

than others, but he thought that this was not contemplated for the Province. The matter was, however, left over for final settlement till the afternoon.

Mr. Conmee also proposed to insert as a section in the bill the principle of his bill, which provided that holders of mining companies' stock, who do not wish to pay repeated calls may allow their stock to lapse without incurring further liability, the company to be permitted to auction off the stock so surrendered. This also was left over for further discussion.

It being 1 o'clock the Speaker left the chair.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

After recess the bill to legalize and confirm the survey made by W. S. Davidson, Ontario Land Surveyor, of a road allowance between the seventh and eighth concessions of the Township of Sombra was read a third time. Concurrence in the supplementary estimates was then taken. On the items for the grants to the Kingston School of Mining and the payment to Proton of the claim of that municipality Mr. Meredith said his position had been somewhat misinterpreted in the morning papers. He had not opposed either vote, but in regard to the first he had objected that the west was receiving less attention in the matter to which the item referred than was the east, and as to the second he had objected that the Attorney-General had opposed the settlement of the claim in previous years when it was being pressed by Conservative members, and that it was suspicious and objectionable that he should do so now on the eve of an election. The Attorney-General said his reply to Mr. Meredith had been that he had never admitted the legality of the claim. The claim had not now been allowed, but it had been compromised, and a \$25,000 claim settled for \$3,500.

THE REGISTRATION BILL.

The House then went into committee once more on the registration bill. Mr. Awrey in the chair. Mr. Ross read over a list of amendments which had been prepared with a view to their being incorporated in the bill.

The principal amendment was one which did away with the necessity of personal attendance for registration in the case of sickness or physical disability, or where the voter is necessarily absent from the city by reason of his occupation as lumberman, mariner, fisherman, commercial traveller, railway servant, or because of being a student. Machinery is provided for registration in such cases. Other amendments provided for the Boards of Registration in cities other than those first provided for, and for appeal from these boards to Boards of Appeal.

Mr. Meredith said that but for the opposition which had been manifested an abominable law would have been forced upon the country. In spite of the ameliorating amendments there were still features of the bill which would make it his duty to continue his opposition to the bill. The Government had taken no notice of the objection taken against the wiping out of the names of those already registered, while not imposing a similar condition on voters other than manhood franchise voters. Some of the changes were still unfair. For instance, there was hardship in the disenfranchising of commercial travellers, railway men and others who would be obliged to be out of the city on the days of registration, no relief being given on this score except to a small portion of the community. The stipulations as to the notice given to the registrars by friends Mr. Meredith thought should be extended. He was not opposed to the new system being tried, he said, but this would try it only with one section of the community and would be unjust in that. There were a large number of objections to the details of the bill.

Hon. Mr. Ross, replying to Mr. Meredith, said the only valid objection he urged was that the registration system would cause inconvenience to some people. This, he thought, was not a very serious matter. Most of the class of voters who would be affected were young men who were not on the assessment roll, and they would be willing to go the short distance necessary to be registered. Did the hon. gentleman still cling to the notion that the declarations put in by the agents of the respective parties should be retained for the purposes of the election? That would mean the abandonment of the bill. There was no doubt attempts were made to load the list, and these names would remain there. Did the hon. gentleman wish to retain the ward-heeler and that class of politicians who disgrace our politics at present? He was convinced that the new registration system would give a pure registration. Look at the press of the city. The Star and Telegram and News all supported the system. The Mail did not protest against it, though it supported the Opposition generally. The only journal that opposed it was The Empire, which, of course, represented the views of the party. All papers all over the Province, so far as he knew, ap-

proved the proposition. Why should there be this obstruction? Why should not the Opposition join hands with the Government in passing the measure, just as they might do in passing some great reform? The class of men who would refuse to walk a block or two to get their names on the register was not the class of men on whom the community and public affairs should depend.

Mr. Meredith defended himself from the charge of obstruction, holding that the amendments which had been inserted in this and other bills were a sufficient reply to that charge. As to the newspapers, he would persevere in the course which he believed right, despite the attitude of the press.

Mr. Balfour held that the changes which Mr. Meredith was citing could have been got on the first day of consideration, and in a very short time, if the Opposition had approached the matter in a proper spirit. He contended that the new measure was perfectly fair, defending the principle of requiring the manhood franchise voters to register at a moment when every man most realizes the importance of his vote. The bill was simple enough for all to understand it and to ensure easy working.

Mr. Whitney protested against the discrimination involved between classes of voters, and suggested that the Ministry had purposely held the bill back till the dying hours of the session in order to "rush it through." Besides other features, it would be physically impossible for 600 or 700 voters to register each day at each station, as would be necessary under the bill.

Hon. Mr. Hardy followed, holding that the old lists were in a very imperfect condition. An illustration of the character of the voters' lists was that the name of W. R. Meredith was down three times in the Toronto lists, as owner, as occupant, and as a manhood suffrage voter. In North Victoria "B. C. Church" had appeared in the assessment roll, meaning "Bible Christian Church," and "B. C. Church" had been placed in the Dominion voters' list and had voted. It was a sign of the justice of the bill that the objection to it came from the hon. gentlemen opposite alone, the three evening papers of Toronto and a portion of the Conservative morning press approving of it.

Mr. Meredith said Mr. Hardy in his illustrations had simply shown the reasonableness of the contentions of the Opposition. He had no personal knowledge of the way in which he was assessed on the list, except that he had made a declaration that he was entitled to be assessed in 1893. Such cases as this, however, could be dealt with by a committee.

Mr. E. F. Clarke held that the amendments introduced were a justification of the course of the Opposition. If the gentlemen of the press had devoted as much attention to the bill as had the members of the Opposition they would have seen its disfranchising tendency, and would not have criticized the action of that side of the House. He could see no argument why the printed lists could not be taken as a basis of the new lists, additional Registrars being employed if necessary. In that way a pure list could be prepared.

There was some further discussion on the point of Mr. Meredith's name appearing three times on the assessment roll. When Mr. Hardy had first mentioned this Mr. E. F. Clarke had asked the Commissioner how he knew it did not refer to another W. R. Meredith. Mr. Hardy now showed the lists on which the names were entered twice on the same lot in Rosedale and once as a resident of the Island. Mr. Hardy said Mr. Clarke's ready question, "How do you know it is the same man?" was the best defence of the personator. He would hardly have asked it so readily had he been so innocent of the ways of personators as he professed to be. Mr. Hardy said if a man of the eminence of Mr. Meredith could have such a question asked regarding him on the second or third appearance of his name on the list, how much better would the same defence be made by the personator in the case of an obscure person? The whole thing showed how very impure and untrustworthy was the present system of compiling the voters' lists.

Mr. Clarke said a second vote could not have been cast in Mr. Meredith's name, seeing both names were attached to the same lot.

Mr. Hardy said that would not necessarily have been sufficient to prevent it.

The Attorney-General said that every person outside of the House admits that the Toronto lists are bad. The question was, however, how the evil was to be avoided. Under the present system the difficulty was absolutely insuperable. Last year 18,000 appeals were taken, as the only possible attempt at purging the lists, and no investigation could be held by the single judge who had to deal with the case. The or involved in investigation would be enormous, and there were thousands of names of which the agents of the party knew nothing. The present machinery was absolutely inadequate, and the sug-