

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Thursday, 10th January, 1935.

The Council met pursuant to adjournment, His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government; SIR CRAWFORD DOUGLAS-JONES, Kt., C.M.G., President, in the Chair.

PRESENT.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Mr. P. W. King (Acting).

The Hon. the Attorney-General, Mr. Hector Josephs, K.C., B.A., LL.M. (Cantab.), LL.B. (Lond.).

The Hon. T. T. Smellie, O.B.E. (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. F. Dias, O.B.E. (Nominated Unofficial Member).

Major the Hon. W. Bain Gray, M.A., Ph.D. (Edin.), B. Litt. (Oxon), Director of Education.

The Hon. J. S. Dash, B.S.A., Director of Agriculture.

The Hon. R. E. Brassington (Western Essequibo).

Major the Hon. J. C. Craig, D.S.O., M.E.I.C., Director of Public Works.

The Hon. E. F. McDavid, M.B.E., Colonial Treasurer (Acting).

The Hon. W. A. D'Andrade, Comptroller of Customs.

The Hon. J. Mullin, M.I.M.M., F.S.I., Commissioner of Lands and Mines.

The Hon. B. R. Wood, M.A., Dip. For. (Cantab.), Conservator of Forests.

The Hon. F. Birkitt, Postmaster-General.

The Hon. N. Cannon (Georgetown North)

The Hon. Percy C. Wight, O.B.E. (Georgetown Central).

The Hon. J. Eleazar (Berbice River).

The Hon. J. I. De Aguiar (Central Demerara).

The Hon. M. B. G. Austin (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. F. J. Seaford (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

The Hon. J. L. Wills (Demerara River).

The Hon. E. M. Walcott (Nominated Unofficial Member).

MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Wednesday, 9th January, as printed and circulated, were confirmed.

SENIOR UNOFFICIAL MEMBER.

THE PRESIDENT: I undertook the other day to go into the question raised by the hon. Member for Georgetown North as to who was the Senior Elected Member of the Council. I will read the following statement which will go on record if the hon. Member so wish:—

Under the Old Constitution there were two classes of Members, viz:—Official Members and Elected Members. With the change of the Constitution, Article 4 of the Constitution Order in Council provided for two classes, namely, Officials and Unofficials. There are no separate classes of Official or Unofficial Members.

If it is desired to ascertain which Elected Member of the Unofficial Class ranks highest in order of precedence this is governed by Article 16 of the Order in Council and Mr. Brassington takes precedence over any other Unofficial Elected Member, but there is really no such person as a Senior Elected Member. The senior Member of the Unofficial Class is Mr. Smellie.

INVITATION TO DUKE AND DUCHESS OF KENT.

MR. BRASSINGTON: Before the Order of the Day is proceeded with I crave your indulgence to ask Government if there is any intention to invite Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Kent to visit the Colony. I see in the Press that

they will be visiting the West Indies, and Trinidad and Barbados are mentioned as places that will be visited during their trip. I certainly think that this Colony ought to extend a very loyal invitation to Their Royal Highnesses to visit this much-neglected Colony when they are touring.

Mr. ELEAZAR: The Senior Member has asserted his rights for the first time, and very properly. I join with him, and it is the feeling on this side of the House, that we should ask Your Excellency to extend an invitation to Their Royal Highnesses.

THE PRESIDENT: When I saw the telegram last night I felt myself that representations would be made and that Government would consider the matter. We should certainly extend an invitation from the people of the Colony to them to visit the Colony during their tour.

Mr. SMELLIE: I think, sir, I should join in this request, being the Senior Member. (Laughter).

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I did not rise in any official capacity, but as an ordinary Member of the Council. (Laughter).

THE PRESIDENT: The hon. Member's colleagues were glad that he did so. (Laughter).

UNOFFICIAL NOTICE.

SALARY OF THE PUISNE JUDGE.

Mr. ELEAZAR, on behalf of Mr. WOOLFORD, gave notice of the following motion:—

WHEREAS prior to the month of October, 1931, there were two Puisne Judges in the Colony drawing salaries of £1,300 (\$6,240) and £1,200 (\$5,760) a year, respectively;

AND WHEREAS on the appointment of Mr. Justice Gilchrist to a Judgeship in the Colony of Trinidad in October, 1931, his appointment as First Puisne Judge in this Colony became vacant;

AND WHEREAS the said vacancy has never been filled but the work formerly divided between the said First and Second Puisne Judges has been performed by the then said Second Puisne Judge almost entirely unaided;

AND WHEREAS the volume of work to be performed by the Judiciary has not as was anticipated been reduced;

AND WHEREAS the salary of the said Puisne

Judge remains at the same figure, viz., £1,200 (\$5,760) as when he first was appointed in August, 1928;

AND WHEREAS the Financial Commissioners recommended that the office of the Second Puisne Judge should be abolished—a recommendation which has been given effect to;

AND WHEREAS the sum of £3,900 (\$18,720) has thereby been saved in the public expenditure on the Judiciary by the omission to fill the said appointment;

AND WHEREAS it is desirable in the public interest that persons holding high judicial office should be suitably paid:

Be it Resolved,—That this Council recommends that the present salary of the holder of the office of Puisne Judge be increased to a sum of £1,300 (\$6,240) the pay of the former First Puisne Judge.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES.

The Council resolved itself into Committee and resumed consideration of the Estimates of Expenditure to be defrayed from Revenue for the year ending 31st December, 1935.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE:

Mr. ELEAZAR: I have since the last meeting been informed that the salary proposed for the Plant Breeder is not more than he is receiving, and further that he will become a Buxtonian in part. (Laughter). That goes a long way with me, and I withdraw my opposition to the vote. I agree to its being put below the line.

Professor DASH (Director of Agriculture): I beg to move the insertion of the following new item:—

Item 1 (16)—1 Plant Breeder (\$2,160 to \$2,880), by \$120, \$2,760.

Question put, and agreed to.

Item 1 (21)—3 Probationers, \$1,140.

Mr. AUSTIN: I take this opportunity to enquire whether my "nepo" St. Lucia friend is included in these three Probationers. (Laughter).

Professor DASH: The answer is "No." The officer referred to by the hon. Member does not come under the estimates of the Department at all. (Hear, hear).

Item 1 (26)—House Allowances to Agricultural Instructors in charge of

Berbice and the East Coast, Demerara, and Agricultural Superintendent, West Demerara, \$672.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I think there is something wrong under this head. I see "House Allowances to Agricultural Instructors in charge of Berbice. . ." As far as I am aware there are three, but one man does not get any house allowance at all although he is entitled to it. I understand from the hon. Member for New Amsterdam that he has been denied his house allowance because he is supposed to have written loose language to the Head of his Department. (Laughter). I say "loose language" advisedly in this instance. It appears that he was complaining that he was not getting his house allowance, and he charged the Head of the Department with partiality and something amounting to jobbery. It is clear that a man who writes that does not appreciate the weight of his language, but that is a different thing to what the Director referred to as loose language yesterday. It is not fair punishment for a subordinate, I submit. It only makes him feel that what he wrote is true. I ask Government to give the officer his house allowance if he is entitled to it. He is being knocked from pillar to post. He is living in a hovel just because it is cheap, but it is not becoming of an officer in his position. I think he has been punished sufficiently, and I implore Government to give him his house allowance.

Professor DASH: I think the hon. Member is unduly apprehensive about the officer in question. This matter of house allowances for Agricultural Instructors has been under consideration by Government for the last two years. The officer in question was first of all in the Pomeroon. It is true he lived in a Government house there but he was not entitled to a house allowance at all. He also drew a duty allowance. He was subsequently transferred to New Amsterdam where he was no longer entitled to a duty allowance according to the Regulations, and as the terms of his employment do not include a house allowance none was given to him. The point was raised two years ago and placed before Government. Government duly went into it and the officer was told that Government could not change the Regulations in that connection. The point has

come up again recently and Government still has the matter under consideration. But the fact that the officer wrote me what might be called an arrogant letter has nothing to do with the matter under consideration. I certainly would not prevent him from getting what he should get even though he wrote me an unseemly letter.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Will the Director not recommend it now?

Professor DASH: I recommended it two years ago.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I suggest that you recommend it now.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think I can permit that to be done now. The matter trenches on administration and will have to be investigated. I will note that the Director is prepared to renew his recommendation that the officer should receive a house allowance and will have the matter looked into.

Item 1 (27)—Grading Inspector (\$1,440 to \$1,920 by \$120), \$1,500.

Professor DASH: This item should be carried out at \$1,455 because the change in the holder of the office did not take place until later in the year.

Item reduced to \$1,455.

Mr. WALCOTT: I spoke yesterday about the Plant Breeder and the necessity for such an officer. I would like to call Government's attention to the fact that the fullest benefit cannot be obtained from the production of the best seed padi unless Government tried to provide means for the farmers to thresh that padi. About 18 months or two years ago we had an interview with Sir Edward Denham who promised the Rice Marketing Board that if representations were made—and I believe they were made—he would support the idea of getting threshers for the different districts, so that the people who grew padi from approved seed would be able to put it through those threshers and get the full benefit of the improved conditions. At present most people plant good seed, reap excellent padi and then spoil it by bull-mashing. You cannot produce a good quality rice by bull-mashing.

I appeal to Government to bring in some scheme whereby the farmers can get the benefit of really up-to-date threshing of rice. Government has a small threshing machine in one district, but it is almost a toy compared with the machines that should be used. It seems to me that in view of the amount of money expended in other directions, \$20,000 or \$25,000 could be beneficially spent on the introduction of mechanical threshers for the rice industry.

I speak very feelingly because I have seen instances where people have produced very good seed padi which has been ruined by the primitive method of threshing. There cannot be any objection to mechanical threshers on the score of unemployment, because the only thing that would be unemployed would be the bull. The time has come when, if our rice industry is to progress, Government, with the help of the Department of Agriculture, will have to go further than only producing the seed. Government must help the people to get proper threshing machines. It is no easy matter, I know, to persuade the average small farmer that he will benefit from the use of a thresher, but once he has been taught that the actual cost of threshing is less by using machines than it would be by the use of his own bulls he would soon enough want to use threshing machines. When I introduced threshing machines at my own place the people did not want them; they said they cost too much. To-day, if there is not a threshing machine there is a tremendous row. They find that it is not only better but that they get a better price for their rice. I appeal to Government to make provision for the introduction of threshers. Whether it is done from Flood Relief or Unemployment Relief funds I do not mind, but I think the time has come when Government should seriously try to help the rice industry other than by just plant-breeding. I feel that Government has not given that assistance to the rice industry which it should have done, and I was delighted yesterday to hear the Director of Agriculture say that it was necessary to have a Plant Breeder. I think it is more necessary to have proper threshing machines, and I hope to receive the support of the Government on this suggestion.

Mr. SEAFORD : I think the hon. Mem-

ber has not explained fully enough what he means. Does he intend that Government should provide the machines and allow the rice growers to have them free, or that they should be for hire? It makes a very big difference. He says that Government does not go far enough in order to assist the rice industry. Government has assisted by giving drainage, irrigation and plants. How far does the hon. Member propose Government should go? I do not agree with him when he says that Government has not given assistance to the rice industry. I think Government has given every assistance to the industry. Government has employed a Deputy Director of Agriculture specially for the rice industry. I understood he was an expert in rice and we were told it was his job to look after the rice industry. We have several experts. Further, we have a Plant Breeder, so I do not think it is quite fair to say that no assistance has been given the rice industry. I do not think the hon. Member quite meant that. I would like to know what he proposes about the threshers. If the farmers have to pay for them I am afraid a good many of them will not make use of the threshers. They will argue that their bulls would not cost them any more for mashing the rice.

Mr. WALCOTT: Having a commercial mind, I never thought for one moment that Government should give them the threshers free of cost. I thought my line of thought would have indicated that I meant they should pay for them. I say they would find it cheaper to use a thresher than to use bulls even if the bulls were their own. I do not believe in gifts. Experience has taught me that when a man pays for something he appreciates it better. They would pay a sufficient amount for threshing to cover the cost of the machines and of working them. It should be properly worked on commercial lines, not on Government lines, and it would be actually an asset to Government and not a liability.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am a little bit amazed because the hon. Member is asking Government to do just the thing Government will not do. I happen to know that the only people in the Colony who put their all in rice have got a mechanical thresher, a tractor for mechanical ploughing, and a reaper, and after losing all their crops by the recent floods they went on again and lost their crops through the

drought. I have been told that they are now being sued by Government through the Department of Lands and Mines for rent. I refer to the people in the Mahaica and Mahaicony creeks. They deserve consideration and help, but that is what is happening. I think what the Hon. Mr. Walcott has referred to is what the late hon. Member for Demerara River has been clamouring for—that the people should be encouraged to get these mechanical devices and should not pay duty on them. It should be the work of the District Commissioners to encourage the people to get these things. The machines should belong to the people and Government should give a rebate of the duty on the petrol used. I do not think Government can embark on the purchase of those machines or even help the people with money to get them. Government should enquire whether it is true that the farmers are being sued for rent. They need help after losing two crops.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I think the subject of the desirability of having community ploughing or threshing is well known to every agriculturist, but how can the people in Essequibo be expected to go in for community ploughing and other labour-saving devices I do not know. I beg to differ from the Hon. Mr. Seaford when he says that a lot has been done by Government for the rice industry. I do not desire to throw any stones at Government. I am fully aware that Government's intentions were excellent in many respects, but to say that Government has done a great lot for the rice industry is a travesty of fact. The sum total of what Government has done for the rice industry, in my opinion, is its efforts in the direction of improving the quality of our rice. I do not know if other Elected Members who represent country constituencies are satisfied and believe that Government has done a great lot for the rice industry, but I can say that as regards the constituency I represent Government has done nothing beyond its efforts through the Department of Agriculture to improve the quality of rice. Can it be contended that Government has done its duty towards the Essequibo Coast and the islands of Wakenaam and Leguan, but especially the Essequibo Coast, when the people have a yoke around their necks in

the form of tremendous assessments for drainage and sea defences? Let it not be forgotten that the rice industry was built up by the East Indians without any help from Government. It is a standing monument to their industry, thrift and courage. I am in no way trying to throw any blame on Your Excellency because, after all, it is only a very few months Your Excellency has been administering the Government of this Colony, but I do say that your predecessors, Governors who have come and gone, have not done what they ought to have done for the rice industry of the Colony. I am sorry if it may seem ungracious of me to say so, but in my opinion it is the naked truth.

Mr. SEAFORD: May I be permitted to remind the hon. Member of the cheap freight rates by rail and by steamer?

Mr. ELEAZAR: While on the question of Government help it is fair to let Government know of one or two things that are happening. Black people in the district of Eversham, on the Corentyne Coast, rent lands from year to year from the Department of Lands and Mines at 20 cents per acre. They would have had a splendid crop but for somebody's action in cutting the dam and flooding the place. I have been told that they have been notified by a certain official that in future they will have to pay \$2 per acre instead of 20 cents. That is not helping them. Those are things Government should know; things which hamper the industry.

THE CHAIRMAN: The matter will be looked into.

Mr. MULLIN (Commissioner of Lands and Mines): The collections of rents in districts is under the District Administration Scheme, and I do not know of the cases referred to by the hon. Member. The lands are inside the Springlands-Kilmarnock empolder.

Mr. ELEAZAR: No, just outside.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will have the matter enquired into.

Professor DASH: I do not think it is generally recognised that in addition to the help Government has given to the rice industry, apart from the question of staff, improved seed and the establishment of

pureline padi farms and so on, the Imperial Government has been rather good to the industry. It has provided us with a very substantial sum running into five figures, in connection with experimental machinery, a rice mill, a Revolving Fund and so on, and certainly a great deal of money has been spent in the last few years in connection with drainage to assist the rice industry. We all know to what extent rice production has increased as the result of those little schemes in various villages and districts which have helped to ensure a better water supply. There is still a considerable amount of work to be done in that direction, and I only hope in coming years we may be able to extend our field of operations in that connection. Certainly sugar and rice are the mainstay of our coastlands, and it is up to Government and the people of the Colony to devote their whole-hearted energies to those two crops. Everything else is bound to be subsidiary as far as one can see at the moment.

The Hon. Mr. Walcott raised a very interesting point, and I am glad he did. He referred to the question of improved threshing facilities. We have given a considerable amount of attention to that question. The whole problem is one of economics. We had trial threshers given us. These machines were of fairly good type and fairly modern; a smaller one we had loaned us by a local firm. Demonstrations have been given, and we worked out the cost per bag, but unfortunately just when we were going very nicely with the demonstrations and proving to the farmers the advantage of using threshers the low prices came in and rather upset—for the time being I hope—the idea of farmers using these threshers more and more. There is no doubt that what Mr. Seaford said is perfectly true. Where rice cultivators have their bulls and their families they are going to use them in preference to paying a fixed charge per bag out of their own pockets.

At the same time rice cultivators complain that when they produce clean padi the millers do not give them any more for it. If landlords would give the farmers an extra bonus for producing clean padi I am sure they would use threshers. It is a rather difficult thing to arrange for and to say who is to be responsible for it. We

have been working in conjunction with the agents and doing what we could to push their use, but I would suggest that the easiest way to get them acquired would be for the landlord-millers to start it, and possibly Government will then come in either offering a subsidy or assistance with cheap gasoline. Then there would be a responsible person to control the tenants and all the operations in the field, and so on. That would be a far easier way of doing it. Communal machinery has been tried in a good many places, and it is no easy job. I throw out the suggestion that possibly the landlords and millers could come together, and we might get more progress made in that direction. It is no good saying we have to have threshers when landlords and millers do not give that extra encouragement for the production of clean padi.

Reference was made by the hon. Member for Berbice River to conditions in the creeks. Certainly that position has been very bad. Those people have lost their crops but have continued to carry on. That is one of the areas which, when the question of relief came up, received the fullest consideration. An effort was made to replace stock and to give them as much seed padi as we could. In that area rice is not planted in beds. It is all shield rice and there is no control of water. They are taking a hazard from the beginning. I am glad to have heard the views expressed. I agree with the Hon. Mr. Walcott that we should press the question of these threshers. They will do a great deal of good to the industry as a whole.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I do not think the point I have made has been answered. I do not claim that Government must prevent what has been carried on as a gamble all these years. What I am saying is that we had two unprecedented occurrences, a flood followed immediately by a drought and causing these people to lose everything, while at the same time Government is pressing them for their rent. I am suggesting that they should get some relief. To say that they knew they were planting at a hazard is no answer.

Item 1 28)—2 Examiners (\$480 to \$624 by \$48), \$1,032.

Mr. WALCOTT: I desire to take this opportunity to reply to the remarks of the

Director The suggestion made by him that the landlord-millers should acquire threshers and rent them, get a better quality of padi and pay the growers extra for it seems to me strange coming from him, because I think Government owns the Bush Lot Settlement. I have been wondering for a couple of years why Government has not acquired a threshing machine for Bush Lot.

Professor DASH: We have.

Mr. WALCOTT: Government has acquired a toy, not a thresher. I have seen the machine down there, unless Government has acquired another within the last 8 or 9 months. The machine I saw there early in March last year was comparatively a toy. It could only deal with a very small quantity of padi in a day as compared with a modern up-to-date thresher. One can understand that the operating cost of such a machine might create results suggested by the Hon. Mr. Seaford, that the owners of bulls might find it cheaper to bull-mash the padi. The fact remains that if they use a really modern thresher the results would be better. The Government can operate those machines, and I would suggest, if it is not too late now, that one be installed at Anna Regina to demonstrate to the landlord-millers on the Coast what can be done. In that district to-day the rice is hand beaten. I do not know how many thousand years B.C. we go back when we resort to that method, but it exists to-day at Anna Regina, which is a Government-owned concern, and which, as an example to the other farmers, should be run on really up-to-date lines. I am not speaking with any malice, but I think Government should set an example. I understand that the Bush Lot Scheme has been turned over to private interests.

Professor DASH: No.

Mr. WALCOTT: In other words Government has leased lots at Bush Lot to someone else. The mill which has been given to the Colony by the Imperial Government is not operating. It is a good mill and should be operated for the benefit of the people on the Scheme, instead of which the padi that is grown on the Settlement is transported to other mills on the Coast to be milled by private pro-

prietors. If Bush Lot is ever to be made a success—and I hope it will be—Government must either work it on proper up-to-date lines or close it down. Government must adopt these mechanical means that would cheapen the cost of producing the rice and run the Scheme as a proper commercial venture. It is all right to say that these landlords-millers should get these threshers, but many of them would like to have them but they have not the means to do so. I know of one proprietor in Essequibo who made application to Government to finance him to get a machine of that kind, but his request was turned down. He did not ask for it as a gift. The machine would have remained the property of Government until he paid for it on the usual terms. His request was turned down. That is the kind of assistance I think Government should grant to the rice industry. Government should help to finance the purchasing of these machines and let them remain the property of Government. In Water Street there is a hire-purchase system.

The landlord-proprietors will see that they keep the padi threshed by these machines separately, and give the benefit of the better prices they would get from the rice obtained from such padi to the farmers. Every landlord would want to retain his tenants, and the better price he gives them for the rice they produce the more likely is he to retain them as tenants. The Department of Agriculture can do quite a lot in the way of educating not only the landlord-proprietor—they have helped him a lot, I say that quite frankly—but they can help others, and that should be their business. If Government would finance some of these men to bring threshers into the districts, the Department of Agriculture, through its district officers, can help to educate the farmers into the benefits they would derive from the use of such machines. They can spend the time, because it is Government's time, in proving to those people in the various districts how it would cheapen the cost, and they can prove it honestly. No nepotism is necessary.

That is the kind of thing I would like to see the Department of Agriculture doing, and then it would be assisting the rice industry. The Department has helped the sugar industry and the rice

industry, but it can do much more in the way of assisting rice by utilising the services of the Agricultural Instructors and their Assistants in the way I suggest. For two days during the reaping of the crop one man might be put on that job. You can reap the crop quicker and get better returns in the shape of rice by the use of threshers. There is less loss in threshing, less breakage and much better quality of rice produced by the mills. Then the Government would be giving real assistance to that particular industry and the Colony generally would benefit. We would get a better reputation for rice and the farmers would soon find out that their returns are better. I am speaking from practical experience. It is not an easy job. It has taken me years to prove to the farmers at my place that it is in their interest to use threshers. They realise now that the additional price they get for their rice compensates them three times over for the cost of threshing by machines.

Mr. SEAFORD: I have learned quite a lot about rice in the last two days, but I have taken the trouble to get some information on that. In view of what the hon. Member has just said about their getting a better quality of rice, one or two large rice dealers and growers with whom I discussed the matter told me that no one here was going to spend any money in getting a better quality of rice because there is no market for a better quality of rice; the market is for No. 2 and No. 3 grades, and that it is impossible for us to compete in any other market but Trinidad and other West Indian islands where the demand is for the lower grades of rice.

Professor DASH: Give better rice at a cheaper price.

Mr. SEAFORD: No matter what the price we can never compete with the better quality of rice from the East in price, and I have been told that by the Director of Agriculture. The people who grow rice realise that. I was rather taken back by the Hon. Mr. Walcott's suggestion about Government financing certain individuals, for two reasons. The first is that Government has always been accused here of not running the affairs of the Colony on business lines. The majority of the people who want assistance in these things are gentlemen with absolutely no financial stability at all. If they want financial

backing for threshers they can get a plenty of it in the Colony if they have anything behind them. Would Government put up money without any chance of getting it back? If people give security they can get threshers or any other rice machinery they desire. We have heard that Government must not compete with private firms in this Colony, and here you have a very practical case of Government competing. I know firms that deal in threshers and are prepared to give those machines on the hire-purchase system at very low rates, but they are careful to whom they give them. If it is the desire that they should be given to everybody, don't let us accuse Government of unbusinesslike methods.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I would like to ask the Director to give the Council some information in regard to the Government mill at Anna Regina. I expected quite a long speech about it, when it was put down with a flourish of trumpets, as to what it was going to do. I tried to find out on my last visit to the Coast what was happening. I do not think what I heard was reliable, but it seems to me that it has been a "wash out." I would like to hear from the Director what is being done.

Mr. ELEAZAR: As the debate proceeds one gets enlightened because the advocates of the Department are now finding out that the Department is not giving what it ought to give. I understand that this bull-mashed padi is discoloured, but the people who do the work say that is not correct, but that the grains are apt to break by the treading of the animals. The Hon. Mr. Seaford argues again and says that the people cannot get any help from Government because they have no security. If they had security would they want Government's help? They go to Government because Water Street would not help them without security. It is evident that the rice producer is anxious to put the best article on the market. He discovers that bull-mashing crushes his grain, and he does not get the first or second grade. He therefore resorts to the ancient method of beating which involves more labour but ensures him the first grade. All these things are brushed aside by the Director who says that the landlords must provide the threshers. It is because the Department that costs the Colony \$118,000

is not doing its work. The Department should be the preacher of the gospel of progress to those people.

Mr. SEAFORD: Self-help! (Laughter).

Mr. ELEAZAR: Self-help is a good gospel if they get other help.

Mr. WALCOTT: I would like to reply to the Hon. Mr. Seaford's remarks in connection with there not being a market for a better quality of rice. He has missed the point. I mentioned yesterday that a better quality rice could be produced just as cheaply as a poor quality, and when we have a market for the poor quality we would have a better market for the better, which could be sold at the same price as the poor quality. If the facilities for making the better quality are available, then the better quality can be sold to compete with the poor quality rice that comes from elsewhere, with advantage to the Colony.

With regard to my friend the hon. Member for Berbice River, I quite understand why he said yesterday that he did not know anything about it. He was rather in a maze over it. The Director was quite right when he said that the use of the bull did not only break the grains but discoloured the rice. It does both.

I quite appreciate that the capitalist would prefer to have these people coming to them for threshers or machines of any kind, but the point is that the rice-producing people have been working under very great disadvantages for the last two or three years, and especially the last two years. They have not the means of buying a thresher from one of the large firms, and, as a Member rightly said, if their financial standing is unquestionable they can get a thresher. We admit that their financial standing is questionable because of the inroads made on their bank accounts during the last two or three years, and these people are asking Government assistance to help them to produce cheaper rice. I say it is good business for Government to do that; it is a duty that Government owes that industry. The sugar industry has asked help from Government and has repaid the money quite satisfactorily. If the necessity arises to-morrow I would be the first to vote for further help to that industry.

Mr. SEAFORD: I did not suggest that Government should not assist the rice industry. Nothing was further from my thoughts. I was only refreshing the hon. Member's memory with regard to the frequent complaint that Government should conduct its business on businesslike lines.

Mr. WALCOTT: I cannot see the difference. Government has also assisted the balata industry. There comes a time in the history of industries in all parts of the world when they need a little help. I do not say that Government should blindly throw away money on the rice industry, but I say that Government can, without any actual ultimate cost to itself, give a certain amount of assistance to the industry by helping the people to acquire these mechanical devices, either through the landlord-proprietors or on communal conditions. It is not only right but it is due to the industry. If we want to keep the industry alive and make it progress it is Government's bounden duty to give assistance.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: It is rather refreshing to hear my friend the Hon. Mr. Walcott's remarks about Government helping industries, because he has several times remarked about the sugar industry. Your Excellency is well aware that while the local Government would help and would do things they are vetoed on the other side. I venture to say that if Your Excellency was allowed a free hand in Essequibo the sugar industry there would not be on the verge of extinction as it is. I have already thanked Your Excellency in this Council on behalf of the people of Essequibo for your tremendous efforts to improve conditions there, and especially to save the sugar industry, so that it is rather jarring on me when I hear the belief expressed by the Hon. Mr. Walcott as to what the Government would do. It is what the Colonial Office will do. In the heat of debates blame is repeatedly thrown on the Heads of Departments when it does not lie at their door at all. I hope when the debate does take place as the result of the Commission Your Excellency has appointed with regard to Essequibo, that the Hon. Mr. Walcott will speak and will be as ready with his vote to assist the sugar industry as he has expressed his willingness to do to-day. I repeat my request

that the Director of Agriculture should make some statement with regard to the mill at Anna Regina.

Mr. AUSTIN: I am sorry that the Hon. Mr. Seaford has left the chamber for the moment, but I think he will support the remarks I am going to make in respect of certain communications from the Colonial Secretary of Trinidad, Sir Selwyn Grier, with respect to the rice industry. But before I touch on that I should like to say that if any help is needed by the rice industry it must come from inside this Colony. We cannot expect it from the neighbouring Islands, from India or from the shipping companies. The shipping companies, as Sir Selwyn Grier told us, take rice to Trinidad, Antigua, St. Lucia, Barbados and the other Islands at a freight which practically amounts to dunnage freight. They put it on board at the cost of loading and discharging at the various ports, but they make good with sugar bags, East Indian foodstuffs, oils and other things which allow them to quote cheap rates of freight to those Islands, and they are continuing to do so. There has recently been brought into a certain part of India a scheme whereby rice is being turned out by millions of pounds, and we cannot compete with that Indian production with the cheap labour and cheap freight if we have to pay heavy dues to Government here and to the Trinidad Government also.

Sir Selwyn Grier told us when he came here that our rice is little used in Trinidad. "We are going to provide our people with cheap rice," he said, and we countered that by saying "How about your oil, lime and other things that you send here?" He replied "That is a matter of perfect indifference to Trinidad. All we want is cheap foodstuffs for our people, and that we intend to get. We are not going to permit any increase or give you any preference whatsoever while we can get from Burma and other parts of India the cheap rice we are now getting." That indicates that we are not altogether in accord with our neighbours, either in Trinidad, Barbados or other parts of the Caribbean. We are a large Colony and we should make them toe the line. We should make their schooners pay tonnage dues and Trinidad should be made to pay on such things as they market here in

order to counterbalance the concessions which they deny a Colony to which they export more than they import from. I know it is difficult for any Administration to suggest means by which such things might be properly regulated, but I am convinced, and I think I am right, that this Colony does not get a fair deal from the neighbouring Islands who use this Colony as a dumping ground for quite a lot of their products.

Mr. ELEAZAR: You will remember how very often I have stated in this House that the cheap freight rates on rice from Burma and other parts of India affect this Colony, and that although rice from India takes six weeks to get to Trinidad it is sold there cheaper than our rice which only takes 36 hours. The people of Trinidad are out to get their rice cheap, no matter from where, and they do not care who is injured. What has Government done to checkmate such a thing? Government has created a Rice Marketing Board to prevent people going to Trinidad to sell their rice cheap, and Trinidad continues to buy Indian rice. The people of this Colony appear to be without brains. If Government cannot deal with the shipping companies it should allow the people to take their rice to Trinidad and sell it as cheap as they can. I have been told over and over again by an East Indian rice miller, who is not a fool, that the Rice Marketing Board has ruined the whole business. Trinidad is using it against the Colony. Their excuse is that they cannot take our rice all the time because when they want it they may not be able to get it.

Mr. WALCOTT: When it comes to the question of marketing rice I am told that the Trinidad people have stated that they would like to see a single-seller established. They would like to see the Rice Marketing Board, or some organisation controlled by the Marketing Board, selling all the rice instead of having the sales in so many hands as at present. If a single-seller could be established they would make a definite agreement with this Colony to buy a certain percentage of their requirements in British Guiana. They would guarantee this Colony a quota of their requirements, and a very substantial quota; in fact a larger quantity than they would take from India. We cannot get

away from facts, and we must realise that if Trinidad or the West Indies had depended entirely on us for their rice supplies during the last 15 or 16 months they would have been in a pretty mess. We had not the rice to give them. We are not producing sufficient rice to supply the West Indian demand. Even in our boom year we did not produce sufficient rice to supply all the West Indies, including the French and Danish islands. Until we get to that point we must expect Indian rice to be taken by Trinidad, and we must face the world's market.

The Hon. Mr. Austin talked about forcing Trinidad's hands to give us a special preference by putting a special duty on their gasoline and lime, which is reasonable. Many years ago I suggested that to Government and we tried to do it, but the Imperial Government would not give us permission to make a special agreement with Trinidad. It is commonsense to understand that the Colonial Secretary of Trinidad is not going to play the game for British Guiana; he is going to do so for the Colony to which he is attached. His idea is the cheapest cost of living for Trinidad. We, on the other hand, have to think of our Colony, and if we can do anything to force Trinidad into giving us a reciprocal preference it would be well, but the hand we have to force is that of the Secretary of State. He put the "kibosh" on it the last time; he told us of the Ottawa Conference. Although the Canadian Treaty allowed us to make inter-colonial contracts, the Ottawa Conference two years ago prohibited it. As long as we are going to borrow money from the Imperial Government we are going to be in the position of having a boss away from the Colony. A pauper cannot be independent. That is our unfortunate position to-day, and it is getting worse every day.

The hon. Member for Western Essequibo talked about responsibility. I never suggested that the responsibility was with the local Government. If the Government is in London then the responsibility lies there. All this Government can do is to make recommendations. Therefore I was quite correct in saying it was the duty of Government to do all it could, and its duty is to make recommendations to the Secretary of State. The position will never be better unless we make a

serious effort, first of all, to try and pull together; not to help one industry but every industry we think will be a possible asset to the Colony, and to try to make our budget balance. We have a lot of "ists" in the Department of Agriculture. What I would like to see and would willingly vote for is an Economist, not only for the Department of Agriculture but for other Departments.

Professor DASH: We have travelled a long way from threshers, but before replying to the hon. Member for Western Essequibo I would like to say that the Hon. Mr. Walcott absolutely supports my contention that we have to go on improving the quality of our rice if we are to retain our markets and quote reasonable prices, and he agrees with me that the best persons to handle communal threshers are the landlords. With regard to the rice mill at Anna Regina, it was given by the Colonial Development Committee for experimental purposes primarily, and afterwards to be used, if necessary, in a commercial way. We have been experimenting with the production of white rice in order to widen our market, and I think those Members who have seen the white rice turned out will appreciate that the mill is capable of turning out excellent rice. The position of the white rice market is that it is much worse than the parboiled rice market, and, as the Hon. Mr. Walcott pointed out, our restricted supply during the past years has not permitted us to go further afield. We are not actually producing it at the moment on account of the flood and drought last year. Until the position clarifies a bit I do not think we would be justified in turning out white rice commercially. The mill is fundamentally sound and quite capable of training out a good grade white rice. We are not running it commercially at the moment. Any mill-owner or landlord, or any person interested in rice in Essequibo, is quite at liberty to make application for the use of the mill at any time, and we would make suitable terms. We will continue to feel out the markets, but at the present moment the position is that we have not enough rice to fulfil our parboiled rice demands. We are trying out white rice with some of our new varieties.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: What I would

like to know is whether this mill is only capable of turning out white rice.

Professor DASH: It will turn out parboiled rice, but there will have to be certain adjustments made in order to get the best returns. It is a new type of mill and no one has experience of it, therefore we have to feel our way as we go along.

Mr. WALCOTT: We have excellent Engleberg hullers which turn out both kinds of rice.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have had an excellent discussion. The question of assisting rice-growers with threshers all hinges on the general position of the rice industry, and I hope to have an opportunity of discussing it with the big people in the business.

Item passed.

Item 4—Library and Publications, \$1,670.

Mr. AUSTIN: The actual expenditure in 1933 was \$949. I think the annual report of the Department is somewhat lengthy and might be reduced somewhat. I think it might follow along the lines of other Departmental reports.

Professor DASH: This item does not include the printing of the Departmental reports. The point about this is that the publication of the Journal was stopped as an economy measure, and we resumed publication last year. That is why the difference is shown as compared with 1933. We cut it down and Members asked Government to resume publication of the Journal.

Mr. ELEAZAR: What was the \$949 for in 1933?

Professor DASH: The running of the Library and publications. We also published certain bulletins.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I was never in favour of the discontinuance of the Journal, and I spoke very strongly against it. I have always read the Journal with great interest. It is a very valuable production and we ought to feel proud of it. No other place in the West Indies produces a

better Agricultural Journal than this Colony.

Item passed.

Item 10—Provision and Maintenance of Scientific Apparatus and Equipment, \$1,750.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I move that the item be reduced to \$1,000 unless it can be explained how is it that the Department wants the same sum that was voted last year.

Professor DASH: You cannot have a scientific staff without regular provision of apparatus and maintenance of it, and also chemicals. When Mr. Stockdale was inquiring into the working of the Department he commended us very highly on keeping this item so low. The expenditure in other places is twice or thrice as much, and a comment like that coming from Mr. Stockdale is something that one appreciates.

Mr. ELEAZAR: That is not a very good reason. A gentleman comes from abroad and tells you that the amount is very small and you proceed to increase it.

THE CHAIRMAN: The vote includes the purchase of chemicals and of apparatus used in the laboratory. The hon. Member must realise that if it is a question of buying apparatus it would not be sufficient.

Item passed.

Item 11.—Botanic Gardens, Maintenance of, \$4,500.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I feel I will get the support of Members if I move that this item be increased to \$5,000. I think every Member of the Council and the people of the Colony generally have nothing but praise for the way in which the Gardens are kept, whatever criticisms we make as regards the Department of Agriculture. This is one of the few items on which we are spending less money to-day than we have spent for a number of years. I think if we increased it by \$500 it would be \$500 well spent.

Mr. CANNON: I do not know whether any support is necessary. The Gardens

are just on the border of my constituency, but I would like to support the suggestion because I think it would be money well spent, and it can only be spent on labour.

THE CHAIRMAN: I appreciate the hon. Member's recommendation that the vote be increased because, if I remember correctly, the vote for the upkeep of the Gardens was decreased a few years ago in view of the necessity for economy. We might very well need a little more now, and I think the money can be well spent. I am quite willing to accept the suggestion that the item be increased to \$5,000.

Mr. ELEAZAR: We might increase it a little bit more. The Garden in New Amsterdam was taken away, and I suppose the Director will say that Government has no money. I suggest that a small sum be added so as to allow the Garden in New Amsterdam to be resuscitated. It was demolished by the Director when he came to the Colony.

Professor DASH: The matter came up last year and it was felt that the Garden in New Amsterdam came under the same category as the Municipal Garden in Georgetown, and that Government should divorce itself from it. Certainly no garden would be demolished by me; I am too fond of flowers, but we had very small support from New Amsterdam in connection with their Gardens. The hon. Member brings up the question every year, and Government has taken it up with the New Amsterdam Town Council and asked them for a little assistance. We are quite prepared to give supervision if we can get any help from them, but they have shown no interest beyond making complaints. Nevertheless, during last year something more was done and a few more beds brought into cultivation. I must impress upon the people in New Amsterdam that it is not sufficient merely to say that Government must do it; they must help us.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I certainly protest against that remark. On his arrival in the Colony and before he had even visited Berbice, the Director of Agriculture suggested that the Garden in New Amsterdam should be demolished and a lawn made. I protested and that year he did not succeed, but the next year he succeeded. Last year I protested to Sir Edward

Denham, pointing out that in cases of death there were no flowers to be got for wreaths. The Governor gave the assurance that the matter would be looked after. Previous to that, when the Governor was expected to visit Berbice an attempt was made to plant flowers. The suggestion that the Municipality should help was made by the Municipality asking that Government should give them the money they asked for. Government said it could not give them.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I have no doubt that the Director will be able to find some money out of the additional vote to help the Garden in New Amsterdam.

Item increased to \$5,000.

Item 12—Upkeep of Government Gardens and Grounds, \$1,400.

Mr. CANNON: I wish to point out that the *antidesma* pest is getting beyond control, and I certainly think some provision should be made on these estimates whereby the Director of Agriculture might attempt at any rate to stamp it out. I refer particularly to the piece of land at D'Urban Park adjoining the Botanic Gardens. I see very great danger of its getting into the Gardens. If it gets there it is goodbye to the flowers.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think it should be made a separate item as special expenditure.

Professor DASH: It might be put under item 21.

Item 14—Experiment Stations—Demerara, \$6,000; Essequibo, \$2,500; Berbice, \$1,500; North West District, \$2,756, \$12,756.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I would like to get some explanation of this item. The explanatory note says:—"Reduced by the equivalent of wages of Agricultural Instructor—See Sub-head 1, (18)."

Professor DASH: We have advanced a foreman who used to be paid his weekly wage from one of these votes. We have simply reduced the vote under this particular Head in order to make his pay a little more substantial.

Item passed.

Item 16—Livestock-Purchase and Maintenance of, \$5,375.

Mr. CANNON: I would like to be told whether the vote of \$5,375 was expended last year, and the number of animals.

Professor DASH: It will be expended. We have imported more animals and established a Livestock Centre at Leguan. There will be practically no saving.

Mr. CANNON: I take it that a formal question will obtain what I want.

Mr. WALCOTT: I take this opportunity of suggesting once more the advisability of Government establishing a stock farm. Government has an excellent officer, a man whom we all appreciate, and here is a high-class man attending to a few cows, pigs and chickens. It is ridiculous. I believe he feels the necessity of doing more. He told me indirectly that he would be of much more value to the Colony if he were given the opportunity of running a stock farm. There is a stock farm in Trinidad which is a credit to that Colony. It is a revenue-earning Department which saves the Government of Trinidad a considerable sum of money every year by supplying milk and other things to the institutions. The sooner this Government realises that the establishment of a Government Stock Farm would be an asset to the Colony the better. We have been told that we do not make helpful suggestions. Government would save a considerable sum of money every year if it made full use of this officer's services by acquiring land and establishing a stock farm. It is several years since I first made the suggestion, but no notice has been taken of it. By investing \$75,000 Government would save between \$20,000 and \$25,000.

Mr. CANNON: I do not wish to support my friend with figures because I have not gone into them, but I do wish to associate myself with the remarks he has made about the necessity for a Government Stock Farm. I may tell you that our late Governor invited me to be associated with a small Committee. Committees are things I have no use for, and why I consented I do not know. My report has been sent in, but I have not even been thanked.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I would like to support

the suggestion. I was told not very long ago by a very responsible Government officer that Government could have had all the horses it required if it had a stock farm.

Professor DASH: I think we all appreciate the remarks of the hon. Member about the stock farm. In the re-organisation scheme I drew up I made a strong bid for a stock farm. The matter has been under consideration since then and Sir Edward Denham was very anxious to have it. One or two Committees sat on it, and the question of the site, cost and everything were very carefully gone into. The whole matter then turned on the question of expenditure, whether we could afford the capital involved and so on. The Hon. Mr. Walcott said we could make money out of milk, but it must not be forgotten that we are going to put out of commission a large number of East Indians who are making a living out of that industry, and the question is whether a stock farm would be able to compete with them. I am not saying that against the farm, which I think would be useful. The matter was put to the Secretary of State who said he was unable at the moment to help in respect of the financial commitments.

The Committee adjourned for the luncheon recess.

Professor DASH: When the Committee adjourned I was explaining that we had gone into the question of a stock farm but that the Secretary of State found that he was unable to give us the capital expenditure. On further representations he agreed to give us a Revolving Fund—I think it is £1,500—to enable us to purchase pure-bred bulls which would be available for livestock ranchers and others who wanted their services. That marked a step forward in our efforts to do something for the beef industry. That is a thing we have been working up in a small way at the Government Stock Farm, and with a considerable measure of success, as hon. Members know, with the class of animal now being used in the country for milk production. While we have not a large farm we have been able to show some progress as regards our dairy cattle.

Mr. CANNON: The Director referred

to a Government Stock Farm. Where is it?

Professor DASH: I said Farm for the want of a better term. It is a Farm of limited size where we have about a dozen bulls, a number of pure-bred pigs, several pens of poultry and small stock.

Mr. CANNON: Where is it?

Professor DASH: At the back of D'Urban Park adjoining the Experiment Station. Some of the animals are stationed in the country. We have not been able to do very much in the way of beef bulls with this vote.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I am glad to be able to say of my own knowledge that the pig industry has benefited tremendously by the importation of the pedigree boars and sows.

Item passed.

Item 17—Grants in aid of Agricultural Associations, Exhibitions and Competitions, \$1,000.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I believe we are going to have an Exhibition this year, and that the Committee that was appointed early last year has held several meetings. I happen to be a member of the Committee which made strong representations to Your Excellency that Government's contribution to the contemplated Exhibition was totally inadequate. We pared down the prize list as much as possible without making it a farce to offer prizes, and we also did our best in order to get subscriptions towards the Exhibition. I ask if it is not possible for Government to give a larger contribution. It is something which I think is going to benefit the Colony. It is a number of years since we have had such an Exhibition in Georgetown. We do not expect it to be an Exhibition run entirely by the Government with regard to finances. I remember that Government formerly gave a Cup for racing. That has been dropped.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I have had a lot to do with those Shows in the past. The Agricultural Societies got a bonus from the Department of Agriculture, and I think they got altogether much more than \$1,000. So that if there is to be a large Exhibition in Georgetown this year, and

it is the intention of Government to assist, the Director should address his mind to that, or when the time comes he will have to get a supplementary vote.

Professor DASH: As the hon. Member for Western Essequibo has pointed out, we had a great deal of trouble when this Exhibition was first mooted, because of the fact that we did not see our way to get the funds. Government said there were no funds available and we appreciated that at the time. Nevertheless, a great deal of time was given to the consideration of every detail in respect of the proposed Exhibition which would have involved almost every activity of agriculture and handicraft. The discussion kept on until finally there was no way out of it, and I made the suggestion that I would endeavour last year to run a purely Agricultural Exhibition, and to run it as far as I could on what votes we had, endeavouring to get prizes and donations from some of the firms interested, and when the gate receipts were thrown in an account would be presented, and if there was any difference it could be made good. Sir Edward Denham readily accepted that proposal, and those are the lines along which we are working at the moment. It is rather a difficult matter to say off-hand just how much would be required, but the Board of Agriculture will meet shortly. We have a catalogue of exhibits practically in readiness, and we want to get it out right away and distribute it. I suggest that we should continue on those lines and at the end we will be able to see what the total cost will be, and if there is any difference we could ask the Council to meet it. If that is the wish of the Council we can continue to work on those lines.

Mr. CANNON: I wish to throw in my lot with the suggestion that if there is to be an Exhibition it should be an Exhibition and not a farce. I am not in a position to say how much it will take to run an Exhibition, but I am satisfied that \$1,000 is not going to do it. I am not enamoured with the method suggested by the Director of Agriculture because, as I have said before, this is our chance to take all we can get. It may be that by the time the Exhibition is held and we discover that we want £500 more, our god-fathers in England will have arrived at their senses and may say we must not have any more money. I am urging that

we vote a sum that is likely to make the Exhibition a success. I do not like to see the entrance fees made so high as to contemplate paying the expenses out of the proceeds. People cannot afford to pay much to go in.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I have some experience of Shows, and I can say that this sum is a bagatelle for a Colony Show. I do not think the Colony can go begging Water Street for donations. I suggest that the amount be increased to \$2,500.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would like to be able to accept the hon. Member's recommendation in this connection, but we have already added something to this vote, and we propose to add \$1,000 for a very useful object. It is better that this matter should wait until we are nearer the time. I am hoping that a certain amount of the expenditure will be covered by voluntary subscription, and until Government knows what the cost will be I think it is better that the item remain as it is. I am sure there will be more money forthcoming later if it is necessary. I do not think it is justifiable to increase this item.

Item passed as printed.

Item 21—Plant Pests Preventive Measures, \$300.

Mr. CANNON: I suggest that this item be increased to \$1,300.

Question put, and agreed to.

Item 23—Soil Surveys, \$400.

Mr. ELEAZAR: What are these soil surveys?

THE CHAIRMAN: Very valuable work.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Only discovered this year?

Professor DASH: It used to be under Special Expenditure.

Item 26—Travelling Expenses of Colony's Representative at the Third International Congress of Soil Science, \$216.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I move that this item be struck out. There is no country in the West Indies where soil conditions are

the same as in British Guiana. In Trinidad the difficulty is to keep water on the surface of the soil. Here it is difficult to keep it off the land. Although it is only a small sum it is only a holiday for some body.

Professor DASH: This is not a West Indian Conference; it is a Congress that is held periodically in England. We all know what a tremendous amount of importance has been attached in recent years to soil survey work, and the idea of this Congress is that soil workers from all parts of the Empire and also foreign workers should meet and discuss their problems and share one another's views so that they may become more enlightened. The information they get must naturally be of tremendous benefit to them in their respective Colonies. This sum is not for paying any officer's passage but merely for travelling while attending the Congress and incidental expenses. The officer will be on leave at the time, and a certain amount of travelling and visiting of soil institutions and research stations will be undertaken. It has been urged on us by the authorities in England, and I certainly recommend it very fully in view of the importance of our soil survey work here.

Mr. ELEAZAR: When I go on holiday I have to pay out of my own pocket, and I take care to visit Law Courts, Legislative Councils and schools, and I see everything I can possibly see at my own expense. When Government officers go on leave and get education which would be of benefit to them why shouldn't they pay their travelling? The reason given is not good enough.

Mr. AUSTIN: May I suggest that the officer referred to by the Director put in an honour certificate for the amount he spends in connection with his visits to the various institutions, and that the matter be dealt with on Supplementary Estimate?

Mr. CANNON: It is very risky to give him an open cheque. (Laughter).

Professor DASH: This estimate has been supplied to us by the Secretary of State showing what it would cost. If the money is not needed it will not be expended.

Mr. AUSTIN: That is all the more reason why the officer should put in an honour certificate and he would be refunded what he has spent.

Item passed.

EAST COAST SEA DEFENCES.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I ask your permission, sir, to refer to a matter of grave importance. I read something very disconcerting in The "Daily Argosy" this morning. The report states:—

"A few yards of the extreme western end of the recently reconstructed concrete wall stretching in sections from Annandale west to Buxton has been partly demolished by the pounding of the waves."

I gather that the new wall at Nog Eens has been partly demolished by the waves this spring tide. If that is not cause for grave alarm I do not know what is. Government was warned in this Council two months ago that this wall would last only six months, but within three months it has been partly demolished. I think Government would have very good reason to have an inquiry held, perhaps by the Sea Defence Board itself. Government seems not to have taken any heed of the complaints. It seems that something is radically wrong.

Professor DASH: Before the Director of Public Works replies I would like to extend a hearty welcome to Members of the Council who may be in Georgetown during the next few days to visit the new headquarters of the Department of Agriculture. I think there will be things of interest for them to see if they can find the time.

Major CRAIG (Director of Public Works): The reference of the hon. Member to the paragraph in the "Argosy" is a case, I think, of a little knowledge being a dangerous thing. I saw the paragraph and rather wondered at the origin of it. I may state that the piece of wall that has collapsed is an old section of wall which was under-pinned in an effort to save it, but owing to the erosion and the heavy wave action that piece of wall was abandoned, and on Monday it was completely cut off on my instructions and allowed to collapse. That is the bottom of the story that our hon. friend has so graphically described as being a wanton waste.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would suggest to the hon. Member that before he causes anxiety he should ask questions about these things.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I only saw it in the newspaper and I drew attention to it.

Major CRAIG: I suggest that the hon. Member visit the site.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I have been there once or twice and given advice, but it was not taken. (Laughter).

GOVERNMENT ANALYST'S DEPARTMENT.

Item 1a—Government Analyst (\$3,600), \$3,600.

Mr. AUSFIN: As regards a reduction of the charge for the testing of sugar Your Excellency promised to go into the matter, but there has been no reduction made and I feel sure that this Department is losing revenue by the very heavy charge insisted upon. The testing of these samples compares very favourably with the results from Canadian and London refiners, and is most useful to the estates in this Colony, but the charge of \$1.20 for one sample is extraordinarily high. The result is that we only send samples when our chemist is somewhat doubtful as to whether they should be tested or not, and instead of half a dozen per week we send about one a fortnight. Your Excellency promised some time ago to go into the matter. I do not think it costs very much as the container is supplied by the estate, and if a reasonable charge of say half a crown is made the estates would send more samples and more revenue would be available to the Department.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. P. W. King): This matter was raised about four or five months ago and brought before the Governor in Council. I am informed by the Analyst that the fee of \$1.20 is not an excessive one. These tests take time. A certain amount of chemicals and expensive apparatus have to be used. I daresay the matter will be reconsidered, but I do not know whether there will be any better results.

Mr. SEAFORD: What test is the Analyst referring to in this case, polarisation? The actual test of sugar does not take two minutes, and the quantity of

chemicals used does not cost more than two cents.

Mr. AUSTIN: When the fee went to the officer doing the test it was half what it is now, but when Government took the fee away from the Analyst it was raised by 100 per cent.

Mr. ELEAZAR: When milk samples are taken for the purpose of bringing cases the defendants are made to pay the Analyst's fee. The fee of 90 cents for analysing a pint of milk is excessive.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will look into the matter again. I am not quite sure what the position is, whether it has been reduced or increased.

Item passed.

Item 1*d*—Laboratory Assistant (\$480 by \$48 to \$960), \$480.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I think something might be done here. I do not know this officer at all. I understand he is a Science scholar who was taken on as a probationer, and after six years he is now getting \$480. I observe that he has to work 10 years more before he gets \$80 per month.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I happen to know the youngster, and I think I am right in saying that at the present moment he is also doing analytical work. My information is that he got that appointment by reason of his qualification, and that if he did not have that qualification he would not have obtained it. Although he has been there six years he is drawing the minimum salary while in other cases when a new post is created the officer starts with two years' increments. In this case the officer is not on the Fixed Establishment after six years' service in a scientific post.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The officer was classed before this year as a Clerical Assistant drawing \$30 per month. Therefore by putting him at \$480 we have given him an increase of \$10 per month on his salary which he had been pressing for for some time. We had to create a special post for him. If he had remained in the clerical position he would have had to wait a long time. I have had one in my office who waited eight years for

promotion. The only thing to do is to put some more people at the top and then we would be able to promote some people more rapidly. I understand from the Analyst that he has no qualification but only experience in the particular post.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I think the Colonial Secretary has strengthened our case when he said that this post was created and the officer was given an increase of \$10 per month which he had been clamouring for for a long time. It seems to me that he should have had it long ago, and if that is so there is justification in asking for some further consideration. I know he has not got any service but he was a Science scholar.

Item passed.

Item 5—Gas and Electrical heating, \$270.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that this item be increased to \$300. It is proposed to get an electric refrigerator which is a very necessary apparatus. In addition the Department supplies the Post Office with distilled water. There has been a lot of correspondence over that, and if we are to continue to do it it will mean increased cost of electric heating.

Question put, and agreed to.

MILITIA.

Item 1*b*—Arms Cleaners (1 at \$360; 1 at \$270; 1 at \$216), \$846.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move that this item be amended to read as follows:—

1*b*—Arms Cleaners (1 at \$360; 1 at \$300; 1 at \$216), \$876.

Question put, and agreed to.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move the insertion of the following new item:—

16—Purchase of a Lawn Mower, \$500.

The mower is required for keeping the Parade Ground at Eve Leary in order. Hon. Members will appreciate the condition in which the ground has been kept during the last few years. It has certainly improved health conditions in that part of

the City. The lawn mower, which is 9 years old, has collapsed. The order will not be placed through the Crown Agents but with a local firm. (Laughter).

Question put, and agreed to.

Item 17a—Bandmaster, \$1,680.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I have been looking through these estimates but I do not see the small sum of \$180 which used to be given to the Band in New Amsterdam. At first it was an ordinary drum and fife Band, but as the result of private subscription it is now a brass Band. Before the Band was established the Militia men went on route marches through the town whistling, which was a farce. It seems to me that everything for New Amsterdam has to be begged for. We have to resort to painful extraction.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am not quite sure about it but I will have the matter looked into. I think the vote referred to by the hon. Member was for music and instruments for the Band in New Amsterdam. That has now been absorbed in item 20 which has been increased from \$50 to \$500. If the Band had it last year it will have it this year.

Mr. CANNON: When are we going to get a new Bandmaster?

THE CHAIRMAN: We have had applications, but we have not yet heard who has been chosen.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move the insertion of the following item:—

23—Passages to Colony of Bandmaster and family, \$500.

Question put, and agreed to.

PENSIONS AND GRATUITIES.

Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer): I beg to move the insertion of the following item:—

14—Gratuity to Miss M. Hamer, Un certificated Assistant Teacher, \$120.

This teacher has served over 26 years and has been found by the Medical Board to be unfit for further service. She is not entitled by law to any gratuity, but it has

been decided to give her if the Council will approve of it.

Question put, and agreed to.

SUBVENTIONS, ETC., MUNICIPAL.

Item I—Estimated rates on Government Property, \$53,595.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move that this item be increased to \$56,383.

Question put, and agreed to.

Item 3—Contribution towards maintenance of Roads and Streets, \$20,000.

Mr. WIGHT: I ask that this item be increased to \$55,000 in view of the fact that Government collects all the licences for vehicular traffic on the roads, which it is not entitled to. It is a matter of grave importance and I am very serious about it. If I were in the chair as Mayor I would leave the roads of the City to be maintained by Government if Government did not increase its subvention. It might be said that the Municipality would not be doing its duty, but it is an important legal question.

THE CHAIRMAN: Representations have been made to the Secretary of State in this and other matters connected with the Municipality, and the time has now arrived when Government considers that some addition should be made to the subvention to the Municipality. The matter is now under consideration.

Item passed.

Item 9—Moiety of cost of maintenance of Roads and Streets, \$5,200.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I ask Government to consider New Amsterdam as well. Government gets all the licences from the 'buses, especially those with double rear wheels, which play havoc with the roads. The New Amsterdam Town Council can only spend a very small sum on the upkeep of its roads because of its limited finances. Government takes all the licences and contributes half of the cost of maintaining the roads. Government can collect all the licences but it should give us a little more for the upkeep of the roads.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am quite certain

that Government will not be allowed to neglect New Amsterdam.

Mr. SEAFORD: I am glad to learn that double wheels do more damage to the roads than single ones.

Mr. ELEAZAR: They do not save the New Amsterdam roads.

Item passed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move the insertion of the following item:—

11—Contribution towards the Imperial Agricultural Bureau and the Imperial Economic and Shipping Committee, \$528.

Question put, and agreed to.

Item 20—Recruitment and Training of Officers for Colonial Agricultural Departments, \$452.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: As the result of the motion passed by the Council yesterday, I beg to move that this item be increased to \$759.

Question put, and agreed to.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Item 2—Public Printing, regulated by Contract, \$30,500.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that this item be carried out at \$36,000. The Printing Contract expired at the end of last year and new tenders were called for. Opportunity was taken to include in the call for tenders the printing of the Debates of the Council and other small matters which were covered last year to the extent of \$31,500. When we called for tenders only one tender was received, and that for \$36,000, and Government had no option but to accept it.

Mr. AUSTIN: It is scandalous, appalling. I did not realise that it would be increased at all. I thought it might be reduced, and it should be reduced. I wish to refer to two matters, and Item 14 might be considered as well. I looked through the *Official Gazette* published in October or November and there were two items which caught my eyes more particularly. One was the

publication of a list of the officials of the Colony which cost \$800. Is it necessary to have a list of the officials of the Colony published in these particularly hard times? The Reports issued by the various Departments are too elaborate and far too expensive for this Colony which, as the hon. Member for Georgetown North has often said, is on the dole. We have far too many of these documents duplicated, and they become, so far as I am concerned, waste paper. My breath was taken away when I heard that another \$6,000 was to be added to this heavy vote. We are bound to pass it, but the sooner Government adopts the suggestion made some four or five years ago of establishing a Government Printery the better.

Mr. SEAFORD: Did I understand the Colonial Secretary to say that it was the only tender and Government had no option? If the only tender was for \$100,000 what would Government have done in the matter?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I might explain that the tender is on a slightly different basis because it includes overtime which we had to pay for rush work, such as the printing of the minutes of the Council which has to be done overnight. There has been an actual increase not of \$6,000 because other things have been included besides overtime. I think we paid \$31,000 last year. The printing of the Civil Service List is a small matter costing about \$500. The printing of Regulations is also a minor matter. With regard to the printing of Reports I do not think we would save very much by curtailing them. The largest items are the printing of the Debates of the Council, legislation and Ordinances. We have received one tender and we have to carry on. Even if we do start a Government Printery it would not help us now. We had to accept the tender. I do not think we would save very much. The matter was gone into very carefully by a Committee that sat and so far as I am aware the Departmental Reports have been considerably curtailed in recent years. Instructions have been issued to that effect, but some of them require long tables to be attached in order to be of any value.

Mr. SEAFORD: I take it that Government has entered into the contract. I would like to know for how long.

THE CHAIRMAN: The term of the contract is five years, and Government can give three months notice of cancellation at any time.

Mr. AUSTIN: Even then the Committee considered \$30,000 far too high. It takes my breath away to have this thing thrust upon us. I do not know that we can afford to add \$5,500 to the cost of printing. It is a colossal sum.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not wish to cause unnecessary alarm, but Government was very concerned at this sudden rise in the Printing Contract although certain things are included in it. There is no doubt that the time will come when Government will have seriously to consider the establishment of a Government printing office. We have gone into the matter and I feel we can save a considerable sum of money by doing so, but the time has not yet arrived. The matter will be very thoroughly gone into in the light of this sudden demand and the fact of only receiving one tender.

Mr. SMELLIE: When the contract expires again we should be afforded more time to consider the tender whether it is one or more. On this occasion there was no time at all. Government had a pistol held at its head and had to accept the tender. We should have had at least six or 12 months to consider the contract.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Does the contract include the printing of Departmental Reports?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, all Reports.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Departmental Reports for 1933 were issued in July or August, 1934. I do not know what use they are. It seems to be that it is done purposely by all the Departments.

Mr. WIGHT: Perhaps you will allow me, sir, to make a few remarks, which may be considered bad form on my part. It happens that I am Chairman of "The Argosy" Co. who are the contractors. I am highly amused. It is just what I have always said here—everybody dabbling into something that they know absolutely nothing about. If it is considered such a remunerative contract why doesn't somebody else come forward? It has never paid

"The Argosy" Co. a ha'penny profit. We expect to make something. The outlay is far too much. We are perfectly willing to sell Government the plant. We distribute between \$60,000 and \$70,000 a year in labour. We do not get anything in duty free, and we have a lot of trouble with the Customs. Government used to pay the "Chronicle" separately for printing the Debates but they could not do it and Government had to go back to "The Argosy." As regards the establishment of a Government printery there is one person who would be delighted in seeing that. Government will find that it cannot do it.

Question put, and agreed to.

Item 6—Hindi Examinations, \$70.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that the item be increased to \$100 in order to pay the fees of the examiners.

Question put, and agreed to.

Item 21—Printing B.G. Civil Service List, \$5.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that this item be deleted.

Question put, and agreed to.

Item 25—Crown Agents charges on store purchases (including commission, inspection and marine insurance), \$5,000.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I ask that this item be allowed to stand over in view of my motion dealing with supplies through the Crown Agents.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is no reason why the item should not be passed. The debate will take place on the hon. Member's motion.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I see there has been an enormous increase.

Item passed.

Item 29—Expenses in connexion with the celebration in the Colony to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of His Majesty's accession to the Throne, \$2,400.

Mr. CANNON: Has Government any

idea of what it expects to get for \$2,400. It seems to me it is only playing with the situation. Why not put a sum on the estimate that will give some result?

Mr. ELEAZAR: I would like to support that. There are some Members here who must have some recollection of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The Georgetown Municipality alone will put that sum on its estimates. If Government is going to do anything it should do it properly. Government will have to give the Village Councils some money to decorate the villages.

Mr. SEAFORD: I remember 1897 and that the greater portion of the decorations was done by private enterprise. No place will rejoice more than this Colony, but it boils down to this: where are we going to get the money? When we met to go into the Estimates we found that they were increased. In this case the only reason why more money is wanted is to make more of a show. I do not think we need carry our loyalty on our coat sleeves. We have to cut our coats according to our cloth. We do it with just the same sincerity as any other Colony which can better afford it.

THE CHAIRMAN: I may say that when we received the despatch from the Secretary of State about the celebrations we were informed that His Majesty the King had expressed the wish that the Colonies should not spend a lot of money in celebrating the occasion but should try to keep their expenditure as low as possible. I anticipated the suggestion of my friend the hon. Member for Georgetown North and suggested to the Secretary of State that we should spend as much as we cared but he limited it to £500.

Mr. CANNON: I move that the item be struck out as being absolutely inadequate, and that the Secretary of State be so informed.

Item passed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move the insertion of the following item:—

29—Contribution towards the cost of maintenance of graves of soldiers from British Guiana killed in the Great War, \$363.

Question put, and agreed to.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move the insertion of the following item:—

30—Maintenance Expenditure Kilmarnock-Springlands Empolder, \$700.

This Kilmarnock-Springlands Empolder was started in 1931 as an unemployment relief work, with the idea of taking in some 30,000 acres of Crown land lying to the rear of Plns. Kilmarnock and Springlands on the Corentyne. The work involved the construction of a dam along the back of the third depth of the estates, a distance of 21 miles, with the necessary sluices, culverts, etc. The work was proceeded with and completed in 1931 at a cost of \$57,500 which was met from Unemployment Relief grants. It was hoped that the scheme would prove useful for agriculture in Berbice, and, as the result of a petition in 1931 signed by over 3,000 rice farmers asking that rice lands within the empolder be made available for occupation by lease, the matter was gone into and it was decided in 1932 to establish an agricultural settlement within the area. To empolder and lay out 10-acre lots in the area of 3,000 acres now known as the Phillipi-Macedonia plot, and to dig a main drainage trench and throw up dams cost \$30,000, making a total of \$87,500 which has been spent on this scheme. The lots were laid out and were duly advertised and put up for sale, with the unfortunate result that only five persons took up lots. The intention was to lay out 300 10-acre lots and to lease preferent claims to the lots at an upset price of \$30, charging a rent of \$2 per acre to cover maintenance. Very few of the lots were taken up, and there the matter remains.

At the beginning of last year there was a flood and the Empolder was very greatly damaged. A report was obtained on it, and it was seen that unless we propose to abandon the whole of the \$87,000 something would have to be done. Government has been in communication with the Secretary of State in the matter, and until a decision is arrived at it is considered necessary to employ a watchman to look after the place. The District Commissioner of Berbice has been going very carefully into the matter, and he considers

that something might be done with the Block, but it will take some time to arrive at a definite decision. In the meanwhile I ask that this amount of \$700 be put on the estimate in order to protect the property. I think yesterday the hon. Member for Eastern Berbice referred to this Empolder and said that in his opinion the terms offered in the first instance were not attractive enough to induce rice planters to take up these lands. That is a matter that is well worth considering. Perhaps if we could give them more attractive terms they may be induced to go there. The amount spent on the scheme is a large one, and Government hesitates to abandon the project until it is absolutely satisfied that there is no hope for it. I hope that if Government reconsiders the terms on the lines suggested by the hon. Member, people may be induced to go and settle there.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I do not wish to oppose the amount by any means, notwithstanding the fact that I had warned Government earlier that it was embarking on a white elephant and should cut its loss. It is true that very few people did bid at the sale, and the Colonial Secretary might have told the Council what was the offer made. It was 25 cents for a 10-acre plot. When the auctioneer asked the bidder if he was making fun he replied that it was not worth more. Government has fenced the area to keep out cattle that have been there for years. You cannot keep cattle from grass when the surrounding country has nothing at all, or from a dry spot when all around is water. There is a single dam to empolder a large savannah. Some of the most depraved people, with the aid of the Police in some instances, take people's cattle by droves from the land to the Pound. I intend to discuss the matter with the District Commissioner because it seems hard that Government should throw away \$87,000, but whether Government will take my advice is another matter. It is wrong that as a sort of reprisal because people would not take up the lots Government should encourage stray-catchers to take their cattle to the Pound.

Mr. SEAFORD: I have mentioned before now about wild-cat schemes, and I think this is one of them. Government refers to this as an unemployment relief

work. I think it is well known in this Colony that as regards agricultural labourers there is really no unemployment. There never has been. Unemployment exists in the City with respect to carpenters, painters and labourers, but not in respect of agricultural labourers. I therefore cannot see what object Government had in view in spending this money. If Government's idea is that people should plant rice there it means that you are robbing other parts of the country to take people there. Did Government ever get a report as to whether this land would produce rice or anything at all? Did the Department of Agriculture report on it? What drainage is there to grow anything? I know that the estates in the neighbourhood have had to instal pumping plants. It seems to me that there was a bit of vacant land and Government just went and spent \$87,000. The money could have been spent to very much better advantage.

What is the nature of the report Government got on the land a short time ago? I have not seen it, but from what I have heard from people in the district the sooner we cut our loss on this proposition the better. It seems to me that unless Government can give the people drainage and irrigation it is no good taking people from one place and putting them in another. It is going to be an annually recurrent vote, and it may come to \$7,000 annually. I cannot see that any good will ever come out of it. Government has a Council composed of men who are supposed to have experience, yet Government has spent \$87,000 without consulting the Council or even mentioning it. Government does not take the people of the Colony into its confidence in spending these large sums of money. I admit that it is an ordinary unemployment grant, but I think Government should get the best opinion as to the best means of spending that money, and not throw it about on wild-cat schemes.

Mr. AUSTIN: A Committee was appointed to deal with the money spent in this particular district. The hon. Member for Georgetown Central and I were members of that Committee, and we were very much against the sum of \$87,000 being spent on the Kilmarnock-Springlands scheme. The Director of Agriculture said he had not been consulted, but that it was

money provided by the Imperial Government and had to be spent. That opens up another question as to whether we should vote the sum asked for in order to continue a mistake. It seems to me that it would be much better for the Colony if we cut our loss as soon as possible. I understand that the road in this settlement is about 6 or 7 miles from the public road, and that it will be very difficult to get people to live away from the public road on land which is not properly drained or irrigated. In reality it is a cattle-ranching ground and not suitable for the purpose such as Sir Edward Denham had in his mind when he wanted to convert it into an agricultural settlement.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I would ask hon. Members not to oppose the item. The people who know the district and feel hurt because they were not consulted are beginning to say now that Government has proved the scheme a failure they are prepared to throw in their lot and make something out of it so that it would not be a total loss. That being the case I ask hon. Members not to oppose it.

Mr. WALCOTT: It seems to me that we are only wasting more money, and this happens to be *our* money. The \$87,000 was an unemployment grant to the Colony, but this \$700 will be our money. I have never been over the land but I have been told all about it—that this is a case of absolute inefficiency, someone being sent to do work that he knew nothing about. A dam running parallel with the Canje Creek has been constructed, and a trench capable of draining about 200 acres of land has been dug to drain between 2,000 and 3,000 acres, with no side dams. That little trench has to drain all the land in the district.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think the hon. Member's information is quite correct. I think his informant has mixed up two series of trenches. The large Empolder dam is sufficiently strong to keep flood water from the Canje creek off the land. The point about it is that the matter is being investigated and estimates are being put up to do something about it, but not a penny will be spent until the matter has been brought before the Council. It is quite true that it was an

unemployment grant, but in future any money to be spent will have to be voted by the Council. In the meantime, while the matter is being investigated, this amount is required to employ a ranger to prevent any damage being done. It is thought by the District Commissioner and others that if the suggested scheme of occupation is varied the land would be taken up. What I understand is a great objection to people going in there is the contingent liability that they will have to reside within the area and take over house lots on certain conditions. We have decided that that should not form a condition of the lease, and that the people would be able to lease land and cultivate it in the ordinary way. It is possible that the lands may be leased on those terms. We will have to spend money on the Empolder if we are to retain it, but no money will be spent without consulting the Council.

Mr. CANNON: The Hon. Mr. Walcott said we are spending *our* money. I disagree with him; we never vote our own money.

Mr. WALCOTT: If we do not intend to pay we are dishonest in borrowing.

Mr. SEAFORD: I do not know if the Department of Agriculture has examined the scheme. I would like to know what proposition has been put up by the Department.

Professor DASH: All I know about it is that we were asked if the land could grow rice, and we said that if it was drained it probably would, but we recommended a detailed soil survey before we could say definitely.

Mr. SEAFORD: Has that been done?

Professor DASH: No.

Mr. ELEAZAR: There are people who are now prepared to go to the District Commissioner and point out to him how the money can be recouped and not be an entire loss.

Major CRAIG: The object of the big dam, which cost \$30,000, was to prevent the front lands from flooding, and that has been done very successfully. It was not intended as a drainage or irrigation scheme. It is to save the front lands from

flooding which occurs every year, and landlords are very high in their praise for the work done. The other section of 3,000 acres was done because over 3,000 of the inhabitants of the district had put in a petition asking that it be done, and they said they would take up the land. That land can be drained, and is being drained, but the trenches must be maintained. Without maintenance it is impossible to carry on drainage in this Colony, which is so flat. You can get a certain amount of natural drainage if the trenches are maintained. No one has made any effort to maintain the trenches, and they cannot be maintained unless money is provided. Out of those 3,000 petitioners only half-a-dozen applied for land when it was put up for sale, the others holding back, I presume, in the hope that it would revert to what it was before, and then they would come in, pay nothing and reap the benefit of the work that has been done. There must be some value in the land, otherwise the hon. Member would not have suggested that the people are anxious to come in and help where Government has failed.

Question put, and agreed to.

PUBLIC DEBT—CHARGES.

Mr. WALCOTT: I would like to know if any action is being taken by this Government through the Secretary of State with the object of trying to get the present bond-holders to accept a lower rate of interest. It has been done elsewhere by the Imperial Government and by Australia and other British Dominions. Money happens to be particularly cheap at the present moment, and with a view to the future it is just possible that the Imperial Government and the Secretary of State might be able to get the bond-holders to accept a lower rate of interest on long-term bonds. It is quite possible and it is worth trying.

THE CHAIRMAN: The matter has been mentioned to the Secretary of State but I doubt very much whether any bond-holder would be prepared to agree to any conversion in respect of our two large loans which were only comparatively recently floated and carry on until 1947. It might be possible in a few years time.

Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer): The point is that one can only effect conversion when the time for redemp-

tion is ripe, or at least when the first date for redemption has arrived. On the only two loans outstanding now carrying large rates of interest—5½ per cent. in one case and 5 per cent. in the other—the date for redemption does not arrive until 1942 and 1949, respectively, and until you can tell bond-holders that you will redeem if they will not accept a lower rate of interest you can do nothing. That is the unfortunate position the Colony is in in respect of those loans. All the conversions that have taken place anywhere in the Empire have taken place only when it was possible to redeem the bonds, and to borrow fresh money and repay those people who would not accept a lower rate of interest. We have done that to the fullest possible extent. We have redeemed every bond we could possibly redeem, and as soon as it is possible to do so with those outstanding we will do so.

I believe the Australian Government actually passed a law to enforce a lower rate of interest on people in Australia who had accepted Australian bonds. They were compelled to accept a lower rate of interest, but we cannot pass a law in this Colony to compel people in the United Kingdom to accept a lower rate of interest on bonds which were issued carrying a specific rate of interest. I have noticed in the Press that the question is being taken up in England. There are other Colonies in the same position, and people in England are beginning to note that these Colonies are suffering financially from having to pay comparatively high rates of interest when the current rates are so low. I have every reason to believe it will be taken up on the other side as well as in this Colony, but so far as Government can see nothing can be done until the redemption dates arrive.

Mr. WALCOTT: I understood the Colonial Treasurer to say that bonds issued in the Colony at a low rate of interest—

THE CHAIRMAN: What he says is that all loans which have reached the first redemption date have been converted.

Mr. WALCOTT: I think he also said that so far as issues made locally are concerned the redemption date had been reached and they had been converted. If

that is the case it occurs to me that the bonds issued in England through the Crown Agents are still paying high rates of interest while bonds issued locally with an earlier redemption date have been converted.

Mr. WIGHT: What I feel about the matter is that those bonds which are outstanding for a long period were issued by the Crown Agents, and we should ask the British Government to make good the rate of interest for the length of time we have to continue paying this high rate of interest as against what we can borrow money at today. If they object they should give us a grant. The loans raised in British Guiana contained a clause that after 10 years Government had the right to redeem them. That clause was left out in this case. I had the bonds in my possession. As a matter of fact most of the 5½ per cent. loan is being paid by the Municipality. Government holds that the Town Council is insolvent. It should use that as a lever in asking for the acceptance of a lower rate of interest. I think the Municipality should move Government to claim the difference in the interest, otherwise I think we should do as Canada has done. I do not appreciate it myself, but this loan cannot be regarded as a British Guiana issued loan. It was issued by the Crown Agents. We should inflict a penalty of 5 per cent. on those bonds held by outsiders, and in that way reduce the interest-earning capacity. The price would come down and Government should then endeavour to raise a long-term loan at a reduced rate of interest and re-purchase those bonds. I agree with the Colonial Treasurer's remarks. We cannot do it right away but in the way I have suggested. We should make an effort to get the bond-holders to convert their bonds at a lower rate of interest. and if they are pig-headed enough not to agree we should pass legislation for all holders of British Guiana bonds outside the Colony to be penalised by 5 per cent. It is done in Canada.

Mr. SEAFORD: I could never agree with such a thing. What the hon. Member suggests is that because we did not actually raise the loan ourselves we could do that. The Crown Agents did it for us and we accepted it with our eyes open. It would be rank dishonesty on our part.

Those loans were floated on behalf of this Colony for the benefit of the Colony. If the interest had gone the other way would we have given the bond-holders the difference? Whatever we do we must be straight and above board. I would much prefer to go to the Imperial Government and ask for a grant to enable us to wipe off our debt.

Mr. Mc DAVID: The hon. Member for Georgetown Central said there was some omission from the bonds issued by the Crown Agents. There has been no omission at all. The 6 per cent. bonds issued in this Colony were redeemable after 10 years. That is rather an unusual provision and was only put in because the bonds were being issued in this Colony and at a fairly high rate of interest. Further, the people who loaned us the money were perfectly willing to do so on those terms, but when the Crown Agents issue a loan they have to offer such terms as would be accepted generally in the London market. Bonds are never issued with an optional guarantee of 10 years; the least is 20 years, and that is what obtained in respect of both of the loans to which we are referring. The £1,000,000 loan issued in 1922 was not issued by the Crown Agents but in this Colony through Lord Dunsford, and there is provision for exercising an option after 20 years, while the loan itself is for 50 years. In 1942 Government can exercise the option of redeeming the loan, and on that date conversion can be offered. Similarly, the \$10,000,000 loan issued in 1929 at 5 per cent. can be redeemed after 20 years although the loan itself was issued for 40 years. Those are normal conditions. The condition with regard to local bonds—that Government had the right to redeem them after 10 years—was extraordinary.

Another point that was mentioned was that Government should take the opportunity of taxing people in England in order to reduce the rate of interest. If we let that go forward we would not be able to borrow a single dollar from the United Kingdom or anywhere else. I should not like it to go forth that British Guiana intends to go in for that kind of financing.

Mr. WIGHT: I cannot agree with the Colonial Treasurer. We are all conversant

with the fact that that money was being advanced to the Colony by the Crown Agents. They were lending us money that was in their hands for various Colonies. That is what we always understood on the Municipality. I can see nothing that can be termed dishonourable if we asked those people to convert their bonds. We are not in a solvent position

to continue paying that high rate of interest. Countries better off than poor British Guiana have done so. I have never heard it said that Canada is a dishonest country. They levied a tax of 5 per cent. on all investors outside of Canada.

The Council resumed and adjourned until the following day at 11 o'clock.