

The Opposition Leader.

Mr. Meredith regretted that in the discussion upon this important question party differences had been introduced. This question should have been discussed upon its merits and decided by the convictions of individual members. He was a little surprised at the course hon. gentlemen had taken with regard to the press, which had been so often spoken of as being the educators of the people. He condemned the fee question in its entirety except in the case of very small offices. As soon as the business increased and the office grew in importance the system of payment by salary should be introduced. They knew that in some instances, at all events, in recent times there had been misapplication of the fees paid into the offices. There would be no temptation were payments made by salary to charge people excessive fees, as the fees would be paid in stamps. He argued that the present system was objectionable in that it permitted the farming out of the work, and for that reason it stood condemned at the outset strongly. Something had been said of the percentage now paid out of the fees of the registrars and credit had been claimed for Mr. Blake for that measure. Now the gentleman who introduced that was Mr. Evans, and his notion was that the salaries were altogether too high. The object of the bill was just the object that his hon. friend had in this resolution. In conclusion he moved that all the words in the amendment be omitted after the word "that," and that the original motion be adopted with the additional words "and the salaries be always regulated according to the duties, responsibility and work of the office."

The Attorney-General apprehended that those on his side of the House would have no difficulty in voting against the amendment moved by the hon. member for London and against the resolution and in favor of the amendment of the member for North York. The member for London had suggested, and it was the only practical suggestion that he had made, that the registrar might be paid by salary in proportion to the number of instruments that he registered. Under the present system the amount of the incomes was regulated by the number of deeds registered and the fees received, and his hon. friend proposed that the salaries be regulated by the same principle. His hon. friend had referred to some cases in which he said some of these officers did no duty themselves, and to the fact that the work was done by others, and, argued the Attorney-General, the same thing would occur if they were paid by salaries. He had listened to this discussion with all possible attention, as he was anxious to see if it was possible the Government had made a mistake in coming to the decision they did with reference to this matter, but his conviction was stronger than ever that the true system was the one that prevailed now, and that they should tax these excessive incomes for the benefit of the country.

The debate was continued by Mr. Whitney and Mr. Tait. At 12.30 o'clock the House divided on Mr. Meredith's amendment, with the following result—Yeas 30, nays 51. The amendment was therefore lost by 21.

The amendment proposed by Mr. Davies was called on the same division and the original motion was negatived.

The following is the complete division list:—
YEAS.—Barr, Bush, Campbell (Algoma), Clancy, Dunlop, Glendinning, Godwin, Hammell, Hiscott, Kerns, McCleary, McColl, McLennaghan, Magwood, Marter, Meacham, Meredith, Metcalfe, Miscampbell, Monk, Preston, Reid, Rorke, Smith (Frontenac), Tooley, White, Whitney, Willoughby, Wood (Hastings), Wylie—30.

NAYS.—Allan, Awrey, Balfour, Baxter, Bishop, Blezard, Bronson, Caldwell, Carpenter, Charlton, Chisholm, Clarke (Wellington), Cleland, Conmee, Dack, Davis, Dowling, Dryden, Evanturel, Ferguson, Field, Gibson (Hamilton), Gibson (Huron), Guthrie, Harcourt, Hardy, Lockhart, Loughrin, McKay (Oxford), McKay (Victoria), McKechnie, McKenzie, H., McMahon, Mack, Mackenzie, C., Moore, Mowat, O'Connor, Paton, Porter, Rayside, Robillard, Ross, Sharpe, Smith (York), Snider, S. rague, Stratton, Tait, Waters, Wood (Brant)—51.

PAIRS.

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| <p>For.</p> <p>E. F. Clarke, Fell, Hudson, H. E. Clarke.</p> | <p>Against.</p> <p>Biggar, Garrow, Gilmour, Fraser.</p> |
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Mr. G. Campbell, member for East Durham, was the only absent member who did not pair.

The House rose at 12.45 o'clock.

Private Bills.

The Private Bills Committee had another debate to-day over the legislation asked for by the City of Toronto. The clauses left over from the former session bore reference chiefly to the Belt Line and other railway agreements. The Ashbridge's marsh reclamation scheme was sanctioned in so far as reclamation by the city on the local improvement principle was concerned, after the insertion of a clause drafted by Hon. Mr. Gibson (chairman) reserving all rights of the Crown now existing in the marsh. Ald. Atkinson for the Committee on Legislation asked for the insertion of a clause giving the Council power to raise money for the widening of Queen street subway from 40 feet to 66 feet. That had been one of the conditions of annexation, and the work, although necessary, had not been done. The chairman asked if there was any hurry. Mr. Wragge, for the Grand Trunk, said that if it was proposed that the railways should pay any of the cost he would object. Ald. Atkinson said it was not now proposed that the railways should pay a share. The question had not been raised. The clause was struck out, the committee being of opinion

that no interests would suffer by a year's delay. The clauses regarding the railway reservation on the Don were then taken up. One of these clauses is intended to confirm an agreement arrived at between the city and the C. P. R., by which that company obtains a lease in perpetuity upon a valuation to be readjusted every 50 years of 26 feet for two running tracks along the Don improvement. Another clause had for its object the confirmation of an agreement between the city and the Belt Line in regard to the use of another portion of the reservation. It was objected at a former session that the C.P.R. would injuriously affect the Belt Line unless before its passage an agreement was arrived at between the city and the Belt Line. City Solicitor Biggar explained the steps taken at the special meeting of the Council, which had decided to grant twelve feet to the Belt Line for a running track for a period of 50 years, renewable for other periods of 50 years, but terminable upon the city at the expiry of the first 50 years, or at any time thereafter, giving the Belt Line two years' notice and nominating the company for running powers over the tracks of the C.P.R. To this the Belt Line would not agree, and it remained for the committee to decide the matter. He was instructed on behalf of the Council to ask that the clause be dropped out of the bill altogether.

To this Mr. Edgar made a vigorous reply. He gave the history of the improvement, quoting the act of Legislature which called for equal rights of access to all railways. That course would not be followed if the agreement with the C.P.R. were confirmed and the Belt Line dropped out altogether. He concluded by tabling a proposal that the Belt Line be given possession of the strip and that the terms be settled by arbitration. Around this the fight went on for an hour and a half. The city solicitor took the position that the city did not want the improvement taken altogether out of its hands after \$570,000 had been spent on it. He preferred to drop both agreements. The mayor urged that the city had been forced into giving the C. P. R. the 26 feet asked for owing to a change in the plan of the improvement made in Mayor Howland's time. "But how was the change made?" asked the chairman. "God only knows how," answered the mayor. "Yes, that is the position," said Hon. Mr. Gibson, "but they got it, and now this other company want similar powers."

The mayor urged that both clauses be struck out of the agreement, but on the chairman asking the committee whether the clauses should be struck out or machinery of arbitration appointed, it was decided to give authority for arbitration.

The debate was animated at times and repartee abounded. "The Council is a curious body and plays to the gallery," said Mr. Edgar. "And some of the railway men are funny coons," retorted the mayor. And Chairman Gibson with judicial gravity remarked "Gentlemen, I agree with you both."

Finally it was decided that the Belt Line should have immediate possession and that the terms of the lease should be settled by two arbitrators, one by the city and one by the railway, with Hon. J. M. Gibson as umpire, within six weeks after the passage of the act or in about two months from date. From their decision there shall be no appeal.

Mr. McWilliams, who appeared for the property-owners on the banks of the Don, asked that they be relieved from the two-thirds of the cost of the improvement levied upon them in view of the fact that the city was going to get revenue from the railways. The committee did not grant the request, but the chairman intimated that there would be nothing to prevent Mr. McWilliams from bringing in a private bill next session along the line indicated.

Speaker's Dinner.

Mr. Speaker entertained the following gentlemen at dinner last evening:—Messrs. Jas. Massie, Aubrey White, D. E. Cameron, Dr. D. Clark, W. Houston, A. Blue, and the following members of the Legislature:—Messrs. E. W. B. Snider, J. Cleland, R. Paton, A. F. Campbell, H. T. Godwin, J. Bush, W. A. Charlton, H. Smith, N. McLennaghan, W. T. Lockhart, J. Loughrin, G. McKechnie, D. McColl, J. Sharpe, D. Porter, G. Campbell, J. Hiscott and J. Reid.

Municipal Committee.

In the Municipal Committee, presided over by Hon. A. S. Hardy, the bill introduced by Mr. G. B. Smith was passed with an amendment. This bill provides that the petition for the incorporation of a village must be signed by 150 residents and not by 100 residents as heretofore. It was amended so as to make it applicable only to villages within three miles of cities of 100,000 inhabitants—in other words to villages within three miles of Toronto. Dr. Gilmour's bill was strongly opposed and discussion of it was postponed pending a conference of those supporting and those opposing the measure. This bill provides that on petition of a majority of the ratepayers of a township the Township Council shall grant aid to the construction of street railways. Mr. J. P. Bull, representing the Town of North Toronto, was given an opportunity to speak against the bill. The chairman wanted to know if North Toronto was really a town, and being informed that it was, he asked "With a mayor and Council?" "Yes," said Mr. Smith, "everything but a public debt, and it will soon have that." Mr. Bull made a strong speech against the bill, and Mr. D. James, ex-reeve of Markham, also spoke against it. Mr. Z. A. Lash appeared for the bill. There were a considerable number of delegates on either side. The conference took place in the library and the result of it was an agreement upon a bill of a permissive character. Mr. Awrey's Public Parks Act amendment giving townships the power to purchase land for park purposes was passed.