

reading of his bill to provide for holding winter Assizes in the County of Carleton.

Mr. Meredith had no objection to the bill, but asked how the Attorney-General was going to get over the difficulty involved in securing the additional officials necessary. Did he propose amalgamated circuits, or what?

The Attorney-General said this point was still under consideration. He recognised the difficulties referred to.

It being six o'clock the Speaker here left the chair.

THE LIQUOR LICENSE BILL.

After recess the House went into Committee on the Liquor License Bill. Mr. Gibson announced several emendations since the bill was last before the House. First and chief, probably, is that which altogether abolishes vessel licenses, for which there seemed a general desire when the bill was previously discussed. The amendment was greeted with some applause, and the various sections containing references to vessel licenses were amended as occasion required. There was no discussion until the clause concerning procedure on appeals was reached. Then Mr. Meredith objected that by the proposition to limit the right of appeal to a Judge in Chambers, providing notice is given within five days, the Government was likely to work grave injustice. Already right of jury had been abolished in this class of cases, and by this proposition serious inroads on the constitutional rights of every citizen would be made. The Provincial Secretary replied that the appeals were usually made an excuse for the re-trial of the whole case. He thought no injustice to persons convicted by a Police Magistrate would take place under this provision. The section then passed. When the last section was reached, viz., that dealing with powers of Municipal Councils as to prohibiting sale of liquor, Mr. Meredith asked if it would not be well to endeavor to have concurrent legislation at Ottawa if the provision were to have any effect. He thought the Attorney-General should confer with the authorities at Ottawa about it.

Mr. Gibson promised that this point should be considered in Council before the bill went through its next stage. He then announced a qualification of the second clause as follows:—

The foregoing shall not apply to the transfer of a license from the holder thereof to some other person for the same premises with the consent of the Commissioners, nor to a licensee applying for a license for, or permission of the Commissioners to remove with his license, to other premises in the same polling subdivision, provided that such license or permission shall not increase the number of licenses issued in such polling subdivision, nor shall be allowed if a majority of the electors, duly qualified as aforesaid, petition against the same on the grounds hereinbefore set forth, or any of such grounds.

Mr. Meredith took strong objection to the amendment, complaining that it would nullify certain provisions of the existing law which enabled the residents of a particular locality to prevent the establishment therein of a liquor seller. While on his feet Mr. Meredith went over again the charges of unfair conduct preferred against the Essex Centre Commissioners in connection with the issue of a tavern license against a petition of the residents. He admitted that in this case the Commissioners had perhaps followed the technicalities of the law, but not the spirit thereof. They had picked holes in a petition and then on the strength thereof had condemned it, and granted a license against the expressed wish of the people. Such men should not have been reappointed by the Government, but they had been. Mr. Meredith also referred at length again to the Killarney case, reiterating the charges recently made against the Commissioners there, to the effect that they had granted licenses without complying with the requirements of the various sub-sections of section eleven.

Hon. Mr. Hardy did not know the particulars of the latter case, but, according to Mr. Meredith's own statement of it, the Commissioners under the various sub-sections of section eleven of the Act had acted in accordance with the law. He pointed out the difficulties in connection with the administration of the License Department which followed upon the repeal of the Scott Act in various places. The Scott Act, in the case instanced, had remained in force until the 1st of May, and after that it was impossible for the Commissioners to obey the strict letter of the law in the granting of licenses. It was too late. Last year an Act was passed covering such cases, but when this occurred the transition stage from the Scott Act to the Crooks Act had to be tided over by the Commissioners themselves. If licenses had not been granted liquor would have been sold anyhow after the repeal of the prohibitory Act. The Commissioners had to take care that things did not fall into a chaotic

condition, and they could not have been expected to comply with the entire machinery of the Liquor License Act. As to the Essex Centre case, the petitions referred to had been decidedly not according to the terms of the Act, and the Commissioners were not bound by it. It might have been wise on their part to have acted otherwise—he would not say it would have been—but the Commissioners were not bound by law to have acted otherwise than they had. He claimed that the Government should have intervened in such a case. This was the first time he had taken such an attitude. It was one the Government would not consent to adopt.

Mr. Meredith said he did not want this, only that they should have general instructions as to the spirit in which the law was to be administered.

Mr. Hardy said this was done now.

Hon. Mr. Gibson said he thought the country was to be congratulated on the fact that, although as many as 27 counties had gone from under the Scott Act to the Crooks Act, these two were the only instances of alleged grievances. In these two cases he thought the Commissioners had acted honestly and with the best intentions, and the only reason he could see for all the talk on them that had taken place this session was that he wanted to try and make political capital out of a little difficulty that had occurred.

Mr. Hammell followed with a brief history of taxation generally in Canada and in the United Kingdom. Mr. Hammell does not often address the House; in fact, this is almost the first speech he has made this session. It is a pity he did not make it before the recent Cardwell Convention. The Convention might have acted differently. He spoke but a few minutes, but during that time discussed innumerable subjects, from the abolition of slavery in Upper Canada to the tax on Bass' ale.

Mr. Waters thought the municipal franchise should prevail in municipalities availing themselves of the privileges of the last clause. Then women would be able to vote on the question of local prohibition.

After some further discussion and other slight amendments Mr. Gibson moved that the Committee rise and report progress.

PRIVATE LUNATIC ASYLUMS.

Hon. A. M. Ross moved the second reading of his bill respecting private lunatic asylums. The most important provisions of the bill are probably the following sections which are to be added to the Act, viz.:—

If any person gives, conveys or supplies to any patient or inebriate confined in any private asylum any rum, brandy, whiskey or other spirituous liquors, or morphia, cocaine or other drug without sanction of the Medical Superintendent first obtained in writing, such offender being duly convicted thereof before two Justices of the Peace shall be fined a sum not exceeding \$20.

Every one who knowingly assists directly or indirectly any patient or inebriate detained in a private asylum to escape from such asylum, shall be liable on summary conviction before two Justices of the Peace to a penalty of \$—.

The bill was read a second time and the House adjourned at 10.15.

EXTINGUISHING FOREST FIRES.

The Act introduced by Hon. Mr. Drury to-day to provide means for extinguishing forest fires provides in section 1 that County Councils may pass by-laws authorising the fire guardians, fence viewers, overseers of highways and pathmasters in townships, in case of danger to property on account of woods or prairie in any township being on fire, to call upon the inhabitants in the vicinity liable to statute labor to repair to the place where the fire prevails and assist in arresting its progress. Sec. 2 provides that such fire guardians, etc., may give to the persons so working certificates of having performed statute labor to the amount of the days' work done, and the work is to be allowed for as statute labor to that extent; or if not liable to statute labor, the Township Treasurer shall pay the person doing the work the amount named in the certificate, and the County Council may provide for the application by Township Councils of so much of the commutation of statute labor fund as may be necessary to assist in extinguishing such fires within the township municipalities. Sec. 3 provides that if the Township Councils shall neglect to make such application, the County Council may do so, and pay the certificates, and impose a rate for that purpose upon the township in default. Sec. 4 provides that persons liable to statute labor who refuse to do such work shall be liable to a fine of not more than \$20 or less than \$1 and costs, and, in case of non-payment of the fine, to imprisonment not exceeding 21 days.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

There was quite a formidable attendance of members of the Public Accounts Com-