AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION BILL 1927

**House of Assembly, 15 December 1927, page 2234**

Second reading

**The TREASURER (Hon. R. L. Butler**) moved—

That the Speaker do now leave the chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution:—-

*That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to empower the Treasurer to pay certain moneys to the University of Adelaide for the promotion of research in agriculture, and for purposes incidental thereto.*

Motion carried.

The resolution was agreed to in Committee on the motion of the Attorney-General and adopted by the House. Bill introduced by the Attorney-General and read a first time.

Later,

Second reading.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. H. Homburg)—The object of this Bill is to provide for an annual grant to be made to the University of Adelaide in the current financial year and in each of the succeeding nine financial years. The amount proposed for the current year is £5,000, for 1928-1929 £7,000, and the amount increases by £1,000 in each succeeding year so that by 1936-1937 the amount of the grant will be £15,000. The money is to be paid to the University for the purpose of extending researches in agriculture and allied subjects at the Waite Agricultural Research Institute. In proposing this grant South Australia is following the example of a large number of other States. Dr. Richardson, in his recent report on agricultural research and education in other lands, set out in detail the extent to which other research institutions were supported by Governments. He indicated that each of the 48 agricultural experiment stations in the United States received appropriations of £18,000 per annum from Federal Funds, and £36,000 per annum from the State Governments. A new Act—“The Purnell Act”—provides for an additional appropriation of £12,000 per annum for a 10-year period to each of the 48 agricultural experiment stations for the conduct of investigations in agricultural economics. In South Africa, with a population comparable with our own, the Government contributed £150,000 for capital to each of the two University faculties of agriculture at Stellenbosch and Pretoria, and in addition, provided an annual sum of £15,000 for maintenance. In Great Britain there are 18 agricultural research institutes, and these receive appropriations varying from £10,000 per annum to £26,000 per annum from Government sources. The Rothamsted Experiment Station receives a grant of £26,000 for maintenance, part from its endowment, and a similar grant is made to the Cambridge School of Agriculture. In Canada each of the provinces maintains a University, School of Agriculture, and Agricultural Research, and these institutions are supported from provincial funds by sums ranging from £20,000 per annum to £40,000 per annum, apart from other sources of income. In Japan, Java, Germany, Sweden, the same active financial support is given in agricultural research. In Java the Sugar Research Station at Pasocroan has an appropriation of £114,000 per annum to deal with researches on one crop, viz., sugar. In Japan there are three Imperial Agricultural Research Institutes, each of which receives over £40,000 per annum from the Government for maintenance. In addition, there are research institutes at four of the Imperial Universities, and in each of the 48 prefectural Governments, all of which are supported from public revenue. In Sweden the Svalof Cereal Breeding Station receives £16,000 per annum from public funds, besides its own considerable revenues, for research on one phase of work— the production of new varieties of cereals. In view of the liberal and generous financial support given in other countries to agricultural research not only for capital expenditure but also for maintenance, the amounts recommended in the schedule in the Bill represent the minimum appropriation necessary to make the work of the Waite Institute effective. To carry out the programme of researches at the Waite Institute requires a capital sum for buildings and equipment of £18,000. The Government have not been asked to make any appropriation for capital expenditure, as the University has been able to provide for the necessary buildings through the generosity of Mr. John Melrose and Mr. J. T. Mortlock, with additional small sums from the Empire Marketing Board and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research. I hope that the generosity of Mr. Melrose and Mr. Mortlock will be an incentive to other public citizens to come forward and assist what is probably the most important institution of research in practical agriculture in Australia. The conditions of the grant are set out in clause 3. These conditions impose upon the Research Institute an obligation to carry out researches in a number of subjects, to furnish an advisory service in plant pathology and entomology to the Minister of Agriculture, and to carry out any investigations required by the Minister of Agriculture. Clause 4 provides a means whereby the Government may, in the future, secure scientifically trained agriculturists for service in the Government. The. clause empowers the council of the University to nominate to the Minister of Agriculture not more than four persons per annum who have taken a course in agricultural science at the' University. The Government are required to employ any persons so nominated at a salary of not less than £300 a year in one of the Government departments where agriculturists are required. In every State of the Commonwealth, except South Australia and Tasmania, provision is made to recruit officers of the Department of Agriculture and other kindred departments from university graduates in agricultural science. In Victoria the Government may appoint six graduates annually for a period of 10 years, and as the result of this practice the Department of Agriculture in Victoria has now one of the best trained agricultural staffs in the Commonwealth. Under the proposal it will be four years before the first graduates are available for appointment. This year has demonstrated the great value South Australia has derived from agricultural research and better methods of farming. The season has been, exceptionally dry, but because of the improved methods employed by the farming community and the knowledge gained from scientific research, a season which 15 or 20 years ago would have been practically a failure, has been reasonably successful in the circumstances. I move the second reading.

Mr. SHEPHERD—It is a pleasure to have the privilege of supporting a Bill of this nature. It is very difficult to estimate the value of this grant towards the research work performed by the Waite Institute. This State is just beginning to realise the advantages to be derived from scientific research. Unfortunately, our agricultural education has lagged behind that of other countries. I hold no brief for the Americans or their methods, but in agricultural education the United States has set a standard very difficult for other countries to reach. Practically every State in America has an agricultural college, the word college being equivalent to university here, which is of enormous assistance to the primary producers. I remember how such a college in the west of America by scientific research overcame a difficulty in connection with the cultivation of grape fruit which is the national breakfast food of America. I am interested in an experiment being conducted now at the Waite Institute to ascertain the manures most suitable for South-Eastern soil. Remarkable results have already been secured and we are looking with great expectation to the completion of the experiment. Parliament should place on record, when passing this measure, its appreciation of the services of Dr. Richardson and his staff. Unfortunately, during the past few years the State has not enjoyed the benefit of as much of Dr. Richardson’s time as we would like, but we must realise that he has been serving a greater purpose for the Commonwealth Government. However, I hope that in the future Dr. Richardson will be able to spend more time in his own State. We must not overlook the fact that, in making the grant to the University to enable them to carry on this work, the State is receiving great services in return in the training of agricultural experts who, in future, will comprise our agricultural staffs. It is only through scientific research, allied with practical knowledge, that we can successfully develop the State and produce a first-class article which will command the highest price in the world’s market. I support the second reading.

Mr. ANTHONEY—I congratulate the Government upon introducing what I regard as a very important measure. It was the policy of the Government to increase production, and the amount the Government are placing at the: disposal of the Waite Institute will go a long way in helping them to attain the desired results. At all times we should place on record our appreciation of the Waite family in placing this excellent bequest at the disposal of the University and the State. I can assure the Government, as their representative on the University Council and the subcommittee of the Waite Research Institute, that the authorities appreciate greatly the assistance the Government are rendering them in connection with this very fine institute. There are two phases in connection with the development of agriculture. One relates to increased production in settled areas and the other to the development of new country. If we are going to open up new country, we must employ a great deal of money in providing waterworks, schools, and other facilities. On the other hand the expenditure provided for in this Bill will bring about results much more quickly. Most of the new land available for production is in low rainfall areas, and the soil is more or less poor. In the South-East drainage would be required. In developing our land the practical must always go hand in hand with the scientific, and this is where the Waite Institute steps in. It is doing a very fine work in endeavouring to increase production. The institute has an income of £8,000 per annum. In addition it charges the Department of Agriculture £1,200 per annum for advisory services, but it costs the institute something like £3,000 per annum to provide those services. This is brought about by the heavy demands made on the Institute for expenditure on laboratories, greenhouses, &e. It is not enough to identify diseases. They must be investigated and controlled. The identification of the oat disease in the South-East, known for 30 years, took the Waite Institute three years of investigation. Research is a painstaking and slow process, but an economically sound one from the State’s point of view. The first money received under the new grant will go to strengthening and consolidating the existing work of the Waite Institute. Agricultural chemistry is important as applied to soil problems in cereal and pasture production, irrigation practice, the manuring of crops, and the study of plant diseases, &c. agricultural problems of cereal production, and the improvement and management of pastures. In 1928 it will be necessary to create and equip a new department in entomology for the study of lucerne flea, codlin moth dried fruit grub, &c. The strengthening of the Waite Institute in these directions will enable the University to collaborate more effectively with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research and the Empire Marketing Board, which insists that the University must find pound for pound in every research that is undertaken. It is vitally necessary that this money should be advanced to the University in order that the Waite Institute may be able to effectively and properly carry on the work it has undertaken. I support the Bill.

Mr. McMILLAN—I am pleased the Government have introduced the Bill, and I support it wholeheartedly. I would like to see a larger amount provided for agricultural research, because the expenditure would be quite warranted. The sum of £5,000 seems quite adequate, but we must consider the wonderful work being performed for producers with regard to checking of plant diseases and fungus parasites. The tomato wilt is an example of that. If that can be checked, and the authorities of the Institute are on the right track to combat that disease, it will mean thousands of pounds to this State. They are also conducting another very comprehensive research into the take-all disease. If that can be checked or they can find a preventive for it, it will mean a huge amount to this State and Australia generally. We have the most capable staff of agricultural experts in the Commonwealth and they are not confined to the University and the Waite Institute, because we have them also as field officers giving instruction to the different settlers throughout the State. The Agricultural Department have lost the services of some wonderful officers because we have not sufficient money to hold them. Mr. Savage, Manager of the Berri Experimental Orchard, has accepted an offer from the Government of New South Wales. Everyone who has taken an interest in horticulture knows the wonderful work he has performed in that direction. Dr. Richardson has returned from a trip, and has stated what is being done in America. We have failed in the past to realise it is necessary to apply science to agriculture in exactly the same way as it is necessary to apply science to medicine. or any other profession. The day has long since gone by when farming could be done by rule of thumb. There is every opening now for a farmer to be trained as highly and as scientifically as any other profession. In conjunction with the Commonwealth Government we are doing something now which has never been done in Australia before, and that is a complete soil survey of Australia, I understand Professor Prescott is conducting that work at the institute on behalf of the Commonwealth. I have visited the institute and know the wonderful work being carried out there. I have also come in touch with the instructors in mallee areas who are doing good work in playing their part in the scheme. Members are doubtless aware that there is a good deal of friction at the University in connection with the medical course and that friction still exists. Parliament provides a certain amount of money annually for the University.

Mr. SHEPHERD—On a point of order, is that connected with the matter before the House?

The SPEAKER—I am watching the matter closely and was just on the point of calling the honorable member to order, but often members traverse short distances from the matter under discussion and come back again in order to place some point before the House. I leave, it to the good sense of the honorable member not to transgress the rules of the House. I do not want to restrict members unduly.

Mr. McMILLAN—We hope to have students doing the agricultural course at the University, and as Parliament has provided money on those lines it should be safeguarded in at least having some authority over the expenditure of that money and the course to be set. Apparently once the money is handed over, Parliament ceases to function apart from the members we have on the council. It is a question which is being debated keenly in this State and felt very acutely by a section of the community. We have students from other Universities coming here and taking the positions which our graduates should have. That is decidedly unfair. It appears the University have set a standard up to which they cannot teach or else their method of examination is entirely wrong. It would be better to have some jurisdiction over the expenditure of this money. It would get over cases of friction which have occurred and are still taking place. I congratulate the Government on introducing this Bill and ask that the grant be increased to £7,000.

The Hon. T. BUTTERFIELD—I commend the Government for bringing in this measure because we must realise that as an agricultural State the more educational science is abroad the more progress we will make. Australia has made immense strides because of the application of science to agriculture. I am glad the last speaker eulogised the officers in the field, because I take that as praise for the last Government, which increased the number of agricultural officers in the field to a remarkable extent. I am sure the numbers could be increased still further with benefit. For all time Australia must owe a debt of gratitude to the founder of the Waite Institute. We can all agree with the Attorney-General in the complimentary remarks he made regarding two further amounts of assistance rendered by Messrs. Melrose and Mortlock. Gifts of that kind are of immense benefit to the country. I am quite agreeable to the amount to be set aside under the Bill. I understand that beginning at £5,000 a year it is to be increased during the next ten years to £15,000, and that there will be a subsidy from the University. Clause 4, providing a means whereby the Government may secure scientifically trained agriculturists, should be looked into, as they would be required to employ any person nominated by the University to the number of four per annum at salaries of not less than £300 a year, whether there is a vacancy for them in the department or not.

The Attorney-General—You do not think the University would make a nomination for the mere fun of the thing?

The Hon. T. BUTTERFIELD—I know what occurred previously when the Hon. Crawford Vaughan entered into an arrangement with the school of afforestation at the University. A contract was made that when the students trained there passed their examinations the Government would find them employment, and the youths expected that the contract would be carried out, with the consequence that we found we had to employ them whether we liked it or not. The Government are again contracting, and if people send their sons to the University to be trained in agriculture, and the boys pass their examination successfully, I can see no reason that the University could advance for refusing to nominate them. What will the University trouble about the affairs of the Government? It is the duty of the University after having accepted a student and trained him in a course of agricultural work, to make the nomination if the boy is suitable, and it will be the duty of the Government to make an appointment at not less than £300 a year. Nominations are limited to four per annum, which in 15 years would result in the employment of 60 men at £300 a year. There is no opportunity for them here as far as I can judge. The House should not agree to the proposal blindly and lead the boys up a lane. A previous Government had to repeal that condition in regard to afforestation, because we were going to get landed with a number of youths who had studied afforestation and we had no occupation for them. It might have gone on, like Tennyson’s brook, for ever. We should exercise care in regard to this clause, which may lead future Governments into difficulties and bring about serious heart-burning on the part of students who may be disappointed at action that may be taken in the future. I endorse the desire of the Government to foster agricultural industries. I have given proof of my bona fides in the matter as a Minister of Agriculture. I increased the number of, dairy and agricultural inspectors to a marked degree, showing that I fully realised the necessity for more education and instruction in the scientific art of agriculture. While the Government may be commended upon this attempt to increase scientific agriculture, I cannot commend them for their activity in the field. The desire of all keen agriculturists must be that the Government should push ahead with further agricultural development. The keynote of any future success of this country is the further development of our agricultural lands, and I regret that more is not being done in that direction. In many directions we see a halt called. Yesterday we were told there would be a cessation for some time of work in regard to the boring plants operating in the North-West, in country which is largely pastoral.

The COMMISSIONER of CROWN LANDS —On a point of order, I ask if the boring plants in the North West have anything to do with the Bill before the House?

The SPEAKER—I ask the honorable member not to pursue that subject any further.

The Hon. T. BUTTERFIELD—I am sorry to have transgressed the Standing Orders, but I was always of the opinion that pastoral and agricultural pursuits were so closely allied that there could be little or no distinction between them. I am rather astounded at the attempt to prevent a discussion which has a much wider range than the interpretation put on it by the Minister, who got up so excitedly in his attempt to prevent a dissertation on the possibilities of an extension of the pastoral side of agriculture. We are so dependent on the growth of cereals and wool that it seems strange there should be any attempt to interfere with a debate of this kind. I regret we are to have large areas of land left undeveloped, and that there is to be a cessation of activities in one branch of our primary production. I would like to see more activity displayed so that there might be more opportunities for the boys who will be trained as a result of the Bill before us. There is a definite danger that the boys who will go to the University for their training will be disappointed if the number nominated cannot be absorbed by the Agricultural Department. There should be no danger like that in connection with a Bill of this kind, which is a definite contract with the parents of the boys who may go to the University in conformity with it.

Mr. CARTER—After going through a session chiefly characterised by retrenchment and taxation, it is gratifying that the Government have not seen fit to retrench in connection with research work. As one who had the privilege of visiting the Waite. Research Institute I was much impressed with what is being done there. Having had considerable practical experience I fully appreciate the results of their work. Experimental work is essentially a government sphere. It is too costly to be undertaken by the individual, and the results from experimental work, if any successful results are achieved, are of great value to the State, particularly in agriculture. As we are primarily an agricultural State it is easily understandable how anxious the Government are to assist forward any works that would make for the betterment or development of our agricultural industry. Five thousand pounds certainly appears an infinitesimal amount to contribute in comparison with the value of the results in certain directions, or the damage that is created through the ravages of certain pests that have not been eradicated, such as take-all, bunt, and flag smut in wheat. The loss through these troubles possibly amounts to hundreds of thousands of pounds annually. In some seasons the damage in the Commonwealth runs to millions of pounds. When we consider the damage that these pests do the contribution from the Government appears rather small, but I am pleased that it is proposed to increase the subsidy from year to year. The late Government appointed a number of agricultural instructors, and their policy of instruction has been followed by the present Government. In certain localities, however, the instructors have not the value they have in others. Imagine, for example, a young agricultural instructor endeavouring to teach Mr. Lyons and other up-to-date Lower North farmers how to manage their farms and increase their wheat yields. We should place the instructors in the districts where they will be of the most value, by carefully selecting the areas and the men. More could be done to encourage experimental work by subsidising individuals. These men could be selected by the local agricultural bureaux, who would choose suitable men. Any results obtained then would be of particular value, because they could be applied to the locality with certainty. I congratulate the Government upon this move, and hope to see the Waite Institute achieve results of great value to Australia.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clause 1 passed.

Clause 2—"Power to grant money to University for agricultural research”.

Mr. BLACKWELL—We have no Bill on our files, and I should like to know what we are doing.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL—The Bill was only introduced this afternoon, and there has not been time to get copies printed. However, I did the next best thing by showing my copy to the Leader of the Opposition. He also had a duplicate of my speech explaining the measure, and we arranged that the Bill should be taken through its various stages.

Clause passed.

Clause 3—“Conditions of grant."

The Hon, G. R. LAFFER—One of the disabilities of a Speaker is that he is muzzled on the floor of the House, so I hope the Committee will not regard my making a few remarks at this stage as an intrusion. Nobody is more keenly interested in the betterment of agricultural operations than I, and I congratulate the Government upon introducing this measure, as I am sure the expenditure will prove of great benefit to the State. The member for Newcastle paid a tribute to Mr. Waite for having made this bequest. I remember when the bequest was announced in this House by the late Mr. Peake, and how impressed I was with the absolute silence with which it was received by the Labor Party. It was not generous, because this bequest is likely to have a very far-reaching and beneficial effect.

Mr. Shepherd—I am surprised at you dragging that in.

The Hon. G. R. LAFFER—I knew Mr. Waite well, and know the interest he took in this subject. Sir Archibald Weigall, a former Governor, knew the value of research work in South Australia and the important part it would play in improving pastures and the betterment of agricultural operations. I hope that the staff at the Waite Institute will direct portion of their energy to a solution of the problem of settling our huge areas of comparatively poor land. Much of this country is in good rainfall area, and if it could be brought into profitable occupation by the application of scientific methods the State would benefit enormously. There are large tracts of country in my district which could be developed if labour were available at a reasonable rate of pay. By the use of top dressing the productivity of my district could be doubled. On Kangaroo Island there is plenty of virgin country which is considered very poor, yet remarkable results have been achieved by the application of, suphosphates. One of our problems is the development of this poorer land, and so far as I am concerned I would be prepared to allot such land free of rent for 20 years to men prepared to develop it properly. This institute can assist materially in the successful occupation of that country. On Kangaroo Island the stock are afflicted with a coastal disease. That disease is rampant, but after careful investigation by the Agricultural Department the men are more confused now than what they were before the matter was taken up. I understand there are 60,000 sheep on the Island today and they are largely affected by worms. All the assistance they have had from the Agricultural Department so far has not been of much help to them. There are many problems in the fruit industry. Already a disease has appeared in the hills amongst the pear trees which threatens to wipe this fruit out of existence. It has come in the form of woolly aphis, which affects the roots. There, seems to be no method of combating the disease, but unless we can do so these trees will be wiped out. Last week I had an opportunity of seeing the new disease which is menacing the cherry industry. I hope a solution of many of our problems will come from the expenditure of this money. One cannot help being impressed with the work being carried out at the institute. I hope an opportunity will be given for co-ordination between that portion of the Waite Institute under the University and that under the Department of Agriculture. I see no reason why the large tracts of land held by the Department of Agriculture should not be made available for investigation by the Waite Institute. I know of nothing which will benefit this State to a greater extent than the breeding of varieties of wheat suitable to our conditions. If we can raise a variety which will raise the standard by one bushel an acre only it will mean a huge amount to this State. In the future science will play a more, important part in agriculture than it has done in the past. The amount set aside in the Bill will be of material advantage to the State. With regard to the point raised by Mr. Butterfield, when we realise that to-day many professions such as medicine and law are being overstocked, there must be a tendency for students to go in for other branches. If a large number of students take up the agricultural course and the whole of them cannot be absorbed we may have to repudiate the contract.

Mr. R. S. RICHARDS—I am in full sympathy with this measure. We are all desirous of doing something which will add to the production of the State. I know of nothing which provides more scope and promises greater opportunity for development than our agricultural industry. With regard to the contributions to be paid by the State to this industry, I am at a loss to know what basis was accepted when the schedule was prepared. I intend to support the measure and trust the State will derive great benefit as the result of the work of this institute.

Clause passed.

Clause 4—"Provision for appointment of nominated persons in the Government Service.”

The Hon. T. BUTTERFIELD—I oppose this clause. Under it the Government contract to employ youths nominated by the University Council. Once an officer becomes an employee of the Government it is most difficult for the Government to get rid of him. Under this provision we are bound to employ at not less than £300 per year annually four students who may be nominated by the University. Many members know of officers who are not satisfactory, but unless the Minister can bring conclusive proof that such is the case he has got to keep on employing such officers. I could give the names of some who have been unsatisfactory to their department for many years. It would be most unfortunate to find ourselves encumbered with a number of unsuitable men because of a definite contract offered. We should have some choice in regard to the men we employ, and the opportunity of dispensing with some if they do not suit. It would be very difficult in view of this deliberate contract to rid ourselves of men who are unsatisfactory. Conclusive proof that a man is unsatisfactory is required to enable a man to be discharged, and it is somewhat difficult to give.

Mr. Anthoney—The honorable member does not think the Director will surround himself with a lot of unsuitable men.

The Hon. T. BUTTERFIELD—Under this clause he will have to take the men and place them somewhere. He will have no choice. The clause is impossible of fulfilment unless with unfairness either to the student or the Government and the country. Students should not be encouraged in the expectation that they will get a lifelong job from the Government at not less than £300 per year. They should have to take their chance with everyone else in the community. If the Education Department or the Agricultural Department desire the services of these youths they will be after them. No doubt a large number will be absorbed by private enterprise. We should not undertake a solemn contract like this without serious thought. The clause should be opposed unless the Minister sees fit to amend it, particularly as it was found necessary to break a contract with young men who were going to be foisted upon the Afforestation Department whether it required their services or not.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I admit that the Committee has been placed somewhat at a disadvantage in members not having copies of the measure before them. I handed the Bill to Mr. Butterfield, and it is probably his perusal of clause 4 that has prompted him to oppose it in its present form. He referred to a time when Mr. Crawford Vaughan arranged something similar and the State found itself in a difficulty because when the students had completed their course it had no suitable occupation for them. We have no desire for a repetition of that, but there is a considerable difference between the conditions which prevailed when the students referred to could not be found appointments and the present proposals. In the first-place great progress is going on in agricultural research. It is not intended definitely to employ these persons in agricultural research as controlled and managed by Dr. Richardson, but they may be drafted into the. Agricultural Department, the Education Department, the Stock and Brands Department, the Woods and Forest Department, or the Irrigation and Drainage Department. There are a number of departments among which we hope to utilise the services of four men per year. Will any member say we cannot find an appointment for a man trained in the University for a number of years and given the best of education in one or other of these respective departments? I should be extremely surprised if there is no avenue for the continuous employment for the whole of their lives of every one of these men. The Hon. T. Butterfield made rather a point in emphasising the obligation of the State to continue the services for the whole of their lives. The clause does not say anything of the kind. It provides that on the nomination of the University the Government shall appoint the graduates to one of the departments mentioned. No time is specified though it is stipulated that the salary shall not be less than £300 per annum. No Government would think of employing a young man, even though he be a bachelor of science or a bachelor of arts unless he were satisfied with his qualifications and character. The Minister will have no difficulty in imposing desirable conditions.

The Hon. T. Butterfield—What conditions could the Minister make?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL—He could appoint the applicant for three years for probation, or even for six months. A dissatisfied applicant would have no right secured to him by this Bill.

The Hon. T. Butterfield—Yes; there is a specific contract.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL—The clause is sufficiently elastic to give the Crown all the: protection it needs, and at the same time enables the State to secure the benefits of a young man trained in the University in a particularly useful branch of science.

The Hon. F. W. CONEYBEER—I am satisfied that these young scientists, when introduced into the Civil Service, will do immensely valuable work. It is only by the aid of science that a country can progress. Little Denmark, with her poor soil and dreadful rainfall, leads the world in agriculture because of the proper application of scientific methods. What is a paltry £300 or £400 per annum when the State will receive such great benefits.

Mr. SHEPHERD—Unless we safeguard the future of the students it will be difficult to induce boys to undertake the course. This clause is a necessary corollary to the grant given by the Government and the Committee should stand by it. I see no danger in the clause whatever.

The Hon. T. BUTTERFIELD—No Minister could resist the terms of this clause as a deliberate contract made with the young graduate. The Minister certainly could not place him in the service on probation. Further, the Public Service Commissioner would most certainly have something to say if displacements had to be made to find positions for these young men. No Minister could put these students into jobs without consulting certain powers in this State, but once appointed, these young scientists could not be displaced even though they were unsuitable. In the other sciences we do not guarantee the graduates Government employment at a certain salary. They risk public demand, and so should these young men. There is no doubt that their services will be required, but a specific contract should not be made by this clause. What employer would make a contract of this kind? What employer would agree to employ a man fresh from the University at a certain salary for all time. I oppose the clause.

Clause and title passed; third reading, December 16.