

found at Wilson's Promontory. This flora is found only where the growth does not become so great that it is smothered. Those who take an interest in flora will appreciate that the greatest growth takes place after a light burning. However, burning should not be undertaken in the Wilson's Promontory area when young birds are in the nest. When fires last went through that area it was regrettable that great loss of birdlife occurred. This birdlife is a great attraction for tourists and I therefore commend to the Government the Rural Fire Brigades Council's suggestion that there should be systematic and controlled burning in the area, but that it should not occur during the nesting season.

I express the hope that the Government will take heed of the matters which have been raised in this Chamber in relation to primary industry, and I trust that those matters which are beyond this Government's immediate control will be brought to the notice of the Commonwealth Government.

The Hon. D. E. KENT (Gippsland Province).—I reaffirm my belief in the Parliamentary democracy in which we are living under the monarchy, which is ably represented in this State. It is important that we should hold fast to those principles upon which we have built our system of democratic representation. It is true that sometimes we tend to treat democracy with less respect than is due to it, particularly in the way in which electorates are imbalanced. During the past two days I have listened in this Chamber to the condemnation of another constitutionally elected body, the Commonwealth Government.

I now refer to a problem existing in country electorates, particularly those which contain areas of sparse population such as Gippsland Province which, together with Mr. May, I have the privilege to represent. It may be significant that my election

has been more recent than that of Mr. May, possibly reflecting a more mature judgment on the part of the electorate. I shall deal with the realities of living of a large number of the electors in Gippsland Province, and their realization of a new approach to their many and varied problems. In some respects the true working of democracy is hampered by the natural tendency of country folk to express their political opinions and the fact that, in certain areas, only two or three miles separate polling booths catering for only 50 or 60 people. This unnecessary burden on the already severely strained resources of Victoria inhibits the real implementation of the secret ballot. Probably, it is possible to determine how people vote. I pay tribute to the educational programme of the Government because country people are now beginning to think in an independent manner, and established practices in voting are being broken.

Mr. May did not mention that I was elected to represent 85,000 constituents, many of whom have no probate problems but who are concerned mainly with obtaining a reasonable living for themselves, their wives and families, and educational opportunities and employment for their children in their local areas. The natural growth of population should be used to build up the areas in which these people were born and where they spent their childhood.

One of the most significant areas in Gippsland Province is the Latrobe Valley, which produces 80 per cent of Victoria's electricity. Within the next few years it is expected that the production of power there will increase to 90 per cent of the total. The Morwell briquette factory produces a tremendous quantity of briquettes. I do not know the exact tonnage of this production per annum, but I understand that it would fill the Melbourne Cricket Ground to a height of 450

feet. I do not suggest that this should be done, but the illustration gives city folk an appreciation of the productivity of the Latrobe Valley.

The brown coal and power industries in the Latrobe Valley are vital to the progress and welfare of Victoria. A well-known member of the Federal Government—we cannot take much notice of his opinion—condemned the employees of the State Electricity Commission as being unproductive and consequently not meriting the wages paid to them for their labours. The State Electricity Commission workers in the Latrobe Valley have contributed tremendously to the progress of Victoria; they realize that the great need in the Latrobe Valley is for the development of further secondary industries so that the natural resources and potential of Gippsland can be developed in the interests of the State.

I have spoken of the electricity industry in the Latrobe Valley, but I have been elected also to represent farmers in the Gippsland Province, which has one of the most highly productive dairying industries in Victoria. The considerably increased production during the past few years is a reflection of the efficiency of these farmers. Although the number of dairy farms in Victoria has decreased by 23 per cent since 1961, the number of cows milked has increased by 19 per cent. The average size of a dairy herd in 1961 was 39 cows, and it has now increased to 65. This is a further indication of the steps taken by farmers to increase their production with the same amount of labour.

Whilst there is a limit to the amount that one man can produce, the fact that many farmers have indulged in uncontrolled production has proved disastrous. Production has increased to the stage that the over-all returns from the market have decreased. All the blame cannot be attributed to the Government because many dairy farmers

have been loath to organize their production and to accept production control. The same type of attitude has existed in the wheat industry. For many years expert advice indicated that the continuance of indiscriminate production was unrealistic, but the growers—and naturally the Government—refused to implement any kind of production control with the result that now wheat quotas have been enforced. The same situation is developing in the dairying industry.

The dairying industry has been opposed to quotas, but in the past twelve months every major dairy farming organization has advocated certain restrictions on production, one of which is the introduction of licensing of all dairy farms. However, the Government, which would be responsible for administering the scheme, is loath to take such action. In any measure of production control, it is essential, farmers receive a guaranteed price, to ensure that production is not allowed to increase indiscriminately. I hope the Government will take note of the pressures which are being brought to bear by the two major dairying organizations.

It was interesting to hear members of the Country Party criticizing the Government, but their absence from the Chamber at this stage is noticeable. I make it clear that I represent all sections of the community in Gippsland Province, including farmers of all types. I do not wish to use this House as a discussion group. The Country Party has been ineffective in the past because it used both the Commonwealth and Victorian Parliaments for that purpose and failed to accept its responsibility as a supporter of the Federal Government and the State Government for the past fifteen years, with the exception of a brief period of four months. It

is reasonable to acknowledge that my election to this Chamber, and the election of my colleagues in another place, is an indication that the Victorian people are concerned to ensure that there is a change in the Government's primary production policies.

Most realistic people will know, because of the situation in world markets for primary production today, that little opportunity exists for an increase in production in primary producing areas of Victoria because the increased efficiency of the primary producers and the added mechanization on their farms mean that fewer people will be required to produce sufficient food to satisfy the requirements of this country and the world markets in the foreseeable future. If there is to be a reorganization of primary production, the social consequences of people inevitably having to cease farming must be considered. It is essential that alternative employment should be found and a retraining scheme started for them. I suggest that many of these people of mature years, who have left their farms for a number of reasons, could be employed as caretakers and in other relatively unskilled jobs in national parks—particularly in Gippsland Province—which should be developed and extended in future years.

The problems I have mentioned are common to many people in Victoria but exist to a greater degree in Gippsland. The great problem in the outback areas of my province is the lack of educational facilities, the inadequacies of schools and the extremely long distance the students have to travel. The Government should take special steps to ensure that these children are not permanently handicapped by the disadvantages which they suffer because of their geographical location.

The Hon. D. E. Kent.

Many opportunities will arise to enable me to debate matters relative to the welfare of the electors of the Gippsland Province and the people of Victoria. I thank honorable members for the courtesy they have shown me at all times. I thank you, Mr. President, and I hope that my contributions to the debates will be constructive and will not reflect against any honorable member personally, although I shall attack the politics of opponents strongly.

On the motion of the Hon. W. M. CAMPBELL (East Yarra Province), the debate was adjourned.

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

LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (SHOP CLOSING) BILL.

This Bill was received from the Assembly and, on the motion of the Hon. G. L. Chandler (Minister of Agriculture), for the Hon. V. O. DICKIE (Minister of State Development), was read a first time.

COAL MINES (PENSIONS INCREASE) BILL.

This Bill was received from the Assembly and, on the motion of the Hon. R. J. HAMER (Minister for Local Government), was read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT.

The Hon. G. L. CHANDLER (Minister of Agriculture).—By leave, I move—

That the Council, at its rising, adjourn until Tuesday next.

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 10.17 p.m., until Tuesday, October 20.