

honorable member for Gippsland East, I find that an important principle is involved because the Act which is to be amended by this Bill provided for a superannuation scheme for employees of municipalities and other local authorities. Prior to that Act being passed, various Acts related to authorities of one sort or another and provided superannuation schemes to cover the permanent employees of those authorities.

When the principal Act was passed it provided a comprehensive cover for permanent employees in a wide variety of semi-Government authorities, and the Bill now before the House provides for the inclusion of river improvement trusts within this cover. This important addition means that the principle already accepted has been extended to cover the employees of such authorities. Country members will be aware of the valuable work carried out by river improvement trusts. Their responsibilities are constantly increasing, as is the number of their permanent employees. Therefore, the need for providing sufficient cover for these employees in terms of superannuation schemes is important.

I compliment the Minister on the manner in which he handled the Bill and take this opportunity to express the confidence of both sides of the House in his obvious efficiency and skill. His successful future will clearly be the result of his own energy and ability. I compliment the Minister and support the Bill.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was read a second time, and passed through its remaining stages.

*The sitting was suspended at 12.48 p.m. until 2.5 p.m.*

## GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

The debate (adjourned from the previous day) on the motion of Mr. J. A. Taylor (Gippsland South) for the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech was resumed.

**Mr. W. J. LEWIS** (Portland).—I express my loyalty and that of the 18,900 electors of Portland to Her Majesty the Queen. When Her Majesty visited Portland, the residents not only of that electorate but also of the neighbouring electorates of Warrnambool and Dundas showed their loyalty in no uncertain manner and welcomed the Royal visitors in their thousands.

I congratulate the honorable members who made their maiden speeches in the course of this debate. Many of them referred to the plight of the farmer, but I believe they did not put the picture in its proper perspective—they did not refer to the rural depression now existing in the Western District. Many young people are leaving the cities and towns in the western area of Victoria to find employment in Melbourne and some of the larger cities. The farms are not large enough to support the traditional family of a father and two sons.

This situation did not arise overnight. Government members should direct to the attention of their Federal colleagues not only the plight of many of these farmers but also the serious condition of the wool industry. Today, the wool grower puts his commodity into the bull ring and says, "What will you give me for it?". On the other side of the picture, General Motors-Holden's Limited and other large machinery firms put their products on the market, saying, "This is what we want", and that is what they get.

Only three major industries are established in Portland—Borthwick's meat works employing 900 men, the harbor trust and associated activities utilizing 150 men, and the wool stores, engaging 60 or 70 employees. I do not envisage the establishment of further industries in the region in the near future. Portland is one of the five towns selected as regional centres for development. The present position has obtained for the past few years, and development

has not taken place. An active tourist industry could alleviate the position considerably, because the Portland area has a special potential for tourism. Along the Wannon River there are the Nigretta falls and the Wannon falls. They are two beautiful spots and I advise honorable members who have not seen them to visit the area. Farther down there are the Princes Margaret Rose caves in the Kentbruck area, which is another wonderful tourist attraction. In the Casterton area to the north there is a series of rocks that have been a bone of contention for some time. Honorable members are probably aware of this contentious subject, and I expect it will be dealt with later. The Government would be well advised to publicize tourism, because it can be established without much capital outlay. According to statistics, a conservative estimate of the amount spent by a tourist is \$10 a day.

I refer now to the Kentbruck area where the Forests Commission has a pine plantation of 10,000 acres. It has a further 10,000 acres in the adjacent Rennick area. In contrast to the Railway Department, the Forests Commission makes a profit. The Government would be advised to allow the commission to plant larger areas of pines because the return from an acre of pines over 40 years is \$1,000. I have inspected these areas and I can see their potential. To enable a particle board factory to be established a minimum of 20,000 acres of pines should be planted in the Kentbruck area. Large tracts of Crown land are available in the vicinity and it would be possible to establish these plantations without alienating any of the national park at Kentbruck.

If, as is envisaged, Portland is to have a population of from 50,000 to 100,000 within the next ten to twenty years, additional recreational facilities will be needed and the natural place for this would be the national parks. In winter no one wishes to go to the seaside, but they still want some

place to spend their recreation time. In any event, the splendid beaches that Portland used to have when I was a boy are no longer there. They have vanished at the expense of progress. The only beach is at Bridgewater Bay and this is certainly a splendid beach. The other beaches have been eroded by the sea.

The port of Portland must progress. The railway line from Maroona to Portland is being relaid and when it is completed more wheat should be shipped from Portland. Doubtless, the honorable member for Geelong North will not agree with that statement, but the more wheat that can be shipped from Portland the more employment there will be in the area. A rail link between Port Fairy and Portland is long overdue and would greatly assist in the development of the area. A train journey from Warrnambool to Melbourne takes four hours, but the journey from Hamilton to Melbourne takes six hours. Country members have to travel by train because they cannot afford to travel by car.

I will conclude on the note that the Government should ensure that a national park is declared in the Kentbruck area, where there are some 50 species of birds and animals and hundreds of species of flora. The people of Portland could then spend leisure time in the national park. I thank honorable members for their tolerance.

On the motion of Mr. WILTON (Broadmeadows), the debate was adjourned.

It was ordered that the debate be adjourned until next day.

#### **WEST MELBOURNE MARKET LAND (AMENDMENT) BILL.**

The debate (adjourned from September 16) on the motion of Mr. Borthwick (Minister of Lands) for the second reading of this Bill was resumed.

**Mr. GINIFER (Deer Park).—**This Bill will permit the Department of Agriculture to provide an inspection