

# THE LEGISLATURE.

## Government Majority 21 on the First Vote.

### COUNTY OFFICIALS' FEES.

#### Discussion Upon Mr. Wood's (Hastings) Motion.

Belt Line Agreement in Committee — The Undertakers' Bill—Municipal Amendments—Notes.

TORONTO, April 15.

The present Provincial Parliament recorded its first vote to-day. The question was one upon which the parties squarely divided, and the result shows a Government majority of 21 in a House attended by 82 (Speaker included) out of 91 members.

The debate on Mr. Wood's resolution in favor of abolishing the fee system of remunerating sheriffs, registrars and certain other classes of public officials, was taken part in by many members, so that the House sat late. It was after midnight when the vote was taken.

#### Municipal Drainage Law.

The Attorney-General introduced a bill to amend the Municipal Drainage Laws, and in moving its first reading he briefly explained

its object. There were many disputed cases arising out of the administration of these laws, and it had been suggested that two things might be done to meet the circumstances of the case. One was that an additional judge should be appointed for the purpose of trying the cases, and that provision should be made for the ap-

pointment of a judge of the High Court especially charged with cases arising out of the Municipal Act. This the Government regarded as inexpedient. The alternative suggestion was that a salaried officer should be appointed—a barrister of ten years' standing—with all the powers that arbitrators would have and that an official referee of the court would have, so that there might be no difficulty as regards his decisions. The first reading was agreed to.

#### Chancery Judges.

The Attorney-General introduced a bill to amend the act relating to the Chancery Division of the High Court and the judges thereof. It would be remembered that when they appointed an additional judge to the Chancery Court it was considered necessary by the judges themselves, and anyone familiar with the existing system would know that since that time the conditions had changed very much, for the amount of work had enormously increased. There were three judges in the Chancery Division, while in the other divisions there were four. It was proposed that one of the other judges should be detached to the Chancery Division, but he would remain a judge of the High Court still. He had been spoken to on this subject by some of the judges of the High Court themselves and they were in favor of the changes proposed. He had also obtained the opinion of Sir John Thompson on the matter.

#### The Prison Reform Commission.

It was decided in the absence of Mr. Hudson that his motion on the East Hastings election should stand over till the following day, and then a bill for the incorporation of the Bracebridge & Trading Lake Railway Company, which stood on the paper for the third reading, was discharged. Mr. Clancy then moved that an "address to his Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that he will cause to be laid before this House all copies of the commission issued with respect to prison reform, and of any instructions accompanying the same or connected therewith. Also a return showing in detail all expenses incurred or paid by the Province in connection with the said commission, giving dates, items and names." The Attorney-General intimated that it would not be possible to give the information required at present, as the commission had not yet concluded its work. Mr. Clancy explained that all he desired was that the particulars he asked for should be presented when the report of the commission was laid upon the table of the House. Upon this understanding the motion was agreed to.

