

in each registration division; the last instrument copied in each municipality in each division, and the last instrument compared in each municipality in each division, with a like return from the same memoranda for 1893, with the dates of the inspections in each division in each year.

For a return from each registration division in Ontario, showing all losses sustained by reason of errors or omissions on the part of officials of said divisions, with the names of parties to whom paid, dates of payment and the nature of error or omission, such return to extend over the last ten years.

For a return showing the persons employed in each registration division for the last three years, giving names and date of engagement, length of time employed, character of service and the amount paid to each person so employed.

THE ASSESSMENT LAW.

On behalf of Mr. O'Connor, Mr. Waters moved the second reading of that gentleman's bill to exempt from taxation plant, poles and wires of telephone, telegraph and electric light companies, but allowing assessment to be levied on the company to the extent of the dividends paid the shareholders, and the shareholders to be exempt from assessment for such dividends.

Mr. Balfour and Mr. A. F. Wood thought the municipalities should have the right of deciding this matter for themselves.

Dr. Willoughby and Mr. Clancy thought the bill should receive consideration.

Mr. E. F. Clarke pointed out that Judge McDougall had recently decided that municipalities had power to assess plant of such companies, and it would be unfair to Toronto, at any rate, to deprive the city of the power of assessing this property when occasion arose.

Mr. Balfour said it was the large companies that were urging this bill, not the small ones. Municipalities should have the right to exempt such companies if they wished to do so, he held.

The Attorney-General said it might be well not to dispose of the bill in Mr. O'Connor's absence. There were contradictory decisions as to the power of municipalities to assess and tax the plant of these companies. The latest decision was that of Judge McDougall, declaring municipalities had this power. This seemed to be in accordance with the general impression of what ought to be. But it would be well to have the law on the subject made clear, and for that purpose to have the bill sent to committee. It was a fact, he believed, that it was the large companies that were desiring this legislation, not the small ones. In many small places the telephone and gas companies were formed, not for the purpose of making money, but for the convenience of the citizens.

Mr. Waters thought that Judge McDougall in defining pipes and poles as real estate was bringing matters down very fine. He would like the House, rather than defeat the bill in the promoter's absence, to let it stand over for a few days.

Hon. Mr. Gibson thought that a bill which elicited so many varying opinions should go to the committee for consideration. The bill was then sent on to the committee.

GOVERNMENT BILLS.

After several other bills had been sent to committee without discussion Government orders were introduced, and the House went into committee upon the Attorney-General's bill respecting certain duties of Coroners. Mr. Clancy called attention to the fact that jurymen do not receive pay for serving upon Coroners' juries. He thought this unfair, and advocated their payment. Mr. A. F. Wood coincided with this opinion, remarking that the duties of those serving on Coroners' juries were frequently very onerous and fully deserving of payment. The bill was then passed.

The Attorney-General's bill regarding Deputy Police Magistrates was read a second time without debate. Hon. Mr. Ross' bill to provide for the final settlement of the Common School fund was also given its second reading. Mr. Meredith first asking for certain particulars, which were given by the Attorney-General and Hon. Mr. Ross.

PAPER CONTRACT.

Mr. Harcourt moved—That this House concurs in the agreement laid before this House on the 19th day of March last, by command of his Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, and bearing date on the first day of January, A.D. 1894, and expressed to be made between John R. Barber of the Village of Georgetown, trading under the name and style of William Barber & Brothers, of the first part, and her Majesty the Queen, of the second part, to furnish all the supply of printing papers required by the Government of the Province of Ontario for the five years ending 31st day of December, 1898.

Mr. Meredith asked for some information regarding the tenders for the paper supply. He also remarked regarding the printing contract with Warwick Bros. & Rutter, ratified the other day in his absence.

that he noticed that while only a certain amount of printing had been contracted for, the public accounts showed that the firm named had received some \$60,000, which might have materially affected the situation had the other tenderers known this amount of Government printing would be given out.

Hon. Mr. Harcourt said he had found the paper contract one of some difficulty to award. He had not trusted entirely to his own judgment, nor to the report of the Queen's Printer, but had got independent opinions also from two experts, Mr. Thomas, the assistant Queen's printer, and Mr. A. F. Rutter. They had gone carefully into the whole question, independently, and had recommended the award that had been made. If the Government used the same quantity of paper during the next five years as during the last five, there would be a saving on this contract of over \$9,000, and a saving on the accepted tender of some \$15,000 over the expense which the acceptance of the next lowest tender would have entailed. Economy would be effected in other ways as to quality of paper, etc., which would make the saving greater still. As to the printing contract, Mr. Harcourt said he would prefer speaking with the papers before him, if the matter came up again.

At Mr. Bronson's request, permission was given to refer the bill respecting the City of Ottawa a second time to the Private Bills Committee, in order that some delegations from Ottawa might be heard.

ISLAND WATER LOTS.

Before the House adjourned, Mr. Meredith asked when the question as to whether the water lots on the Toronto Island lake front are owned by Ontario or by the Dominion will be decided. He thought it an anomaly that the Province should claim them, when the Dominion confessedly owns the water lots along the interior of the harbor, but would like to see it settled.

The Attorney-General replied that a case has been submitted to the Supreme Court, and that the matter did not lie in his hands. He would look up further particulars, and inform the House of the exact state of the matter.

Mr. Marter drew attention to the fact that the figures given in the return of the commissions held in the Province differed in the case of the Mining Commission from those given in the public accounts.

Hon. Mr. Gibson replied that in the Treasurer's absence he could not give an explanation, but that the discrepancy would be accounted for.

The House adjourned at 6 o'clock.