

ject. If the proposition to reduce the number of councillors is rejected when first made, it may again be submitted on the petition of 50 ratepayers.

Mr. Meredith thought the measure was too radical to commend itself to the House. It was a leap in the dark. He believed that very few counties would avail themselves of its provisions. He feared it would become a dead letter on the statute book if the House adopted it.

The bill was then read a first time.

#### RETURNS PRESENTED.

Mr. Gibson presented the following returns:—A despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies covering copies of communications from the Queen and the Prince and Princess of Wales respecting the death of the Duke of Clarence; correspondence respecting the application of Clara Brett Martin for admission to the Law Society as a student at law.

#### PRIVATE BILLS PASSED.

The House then went into committee on private bills and the following were passed:—

Mr. Dryden—To consolidate the debt of the Town of Oshawa.

Mr. Harcourt—Respecting the Village of Niagara Falls.

Mr. Guthrie—To amend the act respecting the public burying ground in the City of Guelph.

Mr. Snider—To amend the act to incorporate the Mercantile Fire Insurance Company.

Mr. Smith (Frontenac)—Respecting the Kingston Light, Heat & Power Company.

Mr. Tait—To incorporate the People's Life Insurance Company.

Mr. Cleland—An act to consolidate the debt of the Town of Owen Sound.

Mr. Magwood—To confirm by-law No. 288 of the Township of Elma.

Mr. Clancy—To consolidate the debt of the Town of Chatham.

Mr. Ross—To authorise the Town of Strathroy to issue debentures in lieu of debentures falling due in 1892.

Mr. Garrow—To consolidate the debt of the Town of Goderich.

Mr. McMahon—Respecting the Dundas and Waterloo macadamised road.

Mr. H. E. Clarke—To incorporate the Hospital for Sick Children.

Mr. Ferguson—To confer certain powers upon the Chatham Waterworks Company.

Mr. Dowling—To enable the Corporation of the Village of Renfrew to issue debentures.

Mr. Gilmour—To confirm by-laws Nos. 76 and 77 of the Town of North Toronto, and for other purposes.

#### QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS.

Mr. Glendinning asked, "Who has occupied the position of inspector of public works for the north districts, either as permanent or temporary inspector, since 1st of January, 1891? For what periods and between what dates has the person or persons who filled such position since that date occupied it? What are the respective dates on which such persons have been appointed, and on which they or any of them have resigned."

Mr. Harcourt replied that Mr. Thomas Walters occupied the position mentioned. He resigned, and the resignation was accepted on February 20, 1891. On March 24 of the same year Mr. Walters accepted temporary employment in the same service. On January 20 last this engagement ceased, and on February 16 he again entered the service as temporary superintendent. No other appointment was made.

Mr. Marter desired to make inquiry from the Commissioner of Crown Lands regarding certain timber limits or berths omitted from a return brought down on April 8th. At Mr. Hardy's request the matter was allowed to stand.

#### THE ANTI-BONUS BILL.

Mr. Dack resumed the debate on the second reading of Mr. Balfour's bill regarding the power of municipalities to grant bonuses to factories or other industries. He opposed the bill, and pointed out that the

question was one of self-interest to the various communities. In granting a bonus a municipality did not consider a manufacturer at all, but the amount of benefit they were likely to receive, and this right he did not think should be taken from them. The whole question was whether the people should be trusted to spend their own money or not, and he believed the House should continue to allow the municipalities to use their own discretion.

Mr. Gibson (Huron) said he only knew of one case where a bonus had been granted that had benefited the place. Most of those seeking this aid were adventurers, who moved about whenever they got a good offer. He instanced a couple of cases showing that the bonus system was disadvantageous to the municipalities.

Mr. Meredith said he was glad to see that the bill proposed did not deal with railways, as they were on a different and more general footing from the ordinary industry. On principle it seemed to him that this system of bonus granting was unsound as a matter of political economy. No one had a right to take money from the general taxpayer to hand over to a private enterprise, but there were classes of companies which approached more nearly to the railways, and it would be a mistake to pass this bill if they were to be affected. Such companies were electric light, waterworks or gas companies, which were quasi-public in their character. It might happen that while the municipality was not ready to take up operations of this kind public-spirited citizens might if given a certain amount of encouragement. There should be, he thought, some judicial tribunal to look into the propositions where bonuses were contemplated to see that no other industry was affected injuriously or an excessive amount granted. One of the worst features of the bonus system, he considered, was the drawing away of an industry from one place to another.

Mr. Balfour said that if some provisions could be secured so that there would be no injury wrought by the bonus system the object of the measure would be attained. He did not consider that there was anything tyrannical about the bill, as the power of granting bonuses was given to municipalities as an experiment. He claimed that his position with reference to railway grants had been consistent, and said that he was opposed to the bonus system altogether.

Mr. Willoughby gave an instance of where a bonus had been granted to an industry and the result was that a similar concern was crushed to the wall.

Mr. Mackenzie was opposed to the bonus system. Some of these bonus hunters, he said, had a habit of sending out circulars to the various municipalities in order that they might use the answers as a whip to secure more aid from the place where they were located. Any business concern, to be a success, must start with small beginnings and work its way up, but in the case of the bonus-aided establishment it generally started up with a large number of employees and big pretensions, and almost always ended up with failure.

The bill was then read a second time and referred to the Municipal Committee.

#### TO PREVENT PREFERENCES.

The following bills were also read a second time: Mr. White—To amend the Municipal Act, with respect to local improvements; Mr. McMahon—To amend the act respecting infants; and Mr. Smith, (York)—To amend the law respecting assignments and preferences by insolvent persons.

In explaining the latter bill Mr. Smith said that the first clause altered the wording from "shall be presumed to be fraud," to "shall be conclusively proved to be fraud," in order to do away with the ambiguity that might arise. The second clause was to prevent the giving of preferences to creditors, as in the recent case where a well-known citizen had been charged by a Montreal firm with seeking to defraud them. The object of the bill was