THE PRICE OF GAS IN HAYWARDS HEATH.

A FEW FACTS WORTHY OF CONSIDERATION.

Several inquiries have been made, and criticisms are now to the recent advances in the price of gas, and comparisons have been made between the Haywards Heath Company and some of the London Companies. It should be remembered that the London Companies advanced their prices in October, 1914, whereas no advance was made at Haywards Heath until March, 1915 — when the price was raised 3d. per 1,000 cubic feet only. Had the Haywards Heath Company raised the price at the same time, and in the same manner as the London Companies, it would probably have been possible now to make a small reduction. As it is, the Haywards Heath Company is pilloried by a small minority of their customers because they saved the pockets of the consumers longer than did some other Companies. Moreover, comparisons of the local Company with large London Companies is, to anyone with any knowledge of all the gas world, ridiculous. The public may not be generally aware that prior to the outbreak of war the bulk of the coal used by the Haywards Heath Company was locally collected to London, and thence by rail. Owing to the enormous increase of war the bulk of the coal used by the Haywards Heath Company is now obtained by sea freight, the coal now comes from the collieries direct by rail. The London Companies have effected very large economies by purchasing their own boats and ships, instead of chartering them, whereas local Companies have been at the mercy of inland transport. When the output of gas locally has again reached the normal figure double the price will come down. Against the increase in the price of gas, residents must put the reduction in the quantity consumed — due to the entire absence of street-lighting in London and other towns a large proportion of the lamps are still used. Another fact long noted by many people is that Haywards Heath has enjoyed an exceptionally low price for gas for many years past, and that even now the following towns in Surrey and Sussex are all paying more for their gas than Haywards Heath: — Beckenham, Burgess Hill, Billinge, Crowborough, Cockfield, Dorking, Haslemere, Horsham, Midhurst, Steyning, Uckfield and Westhame. At Toddenham the price has just gone up 5d. and at Rothbury 10d. per thousand feet. The foregoing facts are not intended in any way as an apology for the recent rise in the price of gas in the district covered by the Haywards Heath and District Gas Company, but given solely for the purpose of throwing a little "light" on a "dark subject."