Mr. ROSS suggested that his motion be put, as it covered the same ground as that of the hon. member for West Toronto, with the exception that it made no mention of Separate Schools.

Mr. BELL desired to press his amendment.

Mr. DEROCHE said that some members might wish to vote to extend the provisions of the amendments to Public and not to Separate Schools, and they would not have an opportunity of voting if the motion of his hon. friend from West Toronto were put now.

Mr. CROOKS said that as it was almost six o'clock, he would propose that the Committee rise, report progress, and ask leave to sit again to-morrow. Carried.

It being six o'clock the Committee rose, and the Speaker left the chair.

RETURN.

After recess,

Mr. HARDY presented a return showing the value of the public buildings belonging to the Province, the probable loss in case of fire, the insurance already effected, the rate, the different insurance companies with whom risks have been effected, and the amount of each risk.

FEMALE REFORMATORY.

The House went into Committee of the Whole upon the Bill respecting the Andrew Mercer Reformatory for Females, which was passed with slight amendments.

EXTENDED POWERS TO GAS COMPANIES.

Upon the consideration of the Bill to extend the power of gas companies,

Mr. MILLER did not specially object to this Bill, but he trusted the Government would see that in giving these extended powers to gas companies in general they would prevent injustice being done to the citizens of the various places where these companies were in operation. He referred to the complaint now being made by the people of Toronto on account of the special legislation applied for by the Consumers' Gas Company. He believed in any case that there was too much legislation passing through this House, and he trusted the Government would see their way to bring such matters at this under one general Act.

Mr. MOWAT said that that was the object he aimed at in the introduction of this Bill.

The Bill was passed with amendments.

REFUGE FOR GIRLS.

The Bill for the establishment of an Industrial Refuge for Girls also passed through Committee without amendment,

THE JURORS' ACT.

The Bill to amend the Jurors' Act then came up for a second reading.

Mr. HARDY in moving the second reading stated that no radical changes were intended to be made in this Act, which had been on the statute books since 1858, or in the working of the jury system in trials. He reviewed the history of the Jury Act in Canada, showing that the first important amendments had been made in 1850, and that it was consolidated in 1858, since which time it had retained in the main its original provisions. He acknowledged in fitting terms the efforts that had been made by the hon. member for West Huron to, point out the difficulties and anomalies of the Act, and the large and unnecessary expense which it caused. The jury system was an involved one, and it would be impossible to make it absolutely simple. The machinery was of necessity elaborate, and every part had to be very carefully adjusted, or it would spoil the working of the whole. It might fairly be claimed that the jury law had worked with reasonable satisfaction, but the increasing demands of the country had made it seem somewhat unwieldy and expensive. The selection of jurors was first made in the townships or towns by a Board composed of the Mayor or Reeve, the assessor, and the township or town clerk, who met to select the whole body of jurors to be returned. The qualifications of jurors were different in different places, and there seemed to be no regular method of arriving at it. He had received returns from various counties of these qualifications, and they varied from $208 in the county of Frontenac, which had 13 townships, to $1,244 in the county of York, which had nine townships—the average of 11 counties being $666 71 in each township. In the cities the variation was from $400 in London to $984 in Toronto, or an average of $685 46. The average in towns was $435, and in villages $451 80. In making a fixed qualification, therefore, he had been guided largely by those facts, and had placed the amount somewhat lower than the average given. The towns, townships, and villages it had been deemed well to class together, and to make the qualification $400, and for the cities the amount had been fixed at $600. This widened the basis of eligibility somewhat, and made the exercise of discretion more necessary. Under section 8 of the Bill magistrates were exempted from serving upon juries in the inferior Courts, and as petty jurors of Assize and Nisi Prius, but it had been thought well not to disqualify them further. These were a body of about six thousand of the most intelligent men in the Province, and it was felt there was no reason why they should not be called upon to serve on juries in the Superior Courts, and the men whom they might displace there would take their places in the inferior Courts, which would be a benefit to those Courts. Another objectionable feature of the old law, as would be known to those familiar with the Jury Act, was the large number of names sent in from each municipality to the Clerks of the Peace to be selected from, as compared with the number really chosen. The names of the jurors were sent in by the township selectors to the Clerk of the Peace, by whom they are tabulated and arranged, entered in the jurors' roll, and are brought before the county selectors, who chose a certain number from among whom the jurors were drafted. This, it would be seen, required a great deal of work, and involved an expense that a less cumbrous system would avoid. He had returns from a number of counties, showing the relative numbers of those selected and those drafted in different counties. In Simcoe 3,426 names had been sent to the Clerk of the Peace, from whom 384 were selected, the names rejected thus being over 3,000. The selection in the first place was were from the assessment roll, generally beginning with the letter "A," so that those whose names began with letters a considerable distance on in the alphabet were not reached at all. This had also another bad effect. As the same letter was chosen from throughout the county there was a likelihood that one jury would be composed almost entirely of Smiths and another of Joneses, so that if the defendant's name was either one or the other he would probably have friends in the jury-box. (Laughter.) Of the number just spoken of as having been selected in Simcoe only 264 were really placed on the panel. In York county 6,471 had been returned to the Clerk of the Peace, 864 selected, and 860 drafted. Out of a total of 44,988 returned in sixteen counties, 5,373 had been selected and 5,134 placed on the panels. The average for each county was:—Returned, 2,812; selected, 398; drafted, 321. The cost to the country had been:—Payments to Grand and Petit Jurors, $100,164 21; summoning Jurors, $13,703 81. payments to County Solicitors, $5,144 69; paid Clerks of the Peace, thirty-seven counties, at $350 per county, $12,950; paid primary selectors, 660 municipalities at $10, $6,500, a grand total of $138,462 71, or an average per county of $3,742. The scheme by which he proposed to reduce this expenditure was to have the county selectors decide what number of jurors would be necessary, and each municipality would elect a number of them according to its voting population, each municipality choosing names beginning with a different letter of the alphabet. Three times the number of names actually required would be sent up, and from these the selections would be made. The number of names to be dealt with would be very much reduced, and a serious item of expense much curtailed. He believed it better to keep up the old machinery to a large extent. He did not advocate the choosing of the names by the municipal selectors, for that might possibly in some cases lead to attempts to pack the juries. He thought it would be impossible to satisfactorily work the jury system without the second board of selectors, and had therefore retained that feature in the Bill. From the experience he had had, and from the opinion which he believed was general throughout the country, he had come to the conclusion that the Grand Jury was an important and necessary part of the jury system. (Hear, hear.) The work that it did could not be entrusted to the County Attorney, or the acting Queen's counsel, because their interests were to send all criminal cases to trial. It was important to separate entirely personal objects from the administration of justice. It would be necessary, if the Grand Jury were abolished, to appoint a third officer, and it would be very difficult to obtain an officer that would perform the duties better than or so well as the Grand Jury. But while the Grand Jury was an integral portion of the jury system, he thought the expense connected with it might be reduced and its cumbrousness lessened. He therefore proposed to reduce the number of a Grand Jury panel from twenty four to thirteen, and the number required to find a bill from twelve to seven. This change, he thought, would add much to the effectiveness of the system, while at the same time satisfying any popular demand there might be for the abolition of the Grand Jury. He did not believe that that demand was universal, because the question had so far been discussed from but one side. The question had not reached the stage that those who were in favour of the retention of the Grand Jury had felt it necessary to speak out. The great question lying at the foot of any changes in the jury system was the jurisdiction of the Legislature. He had not been able completely to ascertain the limits of the powers of the House in the matter, but he believed that all alterations proposed in part 1 of his Bill were within the jurisdiction of the House, while those in part 2, which provided for the lessening of the number of Grand Jurors, both on the panel and to find a bill, were, perhaps, not clearly within the scope of their legislative powers. However, he had proposed that part 2 should not come into force until a proclamation by the Lieutenant-Governor to that effect. The average yearly saving that would be effected by the Bill in amount paid to jurors per county would be $807, or a total saving to the Province of $29,850; on the cost of summoning the average yearly saving would be $117 per county, or $4,352 for the whole Province; on the amount paid to selectors the annual saving per county would be $46, or a saving to the Province of $1,714 a year. Under sub-sections 5, 6, and 7 of section 156 the average yearly saving would be per county $133, or a Provincial saving of $4,937; under sub-section 2 of section 156 the yearly saving to the counties would be $15, and to the Province $555; on sheriff's certificates of former services the saving per year to counties would be $40, and to the entire Province, $1,480; the yearly saving on jury fees paid in Superior Courts per county would be $29, and to the Province, $1,074; and on jury fees paid in County Courts to the counties, $32, and to the Province, $1,206 per annum. The total yearly saving that would be thus effected if the Bill were carried out as proposed would be to the counties $1,220, and to the Province $45,000. (Cheers.) There should, however, be deducted from this amount the cost of a full panel of forty-eight jurors, which it would be necessary to provide in seventeen counties. That cost would be per county $134 50, or to the Province $4,976. Deducting these amounts, the net average saving that would be effected to the counties per annum would be $1,086, and to the Province $40,000, or one-third of the entire amount now paid in connection with the jury system. He did not consider his Bill by any means a perfect one, but he thought that no political considerations should be allowed to enter into the discussion upon it, and asked for a fair and temperate deliberation of the Bill upon its merits. (Cheers.)

Mr. DEACON thought the Bill a step in the right direction, and that it would have the effect of greatly reducing the cost of the jury system. He suggested that the qualifications for jurors be made the same as that for Parliamentary elections. He approved of the retention of the second board of selectors, as that would have the effect of maintaining a higher class of jurors. As the practice now was, the cost of entering a record, whether in jury or non-jury cases, was about $8, while the Bill fixed it at $5. In any case the sum had to be paid by the litigant. The Grand Jury was of great benefit to the country. Their reports to the judge might be sneered at as stereotyped, but he believed they had their effect; and if the Grand Jury was abolished, the gaols and county buildings would not be kept in so efficient a condition as at present. He regretted that any attempt was being made to reduce the number required to form a panel and to bring in a bill. It was a serious thing to put a man upon his trial, and when sent before the grand jury it was one step in the direction of proving a man guilty. When there were considerations so important as these, they might well be very cautious in any attempts to reduce the number of grand jurors, which might have the effect of lessening the efficiency of the grand jury.

Mr. WHITE agreed with his hon. friend from