

Mr. ROSS said he had brought a measure of this kind before the House on a previous occasion. He blamed the legal profession for much of the difficulty, in not being ready with their cases, and thought something of the nature of the Bill proposed would relieve the judges of a disagreeable duty. A feeling was arising in the country against the jury system in consequence of the great expense attending it.

Mr. DEACON concurred in the view that the matter should be left with the judges.

Mr. PATTERSON (Essex) suggested that the Bill should be allowed to go to a Committee. It would be hardly fair to throw it out.

Mr. CLARKE (Norfolk) hoped it would not be thrown out, as many of the profession and some of the judges themselves were in favour of it.

The motion for the second reading was lost on the following division:—

YEAS.—Messrs. Baker, Barr, Bell, Bishop, Boulter, Clarke (Norfolk), Clarke (Wellington), Dawson, Ferris, Gibson, Grange, Grant, Haney, Hargraft, Harkin, Lauder, Macdougall (Middlesex), McGowan, Merrick, Monk, Mostyn, O'Sullivan, Patterson (Essex), Paxton, Preston, Richardson, Robinson, Rosevear, Ross, Scott, Widdifield—31.

NAYS.—Messrs. Ballantyne, Bethune, Cameron, Chisholm, Cole, Crooks, Deacon, Finlayson, Flesher, Fraser, Hay, Hunter, Kean, Lane, Lyon, McCraney, McLeod, McMahon, Massie, Master, Meredith, Miller, Mowat, Sexton, St. Clair, Snetsinger, Springer, Striker, Watterworth, Williams, Wilson, Wood—33.

INSECTIVOROUS BIRDS.

Mr. MOSTYN moved the second reading of the Bill to amend the Act for the protection of insectivorous and other birds beneficial to agriculture. He explained that the Bill was intended to allow certain birds to be shot which were now prohibited. Besides withdrawing protection from plover, it provided that meadow larks, rails, rice birds, and blackbirds might be shot between the first of September and the first of January.

Mr. CLARKE (Wellington) said he introduced in 1873 the Bill which the hon. member for Lanark now sought to amend, and which protected certain insectivorous birds for the whole of the year. He should be sorry to have the House withdraw that protection, for agriculturists were interested in this question as well as sportsmen. He had no objection to withdrawing protection from plover, but he had a decided objection to withdrawing it from the rice-bird or bob-o'-link and the meadow lark.

Mr. MOSTYN said he intended moving that the Bill be referred to a Special Committee, in which these objections could be considered.

The Bill was then read a second time, and referred to a Committee.

HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

Mr. BETHUNE moved the second reading of the Bill to amend the law respecting High Schools. He said the Bill was intended to explain section 30 of chapter 205 of the revised statutes, relating to High School districts. He had been led to introduce the Bill in consequence of a decision given by Mr. Justice Gwynne in regard to a dispute in connection with a High School district in the counties of Stormont and Glengarry. The Bill provided the meaning of the section in question to be "that in the case of an union of counties each of the counties shall be considered as a separate county for the purpose of the said section, and that in the case of the formation heretofore or hereafter of High School districts out of the whole or part or parts of the county, the whole of every sum required to be levied for any purpose shall be levied from the High School district."

Mr. CROOKS thought the question raised had been provided for by existing amendments to the High School Act, which abolished High School districts, and conferred on County Councils the power to divide their particular counties into electoral districts, which might be taxed for the High Schools in them. He presumed, therefore, that there was no occasion for the proposed amendment.

Mr. HARKIN said the effect of the Bill would be to close up the High Schools of the country. He should therefore take a decided objection to it.

Mr. BETHUNE said that the Hon. the Minister of Education had misunderstood the motive of the Bill. He was endeavouring to provide such legislation as would work smoothly, and he felt certain that the proposed amendment was necessary.

After some further discussion the Bill was read a second time, and referred to a Committee.

Mr. MEREDITH moved the second reading of the Bill to amend the law respecting Mutual Insurance Companies. He explained that the Bill was intended to provide for the retirement of directors of insurance companies in turns, so that no important changes could be sprung upon the companies.

Mr. BETHUNE said that the proprietary system of insurance was much prejudiced by the mutual insurance system. He had had a good deal of experience in insurance matters lately.

Mr. MEREDITH—You have had some hard cases. (Laughter.)

Mr. BETHUNE said yes, he had had a number of hard cases, and had come to the conclusion that some amendments to the present system of mutual insurance were very necessary.

Mr. HARGRAFT thought that the mutual insurance companies were doing a good work in their own sphere.

Mr. CROOKS said the law in regard to mutual insurance had been carefully revised, extending over two years. In 1873, after the fullest enquiry and debate, the present system was organized. The whole system of mutual insurance, as at present designed to be carried out, was, he thought, a very good one, but he understood that there were continually abuses being discovered. Many of the companies were involved in large financial operations in the Province of Quebec, while the innocent policy-holders of Ontario were paying up the whole of their premiums. Another practice of Directors was that of obtaining commissions while they formed a part of the company. There was a great deal of merit in the mutual insurance principle if it were only properly carried out.

The motion was lost.

Mr. MEREDITH moved the second reading of the Bill to amend the law respecting Building Societies.

The Bill was read a second time.

Mr. MOWAT moved the adjournment of the House.

The House adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

Mr. Hodgins—On Wednesday next—Order of the House for a return of copies of (1) the regulations adopted by the Executive Government, and of (2) the rules or orders of the Superior Courts respecting short-hand reporting in the Courts; also, a statement of the fees collected for short-hand notes of evidence during 1876 and 1877.