

# Hansard

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## Written Answers

### Volume 121: debated on Monday 24 November 1919

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## Written Answers

### Old Age Pensions

**Captain COOTE**

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asked the Prime Minister what action, if any, it; contemplated by the Government upon the Report of the Select Committee on Old Age Pensions?

**Mr. BONAR LAW**

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I regret that I can add nothing to the answer which I gave on Wednesday last to my hon. Friend the Member for Lincoln. The Report must be carefully considered before a, decision is taken.

### Civil Service (Pensions Basis)

**Mr. GRANT**

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asked the Prime Minister whether pensions now being paid to ex-Civil servants, who have retired since bonuses, on account of abnormal conditions arising from the War, were added to their pre-war remuneration, are based on their pre-war remuneration plus war bonuses; whether the increased war bonuses which have been quite recently awarded by the Civil Service Arbitration Board are to form part of the basis of pensions to Civil servants on their retire- ment; and whether he will reconsider the case of older ex-Civil servants whose pensions are based on pre-war remuneration, without the addition of war bonuses, and submit it for corresponding arbitration?

**Mr. CHAMBERLAIN**

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The existing arrangement with regard to the reckoning, within certain limits, of war bonus for pension was fully stated in my reply of the 16th April last to the hon. Member for the Devonport Division. of which I will send mv hon. Friend a copy. The recent increase in

war bonus does not affect that arrangement. As regards pensioners who were not in receipt of war bonus at the time of their retirement, I am not prepared to depart from my previous decision, which was reached after very full consideration.

## Treasury Bills (Interest)

**Mr. A. SHAW**

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asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) whether the rise to 5½ per cent, in the rate of Treasury Bills has had the result desired; and whether the increase in the sale of the bills has been sufficient to justify the increased cost to the country;(2) whether he can state the reason for the advance in the rate of Treasury Bills; whether he is aware that the lack of clear information on this subject and in the new rise in the bank rate, and the resulting uncertainty, have driven up the price of private discount to 6 per cent.; and what steps he proposes to take to avert the resulting loss to the trade of this country?

**Mr. CHAMBERLAIN**

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In answer to these questions, I would refer my hon. Friend to the answers I gave on Monday, 10th November, to the hon. Member for South Hackney. I would only add that I do not think that the trade of the country ultimately benefits from a false monetary position, and that, so far as I am able to judge at present, the increase in the bank rate is having salutary effects.

## Income Tax

### Abatements

**MAJOR HILLS**

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asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, though widowers with children are allowed an abatement off income assessable to Income Tax for help which they have to obtain to look after their children, a widow has no similar right, and therefore widows who are wage or salary earners and have to work outside their homes and employ someone to look after their children are deprived of abatement and will he consider the advisability of extending the privilege to widows so circumstanced?

**Mr. CHAMBERLAIN**

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I would refer my hon. and gallant Friend to the answer, a copy of which I am sending him, given on die 5th instant in reply to a question on this subject by the hon. Member for Newton.

## Food Supplies

### Calves (Slaughter)

**BRIGADIER-General WIGAN**

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asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Agriculture if he can state the Government's policy with regard to tin; slaughtering of calves?

**Sir A. BOSCAWEN**

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The Board, in conjunction with the Ministry of Food, are fully alive to the necessity of securing the meat and milk supply against the danger of abnormal slaughter of calves, and they have under constant consideration the steps that may be taken to secure this end. Information in possession of the Department shows that the slaughter of calves is not as widespread as is often suggested. It should be borne in mind that a large proportion of the calves slaughtered could not be reared with profit, and the Board are of the opinion that the difficulty cannot be solved by methods of control (which have proved far from satisfactory). Greater encouragement should be given to the breeding of animals that will pay for rearing, and with this object in view the Board propose to develop their live-stock scheme, which has already done a great deal to relieve the situation.

## Maximum Pricks

**LIEUT.-Colonel SPENDER CLAY**

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asked the Food Controller whether he is aware that an impression exists to the effect that it is equally culpable to sell controlled articles below the authorised maximum price as above; and what steps he can take to make the position clear.

**Mr. McCURDY**

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The Food Controller has repeatedly emphasised the distinction between maximum and fixed prices; and he does not consider that the impression to which the hon. and gallant Member refers can be at all general. I may add that a considerable proportion of sales is made below authorised maximum prices.

## Local Committees (Powers)

**Mr. LUNN**

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asked the Food Controller whether he will issue in pamphlet form an explanation of the powers possessed by local authorities or local committees with respect to the control and distribution of food, particularly of milk, and the running of national or municipal kitchens, with special reference to the method of procedure under existing Acts, Regulations, or Orders?

**Mr. McCURDY**

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The Food Controller will consider this question, although he is doubtful whether, at the present stage of food control and having regard to the need for economy, the issue of such a pamphlet is required. I may say that officers of local food committees are always ready to give advice or information to the public on all matters falling within their province.

## Royal Dockyards (Commercial Shipbuilding)

**Mr. HAYDAY**

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asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether any steps are being taken or decided upon in the direction of providing the Government dockyards with merchant shipbuilding and repairs; and whether, in view of the fact that such work as repairing, altering, disguising, and reconditioning merchant craft has been done during the War and that merchant work could be continued without much in the way of conversion having to be done, he will give this matter his careful and immediate consideration, with a view to finding useful and necessary employment for men who would otherwise be unemployed and in receipt of no unemployment donation?

**Dr. MACNAMARA**

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I would refer my hon. Friend to the reply which I gave on Wednesday last to a question by my right hon. Friend the Member for South

Molton, in which I explained the types of productive work now being done by us in the Royal dockyards, and explained the steps initiated by the Prime Minister to secure an exhaustive investigation of the feasibility of utilising dockyard facilities now to be set free from naval effort upon work of a productive character.

## Temporary Writers, Woolwich

**Mr. PURCHASE**

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asked the Secretary to the Admiralty what is the present rate of pay for temporary writers employed in the Woolwich Dockyard with and without bonus; whether there has been any alteration in the rates of pay since August, 1914; and, if so, will he give details of the same.

**Dr. MACNAMARA**

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It is not clear whether my hon. Friend's inquiry relates to temporary writers in the Royal Dockyard, Woolwich, or in the Royal Naval Ordnance Depot, Woolwich Arsenal. The former establishment is under the control of the War Office, and I have no information as to the rates of pay obtaining there. Temporary writers in the Royal Naval Ordnance Depot at Woolwich are at present paid on the same basis as members of the permanent staff, namely, 24s. to 40s. a week, by annual increments of 2s. a week. This is exclusive of war bonus, which is at present 24s. a week, plus 20 per cent, of the rate of pay. No adult writer, however, receives less than an overriding minimum of 60s. a week. The various rates of pay authorised for temporary writers at Woolwich during the War have been as follows:

- 4th August, 1914, to 29th January, 1915—24s. a week.
- 30th January, 1915, to 31st March, 1916.—From 26s. to 38s. a week.
- 1st April, 1916, to 7th November, 1916.—31s. to 38s.
- 8th November, 1916, to 31st December, 1916.—35s. on entry, 38s. after one month, and 40s. after twelve months.
- 1st January, 1917, to 31st March, 1917.—39s. on entry, 42s. after one month, 44s. after twelve months.
- 1st April, 1917, to 31st July, 1917.—40s. on entry, 42s. after one month, 44s. after twelve months.
- 1st August, 1917, to 14th October, 1917.—43s. on entry, 46s. after one month, 48s. after twelve months.
- 15th October, 1917, to 2nd December, 1917.—49s. flat rate.
- 3rd December, 1917, to 31st December, 1918.—54s. flat rate.
- 1st January, 1919, to 31st March, 1919.—60s. flat rate.
- 1st April, 1919, to present date.—As for permanent writers, subject to overriding minimum of 60s. a week.

## Russia

### North Russia Campaign (Awards)

**Mr. BRIANT**

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asked the Secretary of State for War when the decorations awarded in the field to soldiers and airmen in the recent North Russia campaign will be announced in the "London Gazette?"

**Mr. CHURCHILL**

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As regards awards to the Army, I would refer my hon. Friend to the written answer on Thursday last to the hon. and gallant Member for Central Hull. I am afraid it will not be possible to publish in the "London Gazette" the outstanding awards before the middle of December except possibly in the case of Military Medals and Meritorious Service Medals which may be gazetted in the first week in December. I understand that the General Officer Commanding, Archangel, has yet to notify further names of officers and men on whom he conferred immediate awards. As regards the Royal Air Force, all the decorations, etc., awarded in the field were announced in the "London Gazette" on the 18th November.

## Southern Russia (Administration)

**SIR S. SCOTT**

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asked the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Great Britain is responsible for the administration of any portion of Southern Russia; if so, what number of British officials are employed; and what is the cost of the administration?

**Sir H. GREENWOOD**

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The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative; the remainder of the question therefore does not arise.

## British Prisoners (Supplies)

**Lieut.-Colonel MALONE**

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asked the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, since the date of breaking off diplomatic relations with the Soviet Government of Russia and the proposed conference about to take place, any attempts have been made to supply food, clothes, or other necessaries to the British prisoners in the Russian republic?

**Sir H. GREENWOOD**

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The answer is in the affirmative, but we do not know whether the consignments have reached their destination.

**Lieut.-Colonel MALONE**

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asked the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in the event of delays occurring in arriving at a decision at the conference between the hon. Member for Leeds and the Russian Soviet Government regarding the exchange of prisoners, arrangements are being made to supply the British prisoners in Soviet Russia with food, clothes, and other necessaries for the forthcoming winter?

**Sir H. GREENWOOD**

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The matter is left entirely to the discretion of the hon. Member for East Leeds.

## Demobilisation

### Telegraphists, India

**Mr. T. GRIFFITHS**

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asked the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that Sapper J. P. M'Intosh, No. 127084, Royal Engineers (Signal Troop), 3rd Cavalry Brigade, Mosul, is still being retained with the Forces; whether he is aware that it was reported in September that this man's work consisted of attendance for half a day every fourth day at an office where a telephone only is installed; whether a waste of skilled force is taking place in India; and whether, seeing that a number of European telegraphists are attached to Indian units, he

skilled force is taking place in India, and whether, seeing that a number of European telegraphists are attached to Indian units, he will issue instructions that they shall be released by Indian signallers from Poona?

**Mr. CHURCHILL**

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I am making inquiries, and will inform the hon. Member of the result as soon as possible.

## Trade Union Officials (Military Authorities' Action)

**Mr. GRIFFITHS**

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asked the Secretary of State for War whether the military authorities in Wales have explained what circumstances they had in mind which would enable them to impart useful information to secretaries of trade union branches in the district; if so, will he state the nature of this explanation; and, if no such explanation has been given, will he call for it?

**Mr. CHURCHILL**

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No, Sir; but I do not propose to pursue the matter.

## South Camp, Ripon

**Mr. E. WOOD**

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asked the Secretary of State for War whether it is proposed to dismantle the South Camp at Ripon; whether, in the event of this being done, he is aware that a proposal is under consideration for the continued utilisation and extension of the camp railway for agricultural purposes; and whether, in any dismantling, he will leave the railway intact until the matter has been decided?

**Mr. CHURCHILL**

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It is anticipated that South Camp, Ripon, will not be required much longer for the accommodation of troops, and the camp, together with the railway, will be handed over to the Disposal Board. The railway will no doubt remain *in situ* until the whole, of the hutments have been taken away, and this will take some considerable time.

## Territorial Forces (Medal)

**Captain MOREING**

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asked the Secretary of State for War whether any decision has yet been reached regarding the award of a medal to officers and men of the Territorial Forces who were serving the 4th August, 1914?

**Mr. CHURCHILL**

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I regret that I can add nothing to the reply given on the 3rd November to a similar question asked by the hon. Member for Elland, to the effect that it is not possible to make any statement on the subject at present.

## Remount Service

**Earl WINTERTON**[Share](#)

asked the Secretary of State for War what were the total number of officers in the remount service on 11th November, 1918; what are the numbers to-day; and of those how many are deputy-assistant directors of remounts in the United Kingdom?

**Mr. CHURCHILL**[Share](#)

The number of remount officers at home and abroad in November, 1918, was 370, and at the present time is 207. Both figures include twenty-three deputy-assistant directors of remounts, all of whom are serving at home.

## Soldiers' Leave (Sapper H Reed)

**Mr. CAPE**[Share](#)

asked the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that Sapper H. Reed, No. 182614, 2nd wireless squadron, Mesopotamia, served in Mesopotamia from 10th October, 1916, until 19th September, 1919, without home furlough; whether Sapper Reed made application to the Record Office at Chatham on the 31st October asking to be allowed an extra twenty-eight days' demobilisation furlough on account of this long period of service without home leave; whether, under reference No. R2/R/71218/94B, the officer in charge of the Royal Engineers' Records at Chatham informed him on the 5th instant that the matter had been submitted to the War Office for decision; and whether, as Sapper Reed's furlough will expire on the 27th instant, he will cause an early reply to be sent to him at Glen-More, Tip Hill, Ottery St. Mary, Devon?

**Mr. CHURCHILL**[Share](#)

This case was submitted to the War Office as stated. The soldier is not entitled to twenty-eight days' extra furlough on account of service in Mesopotamia, and I understand that Sapper Reed has now been so informed by the officer in charge of Records, Chatham.

## Army Establishment (Supernumerary Officers)

**Colonel LAMBERT WARD**[Share](#)

asked the Secretary of State for War if he can give the number of officers on full pay who are in excess of the present establishment of the Army?

**Mr. FORSTER**[Share](#)

There are at present a considerable number of officers drawing full pay on Regular commissions in excess of the establishment of 1914. Their employment with troops enables temporary officers to be demobilised. Until the future establishment of the Army is settled and it is seen how many Regular officers will retire, it will not be possible to say how many such officers are supernumerary.

## Nursing Service, Mesopotamia (Pay)

**Mr. A. HERBERT**[Share](#)

asked the Secretary of State for War whether Army of Occupation pay is now granted to the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve and the Territorial Force Nursing Service at present in Mesopotamia?



**Mr. FORSTER**[Share](#)

The Army Order which grants Army of Occupation bonus to the nursing service is applicable to Mesopotamia.

## Naval And Military Pensions And Grfts

### Masseuses (War Gratuity)

**Mr. A. HERBERT**[Share](#)

asked the Secretary of State for War why military masseuses are not to receive gratuities?

**Mr. FORSTER**[Share](#)

War gratuities, broadly speaking, are given to commissioned officers and enlisted soldiers, and are not given to the very large numbers of Civilians, men and women, who in various ways worked for the Army during the War. An exception to this rule is made in the case of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service and other staff performing similar duties, for special reasons, and in accordance with precedent; but after very full consideration, I am riot prepared to extend this exception.

**Mr. RAWLINSON**[Share](#)

asked the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether a gratuity can be given to the masseuses who served during the War, seeing they are the only members of the medical and nursing staff who have received no gratuity; and, if not, why the masseuses should be treated on a different basis to other members of the nursing staff?

**Mr. FORSTER**[Share](#)

I would refer my hon. and learned Friend to my reply given today to my hon. Friend the Member for Yeovil.

### Royal Engineers, Signal Section (War Gratuity)

**Sir JOHN BUTCHER**[Share](#)

asked the Postmaster-General why the war gratuity is not payable to employés of the Post Office who joined the Royal Engineers (Signal Section) and sensed as such during the War?

**Mr. ILLINGWQRTH**[Share](#)

I would refer the hon. Member to the reply given by the Financial Secretary to the War Office to various questions on this subject on the 10th of April last.

### Air Ministry (Stores)

**Mr HOHIER**



asked the Under-Secretary of State to the Air Ministry how many yards of cloth (various), how many pairs of boots, how much hosiery, flannel, leather, hardware, crockery, and glass, how many brushes and brooms, and what amounts of timber are held by this Department; and will he give particulars of the amounts disposed of and to whom from the 1st of April last to the 1st October last?

**Mr. CHURCHILL**

The stocks of cloth, boots, hosiery, leather and timber held by the Air Ministry are given below. The preparation of a list of the stocks of hardware, crockery, glass, brushes and brooms would involve an amount of clerical labour, which would not be justified in the present reduced state of staff.

Cloth	yards
Gabardine, blue	147
Overcoating, khaki	31,401
Serge, blue	136,963
Tartan, blue	67,930
Serge, khaki, Canadian	136,266
Serge, drab mixture	102
Whipcord blue	3,220
Whipcord, khaki	20,658
	pairs
Boots, Ankle	15,535
Hosiery.	pairs
Socks, worsted	445,947
Drawers, woollen	109,846
Vests woollen	33,341
Shirts, flannel	232,390
Flannel	Nil.
Leather.	lbs.
Soles, bend	1,014
Bellies, struck	24
Shoulders	9
Tongues	5½
	pairs
Lifts, assorted	4,217
Soles, half	32,404
Tip fillings	17,568

tip, mtings	17,500
Timber.	standards
Aeronautical timber	338
Other timber	157

None of the above classes of materials were declared surplus between 1st April and 1st October. The following quantities of cloth were declared surplus on 22nd and 25th October, and are being handed to the Disposal Board:—

	yards
Gabardine, blue	147
Overcoating, khaki	31,401
Serge, blue	100,000
Tartan, blue	50,000
Serge, khaki	13,206
Serge, drab mixture	102
Whipcord, blue	1,165
Whipcord, khaki	20,658

## Chilwell Depot (Ironmongery Dumps)

**Lieut.-Colonel DALRYMPLE WHITE**

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asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Munitions whether he is aware that at Chilwell, near Nottingham there have been found dumps of worn-out ironmongery, such as pails and saucepans, which are not capable of repair and only fit for scrap: whether a large proportion of these articles are being brought from overseas; whether a staff of over 120 persons are employed at this depot; and whether, if it is considered necessary to bring this scrap from overseas, arrangements will be made to dump it nearer the point of debarkation?

**Mr. FORSTER**

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I have been asked to answer this question. It is probable that dumps of unserviceable ironmongery exist at the Army Ordnance Depot at Chilwell as it is the normal procedure at such depots to sort the repairable and unserviceable stores from the equipments returned from France and elsewhere. Stores brought from overseas should not contain scrap, but it is unavoidable that a certain amount of the unit equipment should be found, after examination, to be unfit for further retention. I am not aware of any large accumulation of such scrap. The number of staff employed is as stated by my hon. and gallant Friend.

## Munitions

### Trading Accounts (Profit)

**Mr. HOHLER**

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asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Munitions why the profit balance on trading accounts, namely, £51,000,000, has been appropriated in aid of his Department and not paid over to the Treasury; and if this had been done as promised by him in

been appropriated in aid of his Department and not paid over to the Treasury, and, if this had been done as promised by him in introducing his Estimate, what is the debit balance on the administration of his Department for the half-year ending the 30th September last?

**Mr. J. HOPE**

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As I stated in my answer to my hon. Friend on 17th November, the sum of £51,000,000 is in no sense a profit on trading accounts. It is merely the difference between purchases and sales in the current financial year. There was, at 31st March, 1919, a balance of £61,500,000, excess of purchases over sales. I cannot, at present, submit an estimate of what the total profit will be on the trading accounts. The sum of £51,000,000 has not been, and cannot without the consent of Parliament be, appropriated in aid of the expenditure on the Ministry of Munitions Vote.

**Mr. HOHLER**

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asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Munitions whether the articles or any and which of them on which the profit of £51,000,000 has been made are or were under the control direct or indirect of the Government, either in regard to the source of supply, the right to import or supply, or in regard to the price at which the goods might be sold, or in any other manner; and will he state in regard to which of the goods such control now continues and as to which it has ceased to exist and when?

**Mr. HOPE**

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The term "control," as applied to the trading operations of the Ministry of Munitions, does not accurately represent the real position. The Government bought the home wool clip and, through the Australian and New Zealand Governments, the wool clips of those Dominions. The contracts in respect of the Dominion clips extend to 30th June, 1920. By these purchases the Government secured the greater part of the wool production of the world, and sales during the War were made at fixed prices, having regard to the total expenses incurred. Since last spring, however, sales by auction have taken place, and after the end of the current month the whole of the remaining stocks will be sold by auction, except as regards sales to other Governments. As regards kips and hides, practically the whole of the Indian production was bought during the War by the British Government, through the agency of the Indian Munitions Board, and prices for sales have been fixed in a manner similar to those for wool. The Government have ceased purchasing kips and hides since 30th June last, and, as a consequence, the balance of stocks is being liquidated in competition with the supplies coming forward in the ordinary way of trade. As regards the balance of the trading accounts referred to in the answer given to my hon. Friend on 17th November, purchases were made by the Government, to meet Government requirements of manufactured goods. Comparatively small quantities were acquired in excess of Government requirements, and these were issued at prices which would recoup the expenditure, wherever possible, and in other cases in competition with commercial supplies. There has, therefore, been no complete control of these commodities and no such control now exists.

## Injured Employee (Compensation)

**Mr. N. MACLEAN**

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asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Munitions whether he is aware that F. C. Thompson was injured on 7th May when at work at the Royal Small Arms Factory at Enfield Lock and, as a result, has been unable to work since, and that the factory doctor's examination of his condition coincided with his panel doctor; if he is aware that this man has received no compensation despite repeated applications: and whether he is in a position to state what action his Department intend to take in the matter?

**Mr. HOPE**

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The man referred to did not make any report at the time of the alleged injury while at work, nor did the medical evidence which was forthcoming support his subsequent claim that his incapacity was due to such an injury. In view, however, of further medical

evidence, it has recently been decided to pay him compensation under the Workmen's Compensation Act, at a rate regarded as commensurate with the degree of incapacity, which appears to be only partial. A payment on account of arrears has already been made.

## Material Supplied To Contractors

**Mr. HOGGE**

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asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Munitions whether the value of material supplied to Ministry of Munitions contractors on free issue, which has not been accounted for, exceeds £9,000,000; and, if so, what explanation can be given?

**Mr. HOPE**

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Inquiries on this matter are being actively pursued; and at the present time it is quite impossible to say what quantity of the material referred to may remain unaccounted for.

## Conteahts (Claims)

**Mr. HOGGE**

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asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Munitions whether, although there were some thirty-five different officials in the Ministry of Munitions making contracts, many of these contracts were loosely worded and actually omitted to mention any price or rate for the articles ordered or the total quantity required, merely stipulating for a given quantity to be delivered per week or per month, and contained no break clause; whether, in consequence, large claims have been and are still being paid every week to contractors who have made no deliveries under their contracts and to others who have failed to deliver the specified quantities per week or month; and whether, in cases where there is obviously no legal liability under the contract, claims are being paid as hardship cases?

**Mr. HOPE**

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I cannot admit that there has been looseness in the drafting of contracts by the Ministry of Munitions. In a certain number of cases orders were given to firms to proceed with immediate manufacture, and the prices were agreed later when the costs had been ascertained by special branches of the Ministry. No weekly payments are being made to contractors who have failed to make delivery, or in respect of short delivery. Claims are, however, being met after full investigation in respect of expenditure incurred by contractors on contracts rendered unnecessary by the Armistice; and cases of substantial hardship where there is no legal liability on the Ministry are dealt with by a special committee set up for the purpose by the Treasury.

**Mr. HOGGE**

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asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Munitions whether he is aware that a contractor sent in a claim for over £30,000 to the Ministry of Munitions on a contract that was made in June, 1918, cancelled in November of the same year, in which no rate was specified and against which nothing was delivered; why, after the claim was passed by the Ministry, the payment was stopped by the Treasury on a certain discovery having been made by a Ministry official; and whether this official, as a reward for his efforts, has been brought under de-mobilisation?

**Mr. HOPE**

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I have been unable to trace any such case as that referred to, but if my hon. Friend will furnish me with definite particulars, I will cause inquiries to be made.

## Officials' Salaries

**Mr. HOGGE**

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asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Munitions whether increases of salary since the Armistice have been given principally to retain business men who were anxious to rejoin their own businesses; whether a clerk in the Department of the Controller of Munitions Timber Supply who started on 31s. 6d. a week, paid weekly, had his salary raised to £500 a year since the Armistice; whether the head of the establishment received an increase of pay, £150' a year, since the Armistice; whether an official in the Central Stores Department who was a voluntary worker was given a salary of;£800 a year since the Armistice; and whether an official in the Finance Department had his salary raised from £600 to £1,200 a year and was recently paid a bonus of £1,000?

**Mr. KELLAWAY**

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Increases of salary have been given since the Armistice principally to retain business men who were anxious to rejoin their own businesses, but in a number of other cases increases of pay have had to be granted in the normal course of promotion or because of higher duties undertaken in consequence of the departure from the Ministry of officials holding the higher posts. There have been no cases of increases of salary since the date of the Armistice to officials in the Munitions Timber Supply or Central Stores Department such as those referred to by the hon. Member. The increase of £150 to the head of the Establishment Department was granted since the Armistice in order to bring him up to the minimum of the scale of salary assigned to the official position he holds. A professional accountant of high attainments was given a gratuity of £1,000, the payment of which was necessary to retain his services for so long as they were required after the date of the Armistice. The official referred to was originally appointed to the Ministry in 1916 at a salary of £600 per annum, which was gradually increased to £1,200 per annum, the amount paid to him as assistant financial secretary. I regret to say that this official has left the service of the Ministry to take up a commercial appointment at a salary greatly in excess of that he was receiving in the Government service.

## Army Blankets

**Major Earl WINTERTON**

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asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Munitions if he can state the average price at which Army blankets are sold by the Surplus Stores Department; and what is the average price at which they are retailed to the public?

**Mr. KELLAWAY**

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New single blankets are sold at prices varying between 13s. and 17s. each, and part-worn blankets, which include a large number of white Navy double blankets, between 8s. 6d. and 21s., each according to their size, quality, and condition. I have no knowledge as to the average price at which they are retailed to the public, but the Disposal Board is in constant communication with the Profiteering Department of the Board of Trade, and keeps that Department informed as to the particulars of sales effected.

## Southampton Factory

**COLONEL DUPRE**

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asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Munitions whether it is intended to retain the site occupied during the War at Weston, near Southampton, and, if so, for what purpose; and whether he will state the nature and cost to date of the buildings now erected on it, and the total amount expended on the site?

**Mr. KELLAWAY**

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The Government rolling mills at Southampton were engaged during the War in the manufacture of cartridge cases and of metal strip. Negotiations are proceeding for the sale of the factory. It would not be in the public interest at the present moment to give the information with regard to cost for which my hon. and gallant Friend asks.

## Locomotive Engines

**Lieut.-Colonel CLAY**

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asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Munitions how many superheater locomotive engines were built in Great Britain for the Railway Operating Department and sent overseas during the years 1914–18; what was their average original cost; and what is the average price at which they have been sold?

**Mr. KELLAWAY**

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Three hundred and five Great Central Railway type, ten New South Wales Government type, and fourteen tank-engine Dutch railway type super-heated locomotives were built in Great Britain and sent to France. The average cost prices of these locomotives varied between £5,500 and £8,300. The tank-engine Dutch railway type locomotives were sold for Frs.200,000 each. Of the others, none have been sold, but they are being allocated to the British railway companies under a pooling arrangement, under the directions of the Ministry of Transport. One hundred and fifty-four have already been so allocated.

## Ministry (Women Employes)

**Lieut.-Colonel CLAY**

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asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Munitions how many women are still employed by the Ministry of Supply; what is the average weekly salary; and what steps are being taken to replace them by demobilised members of His Majesty's forces?

**Mr. KELLAWAY**

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Parliament has not yet been asked to assent to the creation of a Ministry of Supply. The number of women at present employed by the Ministry of Munitions is 4,178, representing 40 per cent, of the total staff exclusive of messengers and cleaners. The large majority of the women are members of the clerical and typing grades, and are paid in accordance with scales prescribed by the Treasury, which range from 35s. to 62s. 6d. per week. As I stated in a reply on the 11th instant, measures are already in operation for the substitution, so far as possible, of non-Service employes of both sexes by ex-Service men, preference being given to disabled men and those who have served overseas. To assist in carrying out this policy, the Minister has appointed a committee, the majority of the members of which are ex-Service men and includes a representative of the Ministry of Munitions Association of Ex-Service Men. Since the Armistice the number of women employes at headquarters has been reduced by 10,136 and the number of male employes by 5,240. The number of ex-Service men now serving in the Ministry is approximately 2,300. Since 1st November over 100 ex-Service men have been substituted in the Ministry for non-Service men and women.

## Certificated Teachers (Examination)

**Mr. WATERSON**

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asked the President of the Board of Education whether all elementary teachers have the same examination to pass, whether college-trained or not, to qualify them to be engaged as certificated teachers?

**Mr. FISHER**

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The answer is in the negative. I would refer the hon. Member to Schedule J.A. of the Code of Regulations for Public Elementary Schools.

## Government Of India Bill

**Colonel YATE**

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asked the Secretary of State for India whether the Government of India have been consulted as to all the Amendments inserted in the Government of India Bill; and when will their opinion be published?

**Mr. MONTAGU**

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The Government of India's views on all the principal issues which arose before the Joint Committee in connection with the Bill were fully stated to the Committee by Sir James Meston in his evidence. I would refer my hon. and gallant Friend particularly to pages 1 to 5 and 543 to 546 of the published evidence.

## Liverpool Disturbance (Compensation Claim)

**Sir HENRY CRAIK**

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asked the Undersecretary of State for the Colonies what has been the result of his communications with the Corporation of Liverpool in regard to the outrage committed in broad daylight in the middle of Liverpool on three British subjects of the Gold Coast, and the question of compensation; and whether the Government proposes to take action in this matter?

**Lieut.-Colonel AMERY**

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The Corporation of Liverpool have, replied that they have no legal power to grant compensation from the city funds in such a case. The Home Office, who have been consulted in the matter, state that persons injured in a riot in this country are not granted compensation from public funds, and that there is no precedent for the proposal to grant compensation to the three gentlemen from the Gold Coast. The matter will, however, receive further consideration.

## Malay States (Pre-War Pensions)

**Sir B. FALLE**

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asked the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if any action has been taken, or is to be taken, to increase the pre-war pensions of pensioned officers in the Malay States Government service; and if he is aware that the Ceylon Government have recently granted a bonus to their pensioned officers and made the same retrospective?

**Lieut.-Colonel AMERY**

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Proposals have been received from the High Commissioner for the Malay States which are now under the consideration of the Secretary of State. In the case of Ceylon a bonus has been granted as from the 1st January last, in the shape of a percentage on



pensions, ranging from 33 per cent, in the case of very small pensions down to 5 per cent, in the case of pensions not exceeding £800. This bonus has been approved only as a temporary measure, pending the Report of a Commission which the Governor proposes to appoint when conditions have become more stable.

## Housing

### Dual Occupation

**Lieut.-Colonel MURROUGH WILSON**

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asked the Minister of Health whether he proposes to obtain power in order that local authorities may deal with the question of dual occupation of houses during the present serious scarcity, and thereby relieve the congestion in districts where there are at present empty houses?

**Dr. ADDISON**

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No, Sir.

### Schemes (Financial Conditions)

**Mr. SITCH**

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asked the Minister of Health Whether the views of local authorities, or of any association representing them in a corporate capacity with regard to the amount of the rate-charge allowed on schemes under the Housing Act were ascertained before the limit of 1d. was fixed; whether he is aware of dissatisfaction among local authorities with the terms of financial assistance offered by the Ministry and of the misapprehension due to indefiniteness in the Regulations as to whether or not the proceeds of a 1d. rate shall be the limits of financial responsibility on local authorities carrying out schemes under the Act; and whether he will consider the desirability of issuing to all public bodies concerned a circular setting out in clear, precise, and unmis takeable phraseology what are the exact financial conditions governing their operations under the new Act?

**Dr. ADDISON**

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The present terms of financial assistance, under which the liability of local authorities is limited to a 1d. rate, were fixed after representations had been received from the Municipal Corporations Association and a number of individual local authorities. As the hon. Member is no doubt aware it is proposed to alter certain provisions in the Regulations to which objection has been taken.

## Vaccination

**Mr. WATERSON**

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asked the Minister of Health whether, before introducing a Bill for the separation of the medical work of boards of guardians from their duties under the Poor Law, he will institute an inquiry into the present position of vaccination in England and Wales, with a view to the abolition of all compulsion, seeing that the compulsory vaccination law is opposed by more than half the parents of Great Britain, as shown by the vaccination returns?

**Dr. ADDISON**

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It goes without saying that the question of public vaccination work and administration must be considered when the Poor Law machinery is dealt with, but I see no reason for "inquiry" such as is here suggested.

## Mines (Rescue Brigades)

**Mr. R. RICHARDSON**

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asked the Home Secretary if he could see his way to pay the men training for the rescue brigades in connection with the mines of the country, so as to secure the services of sufficient men of a reliable type for such necessary and important work?

**Mr. SHORTT**

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It is the duty of the owners to provide and maintain the rescue brigades, and I have no power to pay the men out of Home Office funds.

## Aliens Act (Administration)

**Mr. GRIFFITHS**

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asked the Home Secretary whether he is aware that the water-guard officers of the Customs and Excise, on account of their intimate knowledge of and close association with affairs relating to shipping and passenger traffic, have performed varied and responsible duties for other public Departments in addition to their ordinary Revenue functions; that this system of co-ordination of duties prevented duplication and waste, and ensured the simultaneous performance of various duties, thus avoiding delays in shipping; that the administration of the Aliens Act, 1905, was entrusted to these officers and carried out to the entire satisfaction of his Department and the Board of Customs and Excise; that the long experience of these officers has helped them to acquire knowledge peculiarly valuable in dealing with aliens; that on the outbreak of war the work was considerably increased, with the result that the staff of alien officers was augmented by men recruited from outside and whether, in connection with the administration of the Aliens Restriction Bill, he will favourably consider the claims of the waterguard officers to do this work, in view of the fact that it formerly offered a channel of promotion, arid, in common with other trades and occupations, the prewar custom should be restored to them?

**Mr. SHORTT**

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I agree generally with the statements made in the first five paragraphs of the question, and it does not detract from my appreciation of the ability, discretion and zeal with which officers of the Customs staff have performed their duties in this connection if I say that the work of dealing with alien passengers at the approved ports under the Aliens Order, 1919, will be so heavy and complicated as compared with similar work under the very restricted provisions of the Aliens Act, 1905, that it is necessary to organise a separate Immigration staff under the direct control of my Department. I can add that I hope to be able to make arrangements with the Commissioners of Customs and Excise whereby waterguard officers will be able to offer themselves for service on the Immigration staff.

## Coal Production

### Local Authorities' Powers

**Mr. LUNN**

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asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he will issue in pamphlet form an explanation of the powers possessed by local authorities or local committees with respect to the acquisition, distribution, and sale of coal, with special reference to the method of

procedure under existing Acts, or Regulations, or Orders?

**Sir A. GEDDES**

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it is not proposed at present to issue a pamphlet of the type referred to.

## Anthracite (Export)

**Mr. MADDOCKS**

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asked the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the large quantities of certain classes of anthracite exported from this country and the shortage of supplies available for use in home industries; and whether he will take steps to ensure sufficiency of supplies in this country before permitting the export of anthracite?

**Sir A. GEDDES**

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Measures have been taken to ensure that sufficient supplies of anthracite are available for home consumption, but, as I have already informed the House, the difficulty is one of distribution of the supplies from the pits owing to the lack of adequate transport facilities. The quantity of anthracite exported does not, at the present time, prejudice the position of supplies for inland purposes in any way. Exports would, if that were necessary, be further curtailed in order to safeguard home supplies.

## Hop Extract Company (Miss Troy's Debentures)

**Mr. N. MACLEAN**

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asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he will state the circumstances which led Miss Lillian Scott Troy, an American citizen, in November, 1916, to surrender twenty £100 debentures, with blank transfer, in connection with the management of the Hop Extract Company, then being supervised by Mr. James Fabian under the control of the Board of Trade; and what has since happened to those debentures, and in whose possession they are at the present time?

**Sir A. GEDDES**

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In May, 1916, the Board of Trade appointed Mr. James Fabian as supervisor of the Hop Extract Company, Limited, but no order was made to wind up the business of that company under the Trading With the Enemy Acts. In September, 1916, on the application of Miss Lillian Scott Troy, the Court appointed Mr. James Fabian as receiver for her and all other holders of the first mortgage debentures of the company, and from that date Mr. James Fabian ceased to act as supervisor, and the assets of the company were dealt with under the direction of the Court. I am informed that Miss Troy deposited her debentures with the receiver as security for advances made by him in connection with the carrying on of the business pending the sale of the assets under the direction of the Court, and that such debentures are still in his possession.

## Profiteering Act (Ireland)

**Mr. JELLETT**

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asked the President of the Board of Trade what is the cause of the delay in putting the Profiteering Act in force in Ireland; and whether he intends to take any effective steps to enforce its provisions in that country?

**Sir A. GEDDES**

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The delay in establishing the necessary machinery to administer the Profiteering Act in Ireland has been due to the fact that there was no foundation upon which to build up the machinery as was the case in Great Britain, where the local committees and appeal tribunals were modelled on the local and Appeal Tribunals formed under the Military Service Acts. The necessary action is being taken to set up local committees and Appeal Tribunals in Ireland under the Profiteering Act.

## Transport Administration

### Hay (Transport)

**Mr. BRACE**

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asked the Minister of Transport whether he is aware that, in several English counties, including Berkshire and Somersetshire, many hundreds of tons of hayherotting on the ground on account of the shortage of wagons for conveyance to the South Wales collieries; whether any action will be taken to expedite the carriage of this hay; and whether he will consider the advisability of putting hay in the category of perishable foodstuffs so that it may receive some priority of transport?

**Sir E. GEDDES**

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One complaint of delay in the conveyance of hay to a South Wales colliery has been brought to my notice, but on inquiry the complaint was not substantiated I am not aware of any special ground for complaint as regards this class of traffic, and regret I cannot support the suggestion that it should be included in the category of perishable foodstuffs.

### Tramways (Congestion)

**MAJOR PRESCOTT**

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asked the Minister of Transport whether he is aware that the early morning and evening tramway service on the system of the Metropolitan Electric Tramways, Limited, between Finsbury Park and Tottenham is still inadequate, to meet the needs of the travelling public; whether he is aware that this company run special cars to football grounds; and why additional tramcars are not being run to relieve the present dangerous congestion of traffic?

**Sir E. GEDDES**

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The possibility of improving the early morning and evening tramway services between the points named is now engaging the attention of the Ministry of Transport.

**Mr. A. T. DAVIES**

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asked the Minister of Transport whether he is aware of the delay to workers at the various London tramway termini each evening; whether he is taking measures to prevent the inconvenience and overcrowding; and whether he is in a position to indicate the date when these measures will become operative?

**Sir E. GEDDES**

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I have nothing to add to the answer which I gave to my hon. Friend's identical question on the 19th November.

I have nothing to add to the answer which I gave to my hon. friend's identical question on the 12th November.

## Omnibus Garage, Tottenham

**MAJOR PRESCOTT**

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asked the Minister of Transport whether he has received any notification from the London General Omnibus Company of their intention to close their large garage at the High Cross, Tottenham; whether he is aware that such a step will throw many ex-Service men out of employment and greatly inconvenience the travelling public; and if he will use his best endeavours to prevent the garage being closed?

**Sir E. GEDDES**

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I have received no such notification, and I understand that no decision has yet been come to by the London General Omnibus Company.

## Quarries (Wagon Supply)

**CAPTAIN COOTE**

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asked the Minister of Transport whether he is aware that the supply of railway trucks for the transportation of road metal from the pits at Wymondham, Norfolk, has been completely withdrawn, with the result that the pits will have to close down, contracts with county councils be broken, many quarry-men thrown out of employment, and roads fall into disrepair; and whether he will take immediate steps to have a supply of wagons forwarded to the pits in question?

**Sir E. GEDDES**

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Wagons for road metal are provided by the quarry owners, the railway company being under no obligation to provide them. The Great Eastern Railway Company, owing to the general shortage of wagons and the heavy traffic in food stuffs, regret that at present they are unable to augment the supply which the quarry owners have at their disposal.

## Great Eastern Railway (Enfield)

**MAJOR PRESCOTT**

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asked the Minister of Transport whether anything can be done to improve the railway service on the Great Eastern system between Liverpool Street and Enfield; whether he is aware that the local morning and evening trains are dangerously overcrowded; that the frequent representations of local authorities during the past twelve months have not effected any substantial improvement; and that the company find no difficulty in providing additional trains when football matches are being played; and if he will make urgent representations to the company to improve the existing travelling facilities on this suburban line?

**Sir E. GEDDES**

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I am informed that the Great Eastern Railway Company have recently strengthened the service on this line by running two additional trains. Any extra trains which may be provided for football spectators are not run during the mornings and evenings when the peakload in suburban traffic is reached.

## Birmingham Post Office (Promotion)

## Birmingham Post Office (Promotion)

**Mr. T. GRIFFITHS**

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asked the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that an officer in the Birmingham post office who has never performed acting duty has been promoted over 100 of his colleagues; and whether he will consider the special qualifications possessed by this officer which led to the decision to promote him in this way?

**Mr. ILLINGWORTH**

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The officer referred to was on active service at the time of his promotion. He had previously shown that he possessed special ability, and his superior officers considered that his qualifications were higher than those of the officers senior to him. His promotion is subject to a probationary period on his return to the post office.

## Ministry Of Labour (Premises And Staff)

**Sir H. NIELD**

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asked the Minister of Labour how many separate premises the Ministry of Labour occupy; and will he give a list of the various buildings in the possession of the Ministry utilised by their staff, with the respective number of employées, male and female, in each of such buildings?

**Sir R. HORNE**

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The number of premises occupied by the clerical staff of the Ministry of Labour (exclusive of Employment Exchanges and Industrial Establishments, but inclusive of premises shared with other Departments) is 227. A list of these premises will be compiled and forwarded to the hon. Member, if he so desires; but to set out the full detailed information desired by the hon. Member in the second part of the question would be a task entailing a very serious expenditure of time and labour, and my staff is so busily engaged that I am reluctant to impose this burden upon them.

## Mercantile Marine (Unemployment)

**Captain W. BENN**

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asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Shipping Controller what steps he proposes to take in the matter of unemployment of shipmasters and officers of the Mercantile Marine, in view of the fact that their unemployment is due to enemy action; whether they are in the same relative position as regards unemployment donation as members of His Majesty's Forces; and whether the allowances made to them from the fund which has been set up are commensurate with their normal earnings?

**Colonel WILSON**

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This matter has engaged the attention of the Ministry of Shipping since demobilisation began. The appointments to vessels under the control of the Ministry are in the hands of the managers, and it is obviously impracticable, therefore, that the Ministry itself should make appointments, but everything possible has been done by bringing to the notice of the managers of newly acquired vessels a list of officers who are out of employment, and all companies have been invited by letter and at personal visits to select officers whom they consider suitable from that list, giving preference wherever possible to the senior masters who have performed good service.

they consider suitable from that list, giving preference wherever possible to the senior masters who have performed good service during the War. The answer to the second part of the question is in the negative. With regard to the third part, the allowances made from the fund are not equal to the normal earnings of these officers, but the amounts fixed by the Committee administering the fund, after consultation with the representatives of the officers concerned. I may add that the representatives of the officers are members of the Committee which administers this fund.

## Registers Of Voters

**Sir L. HARMSWORTH**

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asked the Secretary for Scotland if he can see his way, in the interests of national economy, to take steps to provide that registers of voters under the Representation of the People shall be prepared annually, and not bi-annually as at present?

**Mr. MUNRO**

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Legislation would be required to give effect to the proposed change, and obviously that is not a matter in which Scotland can be dealt with by itself. I may mention that, in concert with the Ministry of Health and other Departments, arrangements have been made in connection with the preparation of the spring register, 1920, which are expected to reduce materially the cost of registration.

## Trading With Aliens

**Mr. A. T. DAVIES**

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asked the Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that the Foreign Office has declined to protect or assist British firms who, in pursuance of its instructions, refuse to supply goods to aliens domiciled or carrying on business in neutral countries whose names appeared in the Foreign Office statutory list and thereby committed breaches of their contracts which, according to the laws of the neutral State, will expose them to counter claims by the said aliens and thus prevent them from recovering pre-war debts due from the aliens in question, and further has declined to allow such debts to be registered for collection from Germany under the Treaty of Peace; and whether the Foreign Office will take immediate steps to secure the payment of such debts out of funds belonging to alien enemies now vested in the Public Trustee or to enforce the same against the German Government?

**Sir H. GREENWOOD**

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Provision is made in Section 10 of the Peace Treaty with Germany for the dissolution of all contracts between enemies, enemies being defined as persons between whom trading shall have been prohibited by, or have otherwise become Unlawful under laws, Orders or Regulations to which one of the parties was subject. Provision has, in so far as possible, been made for redress being obtained in the event of a decision by a competent Court which is contrary to this stipulation; but it is not possible to afford satisfactory protection in the case of a contract with a neutral firm. In respect of debts owing by German to British nationals all practicable protection has been afforded to the latter, both by provision for a special tribunal for the consideration of such matters and by the creation of a charge upon German assets in the United Kingdom. It is impracticable to apply such machinery to the collection of debts due by the nationals of neutral States.

## Disabled Soldiers (Government Employment)

**Mr. DOYLE**

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asked the First Commissioner of Works what effort his Department has made to give effect to His Majesty's appeal to employers to find situations wherever possible for disabled demobilised soldiers; if any and how many have been found employment as motor drivers under the Stationery Department; and if he will give the number of male and female motor drivers now working in that



arrange under the Stationery Department, and if he will give the number of male and female motor drivers now working in that Department?

**Sir A. MONO**

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As regards the first part of the question, arrangements are being made, in compliance with the Government's approval of the proposals made by the Committee on the employment of disabled men in Government Departments, to substitute 8 per cent, of the existing temporary staff by disabled soldiers, and fifty-five disabled men have been found since the 27th October. I may add that before the issue of those instructions the percentage of disabled men employed by the Department was already nearly 10 per cent, of the total staff. The rest of the question should be addressed to my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury.

## Increase Of Rent Act ("Extended Period")

**Mr. LANE-FOX**

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asked the Attorney-General whether he is aware of the doubt existing as to the exact dates from which the increase of 10 per cent, on a standard rent allowed under the Increase of Rent and Mortgage Interest (Restrictions) Act, 1919, commences; and can he state what that date is?

**Sir G. HE WART**

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Yes, I understand that a doubt has arisen. The true answer is, I think, that the "extended period" within the meaning of Section 2 (1) of the Increase of Rent, Etc., Act, 1919 (9 Geo. 5, c. 7.), will commence on the expiration of six months from the date fixed as the date of the termination of the present War under the Termination of the Present War (Definition) Act, 1918 (8 and 9 Geo. 5, c. 59), and the increase of 10 per cent, on a standard rent is permissible in respect of the extended period or any part thereof, provided that not less than four clear previous weeks' notice in writing of his intention to increase the rent has been served by the landlord on the tenant.