

tinued during next season after which, providing that the diamond drilling proves the foundations to be satisfactory, designs and estimates of the dam, the power house, No. 1 pumping station, channels, roads, etc., for the first area can be prepared.

Mr. McDonald: What would be the nature of the production of the irrigation areas, so far as you have been able to gather?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am not in a position to deal with that aspect at this stage. That is a phase of the proposals which comes directly under the control of the Agricultural and Lands Departments. A rough estimate of the cost of the scheme is £3,000,000. It is the intention of the Government to have a case prepared for submission to the Commonwealth Government for the purpose of obtaining from its financial assistance in connection with the proposals, if finally they are found to be practicable. In that regard the Government intends to prepare a comprehensive plan for the development of the North-West, in connection with which we shall seek Commonwealth financial assistance. As a matter of fact, it is probable that the Governments of Queensland and Western Australia will, together with the Commonwealth Government, formulate a comprehensive plan of development for the whole of the north of Australia which, of course, will include the North-West of this State, the North and North-East of Queensland and the northern portion of the Northern Territory, which is Commonwealth territory.

Mr. Perkins: Did not the Commonwealth provide one-third of the cost of the Murray Valley irrigation scheme?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, the Commonwealth did provide a large proportion of the finance necessary. At this stage, Mr. Chairman, I seek your guidance as to how I can be permitted to continue my remarks at a later sitting.

The CHAIRMAN: If a member of the Committee is prepared to move that the Minister be given leave to continue his remarks at a later sitting, he will be permitted to do so.

As to Leave to Continue.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I move—
That the Minister for Works be granted leave to continue his speech at the next sitting.

Motion put and passed.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.47 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Thursday, 16th November, 1944.

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

QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL BANK.

As to Capital, Advances and Repayments.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER (for Hon. H. Seddon) asked the Chief Secretary:

(i) What has been the total capital provided since the inception of the Agricultural Bank in 1894 up to the 30th June, 1944, for the following activities now administered by the Agricultural Bank:—

- (a) Agricultural Bank;
- (b) Group Settlement;
- (c) Soldier Settlement;
- (d) Industries Assistance Board?

(ii) The total amount repaid in (a), (b), (c) and (d) to the same date?

(iii) What is the total amount outstanding in (a), (b), (c) and (d) to the same date?

(iv) What is the total loss of capital and interest respectively in (a), (b), (c) and (d) to the same date?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

The particulars required by the hon. member are shown in the following table:—

	Agri-cultural Bank.	S.S.S.	Group Settlement.	I.A.B.
(i) Total capital provided since inception	£ 8,449,144	£ 5,599,754 (a)	£ 2,475,660 (b)	£ 2,947,157
(ii) Capital Repaid and recovered by the Bank	629,188	1,003,341	Nil	611,175
(iii) Capital now outstanding	4,798,218	3,195,727	1,322,905	Nil
(iv) Capital Loss Interest on Capital Loss	3,025,738	500,685	1,162,665	2,335,082
	1,369,955	Included in Agri-cultural Bank Item	229,670	270,701

(a) S.S.S.—The above figures do not include expenditure by Lands and Public Works Departments.

(b) Group.—The above figures do not include expenditure by Lands Department prior to the control of Group Settlement by the Bank.

BILL—FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Chief Secretary and read a first time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. J. A. Dimmitt (for Hon. C. B. Williams) leave of absence for six consecutive sittings granted to Hon. J. Cornell (South) on the ground of public business.

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, Health Act Amendment.

2, Perth Diocesan Trustees (Special Fund).

Returned to the Assembly with amendments.

BILL—NATIVES (CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS).

Recommittal.

On motion by Hon. G. B. Wood, Bill recommitted for the further consideration of Clause 5.

In Committee.

Hon. V. Hamersley in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 5—Evidence to be adduced in support of an application under this Act:

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I move an amendment—

That the following be added to paragraph (c) of Subclause (1):—“and if

the application is made after the first day of July, one thousand nine hundred and fifty, is able to read and write in the English language.”

My object is not to place difficulties in the way of natives obtaining citizenship rights, but to give them some incentive to learn to read and write. The amendment provides that they will have six years in which to do this. Personally, I have not much hope that the natives will become good citizens as a whole, but certainly some of them will attain that status. Those who can read and write will be better citizens because of that fact.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I hope the Committee will not accept the amendment. No doubt Mr. Wood is sincere in his objective, but I feel he has not given sufficient consideration to what would be the real effect of the amendment. Many natives who are now exempt from the parent Act are of middle age and cannot read or write. I am afraid they have got beyond the stage where it would be possible to teach them to read and write.

Hon. G. B. Wood: But the amendment does not apply to them.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It may appear strange, but the department regards those natives as the best conducted natives with which it has to deal. They are living good and industrious lives. But it must be borne in mind that many natives are far distant from the metropolitan area and great difficulty would be experienced in obtaining persons to teach them to read and write. Is it fair that we should insist upon a qualification of this nature, even five years hence? There is a percentage of illiterates among our white citizens. The Army authorities have said that among the recruits were young men unable to read or write. No doubt some members of this Chamber are aware that a camp was established not far from Perth to teach these recruits to read and write. I was surprised to learn that so many of our citizens were illiterate, but when I came to inquire into the matter I found the reason was that they had not had the opportunity to learn. This measure is purely experimental legislation. Why should we impose this additional disqualification on the natives, who already have enough difficulties and disabilities to contend with? Native boys and girls who attend settlements

and missions will almost invariably be able to qualify.

Hon. G. B. Wood: They will be the only ones who will be affected.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I can imagine that there are numbers of native children who are not receiving any tuition today. Mr. Wood probably has a few in his district, and there are more further north. I have been advised by the department that, in view of the fact that this is experimental legislation, before five years have passed we shall have a better idea of what is desirable in this connection. The Government is anxious that native children shall be educated and be able to read and write. Where it has control, the Government will do its utmost to see that the children are educated. Applications under this Bill will not come from children at present, or in five years' time, but from the older natives. Of course, some who apply in five years' time may be children today. I suggest we leave the Bill as it is at present. I give this assurance that the reactions to this measure will be watched very carefully by the department and that, if there is any necessity to put in additional qualifications or to amend the Act in any way, the Minister in control of the department will not be slow in bringing forward some amending measure. I hope that the Committee will not agree to the amendment.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I think that Mr. Wood would be well advised not to persist with this amendment for these reasons in addition to those already given by the Chief Secretary: I hope that long before the date mentioned in this amendment we shall have a comprehensive amending Bill, a feature of which will be a clause exactly opposite to one contained in this Bill, namely, a clause which will encourage natives with citizenship rights to associate freely with their less fortunate fellow-countrymen with a view to helping them. I think it is a mistake to legislate now for what should be done in 1950.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: I was not particularly concerned as to whether the Committee passed this amendment or not until I heard the two previous speakers. I think they have misunderstood the purpose of the amendment. As I understand it, the idea is to stimulate a desire for education

amongst the natives who, after 1950, are likely to apply for citizenship rights, and particularly to stimulate a desire amongst the parents to have their children reach the educational standard suggested in the amendment. I know a full-blooded native who is working in one of the Great Southern districts. His eldest child is attending a school away from where he is working, as there is no school available there. That man is going to be particularly interested, under this amendment, in seeing that his children can read and write because, after 1950, those will be two of the necessary attainments for the children if they wish to apply for citizenship rights under this measure. I cannot see that the amendment will affect the old natives who are now illiterate. Obviously, they will still be illiterate in 1950. If they can qualify before 1950 under the Act as it now stands, this amendment will not prevent them from doing so. If they cannot qualify now, I very much doubt whether they will be able to do so after 1950. The old saying, "You cannot teach an old dog new tricks," is quite true, and applies in this instance. I do not think there is much to be gained by comparing the position of the native with that of illiterate whites. I fear that is where many well-wishers of the natives fall into error. They insist on making these comparisons when dealing with a race that is entirely different from ours. Mr. Wood's idea is to stimulate a desire for education amongst the parents of children and amongst the children themselves. I hope that he will maintain his attitude in that regard.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I have had considerable experience with natives, not only full-blooded natives but half-castes. We will never be able to do anything for them until they are educated. It is rubbish to talk about uplifting the native and giving him citizenship rights until he is educated to a certain extent. My whole object is to create an incentive, as described by Mr. Roche, and, as he said, this amendment does not apply to natives who are today uneducated; it applies only to applications made after 1950. Let us give this amendment a trial and see if it does any good.

Amendment put and negatived.

Bill again reported without further amendment, and the report adopted.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1, Legislative Council (War Time) Electoral Act Amendment.

2, Electoral (War Time) Act Amendment.
Received from the Assembly.

BILL—BUSSELTON CEMETERY.*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. W. J. MANN (South-West) [5.2]: When the Minister in charge of the Bill in another place was explaining its provisions he stated that the Busselton Cemetery had been vested in three denominations. A couple of days ago at Busselton the fact that the schedule of the Bill contains the names of only two denominations was brought under my notice, and I was asked to make sure that the measure covered the whole position. I was not present when the Honorary Minister moved the second reading and do not know whether he repeated the statement to which I have referred. During the day, however, I have made investigations at the Lands Department and the Titles Office, and I find that the local fear is not well founded, that actually what was said was corrected in 1928 when portion of the cemetery was excised for recreation ground purposes, and that it is for that reason it has never been used. Portion of the ground in the name of the Methodist Church was never used, and the custom grew up of burying all protestants in the Church of England section. I have made this statement because I know that a number of old folk down in the district are rather perturbed lest something should be done that concerned them in some undesirable manner. I support the Bill.

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—STAMP ACT AMENDMENT.*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. A. THOMSON (South-East) [5.5]: I shall not detain the House long. This Bill is an effort on the part of the

Government to remedy what was obviously never intended, namely, that two stamp duties should be imposed upon comprehensive insurance policies and third party risk policies. It can be said that the ex-Minister for Works, Hon. H. Millington, is responsible for this Bill, because immediately another place re-assembled he protested against the imposition of that particular charge. Governments generally seem to take the most difficult way and to adopt the most cumbersome methods in putting legislation into effect. Especially is that so in connection with this measure. In 1940 this House appointed a Select Committee to consider the third party insurance risk under the Traffic Act. The report that was submitted contained a very practical scheme. I propose to read three of the paragraphs contained in that document in order to place them on record—

In order to ensure the required protection the licensing authority should collect the premium for third party risk, and should then issue the license, which should have imprinted thereon the fact that a premium for third party personal risk has been paid for the period of the license.

This method provides for economy in collection, at practically no cost by the local authorities, eliminates all possibility of a motor vehicle being on the road without cover, and ensures that any person injured by the vehicle will be compensated by the pool.

As third party compulsory insurance is deemed to be a social obligation and takes the form of a compulsory tax upon the motor vehicle owner, your Committee, supported by evidence submitted, maintains that no profit should be made by the State or insurance companies for the imposition of this form of taxation.

It was pointed out to the Committee, on sworn evidence submitted by experts in insurance, that the administrative costs should not exceed 10 per cent. I quote this to show that if there could be a cumbersome way for the Government to adopt in this matter it has found it. According to the reply that was given to me by the Chief Secretary, the total number of third party risk policies taken out was 55,078. At 2s. 6d. per policy this represents £6,896. The State Insurance Office, being on the box seat, circularised all the road boards and offered the secretaries of those local authorities five per cent. commission for any business they could secure for it. That five per cent. commission represents £2,758. If the State Insurance Office was willing to pay that

commission it would be safe to assume that the insurance companies were also willing to do so. One is therefore justified in saying that that was an unnecessary expense.

I have no doubt that most members who own motor vehicles were surprised when they went to their licensing authority to find that they also had to put in an application for a license under the Traffic Act, 1940-41. They probably went to the town clerk or road board secretary and produced their third party insurance policy, and asked to be permitted to take out a license for the year. They then found it was necessary to fill in this other form. The recommendation of the Select Committee was that the application for the license should have endorsed upon it the fact that the third party insurance risk had been covered. We were all deluged by circulars from various insurance companies. I have copies of them and also of the proposal forms. I made it my business to inquire of a printer what would be the cost of those circulars and proposal forms. He estimated that 60,000 would require to be printed, and that the cost would be 25s. per 1,000. Therefore it appears that avoidable expense to the extent of £75 was incurred in having an unnecessary form printed, all because it had been laid down that one could not get one's license unless the third party policy was produced. Yet one had to put in an application for a license when obtaining a renewal! I do not know how many insurance companies there are in this State, but I understand that every insurance company in business here is eligible to accept third party risks. That being so, it appears that about 250,000 of these insurance policy proposals had to be printed.

The PRESIDENT: Is this connected with the Bill?

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes, Mr. President. I believe I shall be able to connect up my remarks with the Bill and show how unnecessary is the expense incurred. As far as insurance proposals are concerned, they cost at least £678, and the other literature would account for another £115. I am of opinion that, in all, unnecessary expenditure to the extent of £10,531 has been incurred. This unnecessary expenditure could have been obviated if the Government had seen fit to accept the Select Committee's recommendation. Had it done so, all that would

have been needed would be to endorse on the motor car license that the charge for the license is, say, £4 10s., and the charge for third party insurance, say, 15s. There would not have been a penny-piece of additional cost. For the life of me I cannot understand why the Government incurred all this unnecessary expense! We have now before us a Bill dealing with stamp duty in this connection. Why should there be any stamp duty? It is not an impost so far as the Government is concerned, the Government being free of stamp duty. Therefore a road board issuing a license under the provisions of the Traffic Act is in the same position, and the same thing applies. I do not oppose the Bill, but consider myself justified in calling attention to the position. I congratulate the Government on its honesty in admitting the mistake that has been made and in rectifying it.

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—MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT FUND ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

HON. G. B. WOOD (East) [5.39] in moving the second reading said: This is a small but important measure. As it is chiefly a Committee Bill, I shall not occupy much time at the second reading stage. The Members of Parliament Fund has been in existence now for four months, and certain doubts relative to it have arisen. Those doubts the Bill is designed to clear up. Particularly is it intended to make quite certain that no creditor can have any claim on the fund in the event of a member of Parliament dying. The Bill will make the beneficiary absolutely free, and no one will have any claim on the amount of £600. This is nothing new. The relevant clause in the Bill reads as follows:—

The right or interest of any member in the fund or any payment, compensation or benefit payable thereout shall not be in any way assigned or charged or passed by operation of law to any person other than the member or his dependants as the case may be, in accordance with the provisions of the Schedule to this Act and any moneys payable out of the fund on

the death of a member shall not be assets for the payment of his debts or liabilities.

That I consider highly desirable. There is also doubt in regard to the loss of membership. It has been pointed out by eminent lawyers that such doubt exists, and I intend to quote from the notes of an eminent King's Counsel of this State, as follows:—

This Act is, I am informed, designed to provide members of both Houses of the Western Australian Parliament with certain monetary compensation on their ceasing to be such members. The fund to defray this monetary compensation is created by contributions made by such members during the period of their membership. These contributions are compulsory, and are deducted from time to time from each payment to a member of his Parliamentary allowance, so that in each year the sum of £24 will be so deducted from each member.

There is a special provision whereby on the Act first coming into force any member who immediately before such date was a member, could pay voluntarily a lump sum into the fund in respect of any selected number of years already served by him as a member, and thereupon such selected number of years could count as years served after the coming into force of the Act.

One case was not provided for, namely, the case of a member whose prior service as a member was not continued to a date immediately before the coming into force of the Act. In effect, the whole scheme is one of mutual insurance designed to provide for members at the time of their ceasing to be members a payment not exceeding on the present scale £600 in all. The Act passed to give effect to this scheme is not at all happily drawn, although I am not prepared to say that if the matter came before a court it would not give a meaning to the words used in the Act which would give effect to the scheme as above outlined. On the other hand I am not prepared to say that the Court would do so, for the following reasons:—

The benefit coming to the insured person is to be paid, according to the Act, on loss of membership by such person. Although loss of membership is defined in the Act as loss of his seat in Parliament for any reason whatsoever, it seems to me to convey a meaning different from that of ceasing to be a member, which as above set out is what the scheme intended to cover. For instance, if a member, of his own free will, resigned his seat in Parliament, could he be said to have suffered a loss of his seat in Parliament? Or if after dissolution of a Parliament in which he was serving he refused to nominate for a seat in the succeeding Parliament, or if a member of the Legislative Council on the expiration of his term for which he was selected, refused to nominate for a further term, could he be said to have suffered a loss of his seat in Parliament?

In the first of the above cases, he would have ceased to be a member, but it was difficult to

allege he would have suffered a loss of his seat. In the second case it is not so clear, because if he had nominated he might not have been elected, which would certainly have amounted to loss of his seat. The same difficulty could possibly arise in the case of the death of a member. Whatever was the cause of death, it would certainly mean that the deceased ceased to be a member. But if death was the result of suicide, could it be intelligently alleged that the deceased suffered a loss of his seat in Parliament?

As above stated, it is possible that a court would hold that as the scheme is one for the benefit of a class it should be continued so as to give the maximum benefit to such class, and therefore it would overlook the difficulties abovementioned.

The Bill proposes to overcome the difficulty pointed out by the King's Counsel whose opinion I have quoted, by altering the definition of "loss of membership" to include "ceasing to be a member." I will quote the proposed clause—

"Loss of membership" includes cessation of membership through death, disqualification, resignation, defeat at the poll, failure to nominate for re-election or by reason of any other cause whatsoever whether ejusdem generis with the foregoing or otherwise, that a member shall not be deemed to have lost his seat by dissolution of the Legislative Assembly if he is elected to the next succeeding Parliament, or in the case of a member of the Legislative Council by expiration of his term if he is elected immediately thereafter for a further term.

There is a further amendment giving the trustees absolute discretion in regard to where the money should go in the event of a man having no wife and children and nominating no beneficiaries. This would save a lot of litigation. Trustees who are reputable people and can be absolutely relied upon will be the persons who will say where the money is to go to. As I said previously, the Bill can be discussed in detail in Committee, and I conclude by commending it to the House. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch, debate adjourned.

BILL—MORTGAGEES' RIGHTS RESTRICTION ACT CONTINUANCE.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY [5.35] in moving the second reading said: This is the continuance Bill to which I referred a little while ago when I introduced the Bill to amend the Mortgagees' Rights Re-

striction Act. That Bill, which gave relief to mortgagees in certain circumstances, was agreed to by this House. Therefore I do not think it necessary to speak at any length in regard to the principles of the parent Act. Members are aware that it was passed in 1931 and was designed to meet a situation which was particularly serious at that time. We have re-enacted the measure every year since. The Government is of the opinion that we should continue the operation of the Act, with the amendment already agreed to by Parliament. We are hopeful the time will come when it will be possible to allow this legislation to lapse. We hope that it will not be necessary to continue the Act for an indefinite period. With those remarks, I commend the Bill to the House and move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. L. CRAIG (South-West): For some years, I have consistently opposed this measure, and I intend to do so again. If ever there was a time when the Act could be done away with, that time is now. People have more money today than they are likely to have in the future, and many mortgagors are very much better off than the mortgagees. I have repeatedly contended in this House that the onus of proof of inability to pay should be put on the shoulders of the mortgagor instead of the mortgagee having to go to the court. I am still of that opinion, and consider that the Bill is not necessary now except in a few cases. The Chief Secretary said he hoped the time would soon come when we could do without this legislation. He has been saying that for years. Seven years ago he said exactly the same thing and he will still be saying it in another seven years' time. In the meantime, some of the houses will have fallen down. It is unnecessary to have this legislation, unless the Government is willing to place the onus of proof on the mortgagor. I know of two people who are regularly meeting their interest payments on a certain property. They are well-to-do people, but the mortgagees—beneficiaries of the estate—are poor. The two wealthy people are just sitting back, and when the mortgagees said they wanted the money the mortgagors said: "No; we have no intention of paying." Nothing can be done about it.

Greater hardship is being inflicted today by the continuance of the Act than would be inflicted if it were abolished.

HON. H. S. W. PARKER (Metropolitan-Suburban): I oppose the second reading as I have opposed it in past years, because I think it is out of date. Each year it becomes more out of date; and, if it were now to slide out of existence, no trouble would arise. A wrong idea exists that, if the Act were discontinued, everybody would rush in and sell up the unfortunate mortgagor who had mortgaged his property. At present, there are very few people who would desire to get rid of their mortgage, because almost double the rate of interest can be obtained from mortgages that can be acquired elsewhere. If this Act remains on the statute-book until after the war, it will create great hardship if it is then immediately repealed. It must be repealed some time; it is against all principles of economics. If it is discontinued now, no hardship will result to anyone—unless the result to the mortgagor, who has taken advantage of the present law to the disadvantage of the mortgagee, can be termed a hardship. It may not be realised that, in most mortgages, there is what is called a penal clause. It is provided that interest shall be 8 per cent.; but that, if it is paid within 14 days, it shall be 7 per cent.; that is, it will be an ordinary 7 per cent. mortgage.

At present, under the National Security Regulations, it is not permissible to charge the so-called penal rate; only the lower rate may be charged. The mortgagor who is not quite as honest as he might be, takes advantage of that and does not pay interest until he is forced to do so. If an application is made to the court for the mortgage to be called up because the interest is not being paid, the mortgagor then pays up. If it is stated that the security is falling into disrepair the mortgagor says that he cannot get the manpower to have repairs done; but, of course, he knows that he never intends to have repairs effected. He lets his security go to rack and ruin and it is very hard to obtain an order. For the honest—though impecunious—mortgagor there will be no hardship, because the mortgagee is only too anxious to leave his money out on mortgage. It may be that a mortgagee wants his money. If he does, he sells his

mortgage; but at present it is not easy to find a person to take over the mortgage from a mortgagor who is neglecting his own property.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: He has to get authority to do it, too.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Yes, authority has to be obtained for a sale; but, strangely enough, not for a mortgage under £500. Authority must be obtained if the mortgage is over £500, and the mortgagor is fully covered under the National Security Regulations. If this Act terminates now, I venture to say there will be no hardship of any sort; but, if we wait until after the war, I am sorry to say I fear it will become a political question. I want to avoid that. I do not want this Act to be thrown out for the purpose of assisting any mortgagee; but I want it thrown out because I think that there is so much more money available than ever before. There is so much of what might be called "free money" awaiting investment that there is no better time than the present for the measure to disappear from the Statute-book. In past years I have opposed similar Bills on grounds that might have led people to believe I was not quite fair to mortgagors. But the time has come when nobody can say that, if the measure is discontinued, its repeal will occasion any hardship to the honest mortgagor.

HON. L. B. BOLTON (Metropolitan): I have opposed the continuance of this Act for the last two or three years. When it was enacted in 1931, it served a very useful purpose; but it has outlived its usefulness, for the reasons stated by previous speakers. Believing its discontinuance will inflict no hardship on anybody—since, as others have said, there is plenty of money available—I intend to oppose the second reading.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, debate adjourned.

BILL—COLLIE RECREATION AND PARK LANDS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER [5.45] in moving the second reading said: This Bill relates to certain areas of land in close proximity to the Collie townsite, which areas are vested by the parent Act in the Collie Recreation and Park Lands Board. The land concerned constitutes an estate in fee

simple in the name of the board, and has been set aside for the purposes of recreation and park lands. The Act provides that, on receipt of a written application from the board, the Registrar of Titles shall register that authority as proprietor in fee simple, and shall issue a certificate of title accordingly. Subsequent legislation enacted in the sessions of 1941 and 1942 added further areas to the lands vested in the board, and also provided for the issue of a certificate of title. By the 1942 Act, portion of the land initially vested was removed from the control of the board.

It is the common practice in dealing with rights to land in mining areas to limit the title to a depth of 40 feet below the natural surface. In the original statute and the amending Acts the fee simple was granted to the board without any stipulation as to limitation of depth. The purpose of this Bill is to impose such a limit and to authorise the Registrar of Titles to make such entries in official records as may be required to give effect to this provision. This action is necessary to safeguard the underground rights of certain mining leases. The board will not in any way be embarrassed by this procedure, since the operation of the Bill's provisions will not interfere with the purpose for which the land was assigned to it. The board, of course, has no objection to the proposal in the Bill. For the information of members I will place on the Table of the House a plan showing the areas concerned. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. W. J. Mahn, debate adjourned.

BILL—LOTTERIES (CONTROL) ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY [5.49] in moving the second reading said: The Lotteries (Control) Act was passed in 1932 at a time when there was a widespread system of uncontrolled lotteries, coupon competitions and the like, involving many irregular practices. Since that date, lotteries in this State have been controlled, and State lotteries have been conducted under the authority given by Parliament. That authority has from time to time been renewed by the passing of a continuance Bill, generally for a period of one year. The super-

vision exercised and the conduct of the State consultations by the Lotteries Commission have been such that there has been no complaint on grounds such as were frequently heard in 1932. It will be remembered that in those days there were hundreds of lotteries and competitions, some of which were associated with newspapers. They ran for extended periods and much of the profits derived therefrom went into private hands. Today I think we can say very definitely that the proceeds from the State lotteries are at least being devoted to the assistance of charitable and similar objectives.

As I mentioned, the statutory authority given to the Lotteries Commission in 1932 was for one year only, and since then the Act has been continued from year to year. The Government is of the opinion that the time has arrived when we should be prepared to carry on the Commission, not from year to year but permanently. That is what applies to lotteries that are run in other parts of the Commonwealth. The Bill has been introduced with the object of making the Act permanent. Ample justification for a permanent measure is provided by the fact that the State lottery has operated efficiently and with a minimum of criticism for more than eleven years, during which period hospitals and charitable organisations throughout the State have been assisted to the extent of £943,638.

Moreover, the establishment of the State lottery has been the means of our retaining for the benefit of local charitable institutions hundreds of thousands of pounds which previously left the State for investment in lotteries conducted either for private gain or for the purpose of assisting hospitals elsewhere. Then again ours is the only lottery in Australia that lacks security of tenure. It is estimated that as a result of the past policy of re-enacting the legislation annually, charitable institutions have been deprived of over £30,000, that being the amount it is considered has been lost to date, owing to the Commission's inability to enter into long-term contracts in respect of premises, printing and so forth.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: I should say that is a very much exaggerated amount.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Mr. Bolton is entitled to his opinion. That estimate is based on calculations made by the Lotteries

Commission in the light of expenditure it has had to incur.

Hon. G. W. Miles: If the Commission reduced the payment to agents from 10 per cent. to 5 per cent., that amount would probably have been made up long ago.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Mr. Miles has always criticised the rate of commission paid to agents, and on each occasion I have demonstrated to the House that the present commission of 10 per cent. is not too much. It may be said that some individuals have made quite a satisfactory living out of the sale of lottery tickets, but if members were to take the average commission paid to the agents as a whole, they would find that it amounts to a few shillings only in connection with each lottery. Members will be interested to know that during the past year, 46 consultations were conducted, 12 of them being of 50,000 subscribers each, while 34 were of the 75,000 ticket series. Subscriptions totalled £393,704 10s., while the prizes accounted for £208,640, which represented 53 per cent., and the expenses, including agents' commission, £55,843 6s. 7d., or 14.2 per cent.

The profit for the year was £129,221 3s. 5d. This amount, together with the balance brought forward from the previous year of £31,728 16s. 4d., together with bank interest, unclaimed prizes and unexpended grants representing £3,972 17s. 7d., brought the total amount available for distribution to £164,922 17s. 4d. Of that aggregate sum, donations absorbed £104,009 17s., and commitments, including the reserve fund, totalled £53,002 19s. 4d., leaving an undistributed balance of £7,910 1s. The average proportion of subscriptions absorbed in expenses, excluding agents' commission, was further reduced to 4.5 per cent. compared with 4.7 per cent. for the previous year.

With regard to the assistance rendered to hospitals, during the year £33,000 was set aside to meet interest and sinking fund on moneys advanced by the Government to finance the new Perth Hospital. Payments to the Perth Hospital Trust Account, plus interest to date, now total £192,183. Of this sum, interest and sinking fund payments have absorbed £57,190 0s. 2d., and an amount of £100,000 has been applied in reduction of the capital cost, leaving a credit balance in the fund of £37,992 19s. 10d.

Shortage of labour and materials, and rising building costs, which at present are estimated to be 33 per cent. above the pre-war level, have necessitated a postponement until after the war, of other than urgent hospital extension programmes, and consequently the amount of £6,091 6s. 6d. made available to other hospitals during the year was considerably below that normally provided for this purpose. In order, however, that adequate finance shall be available for the purpose of enabling these extensions to be undertaken in the immediate post war period, a reserve fund has been created to which the sum of £26,000 was appropriated during the year. Payments to orphanages totalled £9,790 8s. 7d., which included maintenance subsidy at the rate of 3s. per week per child, amounting to £6,690 8s. 7d.

Hon. L. Craig: Does that relieve the Government of its responsibility in that direction? The Government used to pay a subsidy.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It does not relieve the Government of anything at all.

Hon. L. Craig: Then it is in addition to the Government grant?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes. For some time the Commission has been giving consideration to ways and means of securing improved accommodation for the aged women of the State, whose present home lacks many of the modern facilities necessary for their comfort and convenience. Proposals now under consideration envisage the ultimate establishment of up-to-date homes for both men and women, and the provision of a number of small cottages for aged couples requiring institutional care. An area of land comprising some 63 acres adjoining the Canning River has been made available by the Government, and construction of the women's section and five cottages estimated to cost £110,000 will be commenced as soon as labour and materials are available. The Commission has undertaken to finance this project, and already an amount of £37,000 has been set aside for the purpose.

I desire to emphasise that the provision of funds towards financing the several major undertakings already referred to has in no way limited grants to other charitable institutions, whose applications for assistance have received the same sympathetic consideration as in the past. Other substantial

grants during the year included the following:—

	£
School for the Blind	3,000
Hospital Social Service	2,300
Returned Soldiers' League	2,000
Kindergarten Union	1,561
St. John Ambulance Association	1,500
Christmas Cheer	1,351
Infant Health Association	1,177
Silver Chain Nursing Association	1,000

The total of donations to hospitals from the 17th August, 1943, to the 7th August, 1944, inclusive of the reserve fund of £26,000 for country hospital extensions, amounted to £65,091 6s. 6d., the greater part being the £33,000 provided by the Commission towards the cost of the new hospital in Perth. I have a list of the hospitals that have received donations varying in amount from £10 to several hundreds of pounds. I do not think there is any need to give details of each, but I repeat that every application that has been made to the Commission has received sympathetic consideration. The total donations to orphanages during the same period was £9,790 8s. 7d. made up of the following amounts:—

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Anglican Orphanages .. ..	...	...	...	2,600	0	0
St. Joseph's Farm School, Bindoon .. ..	...	...	...	500	0	0
Maintenance Subsidy at the rate of 3s. per child per week—						
Swan Boys' Orphanage	999	9	5			
Perth Girls' Orphanage	331	15	0			
Parkerville Home	842	13	11			
Castledare Home	689	6	0			
Clontarf Orphanage	732	3	9			
St. Joseph's Orphanage	986	3	8			
St. Vincent's Foundling Home	1,138	1	5			
St. Joseph's Farm School, Bindoon	859	18	8			
Nazareth House, Geraldton	210	16	2			
				6,690	8	7
Total				£9,790	8	7

In addition, donations made to institutions and organisations other than hospitals and orphanages during the period I have mentioned amounted to £55,128 1s. 11d., ranging from £37,000 to the Home for Aged People Trust Account to sums as small as £10. There is a long list including Hospital Social Service, Infant Health Association, Kindergarten Union, Little Sisters of the Poor, Returned Soldiers' League, School for the Blind, Silver Chain District Nursing Association, St. John Ambulance Association and Children's Cottage Home. The Lotteries Commission has entered into certain commitments amounting to £27,002 19s. 4d. covering a large number of country hos-

pital extensions, most of which have not been proceeded with owing to the shortage of labour and material.

This House has usually been somewhat insistent upon restricting the operation of the Act to one year. I hope that on this occasion members will unbend a little and agree that the Commission has done a fairly good job, is working very efficiently and is an institution that would be missed if it were allowed to go out of existence. Unquestionably, if the Lotteries Commission were a permanent organisation, there are many ways in which its expenses could be reduced, and charitable and other organisations would get the benefit of the savings which, as I have indicated, would amount in the aggregate to nearly £30,000. Members are aware of the personnel of the Commission; all the Commissioners are highly reputable citizens of the State. They have shown a spirit of fairness and equity in dealing with the money at their disposal, and country members in particular, I believe, will agree with me when I say that the Commission has served a very useful purpose in assisting country hospitals and other requirements. Therefore, I hope the House on this occasion will resolve that there is no necessity in future, as there has been in the past, to seek Parliamentary authority every year for the continuance of the Lotteries Commission. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.10 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 16th November, 1944.

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

QUESTIONS (2).

PRESTON SHOPPING DISTRICT.

As to Change in Half-Holiday.

Mr. HOLMAN asked the Minister for Works:

By what method was the recent change effected in the half-holiday (from Wednesday afternoon to Saturday afternoon) for shopping in the Preston shopping district, including Donnybrook?

The MINISTER replied:

The closing of shops in this district on Wednesday afternoons was legally effected following the receipt of a petition in February, 1928, which was signed by a majority of the local traders.

A petition favourable to the Saturday afternoon closing of shops in the district was received in August of this year and was signed by a majority of the local traders. As a result, a Proclamation was issued changing the shop half-holiday in the district from Wednesday to Saturday.

EDUCATION.

As to Busselton School Manual Training Accommodation.

Mr. WILLMOTT asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Has any tender been received for the alterations and additions to the Busselton