

of the committee increased. He thought it should consist of at least twenty members.

Mr. MOLEOD urged that the committee should consist, as far as possible, of men who had a practical knowledge of the working of the municipal institutions of the country.

Mr. COYNE suggested that Mr. Ferguson's name be added to the list of the committee.

Mr. McKELLAR thought it would be better not to fix the committee at present. The hon. member might let his motion stand, so that members might have an opportunity of examining the list and considering what were the best names to be put upon it. It would be easy to get a very large committee of gentlemen having experience in these matters. The chief difficulty would lie in making the committee small enough to be a good working body, by excluding a large number of members whom they would like to see upon it. His experience was, that a small committee would do more work and do it better than a very large one. There was an excellent committee on these subjects in 1865 and 1866—the only objection to it being that it was too large. The committee in 1858, of which Sir John A. Macdonald was chairman, had only, he believed nine members, and it did much more work than the committee of 1866, which had 23 or 24 members. It was most desirable, however, that they should have the assistance, as far as practicable, of the gentlemen who had had a great deal of experience in working municipal institutions, and he thought it would be well to let the motion stand for a day or two, in order that the committee might be made as efficient as possible. There were several defects in these Bills. It was very difficult to make such measures perfect, when they were in the hands of private members. The Government ought to take them in hand, and, when they had been made as perfect as possible in committee, push them through without any alteration, unless it could be established that there was some real defect, with respect to which an alteration was necessary. In 1866, when the Municipal Bill came back to the house, almost every member who had not been on the committee had some little notion of his own which he wished to insert in the Bill, and which, if inserted, destroyed other clauses. This accounted for many of the defects in the Bill, as it now stood. A Bill so important should not be amended so hurriedly, as this one was at the close of the session of 1866. In one instance an amendment was made so hurriedly, as to Deputy-Reeves, that the member who made the motion immediately saw that it was wrong, and followed the Bill to the Upper House to get it again altered there.

Hon. J. S. MACDONALD agreed that the motion should stand over for the present, as it was very important to have on the committee, to as great an extent as possible, the gentlemen most conversant with the municipal and assessment matters. It was most desirable that the most mature consideration should be given to these measures. He saw before him numbers of gentlemen, who, if they could afford the time would render the most valuable assistance on such a committee. There was no doubt about the correctness of what had been stated by his hon. friend from Bothwell, as to the bad effects of the haste with which measures were pushed through at the close of a session, and, if there was one instance of this more marked than another, it was the haste with which the municipal and assessment bills were pushed through at the close of the last session of the Parliament of the late Province of Canada. He apprehended his hon. friend would find that, notwithstanding the best consideration which a committee could bestow on matters submitted to them, there were members of this house who had ideas of their own, which they would like to see carried out; and it was after the report of the Committee was submitted, that time should be afforded to members to discuss the matter fully, and suggest such amendments as they might think necessary. The committee, therefore, should report, not at the close of the session, but at a period of the session sufficiently early to allow ample time for discussion, so that the Bill, when matured, should pass with the unanimous consent of the house, if unanimity could be obtained on these important questions. He hoped the labours of the committee and of the house, would result in better Bills being put on the Statute-book, than the Municipal and Assessment laws in their present form.