

making inquiries into the possibility of completing the work which was intended to be completed at the Fredericton station. While we are not in a position to state definitely that the work will be completed, every effort will be made to have it completed at least to the point where we can make use of the building.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): So far so good. Has the minister any estimate of the remainder of the cost? I think it would be a pity to stop the work now.

Mr. GARDINER: I have not that information under my hand at the moment.

Mr. WRIGHT: Has the minister received any requests that experimental farms be turned into producing units for the duration of the war?

Mr. GARDINER: When we reach item 14 it will be found that a number of stations are being closed. Perhaps we can discuss the question on that item rather than on this, which has to do with the general administration of experimental farms.

Item agreed to.

Experimental farms service.

13. Central experimental farm, \$589,435.

Mr. SENN: There is quite a large reduction in the vote for this particular branch. I notice there is a large reduction in wages. What is the reason for that? Is it the intention of the department or of the farm manager to lessen the activities of this branch?

Mr. GARDINER: As I have said in connection with a number of other items, we have had to cut down all our expenditures because of the necessity of having a greater amount of money available for war services. We have made provision for cutting out certain services at the central experimental farm. It is not intended this year to carry on the chrysanthemum show which has been held year after year, and flowers for the show will not be provided. The intention is to maintain the different varieties that we have at the farm but not with the idea of putting on a show in the fall. A number of features of that kind are being dropped this year, together with associated labour.

Mr. SENN: Is there any revenue from the central experimental farm? If so, where does it appear in the accounts?

Mr. GARDINER: The revenue does not appear in the estimates, but I have before me figures showing that the revenue from the Ottawa farm was \$27,958.36, and the total revenue from the farms, \$213,083.07.

Mr. SENN: I can readily understand that experimental farms are for experimental purposes and that they cannot be expected to pay their way; they have not done so, by a very large amount. From time to time there has been a certain amount of discussion about the inability of farmers to pay their way or to make a reasonable profit on their operations, whether upon large farms or upon small farms. I have often thought it might be a good thing if the department would undertake to operate a farm of reasonable size with the purpose of showing farmers how to operate their farms for a certain length of time at a profit. I believe, if that were tried, it might open the eyes of some people as to the meagre profits which are made on farms and the difficulties under which farmers live. Is any such scheme on foot, or are the farms merely for illustrative, experimental and demonstration purposes?

Mr. GARDINER: It is true that the farms are operated for experimental and demonstration purposes. They are not operated with the purpose of making them pay. I do not believe it would be possible so to operate a farm which is carried on for experimental purposes. It might be possible to run some of the smaller farms on a paying basis in a greater degree than they have been, possibly during the war period, as was suggested on this side of the chamber a moment ago; and we intend to reduce costs in connection with some of the farms, at least, during the next year or two while we are in the difficulties of a war period.

Mr. SENN: If it is not possible to operate a whole farm to demonstrate whether it can be run at a profit, the department might take a field of grain, carefully calculate all the expenses of planting, cultivating, harvesting, threshing and marketing the crop, and establish in that way how it is possible for farmers to produce at a profit.

Mr. GARDINER: That is done to a degree on the farms now. For example, farms with field crops are operated under the husbandry branch and records kept of the cost of production.

Mr. SENN: With what results?

Mr. GARDINER: With the idea of determining what particular crop will pay.

Mr. SENN: Would the minister say what result has been obtained in any particular line?

Mr. GARDINER: I have a synopsis of it here, but not in detail.