

item this year. To the people of the west this is the most important item in the agricultural estimates, especially when we consider that there is approximately \$800,000,000 invested in live stock throughout the Dominion, and approximately \$136,000,000 in the province of Saskatchewan from which I come. There has been an impression amongst the farmers throughout the west that the present Minister of Agriculture is not very much in love with the establishment of T.B. free areas.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): What is your authority for that?

Mr. McKENZIE (Assiniboia): I say the statement has been made that the minister is not very sympathetic towards that movement. I hope that it is not true.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): Who made the statement?

Mr. McKENZIE (Assiniboia): There is no need to say. The statement has been made.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): We have put more pressure on that work since we started than ever was put on before.

Mr. McKENZIE (Assiniboia): The hon. member for Compton this afternoon gave us to understand that the ex-Minister of Agriculture had not done all he might have done in connection with the establishment of T.B. free areas and the matter of compensation. I have very decided views in the matter of compensation, but I shall not deal with that now. I do not like to see any reduction made in the vote for the health of animals branch. Let me quote from the report of the veterinary director general, of the health of animals branch. At page 5 he says:

I am glad to be in a position to report that there were no extensive outbreaks of contagious disease throughout the Dominion during this fiscal year.

We have statements such as that from year to year from the Department of Agriculture and the health of animals branch, and we are in that fortunate position because we have been spending a substantial amount every year to prevent these contagious diseases spreading. For that reason I do not like to see the vote cut down. Suppose we had an outbreak of foot and mouth disease, which we have never had in this country because of the activities of the officials of the health of animals branch. There would not only be the loss of the animal, but the loss of our market because of the embargo that would be put on by other countries against our cattle. In the same bulletin from which I quoted mention is made of a disease called

[Mr. R. McKenzie.]

dourine, which was prevalent in Canada at one time, and I note that nearly \$49,000 was expended in compensation for that disease. Within the last nine or ten years there has not been a case of it in Canada. This is largely due to the fact that we have been spending substantial sums on the health of animals branch, and I would like an explanation from the minister as to why a reduction is being made in the vote this year. There are a great many other things I should like to say in connection with this vote, but I shall defer my remarks to a later time.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): In answer to the question raised by my hon. friend it is only fair to myself to ask that the hon. gentleman before he repeats rumours that he may have heard in the country, which I would think no person should pay any attention to, should at least take steps to see if there is any truth in them.

Mr. McKENZIE (Assiniboia): I mentioned the rumour to give the minister an opportunity of looking into it.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): I think we are on pretty safe ground in that matter. We have put orders in council through for a lot more restricted areas in the same length of time than was done by the previous government. The reason the vote appears cut is this: The officials of the health of animals branch feel that before we undertake the establishment of any more new areas we should clean up the second tests, instead of leaving things at loose ends. The idea is to keep clean the areas that we have established, rather than to undertake new work which is impossible, according to my officials, with the staff that we have at the present time. Therefore our work this year is to complete the tests, which the experts tell me is the right thing to do, and I may say that their opinion is confirmed because in many places where we made the second test the losses have been as high as 28 and 29 out of 32. So it is advisable not to continue as we have in the past without checking up as we go along and making a complete job of it. We feel that we are on the right track. I would appreciate it if the hon. member would tell me who starts any false rumours regarding myself.

Mr. McKENZIE (Assiniboia): It is quite satisfactory to me that the minister has denied the rumour. I quite appreciate that the department may find it difficult to obtain a sufficient number of men to carry on the work as they would like to do it.

There is one other matter I would like to mention, and it is one in respect to which I