

[Lieut.-Colonel McDonnell.] referring to experts especially when, as I understand is normally the case, he has not had the opportunity of visiting the countries themselves.

Therefore, I suggest that there should be technical departments in the Colonial Office, manned by experts, corresponding to the various services that there are in the Crown Colonies themselves. Then, when questions dealing with any particular service came to any Territorial officer, he would be able to refer to the expert and get a reasonable opinion. The expert, from his position, would have a general knowledge of the problems affecting his particular service in every one of the Colonies, and thereby each colony would be able to benefit by the experience of all. At present, all the various technical services are run in water-tight compartments, and no colony or group of colonies is able to benefit from the experience of others. Nobody would think of starting an army in the field without giving the commander-in-chief experts in the various branches of the service under his command to act as his advisers. Nobody would think of starting to run railways, or hospitals, or roads, or telephones, or telegraphs without giving the general administrator in charge of them technical experts. That is what I suggest should be done in the Colonial Office. Otherwise, I feel that we shall blunder, like we have blundered before, by putting railways in the wrong places, starting a railway system that has no beginning and no end, and so on.

We have made a start, I know, on these lines, and the Colonial Office have recently appointed a Director of Medical Services at a salary of £1,500 a year, but that is only a start, and we must not stop there. I should like to give one example of what a tropical medical service really is. The United Fruit Company, which controls a territory in Central Tropical America about three-quarters the size of the Gambia, and with a population of about three-quarters of that of Gambia, has, at its headquarters in New York, a medical organisation which costs £16,000 a year. They have installed that organisation to look after a territory and a population smaller than those of our smallest Crown Colony, and we cannot say that we have gone very far if the Colonial Office have been empowered to

spend £1,500 a year to look after the sanitary and medical welfare of nearly 50,000,000 people. It is not extravagant, in any case. I believe now they have also started a Director of Education, but do not let us stop there.

We are only beginning to feel our way, but let us not be charged with not really developing these countries, for which we are trustees, both for the benefit of the natives and for the benefit of this country, because I am sure that in a very short time we have to look more and more towards our Crown Colonies and Dominions to find places, not only in which to sell our goods, but from which to get our raw materials. If you take our cotton trade, for instance, unless we have got countries of our own to produce material for our Lancashire mills, we may be badly off at no very distant date. It is in our own Empire that we shall find the solution of our troubles, and I, therefore, suggest, first of all, that there should be two Secretaries of State appointed, one for the Dominions and one for the Crown Colonies. I hope, of course, the present Secretary of State will understand that there is no reflection on him intended. What I mean is that it is too big a job to put on to any one man. Furthermore, there should be a Committee appointed to report if and how it is desirable to reorganise the Colonial Office so that we can develop the Crown Colonies to the best advantage of the inhabitants of those countries and of the workpeople of this country.

Mr. HADEN GUEST: I want to ask the Government, following on the matters raised by my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby (Mr. Thomas), to let us know what is their policy with regard to migration. One hears a good deal about the obstacles there are at present to migration. If one is interested in the matter, one hears that people are waiting sometimes for months before they are able to get away, and one hears of boys selected, chosen, and in every way fitted who are not yet able to get away. There seems to be a very great block in the flow of migrants from this country, and I should like to know what the Government are proposing to do in the matter. I addressed a question recently to the Secretary of State for the Dominions on the subject of miners, asking what proposals, if any, the Government had with

regard to making special arrangements for such miners as might wish to migrate after the conclusion of the present stoppage, for it is admitted on all hands that there will be a large number of men surplus to employment in the mines. The right hon. Gentleman replied that no arrangements were made at present and that he could not hold out—I am very glad he was so frank about it—any false hopes, but that the matter must be specially discussed at the Imperial Conference. The policy of the Government on this question is really not at all satisfactory. The Labour party policy on this matter was very clearly defined last year at the Annual Conference at Liverpool, and I wish to refer to that policy because I think that it indicates the only way of really tackling the migration question.

The Labour party, in framing their policy, said that they wished to have a survey of the land resources of the Empire with a view to a scientific re-distribution of population, and I think that is the only way in which you can really begin to tackle this problem, because unless you know what land is available, unless you know what places want to have migrants sent to them, and unless you know what facilities you are going to give to those migrants, you are not in a position to do very much in the matter. At present, it is very difficult to get accurate information as to what land is actually available for the use of migrants overseas. When the Attorney-General of New South Wales was over here he kindly supplied me with some very striking figures with regard to New South Wales itself. They had been obtained by the New South Wales Government, and they had been confirmed by, I think, the Railway Commissioner and the Minister of Agriculture. They were to this effect, that within 12 miles of the railway in New South Wales there was land available for wheat growing, for mixed farming, or for dairy farming equal to the total area of England and Wales. If that be so in the one State of New South Wales, you have got an area of land there which obviously is capable of taking as many migrants as we could send to them in the next 20 years.

There is no difficulty whatsoever about land for men to settle upon. [An Hon. Member: "In this country."] I am

coming to that point later. The real difficulty is that there is no definite policy for sending men out and for conferring with the Dominions to get an agreed plan. The Labour party at the last Conference, in addition to determining that their policy was that of a survey of the land for a scientific re-distribution of population, proposed that colonies for training men to work on the land should be set up in this country, through which men could pass before they went on to the land. The setting up of training colonies in this country is necessary, not as a training in farming or agricultural work primarily, but as a kind of sorting place, to find out whether the people who are proposing to go out as migrants are, in fact, the right kind of people to go out. Many Members of the House were present the other day at a meeting of the Empire Parliamentary Association, when the Prime Minister spoke of the Australian problem and the drift to the towns in that Continent. There is a drift to the towns in Australia, in Canada, in this country, and, in fact, all over the world. That is a psychological problem, and, in choosing migrants, the first thing to solve is that psychological problem. You want to get the people who are not going to drift to the towns, but who prefer to live in the country, and, as a matter of fact, that is a very simple thing to do.

Men who have been accustomed to living in a town, and especially married men and their wives, may think in a moment of enthusiasm that it is a fine thing to go out to the Australian bush, or on to a Canadian farm, or into New Zealand, but when they get there they find that the conditions of life in those places are not suitable to them. They cannot run around the corner to buy something at a shop, they cannot go to a cinema, because there is not one within twenty miles, and they do not have those ordinary amusements to which they are accustomed and the ordinary excitements which they think of at home as a matter of course. There are many people who do not like that kind of life, but it is impossible for the town dweller—and for practical purposes nearly everyone in this country may be accounted a town dweller in that respect—to know whether he is fit for life in Canada, Australia, or another Dominion without some preparatory training of some kind. I