

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.*Wednesday, 9th January, 1929.*

The Council met pursuant to adjournment, HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR, BRIGADIER-GENERAL SIR GORDON GUGGISBERG, K.C.M.G., D.S.O., President, in the Chair.

PRESENT.

The Hon. The Colonial Secretary, Mr. C. Douglas-Jones, C.M.G.

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

The Hon. A. P. G. Austin (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. T. T. Smellie, (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. F. Dias, (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. T. Millard, Colonial Treasurer.

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, (Senior Member for North-West Essequibo).

The Hon. R. V. Evan Wong, B.Sc., (Senior Member for South-East Essequibo).

Colonel The Hon. W. E. H. Bradburn, Inspector-General of Police.

Major The Hon. J. C. Craig, D.S.O., Director of Public Works.

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

The Hon. S. H. Bayley, Managing Director, Colonial Transport Department.

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

The Hon. N. Cannon, (Senior Member for Georgetown).

The Hon. H. C. Humphrys, (Member for East Demerara).

The Hon. A. V. Crane, LL.B., (Lond.), (Member for West Demerara).

The Hon. E. A. Luckhoo, (Senior Member for Berbice).

The Hon. Percy C. Wight, (Junior Member for Georgetown).

The Hon. J. Eleazar, (Junior Member for New Amsterdam).

The Hon. J. Gonsalves, (Member for Georgetown).

The Hon. E. F. Fredericks, LL.B., (Junior Member for South-East Essequibo).

The Hon. A. E. Sceram, (Member for Demerara).

The Hon. S. McD. DeFreitas, M.A., (Junior Member for North-West Essequibo).

The Hon. J. Smith, (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. S. H. Seymour, A.M.I. Mech. E., (Nominated Unofficial Member).

MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council of 8th January, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENT.

Major GRAY (Director of Education): I beg to communicate to the Council the following Message from His Excellency the Governor:—

MESSAGE No. 22 OF 1928.

Honourable Members of the
Legislative Council:

I have the honour to invite the Council to authorise the payment of a compassionate allowance at the rate of \$60 per annum to Mrs. Bridget Gibson, an uncertified assistant teacher, as from 1st October, 1928.

Mrs. Gibson is 47 years of age and has taught as an uncertified assistant teacher at St. Jude's School, Lichfield, for 25 years. Her salary has been \$15 per month since 1920.

She is suffering from chronic dysentery and is medically certified to be unfit for further employment as a teacher, and unfit for any other work. She has been forced to resign on that account from 30th September, 1928.

Mrs. Gibson is not entitled to a pension under section 5 of the Teachers' Pension Ordinance, 1928, but she has completed 3/4 of the service which would have qualified her for a pension of \$10 per month.

In view of all the circumstances, I recommend that a compassionate allowance at the rate mentioned be approved.

F. G. GUGGISBERG,
Governor.

Government House,
Georgetown,
January, 1929.

PAPER LAID.

Comparative Statement of Expenditure under the separate heads of the Colonial Estimates for the ten years 1918 to 1927. (*Mr. Millard.*)

GOVERNMENT NOTICE.

Major GRAY gave notice that the following Government motion would be moved at the next meeting of the Council:—

That, with reference to the Governor's Message No. 22 of 1928, this Council authorises the payment of a compassionate allowance at the rate of \$60 per annum to Mrs. Bridget Gibson, an uncertified assistant teacher, as from 1st October, 1928.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. C. Douglas-Jones): The Colonial Treasurer is very anxious that the motion—the last item on the Order of the Day—be taken, and I ask permission that it be taken first.

Leave granted.

ADVANCES BY CROWN AGENTS.

Mr. MILLARD (Colonial Treasurer): I beg to move the following motion:—

That, with reference to Governor's Message No. 21 of 1928, this Council approves of the sums required by the Colony from time to time for the execution of works and for other services, the cost of which will be defrayed from loans to be raised, being advanced by the Crown Agents for the Colonies by the issue of Treasury Bills or at Bank rate varying as the circumstances may require, until such time as the necessary loans have been raised.

Further, that this Council approves of any sums advanced by the Crown Agents for the purpose of financing the general commitments of the Colony being similarly advanced by the issue of Treasury Bills or at Bank rate varying as the circumstances may require, until such time as there are surplus funds from the Colony in the hands of the Crown Agents available for the purpose.

I may explain that the purpose of this motion is to provide the Crown Agents with security in respect to advances made since July 1927. The nature of that security is that the Crown Agents be authorised to issue British Guiana Treasury Bills to the extent of their advances. We have to provide the Crown Agents with the right to do so in order to satisfy the Exchequer and Audit Department at Home.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded and the motion was agreed to.

GOVERNMENT POLICIES.

Mr. SEERAM: I rather regret very much that at the conclusion of the debate yesterday I was unavoidably called away on very important business. I had anticipated that certain other members would have contributed to the debate, and on that anticipation I had hoped I would have had an opportunity to add my little quota to the debate. I therefore seek Your Excellency's permission to do so now. I know that time is an important factor, and I would not like to encroach upon Your Excellency's time to any great extent.

The PRESIDENT: I would like to draw the hon. member's attention to the fact that the debate was adjourned at a quarter past four o'clock yesterday, and there were long pauses during which I gave every opportunity for any member to rise. I am afraid on this occasion it is creating an inadvisable precedent to allow further speaking after the introducer of the motion has spoken.

In summing up the debate on the Annual Message and the Estimates I should like to say how very struck I was by the constructive nature of most of the speeches made by hon. members. I have no doubt, here and there, there was some inclination to allot blame for the past to either the Government or to the Electives. I cannot help feeling from the point of view of a recent-comer that however good the Government might or might not be, or however good the Electives might similarly have been, no very good results could have been achieved under a system that was fundamentally bad, and in which there was responsibility so diverse. I have alluded to that subject before, I think, in my first address, and I was very glad yesterday to see that although some allusions were made to this subject they were not pushed home very vigorously. A great deal of effort, well meant effort, was wasted in the past, due to the faulty nature of the system that obtained. The hon. Member for West Demerara alluded to the importance of agriculture. He put it, I think, as being rather more important than colonisation. I agree with him, although it is extremely difficult to allot relative importance to the two subjects, for, according to our policy, colonisation is based on land settlement and agricultural production. It is possible that out of the two agriculture is the more important; but on the other hand we cannot do much with agriculture unless we have the population to do it.

The hon. Member for West Demerara and the Junior Member for South-East Essequibo both made a most moving and eloquent appeal on behalf of the people of African descent. It seems that some remark which I made

in my Message to the "Agricultural Journal" had rather gone home to the people of African descent. I don't mind saying that I did that deliberately; I wanted to wake them up. I have had a long experience of Africans and I do not see very, very much difference in the essential parts of the character of the Africans of Africa and the Africans here who came from there perhaps two hundred years ago. I believe they are both to be trusted, but that has not blinded me to the fact that the most successful cultivators in this country so far, working on their own, have been the East Indians. There are probably many reasons for that. My own view is that the people of African descent have been working under what is called in modern language an "Inferiority Complex." They are obsessed with the fact that they spring out of the old days of slavery. Well, I don't see why they should have an "Inferiority Complex" for that reason. It was not their fault. They have got a magnificent example before them of the Negroes of the United States who came from the same origin and who fought down that "Inferiority Complex" and succeeded, and they fought it down by the exercise of what several hon. members spoke about yesterday—hard work and determination to prove themselves by their work just as good as anybody else. I have no doubt whatever that the people of African descent here will, if given that chance which perhaps in a great many cases is overdue, succeed. Anyway, Government intends to give them that chance.

I should like to make it rather clearer perhaps than I have done why we decided that our Colonisation Scheme should take for the first two hundred families East Indians and for the third hundred Africans. The object of the Colonisation Scheme is not to provide opportunities for the inhabitants in this country. The primary object of the Colonisation Scheme is to attract that immigration which I trust I have made so clear is necessary that there is no reason to dilate on it further this morning. Incidentally, in giving this demonstration of the advantages of **British**

Guiana to our chief source of supply of immigrants, which no doubt is India—incidentally, during that work we will have an opportunity to settle certain people on the land,—and as we want it to attract India first of all it is only natural that we should turn to the East Indian. Fortunately, since I have been here and benefited by the advice of the officers forming the Colonisation Committee I am very hopeful that the funds we have in hand for Colonisation if wisely spent will allow us to put several land settlements down—land settlements varying from fifty to a hundred families each—and for that reason one has been able to give the people of African descent an equal chance with the others.

I think it is an opportune moment for me to give this Council a somewhat clearer idea of our land settlement work than I have been able to give you so far. Roughly speaking, it can be considered under two heads. First of all there is the North-West District. There we have, as pointed out in the Memorandum on Colonisation, a country that has been reported as full of possibilities to small holdings up to about ten acres. It has been reported on in such terms that, as I have said before, no Government could morally refuse to conduct the further investigations that are necessary to prove the truth of those reports—to confirm them—therefore we are conducting investigations there beginning next month. As a result of these investigations we shall put down one or perhaps two settlements of which the first and last object is to prove the value of that part of the country for immigrants from India or any other part of the world. These experiments in the North West District are necessary if we are to have new types of permanent cultivation. Then again it must not be forgotten that not all the people of India are suited or accustomed to working on rice. They include a great many other subjects of agriculture in their work and it is those other subjects that we hope will form the chief production of the North West District.

There will be another Memorandum on Colonisation issued in the course of a

week or two which will explain to hon. members probably in more detail this question of the North West District, so I will now turn to the Alluvial Belt. Here we have got to have land settlement, and I think that this land settlement should be partly directed towards finding land for the people of this country, and partly and equally directed towards forming a demonstration model on which we can base schemes for immigration and land settlement by the people coming from India or other parts. Now in the Alluvial Belt as we all know we have an extremely fertile, an unusually fertile, area of several thousand square miles. It is true that the soil of the Alluvial Belt, if the localities are carefully chosen, will do more than produce sugar and rice. How much more that soil will be capable of producing other things is not yet definitely settled by the experts. There can be no doubt that we want to develop the Alluvial Belt far more than it is at present, but hon. members are up against a very great difficulty here. Practically the whole of that land, with the exception of a few insignificant areas, has been alienated not only in the past but alienated in the immediate past. We therefore run up against the fact that if Government wants to get that land to re-allot on any organised system of land settlement we shall have to pay for it, and quite possibly—unless we can persuade the holders of the benefit to them of any land settlement scheme we introduce—unless we can persuade them of those benefits we shall have to pay very heavily and we cannot: we have not got the money. Again, we might take up fresh land and drain and empower it immediately outside the alienated areas. There we are up against engineering difficulties—difficulties which are going to cost a considerable amount of money to overcome.

I do not think it is impossible to add considerably to our cultivated belts. It is going to cost money and it is money we should not be justified in spending. Here I want to make this important point. It is money we should not be justified in spending as long as large areas in land which has already been

defended from the sea and drained by the Government and other authorities are not beneficially occupied. That is one of the big points that we have got to attend to in dealing with the Alluvial Belt in any land settlement schemes—that land is beneficially occupied. I think, for example—I am making no attack on the sugar industry or any particular estate—so long as the company can, say, keep five, six or seven thousand acres of land which has been protected from the sea and from floods and keep one-half or one-quarter of that area not beneficially occupied, I don't see how that company can make its estates pay, is going to be able to meet the rates which Government will be forced for financial reasons to put on all areas whether beneficially occupied or not on which we have spent large sums of money for protection and drainage and on which we have to pay annually large sums for maintenance. Nor do I see while that land is going abegging or going practically unused—I do not allude to those parts which are occupied for rotation of crops or lying fallow or kept unoccupied for any other reason connected with agriculture. I allude to those that are not occupied. Well, of course, one alternative is for Government to buy up these lands. I do not suppose we have got money to do that. I am pretty certain that we have not.

The other alternative is for Government on those lands which it does own—I believe we have two or three quite promising areas—to put down as a model two or three settlements for the purpose of growing rice, completely organising them and recouping ourselves by rents in the first place, and, in the second place, as soon as a tenant has shown that he means work and has got half of his area under cultivation we will give him the right of perpetual occupancy by law so long as he continues paying rent. So that all he need do is to carry on the work on his farm permanently; and thirdly, the most important, after that tenant has been in possession for a year or two and has got two-thirds of his farm under effective cultivation Government will be prepared to allow him the right to purchase his

farm and the house by paying for it a fairly assessed value per acre of the land and also the money which it cost Government to put up his house and farm buildings. That payment will be spread over a period of years. It is really immaterial how many years it is spread over. Let us say ten. Interest would be charged naturally, so that it will be all to the good of the farmer if he can make his final payment at the earliest date. In that way I believe, and I am informed I am right in believing, that we shall be able to settle a large number of families steadily year after year on their own farms and in their own houses in the Alluvial Belt, thus giving effect to the principle which the hon. Member for South-East Essequibo so eloquently contended, namely, that the owner-farmer is the only system which is going to be successful with the people of his race, and I believe that it is the only system that is going to be successful with any race. You put a man to own his farm; he becomes, as the hon. Member for West Demerara remarks, a free man; he has got no master except his conscience and the rate-collector. It was rather a different point of view that hon. members had taken of work. Until quite recently, work on the land, I am credibly informed, has always been regarded as a relic of the days of slavery, as a disgrace compared with the work of the gentleman who sits on a stool and drives a pen. I think the better point of view of work is that it gives a man his freedom and not makes a man a slave. As the hon. Member for West Demerara remarked, a successful farmer has no master.

Well, now, the outline of that scheme of land settlement which I have just given you. Of course, there are many details but I think that one of the most important of those details is what I might call the real self-government of these land settlements and a sound, thorough and well-thought out system. As far as I can gather the land settlements which Government has adopted up to date have been carried out under very great difficulties and under various changes of policy. There will be no excuse for that happening in the future.

We can learn by the lessons of the past as some hon. member remarked yesterday. The kind of self-government I mean that is really efficient is this: Supposing we have a land settlement of a hundred families—may be more or less—when these families have been in occupation and have got used to the ground and got their work started all during the first year then would be the time to start, not a Village Council—I am going to get away from that old name—but a Welfare Council. In that Welfare Council will be four Government Officers, the District Commissioner, who is a man who is not going to be appointed unless he is fit to be the father of all the men, women and children in the district, the Agricultural Officer of the District, the Medical Officer of Health of the District and the Public Works Engineer of the District. There, to begin with, you have got your Chairman, three technical officers, and the remainder of the Council will be something like this—I shall say about six elected members of whom one must be a woman. We have given far too little opportunity, as far as I can see, in this Colony for women to take an effective part in the development of the country and in local government, and I believe they are perfectly capable of doing both. Then we are going to have two nominated members, one of whom should be a man and the other a woman. Then you have got there a Council composed of eight or ten people, farmers of the village, and four Government Officers, three of whom are technical experts.

Now, if that Welfare Council is properly conducted it will be able to do everything that is necessary for the welfare of that settlement. It has its engineering advice on land drainage, sea defence and water supply, building roads, etc.; it has got its Medical Officer of Health's advice on the subject of the health of the people; it has its Agricultural Officer's advice on what to grow, the best methods of growing, manures, and, most important, the finding of markets for the produce. More than that I think this Welfare Council in due course should take up other matters that affect the community. One essential

feature of this Government land settlement will be the provision of a rice mill. As soon as that Welfare Council is able to run that rice mill it will be handed over to them. They need not make any profits out of it except sufficient to form a renewals fund and to pay debt charges in connection with the installation of that rice mill. You do away with the profits of the rice miller; their prices could be adjusted and in the alternative you can take the profits of the rice miller and divide them up on the bounty system between the rice farmers. That can be run by the Welfare Council in connection with the local Co-operative Credit Society, which will be based on the mutual support, mutual confidence of the people of the settlement. It will not be based on an Agricultural Bank, but it would have at its back an Agricultural Bank of the Colony which in due course will be able to make advances on security.

That, hon. members, is an outline of Government's proposals with regard to land settlement either in connection with or independent of immigration. Now, this subject is one that has a moral aspect. The hon. Senior Member for North-West Essequibo said yesterday that something should be done to help sugar. I quite agree. It is a very big question. The trouble about it is whenever the Government tries to go and help any private enterprise it gets a pretty sharp reminder that it must not interfere—the business men can run their own affairs better. I am sure there is a great deal of truth in that, but in spite of there being truth in it this Government is going to make suggestions. We don't mind whether we are told it does not concern us. We consider it our duty to make suggestions. It is up to us to suggest to sugar planters—I think that is a misnomer. "The sugar planter" was the term applied to the owner of a sugar plantation who used to live in this country, cultivate his plantation, spend most of his money here, make an occasional trip to Europe and in addition to looking after the plantation he looked after the people working on

it. Those times seem to have passed. We have lost the sugar planter except in one or two cases—very conspicuous cases. We have got the sugar company now. We have gone through the same process as industry in England has gone through. The old head of the manufacturing business who knew his workmen at sight, whose father and grandfather had known them before him and their fathers and grandfathers, has disappeared mostly, and the businesses are now in the hands of companies—limited liability and otherwise, the same as most of our sugar estates here. We have no longer got to deal with the owner of the sugar estate. We have got to deal with what is reputed to be that notoriously hard-hearted thing—the limited liability company. I hope my remarks will not be taken as any criticism of the men who are managing these sugar estates because, quite candidly, I have been very greatly struck by the standard and the type of men who are running the sugar companies—those men whom I have had the privilege of meeting since my arrival. They are worthy descendants of the old planters.

Well, we cannot suggest as a Government to the sugar industry that they should improve their methods and be more up-to-date. We shall be told they know more about it than we do. Quite so. So Government would merely respectfully remind sugar planters and sugar companies that there are such things as up-to-date methods, and that they have been successfully adopted by several prominent estates in this Colony with great success, judging by rumours of dividends, bounties and other evidence of satisfactory working. We can, however, suggest something that may help them on the question of labour. Labour, as we all know, started with slavery, then after a period of transition, by a long period, it passed on to the system of indentured labour. Then, quite recently, indentured labour disappeared and it now comes to labour which the sugar companies can attract by giving to people the best conditions they can offer, among other things by allotting

them quarters, free medical attendance, and so on. Again, another thing by allotting a small bed—I believe it is so called—on which they can grow their rice or garden crops, by allotting them a house. Some charge rent, others do not. So that is the system we have got down to. Personally, I believe there is one serious defect in that system—a defect which may not have been a defect fifty years ago—but it is a defect in the world to-day. There is in it the element of compulsion. The man who is allotted land on an estate—I do not care whether it is a half acre or ten acres—on the condition that he should work for a certain number of days on the plantation is under compulsion because if he breaks that agreement he is liable to lose his land and to be told to pick up his house and walk off. I do not say the agreement is not a fair one: I think it is perfectly fair in some cases. If a sugar company gives a man land and house on those conditions that he must labour for four or five days a week, then that tenant ought to carry out his agreement. It is a perfectly fair one, but whether it is fair or not does not do away with the old feeling of compulsion. I know it does not, because I have talked to a very large number of people since I arrived here on the subject, and I have been told by men in authority who are interested in sugar that if they can only see a way in removing this compulsion they will do so.

Well, Government intends in due course to suggest to the responsible authorities here that they should go in for that system of land settlement which I have just described, acting towards the tenants as if they were the Government. That is to say in giving them a continuous right of occupancy and a right to buy their land. Of course, they are limited by the amount of land they have to spare. Alternatively, they can hand over that land to the Government and say "You are conducting land settlement; conduct this one for us and pay us the value of our land and you recover the value of it from your tenants." That is quite possible. There are some managers of sugar estates who will much rather do the thing them-

selves. Others, however, are too busy and might like to hand it over to Government. If that happens, it is contended, especially in giving a farmer three acres, he would have so much work to do on his own farm that he would not have time to go and work on a sugar estate. I forgot to mention this point: None of the conditions must include that of compulsory labour. That must be free and voluntary. It is contended that if that is the case that the sugar companies will not get the benefit of the casual labour—I think they are called task gangs—which would otherwise come from that settlement. I do not know that they are altogether right in urging that because we are not going to let the people have the land for nothing. They are going to pay the market value of the land. The majority of the people will take ten years to pay off their debt before they can actually get their deed which shows actual ownership, and during that period if I am right in assuming, if the hon. member's figures he gave yesterday (the Hon. Mr. Seymour's figures) are correct, the farmer is not going to get enough profits out of the rice on his farm to pay the whole of his annual instalment for the purchase of the house and land. He will have, if he wants to retain it, to go and put in two or three or four months' work on the sugar estate near to him. It may be urged that this is compulsion in disguise but it is a different kind of compulsion. It is a moral compulsion of the man who wants to own his land and who knows, when he goes and puts in two or three or four months which he can easily spare from the farm and work on a sugar estate, that he is going to get the money by which that farm becomes his and his descendants for life. That is the kind of proposal that I hope Government in due course will be able to put before the owners and companies who own these sugar estates.

The hon. Member for West Demerara spoke of farms of five, ten or fifteen acres, and another hon. member cautioned Government about giving too much land. I think there is a mean

course. To begin with there should certainly be caution. One feature of all these land settlement schemes is this: that they should contain a certain amount of spare lands so that any particularly enterprising farmer who has proved unusually successful will have an opportunity, if he wants, of purchasing several more acres in that vicinity and close to his original farm. I think that Welfare Council which I have just outlined might make it worth considering the use of such things as community ploughs which Professor Dash is credited with being against. I do not think the Director of Agriculture is against the use of any community plough provided it can be proved to be a practical proposition. The fact remains, as he so ably points out, that the experiments conducted with community ploughs and other machines in the past have not exactly proved encouraging for retrieval in the future. However, these Welfare Councils will do a great deal of good no doubt towards organising our system, because, as I pointed out, on them we will have experts. One appeal was made for an Agricultural Engineer. Well, in talking with Mr. Henry Ford last Autumn, he advanced the opinion to me that every farmer should be an Agricultural Engineer. I do not know how far that will agree with our expert adviser's opinion, but it is worth considering.

The hon. Member for West Demerara questioned the advisability of doing anything that can help people who come from India in future to get back there, instancing the fact that if we subsidised steamers, which we will have to do if we are going to have immigration, these subsidised steamers will help a man to get back to India easily. I quite see his view but I am not in agreement. I think if a man wants to go back to India we should let him go. We do not want a man here who is discontented. We can easily cut our losses over it. It would not be half as much loss as we will eventually get by retaining a discontented citizen. Besides, after all, an East Indian is a human being and would like occasion-

ally, especially as he gets older, to visit his home, and that I think should be encouraged because if he has done well here every man and woman who go to visit their own home in India will bring us back very good recruits.

Turning now from the question of Colonisation to that of Transportation, the hon. Member for West Demerara is very uneasy about Government's policy about what I call the triple line of communication between Parika and Berbice. He is perfectly right in his suggestion. We cannot abolish the sea. If we abolish any of the roads we interfere with local trade; if we abolish the railway we will not only do away with a useful system of transport but it will cost us more money to abolish the railway than to keep it. We are now in such a position that we have got to find out of general revenue \$187,792 in 1929 to help the railway. Well, at first sight we will say: "Why not abolish the railway," but if we do that we shall lose what the railway is doing with great credit at present. It is making a profit over its maintenance and running expenses—a profit of something quite large. What we shall have to pay if we do away with it is not \$187,000 but something like \$220,000, because we still have those shareholders, those bondholders, to get rid of and that will not do. I am afraid it looks as if we have got to retain that triple line. Government cannot guarantee to keep the roads in excellent condition. What we have got to try and do is to make the railway pay: and there we are up against a pretty stiff proposition and that is sea transport, the cheapest form in the world; but what we have got to do is not only to cut down the number of services, as the hon. member stated, but we have got to make every effort to secure the sugar traffic from Berbice on the east and Uitylugt and those other estates on the west. I believe our weak points in our railways are our terminal facilities. If we had better terminal facilities at each end, especially at Georgetown, I think we should secure the trade without increasing the cost to the sugar estates,

but the arrangements for our railways here at Georgetown—the terminal facilities—are really a huge joke.

To-day no business companies are going to use a railway unless those railways can give them the service they want, and to say our railways are giving the sugar companies the service they want when the terminus of the railway lies so far from their warehouse as to necessitate a good deal of double handling would be saying a good deal. We have, I believe, before us in 1929 a proposition with regard to the wharfrage and dredging of Georgetown harbour. It is quite possible that one of the solutions of that question of dredging may be connected, and may serve a useful purpose towards, the railway. It is possible that we may be able to extend our railway along the wharf frontage in such a manner as will satisfy the sugar companies. On the other hand it is possible we will not. It may cost us too much, in which case we may have to try something else. But there is no question whatever that until the East Coast railway can run its trains directly into the merchant's warehouse it is not going to get all their traffic. I think that the Managing Director of the Colonial Transport Department and the Board have done their utmost to make the railway a success and I congratulate them on the profit they have made during the past year, but I am afraid they have got a great deal more work before them in 1929 in endeavouring to solve this question of railway terminus.

The hon. Member for West Demerara made a plea that we should do something to improve the communications in the interior. Well, there is nothing the Government would like to do better than that, but for the present I think the time is not ripe. We have not got the money to do it. We must develop from north to south. Should there be some sudden change in the general situation—something that may justify us in getting a loan for opening up the interior more than we have done—for the present is another mat-

ter. But before we can open up the interior there is one thing we will have to do, which no sane Government would do without when it has such a large problem to tackle, and that is to have a correct topographical survey on a fixed framework of the whole country. Our surveys, however admirably each has been executed separately, do not fill the bill in regard to development, and it is for that reason that the loan will come before hon. members at this session—an item for £50,000—for engaging a special survey party which it is proposed to be of two or three Royal Engineer officers who will remain for three years, prepare the framework, co-ordinate such surveys as are already made, start a survey school, start a record office and then go away and hand the work and records and school complete to the local Survey Department to be established on a sound basis—a thing we have not yet had in spite of the very valuable surveys executed in this Colony.

The hon. member expresses the hope that members of the Council will have an opportunity of discussing the details of the Income Tax. There will be plenty of opportunity given when the Income Tax question comes up before the Council.

With regard to Education, the hon. Junior Member for New Amsterdam made a most excellent plea. I congratulate him on the spirit and the soundness of his idea. I notice that he expresses the fear that Government will restrict literary education and puts forward the plea that literary education is necessary to technical education. I agree fully with that. He again put forward the plea that vocational education is not good for primary schools. That I agree with, but what I feel about our present primary schools is that they are purely vocational. They are nothing else but vocational. What do they train the boys for but to be clerks and so on. That is all the education they get and that is purely vocational. What the primary schools have got to do is to prepare the children for life—to give them such

a foundation that they will be able to take up any vocation and not confine themselves to such teaching as will result in their becoming clerks. I also agree that farming or agriculture on any high scale is not suited for the primary school, but, on the other hand, a knowledge of how to grow the products of the soil in a simple manner—an elementary knowledge of agriculture—is useful to every student as an object lesson in Natural History which should form a part of their curriculum. The hon. member also expresses the fear that these Local Authorities referred to in my Education Policy were not competent to govern education. Government does not want them really to govern education. All we want the Local Authorities to do is to be responsible for collecting the funds necessary for building and maintaining with Government assistance any additional schools beyond those which Government is unable financially to establish on its own in the locality. That is dealt with in the Education Policy.

The hon. Junior Member for New Amsterdam also cautioned us about the coastal drainage and advanced the opinion that the Control Boards are not satisfactory. I think that the whole system wants a bit of overhauling and it has already been settled to do that after consultation with the Director of Public Works.

As regards the artesian wells, the hon. member pointed out that some are not going well. That is perfectly true. This is also a question for enquiry. It is certainly well known that some wells have gone bad. From information we have got up to date, in view of the time that has elapsed since these wells have been put in, there should be no cause for serious anxiety. That does not mean we should not try to find out what is the cause for these temporary stoppages. I have got great confidence in the engineer in charge of the work, Mr. Burton. We cannot condemn the system yet. I feel satisfied that we have got sufficient ground to go on.

The hon. Member for New Amsterdam also made a plea, as I understood him,

against the appointment of a Deputy Director of Agriculture and of Education. I think I shall defer any remarks on that subject until we actually get to the Estimate.

Government is very much obliged to the Hon. Mr. Seymour for the information he gave us about the rice industry. I am not certain that his figures have been taken down correctly in any report I have yet seen of his speech, and I will be very grateful if the hon. member will check the figures reported in the papers and let Government know of those figures. He mentioned a very good idea for helping the drainage of the country—a small dredge at different places. I think this will be considered by the Director of Public Works in due course.

The hon. Member for Berbice made a most moving appeal to Government to restore the glories of the New Amsterdam harbour. Of course, Government will enquire into any possibility, but as far as I can see we shall have to give the somewhat usual reply "We regret there is no likelihood of funds being available." To fit that harbour for ocean-going steamers will cost a vast amount—such an amount that even a coastal population of a million instead of 275,000 is a question as to whether it would be justified. I am afraid we will have to concentrate our efforts as far as ports are concerned on Georgetown. He also made a moving appeal for the protection of the farmers from the unscrupulous miller. Well, as far as I can ascertain, not all the mill-owners are unscrupulous. Government recognises what is an obvious proposition that any man who has got to make a profit between the producer and the market will reduce the price paid to the farmer, and if we can eliminate that man, well, all to the good, but, on the other hand, the rice growers—a large number of them—may have been unfairly treated by some millers. No doubt the rice growers owe a considerable debt to the initiative and enterprise of some of these millers and we will have to be very careful as to any steps we take so as not to discourage

the millers. As I pointed out before the best proposition is that in those districts where mills are required Government should put them in and hand them over to the local Council. Several hon. members made the very sound point that whatever system we have, whatever new methods we may introduce, whether it is the Government's or the sugar estates' or the farmers', the main thing is hard work. Well, I do not think any member of the Council will disagree with that dictum. There is one rather interesting point raised by Mr. Dias, and that was with regard to advice from the Mother Country on the subject of education. I did not quite catch the remark but I understood the hon. member said we ought to have advice or ought not to have advice—

Mr. DIAS: I quoted from a speech.

The PRESIDENT: It was not his own personal views I am glad to hear. My own feeling is that the Mother Country is the very last place anyone should go to for any educational advantage—not that it is not good, but the education of every country should be at rock bottom adapted to its environment and to what the people of the country are going to do. Great Britain, England, Wales, Scotland, are primarily industrial countries—manufacturing industries. Here we are more or less a pioneer country. We are an agricultural country. We have a match industry and I do not know of any other industries. Even sugar has fallen short of the final stages of a manufacturing industry, and will remain short until such time as it may be possible—and I hope that time will not be far off—when the sugar companies will be able either separately or in combination with each other to start a sugar refinery in British Guiana and take the profits that the sugar refiner makes in other countries. Here, of course, Government is rushing blindly into places where angels fear to tread.

Towards the end of the debate the hon. Member for Georgetown and the Hon. Mr. Austin gave rather divergent

views on the result of the preferential tariff, I am rather inclined to side with Mr. Austin in the matter where he says we would have been worse off if we had not this preferential tariff. I do not feel that it is the preferential tariff that has caused expenditure to exceed revenue. My own belief is that expenditure has got top-heavy and I will suggest to the hon. member to take the summary of expenditure and revenue given in the Budget and see which of them has grown at a greater pace. It is our expenditure that seems to have got out of control, and until we get it under control, well, we are not going to be able to right the financial situation. Another hon. member referred to the Reciprocity Treaty—the hon. Senior Member for South-East Essequibo. He says it is not fair to blame the principle but rather certain details of the preferential tariff. I think that goes nearer the mark. Well, this concludes my remarks on the members' speeches.

I have been very much struck with the hope, with the evidence that hon. members are hopeful of the future. We do not want to be pessimists now. We want the spirit of optimism sweetly tempered with little practical sauce. A very good description the other day I had of the difference between a pessimist and an optimist was given, I think, by Professor Jack of Oxford. He says the optimist was a man who saw an opportunity in every difficulty while the pessimist could only see the difficulty of the opportunity. It wants a little thinking out but I think it is one of the best definitions that I have heard. The real point about it is seeing the opportunity in difficulties. The difficulties of opportunities, of course, are that they necessitate hard work, initiative and above all a spirit of high resolve. Well, that is the sort of spirit that we hope by our system of education to get into the coming generation. I do not believe that the present generation are wholly lacking in it. At any rate, we have got a fine country. We have got an extraordinarily good climate for the tropics,—much as it may be abused and with as

many drawbacks as we have we have an unusually good climate for the tropics—and I think we have every reason to be proud of this country, but our pride must have a real basis. It has got to be built up on something better than the potential fertility of the country; and on the regularity of sun and rain and the nice cool northeast breezes. It has got to be built up on a foundation which is going to take real hard work to lay, and that is why I was so gratified about the remarks about hard work that came from so many hon. members. There is no reason why we should not make as big a fetish about hard work as Mr. Henry Ford makes of organisation and on that hard work build up a country to which every one would be anxious to come. Personally, I have a very strong belief—it may be merely an instinct or any other name—that the tide of British Guiana is on the turn. There is no doubt that it has been ebbing for some time, slowly ebbing and so slowly that it has been depositing silt. It has been depositing mud and sand like the Demerara River does at its mouth. Well, my own belief is that 1929 is going to see the beginning of a flowing tide. It may be slow at first because it has got to roll over all the silt and mud of trade depression and so on which for the past few years have been depositing. Once it starts running and we keep it going in the right direction and do everything in our power I do not believe anything is going to hold it back, and I believe all the hon. members here hold the same conviction as I do. If we can only get a start to get that tide flowing properly we are going to have a hard job to stop it even if we want to.

The Colonial Secretary is going to move a motion that the Council resolve itself into Committee to consider the draft estimates of expenditure for the year 1929. Before that is done I should like to remind hon. members about something I said in my Annual Message. I asked them to remember when we come to discuss the items on the Estimates that we have already done a considerable number of cuts,

and in a great many cases I am afraid, we have cut to such an extent that we are going to have a little trouble, not in keeping to that as we can do that but in maintaining certain Government services, so that any further cuts will have to be very carefully considered. When hon. members are desirous of making a cut anywhere I would ask them to do what they have not been able to do, judging from what so many hon. members have said in the past, and that is to remember the Government's policy laid down here with which each item of expenditure is connected—that if you cut down that item of expenditure it is going to seriously interfere with the carrying into operation that Government policy. I think we should very seriously consider the matter before effecting it.

ESTIMATES.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move the motion standing in my name:

That the Council do resolve itself into Committee to consider the draft estimates of expenditure for the year 1929.

Question put, and agreed to.
Council in Committee.

Item 2—Deputy Director of Agriculture (\$1,320), \$3,600.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I move that the item be deleted from the Estimate and I do so, sir, because, in spite of Government's promise to reorganise this Department and possibly to find work for a Deputy Director, up to the present this Council cannot be said to be satisfied that there is room at the present moment for the officer. There is hardly any reason for appointing the officer before you are satisfied that you have enough work to give him to do. Your Excellency, up to the present those experimental stations which have been spoken of all along, and which it will be

necessary to supervise by an Assistant Director, have not yet been established. When, a year ago, it was contemplated that a Deputy Director be appointed, one of the reasons given was that there would be three experimental stations—one in Essequibo, one in Demerara and one in Berbice—and that the Deputy would be required to carry out the Director's plans when he had formulated them. Those, however, are not the actual words the Director used. Looking a little back in the past I quite remember Professor Harrison, almost in the evening of his life, going aback of provision farms at Buxton. I had the pleasure of being present when he was there advising the farmers. Up to the present time I am not aware—I am speaking subject to correction—that the Director knows what is happening aback of the East Coast villages, some of which have their agricultural lands seven miles in depth from the township. I therefore feel, sir—even supposing that the time would arrive when we would want the services of a Deputy—that it is far from the present. At the present moment we are in straits for money, so much so that Your Excellency has found it necessary to curtail many of your services to the extent of an irreducible minimum compatible with efficiency. I cannot for the life of me see why this officer should be appointed when the services of several officers—men receiving ordinary salaries which cannot be said to be anything like fabulous—are being dispensed with.

A year ago this Deputy Director of Agriculture was to be appointed and up to now nobody has seen any explanatory memorandum telling us what the duties of this officer will be. I do not know that the staff at the present moment is not commensurate with the work that is being done. When it comes to Essequibo the Director can leave Mr. Beckett there, though he is not considered quite as competent as he used to be considered before, but he is good enough to supervise the initial stages of what is carried on there. Berbice in particular is still awaiting any

scheme that may be propounded by the Director, and, I think, Demerara is in the same position. I think the services of a Deputy are only required when the Department is in full swing, not in making speeches, preaching sermons and talking, but in real work. Should the Director not be on the scene is there not a man whom he considers competent as himself to look after the work? I am at a loss to understand what this Deputy Director is to do. If there is no officer in that Department competent to supervise what is being done in the initial stages, if there is no one competent to take charge for a short period if the Director happens to be away through illness or on leave or in some other part of the Colony, then I say the whole Department should be wiped out. It is inconceivable that we need two Directors, for after all a deputy is only a man who has to take the place of the chief in the event of his not being present. I do not think up to now the Agricultural Department is so developed as to necessitate two Heads, so to speak. For that reason I am asking, in spite of Government's promise, that the matter be investigated before the person is employed. If you vote the money you encourage the appointment of the officer before very long.

At this stage, Your Excellency, I think I might go a little bit out of the way and tell you that I saw sometime ago a report in which it was stated that the students from an institution of Barbados came over here, looked at the rice-fields and have all gone back. They are to be sent to Africa as rice-experts. I venture to state that any East Indian grower in Berbice knows as much about rice-growing as those men who came over here for a week. For that reason the Professor has the opportunity now of utilising the services of some one in his Department who knows local conditions to a certain extent, although not sufficiently learned in the scientific methods but sufficient to lead on the farmer who is supposed to be a little behind him. To employ a highly-paid officer is a superfluity and I ask Government to accept the suggestion as well-

meant and not appoint the officer at this stage.

Mr. CRANE: I notice that the approved estimate for last year is \$1,800 and I ask permission to enquire whether any appointment was made. That will determine my attitude, sir, in this matter. If the appointment was made on the grant of last year, then it would seem very difficult to get rid of an officer so recently appointed. But as the appointment was not made I think I am bound in the interest of economy, without detriment to the Service, to follow the line taken by the hon. Member for New Amsterdam. The reorganisation of this Department, which took place in 1927, involved the separation of the Agricultural and Science Departments. At one time it was a joint Department with the late Professor Harrison as Head, but now the work of the science part of the business has been taken off, and I believe they have their own Science Director and we have the Director of Agriculture who is relieved of the science work calling for a Deputy. I think that is a very good reason. He has not now the same work which he would have had in the days of Professor Harrison yet he is asking for somebody whom Professor Harrison never had. While it might add to the efficiency of the Service, if we can run it for a year or two without detriment, in the interest of economy we should refrain from making the appointment this year. I am aware that the Director will have to be absent from Georgetown, particularly now that he is appointed on the Colonisation Board, but surely there ought to be some official in that Department with a lesser title and lesser salary, who can carry on the departmental routine until he returns to headquarters. I am bound to ask Government to consider very seriously whether it should add to the establishment, because that, I understand, Government is not doing unless there is dire necessity for so doing. I do not see there is any necessity at this moment for a Deputy even though it makes for better service.

Mr. HUMPHRYS: After the memorable speech made yesterday by the hon. Member for West Demerara, I fail to see how he can consistently and logically contend that there should not be a Deputy Director of Agriculture. I feel that this item was not put on the Estimate without a great deal of thought by the Director and by the Executive Council. I gather from what Your Excellency has stated that Agriculture is going to be our rock-bottom, therefore we must have a very full and competent Department. I feel, sir, that an Assistant Director is necessary, because if we are going to start a Land Settlement Scheme he ought to be here at the first and earliest opportunity and not wait for a year to fill the appointment. If the officer is necessary he should be here from the very commencement of things, when he can understand and learn everything and so be in a position to fill the place of the Director in his absence. If he is to be appointed there must be no question of waiting. He should be appointed now or not at all.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I must admit that I am rather astonished at the amendment moved by the hon. Member for New Amsterdam and also at the support it received from the hon. Member for West Demerara. I certainly thought that Agriculture was on the boom now that everything was Agriculture, and that if there was one Department in the Civil Service of this Colony that was to be given every chance, every opportunity, and any large increased expenditure was not to be cavilled over, it was the Agricultural Department. In a way, I quite see the ground of the opposition of the hon. Member for West Demerara and the arguments by the Financial Representative for New Amsterdam—

Voices : Order, order

Mr. BRASSINGTON: And the hon. Member for New Amsterdam. The question that weighs with me is: Is there nobody in the Department at present who is able to fill the post of

Deputy Director of Agriculture? That is the business of the Government. I am not able to say if they have got anyone efficient or not, though I know in theory all Government officials are capable and that it is rather presumptuous for an elected member to think otherwise. I think, if there is, then a great injustice would be done if he is not appointed. Elected members have no say in the administration of the various Departments, but I am not going to grudge the spending of a single dollar by way of increased pay, knowing it is going to put Agriculture on a better footing. For that reason I am going to take a stand in helping forward the Administration by my vote in the pleas or arguments put forward for increased expenditure, though the comparative statement of expenditure is appalling when you take the increases of the various Departments over the last ten years. I do not know if I would be relevant. Take the Colonial Secretary's Office, expenditure between 1918 and 1928 has risen from \$23,074 to \$34,197. And so on we are increasing. But in the expenditure in a Colony which is purely agricultural—I sincerely believe so—on the Agricultural Department the increase is not commensurate with the increases in Departments which are mainly clerical in their function. For these reasons I am going to support the Government in its demands for an Assistant Director of Agriculture if it proves a failure. I will not in any way subscribe to the argument of the Hon. Mr. Dias yesterday that the elected members of the Court in the past were equally to blame as the Government. I cannot accept that as regards myself, because I entered this Legislature with the firm determination to do my little bit.

Mr. HUMPHRYS: I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member not astray?

The CHAIRMAN: I am afraid I have to rule that the hon. member's remarks are not relevant. We are discussing item 2—Deputy Director of Agriculture.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: All right, sir.

Mr. CANNON: Your Excellency, I am sorry I have not Agriculture on the brain. I personally feel that we are here to do what we can to keep down expenditure. While I am prepared to assist in any addition where it is of necessity and of great urgency, on this particular item I beg to differ with Government and must support the amendment for its deletion.

Mr. SEERAM: Your Excellency, if it is necessary for me to support Government I will certainly do so. The foremost policy of Government, I take it, is an agricultural one, and in the reconstruction of the Agricultural Department I think it is desirable that it should have as many capable officers as possible. I am therefore going to ask the hon. Junior Member for New Amsterdam and the hon. Member for West Demerara not to press for the deletion of this item. Your Excellency, while we admit and fully realise that it is absolutely necessary that expenditure should be cut down as much as possible, it is quite patent that the hon. Director of Agriculture's time is so fully occupied already, and with the additional work and more onerous duties he will be called upon shortly to perform, I think it is right that he should have a capable man to assist him. The hon. Senior Member for North West Essequibo has raised the question as to whether there is anybody in the Department at the present time capable of doing so. If there is anyone then Your Excellency will look into the matter, and I have no doubt the Director will also look into it, and in that event I would support the views of the hon. Member for North West Essequibo that preference be given to that man.

Professor DASH (Director of Agriculture): The question of having a Deputy Director of Agriculture was discussed thoroughly in this place last year when the principle was accepted of there being room for the Deputy on the re-organisation of the Department. I claim, sir, that I have put forward my views on the Department at some

length and to have shown conclusively that further expansion in agricultural matters cannot take place without the assistance of a fully qualified Deputy. Since that time further additions have been made to the duties of the Department, and as it stands today we have a much stronger claim.

The position is that last year a sum of money was voted for the post for a part of the year. This year we have come back with the same post on the Estimates but only with an increase because we were not able to get a man at that pay. The hon. Junior Member for New Amsterdam made reference to the work of the Agricultural Stations and from what he said I gather he has not been reading the publications of the Department in which was stated what we have been doing. We distinctly stated that our work in the future would be based largely on the development of these District Agricultural Stations, and we showed distinctly what the duties and the scope of these Agricultural Stations will be. And, Your Excellency, this very morning I also mentioned one of the principal duties of the agricultural officers in the different districts. We have organised a district station for Demerara and that is working satisfactorily. We have organised the North West District Station and that, I think, is also working satisfactorily. We have placed on the Estimates an item for the Essequibo Agricultural Station which will largely be connected with our increasing rice industry. We have made provision there for the production of a pure seed supply for the entire Colony. That is just about to be started, and without the services of a Deputy to supervise that and keep it going I will have to let it go. I say it quite frankly. We have got a fourth Agricultural Station that we contemplate to establish. That is to be in the County of Berbice. I must again say frankly that unless I am sure of getting a Deputy the County of Berbice will have to wait a long time. That is my view of the function of the Department generally.

There is no need to take up the time of the House at any length in connexion with the post of Deputy. The hon. Member for East Demerara made one or two very substantial points. If we are going to expand our agricultural activities we must have proper supervision. I regard effective supervision in the beginning as most important. During the past year I have been able to give a great deal of personal supervision, in spite of what hon. members think, to a great many things which in the future I must have assistance with. We cannot carry on as at present. If we are to expand we must have the necessary assistance. Another point which is very often lost sight of is we have a big country to supervise. We must get in contact with the man on the land and it is the only way we are going to do the Colony any good. Our territory extends from the North West District to the Corentyne and I ask hon. members to tell me how in this wide world one administrative officer can supervise the work of the whole territory. It is a matter of impossibility. I recognise the necessity for curtailing expenditure, and if hon. members care I can produce figures to show that the money voted last year was most carefully expended. I do declare we are capable of taking care of any expenditure that may be given us for agricultural purposes. Therefore, as I said before, unless we can get the right assistance in the starting of and carrying out of the supervision of all these new developments we may as well shut down.

Mr. LUCKHOO: In view of the remarks made by the hon. Director, I am supporting the item. The claims of Berbice have been grossly neglected; we have been advocating the establishment of an Agricultural Station and unless I support the item our claims will be overlooked, Berbice being agricultural and our prosperity being more or less dependent on Agriculture. The Heads of the Department should be free and they would not be doing their duty as they should towards Berbice if they simply confined their energies to

one particular section of Berbice and not include visits to the Canje and Berbice River districts. I hope specific instructions will be given to officers of the Department to be more vigilant and to see that the requirements of that County are properly looked after.

The CHAIRMAN: I have listened with great interest to this very vexed question. In view of the fact that Agriculture is of first importance to this country; secondly, the fact that after thorough examination I am satisfied that the Director of Agriculture has twice as much work as he ought to be called on to do, and can do; and, thirdly, that we have found after due enquiry that we have no officer here who can be appointed to this important post—an officer of peculiar attainments, not only with an agricultural knowledge but with powers of administration—Government is not prepared to accept any reduction of a vote of a Department on which practically the whole future of the Colony depends. An amendment has been proposed that this vote be deleted.

Mr. ELEAZAR: With the permission of my seconder, in view of what Your Excellency has said, I desire to withdraw it.

The Council adjourned for the luncheon interval.

The CHAIRMAN: As I indicated before, any economies in this Department will very probably prove to be false economies. The Director is very much alive to the necessity for effecting economies that can be made. Is there any other hon. member who has any remark to make on any of the items 3 to 14?

Item 9—Veterinary Surgeon (\$2,880 to \$3,360 by \$120), \$2,920.

Mr. CANNON: I should like, Your Excellency, to draw attention to item 9—Veterinary Surgeon. I see it is proposed to make this officer a whole time one. I appeal to Government that it is hardly fair to the Colony that private

sources should be deprived of the services of this officer. It does not affect every member of the community but only those who happen to keep stock. I should like to suggest for Your Excellency's consideration that the officer be allowed, if not to do private practice, to hold consultations. I however do not know whom he is going to consult with as there are so few of that type of officer in the Colony.

The CHAIRMAN: Perhaps the Director may tell us if there are any special reasons for the officer being a whole-time officer.

Professor DASH: Sir, why we have made him a whole time officer—and I think everybody will agree with me—is because of the difficulty in the past of having the officer at hand when he is required. Sometimes the officer is away for a week attending to private practice. We have therefore made provision for a whole time one, but at the same time the point raised by the hon. member has been considered and all matters appertaining to the use of the Veterinary Surgeon will have our attention. The fact of his being a whole time man would not prevent him from having consultation with the live-stock man. We are arranging to have clinics about the country where he can meet the live-stock owner.

Item 24—Agricultural Superintendent.
Essequebo, (\$2,400 to \$2,880 by \$120). \$1,200.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I should like to hear something from the Government in respect of item 24. I see the footnote says: "To provide for an Agricultural Superintendent in the Essequebo District from 1st July, 1929." I should like some information from Government as to what that officer is going to do, and, if possible, who the officer is. Government may supply us with his name.

Professor DASH: Sir, this is one of the posts we are creating in connexion with our district organisation. We have

a District Agricultural Superintendent in Demerara and one in the North West. It is proposed now that we are starting the station in Essequebo to have a District Agricultural Officer there. We cannot utilise his services, however, until July, and he will be required to do the same thing as District Officers usually do and to give advice along the lines mentioned this morning.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: Arising out of the answer given by the Director of Agriculture I would point out that there is an Agricultural Instructor already in Essequebo—a very experienced agriculturist, Mr. Pasea—and, while personally I would support anything which is for the improvement of Agriculture in the Colony, I do not see the necessity for bringing somebody in when you have an efficient and trained agriculturist there in the person of Mr. Pasea. I do not think this is a time that we can make new officers when we have people already on the spot doing the same thing. It appears to me to be duplicating the work of the Agricultural Inspector and the Superintendent down there now.

Professor DASH: We all recognise that Mr. Pasea is a good man but he is a part-time man. He is only supposed to give the Department something like seven or eight days a month. While, however, we all know Mr. Pasea is a man trained in the practice of Agriculture, we want a man who is scientifically trained to take care of the whole work and to give whole-hearted attention to a pure seed supply. We cannot entrust that to a man who is engaged on part-time work.

Item 23—Cane Agronomist (\$2,400 to \$2,800 by \$120) \$2,400.

Mr. CRANE: I have risen just to express the hope that it has not escaped Government's attention that this particular officer, whose salary, we are told, would be paid by the Experimental Station Committee, will be made a Government Officer entitled to pen-

sion, and that some arrangement will be made for some contribution to Government for that purpose later on. We are all endeavouring to prevent an increase of the Pension List, which is already very high. I am afraid if you have brought officers belonging to one system into the Government Service for the purpose of effective control, some arrangement should be made for a contribution to any future pension which may be given to these officers.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member should recollect that this officer will not become pensionable unless he is put above the line. He is on the Unfixed Establishment. I am much obliged to the hon. member for drawing my attention to that matter.

AUDIT OFFICE.

Item—Auditor \$360.

Mr. CRANE: One sum, \$3,960, is included in the Civil List and I take it that the officer is to draw another sum of \$360. May I just enquire whether that is in conformity with the new Civil List. I do not know whether the additional \$360 is included in his salary. I notice, however, that the Ordinance is to be amended to include this amount. If an officer is on the Civil List then the whole sum should be put down in the first column. I would like some explanation why there is this increase of \$360.

Mr. MILLARD: The salary of the Auditor is provided for by a special Ordinance which on amendment will include the addition. It does not appear on the general Civil List.

Mr. CRANE: I ask, therefore, the reason for the addition. It is an increase of salary. All we have is \$360 and we are told the law would be amended to include it. There must be some justification for it.

Mr. MILLARD: A Message from His Excellency the Governor was brought to this Council in which the reason was

represented, and a motion was subsequently passed authorising it.

The CHAIRMAN: That is, the increase has already been passed.

TREASURY.

Mr. MILLARD: It may be helpful to hon. members in their examination of the vote for the Treasury Department if I make a few general observations regarding it. In August last I requested the appointment of an additional Assistant Treasurer. The reasons I gave for making this request were found to be sufficiently substantial and it was then approved that the appointment should be included in these Estimates. I have since suggested that the further consideration of this appointment should be postponed until the stability of the Colony's finances was assured. The present state of those finances necessitates the exercise of the severest restriction of recurrent expenditure and as the Treasury Department must take a very active part in ensuring that restriction, by constant and intimate control over all public financial activities, it is desirable that that Department itself should set an example. I gave very definite reasons in August and I have not in any way withdrawn my arguments for the appointment of an Assistant. Another point is, in the Treasury I have come from the volume of work and the extent and variety of financial problems do not compare with those now current here. Yet, on the other hand, the standard of organisation of routine work and the system of registry and record are far in advance of those available here. There is no comparison between the two. It is questionable even when an equivalent standard is established whether this Department as at present staffed would be adequate for the effectual and effective carrying out of all those functions that are proper to it and the completeness of the performance of which is of such obvious importance not only now, but hereafter. It is certainly a fact that its activities during the past year have suffered in conse-

quence of the lack of the requisite standard. The staff is willing and hard-working, but its general physical fitness leaves much to be desired. I have here a summary of the absences of the staff on account of sickness during the past year. The absences total 462 days, that is 125 per cent. higher than in 1927, which year had the high total of 209 days. From the point of view of the disturbance of routine work and the hindrance to the introduction of changes in methods, the number of the periods of absences is a serious factor. The number of individual periods of absence total 98. That is, separate and distinct interruptions of the work quite apart from their duration. Some of these periods were of one day, two days and three days, and a great number of them required a temporary redistribution of the work. I do not know whether you have realised that the 462 days denote that there have been five whole days absences in every four days throughout the year. The M.O.P. will, I imagine, be concerned at these figures.

The conditions under which the officers are working are unsatisfactory. The accommodation is too limited. This was represented last July and additional accommodation was allotted. It is not yet available but is expected to be occupied shortly.

There is another aspect of the staffing of the Treasury Department. I would invite attention to items 16 and 28—2 Clerical Assistants and Clerical Assistance. Owing to various causes, the performance of routine work has not been relegated to junior officers to anything like the extent ordinary systematisation and organised supervision can secure. The effect is that the tendency has been for routine duties to move up instead of down the scale of seniority of the staff employed. The result is that very important financial questions have not received anything like adequate attention from senior officers much of whose time is occupied with routine work. It is, however, imperative that the tendency I have mentioned should be definitely and permanently reversed. To secure this essen-

tial requirement it is necessary to employ additional clerical assistants to perform the minor and more mechanical part of routine duties. Another aspect of this provision I consider to be of major importance. Recruitment for the Accounting Staffs of Government Departments should be effected through the medium of the Treasury Department in order that the advantages of an adequate and standardised training shall be secured. To provide this the Treasury Department should always have a small reserve of carefully selected juniors undergoing training. Until the financial position improves this will not be possible, but a movement in the right direction will be made by the training temporary clerical assistants will obtain.

Regarding the new Income Tax branch it is not of course possible at this stage to indicate precisely what the staffing and other requirements would be. It is proposed that the existing channels of collection of public revenue and other receipts shall be employed pending the organisation of financial transactions throughout the Colony on the decentralised basis of established sub-accountants. It is unfortunate that the assessment and collection of this new form of taxation will devolve upon the Treasury Department before that Department has derived more than a small fraction of the considerable accumulative advantages that can be ensured by proper organisation of the work and an adequate controlling system of registration and record. As to the staff to be employed on the assessment and collection of Income Tax it is proposed that the Treasurer and his future Deputy (Mr. McDavid) shall be Commissioners, and a Secretary has been chosen from the Audit Department. In selecting the clerical staff it is intended to do this during the course of the general re-organisation of the Government Departments. I am hoping as Head of the Treasury Department—there are one or two increases in the Estimate that are consequent upon the introduction of

the Income Tax branch, namely, stationery, travelling and clerical assistance—these will be passed.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: There is only one point in connexion with the Income Tax branch that I do not think I am quite clear on. I gather from the remarks of the Colonial Treasurer that the staff, for which \$6,000 is provided, will be drawn from the ranks of the Civil Service and there would be no outsiders. I would like to know if I am correct.

Mr. MILLARD: That is the present intention.

Mr. ELEAZAR: With regard to this Income Tax question Government has asked us to take a leap in the dark, and, of course, it seems inevitable that we must. There is one thing I desire to congratulate Government on, and that is, it is not intended to make it a separate Department. I am sick of these independent Departments. I am expressing the sincere hope that this will not prove from the taxpayers' point of view the very last straw, because, Your Excellency, the taxes remain the same; there is virtually no reduction at all. That is the point of view in which the Electives differ from Government. If you are going to bring in this tax not as a super-tax then you should reduce other taxes to some extent and then bring in this tax on incomes. Government can never see that when you keep other taxes at the same height and attempt to bring in Income Tax in some instances you make the position worse.

CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT.

Item 12—11 Customs Watchers, \$5,449.

Mr. GONSALVES: I quite appreciate that in Your Excellency's Message you have indicated that there would be the necessity for a reduction in the working of several Departments. I see, Your Excellency, it is provided that there will be a shortage in the number of Customs watchers. One hon. member

yesterday suggested that lawyers should look after the poor people. Well, I am endeavouring for the moment to look after these poor Customs watchers. I cannot do so in an agricultural way but I can do so through the Customs.

I think, sir, that we look to the Customs for a good deal of our revenue to meet our expenditure for the year. Unless I hear from the Government side of the House that these men are absolutely unnecessary and do not help Government in the protection of the revenue, I do think there must be a reason why the Comptroller of Customs should have recommended for some time in the past that there should be a certain number of Customs watchers. If there be no need for them then I say the officer who held the office of Comptroller of Customs was not doing his duty to the Colony when he recommended that a certain number of men be employed for the protection of the Department. If there be need for them then I say it would not be consistent for me to say that it is not necessary to have these men. We appreciate that the cost of administration of this Colony is exceedingly high. We appreciate Your Excellency's statement in your Message that reduction is necessary, but some of us are disappointed to find these reductions beginning at the bottom of the ladder, and not mid-way or perhaps at the top. I repeat that the cost of administration is high, and it is surprising, speaking from the elective side of the House, that with the exception of one item this morning—the Deputy to the Director of Agriculture—no other Heads of Departments have been tackled. The item with regard to the Deputy Director of Agriculture was one—I am afraid I run the risk of being called to order but I cannot help saying it—which should have been opposed. The item I am tackling now is one on which hon. members should concentrate attention. As long as I sit here any item on the Estimate which appears to be a reduction in regard to men of that class will meet with opposition from me. I do invite some one on the other side of the House to say what is the reason for the reduction in the number of

Customs watchers. Unless there is evidence of good reason for it I am sorry I will not give my vote for the reduction.

The CHAIRMAN: The number of Customs watchers has been recommended as they are not wanted. Therefore we are carrying out the economy. The hon. member prefers to see economies beginning at the top of the list. I thought I already explained the difficulties of getting rid of officers who are already on the Pension List. I promise to do the utmost I can during 1929 either to retire these officers compulsorily, thereby giving them an extra pension involving expenditure, or to find some other posts in other Departments in which they could be usefully employed. The matter is a difficult one, and I think there should be no suspicion that Government means to economise at the expense of the lower dog. Fourteen Customs watchers are not wanted. Indeed the Comptroller of Customs, since these Estimates have been submitted, informs Government that he can do with ten comfortably.

COMMISSARIES DEPARTMENT.

The CHAIRMAN: This is a Department the fate of which will be settled during the coming year. Hon. members will see that there are a good many people on the pensionable list who will have to be disposed of. It is possible that future employment of a useful nature will be found for them; if there is not they will have to go. I fancy the hon. Colonial Treasurer means to utilise some of them for the Income Tax work.

Mr. MILLARD: The appointment of the clerical staff is not urgent at the moment, and by the time it does become urgent I think they will be utilised by me for the Department.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: The Commissaries Department, it is remarkable, is one of the few Government Departments that have not considerably exceeded their expenditure for the last

ten years. The expenditure in 1918 was \$46,773 and the actual expenditure in 1927 was \$46,782. I do not know the cause but the fact remains that it is so.

LANDS AND MINES.

The votes of the Department of Lands and Mines next engaged attention

Item 2—Secretary, Lands and Mines Department (~~\$3,120~~ to \$3,600 by \$120), \$3,360.

Mr. CRANE: The point I desire to raise here is not one affecting the question of estimate at all—I mean such part as the emolument of the officer. What strikes me is that you are going to establish a very dangerous precedent from my standpoint. I notice we are having a Secretary, Lands and Mines Department. I do not know where this idea sprang from to have a Secretary, Lands and Mines Department. I think we had them to Boards and not to individuals. Looking at the explanatory memorandum it appears that the work which this officer is expected to perform is really the supervision and control of the office in the absence of the Head of the Department. Really, I do not think that “Secretary of Lands and Mines” is at all an appropriate term. This officer has absolute control of the Department in the absence of the Commissioner, therefore make him Assistant to the Commissioner, as we have in the case of the learned Attorney General’s Office, if you do not want to make him Assistant Commissioner of Lands and Mines or Deputy Commissioner of Lands and Mines. It does not seem the right thing as you will soon have another Department wanting a Secretary.

The CHAIRMAN: The Lands and Mines Department is one of those Departments that will undergo a great deal of re-organisation, and it seems hardly worth while quibbling over the title at the present moment. However much it is provided in the Estimates, I have already said that no new appoint-

ments are going to be filled until this re-organisation is completed. It is indicated very clearly that the Department of Lands and Mines has much work, heaps of it brought on year after year, and the fact is the Commissioner of Lands and Mines has a large and, in my opinion, very unwieldy Department to handle. What direction the re-organisation will take I am not quite prepared to say, but one thing is pretty certain, and that is the formation by degrees of a proper survey section in it. I really think it will not be worth while pressing that point at the present time. Is there any other item of expenditure hon. members would like to criticise?

Items 45 and 46—Plns. Windsor Forest and La Jalousie \$6,152 and Pln. Hague \$3,749 (Charges on Colony Lands).

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I do not know, sir, if I would be in order in asking a question about these estates. Members of the Council, and certainly myself, would like to hear something about these two estates. They are in the nature of Land Settlements, and I think it would certainly be interesting to hear something in regard to the success of these two estates which have been acquired by Government and for which and on which large sums of money have been expended. Are the Government satisfied that they are getting value and that the material prosperity of the settlers there is all that can be desired? In driving down the West Coast to Georgetown you pass by these two estates. Recently elaborate measures for the drainage of the estates have been undertaken, and very expensive fences have been erected quite recently to keep cattle off the public road, I understand. I do not know who is bearing the cost of that: whether it is recoverable from the settlers of Windsor Forest and Hague. It certainly must have cost a pretty large sum of money, and I would like to know something in regard to these two settlements.

The CHAIRMAN: That is a question for the hon. Commissioner of Lands and Mines.

Mr. MULLIN (Commissioner of Lands and Mines): These estates have been an unqualified success as rental settlements and are on quite a different footing from owner-settlements. They were kept as rent settlements at the request of the settlers themselves and on the representation of the delegates from India who impressed on us that the East Indians prefer to rent from Government rather than to be subjected to the fluctuation of assessment as existed in the village districts. The people—I think I can say without qualification—are prosperous and contented. Occasionally they have a grumble but it is always listened to and the hon. member for that part of the country will tell you that they are much better off than any other settlers on privately-owned estates in any part of the Colony. In respect to the question as to what we are getting out of it, it is a difficult thing to say. The settlements are self-supporting. The rents are covering the expenditure. The amounts are given on pages 11a, 11b, and 14c, and the revenue you will see more than covers the expenditure. The fencing of the pasture is very necessary, and, I think, attention was drawn to that by the Hon. Mr. Dias yesterday—the necessity in a settlement for fencing in the cattle and thus preventing them from breaking down the trenches and dams. And we have carried that out. The settlers pay an agistment fee which covers the cost of fencing and maintenance.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the hon. member.

FOREST TRUST.

Mr. CANNON: If this is the correct head, I should like to again—I think this is the fourth or fifth occasion I am doing so in this Assembly—record my vote against this expenditure. I am going to do so again this year with a little more vigour than I have done

before, because I am satisfied that this Colony has not benefited to any extent by this expenditure. I have read in Your Excellency's Message the remarks in connection with this head, but I am sorry, sir, to say that I have found nothing to justify my acquiescence on this occasion in this vote. Personally, I feel that you are attempting to conserve something that does not call for that process. Your Excellency must know, and if you do not then you will very shortly appreciate the fact, that so far as the timber in this Colony is concerned we have just been able to deprive the outskirts of the forests of this Colony of their timber, and to talk about conserving something which you have not yet actually tapped seems to be an anomaly which I cannot appreciate or understand. I feel, sir, with regard to this matter that if it is necessary—if the Secretary of State and his advisers think that this Colony should be inflicted with this Department—we might have it under the Lands and Mines Department. An efficient officer—an officer with the necessary training—if such an one is necessary, may easily be provided, and therefore the Head of that Department will be able to get all the technical and skilled advice necessary in the circumstances. I do not expect that I shall get a satisfactory reply from Government, because it seems to me to be a bit of legislation forced upon this Colony. I am positive it is not the will of those in this Colony; they are not responsible for it. Be that as it may we have got it, and all I can do is to say that I consider it a wicked waste of public money and to record my vote against it.

Mr. WOOD (Conservator of Forests): Sir, I think that a certain amount of the opposition, which, to do justice to the hon. Senior Member for Georgetown he has consistently displayed against my Department, is due to the fact that he and others, I think, had hopes that the inauguration of the Department would immediately result in a very large expansion of the trade in timber. The report of the Committee, which sat at

the Empire Forest Conference in Canada and which recommended the formation of a Forestry Department here, was very careful to say that it is not usual that the inauguration of a Forestry Department causes an immediate and large expansion in the revenue from the forest. But they quoted instances, and in every case almost where a Forestry Department has been formed it has been found that the rise in revenue is gradual but continuous, subject naturally to fluctuations of trade. We have been criticised this year in other places on the ground that the timber trade is not as great as it was expected; it was rather less. That is one of the inevitable fluctuations which occur. I do not think that on any occasion I suggested that there would be an immediate large increase of revenue such as some people hoped. I have a very clear memory that when I went to see the Authorities at the Colonial Office after my appointment and to ask for information or any reports that they could give me they gave me all they had, and I remember telling them perfectly clearly that although I knew there would be a great many species of trees in the forests of this Colony, the "pagoda" tree does not exist here or anywhere else this side of the moon. The "pagoda" tree is one which, when shaken, emits showers of gold. The hon. member is as anxious to find them in the forests here as I am, but they do not exist.

On the other hand, the position is that there is this very large area of forests about which nobody knows anything. It is very easy to call a forest magnificent, but it is very difficult to persuade people, who possess the necessary resources and the marketing organisation in other parts of the world, to come here and use those resources they possess to our advantage as well as to their own, if we are not in a position to give them definite information such as they require before they will risk capital which they have not amassed recklessly, taking the word anybody gives them that they have riches to offer. Consequently the first phase of any forestry development out here is

bound to be some sort of stock-taking. You will find large forests in this Colony which are unusually valuable from the point of view of tropical forests. I was somewhat laughed at in some quarters when at the first conference I said so. I must say I find myself unfortunately between two fires. I was informed publicly that nobody outside the Colony believed that the forests had anything like the valuation that I had put on them and would regard the people of this Colony as either knaves or fools—knaves, if they thought we were trying to boost the value of the forests beyond what they were worth, fools, if we really believed the forests to be worth what we said. That report, being the first of its kind, was sent by the Colonial Office to the Imperial Forestry Institute at Oxford, the head of which has a greater forestry reputation than anybody in the Empire. Since then a reply has been received that the valuation I had put on the forests was so low as to appear fantastic. Yes, sir, that institute used the word "fantastic" in a scientific document. Between these two fires I did not quite know where to turn. We have got to take perhaps one way or the other, or if anybody likes they can take the middle course and believe me.

As regards the formation of the Forest Trust I should like to say a word regarding that. This Colony has been accused of having this legislation forced on it from the other side. That is not so; it was put up by me entirely off my own bat when I first came here, and it seems to me that it was not an unstatesmanlike way of trying to overcome difficulties which I knew were bound to arise. I am not speaking in any sense of political difficulties but of difficulties of administration which have occurred wherever a Forestry Department has been started. A certain number of people believe we are following the pattern of British Honduras but it is not the case that we are following the pattern of British Honduras. We have been accused, I expect to be accused, that this Department had its expenditure increasing at an enormous

rate. It is quoted that in 1925 the expenditure on the Department was \$20,000—I am speaking approximately—but in 1926 it had jumped up to \$45,000 and so it goes on. Well, sir, it is a matter of history that the expenditure in 1925 was what it was because I and the other officers who were appointed to the new Department landed in the Colony on the 28th October 1925, and consequently we had only November and December in which to spend money. We managed to spend \$20,000 in preliminary work but we could not naturally have spent more. The only reason why we spent that much was that we should use what money was voted in getting an office which we had not then got. If hon. members look at the comparative statement you would find that in each complete year our expenditure,—extended over a period of three years—in spite of increments has scarcely varied and has actually fallen slightly.

With regard to the annual appropriation of \$50,000 I would like to remove from the minds of the elected members the fear that this expenditure was the thin edge of the wedge and would go on increasing. That is a layman's view which we cannot accept. Our appropriation is fixed by law and if we are going to expand and spend more money it is up to us. We have got to earn more money. Everybody knows exactly where he stands. It also means considerable work for us to get outside interests to come here with their resources and marketing organisation. It was also a safeguard against the old rumour that capital was afraid to come here because it was afraid that conditions would alter after investing money. Well, as regards timber propositions that does not only apply, or did not only apply, here but applied as regards other Colonies as well. In fact, I was in the Board room of a large London Company when this objection was raised and I pointed out that there was nothing to fear. I had the example of a very large African Colony put to me—not the Gold Coast but Nigeria—and I pointed out that one of the objects of the Forest Trust

is that there should be continuity on both sides as regards policy. When I went Home the last time I was asked to go and see the Board of Directors of a Company which showed considerable interest in this Colony and which has world-wide organisation. I went with the main idea that I had to talk timber. I explained to them the Forest Trust. They did not talk timber and I heard nothing more from them until one morning somebody from the Colonial Office told me that they had just got a cable from the Colony that the Forest Trust was passed. Half an hour later the telephone message came "Will you have luncheon with the Board?" I accepted and we talked timber until evening in that Board room. It shows that an organisation of that nature like the Forest Trust has some effect on people on the other side.

As regards the statement by the hon. Senior Member for Georgetown that he cannot understand why conservation should be carried out—he did not use the same words—because the forest resources were illimitable, I have heard that talk in the United States, Canada, Australia, I have heard it in New Zealand. I have heard them talking about it in Jamaica.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: (Mr. Hector Josephs): Only talking.

Mr. WOOD: I have heard the tale also in India. In one part of India where I served there are certain small areas of forest. The district near the forest carries an agricultural population of 1,200 souls to the square mile and every square yard of that place is under crops—two crops a year, in the hot weather and cold weather—and the small amount of forest left was left by accident. It has reached such a pitch there now that you see men scraping the dry bark on the road-side trees to put in the fire to cook their food. It shows that things have reached a scandalous position. The forest reserved for fuel and grass is bringing in five times the rental of agricultural lands such is the shortage of land for forest produce. Apart from that, the

density of the population and the pressure of cultivation on the soil makes it such that the cow-dung has to go under the cooking-pots and nothing goes back into the soil. The result is impoverishment of the soil. Eighty years ago John Lawrence, when it was proposed to form settlements in this wild and desolate track, said he could see no sense in doing so. It was proposed to try and drain some of the areas in Bengal which were below tide-level and were costing an enormous sum in keeping out the sea. He objected on the ground that it would be cheaper to keep out the sea in Bengal than the irruptions of wild elephants. Not an individual was there then but to-day the population is 1,200 to the square mile. In eighty years we may easily find ourselves in the same position. (Mr. Eleazar: Hear, Hear). If that is the case you have got to bear in mind that this notion of a Forest Trust is not in any sense a *bureaucratic* question at all. It is not a question of the Colonial Office ordering this Colony to have that legislation. It is not a question more or less forced on unwilling people. The idea of a Forest Trust emanates from the most advanced democracy in the Empire. It started in what was then the Colony of New South Wales, now one of the States of the Australian Commonwealth, and spread to the west of Australia. The history of the Forest Trust in New South Wales shows that the destruction of the forests there was proceeding very rapidly. A Commission was appointed and advised the conservation of the forests and the appointment of a Conservator. The Legislature agreed and the Conservator was appointed. Nine years later the Legislature discovered that the destruction was still going on rapidly. They complained about it; they had appointed an expert to deal with it and it was not dealt with. The expert pointed out that he had warned them but he was dismissed for not warning them often enough. A Commission of three was appointed with absolute power over the forests, and some years later this power was given to one Commissioner. Western Australia followed suit, and their

Conservator is a corporation acting under his own seal, appointed for seven years and can only be dismissed by a $\frac{3}{4}$ th vote of both Houses, passed and repeated again six weeks later.

I think that any accusation levelled against the Trust as being of bureaucracy is altogether beside the point, when the most advanced democracies in the Empire have acted thus in the light of experience. I want to go back to the question of our having a full forest. We are sufficiently advanced to reach the second stage of getting people interested, and when interested of getting them to come in. We have not reached the stage of amassing revenue. It is not a question of its not being business like. It is rather like putting up a factory-building. You do not expect to make a lot of money while putting it up. When you get people interested it is rather like putting in machinery, involving the expenditure of money and no returns. The second stage is now pretty well in full swing and we hope shortly to have interested concerns with sufficient capital, with sufficient resources and sufficient marketing organisation outside to start with the development of the forests. I rather hope that the first two or three firms that do start on that would declare spectacular dividends. Then our terms would be able to go up very high, and we would be able to get spectacular dividends from the people who were coming in when they knew that they were coming in to get good returns.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I regret I did not look up my map of the world before I came in. I am getting rusty about my geography. I want to know what is to become of the \$50,000. I quite agree with all the hon. Conservator has said, but at this stage with our forests practically primeval this Department is really too elaborate and is taking too much of our revenue. While the grass is growing we are practically selling the horse to get the fodder. We have no money. Every day we are getting nearer to bankruptcy. We know that we

are very hard pressed for money and what we are saying is that this \$50,000 every year—from \$20,000 in the first year to \$45,000, to \$50,000, to \$52,000 and now to \$50,000—is really not comforting to contemplate and we would like to get an assurance at least because Government cannot with one stroke of the pen wipe it out. We like to know there is some hope that in fifty years millions of people would come in. I will not be there and I do not expect many of us will be there, and although we must do something for posterity still we have to think of ourselves and the taxpayers who are paying the piper now. I intend that we cut it lower down and I ask Government if some of these items cannot be reduced. I see here seven officers of the Department are drawing house allowances. If you are engaging officers to work in the forests why pay money for their house allowances? It seems to me the salary they get they need not get it altogether. They should take that out of their travelling and subsistence allowances. These are things one would like to have investigated. Of course, Your Excellency promised to investigate all these matters, but after all it is only our duty, if we cannot prevent them, to indicate to Your Excellency the direction in which any feeling is. This is one—seven officers' house allowances in one Department and a large sum of money on subsistence allowances.

The CHAIRMAN: I would like to remind hon. members that quite shortly—next week—we are due to send a delegation to the West Indies Conference at Barbados, and unless we can shorten discussion on these academic matters and get through the Estimates more rapidly we shall have to miss the Conference. I was very much impressed by the good defence Mr. Wood made for the Forest Trust. I have read about the wonderful value of our forests and the necessity for capital to develop them. Well, we are not going to get capital to develop anything unless we are able to

show them the goods and we are not going to be able to show them the goods unless we are able to make a complete economic survey of the forests. I may only add this to my remarks: If I had not found a Forest Trust when I came here I would have asked for it. In my opinion, it is one of the biggest and most valuable things done by Government during the last few years—the formation of a Forest Trust—and I think hon members are getting it dirt cheap at \$50,000 a year. We cannot expect to get returns in the first few years, but that returns will come there can be no doubt at all if we have got any valuable woods in our forests whatever.

Item 11—Travelling, labour and materials for Surveys and Subsistence Allowance, \$18,500.

Mr. CRANE: May I make a suggestion under this Forest Trust head? I notice a large sum is spent on travelling. The suggestion I desire to make is that when two Departments have to work in the same district it may be considered if their officers can travel together in order to save some part of this vote. It is quite necessary that the two Departments—Forestry and Lands and Mines—should work hand in hand.

Mr. WOOD: We have done so consistently in the past and propose to do so in the future—share our vote.

COLONIAL TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT.

Item 150—Steamer and Launch services, \$300.

Mr. CRANE: I desire just to enquire whether this item relates to the launch service between Leguan and Wakenaam.

Mr. BAYLEY (Managing-Director, Colonial Transport Department): Item 150 is for the payment of compensation (accidents and losses) in re-

spect to the steamer and launch services.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD.

The CHAIRMAN: The Local Government Board will be more or less one of the Departments which will disappear during the course of 1929.

CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES DEPARTMENT.

The CHAIRMAN: The Co-operative Societies Department will be absorbed in some other Department during 1929.

BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES.

Mr. CRANE: I was listening for the concluding words which you uttered in respect to the two previous Departments as regards this Department. This is a Department which is placed under the Surgeon General—I am making general remarks—probably because it concerns itself with the registration of marriages, births and deaths. That is the sole function of this Department. This work may be done by the Registrar's Department, and I urge on Government that this Department should be looked after.

The CHAIRMAN: Very probably this Department would be absorbed in some other Department. I do not know whether we will be able to effect economies on it but I hope we will be. It is pretty sure to be absorbed in some other Department.

OFFICIAL RECEIVER'S OFFICE.

The CHAIRMAN: I have not yet had time to enquire into this Department but I rather fancy there will be alterations in it.

POLICE.

Mr. CRANE: I do not know, sir, but I think the hon. Inspector-General of Police will recollect that some time last year the question was raised about house allowances for certain non-commissioned officers.

Colonel BRADBURN (Inspector General of Police): The Militia Band.

Mr. CRANE: There was also some anomaly about their pay which it was promised to rectify this year, and I wonder if it has been corrected.

Colonel BRADBURN: That has been carried out under item 24—A merit allowance has been granted for Sergeants, Lance Sergeants-Major, and Sergeants-Major who have completed a certain number of years' service; in the case of Sergeants-Major \$50 a year each, and \$36 a year to each of the other N.C.O.s who have completed ten years as Sergeants and Lance Sergeants-Major.

Colonel BRADBURN: I have found it necessary to move in under "Other Charges" an amount for the passage of the new Staff Officer. The allowance was made last year but he did not sail until the beginning of this year and therefore the amount lapsed. I suggest that \$700 be inserted as the maximum.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think we need add it now. We can deal with it when the time comes if he ever comes.

Colonel BRADBURN: He has already left England.

The CHAIRMAN: Oh, he has left! The Treasury would be able to find the money for him. On the Treasurer's technical advice we must include it.

Agreed.

Item 71—Purchase of canvas stretchers and Blankets for cells, and lock-ups, \$882.

Mr. DIAS: I move an amendment to item 71. I suggest, sir, that this item be allowed to remain over until we are better off financially. The period that prisoners spend in these lock-ups is very short.

Mr. CRANE: Before this item is actually deleted—I understand the motion is for the deletion of item 71—I hope that some amount would be left on the Estimates. I agree with the hon. member to a certain extent, but those who unfortunately find themselves in the firm grip of the law, and have to be detained during the night on a greenheart plank without any protection or covering find themselves in an uncomfortable position. Sometimes persons find themselves in the lock-up and have to sleep there through no fault of their own. Maybe they are unable to find bail. I do not think it behoves us who have the destiny of these people in our hands to deprive them of ordinary comfort. It is unfortunate that in this Colony at nights a greenheart floor is exceedingly cold. Even though they may be guilty of a crime it is no reason why they should be placed in such a position as to injure their health.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am going to ask you not to strike the item out at all. When it was brought to my notice that certain persons incarcerated in Berbice got ill as a result—one man got fever throughout the period—I had to ask that blankets be got for those people. First of all it is inhuman to make people lie on a greenheart floor. It practically causes injury to health.

Mr. SEERAM: I am going to urge on Government the retention of this item for the reasons advanced by the two hon. members. If Your Excellency knows the sufferings of these unfortunate people I am sure you would without hesitation say that this amount is totally inadequate. I know we want to save as much money as we can, but if we try to save in this direction we will be saving in a false direction.

Mr. DIAS: The prison health statistics in this Colony are the very best.

The CHAIRMAN: The prison and the lock-up are two different places. Prisoners do get feather-beds in prison but not in the lock-ups. They do get blankets in prison.

Messrs. CRANE & ELEAZAR: We are speaking of lock-ups.

The CHAIRMAN: There seems an apparent desire to give as much comfort as possible to drunkards, disorderly persons and other people locked up for the night. I would like to put it to the "open" vote. I have an open mind on the subject and it does not matter on which side Government members vote.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: This matter had been very carefully considered in the past, but as hon. members have urged that it is merely a question of humanity and that the people who find themselves unfortunately in the lock-up are very often not in a position to withstand sleeping on a hard floor without protection, I would ask that the vote be passed.

Question: "That the item be struck out put, and negatived."

PRISONS.

Item 5—Keeper, New Amsterdam Prison ((\$936 to \$1,176 by \$48), \$1,176.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am going to move the reduction of this item by \$1 so as to put myself in order to bring to Government's notice what had transpired in respect to this officer last year. The building which the officer now occupies is completely new. Sometime last year, through no fault of his own, a fire broke out on the premises and he was completely burnt out. He only escaped with his life. His wife and, I think, two children were burnt and died and all his furniture also destroyed, so that he lost everything he had including his wife. The matter was brought to Government's notice last year and there was a virtual promise on the part of Government that he would be given some consideration in order to

re-furnish his quarters. I have been informed that not a single penny has been given that officer, although when the matter was brought to Government's notice the man was given hope at the time to believe so.

The CHAIRMAN: Was the officer occupying his own house?

Mr. ELEAZAR: Government quarters, but the furniture had belonged to him. The Government had put up a new building, nothing like the previous one, nothing so palatial or so beautiful, but had given him nothing to assist him in re-furnishing his quarters. I am asking Government to see its way to give him some help.

The CHAIRMAN: I am afraid Government cannot agree to that. It is creating a bad precedent to assume responsibility for the officer's furniture. It would be a different thing if we had given him furnished quarters and it was proved that the fire was not through his fault; then we would have to replace them. I am very sorry but I cannot see that we can accept that.

Item 16—Dietary, \$8,300.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I think this is the convenient place to mention what I want to say. In New Amsterdam there is a very extensive prison farm. That farm had been very helpful to Government in the past. It yielded provision of all sorts in considerable quantity and I understand up to recent times it supplied the Public Hospital and Lunatic Asylum. For some reason the practice of sending up short-time prisoners from Georgetown to New Amsterdam has been discontinued and these prisoners are kept in Georgetown, and there are not enough prisoners in the gaol to work on the farm which is now practically abandoned. While speaking of agriculture here you have prisoners practically idling about Georgetown where they are not wanted and over the Ferry, and you have a valuable prison farm in New Amsterdam, kept for years by

prison labour with very good results, practically abandoned. I would like to ask that Government resume the practice of sending up short-time prisoners who have not sufficient work to do in Georgetown to keep the farm a going.

The CHAIRMAN: We may be able to supply New Amsterdam with a few more prisoners during the course of the year if our plans about Bartica come off. I think the Inspector General has some idea. We cannot take any measures for filling them at present as eventually I expect that New Amsterdam Prison will more or less disappear. Then that farm will be available for letting out or sale to private enterprise.

Major CRAIG (Director of Public Works): An application was made to my Department during last year for the installation of a water supply on that farm and I applied to the Town Council of New Amsterdam for permission to extend their water mains to the farm so that it could be properly worked. The Council replied that they had no water to spare for use on the farm. So it was impossible to work the farm any longer. (Laughter).

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.

Item 32—Post Mortem Examinations, \$2,500.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am going to move that this amount be deleted from the Estimate. We have a Medical Department which is to my mind a nursery for malingerers. A Medical Officer is paid to reside in a district. He gets from Government a handsome subvention and has the right to exact payment from every patient who consults him. The only thing he does for Government is in the case of post mortem examinations. The Magistrate makes an order to look at a person and he goes and makes a post mortem examination for which he charges Govern-

ment \$10. If he treats a poor child whose parent cannot pay he gets \$2 from Government for doing so. What is the officer doing for the salary he is getting from Government? After all by residing in the district he makes all the money for attending to the people, as if he were not there other practitioners would visit the district. I think this is an amount Government can well save and say to the officer "You live in the district and thus you can do for the salary you are getting."

Mr. LUCKHOO: It gives me much pleasure to support the motion for the deletion of the item for the reasons advanced by the hon. Member for New Amsterdam. In the country districts the doctors in addition to their substantive pay receive certain perquisites from the estates' authorities, are allowed private practice, and are given travelling and other allowances. I think they are well paid for their services. There are no public Government Dispensaries in these country districts and I do hope that they will be established in the outlying districts to help the people who are suffering there. I do not think that any extra remuneration should be given these Medical Officers for *post mortem* examinations. I think the reasons advanced are quite sound and if a proper investigation is made into the matter it would be seen that there are no grounds for paying out extra remuneration for these examinations.

The CHAIRMAN: Probably this is a long standing custom. If what is said is a fact it would come out in the investigation which would be made into the Department in 1929.

Mr. SEERAM: I think this is a Department that can undergo a good deal of scrutiny, and I am sure that from this source much saving can be had. A considerable amount of money is expended on this Department, and I am afraid that the poor people in the outlying districts do not reap much of the benefit that is intended to go to them. Besides a substantial salary these Medical

Officers in the districts receive, there are numerous instances—numerous reports have been made to me by a large number of people in my constituency—that they are charged the very exorbitant amount of \$15. I know that in some cases payment is demanded by the doctors before attendance, and in default there is no attendance. In some cases death ensued. The salaries that are paid these Medical Officers are pretty high, ranging from \$300 to \$400 besides extra emoluments. I do not in the least grudge these Medical Officers receiving good salaries but I think some means may be devised whereby there will be a tariff of fees to be charged, especially in outlying districts where the people are very poor. There should be a fixed maximum figure. I think perhaps the "panel" system may be introduced as in England where doctors are given \$120 per month and allowed to charge a certain limited amount as fees. I am sure if that system was adopted here it would be to the best interest of the poor people. Recently some cases of exorbitant charges were brought to the attention of the Surgeon General and I have been authoritatively informed that the Surgeon General is in deep sympathy with the poor people.

Mr. SEYMOUR: From my experience of Government Medical Officers in the country districts the matter calls for much consideration. In many cases the people have not got the money and the doctors would not treat them unless they got their fee. It is very unprofessional for a doctor to extort money before attendance to a patient. It calls for an investigation into the Medical Service. These doctors are paid a good salary, and steps should be taken whereby they should not sit down and extort money from the people but give the people all the medical assistance and not charge a fee except under Government control.

Mr. CRANE: A motion was accepted by Government last year for an enquiry or investigation into the Hospitals of the Colony and the entire Medical Service. Government insisted that certain preamble be altered and to meet Gov-

ernment those alterations were made, but Government has not yet set up the enquiry and a good many persons regard it as a breach of faith. There were up to recently very grave complaints about the hospitals and if Government had set up that Committee with definite terms those complaints would have disappeared. I cannot consider that a breach of faith is intended, I can only think of something occurring to prevent it. One of the points to be remembered, sir, is whether or not these medical men should be subsidised, whether they should be paid salaries and other perquisites they now enjoy.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member makes the accusation of breaking faith. The position is that this Committee was promised last year, but owing to a great deal of other work it was not possible to find suitable men to sit on it. A more important point is that the Surgeon General was on leave of absence and should be there in order to give evidence on behalf of his Department. The matter is not being overlooked and as soon as the Surgeon General returns it would be brought to your attention, sir, and probably you will then get people to sit on that Committee.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: Your Excellency, is the Council still discussing post mortems, sir?

The CHAIRMAN: We are discussing the general subject in connexion with the Medical Department. The post mortem is over. (Laughter).

HOSPITALS, ASYLUMS AND DISPENSARIES.

Item 23—Medical Officer No. 1 Dispensary and Alms House (\$1,560 to \$1,800 by \$48), \$1,800.

Mr. DIAS: I desire to draw attention to this item. The position is this with regard to this item. Some years ago—I think it was shortly after the War—

it was difficult to secure the services of medical men from abroad for the Government Service. I think there were two or three Government Dispensaries in those days and private medical practitioners had to be engaged to perform the duties at those dispensaries. In the case of one of these practitioners he was given the No. 1 Dispensary in addition to doing certain duties on certain days at the Alms House. From time to time the complement of Government Medical Officers has been increased and to-day we have a full complement. I am suggesting to Government that it is no longer necessary to engage the services of a private practitioner to do this work. In addition to this expenditure the officer gets a travelling allowance of \$270 and shares with Government the fees that are collected at the Dispensary. I think he gets 50 per cent. It is work that can be advantageously performed by a Medical Officer from the Hospital. It only requires a certain number of hours per day at the Alms House and also at the Dispensary. I think the work can be done from that quarter without impairing the efficiency of the work of the Public Hospital. I commend the matter for the consideration of the Government. I feel that this is an item of expenditure that might well be saved.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: What I feel about the whole Medical Department is this: If there is any Department of the Civil Service of this Colony that we ought to get good results from and that there ought to be an absence of complaint and dissatisfaction from the members of this Council and the public it is the Medical Department, when you take into consideration the efforts

that have been made to increase the efficiency of the Medical Department of the Colony for the last ten years. When you look at the comparative statement what do the figures show? In 1918 the total expenditure for the Medical, Bacteriological, X-Ray Departments and Hospitals, Asylums and Dispensaries was \$394,000 and it has gone steadily up during the following ten years to \$547,000. I do say that the service we get is certainly not commensurate with the huge total that we are called on to pay for Medical Service in this Colony. In saying that I am making no attack on any individual medical practitioner, the Surgeon General or anybody else. I am speaking generally. This is not the first time I have commented on what I may call the excessively large sum we have to pay for medical service in this Colony, and I ask that a Commission be appointed to enquire into the whole working of the Medical Service. As the hon. Member for West Demerara said, members of the old Legislature were promised that some such enquiry would take place with a view to greater efficiency and greater economy, and I do think the time is ripe for it and that better means can be devised in regard to the organisation of the Medical Service of the Colony and in regard to its cost. Certainly there is not at all a satisfactory feeling in the Colony, whether it be in Essequibo, Demerara or Berbice, that in regard to the Medical Service we are getting full value for the huge sum the taxpayers are called on to pay annually.

The Committee was at this stage adjourned until the following day at 11 o'clock.