

ONTARIO LEGISLATURE.

Sixth Parliament, Second Session.

(By Our Own Reporter.)

TUESDAY, March 20, 1888.

The Speaker took the chair at eleven o'clock.

THE FRANCHISE BILL.

The House went into committee on the Franchise Bill and amended some of its clauses.

Mr. MEREDITH asked whether in assenting to this bill the House was sealing its death warrant, on the Attorney General's principle that any change in the franchise involved a dissolution of the body making the change.

Hon. Mr. MOWAT said nobody had thought of the dissolution of the House. There would certainly be another session.

Hon. Mr. FRASER said that the bill would not be in full operation all over the Province until two more sessions of the Legislature had been held. It did not come into force until the 1st of January next year, and in many municipalities the voters to be enfranchised by the bill would not be on the lists in time for any general election during that year.

The committee rose and reported the bill.

THE MUNICIPAL ACT.

The House went into committee again on the bill to amend the Municipal Act.

A discussion arose concerning clause 11, requiring declarations on taking office from Councillors, Mayors, clerks, assessors, collectors, Returning-officers, constables, poll clerks, to the effect that they will perform their duties faithfully and will receive no money for the exercise of any partiality or malversation or other undue execution of their office. The words "treasurer" and "engineer" were added to the list of officers from whom such declarations should be required, and the clause passed.

Another discussion took place on the bonus sections of the bill.

Mr. WOOD (Hastings) objected to the section which declares that "no municipality shall grant a bonus to a manufacturer under this section who proposes to establish an industry of a similar nature to one already established in such municipality without any such bonus." He claimed that this section would prevent a municipality from securing competition with an establishment in their midst. He objected also to the third and fourth sections of the clause which required respectively that "no bonus shall be granted by a municipality to secure removal thereto of an industry already established elsewhere in the Province"; and "that no municipality shall grant a bonus in aid of any manufacturing industry, where the granting of such bonus would, for its payment, together with the payment of similar bonuses already granted by said municipality, require an annual levy for principal and interest, exceeding ten per cent. of the total annual municipal taxation thereof. He approved of the first section requiring a two-thirds vote before a bonus could be granted.

Mr. BALFOUR supported all the sub-sections alluded to, and contended that they were all necessary to counteract the evils associated with the bonusing system as it existed at present.

Mr. WHITNEY said some seventy petitions only had been presented to the House on behalf of this measure, though there were over 700 municipalities in the Province. The great majority of the remaining 600 odd municipalities were not of those that had given bonuses, and were not to be expected to band together and petition against the measure. He contended, however, that notwithstanding that some might consider the bonusing system to be an economic wrong, yet it was better that they should be allowed to perpetrate an economic wrong, if it were so, than that their rights should be interfered with.

Mr. GARSON pointed out that although there were 700 municipalities in the Province, yet there were only 200 cities, towns and incorporated villages in the Province, and these were the only municipalities interested in the measure. Nearly one-half of these had petitioned in favor of the abolition of the bonus system, and only one had petitioned against such abolition. He personally would have been prepared to vote for the abolition of the bonus system altogether, but the committee had decided against that. He contended also that if the Government had given the power to a municipality to commit an economic wrong,

they could also take away that power.

Hon. Mr. HARDY said personally he would have preferred that instead of a two-thirds vote a three-fifths vote would be required, and that there should be certain exceptions to the operation of the second section of the clause.

Mr. CLANCY thought the machinery for bonusing an establishment under these provisions would be so difficult and tedious as to virtually make bonusing impossible.

Hon. Mr. ROSS (Huron) said he believed in the entire abolition of the bonusing system, and he certainly would not vote for making the provisions of the bill one whit less stringent than they were.

Mr. WATERS considered the first section of the clause sufficiently stringent. The other sub-sections virtually amounted to prohibiting the system of bonusing altogether.

Mr. MEREDITH did not agree with depriving municipalities altogether of the right of bonusing, and it seemed to him that all these sub-sections virtually abolished the system. The first sub-section requiring a two-thirds vote would practically make a municipality unanimous in voting for a bonus. He would approve of sections two, three and four being stricken out.

Hon. Mr. FRASER approved of the sub-sections. Some municipalities, he said, had gone mad over the bonus system, and he particularly approved of the fourth sub-section.

Hon. Mr. HARDY moved that the words three-fifths be substituted for two-thirds in the first sub-section, making the clause require a three-fifths vote of those entitled to vote before any bonus was granted.

The amendment was lost on division by 37 to 33, the Government being divided.

Hon. Mr. HARDY moved again in amendment to sub-section No. 2 to the effect that a municipality may grant a bonus to a manufacturer who proposes to establish an industry similar to one already established in such municipality without any such bonus, but that the original establishment shall not be taxed to pay its proportion of such bonus.

This amendment also was lost, and it being 1 o'clock the House rose.

HOTEL FIRE ESCAPES.

At the afternoon session Mr. McKay's bill for the prevention of accidents by fires in hotels and other public buildings, was re-committed and amended by providing that it should not be necessary for the fire escape to extend below the first storey. It was pointed out that if it reached the ground it might facilitate the entrance of burglars and the exit of defaulting guests. It was also provided that the license inspector should make a report to the Council as to the decisions which he gives under the Act.

THIRD READINGS.

The following bills were read the third time:—

Relating to the payment of the expenses and enforcement of the Canada Temperance Act—Mr. Hardy. (Title changed to Liquor License Act, 1888.)

To amend the Act respecting the office of sheriff—Mr. Hardy.

To confirm a certain agreement made between the Grand Trunk, Canada Southern and London & Port Stanley Railway Companies—Mr. Meredith.

Respecting the Irondale, Bancroft & Ottawa Railway Company—Mr. Fell.

Respecting the executive administration of the laws of this Province—The Attorney-General.

For the protection and reformation of neglected children—The Attorney-General.

To give certain powers to the commissioners of Niagara Park—The Attorney-General.

To amend the Partition Act—The Attorney-General.

To amend the Act respecting insurance companies—The Attorney-General.

THE MUNICIPAL BILL.

The House then went into committee on the Municipal Bill. The bill was discussed until recess, and reported with certain amendments. Mayor Clarke, at the instance of the City of Toronto, introduced several amendments, which were carried. Mr. Waters and Mr. Wood, of Hastings, complained of the late period at which they were introduced. The substance of the amendments is as follows (the City of Toronto is not named in the clauses, but in most cases the words "having a population of 50,000," limit their application to Toronto):—

4. The police commissioners are to regulate and control children engaged as:—

- (1) Express or despatch messengers.
- (2) Vendors of newspapers and smallwares.
- (3) Bootblacks.

An institution for the reclamation and cure of habitual drunkards may be established and habitual drunkards may be committed to it by legal process.

Where, in order to afford an outlet for the drainage of real property other than that fronting upon the street in which a sewer is constructed, such sewer is constructed larger than is needed for the drainage of the real property fronting upon the street, then the Council may impose a special assessment upon the other real property benefited by the sewer.

Power is given to the Council to set apart and lay out portions of roads, streets, squares, alleys, lanes, bridges, or other communications for carriage-ways, boulevards and sidewalks, or for the improvement or beautifying of the same.

Where a city, having a population in excess of 50,000, has constructed gas or water-works, and raised enough money to pay for them by a general assessment, the Council may, without the consent of the ratepayers, borrow money to improve or extend these works; but it must be proved to the satisfaction of the Lieut.-Governor in Council that the extensions are necessary, that the added revenue will pay for the added debt and interest, and that the by-law was carried by three-fourths of the Council.

At the instance of Mr. Leys an amendment was made to the section relating to the annexation of adjoining municipalities. At present the law provides that the Council may submit to the ratepayers a by-law asking for annexation. Mr. Leys' amendment provides that where 150 electors petition for it the Council must submit such a by-law. This, Mr. Leys said, would provide for such a case as that of Parkdale, where the people want annexation and the Council are opposed to it.

Sections introduced by Mr. Conmee and Mr. Wood, of Brant, empowering Council to lease and dispose of water and other power, were amended in the direction of restricting the power.

After recess,

The House went into committee on the general Act to amend the Assessment Act.

Mr. CREIGHTON moved to strike out a clause allowing the imposition of an additional four per cent. on taxes not paid within a certain time, and the clause was ordered to be struck out by a vote of 28 to 23.

The clause relating to the liability of lands for sale by townships instead of by county treasurers if arrears are not paid by a certain time, was ordered to be struck out by a vote of 35 to 30.

The clause relating to statute labor in cities, &c., was also struck out.

The committee then rose and reported the bill.

THROUGH COMMITTEE.

The following bills went through committee:—

Respecting the Revised Statutes of Ontario—The Attorney-General.

Respecting mortgages or sales of chattels in Nipissing—The Attorney-General.

To amend the Industrial Schools Act—Mr. Ross (Middlesex.)

THE AGRICULTURAL MINISTER.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the third reading of the bill respecting the Department of Agriculture and other industries.

Mr. MEREDITH moved in amendment, seconded by Mr. Creighton, that while this House concurs in the proposition to give greater attention by the Government to the agricultural interests of this Province than has hitherto been done, it is of opinion that that end can be attained without incurring the expense of adding another member to the Executive Council and the inevitable expense which will be consequent on such addition, and that, therefore, the said bill be not now read a third time but be forthwith referred back to the whole House, &c.

The amendment was negatived by a vote of 48 to 23 and the bill was read a third time.