forced to remedy the evils complained of. Then the matter of

SCHOOL ASSESSMENT

was perhaps a still more vexatious question. The hon. member for North Hastings called attention to this matter last session, and received considerable correspondence, which, as well as the report which was prepared, went to show the inequality of the taxation. There was no doubt a great disparity in the rates levied, and in the poorer sections they were felt to be very burdensome. It was exceedingly difficult to remedy this evil. When they adopted the township Board system it was thought that would be a complete remedy, but it was found the people were not disposed to adopt that. He had endeavoured now to provide a remedy which he thought would at least go some distance towards doing away with the evil. It was that township councils should have the power, if they were disposed to exercise it, of raising by a uniform rate over the whole township the sum of $100 for each school section in the township in case the school was kept open during the whole year. In the case where it was a union school the proportion of the sum to be raised by each township towards it should be in proportion to the pupils from each. In a school where two teachers were employed $50 additional should be raised towards it. If a school was not kept open all the year, then the grant would be in proportion to the number of days it was kept open as compared with the number of teaching days in the year. The adoption of this system would be optional on the part of the townships. The would in addition have the Legislative grant of $50, and the municipal grant of $50, outside of local assistance. If more were required it would be raised by levying a note on each school section. They would then start each school with $200, so that the irregularities of taxation would thus be remedied to a certain extent. He also proposed a slight change in regard to the mode of dealing with

NON-RESIDENT CHILDREN.

The law now required a teacher to credit the section to which a non-resident pupil belonged, with the number of days during which the scholar attended a neighbouring school. He thought this system was inconvenient. He did not think the law was very well observed in that particular. His own experience as an inspector told him it was not. The simpler way of dealing with the matter was, that the school attended by the pupil should get the benefit of any grant during the time he attended such school. Another proposal of his Bill was to dispense entirely with school treasurers specially appointed for that purpose in city, town, village, and township Boards, and to appoint the treasurer of the corporation to act as such with the same responsibilities and duties as were laid upon him as treasurer of the municipality. A good deal of irritation had arisen from difficulties in the law relating to

THE AMOUNT DUE A TEACHER

for his services. The present law required that the school trustees should pay a teacher for the holidays that immediately followed the term of his engagement. Suppose a teacher taught up to the vacation in July, the holidays were somewhat long, and he was entitled to be paid to the end of them. That system had been somewhat irritating, and in fact many complaints were made and many expedients resorted to by School Boards to get rid of the responsibility of paying a teacher for services they thought he had not rendered. He proposed that a teacher should be paid for the holidays in proportion to the time during which he had taught to the whole number of teaching days in the year. Third-Class

CERTIFICATES

were now valid in every county of the Province. The value of them, however, was not uniform. He thought it was desirable that third-class certificates hereafter should be limited to the county in which they were granted. There were a number of teachers holding old first-class certificates which were limited to the county in which they were granted. He proposed to provide that these should be valid in any county of the Province of Ontario. Those who held them were all men of considerable experience, and no certificate of this character had been granted since 1871. He also proposed that where a County Council deemed it in the interest of the schools it might add to the board of examiners men competent to examine where French or German were exclusively taught, in order to test the competency of the teachers. A good deal of irritation arose over the fees required to be paid by County Councils to examiners. This Bill provided that they should be paid the same amount as members of the County Council. He proposed another change in this connection which would do away with considerable trouble by providing that Councils pay the examiners so much per candidate. Examiners also complained that County Councils were not sufficiently liberal to pay their travelling expenses, in addition to those required by law. He was making a provision whereby they would be paid liberally, their expenses to be determined by the County Council. Coming to the question of

SUPERANNUATION,

he was going to propose a scheme by which that system might hereafter be entirely abolished. First, no teacher would be required to pay into the Superannuation Fund. Secondly, those who were contributing to this fund, and who wish to continue, would be allowed to do so, the fee being increased from $4 to a voluntary sum of $8. A certain portion of the teachers under 35 and 40 years of age as a rule were opposed to the superannuation system entirely. Those over that age were anxious that it should be retained. If they wished to retain it themselves by a voluntary contribution they might do so. With regard to those who ceased to contribute if they left the profession they would be allowed to withdraw their contribution as at present. If they did not it would be placed to their credit, and at any time hereafter would be allowed to draw for the years during which they contributed. By this means he expected they would be relieved by and by of this charge, and he did not say so because he believed the people should be loth to deal liberally with the teachers, for on the contrary he thought they were deserving of the utmost sympathy and gratitude. The only argument of a substantial character urged against the repeal of the law in regard to superannuation was the simple one that it was an incentive to teachers to remain in the profession. Perhaps it was, yet he noted that 1,607 teachers left the profession in the past four years, or at the rate of over 400 per annum. They had lost the services of some of their very best men.

An hon. Member—Does this number include female teachers?

Hon. G. W. ROSS said he could not ascertain the number of female teachers who had left. They had retired for other reasons perhaps. The superannuation system did not appear to retain the teachers, and the argument he had mentioned against doing away with it did not need to restrain the House one moment in the action he proposed to take. There was another amendment he was going to submit in regard to the

COMPULSORY SCHOOL CLAUSES.

The law required each child between seven and thirteen years of age to attend school 55 days in the half year. As he stated a moment ago there were 88,000 children in the Province not fulfilling the law in that respect. In the case of children attending factories he proposed that after passing a certain examination they should be exempt from attending school half the time, namely, the examination required for a pupil for promotion from the third to the fourth book. At this stage of their educational career children were generally from eleven to twelve years of age, and he proposed that such of them as worked in factories should be exempt from attending school at least a portion of the time. What he wanted to provide for was not simply attendance at school, but the education of the pupil. Although the school age was from five to twenty-one, the compulsory clauses only affected those between the ages of seven and thirteen. Another provision which he proposed of a more radical character was for the

ELECTION OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

on the same day as the election of municipal councils. It would be optional with the trustees by a resolution passed in October to order that the election should be held on the same day as that for members of the Council. It would be by ballot, and so far as the Municipal Act was capable of application for the prevention of corrupt practices, etc., it should apply to the election of school trustees. This did not apply to Separate Schools. He proposed also to disqualify every salaried officer of a municipality from being either a candidate or eligible for election as a school trustee. He thought these provisions would simplify the law and meet a popular demand, excite a greater interest in educational matters, and cause perhaps a more vigorous School Board. He might say he did not propose to move the second reading of the Bill for two or three weeks, in order that members may have ample opportunity to consider it and that the subject might receive that public discussion outside of the House which he thought was desirable in school legislation. He thought it was desirable that they should get this session a measure as nearly perfect as possible in order that for at least five or six years to come, no other changes would be made in the school laws.

Mr. MEREDITH—I apprehend that he does not propose any corresponding changes in respect to the election of Seperate School Trustees.

Hon. G. W. ROSS—I do not, and it is optional all round.

NEW PARLIAMENTARY BUILDINGS.

Hon. C. F. FRASER said the House will remember that when permission was given by the House for the erection of new Parliamentary Buildings it was qualified with the very important fact that no more than $500,000 should be spent on them. The House will also remember that some sessions ago a report was made which stated that in the opinion of the Executive Council they could not be erected for the sum named in a style fitting for the Province and the needs of the Government, and therefore no constitutional responsibility rests with the Executive Council for not taking action especially when it is remembered that it was stated that no steps would be taken without communicating with the House.

CITIES' CHARTERS.

Mr. MORRIS moved that it is expedient and desirable that any city, erected as such under the Municipal Act, which shall petition therefor in due form, shall be entitled to be granted by the Legislature, if, on due consideration of the circumstances thereof, it shall see fit, a special Act of incorporation in the regulation and government of its special interests. It was desirable, the hon. gentleman said, that greater latitude should be given to cities as to their municipal government, and legislation granted adapted to their peculiar wants. The machinery applicable to the needs of small municipalities was not peculiarly adapted to guard the interests of, for instance, a rising city like Toronto. The people looked as eagerly for a finality in regard to municipal legislation as they did regarding school laws. He claimed that the Government ought to admit the principle that a large city should be granted a special Act of incorporation, that it should be maturely considered by the House, and that any changes made should be made upon petition of the city itself, or where public policy required it by the Legislature. They found that other provinces of the Dominion regarded this system as a necessity, and he would only mention St. John, N. B., Halifax, N. S., Quebec city, Montreal, and Winnipeg, as cities possessing the great advantage of having their own special charters. In Ontario, however, the legislation applicable to townships and villages, and the province generally, was made applicable also to a city like Toronto. The places he had named had the immense advantage of a charter such as the people themselves wanted, which did not interfere with the ordinary amendments to the law, and was only changed by the Legislature when it was found necessary. He saw no reason why such cities as Hamilton, London, and Ottawa, as well as Toronto, should not be granted these special charters. Some few years ago steps were taken and a charter framed for Toronto, but it was not advanced greatly then, though there was a very strong feeling in favour of it. He knew the House would be prepared to consider the question on its real merits. A city with the revenues and wealth that Toronto had was to be compared to the smaller provinces of the Dominion, and therefore the demand for a charter was entitled to the very highest consideration. To show the magnitude of the interests involved, and how inapplicable to such a great city ordinary general legislation was, he would give the House a few figures bearing on Toronto. The assessed value of the city in 1884 was $65,212,000; the net debt $6,000,000; estimated value of city property, $5,000,000; expenditure last year, $2,323,000. This included some important items, such as administration of justice, $16,000; fire department—from which these buildings enjoyed protection at the city's expense—$52,000; charities, $28,000; education, $26,000; gas, $55,000; health department, $21,000; interest, $392,000; industrial farm and gaol, $17,000; local improvements, $482,000; police, $119,000; schools, $182,000; water supply for fire purposes, $24,000; additions to water works and general maintenance, $180,000. So the House would note that there was in Toronto a total expenditure last year of $2,323,000, which fact alone would convince them that the matter was a very important one. He looked to the gentlemen who controlled the House for some response, and expected that they would allow no cast-iron rule to prevent the application of Toronto at all events from meeting with favourable consideration.