

parties which believed they could make a more useful disposition of their money, it should be remembered that these municipalities were extremely few in comparison with the whole number of municipalities. They had received a few communications from different parts of the Province, suggesting the application of the money to the purpose mentioned by the hon. member for Lincoln. It was further to be remembered that members of the Municipal Councils were elected with the knowledge on the part of the people that this money was to be applied for the purposes mentioned in the Act. They were elected with the power to make the application mentioned in the Act, and there was no ground upon which the ratepayers could contemplate the application of this money to other purposes. The electors had the power of electing Councilors to take the same view they did, and in some municipalities the application of this money was a matter which the electors took into account in the formation of their Councils. While the scheme was one which might not be acceptable to a few constituencies, at all events it was a scheme which the people of the country by their vote had approved of. He would not say that in some future session, if it were found that they could usefully and judiciously apply the money to other purposes, it would not be a proper matter for consideration, and that there might not be some extension of the objects named in the Act, but they did not think it desirable now to re-open this very vexed question for the purpose of making any such provision as the hon. gentleman desired. He hoped, therefore, that the House would concur with him in this view, and agree to leave this difficult question in the position it then occupied, after the thorough consideration which the matter received last session, and after the generous support the Province had given it.

Mr. GRANGE could not see that this would be a re-opening of the matter. In his county there were several municipalities that did not require the improvements specified in the Act. He denied that the municipalities squandered the public money, and stated that they conceived they could more advantageously expend the money. He thought that if power to invest that money in school purposes were given, it would not be at variance with the wishes of the people.

Mr. CURRIE believed that the Act generally had given satisfaction in the country, but there were some municipalities which desired to use the money for purposes other than those mentioned in the Act. Some desired to use it for the purpose of establishing a School Fund, and he did not see any reason why they should not be allowed to dispose of the money as they saw fit. He had more confidence in the various municipalities than to believe they would waste the money that would be given to them. He instanced one municipality which was to receive \$25,000, and which desired to establish a School Fund. They had built their school house, and did not need to expend it on railways. He hoped the Government, at least next session, would see their way to introduce a measure upon the subject. The Act was one which had generally been approved of by the people, and which had reflected great credit on the Government.

Mr. MERRICK said the majority of the counties were in favour of the Act because they were interested in the settlement of the debt. He had no doubt the Government was justified in the course it had taken, and that the majority of municipalities were satisfied with the measure, but many would not be until they could use the money without any restriction being placed upon them.

Mr. SINCLAIR said that in his county they desired to expend the money as they considered most expedient, and he was very glad that the Government were willing to consider the matter at a future session.

Mr. BETHUNE thought it would be a most unfortunate thing to give municipalities discretion to use the money as they pleased, and that every check that had been adopted was absolutely necessary for the protection and proper expenditure of the money. He was opposed to the re-opening of the question, and he hoped the Government would stand by the scheme until they saw from experience that an improvement could be made.

Mr. HANEY said that in his county there was a desire to use the money for school purposes, and he hoped the Government would so amend the Act that they could use the money as they saw fit.

Mr. HAMILTON was of opinion that provision should be made for the expenditure of

a portion of the money in the erection of Registry offices.

Mr. CHRISTIE thought it desirable to give municipalities the option of expending the money as they thought best. Such an amendment he was sure would meet the views of the people.

Mr. PRINCE spoke in high terms of the Bill as it stands, and did not advocate any amendment.

Mr. PAXTON suggested that the Act should be amended so that municipalities might purchase their own debentures. He was satisfied that if any improvement could be made to the Act the Government would make every effort to render it more workable.

Mr. FAREWELL said that no legislation of that House was so favourably received throughout the country as the legislation of the Government in this respect. However, he thought an improvement might be made in respect to the expenditure of the money.

Mr. HODGINS said, as he understood the matter, there had been a general feeling expressed in the House that there should be additional power given to municipalities for the application of their appropriations to other purposes than those mentioned in the Act. Some had indicated school purposes while others had spoken of general purposes. He was in favour of enlarging the power Township Councils possessed in regard to their appropriation, by applying them in discharge of county debts. The county he represented incurred a debt in granting a bonus to the Canada Southern Railway, and it was a question under the Act whether the local municipalities had a right to appropriate their share of the surplus in discharge of that debt. Clause 12 of the statute provided that the money received under that Act might be applied in aid of railways. The money he referred to had been spent in aid of a railway, and there was no question but that if this money were applied to the liquidation of the debt it would come within the spirit, if not the meaning of the Act. If the Government would enable local municipalities to appropriate their share of the fund in the discharge of county liabilities incurred in aiding railways, he would be prepared to support the amendment, otherwise he would vote for the original motion. He found that a large number of counties were indebted in other ways than to the Municipal Loan Fund, and as the policy of the House was to enable these municipalities to clear off their debts, the power to pay them off should be given in the way he had indicated, if the law as it now stood did not confer that power.

Mr. DEROCHE had heard of no complaint against the measure, but he had been apprised of the desire on the part of some municipalities to appropriate their share of the fund to school purposes. He objected to no restrictions being placed upon the expenditure of the money, and thought the adoption of such a course would result in the frittering away of the money. He was of opinion that it would be unwise to re-open the question.

Mr. McMANUS objected to giving to municipalities the power of disposing of the money without restriction.

Mr. WOOD admitted that there was a desire in some counties that a more liberal provision should be made, allowing them to discharge debts contracted for public works, and while he would be quite prepared to support an amendment making the provision more liberal, he could not support the motion which proposed to place no restriction upon the disposal of the money.

Hon. Mr. MOWAT said the hon. member who spoke last intimated the desirableness of municipalities being at liberty to apply the money for the payment of debts. The Act did contain a provision for the application of the money to the liquidation of debts incurred by public improvements. From communications he had received during recess he was aware that some of the municipalities experienced difficulty in finding purposes to which to apply this money usefully and within the meaning of the Act, as they had all the public works they required. He quite appreciated and sympathized with the desire on the part of some municipalities to appropriate their share to educational purposes, although a question might be raised as to whether it would be desirable to adopt this course. This was one of the purposes for which the Act did not provide. Many municipalities desired to apply the money to other purposes. The hon. member for West Elgin and other gentlemen on both sides of the House were anxious that the money should be applied by municipalities for the payment of their share of the county debt incurred for railways or permanent improve-