in ice and reach their destination perfectly fresh, although they may have travelled 500 miles. We could do all this in the North. The fishermen on the Dogger Bank are a hardy race, and live a very rough life. They are drenched with spray from morning till night and exposed to every storm. I wonder how they would welcome the change to our north coast after their experiences in the North Sea. With our beautiful sunshine and lovely, calm

weather, they would look upon it as a heaven on earth, especially when they found such hordes of fish ready to be gathered in. If we could only get about 10 or 15 of those men and place them on that particular part of the coast, we would make a success of the enterprise. The experiment would not be expensive, and it might be possible to use the services of the younger members of the family to gather cotton that I hope to see growing a little distance inland. It might be possible to work the two industries together. It would not be costly to start a small settlement, and to give the men engaged in it a reasonable sustenance until they got the industry going. I commend the suggestion to the Fisheries Department. I would be glad to think that some little interest was being taken in a proposal such as this, with a view to making a commencement. It would be a god-send to some towns in the south to get fish in plenty. I have seen as many as 10 tons of fish drawn ashore in one haul of the net. Once at Port Hedland the captain of a vessel secured enough fish to fill six coal baskets, and members know the size of a coal basket. After the residents of Port Hedland had taken as many fish as they wanted a nuisance was likely to be created by the remainder being left on the beach. The Health Department took action, and it cost the captain of the boat about £8 to have the fish that were not wanted removed. I would not be the member for Roebourne if I did not inflict on the Committee a few remarks on cotton, a subject that is perennial with me and I shall continue to force it forward so long as I have any voice left. In the local press recently a statement was published to the effect that Mr. Sutton's word must be accepted as a guide to the future development of the North-West. I take great exception to that statement. I will not allow Mr. Sutton to be the guide of the North-West for even 20 minutes. I have every faith in Mr. Sutton as an expert on matters pertaining to agriculture, but not in regard to anything connected with the North. Mr. Sutton has seen practically nothing of the North. His experience of the North consists of a trip by boat to Carnarvon where he went to see a small garden and banana patches two or three miles from the port. The Premier and the Deputy Premier also had an opportunity of seeing this particular farm when they were up there. In any case that farm is not a specially good illustration of what is possible in that part of the State, because at the time of their visit it was undergoing a little setback on account of water difficulties. Then Mr. Sutton took a trip from Derby to Mt. Anderson, and then to a block called "Sawdons." The whole of that trip was done by motor car on a main road, and no deviation was made until Mt. Anderson was reached, a distance of 60 miles. I am sorry to say the lady that

owns the particular block does not appear to be very pleased by the treatment she received at Mr. Sutton's hands. Let the lady speak for herself. Here is a letter from her. She says:—

In the "Primary Producer" of February 24th—

She makes a bad start there.

It is stated that Mr. Wise and Mr. Sutton made a trip through the Fitzroy Valley including the Yeeda Plains, Lower Liveringa, and Udialla Springs. The journey was sixty miles in length (as if that was a long way out). If Mr. Wise means to do any good in the North he will have to go further out than that. Again, much excellent land was seen, but the bulk of this is inundated mostly every year. I am pleased they say "almost" because it has not been flooded since 1915. The inundation has taken place twice in twenty years, whereas whole towns in Queensland, have been swept away and rebuilt.

It will be seen that that lady who was visited by Mr. Sutton and Mr. Wise was not impressed very much by those gentlemen. I did not appreciate their visit either. I was opposed to Mr. Sutton leaving for the North because I know him to be a man who has never been interested in the North, who was never enthusiastic over cotton, in fact, he was rather hostile because a layman had called attention to the remissness of the department in this respect. There are very few heads of departments who take that kind of thing philosophically. They seem to get a set on an unfortunate outsider who dares to call attention to something in perhaps a crude sort of way. Anyhow, that is not the proper spirit in which to treat members of Parliament. Departmental heads should be only too glad to think that members are taking sufficient interest in a department to go out of their way sometimes, and at their own expense, in order to find something that will be of advantage to the State. The officers might give a member a little help sometimes instead of always damning with faint praise anything that he may be taking in hand. I propose to deal briefly with Mr. Wise's report on the rich coastal lands of the North, and then I shall quote a few comments by Mr. Sutton to give members an opportunity of noting the discrepancies between the report of the Adviser on Tropical Agriculture and the report by his superior officer. It looks as if one was trying deliberately to discount something that the subordinate officer had written.

The Premier: And both are experts.

Mr. TEESDALE: Yes. Mr. Wise reports—

The physical condition of the brown loam ensures perfect drainage under ordinary cultural conditions. The soil is admirably suited to the growth of cotton and peanuts, and its texture should be improved by good farming of these crops.

The analysis of the sample taken will doubtless show deficiencies—possibly the most important will be in phosphoric acid—but this land should be capable of producing very many payable crops of cotton and peanuts and other crops in rotation without the aid of any commercial fertiliser. The area on Hay and Overheu's lease, on the Durack River, consists of over 3,000 acres of a uniform sandy loam timbered mainly with beef wood and box. There is no surface water, but indications are present that good supplies are at shallow depths. It is accessible by launch within 20 miles of Wyndham. The soil is much lighter than the alluvials of the Ord River, very responsive to rain, and should respond to every effort of cultivation. It would suit cotton, peanuts, broom millet, and other minor crops. Many good crops of cotton could be secured without reverting to the use of fertilisers.

Further along Mr. Wise reports—

The soil would grow cotton and peanuts well, and it is quite possible that some measure of success would be achieved with early maize.

He further adds—

Altogether it seems that this area offered an opportunity of settling some hundreds of families when the preliminary work of providing transport and other necessary facilities is undertaken.

It is satisfactory to know that this new country has been discovered practically within the last three or four months. The owner of the nearest station to that locality was thunderstruck to find such marvellous rivers of fresh water there. I do not suppose anyone ever knew of the extent of those rivers up to the time of their discovery by the expedition sent out by the Government to explore that territory. That is the particular country that Mr. Wise dealt with in his report. I find that after the report was written, Mr. Sutton had this to say—

My itinerary as planned in Perth included a visit to Wyndham, as this district gave the most promise of being suitable for a settlement, and I was anxious to see the class of country in the vicinity of the port. Arrangements had been made also for me to visit the Forrest River Mission, and if the weather permitted, also the holding of Messrs. Hay and Overheu, who had grown a quantity of commercial cotton last year. As however, the "Bambra" could remain only about two hours at Derby, and this was quite insufficient for my requirements at that place, the proposed visit to Wyndham had to be abandoned.

That was nothing less than a scandalous waste of money when one takes into consideration that an officer holding a responsible position such as Mr. Sutton does, takes a trip to the North, lands at Carnarvon for about 20 minutes and drives around the outskirts, and then proceeds to Derby, a place

that has already been discounted by reason of the previous visit of an expert. I cannot understand why the Director of Agriculture should want to go to a place that everybody knew had had a temporary setback, not through any fault of the land but only because of wretchedly bad management.

The Premier: Besides, we had inspected it; why did he want to go there too.

Mr. TEESDALE: The Premier, the Deputy Premier and I had already inspected it, and given our opinion and that was very satisfactory.

The Premier: It was rather a reflection upon us.

Mr. TEESDALE: Undoubtedly; it was a most satisfactory reason why no other expert should have gone up there. We had been there and had decided that it had never had a chance. The cotton was as healthy as possible, a little stunted in height, but when one considered the vicissitudes the plants had suffered on account of there having been insufficient rain, one could congratulate the unfortunate men on having done fairly well up to a certain point. The Director of Agriculture landed at Derby and took the 60-mile trip, putting Mrs. Sawdon into great consternation and depressing her greatly by his derogatory remarks regarding settlement generally, so much so that she wrote and asked me if that was the sort of people we sent about the country to encourage our settlers.

The Premier: I did not think Sutton was a man like that.

Mr. TEESDALE: In this instance he was. He depressed this settler very much. Mr. Sutton went on to say—

During my visit I met a number of people who admitted that they had not considered the importance of the inundation having occurred in the North.

That is an extraordinary statement. I cannot imagine the Director of Agriculture having met anyone up there who was surprised to know that the land at times was inundated. As these floods have occurred only twice in the last 20 years, there is no great importance to be attached to that statement. Yet he met people who considered this phase of the question. I should like to have the names of some of those people; I would interview them. If they did not overlook that fact, there are other more important facts that they did overlook. Mr. Sutton added—

At the two centres I visited there is no longer any boom in the cultivation of cotton, only tolerant interest.

Is there anything heartening about that? When we are paying this officer his salary, he might say something more encouraging than to give out to the civilised world that there is only a tolerant interest in cotton growing that some of us have been trying to encourage so long. Mr. Sutton went on to say—

The attitude is now one of tolerant interest awaiting the results from the Derby and other trials.

It may be news to Mr. Sutton that no trials are being made at Derby, although we had a trial there. The tremendous amount of money supposed to have been expended on these trials does not exceed £6,000. We have heard about thousands of pounds having been spent, but the expenditure has been distributed over about five mission stations and two aborigine depots. Nothing very serious has occurred up to the present, and there has certainly been no serious drain upon the finances of the State. The paltry amount of £6,000, too, has been spread over a period of 3½ years. In Queensland, serious setbacks were experienced, but the officials there did not paint these pictures of distress and fire Home cables telling the world that the experiment made was a dead failure. Let me give members an idea of what was pending when the disastrous cable was despatched to London. The cable was headed "Failure of Cotton Growing in Western Australia." A letter I received read—

Re cotton growing for the West: I have had an opportunity of submitting this matter to a gentleman well connected with the cotton industry in this country and he is also fully aware of the developments taking place in Australia, and personally considers Australia will become a big cotton producing country. He would also welcome the development of the industry so that Great Britain could be independent of America. I have shown this gentleman your letter of the 12th July and, as a result, he is taking steps to advise your views and the work you are doing to some very wealthy cotton spinners in Lancashire. He states there will be no difficulty in obtaining capital to carry out your programme. It is possible I may be cabling you within a few days to advise amount of capital required to commence the industry in a sure but very substantial way. In other words, only a big scheme must be kept in view. That will give an idea of the class of people with whom I was dealing. They were big people. There is nothing trivial about that. It was a solid group that we had succeeded in interesting in our experiments. My letters had infected them with a little enthusiasm. The information despatched had fallen upon good receptive soil, and these people were prepared to take up the matter. The letter continued—

On receipt of this letter, will you write me as fully as you possibly can over the whole matter, sending any Press reports and Government publications in support of your statements.

Five days afterwards I received a cable asking how much capital was required and

how much land was required to be taken up. Four days afterwards I received another cable reading—

Owing adverse report in "Morning Post" all negotiations off.

Mr. Taylor: Was it Sutton's report that put them off?

Mr. TEESDALE: No, Evans's report. This correspondence shows the extent to which we had got with our little effort. Then all at once a man paid to come here and give us a little advice and a little encouragement rushed into print, and threw the industry back for three years at least. Anyhow, we shall get over that. When we received from London the report regarding the value of our cotton exhibits sent to the Exhibition, I was surprised to find that the department again rushed in apparently to detract from another good impression that had been created. The few enthusiasts were delighted to think we had demonstrated that good cotton could be grown in the North-West, notwithstanding the statements made to the contrary. One would think the department would have been pleased that we had shown the country was suitable for cotton growing, but apparently it was not pleasing to the department at all.

Mr. Marshall: Surely that cannot be so.

Mr. TEESDALE: While we were congratulating ourselves upon the good news, a departmental officer, Mr. Wise, rushed into print with an article describing how the public had been misinformed, and how the statements made were apt to be wrongly construed. He said—

All the article said was that certain samples had secured the world's average price.

It was very satisfactory to know that we had secured the world's market price. We were not supposed to be able to produce cotton at all, but we did produce a very good article. There was no necessity to belittle our achievement. Mr. Wise went on to say—

No account is given as to the return per acre, and no actual return is given of the amount of lint derived.

I do not know why Mr. Wise wanted to cloud the position. It was enough for the public to know that we had grown a first-class sample. There was not the slightest necessity at that stage to state the return per acre or the actual amount of lint to the pound of seed cotton. It was fine to know we had land that could produce such a splendid cotton as to bring 19d. odd. Yet Mr. Wise did his level best to create all sorts of comment and adverse criticism, as though we had put forward statements that were untrue. It was an extraordinary attitude. He went on to say—

The information was insufficient and misleading. No returns were given. Prices were dealt with as returns. The assumption was that the actual settlement could go ahead.

That was another superfluous remark. He might have said there was no reason why actual settlement could not proceed without further delay. Yet he says there is no assumption that actual settlement could go ahead. Mr. Wise also said—

There is no indication as to the profits made in producing the article.

I could have obtained the particulars if I had known in time, but it was his duty to go into that matter. He was supposed to be our agricultural adviser. He accounted for the splendid value by saying that a good season had been experienced. Apparently he was sorry that we had had a good season. It would have suited him and the rest of the department if we had had a bad season, so that we could not have shown such a fine sample. Here we have two officials doing all they could to detract from a good impression created of the ability of the State to grow good cotton. It does not matter a rap what the season was; it does not matter a jot what the profits were. No matter how much of this sort of thing we experience, it will not prevent the industry from becoming established. I am determined that so long as I can voice my opinions, the establishment of this crop in the North-West shall not be blocked. It is bound to come. It may not be in my time, but it may be remembered by some of my younger friends that I prophesied cotton would yet prove to be a big source of wealth in our North-West. As some slight explanation of my friendly criticism of Mr. Wise, let me say that I protected myself against something of this sort three years ago, when I concluded a speech by saying that I recognised Mr. Wise was from a State where he would be likely to learn a good deal about tropical agriculture. At that time I was in possession of information to the effect that Mr. Wise had had no previous experience of cotton, being purely a dairying and banana-growing expert. Having so protected myself at that time, I will say that I now have less faith in Mr. Wise than I had then. I will say, further, that he knows very little more about cotton now than he did when he first came to this State. He has made suggestions as to what should be done next season. The cotton crops now growing will show fine results. Mr. Overheu, who is at present in Perth, tells me there is a splendid standing cotton crop. Mr. Wise had nothing to do with that crop. The remarks in his report as to the advice he gave to the cotton growers and the agriculturists of the North fall rather flat when one knows that the advice was limited to one or two suggestions made at Carnarvon, suggestions moreover which were not appreciated. The editor of the Carnarvon paper expressed this opinion about the late tropical expert—

We give an instance of the position in our own district, where a little while ago efforts were made to induce people to go in for banana culture. Some did so suc-

cessfully, but under our pernicious laws the Government department which is supposed to exercise a grandmotherly supervision over the efforts of those endeavouring to engage in such industries had power, though the plants were healthy and had every chance of being a success, to order their immediate destruction, on the assumption that they were infected with some "microbe" or other. Needless to say, no one else has been fool enough to start in the same line since.

I was there at the time. The extent of the banana plantation is not known to me, but I was astonished to hear the agricultural adviser say that he would have to order its destruction. The northern settlers are very dissatisfied with the agricultural expert. A lady writes to tell me that for four months she was promised certain banana plants, as to the growing of which she had received instructions. She has never heard anything more about the banana plants. I have here a short paragraph recounting the successful efforts of a firm of drapers in behalf of ratoon cotton—

The success that is attending the efforts to make the growing of cotton a big factor in this State's development is due in no small manner to the firm of McDonnell and East, Ltd., drapers, George-street, Brisbane. About six years ago, when the industry was practically a dead letter as far as this State was concerned, five tons of cotton lint was the result of two years' labour, and this amount was held by the Department of Agriculture with the intention of selling it. For some time the attempt to dispose of this crop proved unsuccessful, and the attempt was almost going to be abandoned when McDonnell & East, Ltd., came to the rescue and purchased the whole amount with the intention of using it in the making of "Duralite" quilts and mattresses. The firm state that the cotton has proved so successful in the making of these quilts and mattresses that they have supplied them to many hundreds of homes all over the State. The cotton has many advantages as regards quilt and mattress making, as it will not crumble to dust like the ordinary kapok will do, and it is certainly much warmer and far healthier. Naturally this firm are highly interested in the development of cotton growing in Queensland, and look forward to branching out in other big ways in the utilising of Queensland-grown cotton.

In this connection I wish to acknowledge with thankfulness that but for the foresight of our Minister for Lands in objecting to our cotton going to Melbourne for examination by so-called experts, not one ounce of our cotton would ever have gone to Wembley Park, there to be labelled, for the information of the commercial world, as some of the best cotton ever grown. If our cotton had gone to Melbourne, some parasite would have been discovered in it, and

that would have been the last of it. On the last Estimates I took up considerable time in explaining the difference between ratoon cotton and other cotton, and I must give a little more information on the subject tonight. The determination of that old battler, Dan Jones, has been successful. It has been proved that what he contended for during many years is right. He fought about ratoon cotton. But the Queensland growers sent him to London and America to lecture, and he can now dispose of every bale of ratoon cotton grown in Queensland. Now that the ban has been removed from ratoon cotton, growers of it are in the happy position of being able to do exactly as they like. In the interests of a financial group in Lancashire, as I call them, certain experts came here to deliberately queer a certain type of cotton, simply because it was not suitable for their looms. They tried to block any cotton from leaving Queensland unless it passed through their hands. The agreement the Lancashire group had with Queensland stipulated that every ounce of cotton grown in Queensland should be sent to them, and marketed by them at a price per pound. The agreement made no mention whatever of ratoon cotton. The ban has been removed because otherwise ten Queensland members would have lost their seats. Mr. Gillies, the Queensland Minister for Agriculture, died very hard as regards the restrictions on ratoon cotton. He was determined to see his Lancashire friends through. It was very difficult for the Queensland Government to get out of the position in which he had placed them. I happen to know that the Queensland Premier regretted the drastic action taken with respect to ratoon cotton. But the position could not be improved until pressure had been brought to bear by growers insisting upon the removal of the ban. We are now in the splendid position of being able to send ratoon cotton to China or Japan, or to any other part of the world requiring it. Its price is within about one half-penny per pound of that of other cotton. A Queensland cotton grower named Connell relates his experiences thus—

In August and September of 1922 I planted 1,000 acres of cotton on the scrub lands of The Plains. Most of it died, and had to be replanted. Again a second and third time it died, and had to be replanted.

That is the kind of people we want here—not the kind of people who at the first setback howl like dingoes and say, "It can't be done! Look what we lost at Derby!" At Derby we lost just about the fees of a couple of company directors.

In the end the crops were fairly thick and advanced. The season had been dry; rain fell only a little, but even so there was the hope of a profitable harvest. There was little profit, but it was not altogether discouraging. Arrangements were made with share farmers to cradi-

cato the old plants and set fresh seed. This proved an exceedingly heavy task, and was not fully accomplished; the old plants had to be hoed out, many clinging inches deep in the soil. Fresh seed—and Government seed at that—was sown, but the old plants still had roots and persisted in a vigorous and even aggressive growth. Ratoon plants grew with magic haste, and the seed cotton died. The ban was on ratoon cotton, and I dared not pick the harvest from these hardy, clean, and healthy plants. All labour in connection with the plantation was wasted, but had I been allowed to pick, I was assured of a handsome profit. I turned the plantation into a field of Rhodes grass, and let cattle in to graze on the grass and cotton plants, and they fattened to a prime condition.

It is fine to read of a hardy battler like this, who planted the stuff four times in deference to expert advice, and then, by instructions of the department, hoed out the cotton from which he was hoping to make money. The department told him it was a criminal matter to gather a ratoon cotton crop. The edict had gone forth, and ratoon cotton was damned. He turned a lot of sheep on to the plantation with most excellent results to the stock. I have noticed on several occasions that in Queensland when they have taken the bolls off the plants they have turned sheep into the plantations and topped them up. However, he says here—

The drought season continuing, the plants died in big lots. But eventually rain fell at the beginning of this year and I have hopes of equalling at least 750lbs. to the acre. My troubles were not at an end. The seed cotton produced pests, but it was remarkable that my ratoon crops were entirely free, and had a harvest of cotton that was wonderful.

Now we have Mr. Evans coming back to the charge in the newspaper that he has found some boll worms in some ratoon cotton somewhere. Whenever an attempt is made to advocate the growth of something in Western Australia, there is always a little damning paragraph printed in the papers. The article continues—

As an instance I counted in the presence of others over 129 bolls on one stool, and the texture of the cotton was such that it puzzled one expert to declare whether it was seed or ratoon. That ban, however, was against me and I could see no profit in my ratoon area; nothing but a vast amount of experience. My seed area was next touched by a series of frosts, and by May last I saw I would be lucky if I got 300lbs. from the acre, which I did not get in many instances. During the season I have had 50 to 70 pickers at work on the share system, and while there has not been any direct loss to them the whole has been extremely discouraging to me.

Then we learn that Mr. McConnell is showing his pluck by getting ready some 20 acres for cotton on his Marshlands property, and from the ratoons of this he believes he will eventually score success and profit. All this is rather long, but it is very fine to read the experiences of a battler like that in persisting in again putting in his crop, and evidently making a success of it this season. Now just hear what Mark Foy says on the question of ratoon cotton—

I was delighted at the triumph of your growers in the battle for cotton, and success is now assured for the industry, as they have already refused to handle ratoon—they call it volunteer cotton in America—and the farmers cannot now be refused permission to sell their product to anyone in the world who wants it.

This Mark Foy is a merchant in a big way in Sydney. It is satisfactory to think that he takes sufficient interest in an industry in which at present he is not financially concerned. He is glad to think that we are making a bid to supply the Empire with some of the cotton so badly needed, and which at present has to be imported from America. He says—

We shall have men, women, and children offered free return fares from the south to come and pick the Australian cotton harvest, just as we have the shearers' camps for the wool, only the cotton is a more cleanly prospect, more open and healthy. This is part of a vision I can see ahead in, say, five years' time.

It is very interesting to hear the comments of a merchant prince like that. Now I must read one little paragraph respecting Mr. Jones's visit to America and England. It shows that my championing of that gentleman has been amply borne out, and it is a confirmation of the satisfactory selection I made when asked by the late Government to choose a cotton grower to come over here and show us where and how to grow this valuable crop. Here is the paragraph:—

At a mass meeting of cotton growers representative of the whole of the Dawson Valley the following resolution was unanimously carried after many speakers had expressed the deep sense of gratitude under which they felt the cotton growers of Queensland were placed:—This meeting expresses its admiration of and confidence in Mr. Daniel Jones who in the evening of his life is so worthily justifying the implicit trust we have always reposed in him.

It is fine to hear of a meeting representing 700 delegates of cotton growers in Queensland applauding a gentleman who year in and year out has fought the growers' battles. It is fine to see that those growers recognise the value of his services. The growers of Queensland freely admit they owe a very heavy debt of gratitude to the untiring efforts of Mr. Jones. The union has taken up the matter of securing for him

some measure of appreciation, and a subscription list is to be opened forthwith so that all and sundry may contribute towards that desirable object. Many of us have been interested in the fight Mr. Jones has been putting up for us and we are glad to see that he has been so successful. While we in this State have been using our utmost endeavours to get cotton growing started, it has become an established industry in Mesopotamia. It is a dreadful reflection on this State that, starting off scratch at just about the same time as we ourselves first started, that heathen place, Mesopotamia, has now got 4,000 acres under crop and 1,000 bales of cotton were expected to have been exported last year. Yet previous to 1920 nothing whatever had been done in Mesopotamia in the way of cotton growing beyond the putting in of a few experimental plots. In that year 80 acres were grown under the supervision of the department and the average yield was 1,250 lbs. in seed cotton. In the following year the area under cotton was about 600 acres. Yet up to the present we have been able to send away at the very outside only $2\frac{1}{2}$ tons of cotton. Is there here any reflection on the department responsible for this sort of thing in Western Australia? Does it mean any lack of confidence on the part of those officials that we should let Mesopotamia beat us in the way she has done? I think myself there is. If I were the head of a department responsible for introducing everything the country could profitably grow, I should feel that it was some reflection on me. Undeniably the Director of Agriculture has no time for cotton. He never did have. He was never interested in the crop. He was annoyed to think that it was up to him to go to the North, and he got back as quickly as he could. He went to Derby and was taken out 60 miles in a motor car, but he rushed back to the steamer and away to where the climatic conditions were a little more favourable. I was struck on reading in one of the papers that a certain member of another place had been on a very long and arduous journey during the election period. In a recent speech he said:—

Travelling as I have done during the recess, I have observed hundreds of miles of country unoccupied by a single person.

Reading that, one would think he had had a long journey with many experiences in the bush. He is a member for the North and I want his utterances to be valued at their true worth. He went up by the State boat because it is much cheaper. On the Singapore boats members have to pay their own fare. At several ports along the coast this gentleman did not bother to leave the jetty, or not to go further than to the nearest hotel, and then back again to the boat. At Broome an elector wanted to see him about an important matter,

but the water was a bit choppy and it meant going ashore in a launch, so this member of Parliament, not feeling too brave, asked a colleague to go ashore in his stead and see what the elector wanted. Then our friend went on to Wyndham, another strenuous trip, where he was shown over the meat works. He expressed astonishment at the very good management of the works. Previously he had been entirely hostile to the works and had lost no opportunity of jeering at them. However, on this occasion he stopped to praise instead of blame. He announced his intention of making a public statement at the first opportunity. He did make a sort of broken-legged recantation of his previous statements. It was but a poor fulfilment of the promise he had made to one of the officials. From Wyndham our friend went round to Darwin.

The Premier: That was a risk.

Mr. TEESDALE: Members will recognise the fearful wear and tear upon him. He was within easy access of ices and ginger ale, and no doubt had a very rough trip. After a brain-racking period of 24 hours in Port Darwin he amasses all the local information and goes back to a certain place by State steamer. He then churns off the information he has picked up on the deck of the steamer as if it were something he had discovered himself. I have no compunction in making my remarks as prominent as possible. I want this particular individual to recognise that if he can say offensive things, and does not care whether he pleases or offends, others can give him a little of his own medicine.

The Premier: I am not able to place him yet.

Mr. TEESDALE: He is a native of the State. He speaks of this wonderful trip as if he had had a rough time. He went straight from Fremantle under very comfortable circumstances to Darwin and came straight back again. He then turned on this 16in. record of what he had done, and spoke of the unoccupied country he had seen through the portholes of the steamer. What do members think of a man who will deceive the country into believing he has had this wonderful trip when he has not even seen the station he owns in the North? He has a cattle station there and has never been to it. This member for the North has never been more than 50 miles from the coast since he has represented that part of the State. He is a nice individual to run down the biggest optimist Australia has ever known. He is a counterfeiter who talks about the great North-West, and yet does not know where his own cattle station is. His men on it have never seen their boss. On one occasion this man said, "I know this State from A to Z." God knows what he classes as representing this State. His partner came to Wyndham and implored him to go to the station, but he did not like the look

of things and probably preferred to stay on the good old "Bambra." I hope this man's remarks will be taken for what they are worth in the future.

The Premier: I thought he knew every inch of the North.

Mr. TEESDALE: I believe the Premier has been further than he has.

The Premier: I did not lose sight of the ship once.

Mr. TEESDALE: He has never seen Hall's Creek, Turkey Creek, or Fitzroy Crossing. He is what I would call a port-hole politician. He knows a good deal about what he sees through the screen of a motor car or the porthole of a steamer. This is the man who decries our northern enterprises and runs down the meat works. He went through there so quickly the first time, that people thought he owed a lot of money and was trying to get away. This time he had to make himself a little conversant with things for fear someone would catch him napping. He was so solid in what he said about the meat works that he informed someone he would take back what he had said at the first opportunity. This man runs down the State steamers, but is not backward in travelling by them when it suits his pocket. Of course he travels on them from patriotic motives.

The Premier: Unlike most of us.

Mr. TEESDALE: On one occasion this man enjoined a past manager of a steamship company into giving him a contract which was opposed to the interests of the State. Not content with having bludgeoned this contract out of the man, he skited about with it to show his colleagues what a splendid deal he had made, and how he had dropped the State in for goodness knows how much. Not content with that dirty business, he talked about it all over the country. This man in 1914 implored the Labour Government to face the position. He said he was not going to put a shilling into their hands until they had proved to him what they had done with the money they already had. One would have thought the Government had hawked fish through the streets and kept the money they had received for it. This was when the State Insurance Bill was being discussed. He said, "Not one penny of my money goes into State insurance until you account for the half million deficit on State steamers." This is the man who is always running other people down. He noses about in company with another muck-raker trying to ferret out garbage, and when they think they have found a bit, they mouth and nozzle it about in the gutter like dingoes. They are always on the look out for loose screws. They never say anything encouraging or helpful to the country. They are always on the look out for things that constitute a little set-back and anything that is derogatory

to the State. They will do anything to discount or insult someone of whom they have asked a favour and been refused it, and are always ready to reflect upon anyone who will not take them at their own estimate. They never lose an opportunity of abusing and misrepresenting a certain individual who would not give them what they wanted. It almost gives one influenza to talk about them. This man said in concluding his speech that he did not care a rap whom he pleased or offended; he was quite indifferent.

Mr. Wilson: Who is he?

Mr. TEESDALE: This man has only his friends who are as venomous as he is. There are about eight of them. He has sickened and disheartened hundreds of settlers with his wretched, depressing talk about overhead costs and the tremendous expense of clearing the group settlements. He has done more to dishearten the group settlers than 50 members of this Chamber put together. There are plenty of men on the groups, prepared to be contented and loyal and to stick to their jobs, he has always completely disheartened. He has advertised all over the world that our group settlements are in a rotten condition. He never did anything since he has been in the House of a helpful nature. He has depreciated everything. He is always doing this sort of thing although he is a son of Western Australia. He ought to be ashamed of himself for decrying the country of his birth that has been so good to him. It practically dragged him out of obscurity. He would be in obscurity still but for the splendid way the North has treated him. It certainly deserves more attention and sympathy at his hands and more of his money, for it is out of the North that he made his money in years gone by. It is a poor return on his part to run down the country that has been so good to him. How are we likely to get people to go to the North when we have these damnable things printed in the newspapers? Mr. Lovekin described the agreement made with the Imperial authorities by the late Government as stupid. He went on to say—

The State contracted to take 75,000 people at £8 a head, which would not pay the cost of educating their children. Unless the State settled so many people and brought out so many more, it could not claim under the agreement. He blamed Sir James Mitchell, the late Premier, for not getting better terms from Mr. Amery, who, after making the agreement, had gone to the House of Commons and had "bragged about the good deal made with Australia."

Dr. Saw defended Sir James Mitchell and challenged the authority of Mr. Lovekin's statement in regard to Mr. Amery. Here is another penny balloon busted! This

man is always making statements and having to apologise for them. He insults and vilifies judges but acknowledges that he has made a mistake, and tries in a broken-kneed manner to apologise. He is always having to withdraw something. Here is a fine paragraph which says—

Our calamity howlers are the greatest curse with which Australia is afflicted, was the declaration of Mr. E. J. Brady, the noted Australian author, in the course of an address at the last weekly luncheon of the Victorian Institute of Advertising Men. These "misery merchants," he said, were men of low intelligence and imagination, and tried to hide their shortcomings by condemning everything. When it rained they saw nothing but the possibility of a flood, and when the sun shone they were sure a drought was coming. No country had suffered more from this class of person than Australia. The first calamity howler was the navigator Dampier, who, after landing on the shores of Western Australia and seeing only a very small portion of the continent, described it as the most miserable country in the world. If the voice of this and other "howlers" had been listened to, the Australia of to-day would never have been created. Australia needed men of faith and vision, and to counteract the work of the pessimists a healthy national publicity, both at home and abroad, was necessary.

This is the sort of thing we want and the kind of paragraph we should have always before us. We have wonderful opportunities in the North. Members must not get tired of hearing about it, because it will prove so valuable in time if Parliaments will give it a chance to become settled, and will make provision for the population to go up there. Some money must be spent in preparing the ground before we take any risk about settling people. I brought up the two small industries, fishing and pearl-button making, because so little capital is required to start them. I am particularly keen on the pearl button industry. We know that every man has about six buttons on a certain garment that he wears, and he might have a few more on other garments. Every woman going into a store should say "I want Broome buttons—none of your Austrian productions." There should be a fine profit for the maker, the sheller, and the retailer. That is why I want some of these smaller industries started in the North, to see whether we cannot get something in the way of settlement along the coast. Let me tell the House now what the gentleman to whom I have been referring said in connection with the meat works. He declared that thousands of pounds had been spent in renewing the

roofs of the works. Statements of that kind do a lot of harm. In connection with the meat works it is understood by those who take an interest in them, that it has been through circumstances over which we have not had any control, that the works find themselves in the position they occupy to-day. We have had bad seasons, stock has been low in price, and we have had bad luck on the London market, while, at the same time, it has been discovered that we should have had more storage accommodation. When I was up there I went into the question of renewing the roofs, and I found that what had been said was a gross mis-statement, in fact, it amounted almost to a deliberate lie. I do not know how this individual could have got the idea because there has been nothing done to justify what he said. The roof consisted of a ruberoid material, and it had decayed and would not carry off the water properly. It was decided to remove that ruberoid which had been there for four or five years, and to replace it with asbestos. It was rotten to make statements like those that were published. I was able to prove that what he said was nothing less than a fabrication. I believe the new material is proving a great success. The same individual said that there had been extensive renewals of plant. That was another gross mis-statement. Nothing whatever has been renewed so far as the plant is concerned, with the exception perhaps of the steam launch. The old launch did very good service, and was often placed at the disposal of the public at a nominal sum, and was used by the public in cases of emergency. Evidently it was found that there should be a renewal.

The Minister for Lands: It was allright until it struck a rock.

Mr. TEESDALE: That is a fact. All the maintenance charges are included in the working expenses. The individual declared that no maintenance charges were shown. What sort of people are they that deliberately make these mis-statements that are published at the expense of the State? We should protect our industries on all occasions, and we should be careful not to make assertions that are not true and that can only result in harm being done to the State. I contend that both the individuals to whom I have been referring have done more harm to the State than all the other members of Parliament put together. In dealing with the Closer Settlement Bill the same individual had the colossal impudence to assert that we were dispossessing people of their land and putting indigents in their places. Who is he that he should dare to sneer and insult people coming from England, people who are as good as, if not better than, he himself is? He described them as indigents from mean streets. They come from a country that few years ago helped to feed, finance and clothe half the world, a land that assisted every other civilised country, and

that impoverished itself almost to insolvency in helping others. Is that a country that one should speak of disparagingly, and say that the people from it were indigent and came from mean streets? What do we know about the mean street in which this individual himself was born? He might have been won in a raffle for all I know. Is it a crime for a man to be indigent? Plenty of the indigent poor are girls and boys who have been earning their 12s., 16s., or 18s. a week in mills. Those people gave their mite whenever an appeal was made. That mite, too, was equally as important as the cheques that have been given sometimes ostentatiously by these individuals, and perhaps sometimes given to institutions with the expressed desire that the donation should be kept dark. I wondered the other day whether there was any connection between what the Minister for Works said in referring to cheques given or offered to his party by people who desired that their names should not be disclosed, and cheques, the giving of which was advertised widely. I am sure members will be glad to know that I am about to conclude. I cannot help but call attention to a few remarks I made when I was sitting on the other side of the House. I have carefully treasured the report of those remarks, and will repeat them now as they are very appropos. Before that, however, I would like to tell the House what was said by Mrs. Philip Snowden, of the British Labour Party, who, to my mind, is a very capable lady. These few lines are headed "Nothing but Fair Play," and they read—

I have often heard it said in days gone by that a Labour Government would never have fair play, because it would be sabotaged by the Court and the permanent Civil Service. These fears have been proved to be quite unfounded. From the King downwards, throughout the Civil Service, the Labour Government have had nothing but fair play.

It is satisfactory to hear that from a woman like Mrs. Snowden, who has strong and pronounced ideas. Now I will repeat what I said when I was sitting opposite—

In conclusion, I trust that our friends opposite who accorded the Government fair treatment last session will act similarly during the present session. I am sure they are moderate and reasonable people, though there may be one or two extremists amongst them. In their hearts it is their desire to see the State move along successfully, and I am sure they will help all they can to further its interests.

Next comes the most important part of the lot, and I want members opposite to listen and not forget it. It was a very unfortunate prophecy on my part. It happened only too quickly—

They may find themselves on this side of the House in the not distant future, and

therefore while they remain in opposition they must set a good example so that those who follow them on those benches may know what to do when the position is altered.

No one on the opposite side of the House can take exception to those remarks. It will be good to bear in mind what I said because it is most irritating when anyone on this side desires to get some information, to find that it cannot be obtained, remembering at the same time the generous treatment that has been meted out by my chief and his followers towards the Government during the passage of these Estimates. Such support has never been known in this House. There has not been one jarring note from this side. Whatever hold-up that has taken place has come from the Government's own side.

The Premier: You are only following the example we set when we were in Opposition.

Mr. TEESDALE: Actually the opposition has come from the Government's own side! I trust that these remarks will make one or two of the Ministers feel conscience stricken respecting their treatment of members on this side of the House whenever details regarding a particular subject have been sought. Members opposite should also bear in mind that we did not leave our brains behind us when we perforce had to cross the floor of the House; we brought them over here with us and we still have the remnants of what the public recognised we possessed when they kept us on that side of the House for six years. Therefore let members opposite treat our suggestions with the respect that is due to them and not snap and bite as one or two Ministers do. The Premier is looking so troubled that I assure him I am not alluding to him. I wish to quote from a local paper a few lines that were written after the Mitchell Government went out of office. Members can recognise the source from whence the comment came—

Those who have for so long filled the role of apologists for every act and deed of the late Premier, will strive no doubt to use the breathing time which is inevitable as a scourge with which to flog new Ministers.

I call attention to the fact that we have not done anything of the kind. On the contrary we have given every help with all the legislation that has been brought forward. The writer of that is lying again. He says the people, however, are discerning and with past experience before them will refuse to listen to further wily temptations which portend disaster. That is very dramatic and entertaining. It is pleasing to know that we have not done anything of the kind, but that our relations with members on the Government side are just as friendly as when we occupied the seats on the right of the House.

Mr. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [9.30]: The older members of the House will remember that for some years after I was returned, I never missed an opportunity to direct attention to the necessity for developing and populating the North-West. As time went on and I was able to travel in the southern and eastern parts of the State, I was forced to the conclusion that it was impossible for any one Government to do justice to the whole of this great State. We have in the southern portions of the State, the makings of a second Victoria and a second New South Wales, and I feel that to develop and populate the North-West is beyond the capabilities of the State Government. Having realised this position during the last two or three years, I have been trying to induce the Government to point out to the Federal and British authorities that they, too, should take a hand with the State in developing our North-West. There are great possibilities in the North-West, of which we have heard in the very fine speech delivered by the member for Roebourne. There is also a very great menace in the North-West. The North-West deserves developing; it will pay to develop it. It has the makings of a second Queensland if only it is developed and populated as it should be. Therein lies the greatest menace to the safety of the Empire in leaving that huge portion of the State unpopulated and undeveloped. It has often been pointed out that adjacent to our coasts are millions of coloured people increasing at the rate of 5,000,000 souls a year; yet in the whole of Australia we have only a little in excess of 5,000,000 people. This is why we should urge upon the British Government the necessity for their taking a hand, with the Federal Government, in the development of our North-West. I was pleased to hear the Premier take that view in his Budget Speech. Certainly he did not mention the British Government, but he said definitely it was the duty of the Federal Government to assist this State to develop the North. I would have liked him to join the British Government in this great task. I am not going to dwell on the great possibilities of the North. After having lived for many years not only in the Gascoyne, but also in the Roebourne and Pilbara districts, I can endorse what the member for Roebourne has said as to the great possibilities awaiting development. There is the cattle industry not developed to one-half or even one-third of its capacity; there are the huge areas that will carry sheep; there is the wonderful wealth to be obtained from agriculture when we realise that on portions of the North-West coast are provinces with a rainfall of 30 to 60 inches. There is likewise the wealth in the seas going to waste. It is futile, however, to keep on drumming this into the State Government. It is always pleasing to hear a man admit his limitations. The State Government should realise their limitations. They

should say, "We should like to see the North-West developed. It is our duty to do that if we can, but we cannot do it. We must get assistance elsewhere." It is a duty the Government owe to the State, to the Commonwealth and to the Empire. I do not think the British people or even Federal statesmen really realise the great danger due to leaving this great stretch of 2,500 miles of coast line populated by only about 4,000 people. It is not fair to the Empire. I appeal to the Premier not to be content with voicing the opinion he has expressed but to go further and see if effect cannot be given to his views. It has been suggested that the Premier should go Home to finalise the immigration agreement. I am in accord with that suggestion, but if he went Home and pointed out to the British Government what a menace our undeveloped North is to the Empire, and succeeded in getting the British Government and the Federal Government to assist in its development, he would have done more for the good of the Empire and the State than by finalising the immigration agreement. I am not seeking to belittle the latter by any means, but the other is a duty that devolves upon him and is quite as important as the immigration question. On the Estimates is an amount of £21,000 for the development and administration of the North-West. Why! I suppose it has cost £100,000,000, if not more, to develop the southern part. What is £21,000 going to do for the North? Millions are required. We cannot undertake this task unaided, but we could do it with the assistance of the Commonwealth and British Governments. It is the bounden duty of the Premier to get assistance to develop this huge territory, which some day must be a great wealth-producing asset. Whether it be developed as a separate State or as Federal territory, we shall not lose by it; we shall be an adjoining State and must benefit from any development that takes place there.

Mr. LAMOND (Pilbara) [9.40]: I regret that the North-West is in the throes of one of the most serious droughts ever experienced. This means a great setback to that part of the State. The latest information I have is that at least 50 per cent. of the flocks on the stations has been lost. If the drought continues we can safely say that the percentage of loss will be higher. Owing to the drought large quantities of chaff are being taken into the Pilbara electorate. I wish to appeal to the Minister for Railways to grant some concession in the freight charged on chaff from Port Hedland to Marble Bar. The heavy expense incurred in the carriage of that commodity is a very serious item. Another matter of great importance to the pastoral industry is the increasing number of euros in the Pilbara district. It has been urged by the Port Hedland and Nullagine Vermin Boards that the Minister for

Agriculture should give this matter earnest consideration with a view to having this pest brought under the Vermin Act. I hope the Minister will consider the matter. It does not affect the more wealthy squatters; the new settlers in the outside districts are chiefly affected. They are compelled to do their best to exterminate the pest, and as a result of their efforts, they are assisting to keep clean the inner stations which do not contribute to their work. Apart from pastoral pursuits, the Pilbara districts depends largely upon its mining resources, and I hope the Government will arrive at some definite policy to develop those resources. It is gratifying to know that the Minister for Mines is sympathetic towards the prospectors. He has been instrumental in bringing about a much desired reduction in the price of explosives. I congratulate the Minister upon having taken up this matter so soon after assuming office. That in itself, however, is not sufficient to assist mining in my district. We want something more. We want some definite scheme of development, particularly for our gold mining areas. The gold mines in the Pilbara district have been deserted, owing to the high cost of living, and the high cost of transport. We have in two or three centres a Government battery, but the reefs that have produced the greatest quantity of gold are at least 30 or 40 miles from the batteries, and the ore has to be carted over that distance. Owing to that circumstance the mines have been abandoned, although fair stone is left in many of them. The high cost of carting and crushing simply made the mines unpayable. Before State batteries were established in Pilbara, the mining industry there was on the down grade. Private batteries charged 10s. per ton for the crushing of stone. I may quote some figures showing the quantity of stone crushed and the average rate per ton of gold produced in various centres of Pilbara. The Talga Talga field crushed 891.65 tons of stone for 2,012.28 ozs., an average of 2.25 ozs. per ton. There is no show working at Talga Talga to-day, nor has there been for the last 10 or 15 years, because the cartage to Marble Bar, 17 or 18 miles distant, is too expensive. At Nullagine 1,237.95 tons of ore were crushed for a yield of 3,497.30 ozs., representing an average of 2.82 ozs. per ton. I do not remember any stone being raised at Nullagine during the last 12 years. Then there is the Warrawoona field, which crushed 5,700.01 tons for 17,294.18 ozs., equal to 3.03 ozs. per ton. It will be observed that the average per ton of gold won from those reefs was exceptionally good. With a reasonable amount of practical sympathy from the Government, the Pilbara mining industry could be restored to prosperity. Apart from gold, Pilbara has large deposits of copper and asbestos. A little assistance would bring about good mineral development in the district. I

would have spoken about the Port Hedland water supply, had I not received the assurance of the Minister for the North-West that the work of testing will be taken in hand immediately.

[Mr. Angelo took the Chair.]

Mr. MARSHALL (Murchison) [9.51]: I propose to deal with the North-West Department on the items, and therefore in this general discussion shall not elaborate on that department and its administration. Members have had a fair digest of the North-West and its possibilities. The member for Roebourne left very little unsaid about the North-West, and what he did say was well expressed. From my brief experience in Parliament it seems to me that all Governments desire to stand off north-western development. Apparently it is realised that to develop the North boldly and vigorously would cost much money. No member who understands the North-West will argue against that view. I have heard it said even by Cabinet Ministers that the sum of money involved was so large as to render a development policy impracticable. However, the same difficulty confronted the late Government when they were contemplating the development of the South-West. The only trouble is that the North-West is too far from the seat of government. Where is the weak point of our national defence?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Where is the strong point?

Mr. MARSHALL: The North-West is the weakest link in our chain of defence.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The chain is weak.

Mr. MARSHALL: If the late Government could raise courage to take on a very extensive policy of south-western development, another Government should not lack courage to take on a cheap policy of north-western development.

Mr. J. H. Smith: What about the Wyndham Meat Works and the Carnarvon Meat Works? A lot of money has been sunk in them, more than has been spent on south-western development.

Mr. MARSHALL: I am speaking of a policy of development involving millions of money. The North-West has been kept out of its turn too long. In the early days of this session city members and south-western members wrangled about the policy that should have been adopted by the late Government for clearing the Peel and Bateman estates. It is realised that the capitalisation of blocks on those estates will be heavy.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It won't.

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not say the capitalisation will be heavier than necessary, but still it will be heavy. The question has been, what is the best policy for clearing? To obtain the same results in

the North-West from dairying and pig raising as will be obtained in the South-West would be a much cheaper proposition. If the late Government had started a vigorous policy of development in the North-West, they would have had a return from it in 12 months, instead of having to wait years for a return. Land could have been taken up along the Ord River northward to the coast and eastward to the Northern Territory. In that country the dairying industry would have returned as much in 12 months as it will return in the South-West during five years. Had a northern policy of development been adopted by the late Government, that policy would now be yielding to the present Government almost enough money to finance the south-western scheme. The Leader of the Opposition will deny that, notwithstanding which I can assure him it is positively true. There are up there hundreds of square miles of land with natural permanent water and a fairly good average rainfall up to about 20 inches, quite sufficient to ensure success to anyone going in for dairying. The member for Rochbourne (Mr. Teesdale) knows that the sugar grass, if cut at a certain period, makes very good ensilage. I saw some that had been stored for over two years. It was still sweet. What the ex-Prætor has been doing in the South-West could have been done much more cheaply in the North-West. One of the chief obstacles to the development of the Kimberleys is the great distance from the capital, entailing unduly high cost of production. I have heard it said that because wool has brought high prices this year, all those settled on the land from the Murchison up to the Northern Territory are in the lap of prosperity. As a matter of fact there are going to be many failures, particularly amongst the repatriated lads. Although their wool this year has brought good prices, unless they get good rain in the near future their flocks will be so depleted that many of them will be compelled to abandon their properties. I am not suggesting there will be any failure amongst the old-established pastoralists, but certainly the new settlers, particularly the repatriated men, will have a very bitter struggle unless rain falls shortly. I am not sure that the North-West has had sympathetic consideration from successive Governments. I understand that no wharfage is paid on primary products passing over the Fremantle wharf. I am not complaining of that policy, but surely if it be good for Fremantle it should be good for the North-Western ports.

The Minister for Lands: It applies to only certain kinds of produce.

Mr. MARSHALL: Still, if it be good for Fremantle it should be good for Port Hedland. My information is that everything passing over the Hedland jetty has to pay wharfage, whereas primary products passing over the Fremantle wharf pay no wharfage. In my view no port should be

singled out for special treatment. Then there are the charges on the Port Hedland-Marble Bar Railway, 50 per cent. higher than on any other railway in the State, except perhaps the Ravensthorpe line. I do not see why, because a line is not linked up with the main railway system of the State, it should be penalised by the imposition of excessive charges. When railways in the south of the State were not giving a profitable return, the people of the North-West had to pay their quota in taxation to cover the loss. Why, then, should the Government now turn round and make those people pay the full running costs of their own railway? I agree with those who think that the Federal Government should assist in the development of the North-West. It is impossible for such a small population as we have to develop the whole of the State within a reasonable time. Yet, of course, the Federal Government have made such a wonderful job of their development of the Northern Territory that I am somewhat afraid to ask their assistance in the development of our North-West. At any rate it is clear that there is some obligation on the Federal Government to lend the State assistance. However, not at any price will I be a party to handing over to the Federal Government our sovereign rights in the North.

Mr. COVERLEY (Kimberley) [10.10]: Undoubtedly the development of the North is a national question. Without any great capital expenditure the Government could establish certain industries in the North, as for instance the pearl-button making. I understand that small button-making machines can be purchased in Germany at the cost of £18 a piece. Here is a direction in which the Government might, without any great cost, assist the people up North. Some of our large absentee companies hold millions of acres in the Kimberleys. So large are these areas that they cannot hope to develop them to their full capacity. If those holdings were judiciously subdivided, we should have on each of them at least 50 families, where to-day we have only a company of two or three men. Members representing the North-West will realise that what I say is correct. The stations run their stock along the water frontages, but as soon as one gets back from the water he realises that it is only along the riparian frontages that there is any development. I am convinced that before very long cotton is going to play a great part in East Kimberley. Still, I think our first step to closer settlement should be through smaller pastoral holdings, and agriculture will naturally follow. One of our urgent necessities is the provision of proper shipping facilities, with closer attention to our jetties and, where necessary, extensions of those structures. On the Estimates we have a small sum for Broome jetty. Ap-

parently it is only for maintenance. I should like to see on the Loan Estimates a large amount for the necessary extension of that jetty. Frequently ships have great difficulty in getting into the port, with the result that cargo is sent ashore per lighter, which of course greatly adds to the cost of everything coming into the port. The member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) alluded to the tropical agriculture expert and said that the settlers of the North were very much dissatisfied with his advice. Let me say that that man had an area of about 1,500 miles to cover, and that without any good facilities. I see no provision on the Estimates for a motor car for his convenience in getting about the country. Most officers in responsible positions have the use of motor cars, but this gentleman had not. I know he made one or two trips in East and West Kimberley, but there was nothing in the nature of a joy ride about them. I hope the Minister will see that this officer is replaced. Unless we get a tropical adviser the progress of agriculture in that part of the State will be retarded. When such an officer is appointed I also hope he will be given better facilities than the previous officer had of getting about the Kimberleys. The Chief Protector of Aborigines practically holds a dual position. I have no objection to that, but his proper place is in the North-West, not in Perth. Many agriculturists and pastoralists have suffered a great deal of inconvenience owing to the Director refusing a permit for niggers, and as a result they have been held up for some time, through no fault of their own but through a misunderstanding. If this officer had been domiciled in the North, he would have obtained first-hand information and a great deal of this inconvenience would have been obviated. I notice that the cost of the administration of the North-West is increasing year by year. The view of the local governing body is that the administration of the department is wrong, and that there was very much better administration under the old system when the Engineer-in-Chief was in charge. I would urge upon the Government to reorganise this department as early as possible.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE
(Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [10.18]: The member for Kimberley has asked whether it is proposed to appoint a successor to Mr. Wise. Nothing up to date has been done in the matter. Probably steps will be taken to do this in the near future, when the policy for the North-West has been outlined. I very much regret that Mr. Wise and Mr. Sutton should have been attacked by the member for Roebourne. In my opinion Mr. Wise was a most conscientious officer and one who knew his business thoroughly. If ever there was a man who knew his business, it was Mr. Wise. He came here with the

highest qualifications from a country that is essentially tropical in every respect. He was thus able to make comparisons with that country and Western Australia. I have read his reports. From my own knowledge of tropical agriculture—for I spent my boyhood days in tropical parts—I would say that Mr. Wise was an extremely practical man, who knew his job.

Mr. Teesdale: He knows nothing about cotton. He was a good banana man.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I know the hon. member does not like him.

Mr. Teesdale: I have never claimed to do so.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member has a bitter tongue.

Mr. Teesdale: If I had half as bitter tongue as you have I would cut it out. You have a more venomous tongue than any member of this Chamber.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Then I shall be a good match for the hon. member.

Mr. Teesdale: We shall have to run in double harness.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member has attacked a man who was an officer of my department.

Mr. Teesdale: I have done it openly.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Mr. Wise knows more about tropical agriculture than the hon. member, who knows nothing.

Mr. Teesdale: I have never claimed to know anything about it.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The only evidence the hon. member ever gave in this Chamber of his knowledge of agriculture was when he urged upon the Government to buy the Riverton Estate for returned soldiers. That turned out to be an absolute catastrophe. That is the full extent of his record as an agriculturist.

Mr. Teesdale: Has that anything to do with the Wyndham Meat Works?

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: In scathing and bitter language he has referred to the reports of two responsible officers, who are not here to defend themselves, who have no axe to grind and no constituents to back them up, but who have given good service to the country. Although I may disagree with the opinions expressed in the reports of some of my officers, I do not disagree with Mr. Wise's reports. Whatever reports officers make they do not make them for the purpose of playing up to some constituency, or some accepted view of a district, but with the object of giving their best services to the country.

Mr. Teesdale: One report was made with the object of getting a trip up North. The officer in question did not care about the North. I refer to Mr. Sutton, the biggest waster I ever struck, so far as anything appertaining to cotton is concerned.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must ask the hon. member not to interject.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Members know how far they can accept the hon. member's statement.

Mr. Teesdale: Thank God they are not influenced by your opinions.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I would certainly not be influenced by anything the hon. member said.

Mr. Teesdale: You can be as vitriolic as any man if you are opposed. You have been a Minister for about 10 minutes only.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I should like to know who is making the speech.

Mr. Teesdale: You cannot make one quicker than I can.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must cease interjecting.

Mr. Teesdale: Let the Minister cease his abuse.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member is quite competent to bitterly attack a man who is not in this House. He has given expression to some bitter remarks concerning an officer, more bitter than I have ever heard expressed here before. I am of opinion that the first thing to do for the North is to effect the settlement of the pastoral areas, and the hon. member knows that.

Mr. Teesdale: You always have that in your mind.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The member for Kimberley spoke the truth, and that is borne out by Mr. Wise, when he stated that in the North-West the country is eaten out along the rivers, and back from the rivers no wells are sunk and there are no water supplies. The country is not effectively settled from the pastoral standpoint. Even if people were to engage in agricultural occupations there to-morrow, they would not be able to sell their produce because there is no population to provide the market. If the country were effectively settled from the pastoral point of view, the population would be there.

Mr. Teesdale: That is a nice thing to say.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Mr. Wise has said that the North-West is not tropical except as to heat. The tropical conditions of Queensland are in no sense similar to the tropical conditions of the North-West. Queensland is tropical in heat as well as in rainfall, and that makes all the difference. The North-West is not tropical, except as to heat, apart from Kimberley, which has a rainfall over four to five months. It cannot be expected, therefore, that we can grow products in the North-West such as can be grown in Queensland. People have amused me by talking about growing sugar in the North-West. It cannot be done, because sugar is a plant that requires a

fairly continuous rainfall and tropical heat. Under those conditions only can it be grown profitably. I do not know what can be done in the matter of cotton.

Mr. Teesdale: Don't say anything about sugar either. We have a 60in. continuous rainfall in the Kimberleys.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I grew up in the sugar industry, and ought to know more about it than the hon. member. From my knowledge of the rainfall and the seasons required, I am sure that sugar cane requires an 80in. rainfall, which must be spread over the whole year. It is impossible to get results without those conditions. The same thing applies to almost every tropical product, with the exception of cotton and a few other things which mature in short seasons.

Mr. Teesdale: What about tobacco?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not know about that. There will come a time when the North-West will be a rich and prosperous territory, but that time will not come until this country carries a large population and until water supplies are provided for irrigating the country. In such places as Roebourne, Onslow, and the Gascoyne agriculture can be carried on only under irrigation conditions. What is the use of talking about spending money in the South-West as against the North-West? In the South-West it is a practical proposition. The rainfall is good and lasts sufficiently long to produce payable crops. But in the North-West, apart from Kimberley, there is not a rainfall over a general season, but an occasional rainfall, and sometimes no annual rainfall. We cannot put people there at the risk of trying to make a living under conditions where nature will not help them. To the localities suggested by the member for Roebourne one might send a tribe of Arabs and expect them to live there; but one could not send our own people, knowing that under the natural conditions they could not possibly make a living. If the hon. member would put up a proposition of that kind, it would not deserve a moment's consideration.

Mr. Teesdale: You have been there for only 10 minutes.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I know something of the North-West. The hon. member was there for years. If this proposition is so good, why did he not put his capital into it? He was in Roebourne for years. The hon. member, who never in his life had any practical knowledge of this particular matter—

Mr. Teesdale: I have paid more money out of my own pocket for information than ever you did.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

Mr. Teesdale: You never tried to get anything by paying for it.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is cheap.

Mr. Teesdale: I paid my own money for my fare to Queensland.

The CHAIRMAN: I want to give the member for Roebourne warning that I shall have to report his interjections to the Speaker if they continue.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I make an exception of Kimberley, because I have studied the reports of the rainfall, and have studied Mr. Wise's reports. Cotton can be grown in Kimberley, but I am satisfied that sugar cannot be grown in Kimberley. I had an idea that maize could be grown in Kimberley, because it is a crop that requires only a short seasonal rainfall. I thought that if large quantities of maize were grown there, pigs could be raised. Kimberley may ultimately become a great dairying country. In Kimberley during the seasonal rainfall large quantities of fodder can be conserved, and a country where that can be done, and where there is plenty of surface water, and plenty of water to be got at a depth, it is quite possible to carry on the dairying industry. But it is no use drawing comparisons between the North and the South. I have always held the opinion, and I hold it now, that this community is too small to be able to raise the millions of money required to be spent on north-western development. This community is only a handful of people. I have often thought that there should be another capital at Broome, around which, if it were a commercial and political centre, population would spread. The first thing to be effected in the North-West is, I consider, pastoral settlement. Australia has been settled in the beginning from that. The first settlement of Australia came by means of pastoral occupation. Men brought their flocks and herds, and spread out; and as the population grew, the country was cut up into smaller areas, and thus developed. And that is the only way in which the North-West can be developed. There is no effective pastoral settlement yet in the North-West, and the reason for it, and the reason why settlement cannot be made smaller, is that the pastoral interests prevent it. It is no use crying for the stars, and it is no use hon. members condemning men who have given good advice. I will not hear Mr. Wise condemned now. I met him, and I know him to be absolutely scrupulous and honourable. Never have I read more practical reports than his.

Mr. Teesdale: I never said Mr. Wise was not honourable.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am satisfied with the reports of Mr. Sutton on his visit, although they do not satisfy the hon. member.

Mr. Teesdale: Where did Mr. Sutton go?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: He reported conscientiously and to the best of his knowledge.

Mr. Teesdale: On what he saw on a 60-mile trip on a main road in a motor car.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Mr. Sutton is a gentleman—

Mr. Teesdale: I never said he wasn't.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:—who has done a great deal for Western Australia.

Mr. Teesdale: I have admitted it.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: In our general progress he has played a large part. When he went to the North-West, he went there to do the best he could for this State, and he did it. I would not be worth my salt if I sat in this House and heard my officers criticised unjustly without defending them.

Mr. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret) [10.36]: I think there is a little misunderstanding between the Minister and the member for Roebourne. The Minister made a strong point of the integrity and honour of his two officers. It is his bounden duty to protect them. I listened to the member for Roebourne and he certainly did not attack the honour or probity of those officers in any particular. His charge was that they knew nothing about cotton. He gave them credit, one for knowing all about wheat growing, the other for knowing all about dairying. I think everyone in this House who knows Mr. Sutton respects him. I had not the pleasure of knowing Mr. Wise, but if he was an officer like Mr. Sutton we should be proud of having had him in our service. The member for Roebourne criticised those officers only in regard to their knowledge of cotton growing.

Mr. Teesdale: That is all, absolutely.

Item, Commissioner for North-West, £852:

Mr. TEESDALE: The Commissioner for the North-West had something to do with the engagement of Mr. Wise. The member for Mt. Margaret has rather anticipated what I was going to say, that I made no reflection upon either Mr. Sutton or Mr. Wise, except as regards Mr. Sutton's visit to the North, which consisted of a 60-mile ride in a motor car, and as regards Mr. Wise's knowledge of cotton growing.

The CHAIRMAN: I must remind the hon. member that we are on items.

Mr. TEESDALE: Mr. Wise was engaged by the North-West Commissioner.

The Minister for Mines: Mr. Wise was not appointed, nor was he recommended, by the North-West Commissioner.

The CHAIRMAN: I am afraid I cannot allow any further discussion of Mr. Wise on this item.

Mr. TEESDALE: I desire to read an extract from a letter I hold in my hand, revealing great lack of interest on the part of those who should foster north-western development—

They are very sanguine about cotton. No wonder, because they have no interest in it. The reason why I say so is that no one has been here to see when, how, and where we planted it. They certainly saw the ploughed space. It has grown and has been picked, and Mr. Wise has

never seen it. It is six months since we saw him. Surely four visits a year are not too much to ask. If not, what is Mr. Wise here for? I think many more are asking the same question here in the North.

[Mr. Lutey resumed the Chair.]

MR. MARSHALL: I move—

That the item be struck out.

Residents of the North-West see no necessity for this provision. Apart from a gradual increase in the cost of administration, there has been no reflection of the item in the progress of the North-West. The officer concerned can well be retained in the Treasury. If a referendum were taken in the North-West on the abolition of this department, there would be an overwhelming majority in favour. I do not know why we should see the charities and hospitals starved for assistance while we pay out £352 for an office which, in the opinion of those who should know, is ridiculous. I do not know that the Commissioner has done anything whatever to warrant the expenditure. Indeed, from my experience I know that nothing of importance has been done and that so little at all has been done that even the organised bodies in the North-West are of opinion that they would be better catered for under some other system.

MR. TAYLOR: Has there been no improvement up there?

MR. MARSHALL: Not the slightest. People ridicule the idea of hoping for any improvement.

HON. S. W. MUNSIE: I hope the Committee will not delete this item. I am not going to reply to all the statements made by the hon. member, but I want it to be known that the Government are even now considering the position of the North-West Department as a whole.

MR. TAYLOR: I think you need to.

MR. TEESDALE: I am glad to hear the Minister say that. I hope the Government will give the question careful consideration before taking notice of exaggerated statements made about the department from time to time. I have watched this department carefully, and I know we are getting our work done as economically and satisfactorily as possible with the small amount of money available. I hope we are not going to allow any officer to suffer injustice on account of his name. There was a good deal of adverse criticism at the time of his appointment, but I have watched him closely, and I can say he has justified his position in every respect. He is very enthusiastic in his work and has given really good service to the State.

MR. MARSHALL: Yes, but tell us something that he has done.

MR. TEESDALE: I can say that he has done his duty.

MR. MARSHALL: Notwithstanding which he has done nothing at all.

MR. TEESDALE: The hon. member may know a good deal about his own electorate, but he has not had much call on the attendance of the Commissioner of the North-West. I should like the Government to inquire as to what was the cost of administration of the North-West under the Public Works Department, and what its cost during the last two years under the new system has been. I implore the Government not to abolish the department. It has given good service and the public are satisfied. Some member may have gone to a township where the Commissioner has refused to grant some little consideration, but we cannot have our officials condemned for that sort of thing. There must be something extending over a long period.

MR. ANGELO: I shall not express an opinion as to whether the officer has been doing his work efficiently, but I have always contended that the salary paid him could be better spent on an additional Minister to devote four or five months of the year to making himself personally acquainted with the affairs and conditions of the North-West. He could report direct to Cabinet.

MR. TEESDALE: With no engineering ability?

MR. ANGELO: All the engineering ability required could be made available by the Public Works Department. I have never been favourable to the North-West Department taking over the functions of other departments. It should have been an advisory department only. When it was necessary to obtain expert knowledge, it should have been obtained from the departments.

MR. TEESDALE: And a nice time it used to take to get it.

MR. ANGELO: If we had a Minister for the North-West he would be able to adjudicate on most questions.

MR. TEESDALE: The Commissioner will do me.

MR. ANGELO: On the bigger issues he could report to Cabinet. I am glad to hear from the Honorary Minister that something is to be done, and I hope it will be on the lines I suggest. I have nothing against the present Minister for the North-West, who has too much to do and cannot personally give time to the North-West.

MR. LAMOND: I hope this item will be deleted on the ground that the department has never justified its existence. If members agree to its deletion, they will be fulfilling the desire of 90 per cent. of the population of the North-West.

MR. TEESDALE: You cannot say that.

MR. LAMOND: And probably an even greater percentage.

MR. TEESDALE: That is not fair.

MR. COVERLEY: I am expressing the opinion of the Broome, Derby and Wyndham Road Boards when I say the administration of the North-West is entirely

wrong. The Commissioner has not the requisite power; he is merely acting as a smoke screen between the Government and the people. I hope the item will be deleted.

Mr. MARSHALL: I regret that Mr. Teesdale's feathers should have been so ruffled. I am moving to delete the item, not because the Commissioner happens to be Mr. Drake-Brockman, but because of two years' experience on the Meekatharra Road Board during his regime. The Commissioner lacked the intelligence to take an interest in the simplest matter concerning the road board. A conference of roads boards was held and certain proposals were agreed to, but the North-West had no representation upon it and had no say in the framing of the laws to which the North-West was afterwards subject. What has the Commissioner done to warrant the expenditure? Would not the £852 be better spent amongst the poor or on the Health Department? I have never seen this officer, and I have nothing against him personally.

Mr. Teesdale: Why do you attack him?

Mr. MARSHALL: Because he has done nothing since his appointment three or four years ago.

Mr. Teesdale: That is, in your electorate.

Mr. MARSHALL: Yes. I travelled through part of the North-West recently and while the Meekatharra people objected to his administration, the further North I went, the more was the department regarded as a joke.

Mr. Teesdale: It applies only to the road board in your district.

Mr. MARSHALL: I could give other instances. The member for Roebourne said that before the Commissioner was appointed correspondence was subject to great delays. To my knowledge it took 3½ months to receive a reply to a letter sent to the Commissioner from Meekatharra.

Mr. Taylor: That was before the aerial service.

Mr. MARSHALL: I believe it was. Even so, 3½ months was altogether too long to have correspondence held up. If there is a position in which this officer can be usefully employed, I would not object to his transfer, but the people of the North are of my opinion. I have always contended that this was a useless appointment. It has never been justified.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: The member for Murchison has asked for evidence of neglect. I have not heard anything from the Commissioner regarding the cultivation of peanuts. Recently I received from the Northern Territory a letter which I shall read.

The CHAIRMAN: Does it deal with this officer?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: No, but I wish to show that this important industry has been neglected.

The CHAIRMAN: You cannot read the letter now. You should have brought it in during the general discussion.

Mr. TAYLOR: We cannot expect the Honorary Minister, who merely represents the Minister for the North-West, to be au fait with all the details necessary to combat the arguments raised by the member for Murchison. It is strange to hear members representing the North-West say that this officer has not justified his selection for the position. The member for Kimberley goes so far as to say that the local authorities regard his services as of no value. I do not feel like voting to delete this item, seeing that the Honorary Minister has given the Committee an assurance the whole question will be gone into thoroughly. I suppose we shall hear next year what has been done. It is just as well to give the Government a chance to reorganise the North-West Department. I am satisfied that this part of the State is not getting the value from the change in the administration that was expected, but I am not in a position to verify the statement.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The member for Murchison wanted to know one thing that the Commissioner for the North-West had done. I could quote many instances, but will confine myself to one. For eight or nine years there have been complaints with regard to the local road boards in the North not having any proper system of audit. There has always been trouble with the Government in respect to the amount of subsidies paid to road boards there. Since the North-West Department has been created a system has been established.

Mr. Teesdale: And a good one too.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The Department believes that at the end of this year every road board will have had an audit. Prior to that, not one had an audit for five years. Arrangements have also been made for a continuous audit each year.

Mr. MARSHALL: In consequence of the Honorary Minister having cited one thing done by the Department, I will withdraw my motion.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 11.6 p.m.