

Mr. Crosby—From the Township Council of Markham to the same effect.

A SUGAR REFINERY IN TORONTO.

In the report of the Committee of Standing Order it was recommended that the rules of the House should be suspended in the case of the erection of a sugar refinery in Toronto, by John Aldwell, and the report was confirmed. Subsequently, Mr. Ryker introduced a Bill to exempt from taxation the sugar refinery referred to. The Bill was referred to the Committee on Private Bills.

FIRST READINGS.

The following Bills were read a first time and referred to committees:—

Mr. Williams (Hamilton)—Bill to authorize the construction of a railway from the city of Hamilton to Caledonia, and for extending the same.

Mr. Williams (Hamilton)—Bill to amend the Act incorporating the Wesleyan Female College of Hamilton.

Mr. Ferrier—Bill to legalize a certain by-law of the village of Elora to close certain streets in that village, and for other purposes.

Attorney-General Macdonald—Bill respecting the holding of public fairs. Second reading on Thursday.

Mr. Scott (Ottawa)—Bill to enable the Ottawa Mechanics' Institution and the Ottawa Natural History Society to amalgamate, under the name of the Ottawa Literary and Scientific Society.

Mr. Smith (Kent)—Bill to confirm certain rules of the Township of Tilbury East.

Hon. Mr. Cameron—Bill to amend the Act incorporating the Toronto, Grey and Bruce Railway.

Mr. Code—Bill to facilitate the withdrawal of the town of Perth from the county of Lanark, and to provide for the liabilities of the said town, or its share of the common debt.

Mr. Coyne—Bill relating to trade marks on casks and packages containing butter.

Mr. Williams (Durham)—Bill respecting the separation of the county of Durham from the county of Northumberland.

SALES OF LANDS FOR TAXES.

Mr. SINCLAIR introduced a Bill to notify the owners of lands sold for taxes of the same.

Attorney-General MACDONALD—"Explain."

Mr. SINCLAIR said it was very well known that under the present system sales of lands for taxes took place without the owners of lands knowing anything at all about it. In the view of the introduction of the Tax Titles Bill by the Government, he thought it was most important that the owners should be informed of the sale. His Bill proposed that the Treasurer should make it his duty immediately after the passage of the Act to make out a list of all lands in every municipality which had been sold for taxes, and should transmit these lists without delay to the different clerks, and that the clerks should then notify those owners of lands, whose names appeared on the assessment roll in the various municipalities.

The Bill was read a first time, and the second reading fixed for Thursday.

ALLEGED BREACH OF RULES.

Mr. BOYD wished, before they proceeded to other business, to call the attention of the House and of the Government to a statement that had appeared in one of the city papers with reference to a breach of the rules of the House. It appeared that there had been an undoubted interference with the rules of the House in regard to the matter of posting notices in the lobby before Bills were distributed. The facts, as alleged, were that two Railway Bills were introduced into the House last Friday—the Air Line and the South Western Air Line. The agent of one of these Bills, it appeared, had gone to the Government Printing Office to see if his Bill was in course of being set up, and he found it almost complete. About an hour subsequently a clerk called at the printers, and ordered that the South Western Bill should have precedence, and in the refusal of the printer, to do so, he produced the written authority of the Clerk of the Private Bills' Committee to that effect. Now, he believed that it was a rule of the House that before any Bill could be posted in the lobby that copies of it must be distributed. Rule 59 was to that effect. The charges, as alleged in the paper, contained an allegation that this rule had been tampered with.

Mr. CLARKE said it was against the rule of the House to debate what was contained solely in the newspapers. The hon. gentleman ought to have some personal knowledge of the matter to previous to bringing it before them.

Mr. BOYD said he would then refer their votes and proceedings, of Friday, and from them they would find that the Bill had been ordered for Committee on the 4th December, and he was prepared to say that the Bill was not distributed till the following day. He had been to his own box in the Post Office and there was no such Bill there, but it was placed there subsequently. He wished to call attention to the matter on public grounds, and from no personal feeling in the matter whatever.

Attorney-General MACDONALD, while confessing that he saw no grounds for the statements made by the hon. member, would not raise an objection to the matter being referred to a special Committee appointed for the purpose of enquiring into the allegations.

Mr. BOYD said he would propose such a Committee.

Mr. RYKERT said, as the person in charge of the Bill, he would like to see the matter thoroughly investigated. He was perfectly satisfied that the House would see that the course he had pursued was a proper course. He thought that when a Bill was in a fair state to be printed that it should be printed, and that position he was prepared to affirm. If in any of his acts he had been guilty of what was unparliamentary—if he had endeavored to force his Bill when it should not be forced—he would be prepared to bear the censure of the House.

Mr. BOYD had no idea of alluding to the hon. member for Welland in his remarks.

His general course in the House cleared him of all unlawful interference with the rules of the House. What he had referred to was this, that in the memorandum of Friday a certain Bill was posted up in the lobby before it was distributed to the House.

Mr. FERGUSON defended the character of the Clerk of the Private Bills Committee, whom he had known for many years and who was a most efficient officer. He was not only an efficient officer, but he was also anxious and desirous to do his duty. He had, no doubt, an explanation could be given of the matter.

Mr. BLAKE also thought there was no doubt expressed as to the conduct of the hon. member for Welland. The House ought not, however, to form an opinion with reference to the matter before the Committee had met and had heard the evidence.

The matter then dropped, it being understood that Mr. Boyd would propose a Select Committee to enquire into the circumstances.

INDEMNITY TO MEMBERS.

Atty.-General MACDONALD moved the reception of the Report of the Committee of the Whole on Resolutions as to Indemnity to Members, and the salary of the Speaker.

The Report was concurred in, and Atty.-General MACDONALD introduced a Bill founded on the Resolutions.

The Bill was read a first time, and ordered for a second reading on Friday next.

DRAINAGE.

Atty.-General MACDONALD moved the House into Committee on "Resolutions as to Drainage." Mr. Lyon, in the chair.

Atty.-General MACDONALD wished to explain the measure he proposed to bring before the House. The necessity of providing for the drainage of large tracts of swamp lands in the Province of Ontario had been long felt, and the Government had decided that a sum should be granted from the public exchequer for the purpose of accomplishing the drainage of such lands. It was known that there were several places in the Province of Ontario where these large tracts of land existed, and it was computed that over four hundred thousand acres of such lands could be reclaimed, which are now totally unfit for cultivation. It was of some importance not only to the agriculturists of the country, but also to the health of many communities that the drainage of these lands should be entered upon as soon as possible. It was proposed by this Bill that Government should advance from time to time such sums as they should deem necessary. The plan proposed was that upon a report of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, setting forth the desirability of any portion of such lands being brought into a state of usefulness by drainage, that the Lieut.-Governor in Council should order that a certain sum be advanced to the Commissioner of Public Works for the purpose. He had no fear that the House would trust the Government this far, knowing that they would carry out these works with the same economy which had characterized the conduct of the works for which money had hitherto been appropriated. He had no hesitation in assuring the House and the country at large that the course pursued by the hon. gentleman, the Commissioner of Public Works up to the present time would be continued in the future. It was proposed that plans and specifications of the proposed works should be submitted to His Excellency, and that the works be given out in contracts. As soon as the works should be completed, arbitrators appointed under the Board of Works Department, should visit the locality and see for themselves the advantages which should arise from the improvements made by the drainage. Not only the lands immediately reclaimed, but the lands bordering on such swamps, which might also derive advantage from the improvement, should be made to pay their share of the expenditure, and that should be allotted *pro rata*, according to the benefit derived by each lot in the whole locality. Then, it was proposed that the report of the arbitrators should be printed, and distributed to all parties concerned in it, and copies should also be left with the municipalities interested in the matter. A day should be appointed, not later than a month after the receipt of the printed report, in order that the parties interested in it should be able to explain their objections, if any should exist. The arbitrators should then enter upon an examination of such objections made by parties who might imagine that their lots, or parcels of land, had been too highly assessed. Then the arbitrators should correct any errors which might have been made, and afterwards report to the Department, and such examination should be considered final to all parties concerned. A copy of the final report should be sent to each registry in which the improved lands might be situated, and should form a part of the public records of the Registrar's office. Copies of the final award should also be sent to every clerk of the municipalities within whose bounds any of the lots sold be situated, and the clerk of any such municipality, or the Council of that municipality should be compelled to impose a rate on the whole township for the payment of the sum which was to be payable by that locality towards the amount expended in that locality, and the interest should form a suitable fund for the extinction of the loan in twenty-two years. It provided further that the municipality should be bound to pay every six months to the Ontario Treasury the interest of the rent charge on each lot which should be collected from the rate payers as other municipal rates.

Mr. BLAKE—"Why six months? It ought to be a year."

Atty.-Gen. MACDONALD said that was a matter for after consideration. He continued to explain the manner in which the municipal clerks should collect such rates and remit them to the Treasurer of Ontario. Hon. gentlemen would see that the Bill was intended for three or four localities, where the municipalities were unable to make the improvements themselves. He hoped the House would allow the Government to judge of the localities where such improvements were required, because it was impossible to state exactly where they should be made. Next session the Government could give a satisfactory report of the manner

in which the money had been expended. He proposed to explain the calculations on which the Government intended to reconsp itself. An annual rate of five per cent interest should be imposed for twenty-two years; and the rent charge would be \$7.60 per annum on the \$100. That was to say, five per cent. was to be allowed to cover the risk of the money not being paid at the end of the twenty-two years, or the Province not being able to invest it satisfactorily when returned. It was necessary always to make a margin of one per cent. in order to meet contingencies, because the object was that the Province should not lose in the end. If a charge of six per cent. were made for the money advanced, there would annually be paid \$8.30 per \$100. If a charge of seven per cent should be made (which was not very likely) it would require them to put \$9.04 per annum on the \$100 to pay it back. At the rate of five per cent on the land there would be an annual payment of \$7.60 per \$100, of which \$1.60 should be applied to the sinking fund. He believed this mode of advancing from the public exchequer would commend itself to the people at large. They would know it was not a gift, but a generous outlay on the part of the Administration to those who had not sufficient means to accomplish what could only be done by an expenditure of the public funds. He believed what was calculated to benefit any one portion of Ontario was a benefit to the whole Province. (Hear, hear) This was no gift; it was a loan which would go to reclaim a large tract of land now useless, and benefit a large portion of our population. He was told, since he had announced the intention of the Government to introduce this measure, that the Toronto, Grey and Bruce Railway Company, in laying out the route of this line, were obliged to carry it round the edge of a swamp, whereas, if there had been a little drainage made, the road could have been taken in a direct line. It was proposed that where Government had lands of their own in localities thus improved, they should be charged precisely the same rent as if the lands were held by private individuals. The Department of Crown Lands would have the benefit and should pay for it, for Government lands now not worth ten cents would, if drained, readily sell at \$5 per acre. Besides the advantages which he had set forth, he should not omit to state the great benefit which would accrue to the surrounding localities in regard to roads. It was well known that there were large districts through which swamps ran, which were more hopelessly separated than if a river or lake lay between them, for they could neither canoe nor boat these quagmires. If such swamps were drained, macadamized roads could be run across them in places where no man would at present venture. He therefore moved that the sum of two hundred thousand dollars be granted to Her Majesty for the making of drains and the construction of works connected therewith in the Province of Ontario. Before sitting down, he would mention that His Excellency had given his assent to this measure.

Mr. BOYD wished to know if the hon. Attorney General had decided where these works should be constructed, and if so what was the estimated cost.

Atty. Gen. MACDONALD said there appeared to be a desire on the part of some hon. members to pin down the Government to certain localities in constructing public works. If Government should say where such works were to be undertaken, they would never be accomplished. If the Administration was not fit to be entrusted to settle where the sum of \$200,000 should be expended, they were not fit to hold office. He promised the hon. gentlemen opposite, that in selecting the localities in which to expend this money Government should not be influenced by party considerations. They would select the places where drainage was most required.

Mr. MCKELLAR wished to say that there was no member in the House more alive to the importance of the swamp lands of the country properly drained, and when he heard of this drainage bill, he thought Government would bring in some measure for some particular locality. With the exception of some marsh lands in Essex and Kent, and a couple of other places, he knew of no place where it was beyond the power of the local municipalities to effect the drainage. At all events he expected the Government would have come down to the House, stating the particular localities where they intended to expend the public monies; but on looking over their Bill, he found that they not only gave no specified locality, but they announced their intention to go where they thought fit. He admitted that where he came from himself the land was low, though it was not exactly a swamp, and the local municipalities were draining it themselves. The Government proposed to go on such lands, and do the draining themselves, and after the work was done without any invitation from the people who owned the land, to send Government arbitrators (he did not know where they were to come from) to value the works built at the hands of the Department. These men were to perambulate the country, going from one end of it to the other, going to sections which they had never seen before and with which they were totally unacquainted. These men were to ascertain the benefit this lot, that lot, and the other lot was to derive from the drainage. That was the most objectionable feature in the Bill. He maintained that the men on the spot could do that work much cheaper and better than arbitrators from a distance. At the present time this system of drainage was going on, and he was apprehensive that this proposed system would prove an exceedingly expensive operation. It would be another Municipal Loan Fund affair, and he warned the House against placing these monies in the hands of the Government before they should state where it was to be expended. It was true the Government assumed the responsibility of the expenditure, but it was after the money should be expended. This evil had existed for fifteen years. The Government were, of course, responsible, but they spent the money just as they pleased, and with a majority at their backs they managed to hold their seats. He did not say that hon. gentlemen opposite would pursue such a course; but such things had been done in the past and might be done again in the future. (Hear)

if the House would do their duty to themselves and the country, they would not object to granting money for the purpose of draining places which local municipalities could not drain themselves; but before granting that money, they would require to know where every dollar of it was to be expended (Hear, hear.) It was their duty as representatives of the people, who were responsible to them, to insist on this before granting the large sum which the Hon. Attorney-General desired them to place in the hands of the Government. There was not an hon. gentleman on either side of the House who objected to the draining of places which required it; but each member felt it was but right that the Government should say where every dollar was to be expended. The Hon. Attorney-General stood up in his defiant manner, and said the Government were responsible. Was that proper language for the Leader of the Government to use towards the House? He hoped the House would assert its dignity and demand the fullest explanation, and if that were not given, not an hon. gentleman on the floor of the House should give his support to the measure. (Applause)

Hon. Mr. McMURRICH said it was unjust for the Government to withhold explanations from the House. It was unjust that the House should be called on to vote away such a large sum without knowing something about how and where it was to be expended. He did not ask for details that it would be inconvenient to give, but he desired to know something more about the matter than the Government had furnished the House. (Hear, hear)

Mr. BLAKE proposed that in accordance with the view of the functions of Government taken by the hon. Attorney-General, that the word "certain" in the resolution be struck out and the word "uncertain," substituted, for it was certain to no man in the House what was to be done with this money. (Laughter.) The customary rule of Parliament—that applications for grants of money should be preceded by a resolution was founded upon the wise view that there should be more numerous opportunities for discussing them than was the case with ordinary measures, and it was for this reason that the resolution was considered in Committee, when more freedom of speech could be used than when the Speaker was in the chair. Although he quite agreed that this was hardly the time to enter into the minute details of the measure; still, he considered it was due to all parties, that it should be utilised so that as early a stage of the Bill as possible, those objections which might occur to hon. gentlemen respecting the details of the scheme might be set before the House and the country. He did not desire to enlarge on the objections to the Bill, but simply to show how the present policy of the Government was opposed to the principles they professed last session. The Public Works Act gave the Commissioner authority, in the construction of Public Works, of his own power to make the necessary investigations in order to arrive at a conclusion, and proceeded to say that the Commissioner shall report to the Governor, and that that report shall be laid before this Legislature for its consideration. This was for the purpose of informing the House of the policy of the Government, as to what works they proposed to carry out under this Act; and that the Legislature might have an opportunity before it was asked for a grant of money, of knowing for what purpose that money was required. It was not necessary to refer to the past policy of his hon. friend the leader of the House; but the principle of the Public Works Act brought forward by that hon. gentleman was recognized last session by the Government and adopted by the House. Last session this was the policy of the House, and now they were asked to reverse that policy and to come to a conclusion more favourable to the notions of the hon. Attorney-General at the present time. Consistent with that Act it was the duty of the Government, having obtained the information which the Act required, and come to the conclusion which the Act pointed to, and having made the report which the Act demanded, to ask for money to carry on the works. According to the present proposal of the Government—he called the attention of the Government to this in particular—although they only asked for \$200,000, the House had no assurance that the works which the Government proposed to commence would be finished with that amount. (Hear, hear.) An expenditure might be commenced on works known to involve a much larger sum, and the House might be practically committed to an indefinite expenditure, unless they should say after the \$200,000 had been expended, that the work was a bad one and should be left uncompleted. They would not do that. They would feel obliged to say, "We cannot throw away that \$200,000. We will be obliged to let the work go on." Although upon the ground of principle he objected to the proposal of his hon. friend, yet his uneasiness with reference to it would be much lessened if he received any assurance that it was not intended to commence works with \$200,000 which \$200,000 would not finish. He desired to know the intention of the Government on that point.

Atty.-Gen. MACDONALD.—No. Every work which will be commenced, will be finished with the appropriation.

Mr. BLAKE.—So far so good; but it does not get rid of the principle to which he objected; but it was well known that the House was not committed to a larger expenditure than was now asked for. Notwithstanding, the want of information remained, and was as urgent as it was before. He admitted that there might be works required in this country which municipalities might not be able to do themselves. He did not mean to say such was the case or was not, but if there were works of that magnitude which the public should undertake, it was desirable that they should be undertaken by Government. But that was not the principle of the Bill. It was based on a general principle, which, in his judgment, could not be too strongly condemned; that the Government was itself to do the work, however small it might be, by its own officers, its own contractors; it was to settle the price to be paid for that work, and to saddle the municipalities with the expense. It was well known how difficult it was to recover moneys