

the matter.

Mr. Rorke objected to the frequent changes in text books, claiming that parents were burdened by having to buy books for their children utterly unnecessary.

Mr. Ostrom would like the Minister of Education to take warning of the discussion, as he felt sure text books would play an important part at the next general election. In his constituency there was a strong feeling against the price of school text books.

Mr. Whitney thought the feeling was that the people of Ontario were paying too much for school books. During his election there was no question more brought to his attention than the price of school books, and he would say that the majority of the rate-payers also believe that their children have too many studies to attend to.

Mr. Awrey said he had the pleasure of attending five meetings held in the County of Wentworth to consider the question of education. No teacher, parent or guardian said a single word against the text books of the Public schools. If it were a fact that the school books are sold at a higher price than reasonable, those meetings, he felt sure, would have condemned the system. The whole people of the Province, the speaker maintained, are of the opinion that the books placed in the hands of their children are the best and cheapest possible. He would venture to say that there never was a Minister of Education as popular in the Province as Mr. Ross, notwithstanding the criticisms of the Opposition. (Cheers).

Mr. Ross again replied to the observations of the member for North Grey, claiming that the arrangement which he entered into with the publishers, so far as drawing books are concerned, was in the interest of the public. They have been reduced to the lowest figure possible. Other Provinces have introduced these text books into their schools.

It being 6 o'clock the Speaker left the chair.

AFTER RECESS.

ROUTINE BUSINESS DISPOSED OF AND THE SCHOOL BOOK DEBATE THEN CONTINUED.

After dinner, the House not being very full, it proceeded to dispose of some private bills. The House went into committee and advanced a number of these a stage, and then read a second time the following bills:—

Respecting the Ontario & Sault Ste. Marie Water, Light & Power Company and the Town of Sault Ste. Marie—Mr. Lyon.

To authorise the Synod of the Diocese of Huron to sell certain lands—Mr. Meredith.

Respecting the consolidation of the debenture debt of the City of Toronto—Mr. E. F. Clarke (Toronto).

To revive and amend the Act incorporating the Sarnia & Lambton Southern Railway Company—Mr. Graham.

Respecting the Toronto, Hamilton & Buffalo Railway Company—Mr. Leys.

Respecting the Niagara & St. Catharines Street Railway Company—Mr. Garson.

THE SCHOOL BOOK DEBATE.

The debate on the resolution offered by Mr. Preston was then continued by Dr. Willoughby, who reiterated the arguments advanced by his side of the House during the afternoon.

Then Mr. Sprague put in his protest against the range of the discussion, inasmuch as it had become almost an attack upon the educational system of the Province. This whole subject had been pretty thoroughly threshed out at the general election, and now, it seemed, the whole thing would have to be done over again. He was glad, however, that the discussion had lost one of its old aspects, viz., that of the Ross Bible.

Mr. Ingram continued the discussion for the Opposition, claiming that from his own knowledge he was aware of the feeling existing that books were too high-priced.

Mr. Preston then replied to the speech of the Minister of Education. He was entirely dissatisfied with the explanations of Mr. Ross. He insisted that ten cents was an enormous price for the drawing books used, produced again the Irish book which he had exhibited during the afternoon, and said that Mr. Ross' explanation of the difference of price between it and that of the Ontario reader was trifling with the intelligence of the House. The price of the one was 6½¢, and the price of the other was a dollar.

Mr. Ross interrupted here to point out that the price of the Ontario Fourth Reader was only fifty cents.

Mr. Preston said that there was another book that had to be purchased with it—a commentary, or something of the kind.

Mr. Ross said the book was complete in itself, its full price was fifty cents, and the second book referred to by Mr. Preston was not in any way authorised by the Depart-

ment of Education. He was in no way responsible for it therefore.

Mr. Preston, proceeding, and waxing eloquent as he grew warm, remarked, "I tell the hon. gentleman, I tell the members of this House, and I tell you, too, Mr. Speaker—"

Mr. Fraser—Order, order.
Mr. Preston—"You, too, Mr. Speaker, that the people of this Province will not be content with the explanations of the Minister of Education and that they will continue their agitation until the price of school books is reduced."

The discussion ended here and the resolution passed by consent.

HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION ACT.

Mr. Balfour moved the second reading of his bill entitled the Homestead Exemption Act. The object of the bill is to exempt from sale or levy under execution property to the extent of \$1,000 when the owner is in occupation of the same. Mr. Balfour pointed out that almost every State of the Union had such a law and that it worked very beneficially there. He thought the absence of such a law worked great harm to the Province and was the cause of much of that emigration to the adjoining republic which was attributed to various other causes. A man worked hard all his life to acquire a home, and then from some misfortune or other lost everything and under the present law was compelled to leave his home, lose everything and be driven to other lands. Rather than perpetuate this system, let the Government make such a change in the law as would encourage and enable persons so situated to remain in the country. The hon. gentleman gave valuable and interesting statistics concerning the number of Canadians in the United States, showing that the native-born Canadians added to their immediate descendants numbered close upon two millions of people. Every effort, he urged, should be made by the Government to put a stop to this immense emigration. Many of these emigrants, when they gave a reason for their emigration, explained that in Michigan, or some other one of the United States, they could live without fear of their house being sold over their heads. The principle of the Act had been adopted and was in operation in Manitoba, and no doubt that was one of the reasons why that Province had taken so many of our best settlers from Ontario. The hon. member said he would have been pleased had the Government taken up the bill. He believed the Attorney-General favored its principle. He had done so at one time, anyhow. He believed the enactment of such a law would go far to retain our population, decrease our pauperism, stimulate industry and thrift in our midst, and encourage trade on a healthy basis. The bill before the House had been carefully drawn, and, he believed, contained all the best features of the Acts in the different American States.

Mr. Fraser said he was not disposed to oppose the bill and he complimented Mr. Balfour on having so ably introduced it to the attention of the House. He thought so important a measure should not become law until it had been much more discussed in the country and in the press than he fancied had been the case up to the present time. It was important enough, too, to become a Government measure, if after deliberation the Government came to the conclusion that it was advisable to take it up. It was too late, however, to do so at this session. At the same time, he saw no reason why the House should not now discuss the bill if it pleased.

There being, however, no disposition apparently to discuss the bill just then, Mr. Balfour moved the discharge of the order, expressing his satisfaction at Mr. Fraser's statement.

PUSHING BUSINESS.

The Attorney-General at this point suggested that having in view the period which the session had reached it would be a good thing to send as many as possible of the bills making amendments to the Municipal Bill to the Municipal Committee.

The suggestion was adopted generally, and municipal amendments proposed by Messrs. Ostrom, Wylie, Stratton, H. E. Clarke, Ingram, Graham, Lees, Field, McKay, Bronson, Clancy, Guthrie, Wood of Hastings and Conmee, were read a second time and referred to the Municipal Committee. Municipal amendments proposed by Mr. McMahon and Mr. Garson were declared lost in division.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

Mr. Ostrom—On Friday next—Bill to amend the Saw Log Driving Act.

Mr. Preston—On Friday next—Bill to amend the Act respecting the office of sheriff; also, bill to amend the Act respecting the registration of instruments relating to

lands.

Attorney-General—Bill as to the conveyance of land granted under the Free Grants and Homestead Act.

AROUND THE HOUSE.

ITEMS GATHERED IN THE HOUSE AND DEPARTMENTS.

The Municipal Committee met in the morning, the leading bill before them being Mr. Lees' bill to amend the General Road Companies Act, which is framed with a view to give County Councils powers under certain restrictions to purchase toll roads. The library where the committee sat was crowded, the following places being represented for and against the provisions of Mr. Lees' bill and also that of Dr. McMahon:—Ancaster, Ayr, Brantford, Glanford, London, Oxford, Ontario, Paris, Port Hope and York. The gentlemen were:—Mayor

Walker, Ancaster; Dr. McVicar and P. O'Connor, of Paris; Mr. Dickenson, of Glanford; Mr. Moyle, Brantford; Mr. Elson, Reeve of London Township; Mr. Robeson, of London Township; Mr. McDonald, of Lincoln; Mr. Pelham, Mr. Townsend, Mr. Brown and Mr. Tilson, of Oxford; Mr. Farewell, Ontario; Mr. Smart, of Port Hope; Mr. Lark, Warden of Ontario, and Mr. Wardell, Wentworth. There was nothing to show that the difficulty will be removed this session but it is not improbable the Government will introduce legislation at a future session, which will have the effect of making the Queen's roads free to all classes of the people.

PERSONAL.

Mayor McEvoy, of Chatham, was in the House during the day.

Col. Ray, of Port Arthur, occupies a seat on the floor of the House. The colonel is attending the Military school here with several of the officers of his company.