

measure on the lines of the Queensland Act, and allow commissioners to arrange the boundaries in the method laid down in that measure. I am satisfied that there would not be the personal bickerings and the bitterness which have taken place in this Chamber, if they adopted an attitude of that kind. I trust even at this hour that the Government will withdraw from the position they have taken up, and consider the effect a Bill of this kind will have, and permit the people, who, after all, are those most affected, to give free expression to their opinions by having just and proper representation in this Assembly.

On motion by Mr. Layman debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 10.45 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Friday, 16th December, 1910.*

	PAGE
Papers: Outer Harbour, Fremantle ...	2480
Bills: Workers' Compensation Act Amendment,	
3a. ....	2480
Tributers, 3a. ....	2480
Perth Municipal Gas and Electric Lighting,	
Council's Amendments ...	2480
Annual Estimates, Votes and Items discussed ...	2482

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 10.30 a.m., and read prayers.

### PAPERS—OUTER HARBOUR, FREMANTLE.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. H. Daglish): There was on the Notice Paper a motion in the name of the member for Fremantle. It had been agreed that this motion should be treated as merely formal, so in the absence of the member for Fremantle he himself would move it. He moved—

*That all papers, reports, etcetera, in connection with the construction of an outer harbour at Fremantle be laid on the Table.*

Mr. Bolton: Had the member for Fremantle no interest in the affairs of Fremantle?

Mr. SPEAKER: This being merely a formal motion it was within the province of any hon. member to move it for the absent member, unless the House objected.

Mr. Bolton: There was no objection; he merely called attention to the absence of the member when there was important business concerning his electorate.

Question put and passed.

### BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1. Workers' Compensation Act Amendment.

2. Tributers.

Transmitted to the Legislative Council.

### BILL—PERTH MUNICIPAL GAS AND ELECTRIC LIGHTING.

#### *Council's Amendments.*

Two amendments made by the Legislative Council now considered.

#### *In Committee.*

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

No. 1—Clause 9, Strike out Subclause 1 and insert new clause (for taking the poll):

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The amendment made in another place to Clause 9 was really in the direction of providing more complete machinery for the carrying out of the purpose of the Bill. There was no change whatever in principle represented in the amendment; it was merely an improvement in the drafting. This particular Bill had not been drafted by the Parliamentary draftsman or the Crown Law authorities, but on the order of the Perth municipal council. He moved—

*That the Council's amendment be agreed to.*

Mr. ANGWIN: The excuse made by the Minister was a poor one. The Minister should have taken care in the first place to see that the provisions of the Bill were in the best form.

The Minister for Works: I am doing that now.

Mr. ANGWIN: The Minister should not have waited until the Bill came back from another place. It suggested great carelessness on the part of the Minister, or, alternatively, that the Minister had never seen the Bill until it was introduced by him in the House. It was a practice becoming so common that it was a matter of indifference to many as to whether or not a Bill was in proper order when presented to members. It had become the rule that Ministers should use another place for the purpose of improving the drafting of Bills, and, under the same practice, if against the Government one secured amendments to a Bill in this House the Government had the original clauses restored in another place.

Mr. BOLTON: It was a bad doctrine to hold that another place should be regarded as a House for the redrafting of measures, and it was a poor excuse for the Minister to say the Bill had been badly drafted in this Chamber.

The Minister for Works: That is utterly incorrect; I said it was not drafted by the Government at all.

Mr. BOLTON: Then the Minister had no right to take up an improperly drafted measure. This sort of thing served to make another place necessary in order that the various measures might be redrafted therein. All Bills should be carefully scrutinised and overhauled in the first place by the Minister in charge. It frequently happened that amendments were moved in another place which the Minister in that place had not the courage to oppose and which, when they came to this House, we were asked to accept rather than have any opposition to the passing of the Bill. Important amendments were being made in the Licensing Bill in another place, and presently, when that Bill came back, we would be told the amendments were necessary in order to make the clauses sufficiently clear.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There might have been a lot in what the hon. member said if the hon. member had

not been arguing from the wrong premises. The hon. member had based his arguments on what he (the Minister) had not said. It had not been said that the Bill was not properly drafted when introduced here. What he had said was that the drafting had not been done by the Parliamentary draftsman or the Crown Law authorities, but on the order of the Perth municipal council. The Bill had not been badly drafted when introduced here, by any means, but in the most carefully drafted measures it was possible to make improvements. Were it not so it would be a waste of time for us to have two Houses discussing the Bills week after week.

Mr. Bath: It is a waste of time in any case, and you have often said so.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Surely if the Bill had been introduced in a bad form it was as much the duty of the member for Fremantle as the members of another place to see that an improvement was effected. All the brains and capacity of the Committee were not carried in the head of the member who had introduced the Bill.

Mr. Bolton: You have the assistance of the Crown Law Department.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The advice of the Crown Law Department had been acted on, but that was no reason why a review should not be made in another place and why improvements should not be effected. The amendment made the clause a little more complete. He did not think that there would have been any difficulty in carrying out the intention of the clause if the amendment had not been made, but why disagree with a proposition that was not detrimental to the Bill simply because it emanated from another place?

Mr. ANGWIN: Why should another place be allowed to insert amendments that were not necessary? The Bill, as it had left the Chamber, put the intention in regard to the special poll very clearly, but it seemed that members in another place thought it necessary to amend the Bill, no matter how clear it was, for the express purpose of showing the people that they were doing some-

thing. There was no necessity for the holding of a revision court for the express purpose of taking this one poll when there was a ratebook which would fully meet the requirements.

Question passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 2, Clause 9, Subclause (2).—Strike out in line three the words "according to the direction in such Schedule" and insert "by signing his name thereon."

The MINISTER FOR WORKS moved—

*That the Council's amendment be agreed to.*

The effect of the amendment was simply to replace the principle in the clause in regard to the method of voting as it had been introduced originally. The member for Guildford had carried an amendment with a view to providing secrecy in the voting, but it had subsequently been agreed that the amendment would have been better left unmade. If the amendment of another place was agreed to, it would be provided that any person who voted should sign his name on the voting paper. As the poll would be one to forbid the council from proceeding with the loan, it followed that only those who wanted to forbid the loan would vote and, therefore, there could be no secrecy, and the fact of the voter having to sign his name could not be injurious.

Mr. GILL: The fact of a person going to vote was proof that he was going to vote against the loan, but it was not clear why another place was insisting on a person signing his name. His objection to that procedure was that it was creating a permanent record of those who voted against the proposal, and he did not think that was desirable.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The amendment would do no harm, but what good would it do? If it would do no good why was the signature necessary?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The signing of the voter's name was the simplest form of taking the vote. It was not a yes or no vote; only the one expression of opinion could be given by the man who went to the poll. The vot-

ing paper was to the effect that, "I forbid the council of the city of Perth from proceeding further with the loan, etcetera," and the voter must make some mark on the paper. The returning officer was bound to keep a record of every person who voted, and, therefore, there could be no more secrecy in not providing for a signature on the papers than if they did provide for them. The virtue of the amendment would be that it would prevent any impersonation, and would assist in bringing offenders to book if impersonation did occur.

Question passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolutions reported, the report adopted, and the Message accordingly returned to the Legislative Council.

## ANNUAL ESTIMATES 1910-11.

### *In Committee of Supply.*

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

Department of Agriculture (Hon. J. Mitchell, Minister).

*Vote, Agriculture Generally, £20,854:*

The MINISTER FOR LANDS AND AGRICULTURE (Hon. J. Mitchell): In introducing these Estimates I would like to draw attention to the rapid development of every branch of agriculture in the State. We have now reached a time in the history of Western Australia, of which we can be justly proud. I believe the land will produce this year a crop worth not less than three million pounds, a very respectable amount to be produced by a country with a population of less than 300,000, though when it is remembered that nearly half the people of the State live in the rural districts, it is probably not so much cause for wonder. We have developed very rapidly in ten years. The area under crop ten years ago was 200,000 acres; to-day we have something approaching 900,000 under crop. In 1905 we had under crop and fallow 408,832 acres as against 1,300,000 acres under crop and fallow to-day. This is very satisfactory progress to have made in a short five years. Not only have we increased our area under cereals, but the area under fruit has also in-

creased, and to-day we have 15,000 acres under fruit trees. Last year we exported 4,000 cases of apples, and it is estimated that we will export 20,000 cases this year.

Mr. Jacoby: Your figures are wrong.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Very satisfactory prices were obtained in London, such as up to 27s. for apples and up to 30s. for grapes.

Mr. Jacoby: Where do you get those figures? They are quite wrong. There were 6,000 exported from Fremantle and 3,000 from Albany.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: At any rate these are the figures supplied to me. I wish briefly to say a word or two in connection with keeping out disease from our orchards. As hon. members know, the codlin moth is found in some of the Eastern States, and it has been the work of the Government for many years to prevent the introduction of this pest into Western Australia, and so far we have been successful. Only the other day some apples were brought in from without the Commonwealth containing codlin moth. The inspectors under the Commonwealth made the discovery, and I am pleased to say the Commonwealth Government acted promptly and enabled us to destroy this fruit that would probably have brought the codlin moth into the State. Inspection is rigidly enforced where fruit is brought into the State from the Eastern States and elsewhere, and so far the result has been satisfactory so far as keeping out the codlin moth is concerned. The work of inspection is capably done in regard to keeping down diseases in our orchards and preventing their introduction to the State. Our live stock and the pastoral industry generally have made rapid strides. To-day we have in the State 850,000 head of cattle, and it is estimated there are  $5\frac{1}{2}$  million sheep. Ten years ago there were only 338,000 head of cattle and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  million sheep. So it will be seen that in these directions progress has been as satisfactory as in the case of agriculture. Of course the trouble with our stock-owners, particularly our cattle-breeders in the far North, is to find a market for their surplus stock.

During the year irrigation has engaged the attention of the department; and the irrigation expert, Mr. Scott, has been actively engaged in encouraging people to undertake irrigation in the South-West of a permanent nature. It is perfectly true that in Western Australia we can as yet only follow small schemes. The Government have not been called upon to provide much money for this purpose, and practically the only expense has been the expense of the irrigation expert whose advice has resulted in 62 of our producers going in for irrigation. I believe that in the South-West, irrigation would do a great deal to solve the difficulty we are faced with in regard to our dairying industry. At any rate the irrigationist tells me there are many people inquiring, and that he hopes he will get many small schemes going. In the East they are spending enormous sums of money to bring about closer settlement by the aid of irrigation, and I would like to be able to tell members that we are not afraid of facing a comprehensive scheme, though it is impossible at this stage of our history. However, the water now going to waste in the South-West will be put to use so far as we can encourage the people to do it. One work of the department I feel a little proud of is that of the special settlement at Tammin. Probably the member for East Fremantle will have a word or two to say in this connection. As hon. members know, we assisted 50 men without means to settle in the Yorkrakine area. These men have done their part. They were carefully selected by Mr. Paterson, the manager of the Agricultural Bank; but if the men had not been the right men and had not done their part. I should not be able to-day to announce the success of this scheme, now  $2\frac{1}{2}$  years old. Of the amount originally advanced to these men by the department, only £390 3s. 1d. remains owing to us. We advanced £1,557 to enable them to put in their crop, and I hope this will be repaid as soon as their crops are harvested. With few exceptions the crops have been satisfactory. The other day one of the settlers came here and saw me at the House, and said his crop was not too good, but on inquiry I found that he expected to get 15 to 18

bushels. I said, "If you get 12 on your method of cultivation, you would be doing fairly well," but he said his neighbours were getting up to 30 bushels. I thought that if this man was getting from 15 to 18 bushels they must be doing pretty well on the settlement. If these men retired from the settlement to-day they could take £20,000 with them, and these are men who 2½ years ago, as far as I know, were almost without means. I believe that this is the first special settlement of its kind in Australia that has succeeded. I do not mean to say that Nangeenan will not succeed, but at Nangeenan they were handicapped in the early stage, and they have not got into the position the Tammin settlers have reached. At any rate, this settlement has done this for Western Australia: it has demonstrated the fact that men almost without capital can become successful. They were each loaned £50 by the department which they have almost repaid. Many of them repaid it some time ago. Then they had the advantages of the help of the Agricultural Bank, and with that help they cleared 7,000 acres of land. To-day they are independent men and at any rate they can clear out of the place with 20,000 sovereigns. The civil servants' settlement scheme has proceeded very satisfactorily. The men have been settled 13 months, some of them, on their land to the north of Nangeenan, and in that time they have cleared 6,000 acres. They had an advantage over the men at Yorkrakine, because my predecessor had ringbarked a fairly large area in the locality, in consequence of which they were enabled to get in their crops much quicker than would otherwise have been the case. These civil servants who have been there so short a time will harvest 1,400 acres this year. There are 73 settled there, and that will be an average of 20 acres per man. Of course some of them have no crop, and others have up to 100 acres.

Mr. Gill: Have any left the settlement?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I think two or three have, and 25 men withdrew their names before the scheme was put into operation. Professor Lowrie visited the settlement recently

and expressed surprise and pleasure at the good work these men were doing. I mention these matters because they are of considerable interest to hon. members and to the country. These men were in Government offices, and when I suggested that they should become farmers it was thought that their training had not been of such a character as to fit them for the land. However, they are doing excellent work. That they have cleared 6,000 acres in 13 months is evidence of what they are capable of. The department imported a number of stock—sheep and cows—and these were sold. They cost £37,836, and of this only £8,516 is now outstanding. I think the scheme of supplying settlers with stock should be proceeded with, because practically all the people going on the land to-day are wheat farmers and every wheat farmer should have a number of stock on his holding. It is difficult for a struggler who goes on the land with limited capital to purchase stock, and I think the Government would be well advised to continue this system of supplying stock to our farmers. The advantage to the State is apparent, and it will mean a considerable help, particularly to the people who are settled in the dry areas where they take up fairly large selections.

Mr. Underwood: It would be far more help to them if you supplied horses.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: We do supply horses. I will tell the hon. member what we have done in that connection under the Agricultural Bank Estimates. There should be no loss in connection with these stock sales. I do not mean to say that all will pay up, but the reinvestment of the money which gives 3½ per cent. will cover any small loss we may make. Another feature of the year's operations has been the work of clearing by traction engines. We have in the State a very large area of land in the south-west corner where the rainfall is from 15 to 30 inches. It is heavily timbered country which it is almost impossible for an ordinary man with limited means to face. We endeavoured to assist in the clearing of this land by the employment of traction engines. Naturally it will take some time to perfect the system, but I hope in the near future we shall have a sufficient

number of engines at work to assist in the settlement of the area of rich land which extends from Bunbury to Albany. At Denmark the clearing, according to the report of the officer in charge, has averaged £14 6s. per acre, and at Ludlow the clearing and ploughing has cost £17 7s. 6d. per acre, which is about £4 less than it could have been done for by hand labour. Some time ago we assisted in the establishment of a butter factory at Bunbury: this factory struggled in the first year of its existence, and last year they did not do great things, but they paid £4,200 to the farmers around that township. This is very satisfactory indeed, and it is particularly gratifying to know that the butter which they make is eagerly sought by retailers in Perth. I believe the Bunbury butter invariably fetches a higher price than factory butter imported from the East.

Mr. Angwin: How is it that it goes bad quickly?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: They say that it will not keep because the people want it. I am sorry the member for Collie is not here, because in his district we have assisted to establish a jam factory, and I dare say he could have told the Committee something about it. A factory has been established at Donnybrook, and we have one at Perth, and another at Fremantle, and all these factories are turning out an excellent article, and I hope that the £50,000 which is spent in importing jams in the near future will remain in the pockets of the West Australian producers. With the development which is going on, it is necessary that we should convert into jam the fruit which is not fit for export, and that is being done at the factories. The production generally means of course that the Government have to expend a considerable sum of money in providing marketing facilities. Just now the wheat producers are being supplied with up-to-date machinery for handling the grain at Fremantle. This system I suppose will be superseded by the bulk handling system, but at the present time the Harbour Trust have made satisfactory arrangements for handling grain at the port, and

at other ports means have been provided for loading vessels. The export of fruit has been satisfactorily provided for without conveniences being afforded for free cooling.

Mr. Underwood: Where is Despeissis now; is he cooling off?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I think he would require cooling off if he had come from the hon. member's electorate. We proposed to establish abattoirs and freezing works at Fremantle in order that producers in the agricultural districts may find a market for their lambs, and we propose to establish freezing works at Wyndham so that the millions of acres there may be turned to account. At the present time production there is limited. With freezing works and abattoirs we anticipate that the whole of the country will speedily become settled, and that we shall bring about the export of a large quantity of meat. Hon. members know that in this cattle country it is impossible for the small producer to carry on unless he can market his stock. I have had the opportunity lately of meeting a small producer, a man who owns 4,000 head of cattle in the far North, and he told me that he had not been able to sell a hoof for some years. We would not be doing our duty if we allowed this state of affairs to continue one day longer. We are each year sending up in smoke millions of acres of magnificent grass which should be turned to account. I venture to say that no other country on the face of God's earth would have been content to allow that magnificent district in the Kimberleys to remain unsupplied with facilities for marketing stock. It is utterly impossible for a producer to hoard up his increases year in and year out, and this has been found out by the people who are settled there.

Mr. Underwood: Is that the only place you have heard of?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: There is Pilbara, of course, and Port Hedland, and there are other parts of the Nor'-West capable of doing more than they are doing to-day. We propose, and hon. members opposite will agree with me that it is right to erect these works our-

selves, and we propose that the cattle owners in the far North shall bear any loss that may be caused by the establishment of these works.

Mr. Butcher: Will the Government control them?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is the idea at present, unless some better idea can be suggested.

Mr. Butcher: I hope the Government will stick to that idea.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: We intend to impose a stock tax to cover loss in connection with interest and sinking fund, and working expenses. This will mean that the general taxpayer of the State will not be burdened to the extent of one penny in connection with these works at Wyndham. I want to make it clear that Wyndham is not the place altogether for the large producer. Wyndham is capable of accommodating a great many small producers if there were facilities for marketing stock, and these producers, I venture to say, will soon be in evidence. We propose to establish works, and we have already started them at North Fremantle. A great deal has been said about the selection of this site. I want to say that there is no other suitable site that I know of. North Fremantle was designed by nature to provide an export depot for the great bulk of the producers of Western Australia, and we selected this site because we believed that our producers should reach the world's markets with the least possible cost. We believe that North Fremantle will provide the cheapest way of marketing for the old world, and the slaughtering and freezing of stock at North Fremantle will save the producer the cost of second handling, and will also provide against damage to frozen meat.

Mr. Jacoby: Where did you get that information from?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I am making a statement to this House and taking the responsibility for it.

Mr. Johnson: Hear, hear.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The works at Port Adelaide are said to be the best of their kind in Aus-

tralia. I did not intend to refer to this matter, because I know that my friend opposite will have a good deal to say about it, but there will be no harm in providing him with fuel for his speech.

Mr. Johnson: Of course you are referring to the member for North Fremantle.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The member for North Fremantle is a friend of mine in this connection. I am referring to the member for Guildford. The South Australian people, who are strongly commercial, determined to have their works at Port Adelaide, and their Government abattoirs were removed from Dry Creek to the port because they realised that the port was the right place to have them, and that everything could be cheaply handled there. South Australia began exporting when she had something over six million sheep, and last year that State exported 220,000 lambs. At the export depot they not only dealt with sheep and fat lambs and mutton, but butter, eggs, and honey, and other produce. These works have been more satisfactory, probably than any similar works in Australia. The cost was enormously increased in consequence of having to remove the abattoirs from Dry Creek to the port; but under this system, by which the producer sends his stock or produce direct from his farm to the ship, the maximum value for the produce is of course obtained. We propose to follow the South Australian example, and I would like to tell the member for Swan that we are warmly supported by Professor Lowrie, who has had experience in South Australia and New Zealand.

Mr. Jacoby: Did he agree upon the North Fremantle site?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes; and he could not agree about any other site.

Mr. Jacoby: What about Owen's Anchorage?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Owen's Anchorage is unsuitable because it is away from the wharves which will accommodate the shipping. We propose to establish abattoirs and freezing works, and slaughter yards at North Fre-

mantle, where we have 12 acres of land. We are meeting with considerable opposition, of course, and I suppose the opposition will continue as it did in the case of the Kalgoorlie abattoirs until the erection of the works at this spot has been proved to have been justified. We propose that these works shall supply the needs of the metropolitan area. They will be well placed indeed. We have heard some arguments against this site, but when we remember that Perth is supplied with Government markets and freezing works, and that at those markets you get the wholesale meat supply for the metropolitan area, it will be seen that it is necessary to provide to the same extent at North Fremantle, where meat will be carried to 25,000 consumers. Everyone knows that the great bulk of the population lives between Perth and Fremantle.

Mr. Bolton: How is it that the Attorney General did not recognise that?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I have nothing to say against Midland Junction, but would that be the case there? I say no. There are not more than 5,000 people living in the vicinity of Midland Junction near enough to the works to send in their carts for the meat. If, on the other hand, 25,000 people can send in their carts, that in itself will guarantee the success of the works at North Fremantle. Another reason, and the best of all, for placing the works at North Fremantle lies in the fact that you give the producers of Western Australia a chance. There are in the State to-day  $5\frac{1}{2}$  millions of sheep capable of producing a million and a half lambs each year, and one-half of them are in the South-Western division. If we were prepared to do it we could ship 250,000 lambs per annum. Last year there was an increase of 634,000 over the previous year, and that, after providing for the local requirements, which means about 600,000. Are these producers to be left entirely to the mercy of the wholesale butchers operating in Perth?

Mr. Johnson: Where are you going to get the lambs?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: We will get the lambs all right.

The butchering trade is in the hands of a few people supplied by the large pastoralists in the North.

Mr. Johnson: Do they get their lambs from the North?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No, of course not; but the butchering trade is in the hands of a few people and they have a monopoly, because there are no public abattoirs. It is a standing disgrace that there are no public abattoirs in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Johnson: And it is also a standing disgrace that you propose to put them at North Fremantle.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I will take the full responsibility for that.

Mr. Johnson: But we have to foot the bill.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I think I can claim to know a lot more about the requirements of the producers than most members, and I am here to protect the interests of the producer and the consumer alike. The producer can have no freedom while purchasers are limited to the few who carry on the wholesale butchering trade in the metropolitan area. It was the same on the goldfields: when we opened the works at Kalgoorlie there were six butchers in that centre, while to-day there are 15, and this, no doubt, will apply again when we open the works in North Fremantle. My concern is for the producer. Professor Lowrie, when at North Fremantle recently, saw lambs sold at 11s. 6d, which would have brought 2s. more in New Zealand. There can be no protection for the producer until he can face the world's markets, until we provide him with the conveniences which will enable him to reach those markets at the cheapest possible rate. The producer must be provided for. This year we have settled 3,000 people on the land, and if each of these people produce only 50 lambs what is to become of them all? They will be entirely in the hands of these few people who cater for the public in the metropolitan area. We have heard the same argument used in connection with wheat and with fruit, for we were told we would never produce sufficient for ourselves.



Notwithstanding that our flocks are increasing I am told we can do without export facilities. I say it is utterly impossible for the people on the land to reach the market at all, except through the freezing works and over the water. The Government are assuming the responsibility for settling these people, and they must face the further responsibility of providing access to the world's markets. Why do we hear so much of Midland Junction and Owen's Anchorage? Every member knows the farmer would have to get his stock to the ship from Midland Junction or Robb's jetty at a very considerable cost and disadvantage, because the frozen stock would very probably be injured in transit. The producer knows I am here to see the best possible is done for him. It is of no use arguing against experience. We have the experience of South Australia, where the works are beside the wharf, and where the producers get the maximum rate for their produce. It is true that to-day a great many of our lambs are not suitable for export; however, it has to be remembered it is an annual crop and can be influenced by the introduction of suitable rams. They will be introduced so soon as the farmer knows he can sell his lambs. We have, of course, merinos and British breed, but no man who wants to sell will introduce British breed into his stock; whereas as soon as he knows what can be done with his lambs he will put in the British breeds. This applies particularly to the farmer in the wheat belt where the carrying capacity in winter is three times as great as in the summer. The proper procedure is to hold the full summer capacity, leaving Gascoyne to provide the ewes; for Gascoyne, we know, can furnish ewes capable of producing the highest quality lambs. The questions we have to ask ourselves are: is this sheep country of ours to be developed, are we to serve the producer, are we to serve the consumer of the metropolitan area, or are we consider the people who now control the meat trade of Western Australia, the wholesale butcher and the supplying squatter? Our duty is clearly to the small producer on our agricultural districts. What I want the Committee to do

is to endorse my recommendations that the consumer in the metropolitan area and the producer in our back country be protected, and that we follow the example so well set by South Australia, and provide these export works in the most convenient position possible. Works will be needed at Albany, for development is going on very rapidly in that corner of the State. Hon. members know it is inadvisable to submit to long railway carriage when we have a magnificent port at hand. The question will be faced there also, and I hope in the near future up-to-date facilities will be provided. I believe these questions will provoke considerable discussion, but I hope hon. members will realise that so far as I am concerned I am, to the best of my belief, acting in the best interests of the producer and the consumer in placing the works at North Fremantle. During the past year Australia has had the misfortune to discover that Irish blight exists among the potato crop. Fortunately for us, very little of the blight has found its way into Western Australia, and we are keeping the disease in check. I do not know that it is probable we are likely in the near future to become exporters of potatoes to the Eastern States instead of importers therefrom, as we have been for many years; but the land in Western Australia is suitable for the production of potatoes if we can get a sufficient number of people to work up that industry. The work of the department is largely for the protection of the producer. We administer the Fertilisers Act that he might not be imposed upon by the seller; and the Rabbit Act which, of course, should be administered with care, because the rabbit trouble is now being experienced by the people settled outside the rabbit-proof fence, and because every man in the Chamber knows full well the fences will only hold the rabbits back for a limited time. No doubt, before very long the rabbits will find their way into the settled districts of Western Australia. With the increase of settlement along the fence we are experiencing considerable difficulty in keeping the gates closed, and we know the rabbits have got through. Although we are using every means to destroy them it is not

likely we shall get them all eradicated, and before many years I anticipate they will be very much nearer to Perth than they are to-day.

Mr. Price: Population will always check the rabbits.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I believe it will. The fences are doing good work, and outside those barriers the rabbits are dying in thousands.

Mr. Scaddan: Can you not make the gates to close automatically?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It has been tried, but not found satisfactory.

Mr. Underwood: The rabbits are inside the fences, are they not?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: A few are inside the second fence; at any rate, it is well that this Act should be administered in order that the rabbits may be kept down as far as possible.

Mr. Underwood: They were inside the outer fence before it was constructed.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes.

Mr. Underwood: And the inner fence too.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Only the northern portion of the fence, and the third fence cut them off. I want to refer to the case of Professor Lowrie. I regret he is leaving us, but I want to remind hon. members that his advice will always be available. He knows Western Australia now, having travelled almost from one end to the other of the South-Western division, and over a great deal of the Eucla division. His advice will always be available, notwithstanding that he, himself, will not be in Western Australia. I do not know of any other man capable of filling the position of Director of Agriculture as Professor Lowrie has filled it. No doubt, his two years in Western Australia have done a good deal, particularly for the wheat grower. This year we have seen some evidence of the result of his advice. He believes in fertilisation, and he advised the people to fertilise heavily, with the result that to-

day even our third-class lands are producing good wheat crops. It is entirely due to the advice of Professor Lowrie. It is true that advice is not always followed; the agriculturist does not receive new ideas with hospitality. Still, Professor Lowrie occupies a unique place in the work of encouragement to agriculturists, and his advice is usually taken. Another very important matter that has been looked into during the year has been the fertilisation of pastures. It is found that the land in Western Australia is very short of phosphates, and wherever these have been applied the result has been most satisfactory. Mr. Richardson, at Roelands, has probably done more in this direction than anyone else, and with better results. In country where phosphates have been applied we have got magnificent pastures in a very short time. The advice and the assistance given by the professor must be continued. He will leave behind him written advice, which the agriculturists will follow, and his successor when appointed will, I hope, take up the work actively and be able to advise and direct agriculturists in Western Australia to better things. It is true that education is a conquest and not a bequest, and that in Western Australia the educational advantages, especially agriculturally, have been very few. Our farms are scattered and the settlers do not very often have the chance of coming together and exchanging ideas.

Mr. Price: I desire to call attention to the state of the House. The fact that there are only three members on the Ministerial side while the Minister is dealing with such an important matter as agriculture is a disgrace to the country.

The Minister for Works: There are six here and six on the Opposition side.

Mr. Price: I am calling attention to the absence of the so-called agricultural representatives.

Bells rung and a quorum formed.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I hope that the work during the coming year will be in the direction of

increasing educational facilities. Agricultural education should, I believe, commence in the public schools, and I think that the Minister has made some arrangements in that direction. Nature study is, of course, a great aid to the man who is going on the land; it teaches him observation and to set a proper value on animal and plant life. This sort of study should begin with the State schools. We should realise that agriculture will be the main industry of this State and prepare our young men for it. Having commenced the study in the primary schools it should be continued after the boys reach a mature age. I have not much more to say, except that we are going to be visited on the 28th December by the Scottish Commission now looking over the lands of Eastern Australia. The commission were invited by the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth to visit Australia. They visited Canada at the request of the agriculturists of Scotland, in order that they might be able to advise the young men of Scotland, who desire to seek fresh fields, of the value of Canadian agricultural lands and the possibilities ahead of them there. The Prime Minister of the Commonwealth very rightly invited them to visit Australia, and during the closing days of this year and the early days of the new year these commissioners will travel throughout the South-West division of this State.

Mr. O'Loughlin: Why confine them to the South-West?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It is no use sending them to the north. They will have only a fortnight in the State, and I hope that we shall be assisted in conveying a correct idea of the agricultural possibilities in Western Australia. The result of this visit will be far-reaching, and I hope that it will lead to many young men coming from Scotland to settle in Western Australia, for I believe that after inquiry into our land methods it will be found that land is very much cheaper here and the assistance given to the farmers very much greater than anywhere else in the world. I have nothing more to

say except that agriculturally all is well and that the future never looked so promising. I believe that the work of the department during the coming year will be in the direction of increasing production in wheat, in fruit, and in stock.

Mr. PRICE: One could not imagine that the Minister for Agriculture felt very flattered by the want of attention to his interesting remarks that morning by the large number of his supporters who were alleged to represent the agricultural constituencies. There were three notable exceptions, the members for Katanning, Gascoyne, and Swan, but there were seven or eight members on the Ministerial side, who allegedly represented agricultural constituencies, and whom one might reasonably have expected to do the Minister the courtesy of listening to his utterances in connection with the department to which he had been referring.

Mr. Harper: You look worried.

Mr. PRICE: His concern was for the constituencies allegedly represented by those individuals. They would later on give their votes on matters of supreme importance to the agriculturists and their constituencies, and they would do it without the least knowledge of the facts as laid before the Chamber by the Minister in charge of the Agricultural Department. He was pleased to say that in rising to speak on the Estimates of that department, one could do so without that feeling of distrust in the administration of the department, which one could not help feeling in regard to the other department under the control of the Minister for Lands. Every member in the Chamber would admit that the executive head of the Agricultural Department was an officer doing all he possibly could to conduct the affairs of the department in a business-like manner. Whether one could say the same of the Minister was somewhat problematical, because there was found an overwhelming tendency on his part to expend loan funds in connection with his department. Everything he required must be paid for out of loan fund. The first thing he looked to, in pushing ahead the Agricultural Department, was to dip into loan funds; nothing must come from revenue. Some few days ago references

had been made to the fact that a quantity of grass seed had been purchased out of loan funds, which were supposed to be confined to reproductive works.

The Minister for Works: The seeds are reproductive.

Mr. PRICE: They were reproductive in a swarm of rats and mice that were continually annoying the people of Denmark. If those rodents were any benefit to the State the seeds were certainly proving highly reproductive. The Minister had goats established there and was now starting to breed rats, for which he was providing grass seeds at an expenditure of over £2,000.

The Minister for Agriculture: One thousand five hundred pounds worth of seed was sown. This item came under the Lands Estimates.

Mr. PRICE: The amount had been taken from the agricultural development vote.

The CHAIRMAN: Only the Revenue Estimates were under discussion; the hon. member could not discuss the loan expenditure.

Mr. PRICE: Members could surely deal with the administration of the department. He was pointing out that loan money had been expended on certain things, which should have been paid for from revenue. Unless he was allowed to comment on that peculiar system of administration now he would have no opportunity of doing so.

The Minister for Agriculture: The money spent on agricultural development comes from the Works Department and the Land's Department. All these seeds were bought under the lands portion of the vote for the development of agriculture.

Mr. PRICE: The position was that the Minister was in charge as Minister for Agriculture of nearly £1,000 worth of grass seeds---

The Minister for Agriculture: It is as Minister for Lands I have it.

Mr. PRICE: Why should the Minister try to quibble on that point. The seed was in his charge as Minister for Agriculture. People had applied to be allowed to purchase portion of the seed and had

been refused, and whilst they had been refused the rats were feeding on it.

The Minister for Agriculture: The grass seeds were placed in the hands of the tender board for sale.

Mr. PRICE: As a matter of fact 42,000lbs. of seed had been planted, and 20,000 pounds was supposed to be in the sheds at Denmark. He did not intend to deal with the subject at length, because there were various matters in connection with the department to be commented on without spending too much time on the predilection of the Minister for providing food for rats. Another item which had been paid for from loan funds was a motor waggon for which £886 had been paid. Perhaps the Minister would say that that was not an agricultural item. This motor was sold for £250, of which £150 had been received, the other £100 still being owing.

The Minister for Agriculture: That was purchased five years ago.

Mr. PRICE: It was purchased out of loan funds, and the revenue derived from the sale went into ordinary revenue. This kind of thing was continually going on in this department. There were other items in connection with the expenditure of loan moneys by the Agricultural Department on which information should be received.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member should seek that information on the Loan Estimates. We were discussing expenditure from general revenue. If the hon. member wished to get information from the Minister there was no desire to prevent him, but the hon. member should not make a long speech of it.

Mr. Hudson: Had the Chairman observed the item on these Estimates "Less charge to loans"? So we were entitled to discuss anything charged to loans.

Mr. PRICE: It was regrettable discussion must be curtailed despite the fact that loan moneys were spent under these Estimates.

The Minister for Works: That is not authority for spending loan moneys.

Mr. PRICE: One could appreciate the tactics of the hon. member in endeavouring to burk discussion.

The Minister for Agriculture: You will have opportunity on the Loan Estimates.

Mr. PRICE: The hon. member knew that the opportunity would not be given on the Loan Estimates for dealing with this question, because it would be ruled to be a matter of administration.

The Minister for Works: How did the Minister burk it; he did not even raise a point of order?

The Minister for Agriculture: I merely made an explanation.

Mr. Hudson: The Minister tried to burk discussion when he said the item was dealt with under the Lands Estimates. What was that but to hide things?

Mr. PRICE: Seeing the point was one the Minister did not desire to have discussed, he would pass on. The Minister had dealt exhaustively with the necessity for providing freezing works to deal with the export of lambs, but nearly 12 months ago the Minister had expressed the intention and desire to immediately proceed with the erection of freezing works at Albany, not so much to deal with lambs as to deal with the large export of fruit from that centre. Had the Minister got any further than the rough plans?

The Minister for Agriculture: I do not know.

Mr. PRICE: Did the Minister know anything except how to wave his arms about and assure us that everything in his department was lovely?

The Minister for Agriculture: I do not prepare the plans.

Mr. PRICE: The Minister might have made some definite announcement as to when these works were likely to be commenced, and as to when we would have something more than rough plans. Right throughout the South-West there was an enormous area suitable for fruit-growing and for dairying. Would the Minister say what the dairy expert was doing to bring the dairying industry into existence. A number of members had condemned the purchase of goats, asserting they were absolutely useless and not fulfilling the purpose for which they were placed on the Denmark estate. Information was desired on this point.

The Minister for Agriculture: That was discussed yesterday on the Lands Estimates.

Mr. PRICE: When we wished to discuss matters on the Lands Estimates we were told they came under Agriculture, and when we tried to discuss matters under Agriculture we were told they were under Lands. Seeing the Minister was determined to burk comment on the matter he would resume his seat.

Mr. JACOBY: A review of the agricultural year led to general satisfaction at the great progress made in practically every department of production from the soil, and it was marvellous even to those well acquainted with the progress being made that the Minister was able to say that the probable production from the soil would be roughly something like three million pounds in the coming year, of which probably we could expect more than a million pounds would be exported, adding this enormous sum for the use of the community and having an effect upon every industry in the State. There were many things one interested in agriculture would like to deal with on the Estimates of this department, but he proposed to deal with only one or two subjects. The Minister did not seem to have at his disposal that efficient organisation in the agricultural department that was so necessary. As far as one could observe from contact with some portions of the department, there seemed to be a lack of thoroughness and efficiency. This was evidenced to-day by the fact that the Minister was supplied with figures which were absolutely wrong. The Minister told us the export of apples amounted to 4,000 cases last year. It was nearly double that amount. The customs returns published in the *Statistical Abstract* showed we exported 2,666 centials of apples. If we divided that by the weight of fruit in each case, about 40 pounds, we would get some idea as to how misleading were the figures supplied to the Minister by the officers of his department, who surely should know better. It was indicative of similar want of thoroughness in other matters of administration in the department, and it was regrettable the Minister had not at

his command a little more efficiency in such an important department of the State. A good deal of the dissatisfaction expressed in connection with the department, was owing to this lack of thoroughness and efficiency. The development of the South-West must necessarily become a prominent feature of the work of the department. We had practically overcome the main difficulties confronting us in connection with the development of wheat-growing; the main problems were overcome in that direction; and we had now to tackle that part of the country the production of which was to equal in value the production of the wheat and hay areas if we could discover the methods necessary for its development. The South-West would depend for its development on three principal operations, drainage, irrigation, and clearing. We had done a good deal in the way of drainage, though an immense amount had yet to be done. Irrigation was practically in its experimental stage, though the work done in several parts of the State, particularly at the Government farm at Brunswick, demonstrated the fact that there was no reason why we should not have an immense area of the coastal regions of the South-West under intense culture, particularly under lucerne. The work that had been done there had shown that there was no great difficulty whatever in producing magnificent crops of lucerne, and having settled that now, the propaganda work of the department had to come in to induce farmers to go in for irrigation, and then there would be a solution of the difficulty with regard to the development of the dairying industry. The time had almost arrived when we should have to go in for an irrigation scheme at the Harvey settlement. In addition to the drainage scheme which was in operation there, if they adopted a scheme of irrigation during the summer months, their production would increase tenfold, and certainly the trees, which were not as big as they should be, would benefit very considerably. The irrigation scheme, he was confident, would be self-supporting on account of the natural facilities which existed for the conservation of water, and the question

was whether the time had not now arrived when such a scheme should be in operation. The conformation of the country along the coast, and the quality of the soil between Perth and Busselton was such that the range of hills behind the coastal lands would render irrigation schemes practicable, and he was confident that when settlement in these districts justified it, it would be found that the most economical method of managing that country agriculturally would be by a system of conservation of water in the hills to irrigate the lands along the coast, and in time to come the whole of that country should be under a series of irrigation schemes, and there would be as a result of that development production in money value which would cause to pale into insignificance the value even of the total wheat production of Australia. There was an enormous stretch of land there waiting to be developed, but what we wanted first of all was population, and after that the necessary Government works to be carried out to give effect to this scheme. Clearing was the first great essential of this country, and he hoped the Minister would go into this question of clearing a little bit more thoroughly than had been done. It had only been conducted in a dilettante fashion. The department had not made up its mind on what terms it was going to do the clearing work for the settlers. This area should be done by the Government on very easy terms. That was the prime factor, and it would be no use doing clearing and asking people to pay cash, or even to pay on short terms. We should consider what an efficient clearing scheme would mean in the way of production. The Government recently decided to send a traction engine to the Canning Hills district, and immediately the settlers knew of it applications were sent in for the clearing of over 500 acres, enough to keep the engine occupied for six months, and he was quite sure that applications for another 200 or 300 acres would be sent in in a short time. Even in the clearing of 500 acres a remarkable difference would be made to the production of the State. This clearing would

mean a necessary increase in population, over these 500 acres, of nearly 300 people, and it would mean a productive capacity of something like £25,000 per annum from that small area, estimated on conservative figures. If we were going to do that on such a small area, what would be the result if we carried out a general scheme of clearing which would make this land available for the people. He did not suggest that the land should be cleared ahead of settlement. There was a comparatively large settlement in the South-Western district, and the energies of the department should be devoted towards making the land already taken up by the people there ready for cultivation. Clearing could be done at half the cost by the Government, and instead of the individual having to do it by the laborious process of manual labour, and acre by acre, and then put under cultivation, and while keeping that cultivation going clearing a few more acres and so on, the Government with its resources could clear the country and add to the value of the land. Nothing should stand in the way of giving practical effect to a scheme of this sort. The Minister had taken up this scheme, but he had not done so thoroughly. The Minister should devote £100,000 a year to this work which would be a reproductive work, and the cost could be charged against the settlers to be paid in easy instalments ranging over a number of years, certainly not less than 10 years. If that could be done the amount of development which would take place would be phenomenal, and the production in cash from the crops would surprise even most of us to-day.

Mr. Underwood: It would be even better than the Bullfinch.

Mr. JACOBY: It would be better than a thousand Bullfinches. It would make an immense garden in the South-Western district. The terms should not be shorter than 10 years because it took practically that period from the time a man started to clear his land to the period when an orchard came into bearing. It was only then that the orchardist commenced to get a return, or what might be called a return. An orchard came into bearing about seven

years after the time of clearing the ground, but it would not be fully productive until 10 years had elapsed. If the Government in carrying out such a scheme insisted upon short terms say, three, four, or even five years, then operations would be considerably restricted. The main thing to be kept in mind was to get the land cleared and put under cultivation, and minor considerations should not be allowed to interfere with that object. If the land was in the possession of a man who was anxious to get it under cultivation, that man would be willing to pay for services rendered by the Government, but the Government should meet the grower in such a way that the grower would not be harassed during the progress of his operations. To do that the repayments should be made concurrent with the time when a return would be forthcoming from the land. The Canning Hills scheme was nearly wrecked because of the action of one of the officers of the department which was quite contrary to the intention of the Minister. The Minister declared that each case should be dealt with on its merits, and that the people were to be allowed reasonable terms, but the under secretary said that the whole cost had to be repaid in twelve months. This was an absolutely impossible proposition, and the result was that immediately this got about the request for clearing about 500 acres of land dropped to about 50 acres, because there was only one man there who could afford to pay in 12 months. It would be seen therefore that it was necessary, in carrying out such a scheme to deal with the people according to the circumstances. This is what he had been advocating for the past 10 years, and his idea was to use the resources of the Government for the assistance of the individual.

Mr. Underwood: You are a socialist.

Mr. JACOBY: No. It was known that the socialistic idea, if there was anything in it, was to use the resources of the Government for the supplanting of the individual. His idea was, however, to use the resources of the State to assist the individual and not to supplant him. It was his desire to say a few words with regard to the freezing works

at Fremantle. The Minister had rather confused the two matters connected with this proposal. There was a proposal for the establishment of abattoirs for the sale of stock and the supply of meat to the metropolitan area, and another proposal provided facilities for the export of produce. The two things should be dealt with separately. The Minister had relied very strongly upon some departmental opinions which had been given to him, but he (Mr. Jacoby) submitted that the opinions of producers and the merchants concerned were deserving of greater consideration than the views of departmental officers. The member for North Fremantle had talked about the consumer, but the hon. member might leave that to the people who had to supply the consumer, because they understood a great deal more about methods of distribution and supply than did the consumer, who was not an expert on the subject at all. He (Mr. Jacoby) had all along held the opinion that Midland Junction was the place favoured by the great majority of producers concerned.

Mr. Angwin: Question.

Mr. JACOBY: There was no question about it. It had been discussed time after time, and he could safely say 75 per cent. of the people interested, whether merchants or producers, had decided in favour of Midland Junction as the place where the abattoirs should be built.

Mr. Angwin: That is your opinion.

Mr. JACOBY: At all events he was in a position to give an opinion on the subject. It was the opinion also of 75 per cent. of the producers concerned. He was endeavouring to deal with the question purely on its merits, having no personal interest one way or the other. Regarding the question of freezing works, he distrusted entirely the expert evidence the Minister relied upon, and he regretted the Minister had placed himself almost body and soul in the hands of his expert officer.

Mr. Angwin: He should trust himself to you.

Mr. JACOBY: The Minister should deal with the question on its merits. There had been an unscrupulous attempt on the part of the officer advising the

Government in this matter to back up his recommendations with absolute misstatements. The Minister, when discussing this scheme, had used as one of the strongest arguments that it was necessary for the export of fruit, and for months the Minister had stuck to this, despite the fact that he (Mr. Jacoby) had advised him that the pre-cooling of fruit was absolutely disadvantageous, and had explained the situation from the fruit-growers' point of view; yet the Minister had adhered to the advice of his expert, although it had been said that officer was not a refrigerating expert.

Mr. Bolton: But his advice is as good as yours.

Mr. JACOBY: No, because he (Mr. Jacoby) had had a large amount of freezing done for years past.

Mr. Bolton: Therein lies your interest in the matter.

Mr. JACOBY: Nothing of the sort, it was a question of fact. In order to support the contention of the Government expert upon whom the Minister relied this had been the argument used, notwithstanding that he (Mr. Jacoby) had demonstrated over and over again both to the Minister and to the officer concerned, that they were on the wrong track. The refrigerating engineer had attended a meeting of fruitgrowers, and asked for an opportunity to demonstrate the necessity for these works and for the pre-cooling of fruit. After that officer had read an elaborate paper on the subject, the fruit-growers present, all representative men, carried the following resolution—

Mr. Bolton: He said it was all fixed up beforehand.

Mr. JACOBY: The resolution read as follows:—

That pre-cooling of fruit for export from this State is neither necessary nor advisable, because (1) it would necessitate the fruit being gathered a week earlier than the present system; (2) the extra handling involved would considerably damage the fruit; (3) apart from other considerations no expense should be added to the cost of export unless extra profit would be won thereby.

Mr. Cairns had been present when the discussion took place, notwithstanding which



he had continued to impress upon the Minister that pre-cooling was necessary to the export of fruit; and in reply to questions asked by him (Mr. Jacoby) the other day the Minister had inferred that he was building these works to assist the fruit-growing industry. The fruitgrowers did not want the works at all. No fruit had been sent out of the State which had been pre-cooled, yet when our fruit met pre-cooled fruit in the world's markets, our fruit beat that fruit in value by, in some instances, as much as 15s. a case, the average advantage being from 2s. to 4s. per case. Seeing that this agitation was still being maintained by the supposed expert advising the Minister, the Western Australian growers had decided to carry the campaign a little further, and submit a resolution to the Australasian Conference held at Hobart recently, where there were present delegates from all parts of Australia. The resolution submitted by the Western Australian delegate was carried unanimously.

Mr. O'Loghlen: They carried some extraordinarily inconsistent resolutions at that conference.

Mr. JACOBY: This particular resolution was in nowise inconsistent; it read as follows:—

That pre-cooling of fruit for export is neither necessary nor advisable, because (1) it would necessitate the fruit being gathered a week earlier than the present system; (2) the extra handling involved in pre-cooling considerably damages the fruit; (3) Western Australian experience has proved conclusively that pre-cooled fruit has no advantage whatever over fruit not pre-cooled; (4) the shipping companies are already paid for cooling the fruit; (5) if pre-cooling is necessary for fruit before loading into chilled holds, then it logically follows that fruit before being stowed in ordinary cold stores should be pre-cooled, which reduces the position to an absurdity; (6) apart from other considerations, no expense should be added to cost of export unless extra profit would be won thereby.

The reason why he strongly opposed this proposal was because it would rob Western Australia of the advantages

already enjoyed in our geographical position, and in the organisation of our export fruit, which was far better than that in the Eastern States. The Western Australian fruit had met with better success in the markets of the world than the fruit from the Eastern States, because the former was landed in prime condition in London, owing to the fact that it had been allowed to hang on the trees until the last moment before shipment. Further than that, the organisation had been arranged to knock out all unnecessary handling, and the fruit was put into trucks at the port of departure, and was not touched again until it was taken out to be loaded into the ships' holds. If we were forced to put our fruit through these proposed new chambers, it would mean a tremendous amount of shunting, and the addition of three or four handlings into and out of the cold stores before it reached the ship. It was because of these handlings in South Australia and Victoria that so large a proportion of their fruit arrived on the market in a damaged condition. Only one or two steamers were available for the shipment of our fruit, and it was to the advantage of the refrigerating engineer to get the fruit into the holds as cool as possible, because it prevented the rise of temperature and the consequent expense of reducing it again. So, from the point of view of the refrigerating engineer pre-cooling was an advantage; but producers had to pay £3 5s. per ton for refrigerating space, and, therefore, they did not see why they should pay for cool storage ashore as well.

Mr. Angwin: But fruit has been refused by the steamers on the score that it would raise the temperature of the refrigerating chamber.

Mr. JACOBY: No; it had been refused by the German boat because the space was not available.

Mr. Angwin: They had the space, but the fruit had not been pre-cooled.

Mr. JACOBY: That was not correct, for the fruit had been left behind owing to want of space. Seeing that we were in the hands of one or two companies, if we had pre-cooling facilities at Fremantle those companies might insist upon all fruit being pre-cooled, which

would mean increased cost of 3d. or 4d. per case in addition to the extra handling and the necessity for picking the fruit at least ten days earlier than was done under present conditions. Then, certainly, the fruit would not arrive in prime condition. He agreed with the arguments advanced against the establishment of these works at North Fremantle. The argument that had been used by the Minister that the conditions were similar to the conditions in South Australia was not correct, because behind the abattoirs at Port Adelaide there was a large stretch of coastal country. That was not the case at North Fremantle. The conditions at Port Adelaide were nearer the conditions at Owen's Anchorage than at North Fremantle. He hoped that the Minister and the members for the district would recollect that it was necessary, in connection with the establishment of abattoirs, that there should also be put down bone manure and blood works. If the member for North Fremantle knew anything about such establishments he would find it well to reconsider whether he was acting in the interests of the people he represented by asking to have works of that description established in the district. It would be necessary to establish what were known as noxious trades, including the manufacture of manures of a very evil smelling kind, and it was worthy of consideration whether it would not be better to accept the recommendation of many people who thought that the site should be at Owen's Anchorage. There was another point which should be borne in mind. The time must come when it would be necessary, for railway purposes, to have a line along the south side of the Swan, and in that case what was going to happen to all the South-West produce sent forward for freezing? It would have to be brought through Perth instead of having the advantage of the nearer transit via Jandakot.

Mr. Bolton: From what direction?

Mr. JACOBY: In order to get to the north side it would be necessary to carry the produce on the present railway, because it would be difficult to work all

that freight traffic over a swing bridge. This being a matter for decision by experts, he was not prepared to suggest more than a general opinion, but to him, as a layman, it did seem inadvisable, in view of the almost certain necessity of building the south Swan railway, that works of the description should be kept to the north of the river. Mr. Watson, manager for Messrs. Forrest, Emanuel, and Company, had contributed to the *West Australian* his views regarding the establishment of those works.

Mr. Butcher: That is a prejudiced opinion.

Mr. JACOBY: To those who took an impartial view there was a considerable amount of strength in the statements which Mr. Watson had put forward. Providing views of that character were considered on their merits, it did not matter whether or not the person who uttered them was an interested party. He had spoken to a number of people on the subject, and in every instance, except one, the opinion had been adverse to the action of the Minister in selecting a site at North Fremantle.

Mr. Bolton: You should give a reason for the adverse opinions; in what respect is Midland Junction better?

Mr. JACOBY: The hon. member was confusing abattoirs with freezing works. It might be economically advantageous to connect abattoirs to supply local requirements with the freezing works, but it was not necessary to do so, and in the opinion of many experienced people the abattoirs for the supply of the metropolitan area should be at Midland Junction. When the time came for the erection of freezing works undoubtedly they must be erected at Fremantle, but the time had not arrived yet. The Minister admitted that the class of sheep which we had at the present time was not suitable for the production of lambs for export, and that it would be two years after we got the necessary breed of rams into the country before the export of lambs could be proceeded with.

The Minister for Lands: No.

Mr. JACOBY: The Minister had distinctly stated in answer to a question that 1912 was the earliest the State would have lambs for export. At the present time there were no lambs available for export and the population was increasing very rapidly. If lambs were to be exported they must be sent away in ship loads. It was not economical to attempt to export them in small quantities, but for small quantities we had already existing at Fremantle freezing facilities. There were slaughtering facilities at Owen's Anchorage and freezing facilities at Fremantle. He had been concerned in organising the first consignment of frozen lambs sent from this State, and there had been no difficulty in getting the lambs slaughtered at Owen's Anchorage and then brought to the ice works at Fremantle; in fact, it had not involved much more than the average cost, and the results, both as regards shipment and prices, had been satisfactory. There was no hurry for the establishment of freezing works. If there was any strong feeling of doubt as to whether we were doing the right thing we should hesitate a while and make the very fullest inquiry. There should be no obstinacy in the matter. The Minister surely was not so wedded to his own opinion that he would attempt to force his scheme on the community regardless of what others might think. The great majority of people in the business were against the proposals, and it would be better for us to wait a little while, review the whole position, and see whether we were doing the right thing? An expenditure of £80,000 was involved, and if the freezers were placed in a position where they could not be used to the best economical advantage a great waste of money would have been incurred. The Minister admitted that the abattoirs at Port Adelaide were the best in Australia, and seeing the great difference of opinion that existed as to what was the right thing to do, would it be an unworthy and unjustifiable expense if the Minister were to ask the South Australian Government to allow Mr. McCann, the manager of those works, the man who had designed them and fixed the site after having visited various parts of the world to ascertain what was best, to come to

this State and give the Government the advantage of his opinion. If the Government did that, he would be content to accept whatever decision Mr. McCann came to, and would withdraw all opposition to the works. As it was now, the Minister was doing something to which the great majority of people interested were strongly opposed. He trusted that the Minister would consider the suggestions which he had put forward in that and other matters, and that he would be able next year to come before the Committee and tell them of further great advances, and that instead of the crop being estimated to produce three million pounds for the year, it would produce a substantial increase above that sum. At the present time every line of agriculture was on the advance in Western Australia. On the dairying side we were somewhat backward. That would have to wait its time but when it did come, it would be an immense industry in the south-western portion of the State. He trusted that however members might differ from the actions of the Minister in matters of detail, and some of them he differed from very strongly, they could at least join in congratulating him on the advance that had been made in the agricultural industry of this State.

*Sitting suspended from 1 to 2.30 p.m.*

Mr. ANGWIN: In regard to the Tammin settlement referred to by the Minister, the time these men needed assistance was the very time the Government neglected to give it. The position so far as the department's finances was concerned was very satisfactory; out of about £7,000 advanced to these men there was only about £300 standing out as a liability; but the position was not altogether satisfactory so far as the men themselves were concerned. They were going round to the different financial institutions to try to lift their mortgages from the Agricultural Bank so as to get more financial assistance than could be obtained from the Government towards developing their holdings. The storekeepers in the district had treated them very liberally with regard to stores, but the storekeepers wanted some kind of security, and the

people on the settlement would have to lose their properties or get more financial assistance rendered by the Government to take them over their difficulties, or they must sell their lands at a small profit. The land was specially picked for the purpose of the settlement and they secured it at fairly low prices in comparison with the prices now being obtained for land in the Tammin area.

The Minister for Agriculture: It was the usual price at that time.

Mr. ANGWIN: That was before survey. These men went there with one determination, to try if possible to make the settlement a success, because they realised that if they refused the opportunity it would not come along again in a hurry, and also because they wanted to assist others who required land under the same conditions. They were told that if the scheme was a success the Minister would enlarge it, so with one or two exceptions they determined to make it a success, and it was a success from the point of view of the Government's finances, but in order to meet their obligations to the Government the men and their families had to undergo hardships. Knowing this was good land, many buyers were going round the holdings trying if possible to get these men to sell. If they sold now they could make a profit with the buyers at hand, but if the storekeeper forced them and a buyer was not convenient they would probably lose their holdings and a good deal of the labour they put in to improve them. The men desired to stay there and make homes for their wives and families, though they must sell if the Government would not render further assistance, because it would be very foolish for a man to run the risk of losing the whole of his labour put into the land if there was any possibility of getting a return for that labour by selling. There was a possibility of getting a return if the Government would render a little assistance towards putting in crops on the land already cleared, and instead of the men being in a beggarly position at the end of the season, with assistance from the Government they would no doubt be in a flourishing condition, because the return

from the crops would recoup them. Certainly the Government did spend a few hundred pounds in providing necessary seed.

The Minister for Agriculture: Fifteen hundred pounds.

Mr. ANGWIN: But this was for an area of about 50,000 acres. The land was cleared and the men were waiting for their crops, but they had neither horses nor machinery nor seed. This was just the time when a little assistance from the Government would enable them to get over their initial difficulties, and the scheme would turn out a success. Some of the men had done well because since going on the land they had been able to sell their property elsewhere, and with the extra money they had enlarged their holdings and would be able to crop their land this year and obtain a result. It was merely temporary assistance that was asked for these men to enable them to develop their holdings and make permanent homes there. We did not wish them to sell out to enable other persons to enlarge their areas. There would be no financial risk in the Government assisting these men a little at the present time. The fact that there was only £300 now owing out of the £7,000 advanced proved conclusively the men could be trusted with a little further assistance. If they had not made any attempt to pay back the money granted them there might be justification for refusing further assistance; but seeing the money was repaid after such a short time, the Government were justified in extending a little further practical sympathy to enable these men to establish homes. It was far better to settle 100,000 acres in this way than to have a million acres taken up without development. In regard to the abattoirs and freezing to be established at North Fremantle, Parliament had made provision for two years to make a start. Now that the tenders were called, it was to be hoped the Minister would make an immediate start and put the wish of Parliament into practice.

Mr. PIESSE: As a representative of an agricultural constituency he on every occasion realised the great help the min-

ing industry was to the agricultural and pastoral industry, and that had it not been for the great discoveries of gold in the Eastern Goldfields the agricultural industry would not have developed so rapidly. Anyone who did not realise the great help the mining industry was to agriculture would not be carrying out his duty. It was encouraging to hear from the Minister of the important development in agriculture during the past 12 months. It would be admitted that with an increase of land under crop, from 200,000 acres ten years ago to 900,000 acres to-day, great strides were taking place in the industry. When we were told by the Minister that there was over a million acres under crop and fallow, and when we took into consideration that last year the department were responsible for placing 3,000 farmers on the soil we could have every confidence to look forward to a large development in agriculture in the near future. The industry was never more prosperous. Any Minister for Agriculture must realise, whether he be of the Liberal party or of the Labour party, that grave responsibility rested upon him. After all it was one thing to get the people to settle on the land, and it was another thing to keep them there. Very often we lost sight of the importance of the fact that we did not follow the selector as closely as we should do after he had selected his land. We should all realise that if we were going to receive any benefit from the great settlement which had taken place during the last few years, we should have contented settlers, and to bring that about every sympathy would have to be shown by the Government and Parliament. He felt that it was the genuine desire not only of members on the Ministerial side, but on the Opposition side as well, that that settlement should be successful. It was pleasing to notice on every occasion when these items on the Estimates were under discussion that there was a general feeling among members that every inducement should be given, and every facility offered for the development of our lands. He was afraid, however, that in some instances during the past few

years a number of our settlers had been sent back too far from the railways, and unless we became more active in the work of constructing agricultural railways disaster must follow settlement in many cases. It was not generally known that most of the areas selected were small, and that people who had gone out were mostly what would be known as small farmers, and their only income would be from the production of wheat. It had been proved over and over again that it was impossible to grow wheat profitably 20 or 25 miles away from a railway. We should as a matter of fact have the wheat producer no further away from a railway line than 10 or 12 miles, particularly when the price of wheat was low. It was to be hoped we would never see wheat lower than it was to-day, but there was no guarantee that that would be the case. Wheat had been as low as 2s. 6d. per bushel in the past, and there was no guarantee that that would not happen again. When one remembered that many of those now settled on the land, and who had been on the land in many cases 12 months and over, and were from 30 to 40 miles from a railway with no prospects of getting a railway within the next 18 months of two years, he hesitated to think what would be the result in such cases unless there was a speedy construction of lines. He did not for one moment doubt the earnestness and desire of the Government to give every selector these facilities, but the Government should realise, and the House should realise it, too, that we should push on with the utmost speed the work of building agricultural railways, more particularly in those areas east of the Great Southern railway. It was now some five years since the construction of certain lines in that part of the State was advocated, and a number of selectors who went out there did so expecting that the railways would be built within a reasonable time, and many of these settlers had been obliged to cart their wheat during the past year distances of from 20 to 30 miles.

Mr. Price: Is that not a matter to be discussed under the Works vote? Your

Minister over there would not allow me to refer to this matter.

Mr. PIESSE: The question was so wrapped up with the Agricultural Bank that one might be excused from referring to it.

Mr. Price: They would not excuse me.

Mr. PIESSE: The successful development of our agricultural lands must depend upon improved facilities for handling crops, and unless we got to work at once and pushed on these railways there would be a severe check to the development of our lands. There was no desire on his part to croak; he was quite satisfied that the people who had gone on the land were the right class of selectors. Many had been drawn from the gold-fields, who, before they came to the State, were sons of settlers in the Eastern States, and they were very excellent men with practical experience, and who had determined to make a success of settlement.

Mr. Underwood: Men who have been driven out by the big landlords.

Mr. PIESSE: There was no doubt that many had been driven out of the Eastern States because they could not obtain land.

Mr. Underwood: We have plenty of land here, and any amount of big landlords to grab it.

Mr. PIESSE: These people to whom he referred would become successful settlers. In mentioning the fact of the want of facilities, it should be pointed out that last year one farmer whom he knew was occupied for three months of the year in carting his produce to the nearest railway station. When one considered that the farmer might have been occupying his time in either clearing his land or further cultivating it, one would realise the loss to the State, because after all, the time occupied in unnecessary carting was certainly a loss to the State. In view of the fact also that draught horses were becoming almost unobtainable, and were realising prohibitive prices, it should be the object of the Minister before he cut up and disposed of further land, an assurance should be given that within a reason-

able time railways would be constructed, or that the new areas would be within a reasonable carting distance of the railway. With regard to the season, he was quite satisfied that while it would not be all that was desired, the result would be satisfactory, although he was sorry to say in some of the low-lying parts, owing to the very severe winter, some of the crops had been flooded out, and in other cases the average output per acre would be reduced. The Minister assured him, however, that the average would not be reduced, but he (Mr. Piesse) was afraid that unless the areas to the east of Northam, and the east of the Great Southern, and the northern areas came up to expectations, our average yield per acre would be less than it was last year. In dealing with this question of agricultural development, one could not overlook the fact that very good service had been rendered to the State by the Agricultural Bank, and he would like to give a word of praise to Mr. Paterson, and the officers of the bank for the very excellent work they had done during the past year.

Mr. Underwood: He does not do any work.

Mr. PIESSE: The results showed that the officers of the bank had done very good work.

Mr. Underwood: The work is done by the surveyors; the member for Bunbury will tell you that.

Mr. PIESSE: There was one matter that was brought forcibly home to him, and that was in connection with the development of our agricultural land, the fact that many of our farmers were depending at the present time entirely upon the production of wheat. This was only to be expected, because it was known that the production of wheat gave the quickest return to the new selector. Every encouragement should be given to the selector not to carry all his eggs in one basket, but he should be encouraged to go in for a system of mixed farming.

Mr. Underwood: How can they do that where there is poison?

Mr. PIESSE: Where there was poison the most effective way of getting rid of

it would be by cultivating the land, growing a crop of wheat, getting the poison out, and then stocking the country. Every inducement should be given to the selectors to go in for mixed farming. The Minister should not be too anxious to limit the area granted to the farmers; the area should not be made too small. Many men had begun to farm on 600 or 800 acres, or even 1,000 acres, and in the near future they would find it more profitable to extend their holdings, so that they might hold at least 2,000 acres in order to carry on mixed farming.

Mr. Underwood: It would be a long time then before we got a big population.

Mr. PIESSE: We had plenty of land available, and it would be only courting disaster to induce people to take up small areas. He did not believe in one man holding more land than he could work, or more than he could profitably use, but the capability of some people was greater than that of others, and when we came to make a hard and fast rule that a man should not hold more than 1,000 acres, as the member for Pilbara suggested, we would be limiting the energy and industry of the people. In some cases, probably 1,000 acres of the very best land would be worth 2,000 or 3,000 acres of second-class land. Unfortunately, however, our areas of first-class land were very limited, and we should take this into consideration that when subdivisions were being made we should see that our settlers were not only taking the land, but that they were satisfied to improve that land and make their homes upon it. In connection with these subdivisions he was afraid that in many instances there was an over-valuation of the land. He did not wish to deprecate the quality of our lands, but it was to be remembered that before they were improved they were practically worthless to the country. It was only the improvements put upon the land that made it of any value to the State. He hoped the Minister would take this fact into consideration. Where we had first-class wheat-growing land no one would object to paying a higher price for it, but there was a very great difference between the value of that and of our second

and third-class lands. He had been pleased to hear from the Minister what had been done in connection with agricultural education. From time to time he had noticed that a little was being done in this direction in our district schools, and he hoped much more would be done in the future. We knew, indeed, too little about our lands, or about the question of fertilisation, which was becoming a most important factor in the improvement of the land. The member for Swan had declared that many of the problems of wheat-growing had been overcome in this State, but he (Mr. Piesse) considered there were very many still to overcome. For instance, he had referred to the loss which had taken place this season in the districts under the heavier rainfall. He would suggest that something be done in the way of inducing growers to make experiments in the breeding of wheat, with a view to discovering which was the most suitable for the wet areas. In his own electorate it had not yet been discovered which was the most suitable wheat to grow, particularly in respect to the western portion of the Great Southern district. We had there immense areas not only suitable for the growing of oats and the production of sheep and wool, but also capable of producing large and profitable crops of wheat, and it was to be hoped the Minister would pay special attention to this question, and endeavour to determine the most profitable wheat to be grown in those parts. A twin question was that of draining, which should be studied in respect of these localities. A successful solution of the problem would result in immense profit, not only to the settlers, but to the State generally. He had been pleased to notice that the Minister contemplated making early provision for abattoirs and freezing works at Fremantle and Albany. With considerable interest he had listened to the remarks of the member for Swan, with whom he could not agree that there was no necessity for the establishment of freezing works. If, as Mr. Jacoby had said, these works were not required for fruit, still, it was only a matter of a very short time before they would be urgently required for the lamb export trade. One

of the reasons why we had not more lambs offering at the present time was because during the past two or three years, owing to increased settlement, a greater local demand had arisen for lambs and sheep and, consequently, we had to-day insufficient to supply local demands. But that was not going to continue, and it was only a matter of a couple of years before we would be faced with overproduction, especially in the South-Western districts, when the only outlet would be in the direction of export. He could not see that we would be running any grave risk in making early provision for this export trade. The works would not be built in a day; they would take at least a year or 18 months before completion, and there was no reason why we should wait until there was a glut in the market before beginning these works. He was quite satisfied we could grow the lambs and, notwithstanding what had been said by the member for Swan, it would not take very long to breed up the right type of sheep for the export trade. Two or three years ago an effort had been made in the direction of export, but, as he had already pointed out, owing to the increase of local demand the growers had turned from export to go in for a more profitable type of sheep for the local supply. They had forsaken cross-breeds, and almost exclusively gone in for merinoes. However, this was not to be looked upon with any alarm, because we had the basis to work upon, and it would take but a very short time to breed up the right type for export. A great deal had been said as to the question of site for these works, and, apparently, there was a difference of opinion in the minds of some of our producers as to whether the right site had been chosen. In these circumstances, one might very well commend to the Minister the suggestion that, unless it meant undue delay, if the Minister had any doubt in his mind, he might avail himself of independent advice. Clearly there would be no harm in securing this advice. Another suggestion he had to make on behalf of the new settler had relation to the clearing of the mallee areas which had been subdivided. On these areas the timber grew in thickets, and up to the present had been

cleared by a process of chopping down, in the first instance, and burning in the summer. He would suggest that an effort be made to supply the settlers of those districts with a traction engine suitable for rolling down the timber. Similar timber was being rolled down in the Eastern States at a cost of from 5s. to 8s. per acre, whereas to cut down this timber represented a cost of from 10s. to 20s. per acre. If the more modern method of rolling down were adopted it would allow the new settler to get a much larger area under crop during the first year, which, of course, was most essential. It was to be hoped the Minister would go into the question. There were already available in the district referred to, men who had worked these engines in Victoria, and those men had assured him that the heaviest of the timber could be rolled down at a cost of 7s. per acre, while much of it would cost not much more than 5s. per acre. There was no apparent reason why the experiment should not be made. Another question was that of woolclassing. Wool growing was becoming a most important industry in the State, and it was absolutely necessary that our small farmers should go in for mixed farming, including wool production; therefore he would suggest that every facility be given and every opportunity taken to educate our small farmers in the classing of their wool. He understood that a little had already been done in this direction in some of the Eastern districts, but he thought the department could, with profit, put on more than one expert to give instructions to our small farmers, because  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. or a 1d. increase in the value of wool would mean an enormous increase on the value of the total output. He had nothing further to say at this juncture, except to again urge upon the Government the necessity of affording our new settlers improved facilities for the handling of their produce. He was quite convinced that in the near future the agricultural industry would show an even greater development than it had ever done in any previous year.

(*Mr. Jacoby took the Chair.*)

Mr. HARPER: With other hon. members he desired to congratulate the Min-



ister for Agriculture on the splendid work of development in the agricultural areas. He was pleased, indeed, to know there had been such an excellent wheat crop last year, and that the prospects indicated a largely increased crop for this year. The country in the North was capable of producing immense numbers of sheep and cattle, and to his way of thinking it was the duty of the Government to set about the establishment of freezing works in the North in order to encourage that industry. He appreciated the suggestion that the industry should itself contribute towards the necessary outlay by paying a tax on the stock. It was a pity, indeed, that this had not been done long ago. He referred to freezing works in the North-West of this State. In Queensland such works had been in existence for a number of years, and they had proved a great success. Western Australia had splendid pastoral areas, and certainly with a little attention from the Government there was a possibility of developing an industry that would prove very valuable to the country. It was a great pity that both sheep and cattle should be allowed to grow old on the stations and die, when there was so great a demand for meat in other parts of the world. Much had been said about butter factories and dairies. He had been living in New Zealand when Mr. Ballance was Minister for Lands some 18 or 20 years ago. At that time a system of encouraging dairies and butter factories had been inaugurated, with the result that the Dominion now produced about a quarter of a million pounds worth of butter each year. That showed the importance which was to be attached to the dairying industry.

Mr. JOHNSON: We had better stick to sheep and wheat; we have not the country for dairying.

Mr. HARPER: Whilst agreeing that the State should pay particular attention to sheep and wheat, he contended that the dairying industry ought to be encouraged.

Mr. JOHNSON: On a moderate scale. It needs to be tested first.

Mr. HARPER: The industry would never grow to any extent unless it was given a start. With regard to the export of lambs from Western Australia, he had

been in a great many parts of the world, but nowhere had he had mutton, which for flavour, was anything like what could be got in the North-West, particularly the Murchison country. When one went there and tasted some of the best mutton grown in the district one appreciated it, and so far as his own experience was concerned he had tasted nothing better in New Zealand, America, or England. Once the export of mutton was established in Western Australia the meat would realise the highest price in the markets of the world.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: It realises a pretty high price here.

Mr. HARPER: In regard to the railways, in the old settled districts of Beverley there were settlers who had been on the land 40 or 50 years and were still upwards of 30 miles from a railway. There was a great need for railways both east and west of Beverley, and it was a great injustice to the people settled there that they had not had railways built to those parts before now.

Mr. PRICE: Where is this land?

Mr. HARPER: The reference was to the district generally. The people had been promised a railway by the advisory board, and the construction of that line should be pushed on at once. He had been pleased to notice that hundreds of people whom he had known on the goldfields in earlier days, were now comfortably settled in the agricultural districts. It had been a pleasure to meet so many old acquaintances, and to see that in many instances they had made a great success of farming. Some men who had been working for him were now worth £3,000 or £4,000 each. It was very satisfactory to see the goldfields people turning their attention to the agricultural districts and to see the goldfields members doing likewise. Some members had stated that 1,000 acres was quite enough for a man to hold, but there were members of the Opposition who held 2,000 and 3,000 acres. That they were fully entitled to do, because it must be realised that 1,000 acres was not sufficient for a man who later would have to divide his estate amongst a large family. The system of farming in this State was not like it was in many

other places. It was necessary to spell the land, and, in the case of wheatgrowing, a crop once in every three years was quite sufficient, whilst in combining sheep and wheat, which he considered was the proper method of farming along the Great Southern Railway, at least 3,000 acres was necessary. The rates charged on the Great Southern Railway were exorbitant, and anything that could be done to reduce them would be a distinct advantage to agriculture. He agreed with the Minister for Lands that some attention should be paid to the matter of agricultural education. The State would get more value for its money in educating the people in the science of farming than from any other form of expenditure.

Mr. Scaddan: Then why not turn the Esplanade Hotel into a farm?

Mr. HARPER: The Minister should provide instructors for the agricultural areas to assist the teachers in the various schools in training the children in the science of farming. A knowledge of the composition of soils and the use of fertilisers was an invaluable portion of the knowledge of any successful farmer. It was all very well to put in crops haphazard, but there was much in knowing the best kinds of wheat to sow and the best fertilisers to employ. He hoped that the Minister would assist in that direction. As a boy he had attended a science school, and the knowledge he had then gained had been of great advantage to him in later life. Much was being done to put people on the land, and the State should certainly persevere in the policy of encouraging immigration. There was any amount of work for a large number of people, because in the agricultural districts labour was very scarce indeed.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member could discuss immigration on the immigration vote.

Mr. HARPER: It was pleasing to note that the Government were importing six traction engines for the agricultural districts, and to his mind the experiments with two such engines at Bridgetown had provided sufficient proof that they would be of great service in the agricultural areas. He had nothing more to say except that he hoped that the agricultural

development of the State would continue. It had certainly been of great advantage to Western Australia; even the goldfields people realised that. Western Australia just now was repeating the experience of New South Wales and Victoria, in which States the gold had attracted the population, and later, when the mines had worked out, the people had turned their attention to agricultural pursuits. That was now happening in Western Australia, and the State had to look to agriculture more than to anything else.

Mr. Scaddan: There is no need to decry the goldfields.

Mr. HARPER: Without decrying the goldfields members should realise what was the truth.

Mr. Scaddan: It is absolutely incorrect.

Mr. TROY: After the very general remarks of the member for Beverley he felt it his duty to move a hearty vote of thanks to the candidate.

Mr. Harper: Do not try to be funny; go on with what you have to say.

Mr. TROY: The matter of tropical agriculture had not been discussed, and even the Minister had given it very little attention. Last year Mr. Despeissis had been appointed to travel through the northern portion of the State in order to determine what was the best course to pursue to bring about the development of the South-West from an agricultural point of view, and his inquiries had resulted in a report being submitted to Parliament. Later on Mr. Despeissis had been appointed Commissioner for Tropical Agriculture, and it would be interesting to learn from the Minister what qualifications that gentleman had for that position. If his qualifications were embodied in the report which he had written, then he was one of the least competent men to occupy the position of commissioner in the North-West. Mr. Despeissis had not put forward one proposition which would conduce towards the development of the tropical portion of the North-West. Having been reared in a tropical portion of Australia, he (Mr. Troy) ought to be able to speak with authority on this matter. Two years ago he had the opportunity of returning to the East and seeing the de-

velopment of the tropical portions of New South Wales and Queensland, and it was his opinion that if we expected to grow many things in Western Australia which were grown advantageously in the Eastern States we would require an entirely different climate to that which we had in the North-West. The commissioner and the Government believed that sugar could be grown in the North-West. Without any desire to say anything deprecatory towards the possibilities of the North-West, he maintained that sugar could not be grown there successfully. Sugar needed a fairly decent rainfall, and that all the year round, whereas in the North-West the rainy season was in the summer months alone, there being very little rain during the winter. All the sugar in New South Wales and Queensland was grown along alluvial flats adjacent to rivers in localities where the heat was very great and where there was intense moisture. Every week there was rain and there were 60 inches of rain in the year in the district where he was reared. If a month passed without rain there was a drought. He could not see how sugar could be advantageously grown in the North-West. Speaking not only from his own experience but from the experience of those who had travelled in South America and in the West Indies and in Fiji and other countries, to grow sugar we needed a high temperature and abundant moisture, and this could not be obtained in the north-west of Australia except during the summer. But it should be possible to grow decent maize there. It was mainly used for feeding pigs and horses; in fact, in America the pigs were solely raised on maize. It took only four or five months to grow and ripen maize, and the season of four or five months in the Kimberley country would suit it very well. The only difficulty one could see was the heavy storms that occurred in Kimberley that would level the crops to the ground. Certainly if they occurred too frequently they would damage the whole season's crop; but maize ought to be grown profusely and with advantage to the State in that district. If the Gov-

ernment planted maize at an experimental farm at Kimberley, within a year they could find out if the crop could be grown advantageously. If it could, it would open up vast possibilities in the North-West for horse-raising and pig-raising. If we were about to seriously consider the capabilities of the North-West from a tropical cultivation point of view, would it not be better to import some person from those countries where tropical cultivation was carried on systematically? We might import a man from Queensland or from America. In the early days in the Eastern States the persons who knew most in regard to sugar-growing were brought from the West Indies, and it was they who gave a start to the industry. A few years ago the Minister for Agriculture was very enthusiastic about dairying, but his enthusiasm seems to have subsided, probably because the Minister had failed most appallingly in establishing the industry. The Minister sent a gentleman to the Eastern States to purchase a number of cows. The Minister to-day would not deny that the person sent was not competent to carry out the deal for the Government, because his knowledge of dairy cattle, gained only in this State, was not sufficient to enable him to go to the Eastern States, where dairying was a most up-to-date proposition, and where the keenest judges of dairying in the Commonwealth existed, to compete in the purchase of stock. Many people who bought stock from the Government had not paid for it, because they felt they had not got the value for their money.

The Minister for Agriculture: Very few; only £8,000 out of £37,000 is owing.

Mr. TROY: Without any desire to speak too harshly of the Minister, it was only really good luck that helped the Minister to get through at all. Had it not been for the good season and for the natural trend of the people towards the agricultural industry in the Eastern districts resulting in great wheat production, it was doubtful whether we would have had that progress made

which was made. Without securing any advice and without entering into matters thoroughly, the Minister apparently rushed at things; but he was not able to make a success of the dairying industry. There were butter factories at Busselton and Bunbury which were subsidised by the Government but which were still not a success.

The Minister for Agriculture: The Bunbury factory is doing very well.

*(Mr. Foulkes took the Chair.)*

Mr. TROY: It would be discourtesy not to take the word of the Minister, but the money lent to the factory was not paid for three years; one could not arrive at the real position of the institution. It was to be hoped dairying would yet be an important industry in this country, though the State was less favourably adapted for dairying than any of the Eastern States with the exception of South Australia. In saying this he spoke advisedly. The member for Swan would know of the Byron Bay district where the largest co-operative butter factory in Australia was established. That was a gold mine. Every month £60,000 was paid for butter fat to farmers for 60 miles round. Started twelve years ago it had branches throughout the whole of the northern districts of New South Wales. The conditions in that district were much more favourable than anywhere else in Australia. There one found rich alluvial flats, perennially green grass, and running water, *paspalum* grew waist-high, so luxuriantly that it had to be ploughed up or cut down with a scythe.

Mr. Jacoby: With irrigation we could do that in the South-West.

Mr. TROY: Two years ago when visiting that district after an absence of 10 years, he saw it with a greater knowledge of affairs and could go into the matter more fully. There was no need for irrigation there. They had magnificent soil 20 or 30 feet deep and everything grew most prolifically because the heat was great.

Mr. Jacoby: What about the droughts you spoke of?

Mr. TROY: There had never been a drought in the history of the inhabitants.

He had said when speaking of sugar growing that if there was a month without rain there was a drought, but there never was a month without rain. The rivers which were navigable for 100 miles never dropped a foot in level.

Mr. Jacoby: Some of the greatest dairying country in the world is irrigated.

Mr. TROY: There was no need for irrigation where there was a perennial rainfall and the heat to bring up plant life. The people of this district he spoke of were carrying on under most favourable conditions. It should be possible to irrigate in the North-West, and possibly our best dairying land would ultimately be found in the North-West, where there would be rains and heat in the summer and irrigation from the rivers and pools during the winter. The very best dairying country in Queensland was the Atherton scrub country beyond Cairns. It was very heavily timbered tropical country, and ten years ago it was thought impossible to carrying on dairying operations there.

Mr. Jacoby: Do they have butter factories there?

Mr. TROY: Yes. But he was speaking more particularly of the northern part of New South Wales. Every eight or nine miles butter factories could be found, and these people were carrying on under the co-operative system. Not only did they make butter, but they cured bacon, and to-day they chartered steamers and sent their produce to Sydney from whence it was shipped to the London market, and much of it found its way to Western Australia. He did not despair that one day we would be able to carry on dairying in this State, but it would not be done until the people had greater experience, and until, little by little they solved the problem here as it had been solved in the Eastern States. He could not refrain from making the statement that sometimes the money which was voted was utilised for anything, but legitimate purposes with regard to agricultural development. It was found that on occasions the Minister expended a portion of this vote for purposes which could not by any means meet with the commendation of the House, or the people. For instance, subsidies were

given for agricultural and horticultural conferences. He would not deny that an agricultural conference was a good thing, but his objection was that these conferences were used for political purposes by the Ministerial section of the House. Last year an agricultural conference was held in March, just prior to the Federal election, and undoubtedly at this conference which was subsidised by the Government, the opportunity was taken to influence the farmer against the Labour party. There were papers read there by people simply to indulge in the misrepresentation of their opponents in order that the farmers might be influenced at the elections. No less a person than Mr. J. H. Noble, the secretary of the Pastoralists' Association, read a paper which received considerable space in the *West Australian* and the title of this was "Organisation and Co-operation," and it was found that although Mr. Noble had very little to say about co-operation he devoted a great portion of his remarks to the condemnation of the policy of the Labour party, and it was not only condemnation but misrepresentation. It was so flagrant that one farmer told him (Mr. Troy) that he had to take strong exception to it. The founders of co-operation were people who were in sympathy with Labour politics, and the strongest co-operatives to-day were the people whose sympathies were with the Labour movement. We found that Mr. Noble in that paper warned the conference against the Labour party, and he went out of his way to point out that labour aggression was making it impossible for the farmer to live. Mr. Noble also talked about the policy of the nationalisation of land, and said that the Labour party wanted to take the farms away from the farmers. That of course was an absolute lie, and that sort of thing was permitted to be told to the farmers at a conference which was held by virtue of the money voted by the House. Nothing more disgraceful than a proceeding of that kind could be imagined. If a miners' conference were held, and money were voted by the House for that conference, and this sort of thing was indulged in, objection would be

taken at once. It was to be hoped that the good sense, and the good taste of the Minister would induce him to prevent this sort of thing from being repeated. If there was a desire to abuse the Labour party, let them do so and pay for it out of their own pockets.

Mr. Jacoby: It was not the chairman's fault.

Mr. TROY: The Minister was there.

Mr. Jacoby: But the Minister did not have control of the conference.

Mr. TROY: If the member for Swan was there he should have taken exception to these remarks.

Mr. Jacoby: I did not hear them.

Mr. TROY: This address by Mr. Noble was a most dreary, bitter, and jaundiced attack on the Labour party.

Mr. Jacoby: And it was quite out of place.

Mr. TROY: It was pleasing to know there were not so many farmers to-day who could be so easily influenced.

Mr. Jacoby: They are good thinkers.

Mr. TROY: They were good thinkers, but it took months before light broke in on their intellects. A great many farmers in this, and in the Eastern States, did not view the Labour party in the same light as the opponents of the Labour party would have them believe. The farmers were changing their views, and they would not allow this kind of thing to go on in the future. Some few years ago a good deal of newspaper talk was aroused in the State by the fact that manures had been discovered along the coast, and it was hoped that the price to farmers would by these discoveries be considerably reduced.

The Minister for Agriculture: It was a socialistic trial, and it failed.

Mr. TROY: It failed because it was in incompetent hands; it was in hands which did not sympathise with the project. Even if the Minister did sympathise with it, it was quite possible that the beginning might have proved a failure, but hundreds of other things which were socialistic had proved failures. If the Minister had persevered, the commodity would have been of some value to the people of the State. The Minister should inform the

House what it was intended to do with regard to these deposits? Was it intended to work them now or in the future? The Minister had told the House that if these deposits were of any value to the people of the State, and members were led to believe in the first instance that they were—

The Minister for Agriculture: Yes, they are.

Mr. TROY: Yet we encouraged private manufacturers to come along. Why not use our own deposits?

Mr. Jacoby: You can buy phosphates just as cheaply.

Mr. TROY: The Minister should explain what the intentions were with regard to these deposits. The majority of members would like to see the Government working those deposits in the interests of the farmers, and although, through having incompetent men in charge, the Minister had failed once, if the Minister would give the matter fair trial, he would probably be successful in putting those deposits on the market. It was to be hoped that when next we discussed the Estimates we should be able to congratulate ourselves on a much greater progress in agriculture than had taken place to date. Providing the money was expended wisely the Minister would have no occasion to fear criticism from members of the Opposition; rather would he receive their hearty support in all matters pertaining to the welfare of the agricultural industry.

Item, Commissioner of Tropical Agriculture, £660.

Mr. TROY: Would the Minister tell the Committee what the commissioner had done to date, and what were the intentions of the Government in regard to the development of the North-West.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The commissioner was even now making inquiries into the possibilities of the development of the North-West. The Government realised that our importations of tropical products were tremendous. Having lived in the Mauritius Mr. Despeissis had had considerable experience of tropical agriculture, and Professor Lowrie had expressed the opinion that Mr. Despeissis was the most experienced

man in tropical agriculture we could get. However, with the labour market in its present condition it would be difficult to do much in the development of the North just yet. Mr. Despeissis had been making inquiries at Java, and was now returning down the coast from Kimberley to Gascoyne. Already some of the people settled in the North were inquiring into the possibility of growing lucerne along the rivers, and there were many other projects in which Mr. Despeissis was assisting.

Mr. JACOBY: There were many directions in which this money might be more usefully expended. If we wanted a man to advise on the development of tropical agriculture, why not get a man who had made a success of the actual work? It would be easy to secure such a man in Queensland. Mr. Despeissis had had no practical experience at all, but was a mere dilettante. There were other directions in which the services of Mr. Despeissis could be profitably utilised, particularly in an information bureau. It was costing us £1,000 a year to send Mr. Despeissis around making inquiries that would never be of any use to the State. Mr. Despeissis had been appointed as a viticulturist and horticulturist, yet all practical men knew that Mr. Despeissis was neither. Instead of worrying ourselves about propositions absolutely impossible, we should employ Mr. Despeissis where he would be useful. No practical man would regard any report of Mr. Despeissis on the North as being authoritative. For his own part he preferred to read reports of men who had done things, rather than those of men who had merely talked about things. We were spending £1,000 a year in this direction, yet for want of funds we could not get inspectors to keep down the fly pest. This £1,000 a year would keep three such men employed in really good economic work. The Minister was in the unfortunate position of not knowing what to do with Mr. Despeissis, who was suited only to be an officer in charge of an information bureau.

Mr. ANGWIN: First the member for Swan had said no notice would be taken of any report by this officer, and then had gone on to declare that Mr. Des-

peissis would be a splendid man to put in an information bureau. It seemed it was merely a personal prejudice that the member for Swan was exercising against this officer year after year. As for experts from Queensland, we had had one as a director of agriculture, and another whom Mr. Jacoby had condemned that morning as being unfitted for the position he held. Naturally it would be a difficult matter to get a man to suit Mr. Jacoby. He trusted the Minister would take no notice of Mr. Jacoby's advice to place Mr. Despeissis in charge of an information bureau, because he, with others, believed that Mr. Despeissis could do much better work where he was. Could it be that Mr. Despeissis knew too much for Mr. Jacoby in the fruit line, and had outreached the hon. member in some project?

Mr. OSBORN: While admitting that, perhaps, we had not as yet had much result from the labours of this particular officer in the North, he would remind hon. members there were many other undertakings which had not yet produced any great financial results, but which were far from being considered as hopeless. It had taken many years of repeated recommendations to successive Governments to secure the taking of any step at all in the direction of ascertaining whether it was possible to develop the enormous area of cultivable land in the Northern portion of the State. While admitting that the Commissioner had not yet marketed any dates, which he was informed took 20 years to grow, or established an ostrich farm and marketed feathers, he had made certain reports which might yet be found well worthy of consideration, and might induce some man to come along with capital and show the State that it was possible to do something in the way of tropical agriculture. The object of the inquiry by Mr. Despeissis was principally to show that there were certain lands situated in tropical latitudes with a certain rainfall and certain soil which might produce tropical products. The one trip which the Commissioner had made was sufficient for

that purpose, unless it was the intention of the Government to set him to work on some particular area to prove that he could carry out the production which he had said was possible. If it was not the intention of the Government to experiment in that direction it was not necessary to keep Mr. Despeissis in an office simply to make a report from year to year. He trusted that in the near future something would be done with the lands close to the northern coast, so that they could be made to produce better results than at the present time. It was time that something more practical was done to experiment with the forms of production suggested by Mr. Despeissis. There were working men already in the district who, with a little assistance from the Government, were prepared to experiment with their own labour and determine whether it was possible to successfully follow those industries. He hoped the Minister would favourably consider some of the applications that had been made to him for assistance in that way by persons in the Roebourne electorate.

Mr. TROY: From the statement of the Minister it appeared that Mr. Despeissis had been making inquiries in Java and the Eastern States, and had spent nearly 12 months in doing so, and that he was being paid a salary to still make inquiries. Mr. Despeissis seemed to report not only on agriculture but on all industries, all races, all animals, and all products, applying everything produced all over the world to the North-West of this State. If we were going to do anything in the North-West except talk we ought to make a start; already that start had been too long delayed. An experimental farm ought to be established at once to show the people what could be done, and he did not know why the Commissioner should be inquiring in Java, where the conditions were entirely dissimilar from those in the North-West.

*(Mr. Taylor resumed the Chair.)*

Mr. TROY: The experimental farm was the only means of testing the capacity of the North-West. It was a useless

expenditure of money to send a man around the world reporting on everything simply to avoid getting rid of him. The State wanted some practical results. If the member for Kimberley found satisfaction in that officer's work it must be in the fact that so long as he dilly-dallied in this fashion the squatters of the north could continue to hold those large areas. The squatters did not want to encourage any other form of industry which would interfere with the cattle raising which paid them so well. For many year squatters in the vicinity of Geraldton had said that the country could not grow wheat, and it was only when they had been compelled to make way for the farmer that it was proved that we could grow wheat there. There must be a sum of money set apart to make practical tests in the North-West at once, and, if Mr. Despeissis was a man capable of carrying out these tests, he should be instructed to do the work, and to show people that the industry could be developed. We must help the farmers to make a start there. In Queensland they first went into this tropical country for timber and from timber they got to farming. In New South Wales an experimental farm was started at Woolingbar in the big scrub, and that was the means of establishing the dairying industry there. It should not be necessary to spend all our revenue and the loan funds available for agricultural development in the South-West.

Mr. JACOBY : We would get a valuable lesson as to the possibilities of the North-West if we examined the results of the work attending the experimental farm in the Northern Territory ; and until we made full inquiries into the results of that experiment, we should not risk the establishing of an experimental farm in the North. There was one product that could be cultivated successfully in the lower North, and that was pineapple culture. Other branches would probably spring from that. It was to be hoped this item for a perambulating commissioner would not recur year after year.

Item, Dairy Expert, £300.

Mr. PRICE : A man of great qualifications could not be secured for £300 a year. What was this officer doing to earn the money ?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE : The dairy expert was now engaged as manager of the State farm at Brunswick, and was doing excellent work. A tremendous lot of people visited the farm month by month. The dairy expert was a comparatively young man who was gaining very valuable Australian experience while acting as manager of that farm, though the results of the farm were not as good as we had looked for. He was keeping in touch with the people in the South-West and delivering lectures in connection with dairying. The industry moved slowly because the trees marched off slowly. If we got the clearing done by traction engines we could look forward to the time when the importation of butter would cease. The officer was earning his salary now, and the opportunity for greater work would come in the near future. There were indications that at Denmark and in the land below Bridgetown we were going to have fairly excellent results.

Mr. PRICE : It would be more satisfactory to have the item read "Farm Manager." Evidently this officer was becoming an expert at the expense of the State.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN : The Minister should give us some information as to what was being accomplished by the pathologist. Dairying would be absolutely impossible until we did something to eradicate the zamia palm. Farmers were losing their cattle and their horses through this palm. He had a dozen letters from settlers complaining of their losses in this direction.

The CHAIRMAN : The hon. member could discuss that better under the item "Noxious Weeds Act."

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE : The member for Albany was a little unfair to the dairy expert. That officer held high diplomas in Great Britain. His headquarters would always be at the farm when doing the work properly attached to his office.



Item, Irrigation Expert, £450.

Mr. PRICE: One looked in vain to discover what was being done in the matter of irrigation to cause the retention in office of an alleged expert at this salary. It was 50 per cent. higher than that given to the dairy expert with the splendid diplomas we had just heard of.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member was also unfair to this officer. There were 62 people irrigating, and of these 32 were irrigating 476 acres which was a very fair start indeed.

Mr. PRICE: It costs us £450 a year for 476 acres!

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Blocks of 10 to 15 acres provided good livings for men spending their whole time on them.

Mr. PRICE: There are single farms in New South Wales of 476 acres irrigated.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The 25 acres irrigated at the Brunswick State farm kept a couple of men most of the time. Irrigation was no light matter if the land was put to its full use.

Mr. PRICE: The Minister's explanation was not satisfactory. The Minister said that there were 476 acres irrigated in the State. In New South Wales there were single farms with more than 476 acres irrigated, and they had no expert at £450 a year.

The Minister for Agriculture: They are spending hundreds of thousands of pounds on irrigation there.

Mr. PRICE: The individual farmers were doing that, not the Government.

The Minister for Agriculture: What about the Barren Jack scheme?

Mr. PRICE: That scheme supplied water for the metropolis. These irrigated farms in New South Wales were on the Lachlan river.

The Minister for Agriculture: I know they are spending a lot of money there.

Mr. PRICE: In this State we were not warranted in spending such a sum of money as £450 on an expert; it could be better expended in draining some of the lands and giving people a chance

to get on them. The Government were not justified in appointing an expert to instruct the people how to irrigate such small areas. If the areas were large the farmers should be in a position to pay for the necessary expert knowledge, if such was necessary. He moved an amendment—

*That the item be struck out.*

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The officer was doing really good work, and his services were needed in the State. It was to be hoped the hon. member would not press his amendment.

Mr. PRICE: It was to be hoped that next year the Minister would have something more definite to state to members as to what this officer had done to warrant the expenditure of such a large sum of money. By leave of the House he would withdraw the amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Item, Temporary professional and clerical assistance, and casual labour £1,000.

Mr. HOLMAN: There was provision made for temporary labour in every division. With regard to this department, the accountant and under secretary had recommended increases to the temporary officers. Would the Minister give an assurance that he was going to grant the increases as from the 1st of July?

Mr. Angwin: Are they paying these men more than the permanent hands?

Mr. HOLMAN: The permanent hands were receiving £180 for the same work that was being done for £156 10s. by the temporary hands.

Mr. JOHNSON: There was no doubt that a lot of temporary labour was employed in the department, and the officers were doing good work. The positions should carry the same salaries but it was found that these men entered at 10s. a day. They were to all intents and purposes permanent hands. It was only fair on the part of the Committee to express an opinion endorsing the attitude of the Government on this matter: that whenever increases were given they should date from the beginning of the year.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: There were not many temporary officers in the Agricultural Department. Four of them had been appointed to permanent positions since the end of June. He agreed that when men were kept on for any length of time, they should be properly paid. Steps were being taken to appoint as many good officers as possible from among the temporary ranks to permanent positions. That was the reward for good service.

Mr. HOLMAN: The Minister was getting work done by temporary officers for 10s. a day, and in some other departments as much as 11s., 12s., and 13s. a day was being paid. The Minister for Agriculture should treat his employees as the other departments were doing. Whatever increases were given, they should date from the time the recommendations were made.

Mr. GILL: Last night the Minister had said the question of temporary hands employed at over 10s. a day was a matter for the Public Service Commissioner. He (Mr. Gill) understood there were two of these temporary hands in other departments being paid a higher rate than 10s. a day. If that was the case there could be no objection to doing the same in the Lands Department. The Minister would recognise that 10s. a day was not a fair remuneration for good work.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Some time ago he had given instructions that the permission of the Public Service Commissioner should be sought for the payment of a higher rate to these particular ledger keepers. Some of the temporary men were being better paid than some of the permanent men in the same grade. He would see that justice was done to these officers, whether in the Lands or the Agricultural Department.

Item, Wages of foremen and farm-hands, £2,250.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: In the Kellerrin district, where a good deal of dam sinking was going on under the direction of the Agricultural Department, a foreman had been recently prosecuted for working a horse with sore shoulders.

The driver of the horse was prosecuted also, and in both instances fines were inflicted with costs. The department had paid the fine and the costs in respect to the foreman, but had refused to pay in respect to the driver, who, after all, was merely carrying out his instructions in working the horse. A warrant has since been issued for the arrest of the driver, and it was likely to be executed at any time. Why had this discrimination been shown?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: This was the first he had heard of it. The horse, it seemed, had been borrowed for the Works Department, and in all probability it would be found that the foreman was engaged under the Agricultural Department, while the driver belonged to another department. He would certainly look into the matter and do what was right.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: It was only a small amount, and he thought the Minister should pay it and save the driver from imprisonment.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The facts were unknown to him, but he would go into the case and see that the right thing was done.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—*Refrigerating works, abattoirs, and Perth city markets, £7,360:*

Item, Manager and superintendent of abattoirs, £500.

Mr. JOHNSON: It had been his intention to move a reduction of the item with a view to testing the feelings of the Committee in respect to the establishment of freezing works; however, he did not desire to take up any time at this juncture. So he had decided to test the feelings of the Committee when on the Loan Estimates. He desired that the Minister should realise the necessity of getting an outside expert to investigate this important matter. The Minister had grandly declared that he would take the responsibility, but he (Mr. Johnson) was not prepared to allow the Minister to spend money on any such experiment.

The Minister for Agriculture: The House endorsed the price.

Mr. JOHNSON : Only through scheming on the part of the Minister. He would defy the Minister to deny that members on the Ministerial side had privately declared against the project, and that if it had been put into a separate measure they would not have supported it. The Committee had never been tested on the question and those in a position to judge best, namely, the producer and the consumer, had declared that the Minister's policy in this regard was not sound. The fruit growers had declared against cold storage, but the Minister pitted his opinion against all these experts.

The Minister for Agriculture : No.

Mr. JOHNSON : And despite the opinions of these experts the Minister had declared his intention of pursuing his own course. He (Mr. Johnson) was prepared to admit he had not to-day that high opinion of Mr. Cairns which he had entertained when first that officer was appointed. The fruitgrowers in conference in Western Australia, and again in Hobart, had declared that the freezing or pre-cooling of fruit previous to shipment was detrimental to that fruit, and they had appealed to the Minister not to force them into the freezing works. The Minister had made it part of his policy and had appealed to the Committee to pass the vote because of the fact that he wanted to cool the fruit. To assist him in carrying out his policy he had quoted Mr. Cairns, and the latter, in order to boost up his own particular fads, had given figures which the member for Swan had proved to be incorrect. He appealed to the Minister to realise that the producers and consumers, and the men qualified to express an opinion, had said that he was not working in the best interests of the State, and that some other method should be adopted. He wanted some outside expert to be brought in to settle this important question, because the proposed expenditure at North Fremantle would run to something like £130,000, an amount which should not be expended while there was a doubt about the wisdom of the Minister's scheme. The advisableness of incurring that expenditure had

been questioned by persons qualified to speak, and it was to be hoped that the Minister would agree to get expert advice as to whether the works should be proceeded with.

Mr. BOLTON : It was to be regretted that Mr. Cairns had come down in the estimation of the member for Guildford. Had his report been exactly the same and couched in similar words, with the exception of an alteration of the site, Mr. Cairns would undoubtedly have been held to be an excellent officer by that hon. member. To his mind the report was a good one and the site excellent, and the superintendent had, for that reason, gone up in his (Mr. Bolton's) estimation. What was the object of asking that an expert should be got from outside the State to report on the scheme ? Simply that there might be further delay and agitation with a view to getting Cabinet, if possible, to alter their decision as to the proper site for abattoirs and freezing works. As to the remarks of the member for Swan, that the fruitgrowers were averse to pre-cooling, it was not to be believed that the Government were going to force them to cool their fruit. The objection of the member for Swan could be easily understood. At the present time nearly all the exported fruit passed through the hands of his company at a commission of something like 6d. per case, and it was possible that, if the freezing works were established, the growers might think it expedient to pass their fruit through that establishment, thereby depriving the member for Swan and his company of their commission. Even if the producers did object to the scheme, they were not the only persons to be considered. Certainly the consumers would be losing nothing if Cabinet proceeded with the site which had been chosen. Already the small butchers in Fremantle were able, as the result of the establishment of sale yards on the recommendation of this superintendent, to buy a single beast and the residents were able to get cheaper and better meat than ever before. The superintendent was quite consistent in his argument. In the case of growers

near to the port it might not be necessary to pass the fruit through the freezers, but growers situated 40 or 50 miles from the port would require louvre vans to carry their fruit, in which circumstances it would be necessary for the fruit to pass through the freezing works. The member for Swan had stated that the time would come when the people of North Fremantle would object to the noxious trades in connection with abattoirs. They were quite prepared to take that risk, but there should not be anything objectionable in abattoirs run on up-to-date lines. In any case, North Fremantle was an industrial centre, and a workingman's district rather than an aristocratic one, and if there were any other noxious trades to be picked up the district would be quite prepared to take them. He was sorry that after two years of argument on the question, the people of Midland Junction were dying so hard. If after that term of consideration and agitation a site had been chosen in opposition to his wishes, he would not have fought so bitterly and would not have been continually bobbing up like an indiarubber ball to object to the works being proceeded with.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—*Insect Pests Act*, £3,750—agreed to.

Vote—*Rabbits and Vermin Board Acts*, £16,550 :

Mr. PRICE: This was a very large sum. According to the Auditor General's report there was only one vermin board in existence.

Mr. Butcher: No, there are four.

Mr. PRICE: The Auditor General's report stated that the expenditure last year had been incurred by one board. This was to provide wire netting for the pastoralists of the Gascoyne, and the cost to the State was £31,910 to date, against which, according to the Auditor General, the State had only received in interest £153 18s. 11d. or about a half per cent. Why should this special consideration be shown to pastoralists in the Gascoyne if it was not provided for pastoralists in the Eucla division?

The Minister for Agriculture: Eucla pastoralists can have a board if they wish.

Mr. PRICE: One would protest against pastoralists in the Eucla division establishing another vermin board to cause the expenditure of £30,000 to £40,000. Who received the benefit? Nobody but the pastoralists. Although this money was taken from loan funds the repayments were credited to the Sale of Government Property Trust Account. One would like some assurance from the Minister that steps would be taken to ensure the payment of interest and sinking fund.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Interest was payable at the rate of 4 per cent. Interest and sinking fund would be paid. Under the Act which authorised the advance there was power for the Government to rate the property within the area enclosed. The system had only just been started. If it had been adopted years ago it would have been more satisfactory in the long run than spending nearly £400,000 on two rabbit-proof fences. Under this system the pastoralists took full responsibility for the payment, first for the fence and then for the upkeep and then for the destruction of vermin, thus relieving the general taxpayer who did not need to contribute at all. Other vermin boards would be formed in the near future, and people in the Eucla district would be well advised to form one. There was no doubt about repayment.

Mr. Price: What security have the Government?

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The right to rate the property. If the lands came back to the State to-morrow the State would have very fine security.

Vote put and passed.

Vote, *Stock*, £3,922—agreed to.

Vote, *Agricultural Bank*, £12,482 :

Item, Deputy Manager and Trustee, £420.

Mr. PRICE: This officer was receiving an increase of £15. It was well known that the internal business of the bank was practically wholly conducted by this officer, because the managing trustee was away from the bank nearly the

whole of his time inspecting and in connection with the bank and in connection with the Railway Advisory Board. At least the salary of this officer should be equal to the salary of an under secretary. Certainly his duties were more responsible than the duties of the majority of under secretaries.

Mr. PIESSE: A private firm in the City would pay its accountant more for doing responsible work like that entailed upon this officer. It was to be hoped that the Minister would take into consideration the suggestion that the officer's salary be increased. He was an excellent officer and his ability was of a special character.

Mr. GILL: The managing trustee's time was necessarily taken up away from the bank, and the duties of managing the bank devolved upon the deputy. It was reasonable that the position should be made better financially.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: One could acknowledge the good work done by the officer, and he would be pleased to increase the salary if he could do so. The work this officer did was responsible work, and there was a tremendous lot of it also. The accountant should also receive a higher salary. He would bring under the attention of the Public Service Commissioner the need for increasing the salaries of both officers, and he hoped the increases would appear on next year's Estimates.

Mr. PRICE: Was the increase of £150 for the managing trustee recommended by the Public Service Commissioner?

The Minister for Agriculture: It was fixed by Statute.

Mr. PRICE: The Minister should impress upon the Public Service Commissioner the need for increasing the salaries of these two officers. The accountant was receiving a salary little above the wage of an ordinary tradesman.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 5.46 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Tuesday, 20th December, 1910.*

	PAGE
Papers presented	2516
Bills: York Mechanics' Institute Transfer, 3a	2516
Permanent Reserves Rededication, 3a	2516
Licensing, Recom.	2516
Tributers, 1a	2534
Workers' Compensation Act Amendment, 1a	2534
Fremantle Freemasons' Lodge No. 2 Disposition, Message	2534
Perth Municipal Gas and Electric Lighting, Message	2534

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

### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: 1, Fremantle Harbour Trust Annual Report, 1909-1910. 2, Municipality of Claremont—By-law. 3, Bunbury Harbour Board—Amendment of Regulation. 4, The Factories Act, 1904—Regulation. 5, Midland Junction Municipality—By-law. 6, Registrar of Friendly Societies—Report for the year ended June 30, 1910. 7, Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1902—Report for the year ended 30th June, 1910. 8, Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Department—Annual Report, 1909-10.

### BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1. York Mechanics' Institute, transmitted to the Legislative Assembly.
2. Permanent Reserves Rededication, *passed.*

### BILL—LICENSING.

*Recommittal.*

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move—

*That the Bill be recommitted for the purpose of considering the amendments to the clauses appearing on the Notice Paper.*

Hon. M. L. MOSS: I move an amendment—

*That clauses 95, 121, and 159 be also included.*

Hon. W. PATRICK: I desire that Clause 33 be added to the list.

Hon. F. CONNOR: I also desire that the clauses which are not numbered and which refer to barmaids be included.