

Vote. Apr 22.

threshers, and this additional cost would inevitably fall upon the farmers in the end.

Mr. Hiscott spoke briefly in opposition to the bill.

Mr. Bishop made a forcible arraignment of the bill and of the methods of the Ontario Underwriters' Association in connection with legislation. The hon. member is one of the oldest and most respected members of the House. He has in a marked measure the strong sense of his Scotch nationality and a forceful command of language. He told the House they might as well legislate against tobacco pipes. He looked in the reports of fires in 1888, and out of 1,182 only four were caused by threshing machines, while six were from tobacco pipes. In 1889 of a total of 1,058 five were from threshing machines and nine from tobacco pipes. He hoped the bill would be withdrawn or defeated.

Mr. McColl opposed the bill.

Hon. Mr. Fraser suggested that to save time the bill might have its second reading and be discussed in committee.

Mr. Meredith objected to this and there were cries of "question," "withdraw" and "6 o'clock." The latter call won and the Speaker rose.

These bills were given third readings during the afternoon :-

Respecting an agreement between the Midland Railway, the Grand Trunk Railway Company of Canada and the Village of Midland—Mr. Biggar.

To incorporate the Ontario, Belmont & Northern Railway Company—Mr. Blezard.

Respecting the City of Kingston Gas and Electric Light Companies—Mr. Metcalfe.

To consolidate the debt of the Town of Port Arthur—Mr. Connee.

Respecting by-law number 128 of the Town of Gravenhurst.—Mr. Marter.

To amend the act to incorporate the Ottawa, Arnprior & Renfrow Railway Company—Mr. Monk.

To further amend the acts respecting the Sandwich, Windsor & Amherstburg Railway—Mr. Balfour.

To consolidate the debt of the Town of Alliston—Mr. Wylie.

To prevent the extermination of the plant called ginseng—Mr. Caldwell.

The following bill was read a second time :-

Respecting the sale of real estate by personal representatives—The Attorney-General.

Advancing Business.

After recess, on motion of Mr. Fraser, the debate on the Insurance Bill was adjourned.

A number of Government bills were then taken up and passed quickly and with comparatively little debate. These have already been explained. The following were read the second time and referred to committee of the whole, to be taken up at a future sitting :-

To amend the act respecting county Crown attorneys—The Attorney-General.

Respecting the disqualification of justices of the peace—The Attorney-General.

To amend the Municipal Act—Mr. Bronson.

Bill relating to railways—Mr. Fraser.

Drainage Disputes.

The Attorney-General, in moving the second reading of the bill respecting disputes under the drainage laws, advocated the bill on the ground of the necessity which existed, especially in the western part of the Province, for the settlement of disputes at a minimum of cost, and also to secure greater uniformity of decision. The appointment of a referee, as provided for in the bill, was believed to be the best available means of meeting the difficulty. He foreshadowed the issuing of a commission before next session to investigate this whole question of drainage disputes, with a view to making some permanent and satisfactory settlement. This bill led to a considerable discussion taken part in by some of the leading members of the House. Mr. Meredith wanted the Government to wait before making this appointment until the promised commission had been appointed. He thought it would be a grave disadvantage to have a permanent officer appointed before the final decision was reached. At the same time he recognised the importance of having a settlement of this grave matter. Mr. Balfour, in whose county this drainage question is a very serious one, represented that it would take two years before legislation could be passed based upon the report of the forthcoming commission, and the necessity of making a settlement was urgent. He suggested that the referee to be appointed might assist in the work of the commission. This led Mr. Whitney to object that if the referee was busy on the commission he could not do much in settling disputes. Mr. White did not see any reason why the report of the commission could not be before the House next session. Mr. Charles Mackenzie (West Lambton) dwelt upon the difficulties arising out of the present cumbrous and unsatisfactory system of arbitrations and the necessity of having a settlement of the matter as soon as possible. He expressed the opinion also that the bill proposed would do a great deal of good. Mr. Clancy urged that it was impossible for the House at this stage of the session to give due consideration to this problem, but Mr. Fraser expressed a confident belief, on the other hand, that the members would be willing to remain until the case had been properly dealt with. He pointed out that the gentlemen opposite had not suggested any other effective remedy in place of this, which they criticised. The real cause for opposition, he contended, was that this bill meant another appointment to be made by this Government. Had this been

a bill to provide for referring this matter to a new judge, whose appointment would be in the hands of the Government at Ottawa, there would be a general acceptance of it by gentlemen on the other side. Mr. Waters favored the bill for the reason that it would tend to uniformity of decision, but he did not see that it would make the proceedings less costly or less prolonged than before, unless they gave the referee power to prohibit the engagement of lawyers to argue cases before him. Mr. Ferguson, who ranks among the first of the comparatively few men in the House who understand this drainage question, made a short but telling speech in favor of the bill. In commenting upon what had been said, Mr. Meredith made the boast that the valuable amendments to the drainage law had mainly been made by gentlemen on his side of the House. At once Mr. Fraser and Mr. Hardy rose to their feet demanding that these amendments should be named. Mr. Meredith claimed all and declined to specify, whereat the Ministers laughed scornfully, while Mr. Hardy cried, "Why, the hon. gentleman from Middlesex (Mr. Waters) and the hon. member for South Essex have done more than all of you put together." In a few remarks subsequently he spoke in praise of Mr. Waters, Mr. Balfour and Mr. Ferguson for their knowledge of this question. The bill was read the second time and referred to committee of the whole.

Supply—Hospitals.

The House then went into Committee of Supply. On the appropriation Mr. H. E. Clarke made a brief speech, calling attention to what he regarded as an anomaly in this branch of expenditure. Mr. Clarke seemed ill and several times paused as if in pain. He asked the patience of the committee, and all seemed to sympathise with him in the gallant effort he made to get through the presentation of what he regarded as an important matter. Mr. Fraser suggested that the item might be taken up another time when Mr. Clarke was stronger, but the response was quick, "Oh, I should be no better another time; I can get through." The point of Mr. Clarke's speech was that though the Roman Catholics were a comparatively small portion of the population of the Province, Roman Catholic charitable institutions received \$28,000 as against \$17,000 to all others, which, for the sake of argument, he classed as Protestant. He recognised the fact that the appropriations were made on the basis of the number of patients in the institution and the number of days they were there. He thought there must be some different way of enumerating in the Roman Catholic institutions from that which prevailed in the Protestant institutions. He disclaimed all feeling of bigotry, but contended the question should be looked into, and moved that the appropriation be reduced by \$10,000.

Mr. Fraser made a reply as calm and temperate as had been the speech of Mr. Clarke. He pointed out that there was a greater proportion of poor among the Roman Catholics than among the Protestants. The reasons for that were historical, and were not very old in history either. The institutions of the Roman Catholics were not devoted to that class exclusively, but were open to all, and though they received aid from the Government and by voluntary contribution, the ladies of the religious orders who had most of them in charge were compelled to assume the roll of supplicants for aid from the general public, and even then the institutions were barely able to keep pace with the work they had to do. He felt confident that there was no ground for believing that there was a different basis in one case from that used in the other.

Mr. Meredith objected to the system of payment, based in part upon the amount contributed by patients. It simply meant that these institutions became boarding houses for the infirm who were able to pay their way and the Province had to assist them. In reply to this, Mr. Mowat pointed out that one of the objects of the system was to encourage people to help themselves; that the system had been deliberately adopted and no better had been suggested.

After further discussion Mr. Clarke withdrew his motion.

Colonisation Roads.

There was the customary lively debate over the appropriation for colonisation roads. Mr. Clancy made use of some of the information he had recently got in the Public Accounts Committee, and considering how little importance it was he showed great skill in presenting it so as to make it look like a serious case against the Government. He was assisted by Mr. Campbell of East Algoma, while Mr. Connee, a practical man in bridge building and general construction work; Mr. Davis, who proves himself more and more an effective debater, Mr. Cleland and others stood up for the Government system and its expenditure. The debate was notable also for bringing out a short speech from Mr. Porter. The question was a local one. Mr. Porter did not attempt an address, but what he had to say he put with directness and clearness. Mr. Hardy, of course, was the great champion of his own department, and he met all criticisms with facts and arguments, and seemed rather to enjoy the struggle.

The Toronto Bill.

Just before the House adjourned Mr. Gibson (Hamilton), chairman of the Pri-