

departure for Rotorua Sir Francis Bell said he had arranged for the railway sawmills to be taken over by the State Forestry Department. During his visit to Rotorua he will discuss with the natives the question of the ownership of the bush at the edges of the lakes in the district, and he will also visit the prison plantations. Towards the end of the week he will leave with the Hon. W. D. S. Macdonald for the East Coast, travelling via Whakatane and Opotiki to Gisborne, and visiting the State forests en route.

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Hitherto the humble *pinus insignis* has been regarded as having but little value as a timber tree, owing to the knotty formation of its wood throughout. A novel experiment recently made by the manager of Ellis and Burnand Veneer Co., at Manunui, has disproved this belief, with remarkable results. The *pinus* is treated similarly to other timbers used in ply-work, and the finished article is a highly pleasing and beautifully grained veneer, much handsomer than any usually in favour, and having equal value as an accessory to cabinet-making.

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If the war has taught the lumber industry one single lesson it has been the necessity for proper cost ascertainment. The benefits which will accrue in the future will be of inestimable value. Men are not nearly so apt to cut a price deliberately when they have in front of them the real cost of production.

Industrial Self-Government

In the course of an important speech delivered in the Federal Parliament on September 26th, the Hon. W. O. Archibald made a strong plea for action in the Commonwealth on the lines proposed in Great Britain by the Whitley Committee.

Mr Archibald said:—"No award by any industrial tribunal can prove as satisfactory as an agreement which is arrived at between the parties to any industrial dispute at a round-table conference. When the war is over, the workers will no longer be content to be merely employees in industries—they will insist upon becoming partners in them. Otherwise there will be a cut-throat revolution and the red flag will be hoisted. It is of no use mining matters. The sooner we face the situation as it is being faced in the Old Country the better it will be for us; but the Labour leaders there are acting very differently from the Labour leaders here. There, Mr Will Thorne, Mr Ben Tillet, and others recognise the responsibility which will rest upon their shoulders when this fearful struggle is over. They realise that the workers will never return to the drab conditions of life which obtained prior to the war. That, I repeat, is the keynote to the report of the Whitley Commission. Let us constitute an authority to cover practically the same ground as has been covered by that body. I know

of nothing more important to the industries of this country than that we should establish some such machinery.

"I have not the slightest doubt that Mr Beeby, the Minister of Industry in New South Wales, is in thorough accord with the suggestion that I have made under the heading. Let us call together the Ministers of Industry in the States, and let them form a council. Let a council be formed in every large city, consisting of workers and employers, and, as this scheme will be useless unless it is far-reaching, let there be a committee in every shop. Of course, the task will be a difficult one, as it has been found to be in England, but as it is not a characteristic of Australians to run away when they are in a tight corner, that fact should not deter us from seeking to achieve the desired end. No doubt there will be grievous disappointments, but if the workers can have the opportunity of criticising the methods by which work is carried on, there will be greater harmony. Let them be put in the position of partners. A partner in a concern does not necessarily have an overwhelming monetary interest in it. We must work on those lines in order to get the absolute confidence of the men. One of the causes of discontent in Great Britain has been the absence of constancy of employment, and it is no doubt a great cause for discontent to a worker when he finds that for a large portion of each year he is out of employment. Some capitalists will question our right to interfere with the conduct of their businesses, but the sooner such men are pushed out of business by taxation, or in any other way, the better it will be. Without question the old days have gone. We no longer look upon employment as a means of creating colossal wealth for a few to put into their pockets or squander, while the great majority have difficulty in securing the necessities of life. All that sort of thing has to go.

"If we approached the Trades Halls in Australia with a proposition such as I have outlined they would turn it down in five minutes. It is a curious fact that many great questions which have cropped up in these organisations during the war have been determined by very narrow majorities. The red-rag element win merely by the skin of their teeth. It is characteristic of this red-rag brigade, the industrialists, that they are the greatest tyrants we have in Australia to-day. They throw out the taunt that a man is a 'scab' if he does not roll up to a meeting of the union where a question is to be decided by a show of hands which should be submitted to a ballot, and where no man dare open his mouth, and in this way they intimidate him. The best type of unionist does not go near his union. He sends along his contributions by someone else. I have asked several unionists why they do not attend the meetings, and they have said: 'We have no time for that sort of thing.' But, notwithstanding the absence of so many of the best type of unionists from the meetings, the red-raggers in Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane only win by the skin of their teeth.