

my standard I could play just as well on any part of the road to Morwell or Traralgon. I invite everyone to come up and see in my electorate Morwell, Traralgon and Mirboo North where they can live in better conditions than elsewhere. When I went to the area fourteen years ago, I did not want to do so. Now, no one could get me out of the place. No matter what people have in Melbourne there is something better in Morwell, and I invite each and every honorable member to visit our area and inspect these things.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker, as well as all members of the House, for your forbearance.

Mr. BILLING (Heatherton).—I wish to add my small contribution to the expressions of loyalty conveyed in the motion so ably moved by the honorable member for Warrnambool and so graciously supported by the honorable member for Mitcham. I add my personal fealty to the Crown and also that of the constituents who have placed in me the trust of representing them, irrespective of their political views. At least this is the position as I find it now. To those constituents I pledge my word in this House, as no doubt hundreds of members have pledged before me, that I shall do my best, for my electorate in particular, and for the State of Victoria. I trust that my message of loyalty together with the message from honorable members will go from this House to Her Majesty through her illustrious representative, our popular and beloved Governor, Sir Rohan Delacombe and his lady.

Much has been said in this House concerning the development that is taking place and the confidence which exists in the State of Victoria. Much has been said concerning those people who would act as "knockers" of this confidence. Much has been said in this House and in the daily press and in all manner of media of distribution of material for public consumption to the effect that in these days we live in an affluent society. I do not wish to add any remarks con-

cerning the development that has taken place and that which will undoubtedly take place in the future, but I should say that it devolves on this institution of Parliament to see that this affluence does not breed amongst us some men of substance and some men of poverty. It is the duty of the legislature to ensure that the gifts and mineral deposits in this State that have been placed there for the benefit of all should be stretched out to give substantial benefit to each and every citizen.

It is my fervent hope through belief in the institution of democratic government, which has been handed down to us through trial and tribulation in times of plenty and in leaner times, that this legislature and those men entrusted with responsibility in other parts of Australia will ensure that not only this State of Victoria but also this mighty Commonwealth of Australia will look after their people as well as the mammoth machinery and the ways and means by which we gouge our wealth from the earth and from the ocean.

I should like to deal for a moment with the subject of education, which has been debated and criticized up and down this country for a decade and more. In coming to this House, in the words of Lerner and Lowe, as an "ordinary man" who has had the experience born of the average family in this community, and who has lived through the times following the first world war—the great world war, of which it was said that none could be bigger—and then passed through the education system of the day, through pre-depression days of trial when men who wanted to work could not find it and when Governments with all the good will in the world seemed to be able to do nothing about it. I emerged as a young man, along with thousands and thousands of others to go to a greater war, and after that came to this time of post-war explosions of population, with all the problems which confront us in our municipali-

ties around this great city and the urban cities that are growing with it.

With all the criticism that is made, one should remember that these things just did not happen because men stood by and set about tearing down the work which other men had done before them. I should like to say that from personal experience, which I know many honorable members have undergone, I pay little heed but some attention to the criticisms that are offered, because I know that this State of Victoria, with its limited finances and the good will of men, has done a very good job. Those responsible have not done the perfect job, and no group of men ever will, but they have done their best. Thus to-day I find that in my electorate there are twenty primary schools, six secondary schools and six registered schools, and more than 50 per cent. of the State schools have come into being during the term of office of this Government and the representation of the party which I have the privilege of joining here on the Government side of the House.

On education it behoves all of us not to be over-critical, but to lend our hand to the building up of an institution which surely has a proper foundation. In regard to students, the young university men who rant and rave and hold placards in processions, as all university students will do, I say this: Let them have their youthful fling within the realm of law and order, but remind them that as yet many of them have not contributed one penny piece to the coffers of this Treasury, which is trying, and has tried for many years under various Governments, irrespective of political complexion, to give them facilities which are second to none and which many members of this House would have liked to enjoy at the relevant stage of their life.

I turn now to the subject of health, in which field I have had many years of practical experience. On the one

hand, there are not enough hospital beds and not enough treatment for the mentally retarded; on the other hand, much endeavour and thought have gone into the health and hospital programme, and it must not be forgotten that, along with the provision of bricks and mortar, stainless steel and complicated machinery for the administration of anaesthetics, has come medical knowledge which has reduced the time of occupancy of beds. Thus to-day a person, who previously would have had to stay in hospital for ten or fourteen days, is able, as a result of the miraculous development and researches that have occurred, to go home hale and hearty in less than one third of that time.

It might interest honorable members to know that the average stay in hospital for a maternity patient is about seven days. If a mother is "with it" in modern parlance, she can go home in five days and receive hospital benefits payments for seven days. The Commonwealth will contribute for five days, and sometimes if she is lucky she can make a little profit on the deal. This happens under a system which many people are decrying. Without doubt we have come a long way in the past ten years in provision for the general health and welfare of the sick in the community. We must not lose sight of the fact that, amid the bricks, mortar and the stainless steel, the most important person is the patient, and that people are all that matter in the health set-up in this community.

One could go on all night in some sort of reverie on what has gone before; one could reminisce and I know, as one gets older, reminiscence is all that is left. It is an old man's prerogative to sit and think, to remember, and to say, "It is not as good to-day as it was then". Is there any man or woman in this Chamber who would exchange the confident, affluent times in which we live for the good old days of bucketing water and the scrubbing board?

Parliaments are the people, and it is up to the Parliament to retain its image. Much has been said, even in the last few days, about this Parliamentary institution and the heritage that has been handed down to us, which we ought to safeguard with zeal to ensure that the image of this democratic institution is not lowered in the eyes of the people.

On this first occasion of my speaking in this House, I compliment the Government on the establishment of a Government Information Bureau, which is one step in the right direction towards giving correct information. It is the lack of information which causes much misunderstanding and unrest in our community.

I now turn to my immediate interest, the electorate of Heather-ton. I look forward to the task that has been entrusted to me with a certain degree of excitement in entering upon a new adventure. At this stage, I also pay my compliment, as an elector in this area for 30 years, to those people who have been entrusted with its representation. Immediately, I think of Mr. L. S. Reid, Distinguished Flying Cross, the honorable member for Dandenong, portion of whose former electorate is now included in the one I represent. I think, too, of Mr. Wiltshire, and of Mr. Suggett. To those three honorable members, I pay a personal tribute for a job well done in the particular area which I have inherited.

In area, Heather-ton is the largest metropolitan electorate. It is an exciting one because there are large areas set aside for recreation: It includes seven golf courses, one of the largest racecourses in the southern hemisphere, two racehorse training tracks, numerous bowling greens, and other sporting facilities. There is also much industrial development, plus the urban development to house those people who want to live and work in the area.

In particular, the Heather-ton electorate is an area of challenge, one which needs a planned approach by our so-called town planners to preserve the rights and assets of the residents. This leads me to one much discussed and argued-over commodity in the area—sand. The electorate contains the largest deposits of the best concreting sand in Victoria. Great holes are being made in the earth to get it out, and this has been the subject of many arguments in the municipal councils. The rights of those people who live in the area, and who are fortunate in one way to have these deposits, must not be trampled on in an effort to extract what is a vital commodity to the building development in this great metropolis. I hope that the authority concerned under the Metropolitan Planning Scheme will ensure that in the future extraction of sand some semblance of order will be observed, and that some of the areas will be reserved for future open park-land.

On a sober note, the Heather-ton electorate also contains the largest crematorium and necropolis in the southern hemisphere. Whenever I pass the crematorium, I am mindful of our mortality. I am reminded that the only thing left for me is time and, by obligation to this House, I hope I shall not waste the time given to me, and that honorable members will not waste my time either; that we may, with some zeal, use all the time we have left in the best interests of those whom we represent.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and all other honorable members for the gracious way in which I have been accepted into this Assembly. I have enough naïvete left in me to have the pious hope that I can look forward with confidence to the guidance, tolerance, and co-operation of every member of this House in attempting to discharge the trust that has been placed in me by the electors of a small portion of the State of Victoria.