

duty—they have an excellent field in which to operate and they have a tremendous amount of work to do—namely, to educate the people to love one another and to do unto all men as they would they should do unto them, then I think they can safely leave the rest of the government of the country to those who like to take part in politics. I hope that clerics for the future will stand entirely clear of all political matters.

On motion by Hon. E. H. H. Hall, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.10 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 24th August, 1913.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

ELECTORAL—SWEARING-IN OF MEMBER.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have received the return of a writ for the vacancy in the East Perth electorate caused by the resignation of Thomas John Hughes, showing that Herbert Ernst Graham has been duly elected. I am prepared to swear-in the hon. member.

Mr. Graham took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll.

QUESTIONS (3).

FISH SUPPLIES AND PRICES.

As to Perth Herring, etc.

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for the North-West: 1, Can he now satisfactorily answer my question asked on the 3rd March, 1943, regarding the minimum length and age of Perth herring when it

first spawns and the weights at the lengths then specified? 2, Is it not a fact (a) That the increased production desired as stated by the Chief Inspector of Fisheries on the 29th July, 1943, if procured from the southern and western coastal rivers and estuaries south of Perth, will prejudice the future supplies from those sources? (b) That it will cause further wholesale depletion of mature fish or those able to reproduce their species? (c) That these waters, or some of them, are already seriously depleted? 3, Does he consider that the existing wholesale prices of fish are exorbitant and are inducing the excessive exploitation of these waters, including closed waters, irrespective of the additional exploitation proposed for canning purposes? 4, Is he prepared to take immediate action to have the wholesale prices of fish in Western Australia controlled and, if so, does he consider the prices ruling, say, in December, 1941, would be fair? 5, Does he consider it desirable to close to all netting additional coastal and estuary waters so as to permit the free ingress of mature fish to the southern rivers and estuaries this coming spring, say, between the 1st October and the 30th November, 1943? 6, If not, does he not consider that there will be a further depletion of local fish supplies for food for the immediate benefit and profit of a few? 7, Will he take steps to resist further Federal control of local fishing and fish products and, if not, why not?

The MINISTER replied: 1, In view of the value of Perth herring as a canning proposition, the investigation of its life-history is now being undertaken by officers of the local branch of the Division of Fisheries of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research. This investigation is being placed at the head of the list of importance, and it is hoped that the Commonwealth officers will at an early date be able to throw light on this important question. 2, (a) No. (b) No. (c) No. 3, The wholesale prices of fish are those secured at auction, and are regulated purely in accordance with supply and demand. There is no excessive exploitation of our waters, nor is there likely to be while the numbers of fishermen remaining in the industry continue at their present low level. 4, Action in this direction is already contemplated by the Commonwealth Prices Commissioner. 5, No. 6, No. 7, Control measures instituted

by the Commonwealth Government relate purely to the co-ordination of activities so as to ensure a maximum of effort with a minimum of manpower, and although this will involve the control of wasteful methods of fishing, the general administration of fisheries will remain a State function.

VERMIN DESTRUCTION.

As to Strychnine Supplies.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Is he aware that in numerous instances road boards are unable to secure strychnine, or where able to get any, obtain it in wholly inadequate quantities? 2, Is he aware that when replying to requests made by a Country Party deputation on the 15th April last the Under Secretary for Agriculture assured the deputation that 6,000 oz. of strychnine were then available in the State against a normal annual requirement of 4,000 oz.? 3, If the Under Secretary's statement was correct, what is preventing the distribution of the poison to road boards? 4, Will he take immediate steps to have supplies of strychnine sent out to all road boards that require them in bulk, if a shortage of bottles makes that form of distribution necessary? 5, Will he also take steps to ensure that the price charged to the consumer does not exceed the price ruling when the supplies mentioned by the Under Secretary for Agriculture were received?

The MINISTER replied: 1, 2, and 3, Six thousand ounces of strychnine have been distributed almost wholly to Vermin Boards since April 15th. Recent inquiries indicated that some boards have purchased in excess of requirements, which may mean other boards are unable to obtain supplies. Steps have been taken now to issue further supplies on a pro rata basis. Annual requirements of strychnine for Vermin Boards—owing to increase of vermin—now estimated at 8,000 ounces. 4, Vermin Boards seldom require strychnine in bulk, but can obtain strychnine in this form if desired when stocks permit. 5, The wholesale price of strychnine is governed by the Commonwealth Prices Office.

TIMBER SUPPLIES.

As to Protecting Millers' Rights.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Forests: Will he take the necessary steps to ensure that before district timber rights

are disregarded consideration will be extended to those already engaged in timber-milling and cutting work in bush areas?

The MINISTER replied: It has always been the policy of the Forests Department to provide, as far as possible, for continuity of milling operations in forest areas where the personnel have been employed for a number of years, and so retain these forest communities which are essential to the life of the industry. In no other way could stabilisation of the timber industry, so important to the welfare of the State, be effected. Areas have been kept in reserve so that when an existing permit is cut out further cutting rights can be auctioned with a view to maintaining the output, and the industry in the district. It is undesirable to sell in a time of high demand a lot of cutting rights which would later cause an excess cut, and dislocation of the timber industry, owing to fluctuations in the trade. Following an expression of opinion by the House, the Forests Department has submitted for sale five areas without restricting them to mills established or to be established in the localities concerned.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fifth Day—Conclusion.

Debate resumed from the 12th August.

MR. BERRY (Irwin-Moore) [4.41]: At the outset I wish to congratulate the new member for East Perth, and I think I am voicing the sentiments of every member in welcoming him to this Assembly. The chief merit in the Speech delivered by His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor lay in the reference to the successes of the Allies in the war. Since the beginning of the year our successes have been almost phenomenal; in the last 12 months the picture has changed tremendously. The Germans have been thrown out of Egypt and Tunisia and the Italians have gone from Sicily. It would almost seem that the naval war in Europe is over; the Mediterranean is practically ours once more, which will have far-reaching effects for Australia. Then we have the statement of the Prime Minister of Australia containing the assurance—perhaps in one sense it was rather tactlessly given—that the risk to Australia of an invasion by the Japanese was a thing of the past. I feel that the passing of the risk, which he claims has left us, was in no small measure

due to the wonderful exploits of the British Navy in clearing the Mediterranean, though I am not losing sight of the fact that our boys in the Pacific Islands, together with our Allies, the troops of the United States of America, have contributed materially to the improvement in the position.

The job confronting our boys in the Pacific Islands is a colossal one. Not only have they to contend with heat, dense jungle and flooded rivers; in New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, both of which parts I have visited, they have to contend with the scourge of malaria. This is a disease that must be regarded very seriously. Personally I cannot see how one solitary soldier serving in those parts can possibly escape infection by mosquitoes. We have a malarial-carrying mosquito in the northern parts of Australia, including the North-West and, if they become infected with the virulent form of malaria introduced by stricken soldiers, there is a serious danger of malaria spreading in the more southern portions of the continent. We are all aware how easily insects entirely foreign to Australia can be introduced and how their depredations have to a large extent nullified our efforts. Therefore I maintain that we should do all in our power to impress upon the Commonwealth the absolute need for taking all steps to prevent any spread of malarial infection. In saying this I am not speaking without knowledge. Apart from the member for Wagin, I am probably one of the few members of this House who have had dose after dose of malaria, and I can bear testimony to the manner in which it lays a man aside for months and weakens his physique.

It is pleasing to find that the Japanese have been driven out of the Aleutian Islands. Those who were on the island of Kiska appear to have run away. There has been a feeling amongst our people that the Japanese soldiers do not fear death and do not run away, and that each one of them has to be dug out of his foxhole and killed. Having lived amongst those people I know that that impression is not correct. If we keep on hammering them as we have been doing I believe they will run just as anyone else would. I am pleased that they ran away from the last of the occupied islands in the Aleutians before our soldiers got there. They apparently made good their escape under cover of fog, after having been heavily bombed. This fact is of great importance

from the point of view of Allied morale. It would be highly dangerous if our minds became imbued with the idea that the enemy is not afraid of death. I believe the Japanese are now showing that they can be just as much afraid as anyone else.

Of the armies of Japan I hold the view that once we have broken through the crust of training and education they have received, we shall find that with them fear is just as much a natural instinct as it is with anyone else. It is our business to make them run and, once we have got them running, it is our business to keep them running, and not draw any silly lines beyond which our soldiers may not be used. If we refrain from keeping them running, the enemy will get a respite and return to the attack. So I say the reference in the Speech to Allied successes was highly gratifying. If I were given to prophecy, as is the member for Canning, I would say that we are not likely to meet much opposition from the Italians.

Possibly by the end of another month we shall find the Italians out of the war, and I believe that before the end of the year Germany will crack as she inevitably must do under the pressure by Russia and the pressure of an Allied front in Europe. It was Bismarck who said that Germany could not fight on two fronts at once, but it seems that she will have to fight not only on the Russian front, but also in Italy and in France. I am hopeful that by the end of this year marked changes in the war position will have occurred. Being of a selfish disposition, I naturally hope that we shall re-take Singapore, because I am fed up with being poor. I think that by the close of this year we will see the end of the war.

In his usual efficient manner the member for Mt. Magnet touched the other day on the subject of population. He was very interesting and stressed the need for populating Australia and this State in particular. I agree with everything he said. If we desire to maintain our White Australia policy, we must bring people here so that we can cope with the teeming multitudes of the Far East. I do not think the figures quoted by the member for Mt. Magnet were quite right, but the numbers of these people are so enormous that a slight error one way or the other hardly affects the position. In our isolation it behoves us, as the single

white nation in the Pacific, to encourage people to enter Australia in such numbers as to enable us to continue our White Australia policy, so that we may be protected against serious danger of invasion. Just imagine our position had America not joined in this war with us! You, Mr. Speaker, would not now be sitting in your Chair, nor would I be standing in my place here, had the Japanese left Pearl Harbour alone and allowed America to continue fighting its isolationist policy while we were at war. At that time I do not think Australia would have lasted 14 days. That fact alone was sufficient justification for the remarks of the member for Mt. Magnet.

It is all very well to bring people to this State in hundreds and thousands, but they must have something to come to. In the past, people were brought to the State indiscriminately. They were placed on group settlements, such as the Peel Estate and the Victorian Mallee. Those unfortunate people did not have a hope from the word go. They amassed debts which it was impossible for the land to carry and they paid staggering interest bills. Naturally, they longed to return to their homeland, as I would have done had I been in their position. In their insolvent state they realised they would have been better off had they remained at home. Therefore, in bringing people to settle in this State let us be sensible. Let us see to it, if they are to be put on the land, that things will be prepared for them in such a way as to give them a sporting chance. I have attended meetings in the country where people have said that no man, whether he be a returned soldier, an immigrant or a civilian, should be placed on the land unless the price of the commodity which he intends to produce is fixed at a figure that will amply cover the cost of production and leave a margin of profit for himself. What is wrong with that? Why should not that be so?

Settlers are tired of having costs passed on to them by the city. The practice is simply to add these additional costs to the invoice for the man on the land to pay. We must make settlement here at least as attractive for people as are the conditions prevailing in their homeland. If we are not prepared to do that, then we should give up the whole thing and say Australia is not worth while. However, we realise the potentialities of our State and know that,

if we attract the right type of settler, we shall not only be helped in defence matters but our general progress will be stimulated. We must, however, give these proposed settlers a chance to make good. I maintain that the settlers placed on the Peel Estate should have been allowed to stay there. Their debts should have been entirely written off. They would then have been in a position to receive the results of their labours, and the products garnered from the estate would, in the long run, have repaid the debts written off. We lost those settlers, we lost population and we lost our money. We would not have done so had they been given a reasonable chance.

I lived for years in the Far East in the heat and sweat, as did many others. We would not have done so had it not been worth our while to go there. It was made worth our while and so we went. The same thing applies to Australia. Make the conditions attractive and people will come here. I am not above bringing German settlers to this country. I would rather have people of the Nordic race from Northern Europe as immigrants than anybody else. Germans and Scandinavians make excellent settlers. Furthermore, when they settle here they marry and the first generation, notwithstanding that it bears a German or a Scandinavian name, is Australian at heart. That is because Australia is their home. Members must have noticed in the Press many strange names of men fighting with the Americans against Germany, names which point to German ancestors. These men are fighting against Germany, not because they are Germans but because they are American citizens. The same thing applies here.

Many men in our own Forces bear names which show that they are of German extraction. They are only too glad to fight for Australia, their homeland. If we encouraged more of such people to settle here we would reduce the likelihood of war. Some people have been agitating that Italians settled in Australia should be repatriated to their own country. I do not hold with that. Those people have settled in Australia, have married and had children, many of whom are in our Fighting Forces. On the other hand, if it can be proved that any Italian has worked against our interests during this war, if it can be proved that he belongs to some Black Shirt organisation, then I would confiscate his property and send him back to

his own country. Let him go elsewhere and fight for Fascism, or any other "ism." But that is not the case with the ordinary Italian. Is it right that Italians whom we have naturalised, and whose children are fighting in our Forces, should be sent back to Italy merely because they are Italians? There are many ordinary Italians, as you are aware, Mr. Speaker, in Fremantle who are engaged in the fishing industry. They did not know that a war would break out; and they probably were totally unaware that the present conflict would occur.

Mr. J. Hegney: Most of them are non-Fascists.

Mr. BERRY: Yes. I recently heard a clamour—fortunately at a returned soldiers' meeting—for legislation to prevent Italians from engaging in fishing. If they are stopped the Australian people will not engage in the industry, not because the Australians are idle but because the business is not sufficiently remunerative. They earn a pittance. They struggle on and do a job which you and I, Mr. Speaker, would not seriously entertain because the living is so precarious. A man may make £20 in one day catching some variety of fish, and then sit on a chair in some little house on the beach and wait ten days and not get out at all.

Mr. Marshall: Australians have taken on farming but I do not know that they have made much out of it.

Mr. BERRY: I took on farming and I made a lot out of it—for someone else! I agree with remarks that have been made about the need for population. I know it will be said that that is a Commonwealth matter, but I think we should voice our opinions here and make every effort to see that the Commonwealth Government endeavours to do the things I happened to read the other day it intended doing. I trust it will meet with success. There is no question about the resources of this country.

We have resources in the North-West at Yampi Sound which are a danger to us. There we have idle iron which countries of the Far East, like Japan, are hungry for, and which they are going to Malaya to scratch for when it is here in millions of tons. They could more or less ship it off the walls of the cliff into the hold of a boat. What have we done with it? It has lain

idle for years and has been a definite threat to every man, woman and child in Australia. Let us bring people here. Let us make Australia what it should be—a country equal to the United States. We may not have quite the same resources here as the United States possesses but we have infinite resources which, coupled with what New Guinea possesses, lead one to the conviction that we have as many resources as has any other country. When I was in New Guinea in 1912 there was talk of oil being discovered in the basin of the Fly River. In those days if you talked to people about oil they said it existed in New Guinea. If it does why have we not got it? In the Year Book reference will be found to the existence of oil. Has somebody been paid to see that these deposits should be no more than deposits? If so, I congratulate the Labour Government on its sweeping victory last Saturday because I believe that if the oil is there the Labour Government will see that it comes out.

I pass from that subject to one which is of very great importance to us in this State. I refer to housing. Members will observe that the Lieut.-Governor's Speech refers to legislation being brought forward in regard to this matter. I do not know what the legislation is but I hope it will provide for actual accommodation rather than for fair rents. When speaking on the Address-in-reply the member for York referred to this matter and dealt with the question of rents. But rent is not the problem today. If one goes on Friday morning to the local court one can see exactly what the problem is. I do not know how many members have been there. I think the member for Perth knows all about it and probably the member for Maylands.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I have been there several times.

Mr. BERRY: Then the hon. member knows what I mean. On Friday morning 50 or 60 people can be seen appearing before a harassed magistrate to appeal against evictions or to appeal for evictions.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: For repossession!

Mr. BERRY: Yes. It is absolutely demoralising and it is made more so when one realises from inquiries that the erection of about 500 houses in the metropolitan areas of Western Australia would solve the problem.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Five thousand!

Mr. BERRY: I have been told on very good authority that the erection of 500 houses would put the matter right, but I do not mind if the figure is 5,000. However, 500 was the figure given to me by a responsible person.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: He did not know the extent of the problem.

Mr. BERRY: There is no way of overcoming this problem except by building houses. The New Zealand Government has been fully alive to the situation. It has had a building commission of some sort in existence for nearly 20 years and the programme there this year envisages the building of 1,200 houses. I do not know what the rents are. I was told they are high but I cannot believe that, because the programme of building continues.

Mr. Perkins: Are the houses allotted on an ownership or on a rental basis?

Mr. BERRY: On a rental basis.

Mr. Perkins: That is what I was criticising.

Mr. BERRY: I am not criticising the hon. member for his criticism. The point is that it is not the rental basis that worries us today but the fact that there is nothing to rent. The rent could be made £100,000 a week. That would make no difference if there were no houses to rent. If the statement of the Prime Minister is correct—and there is no reason to doubt it—namely that the same danger does not face us as that with which we were faced previously, why cannot people who are able to build houses be withdrawn from the Army to build them? Why cannot we build weatherboard houses if necessary? We turn our faces sedulously away from weatherboard houses but I understand that in the United States people go in for nothing else. If weatherboard houses are properly cared for and painted what is wrong with them?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: New Zealand is building them.

Mr. BERRY: I did not know that. We have the material here. If we were to make an exhaustive inquiry into the manpower situation we would find that carpenters are busy pulling down this wall or putting up that wall, merely at the whim of some young officer. An immense amount of unnecessary work is being undertaken and a large amount of time being unnecessarily lost. I would like to see that time and energy utilised in the interests of the civil population, because

the position of the housing in Western Australia is a demoralising and an unnecessary insult. I think, too, that some of the people who have gone into these houses and are protecting themselves under the National Security Regulations are over-doing it. The regulations were designed to protect people against the vicious landlord and to strengthen them against the unscrupulous agent. They might have done that, but they have also encouraged people to tell the legitimate owner of a house who wanted to re-occupy it that he could not do so. I suppose every member here has had a case of that sort brought to his notice. The member for West Perth knows a good deal about it.

I suggest there is no alternative but to build houses. We can pass any Act we like in this House in regard to the control of rents, but there is no redress for what is going on every week in front of the magistrate except to provide necessary accommodation. I understand that in New Zealand 2,000 sites have already been selected for the erection of these houses in convenient positions where lighting, water and transport are available, and that those sites will be filled as quickly as possible. If New Zealand can do it, can we not do the same? Are we such numbskulls that we must sit by and let these things happen to us when they do not happen to people in other countries? Is it that the New Zealand Government is a true Labour Government and looks after the people, and that we do not match up to it? If so, I hope we shall follow the example of New Zealand. I do not know the nature of the legislation that is to be brought before us but I hope it is along those lines. Fair rents do not matter. Houses that we do not possess cannot be rented at all.

Again, why should not a housing scheme be extended to the farming community? It has always been a matter of amazement to me to travel through the country, particularly in Western Australia, and find that the primary producers who have created this continent live for the most part in hovels. Why should that be? Why should there not be some comprehensive scheme whereby houses are provided for men on the land with practically the same amenities as those enjoyed by people in the cities? Why should a man go hundreds of miles into the country to live in a hessian-bag shed hoping that some day he will be able to pull down the

hessian? He never does pull it down. It falls down and he goes out. All those things need care and attention from us. Now that the farmers have so emphatically voted for the Commonwealth Labour Government I hope the Government will be alive to its responsibilities. Perhaps it is that the people in the country are showing their appreciation for what the Labour Government has done for them.

Mr. Fox: Hear, hear!

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: For what has been promised.

Mr. BERRY: No. For what has been done. The Labour Government in Australia should appreciate the gratitude of the country people. I have heard from time to time that the reason the Labour Government would do nothing for the farmer was that the farmer would not back him. This time the farmer has backed him by two to one. Some of the most conservative centres of Western Australia have come forward and voted for Labour. The onus of living up to that is not on the farmers but on the Labour Government. If the Labour Government cannot accept that trust and give the farmers the amenities they seek, need, and deserve, we shall see the same swing the other way at the next election. The responsibility is entirely on the people the farming community has actually put into power.

Mr. Fox: The first time they have ever given them a chance!

Mr. BERRY: That has nothing to do with it. It is a puerile interjection. The fact remains that they have done it, and that they have done it because they appreciate what the Curtin Government did for them in the last 24 months. What I am trying to stress is that the Labour Government will have to continue doing what it has done, and more.

Mr. Fox: I agree with you.

Mr. BERRY: I repeat my hope that instead of going in for fair rents we shall set about building more houses.

Mr. Fox: That is right.

Mr. BERRY: That is the only answer to the problem. I would refer now to the superphosphate position. There is a wave of discord throughout the country regarding the distribution of available supplies. There has been a myriad of stories—probably most of them myths—but we know there is only a certain amount of superphosphate available. Because of the war

we are prepared to agree to a fair rationing. I suggest that the cure for the 30 lbs. per acre which is to be issued next year is to go away and get it. Without the slightest compunction and with the least possible amount of trouble the Germans took the cantilever system from Nauru and Ocean Island. What is wrong with going and getting it back? We will have to take a little more trouble than they did, but let us retake these islands. They should never have been lost.

Apart from that we have Tunisia, a country which is one of the richest in superphosphate in the world. Its percentage, I think, is higher than anywhere else. At any rate, its superphosphate is of a very high grade. Australia needs something like 1,000,000 tons. I do not know how many ships would be required to bring that amount here from Tunisia; probably thirty or forty. But even that could be done. Ships are carrying munitions of war westward from this country, and it is no secret that they are returning in ballast, or laden only with odd cargoes. I am actually referring to the Liberty ships. Why cannot they be diverted from their destination to Egypt or Tunisia in order to increase our supplies of super? There is no reason at all if we would only push for it, but I have come to the conclusion that we would not push our way out of a wet bag. That is the only answer to the super problem.

It is all very well to say to the Government, "Will you please make a minimum amount for each settler?" but if you have 10,000 or 11,000 farmers, and you give each of them eight tons of super out of a limit of 110,000 or 114,000 tons, not much is left over for other products. The primary producer would realise and understand that, but the answer is—"If you are short of anything, go and get more of it?" If the Commonwealth Government applied sufficient pressure, ships could actually be diverted to some of these countries. We cannot at the moment go to Ocean Island or Nauru, but I think they could be bombed and retaken. I would not be surprised to learn that there are no more than 200 soldiers garrisoning those places. This superphosphate question is of immense importance to Australia.

The next note I have is fisheries. About 12 months or so ago, as the Premier will remember, we were granted, I understand, a sum of money from the Commonwealth Government for the purchase of a research

fisheries vessel, and I was particularly interested in this. Because of the war exigencies, presumably, we could not get a boat and as a result we have simply sat back and done nothing. Today we have not a boat of any sort and apparently are not making any effort to get one. The time has come for us to look into this question. We moan about the price of fish and say it is too high. The reason is that the Italian fisherman is no longer out fishing and our own professionals are not quite as good or as diligent, but, apart from that, the true story is that we have not yet found where the fish are on the coast of Western Australia. I have many strange, but exceedingly nice, friends amongst the fishing fraternity. I have in mind one who was for some time an inspector. He is a man who has had years of experience. One day when I was out with him he assured me that, if we were to look on the western edge of the continental shelf, we would find schnapper.

Everyone knows that the schnapper come in to spawn, but when they depart we do not know where they go. As a result, we, in our wisdom, set to work and snare and trap and catch these unfortunate creatures before and while they are spawning. That is wicked. There can be only one answer to such a course of action, namely, "No fish!" That answer has come about. The war has aided the fish a little because it has curtailed fishing, but the fact remains that our waters are very depleted seeing that we have not gone to the trouble to find out where these fish go. I am told that if a fisherman went fifty miles off this coast, in a small boat, and reached the edge of the continental shelf, he would possibly find the schnapper, and that there they could be caught at a time when they are not spawning. If that contention is correct, it would mean that the spawning grounds would be protected, which should be done in any case, but under those conditions there would be no excuse for not doing so. The young fish could then be allowed to grow and go out to the continental shelf where they could be caught. If the capture of the fish in our bays was prevented before they spawned, the waters of Western Australia would soon be restocked. I believe that in the old days there were tons of schnapper around our shores, but they are not there now. It reminds me of the story of the egret and its plume. This unfortunate bird produced, in the breeding

season, a very attractive plume. Hundreds of people with thousands of rounds of ammunition went out to shoot these birds off their nests. I have often seen nests containing dead young birds, because some silly coot had shot the parent bird so as to provide a plume for some vain woman in one of the cities of the world. Vain women are everywhere.

A fisheries research vessel is absolutely necessary. I think also that there should be appointed to it one of these old practical fishermen. We do not want too much academy in this matter. It is of no use sending out a lot of pamphlets to people and saying, "Here is the picture of an immature fish. Do not catch it." Neither should we say, "Here is a photograph of something else and do not catch it because it is not 12 inches long," as human nature is too selfish. I trust that we will shortly hear that we have a fisheries vessel. There is no need to build one when temporary expedients are available. At the mouth of the river and at Coffee Point there are boats lying idle and rotting which could be used for this purpose. At Safety Bay there is a small vessel which was built locally by two young fellows. It was chartered and fitted out by the Government to go to the Abrolhos Islands to prospect the superphosphate deposits there. What is wrong with hiring that boat and getting on with the business?

Let us find out whether we have a fishing industry here. I am inclined to think we have, but it is not in the shallows along the beaches. Let us find where these fish are. I was told authoritatively the other day, that an aeroplane had reported, off Augusta, a shoal of fish estimated to cover 60 square miles. Why cannot we go after the business properly? If we want fish, we must find out where they are and catch them. If we are going to let matters go idly on and say, "You may catch herring or schnapper in their breeding seasons," then we must not moan about the price of fish. It is all the result of our own fault. There should be no moan about fish prices, and it is of no use regulating them. It is just like the other two problems of super and housing. The answer to the fishing problem is to see that our waters are stocked with fish and, as legislators, that is our duty.

While we are on the subject of industries for the good of the State, I wish to stress

what I consider to be a very fine accomplishment on the part of the Government, namely, the building of wooden ships in Western Australia. The work that has already been done is really amazing. I have been told that it is two months behind schedule, but to my mind it is not at all in arrears. The manager, Mr. Arcus, should be congratulated on his success and the foreman, Mr. Lawrence, is also deserving of recognition. A few days ago I had an opportunity of taking some of my friends to see the work, people who had been sceptical of the scheme, and they were amazed to find what has been done. I appreciate the manner in which the problem has been tackled and handled. The work is well worth viewing and is a credit to all who are responsible.

Members have been supplied with copies of the report of the Royal Commission on delinquent youths. Some time ago the thought occurred to me that it might be possible to tackle this problem by altering our outlook. Instead of telling a refractory boy that he is to be sent to a reformatory, we might well adopt the attitude of asking the boy what he would like to do. If we gave him the choice of attending the Guildford Grammar School or being sent to a reformatory, there is no doubt he would choose the Guildford Grammar School. I believe that Mr. Kingsley Fairbridge was imbued with a similar idea when he started his farm school scheme.

Why cannot we start a scheme under which these delinquent youths, who are no more delinquent than we were at their age, could be asked whether they would like to be trained as sailors on some of our idle pearling vessels? They could be offered the inducement of studying in order to obtain second mate's certificates and become officers of merchant ships. Quite a number of elderly mariners would be only too happy to co-operate and give the boys what assistance they need. In this way we could teach the lads something that would have a definite value for them and be of use to the country. I believe that many of the boys would be willing to come under such a scheme and learn to become sailors. So far all we have done is to offer to put them on the land, but the land is not attractive to everybody. I am satisfied that something along the lines I have indicated could be done. Some of the small ships in the river could be utilised for this purpose instead of being allowed to lie

there until, worm-eaten, they sink to the bottom.

Can we not make inquiries in England to ascertain how many orphans are available with a view to bringing them to Australia and, provided they are not too old, educating them? There must be thousands of orphans who could be dealt with in this way. If they were educated here, they would grow up to become good Australians. Undoubtedly a man's country is the country of his boyhood—the place where he played wag from school and swam in the river. Many boys could be brought out to Australia and trained to be useful and responsible citizens. I hope this matter will be given consideration.

The subject of education is mentioned in the Speech, and it is suggested that the school-leaving age should be increased to 15 years. To me even 15 years seems to be a very early age at which to take a boy from school and put him to a business. At the same time I consider that any move to increase the school-leaving age must be right. While speaking of schools, I maintain that money must be made available to provide better accommodation. In some of the schools in the country districts the accommodation is appalling. In the summer-time the rooms are like ovens; in the the winter they are like ice-boxes. Many of them have no protection against the weather except within the four miserable walls that constitute a building almost as miserable as one could ever see. Yet, to ask for the provision of a shelter shed seems almost a sin against proportion.

Mr. Sampson: Then there are those dreadful pavilion schools.

Mr. BERRY: Yes. Apparently, to ask for any money for education is regarded as a sin. Yet surely education is the basis of the moral fibre of the race. Without it where would we be? Hitler showed its value by taking the young people and training them for war, and we all know what happened in Germany. The young people followed him. We should give the young people decent international education and train them all for peace. I consider that education is probably the most important matter we shall have to face in relation to post-war reconstruction.

In this State a dental van was provided to travel the country and care for the children's teeth and, although the arrangement

was hedged with restrictions, the work done by that van has met with the acclamation of the people who enjoyed its activities. Yet we have only one such van, and we are told that there is not money to provide more. We have not the money to enable the children's teeth to be attended to; we have not the money to safeguard the health of the children and to provide adequately for their education, but we have money for the purposes of war and plenty of it. I suggest that there should be no hesitation on the part of the Government about increasing the dental service, improving it where it needs improving and extending it throughout the State for the benefit of the children.

The children of today will be the men and women of tomorrow. In fact we may say that our children are Australia. They are more so than we are, because our lives are more or less behind us while theirs are ahead. We hear talk about bringing people here to defend Australia. Doubtless we need them, but another way of helping to defend Australia is to make the youngsters who are already here fit and strong. This could be done by increasing the care given to children in the schools. True, some advancement has been made. Conditions in the Government schools are not as bad as they were when I was a boy, but there is still room for improvement. I would like to see a dental van in every district. But the Minister says there is no money. There is money, tons of it! It is useless for anybody to deny that fact. I insist that too much cannot possibly be done for the benefit of the children who are the future people of Australia.

There is a general request—or more than a “request,” which is the polite word—from the country districts that when the mortgage bank becomes operative, so far as Western Australia is concerned the institution had better not be left in the hands of our Agricultural Bank. The farmers do not care who handles the mortgage bank, so long as the Agricultural Bank does not; and I quite agree with them. The Agricultural Bank has already quite enough to handle. I hasten to add that the treatment afforded to me by that institution has invariably been most courteous; but the general feeling throughout the country districts is that the Agricultural Bank has enough to do looking after its own particular businesses without also looking after the mortgage bank. Now

that the Commonwealth Government is such a national Government, I hope the problem of reducing interest to 2½ per cent. will be tackled. Probably there ought to be Commonwealth Bank branches operating throughout the country districts, for the mortgage bank scheme. Let the mortgage bank, too, provide money for seasonal credit, which matter up to date has not even been considered.

Mr. Marshall: Do you think the people are going to get out of debt by the establishment of mortgage banks?

Mr. BERRY: No. I do believe, however, that mortgage banks can help in regard to interest rates. If the farmer is to be helped, the problem of debt should be tackled generally, and not fiddled about with. If the question of high rates of interest is to be settled, settle the question of secured debts. Don't take off your hat every time you see a banker. Probably the mortgage bank will be an instrument whereby the Associated Banks will shed some of their doubtful accounts. I have had the floor for the better part of an hour, and I am very grateful to members for their attention. I do hope that the points I have raised will receive early consideration. I trust we shall not continue to dilly-dally. We go on for years and years talking and talking! Even in wartime we have to indulge in endless talk before we wake up. I thank the House for its attention.

MR. HILL (Albany): I move—
That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and negatived.

Question put and passed; the Address adopted.

BILL—COMPANIES.

Restored to Notice Paper.

On motion by the Minister for Lands (for the Minister for Justice) ordered:—

That this House, in accordance with the provisions of the Standing Orders relating to lapsed Bills, resume consideration of the Companies Bill, and that the third reading of the Bill be made an Order of the Day for the next sitting of the House.

BILLS (6)—FIRST READING.

1, Criminal Code Amendment.

2, Electoral (War Time).

Introduced by the Minister for Lands (for the Minister for Justice).

- 3, Coal Mine Workers (Pensions).
- 4, Trade Unions Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Minister for Labour.
- 5, Mine Workers' Relief Act Amendment.
Introduced by the Minister for Mines.
- 6, Main Roads Act (Funds Appropriation).

Introduced by the Minister for Lands
(for the Minister for Works).

House adjourned at 5.47 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 25th August, 1943.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 p.m. and read prayers.

QUESTION—SCHOOL DRIVING ALLOWANCE.

As to Income Limit for Participation.

Hon. A. THOMSON asked the Chief Secretary: Will the Government consider abolishing the net income limit (£250 per year) now in force thereby debarring parents earning over that amount from participating in the driving allowance—6d. per day per child attending school when a horse and sulky is provided, and 6d. per week when a bicycle is provided?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: No. But the Government is considering raising the income limit.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Sixth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Central) [4.34]: Before addressing myself to the Lieut.-Governor's Speech, I would like to say how thankful and grateful I am that the position in which the Empire stands today compared with that in which it was at our last meeting is ever so much better, and is such as to induce us to go forward at an accelerated pace. Perhaps sooner than most of us thought possible two months ago, we shall have crushed the ruthless enemy that has created such a ter-

rible state of affairs in the world in general and in our beloved Motherland in particular. Permit me also to acknowledge the great debt we owe to those who have made the supreme sacrifice and to those others who have undergone great privations and sufferings in order that we may remain a free people, thus enabling us to carve out our destiny in the way that democratic people have every right to expect.

I would further seek the privilege of commenting on the recent expression of public opinion throughout this Commonwealth and congratulate the Labour Party on having been returned to the National Parliament with such a substantial majority. I take it that that party will endeavour to put into operation the platform to which it professes to subscribe. Certainly, the new conditions in the Federal sphere will be a great advancement on the uncertain state of affairs that existed in the National Parliament subsequent to the previous election as the result of which two Independents were responsible for the fate of the Ministry. The Labour Party appears likely to have a majority in both Houses but, if it brings in certain legislation which it has promised to introduce, I think that those members of this Chamber and another place who worked so enthusiastically for the return of Labour may live to regret that they displayed so much enthusiasm in that direction, because I understand that one of the planks of the Federal Labour Party's political platform seeks the abolition of State Parliaments and also the Senate. However, whether that will be done remains to be seen.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: The One Parliament for Australia candidates did not receive much support!

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The first item in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech to which I wish to refer concerns the very important mining industry. I do not propose to touch on what was once the great goldmining industry of this State and the blow that was dealt it by the Commonwealth Government. The people have spoken and we must accept their verdict. I do, however, want to say something about base metals because in Northampton, which is in the Central Province, there are a number of mines which, as many members know, have for years past been producers of lead and copper. I have here a letter from the Under Secretary for Mines in which he advises me of 14 mines that are