

nection with the raising of loans. At present one month only is allowed and it is proposed to make the time six weeks. That has been asked for by a number of local authorities which consider that a month is not long enough for the ratepayers to demand a poll concerning a loan about which there may be some conflict of opinion. I am not saying that in this case everybody agrees it is desirable to extend the time. One has to make up one's mind whether the period of one month in all parts of the State, taking into consideration the various factors involved, is fair to ratepayers and councils alike. Some local authorities and I myself consider that six weeks is a more reasonable period.

Another provision it is suggested should be altered is that concerning the number of ratepayers who may demand a poll. At present only twenty need ask for a poll and it must be granted by a municipal council. In the Perth Municipal Council area—though I have no exact figures—it is quite obvious there are at least 20,000 ratepayers entitled to demand a poll; and for 20 of them only to be required to do so in order to force the local authority to conduct a referendum on a loan proposal, could easily result in a few disgruntled people getting their own way. On the other hand, we have smaller municipalities where 20 might be a substantial proportion of the ratepayers.

So it is proposed that the number required shall be 50 or one-tenth of the total number of owners, whichever is the lesser in number. If one-tenth is only 15 there can be a poll if 15 demand one; but if one-tenth is 1,000 there can be a poll if 50 demand one. In that instance 50 would be the number, and it is hoped that by so increasing the figure the possibility of frivolous or vexatious applications for loan polls will be removed and satisfaction will be given to both large and small local authorities.

The last provision is one to which I have already made considerable reference when introducing another measure a few moments ago. I allude to agreements to be made between the Housing Commission and a municipal council in respect of the making of roads and the payment therefor, and the advancing of money by the Commission for the purpose of making roads where houses are being built by the Commission. I do not think I need reiterate the arguments I advanced a few minutes ago in connection with the other Bill save to say that there is

no compulsion on a local authority. It is a matter of agreement between the Housing Commission and itself, and the proposals for the repayment of the money will be found to be identical with those in the previous Bill to which I referred. These proposals are also complementary to those which are to be found in the State Housing Act Amendment Bill.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I suppose that aspect will apply less to municipalities than to road boards?

The MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT: I would say so, but it was impossible not to include them because the circumstances might easily arise and, as I previously said, no harm could come of giving them the power. Much difficulty might arise, and in fact I think has already arisen in some cases, because they did not have the power. I therefore move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. F. J. S. Wise, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.22 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 10th September, 1947.

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

ELECTORAL—SWEARING-IN OF MEMBER.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I have to announce that I have received a Commission

from His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor authorising me to swear-in members of the Legislative Council. I have received the return of a writ for the vacancy in the Central Province caused by the death of Hon. J. M. Drew, showing that Harold Arthur Charles Daffen has been duly elected. I am prepared to swear-in the hon. member.

Hon. H. A. C. Daffen took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll.

QUESTIONS.

SERVICEMENS LAND SETTLEMENT.

As to Properties Offered, Resumed, Etc.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE (on notice) asked the Honorary Minister:

(1) Have any properties been resumed for soldier land settlement?

(2) Are there any properties the Government wishes to resume for soldier land settlement but is not able to do so owing to—

(a) Lack of necessary powers;

(b) any other reason?

(3) Will he lay on the Table of the House particulars of properties referred to in (2) above and the Land Purchase Board's valuations for same?

(4) How many properties have been offered for sale to the Government for soldier land settlement?

(5) How many have been withdrawn from sale by the owners?

(6) For how many are negotiations still taking place?

(7) Will he lay on the Table of the House particulars of properties mentioned in (5) and (6) above, with particulars of prices asked by vendors and valuations arrived at by Land Purchase Board?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied:

(1) No.

(2) No.

(3) Answered by (2).

(4) 1,567.

(5) 363.

(6) 354 current and 258 deferred (total 612).

(7) No. Regarding the 1,567 properties offered to the Government, the owners' offers are treated as confidential. The Land

Purchase Board does not make valuations. All valuations for War Service Land Settlement in Western Australia are the responsibility of the Chief Valuer of the Taxation Department, Mr. V. L. Steffanoni.

AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE.

As to Obtaining Services of Graduates.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE (on notice) asked the Honorary Minister:

(1) Is the Government aware that there will be nine graduates in Agricultural Science from the University of Western Australia this year?

(2) Has the Government taken any action to obtain the services of any of these graduates?

(3) If not, why not?

(4) Is the Government aware that, whilst commencing salary and conditions in the Western Australian Government service for the above class of worker are comparable with conditions elsewhere in Australia, the long term prospects, particularly with regard to salary and research work, are not?

(5) Will the Government give early consideration to measures for rectifying this position?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes, subject to their passing the necessary examinations.

(2) Yes.

(3) Answered by (2).

(4) Yes.

(5) This is receiving consideration.

ROYAL PERTH HOSPITAL.

As to Completion, Cost, Etc.

Hon. A. THOMSON (on notice) asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) When were the additions to the new Royal Perth Hospital started?

(2) What was the estimated cost at time of starting?

(3) When does the department expect the building will be ready for patients?

(4) What has it cost up to the 31st August of this year?

(5) How many men are employed and the number of various tradesmen employed?

(6) How much money has been contributed by the Lotteries Commission?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Excavations for foundations were commenced on the 14th December, 1939.

(2) The estimated cost of the new Perth Hospital scheme at the time of its commencement, and including furniture and equipment, was £765,000.

As a result of changes in medical practice and administration, the floor area has been increased by one third, and because of the reduced working week, quarters and other facilities for nurses will be much larger.

(3) Subject to delivery of essential items, early in 1948.

(4) £799,359.

(5) (a) On the hospital building—foremen 2, bricklayers 10, carpenters 45, labourers 86, painters 31, plasterers 31, plumbers 40, fitters 7, clerks 9, total 261.

(b) On the steam line—foreman 1, carpenters 15, labourers 77, fitters and welders 4, clerks 4, total 101—grand total 362.

(6) £302,000.

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, Supreme Court Act Amendment.

2, Unclaimed Moneys Act Amendment.
Transmitted to the Assembly.

BILL—LOTTERIES (CONTROL) ACT AMENDMENT (CONTINUANCE).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. A. THOMSON (South-East) [4.46]: As one who in the past has strongly supported the renewal of this legislation, I shall not raise any objection to this Bill. I do not agree with those members who say that the Act should find a permanent place on the statute-book because, when a continuance measure like this one has to be brought before the House periodically, it affords members an opportunity to discuss the ramifications and administration of the Lotteries Commission.

This afternoon I asked the Minister when the additions to the new Royal Perth Hospital were started and was informed that they were commenced on the 14th December, 1939. At the time I took strong exception to the erection of this building, which was

somewhat rushed by the then Government. I think members will agree that the information supplied to the House by Dr. Hislop showed that an amazing blunder had been made when it was decided to erect the new hospital on that site. I do not propose to deal with this matter at length, but wish to draw attention to the fact that the Lotteries Commission has already provided £302,000 towards the cost of construction.

When the work was begun, it was the intention of the Commission to pay the interest and sinking fund, but evidently these demands have proved too much for the finances of that body. At the same time, it is an eye-opener to find that so much money has been provided by the Commission. That in itself is justification for the action of those responsible for introducing this legislation, which we are now asked to continue for a further period of three years. As was pointed out by Mr. Baxter, before the inauguration of the State lotteries, people every week were held up by street collectors, and quite a number of lotteries were being run which, on examination, were found to be conducted not at all in the interests of those people who were investing money in them.

Hon. E. H. Gray: They were pretty expensive.

Hon. A. THOMSON: They were more than expensive. The Lotteries Commission can be congratulated upon the fairness of the manner in which it has administered the distribution of the funds. Speaking for the country hospitals in my province, I can say that they have received a considerable amount of financial support from the Commission. Originally—I think when Sir Hal Colebatch was Chief Secretary—the then Government laid down the policy that money for country hospitals would have to be provided by local authorities and committees. When the Lotteries Commission was instituted, local authorities were required to find one-third of the amount required for hospitals. By contributing an amount equal to that provided by the Lotteries Commission, several hospitals on the Great Southern were able to wipe off their indebtedness. That money was obtained by special appeals to ratepayers.

I repeat what I have said often on this subject: While people in the country have to find one-third of the money to finance

hospitals, those in the metropolitan area, with all the advantages to be obtained from the Royal Perth Hospital, are not called upon to contribute one penny piece. If it is fair and reasonable that residents in the metropolitan area should not have to pay anything towards the erection of the Royal Perth Hospital, then I commend to the consideration of the present Administration the suggestion that it would be fair and reasonable to apply the same principle in country districts.

There has been a considerable amount of dissatisfaction about the matter in the Great Southern. In one district a considerable sum of money was raised for the installation of an up-to-date x-ray plant, but for some reason or other the Health Department is not agreeable to the acquisition of a plant of that type. If people are sufficiently patriotic to raise funds for purposes like that, some consideration should be given to them. When the Lotteries Commission first came into existence, country hospitals were provided with x-ray plants, which are now totally out of date and not of much use. The result is that those living in country districts and finding it necessary to have an x-ray examination, are compelled to come to the metropolitan area for the purpose.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Those things will be provided in the regional hospitals.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes.

Hon. H. L. Roche: In 20 years' time!

Hon. A. THOMSON: I recognise that is the intention, but it is a question of the finance available; and I presume it will depend on the goodwill of the Federal Treasurer as to how much money we will be able to obtain, in view of increased costs. There is also a great shortage of such things. I observe that one hon. member has given notice of his intention to ask a question with regard to permits for the erection of houses.

Hon. G. Fraser: No. I am not asking about permits. I am wanting to know how many houses the Government has built.

Hon. A. THOMSON: What the hon. member desires to do is to draw the attention of the public to the fact that there is a shortage of houses.

Hon. G. Fraser: No. Merely that none has been built in the Fremantle area, and that some consideration should be given to

a district from which 500 applications have come and for which nothing has been done.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I have no doubt that the Premier will be able to provide a satisfactory answer.

Hon. G. Fraser: He will need to!

Hon. A. THOMSON: I have no doubt he will be able to give as satisfactory an answer as the previous Premier.

Hon. G. Fraser interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order/ Mr. Thomson will proceed.

Hon. A. THOMSON: It is amazing—but the present Government is exempt from any blame—that a building which was started in 1939 is still uncompleted. I admit that the war intervened and retarded progress on the Royal Perth Hospital, but we know that in Victoria during the war a new hospital was completed and put into operation for the benefit of the public. It would be interesting to know why our hospital, which was begun in 1939 and was then estimated to cost £755,000, will not be available for patients until 1948.

Hon. G. Fraser: Did not the Yanks build the Melbourne hospital?

Hon. A. THOMSON: No, the Victorian Government built it. I am not going to say that the men employed on the Royal Perth Hospital at present should not be working there, but it is a fact that there are 362 so engaged in completing a building that was begun in 1939.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: What has that to do with this Bill?

Hon. A. THOMSON: The Lotteries Commission provided £302,000 towards the erection of the hospital, which has not yet been completed. That is not the fault of the Lotteries Commission; but in view of the serious housing shortage one is justified in asking why so many men are being employed not only on that structure but on many other Government jobs. I believe we would get houses much more quickly if there were a little less Government work being undertaken. However, I support the Bill. I congratulate the Lotteries Commission on the work it is doing.

I would like to express agreement with the views propounded by some members that there should be more prizes. It would

be better to revert to £2,000 as a first prize and distribute the remaining £1,000 in other prizes. Reference has also been made to the means test, which is rather injurious to those who are receiving pensions. I suppose I shall be asked what that has to do with the Lotteries Commission. The point is: I think it would be very much better if the prize money were reduced to £2,000 and more cash prizes were made available. More funds would be subscribed and there would be a greater number of returns.

HON. E. H. GRAY (West) [5.0]: It is a pity the question of street collections was introduced into the debate. I do not think Mr. Baxter intended to create the impression he did, but to my mind what he said was a reflection upon a large body of women.

Hon. A. Thomson: I do not think his remarks were intended in that way.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: These women have done a tremendous work in raising funds for all kinds of social services. The lotteries Act has nothing to do with street collections, the Act governing which was passed in 1940. The Lotteries (Control) Act was passed in 1932, and was intended to stop a large number of lotteries, sweeps, etc. that were being conducted, and the sale of tickets in the streets of Perth, Fremantle and the metropolitan districts generally. In those days many well-deserving sweeps were being conducted. On the other hand, while some of them were good, many were bad and a tremendous number were very bad. The passing of that legislation was of great benefit to the public and to deserving charitable organisations.

There is nothing so cheap to run as a voluntary-giving organisation. The people concerned over the years have raised hundreds of thousands of pounds at less cost than could have been achieved by any of the best conducted businesses. Even the Taxation Department would cost more to run, proportionately, than would any of the Western Australian voluntary organisations in their endeavours to raise money through the generosity of the people. It would be a great pity if the impression went from this Chamber that members were against voluntary giving and opposed to street collections.

The street collection legislation of 1940 was passed through both Houses to meet

a special emergency. Prior to that date street collections and the sale of lottery tickets were under the control of the Police Department, which administered the street collections and did so with a view to preventing as much obstruction of traffic as possible. It had nothing to do with the bona fides of the various committees that were conducting the collections.

During the war period hundreds of organisations sprang up and there were street collections on practically every day of the week. It was no trouble for the then Government to pass legislation dealing with the matter. We all realised the necessity for some control being exercised, both as to the sale of lottery tickets and the taking-up of street collections. The legislation of 1940 provided for a maximum of 50 collecting days in the year. I think that at present 24 permits are given to various organisations during the year for street collections.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: The cost of the street collections is trifling.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: It is practically nothing.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: It is a really good act on the part of the people concerned.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The people of Western Australia, and the Government as well as members of Parliament, owe a great debt of gratitude to those women who take up street collections. They represent all classes and spend their spare time in fostering the organisations in which they are interested. Far from the people being opposed to voluntary giving, I contend that four-fifths of the residents of the metropolitan area welcome every genuine appeal that is made to their generosity. These appeals are still controlled by the department concerned. I think people welcome the opportunity to give their sixpences and shillings on the Fridays when collections are made in the street, particularly when these collections are in aid of some deserving social service.

I have been connected with the Infant Health organisation since its inception, and I know what a great job it has done. Then there is the Silver Chain! We should allow at least a dozen street appeals to be made each year on behalf of that organisation, because it has been of tremendous benefit to sick people who cannot

afford to have a nursing sister in the house. It is a pity the public does not know more about the work of the Silver Chain. Then there is the Salvation Army! I was, as Honorary Minister, in charge of the Employment Department for six years. I know what the Salvation Army does in Queen-street. The Government cannot do without it.

The efforts of the most competent men it would be possible to get hold of could not compare with the wonderful work the Salvation Army does in the case of people who are down and out. That organisation deals with what are thought to be hopeless cases. Those are people who were brought up in poor surroundings, for the most part. If we were reared in the same environment and were subjected to the same temptations as those unfortunates, we right indeed be worse than they are. The funds received for the work of the Salvation Army are all voluntarily donated. It will not accept money from the Lotteries Commission, and is doing a truly wonderful job. Would members suggest that we should prevent the Salvation Army from conducting a street appeal every year? There would be a great outcry from the people if that were done.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Who suggested such a thing?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: One member rather half heartedly supported Mr. Baxter in his remarks about street collections.

Hon. A. Thomson: I was referring to the very bad cases.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: There has not been a complaint for years past concerning any of the street collections held in the metropolitan area. The Chief Secretary's Department deserves every credit for the way in which it has controlled them. It has done a splendid job. The large number of women who assist in this direction have faith in the department and they are protected. They have earned the respect and sincere thanks of the whole community. When the Lotteries (Control) Bill was first brought down, I do not recall any promise that street collections would be abolished. It has been the policy of the Commission to encourage voluntary giving and promote honorary work on the part of our citizens throughout the State. To assist them the Commission makes handsome donations, based perhaps on the amount of

money that is also raised by voluntary efforts.

It would be a bad day for Western Australia if we frowned upon voluntary giving, either through street collections or in other ways. The result of the donations that have been made has been to assist very greatly those social service organisations that are of such importance in the community. We could also do a great deal in the case of the kindergarten movement. We have to face the fact that the needs of the Government with respect to its various departments are so great that there must be an increased call upon the public to subscribe their spare cash to assist in the maintenance of social service organisations.

I should like to see a street appeal once a year on behalf of the Parents and Citizens' Association with the object of its leading the way in regard to amenities in our Government schools. I am sure such a move would catch on with the public and would lead to the raising of thousands of pounds. The money could be devoted to the installation of an up-to-date kitchen in one of our Perth schools.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! I point out to the hon. member that we are not discussing street collections.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I was talking about cooking. All previous speakers have had something to say about street collections. The Lotteries Commission has made voluntary-giving a part of its policy, and much praise is due to it. It has done a wonderful job all through its existence. Members of the Commission have paid visits to various parts of the State and encouraged the formation of local committees, hospital committees, and social service organisations. I should like to see wider powers given to it so that it might contribute money to other organisations, particularly the one I was referring to when I was called to order.

Why should mothers in these days have to cut anything from three to five cribs every day for their youngsters attending schools? The waste that goes on in the summer time in the schools in the metropolitan area is terrific. It would pay to have a street collection with a view to starting a fund out of which a kitchen could be equipped at one of our big schools. The Government could

then say to the mothers "We will provide the facilities and you do the cooking."

The Minister for Mines: And you could then sell them a lottery ticket!

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Instead of having, say, 800 mothers cutting lunches for their children every day they could roster themselves, go to the school kitchen, and provide an appetising meal for the youngsters. That would save thousands of pounds in the year. This is the time to undertake such a scheme, for it would also mean the saving of food in every shape and form. I should like to see this legislation made permanent. Mr. Craig referred to old age pensioners. Quite a number of the old people form themselves into syndicates, put in their sixpences and buy a lottery ticket between them. There are hundreds of such syndicates. The people concerned get quite a lot of enjoyment out of the purchase of tickets.

The Minister for Mines: That is about all they do get!

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I support the second reading of the Bill, and am very pleased to have had this opportunity to refer to the splendid work that has been carried out by the Lotteries Commission.

HON. A. L. LOTON (South-East) [5.13]: I support the second reading, but would prefer that the term of the life of the Lotteries Commission should be two years instead of three. I am also opposed to the amount of commission that is paid on the sale of tickets. In the case of lotteries 363 to 367, the amount of commission paid was £6,186, equal approximately to 9 per cent. In the next three lotteries, about the same amount was also paid out in commission, which is at the rate of 3d. per ticket, and represents a large sum for very little work done. Most people put down their half-crown at some booth, write out their own ticket, and the attendant collects the 3d. If the commission were reduced to 1d. per ticket, I think it would be ample, particularly as numbers of people are conducting more than one booth.

Hon. G. Fraser: It would be difficult to get ticket-sellers at the reduced figure.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: I do not think so. I understand that many permits are now held by small syndicates that employ attendants at the various booths and arcades for the

sale of the tickets. If they can afford to do that, they must be making good money. I would prefer to see a permit issued only to the person who holds the booth.

Hon. G. Fraser: Out of the lot who sell tickets, you are referring to five or six only.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: They are all making money.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: That is why they undertake the work.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: They do not sell the tickets merely for the sake of selling them.

Hon. G. Fraser: Have you any idea as to how many sell two books only?

Hon. A. L. LOTON: No.

Hon. G. Fraser: If you had, your views might be different.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: Perhaps so; the hon. member can enlighten us. Next there is the question of the prize money. I would prefer two prizes of £500 each than one prize of £1,000. In recent lotteries, the first prize has been £3,000, and I think it would be better if the money were split up into a prize of £1,000 and more of £500 each; it would be better for the community as a whole. Members will appreciate that a prize of £500 would be very acceptable in these days and, with a lottery being drawn practically every week, it would mean that the money would be kept in circulation all the time.

Then again, with the present system of a lottery per week, many country sellers do not have much time within which to dispose of their books of tickets and return the butts to the Commission in order that they may be included in the draw. Members will understand that if it takes a day to get to Perth from a country centre and a day to return the result slip, with a week-end in between, country sellers are at a disadvantage compared with those engaged in the business in the metropolitan area where, as the results show, the larger percentage of sales of tickets are effected. Many people in the country prefer to send to the city for their tickets, knowing that they will be in the current lottery, rather than wait to be in one at some future date.

HON. E. M. HEENAN (North-East) [5.17]: It was not my intention to speak on the Bill but, in case my silence should

be construed as an indication that I did not agree with some of the remarks that have fallen from members, I feel I should comment on the measure. I am glad the Bill has been introduced again, and am not greatly concerned with its being for a duration of three years only. I am convinced we all fully realise that at the expiration of that period the legislation will be renewed and so it will go on ad infinitum. Perhaps the more frank way would be to make it a permanent piece of legislation. I do not suppose it matters very much in all the circumstances.

I have had quite a number of dealings with the Lotteries Commission, and I take this opportunity to join with other members in paying a tribute to the manner in which the members of that body have managed the undertaking, and the very courteous and helpful treatment they have always extended to me. Mr. Gray's remarks greatly interested me, and I commend him upon his speech. He opened my eyes, and I am sure has done quite a lot of good by helping members to appreciate the position. Possibly some people get annoyed with the street collections that are made from time to time, but I am afraid that if they were stopped the position would be more difficult for some institutions. As Mr. Gray pointed out, the collections are in aid of very worthy objects and those engaged in the work are rendering in an honorary capacity a useful public service. If we appreciate that fact, our attitude towards street collections must be different.

I was also interested in Mr. Gray's suggestion that the Government should take into consideration the enlarging of the jurisdiction of the Lotteries Commission. With other Goldfields members, I recently supported an application that the Goldfields Fresh Air League made to the Commission for a donation. We received every consideration and were subsequently granted a very handsome sum towards the cost of the erection of a home at Esperance. The building is to cost between £10,000 and £12,000, which includes its equipment. The object of the Fresh Air League is to provide holidays at the coast for children whose parents normally would not be able to afford to send the young ones away for a vacation. In my opinion, that is one of the worthiest causes that exist. However, Mr. Kenneally

pointed out to me that there was some doubt as to whether the league came within the purview of the Act. I am happy to say that that doubt was resolved in favour of the Fresh Air League, but apparently there are other organisations which may find themselves on the other side of the borderline. I certainly concur in the suggestion made by Mr. Gray that the Government might give that phase some consideration.

The continuance of this legislation is fully justified when we realise the enormous amounts that have been distributed by the Lotteries Commission. I would instance one item alone, that of the provision of over £300,000 for the Royal Perth Hospital. That serves to indicate how much money is involved in the running of lotteries and, unless they are properly controlled, how the public could be defrauded and how easily profits could be misapplied. I appreciate the feelings of those who are opposed to lotteries, but at the same time, while human nature is as it is, we cannot limit the tendency on the part of the public to take a chance. That being so, it is far better to have a legalised and properly well-run organisation like the Lotteries Commission, to control such activities in this State. I have pleasure in supporting the Bill.

HON. R. J. BOYLEN (South) [5.23]: I, too, support the Bill. Personally, I think that if the legislation were made permanent instead of merely being extended for three years, it would be advantageous. Like Mr. Heenan, I appreciate the contribution made by the Commission to the Goldfields Fresh Air League, an institution that provides many holidays for Goldfields kiddies who otherwise would not be able to enjoy them. I am afraid I cannot contribute any support to Mr. Loton's suggestion to revise the commission paid to sellers of tickets with a view to reducing it from 3d. to 1d. per ticket. Under existing circumstances, in many instances employment is provided for aged or sick people and for cripples as well. I know that is so on the fields and it probably applies in the metropolitan area.

I have one man in mind who is married and has a family. By this means he is able to earn £4 or £5 a week, whereas if he had to rely on a pension or on charity he would almost certainly be financially embarrassed.

There are many others who sell lottery tickets as an adjunct to their ordinary business. Some sell up to as many as eight books of tickets a week, but very often, with the approach of the closing date, they find themselves with a couple of books unsold. The result is that they have to take the tickets themselves, which may represent an outlay of 50s. per book. Members will see, therefore, that they would not have much with which to reimburse themselves for such expenditure if the commission were reduced from 3d. to 1d. per ticket.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. S. W. Parker—Metropolitan-Suburban—in reply) [5.25]: At the outset, may I be permitted, Mr. Deputy President, to welcome Mr. Daffen on taking his seat in the Chamber this afternoon. I trust he will long be spared to give of his best in rendering service to the State for the welfare and benefit of the community at large.

Members: Hear, hear.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: A number of matters have been discussed in relation to the Bill, and I desire to refer to one or two points that have been raised. Mr. Gray mentioned the fact that mothers, who are very much overworked as we all know, have to cut lunches for their children each school day. There is one benefit we can expect in that respect very soon, in that the husbands will have plenty of time to cut their children's lunches instead of the mothers having to undertake that task. We are fully aware that mothers work infinitely longer than 40 hours a week and consequently husbands will be able to do much more to assist their wives after the 1st January next!

Hon. E. H. Gray: There is no school on Saturdays.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: And no work on other days of the week! However, it will not hurt the fathers to get up a little earlier and cut the lunches instead of allowing their wives to do it.

Hon. G. Fraser: You set the example!

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I can say that I have set an excellent example, but unfortunately it is done within the four walls of my own home. To revert to the Bill, the Act was originally introduced for the purpose of controlling lotteries, legal and illegal. Formerly they were all illegal, of

course, but legislation was introduced in order to control the situation. In those days there were lotteries of all sorts, sizes and descriptions, some being conducted with the permission of the Commissioner of Police and others without it. As a matter of fact, in law the Commissioner of Police had no right to grant any such permission.

From the point of view of the objective originally intended, the Act has functioned very well indeed. It was not, however, introduced to control street collections, to deal with which a further Bill was introduced at a later stage. As that matter has been referred to during the course of the debate, I thought it as well to make that position clear. This year only 24 permits will be granted for street collections and over a period of years it has been found that the cost of such collections has been 4.2 per cent. Members will agree that it is an excellent way of collecting money and many institutions that would not receive money from the lotteries, are able to continue operations as a result of the funds received from the donations derived from the public when street collections are made.

During the course of his remarks, Mr. Latham took the opportunity to refer to a much abused section of the community. Had he consulted any solicitor before he spoke, he would have been better informed and could have saved a considerable amount of time in this Chamber, because he would have been told that the 1946 amendment to the Lotteries (Control) Act was for the purpose of enabling the Commission to purchase a building, and had nothing to do with the extension of the Act. He is like very many other people who when they are told the position by a person who knows something about it, will not accept such an intimation unless they pay for it. *

When I introduced this Bill, I told Mr. Latham that the first occasion on which the measure had been extended for three years was in 1944. As it expires this year, legislation must be passed to continue it for a further three years. I regret to say that Mr. Latham did not hear me or did not think that what I said was correct. However, I sincerely hope that in future he will get his facts right before abusing a section of the community which is perfectly correct. The draftsman was quite right in his drafting of the measure, although he

does happen to be a solicitor. I do not propose to take up any further time; the measure is a simple one and is for the the purpose of continuing the Act for another three years.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

BILL—RURAL RELIEF FUND ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

BILL—THE FREMANTLE GAS AND COKE COMPANY'S ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. E. H. GRAY (West) [5.34]: The Leader of the House has given a very clear exposition of this short Bill. I support it, because it will be good news for the people of Fremantle, particularly for the housewives, who have during the war years and since been placed at a very great disadvantage owing to the poor pressure of gas supplied in the Fremantle district. The present works of the company are too small. It is a paradox that in a town like Fremantle, where we have a well organised electric light system and an excellent tramway service—both successful business concerns—the supply of gas should be in the hands of a private company. Many people in Fremantle regret that years ago, when the local authority had the opportunity to take over the company's undertaking, they slipped and let the opportunity pass by.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: They still have it.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Yes, but I doubt whether under the present franchise system there would be a majority of votes in favour of the municipality taking over the undertaking.

The Minister for Mines: You mean that the people would not vote for it.

Hon. G. Fraser: There would be four to one against under the present voting system.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The plural voting would kill any chance of success. We have to face the fact that there has been very little complaint in the Fremantle district about the operations of the company. When in 1940 an amending Bill was before the Chamber, I think Mr. Fraser caustically criticised the lack of facilities in some parts of Fremantle, particularly Hilton Park, White Gum Valley and Beaconsfield.

Hon. G. Fraser: And North Fremantle.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: That is Mr. Fraser's own district. When the company establishes its works at Spearwood, it should be able to supply the districts I have mentioned. The Commonwealth Housing Scheme has erected a great number of new houses in those districts, which should be the first to which extensions should be laid. Many complaints have been made about the quality of the gas, but the company cannot be blamed for that; it is due to the inferior coal which has been supplied to it on many occasions. This remark applies also to the Perth undertaking. Again, lack of supplies, owing to shortage of shipping, placed tremendous difficulties in the way of the company and in consequence the service had to suffer. It was a difficult matter for people to get a bath on Sunday morning.

The Minister for Mines: Why did they not have it on Saturday night?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: It was also difficult for the housewife to cook the Sunday dinner. I would much prefer to support a Bill giving the people control of this undertaking; but, in the existing circumstances, we must support the present measure as a matter of public duty. I therefore support the second reading.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [5.39]: I intend to support the Bill. Actually, I have no option but to do so, although I am not in agreement with Mr. Gray's remarks as to the satisfaction which Fremantle residents feel with the way in which this company has carried on its undertaking. During my term in this Chamber I think we have had at least two Bills relating to this company which I found it necessary to support. As a matter of fact, on the last occasion I think the measure was to give extra territory to the company and that was when I made the caustic remarks referred to by Mr. Gray. I

cerainly objected to giving the company additional territory while it was not rendering efficient service to the territory it already had, nor is it yet giving efficient service to that territory. I was forced to support the previous measures, however, because otherwise the service might have been placed under the control of the Perth undertaking. That explains my attitude on those occasions.

I have had complaints over the years about the gas supply at Fremantle, particularly by the residents of North Fremantle, which is within $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of the gasworks. Gas is still only supplied to one or two streets in North Fremantle, the main street and one other street. On various occasions the residents of that area have submitted petitions for the supply of gas, but the company has not stood up to its obligations and provided a supply for North Fremantle. Negotiations took place with, and protests were made to, the municipal council, which took the matter up with the gas company and has now promised that the company will do something in the near future for North Fremantle.

The North Fremantle district has been in existence ever since the company started operations in 1886, some 60 odd years ago. I therefore cannot agree with Mr. Gray when he says there have been no complaints; there have been many. I admit that during the war years we could not expect the company to effect very great improvements in the quality of the gas. That was due to the poor quality of the coal; but the company had the opportunity before the war to supply gas to North Fremantle and the districts mentioned by Mr. Gray. I give my support to the measure in the hope that, if it is passed, the company will stand up to its obligations. The measure, if agreed to, will give the company another opportunity; and I hope that in the near future, it will find ways and means to stand up to the obligations which it undertook when its works were established.

FRAN. E. M. DAVIES (West) [5.42]: I desire to say at the outset that it is not my intention to raise any objection to this amending legislation, because I realise that, in order that the company may extend its operations, it must have greater borrowing powers and greater capital. I believe that, as the result of new blood which has been

infused in this company within recent years, an expansion of its undertaking is about to take place. Like Mr. Fraser, I live in a district that is not served by gas. I have taken a keen interest in this matter and have endeavoured to induce the company in past years to reticulate certain residential districts, but was not successful.

In the years gone by the company was not prepared to lay mains past vacant land, notwithstanding the fact that there were approximately 50 consumers on the other side of the vacant area. The company has already purchased a property in the Spearwood district and new mains are being laid in High-street and Carrington-street to connect up with the new works. The districts I refer to particularly are Hilton Park and White Gum Valley. These are to be reticulated and that is something we are very pleased to know. I hope that the work will be proceeded with in the near future.

Only one thing is agitating my mind and that is, if we grant the company extra powers, have we any definite assurance that it is prepared to reticulate the areas at present not reticulated? But I am not prepared to say that the company will not fulfil its obligations, because I think that as a result of the new blood that has been infused into the directorate in late years, it will see that gas is reticulated to the different parts of Fremantle. Where I live is only $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles from the Fremantle Town Hall, and the area of concession given to the gas company extends to a radius of five miles, and to districts outside of that boundary. I trust that as a result of this amending legislation the company will give consideration to the many people who have lived in these districts the growth of which has, to a certain extent, been retarded through the usual amenities necessary for domestic house-keeping not being available. I trust it will not be long before the whole of the Fremantle district will have the convenience of gas. I support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. S. W. Parker—Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.47] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is merely to rectify an error in the drafting of the measure passed in 1927. In that year Section 45 of the Constitution Acts Amendment Act—which can be found in our book of Standing Orders at page 134—provided for payment to Ministers of the Crown as per the schedule, and the schedule sets out, inter alia, "Eight Ministerial salaries, £8,200." But what was overlooked was the proviso to Section 37 which states—

Provided that this section shall not apply to the six principal executive offices of the Government liable, in accordance with this Act, to be vacated on political grounds.

The number mentioned there should have been eight to bring the proviso into line with the other amendments. But for some reason or another it was overlooked, and it is now desired to rectify the error. The Bill is simply to alter the word "six" to "eight". I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

BILL—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACT AMENDMENT (CONTINU- ANCE).

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. G. B. Wood—East) [5.53] in moving the second reading said: This is a very small Bill but nevertheless, an important one. It is to continue the operations of the Industries Assistance Act which was enacted in 1915, after the drought. Over the years, Parliament has never failed to continue this measure. I have sometimes wondered why it is continued from one year to another rather than be made a permanent Act. I hope that next year we will re-enact it for at least five years. It was originally passed for the relief of drought-stricken farmers, but every year, in a State like this, we find

that some part suffers, and the Government is desirous that the Act shall be continued.

There is at present owing to the State Government £48,049, principal, and £3,126 interest. These sums are secured by the Act. Last year, £40,870 was made available to farmers, and so again I stress the necessity for the Act to be continued. I am afraid that at the present time the need for drought relief, which I have already mentioned, exists in the north-eastern and the eastern wheat belt areas where the crops are such that it is absolutely sure that many farmers will require assistance.

The position is quite beyond redemption. Even if we had heavy rains tonight, they would not assist materially. The position is so hopeless that many farmers have already put their sheep on to the crops. It is a sad state of affairs and a great pity for me to have to say these things, particularly in view of the promising start we had all over the State. Because of these circumstances, I think this House will have no hesitation in passing the measure.

Hon A. Thomson: You have only dealt with the agricultural part of it, what about the other?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I therefore move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACTS AMEND- MENT (RE-ELECTION OF MINISTERS).

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. S. W. Parker—Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.54] in moving the second reading said: This is a Bill to do away with the necessity for the re-election of persons who have been appointed to Executive office—eight in all. At the present time, when a member is appointed to the Executive Council he automatically loses his seat in Parliament and has to stand for re-election. Many discussions have taken place as to the advisability

or inadvisability of this process, and many examples can be given of how it works. One example is this: A very excellent man might hold an extremely doubtful seat and, although he might be well worthy of inclusion in the Executive, it might be inadvisable to appoint him to office because he might lose his seat after being made a Minister. That seems wrong. Then again, take the recent instance. There was a new Government, and every member of the Ministry automatically lost his seat in Parliament and had to stand again for election. I think the last time a Minister was opposed in these circumstances was about 1904.

Hon. E. M. Davies: No, it was since then.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Was it in 1906? Anyway, it was long before the parties became as organised as they are now. At that time the two parties in the Assembly were known as the Government and the Opposition; it was more or less a personal following. There were not the deep cleavages that we find now with the political parties. The Premier at that time was defeated on a no-confidence motion and the new Premier went to the poll, with his Ministers, and some of them were defeated, with the result that the first Premier was reinstated. That was long ago and I do not think anything such as that could happen again. I am sure the great majority of people consider it a farce that a person who has been elected to Parliament and who is then promoted to ministerial rank should automatically lose his seat. I understand that there are only two Parliaments in the British Empire where such a position obtains, one being that of Western Australia and the other that of the State of Ontario in Canada. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. G. Fraser, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. S. W. Parker — Metropolitan-Suburban): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, the 16th September.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 6.3 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 10th September, 1947.

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

QUESTIONS.

HOUSING.

(a) *As to Applicants under Eviction Orders.*

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN (on notice) asked the Premier:

(1) How many applications has the Housing Commission received from persons under court order for eviction?

(2) How long is it likely to be before those persons will be provided with homes?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) Information is not available as to the total number of applications received from persons evicted from their homes under a court order, but the Housing Commission has at present 40 applications from evicted persons whose applications have not yet been satisfied.

(2) Every effort will be made to accommodate these people as soon as possible, but no definite period can be stated.