

Continuation of the Debate on the Budget.

MANY SECOND READINGS.

Wednesday, Feb. 26.

There was no night sitting to-day, but the House made up for the omission by an afternoon's good, hard work. The usual number of bills was introduced, a couple of orders were passed by the House, several bills which came up for their second reading were discussed, some being withdrawn, the sense of the House declaring against them, and some being sent on for consideration in committee. Finally, the House spent an hour in consideration of the budget speech, Mr. St. John completing his speech, which he left unfinished yesterday, and Mr. Gibson, the veteran member of East Huron, giving the first portion of his speech. He had not finished when the House adjourned, but in the few minutes he occupied he gave a clear defence of many of the acts which the Opposition had attacked.

READING OF BILLS.

Second readings of bills came next, and the first bill to come up for its second reading in the session was Mr. Chapple's bill to amend the municipal act. He explained that the bill was intended to abolish the detailed statement at present required by section 283 of the municipal act in December, substituting for it an audited statement in time for the annual election. Hon. Mr. Dryden feared that the double audit which would thus be set up would confuse the returns to the Bureau of Industries, and Dr. Meacham also opposed the bill, which Mr. Chapple then consented to withdraw.

Dr. McKay of Oxford then moved the second reading of bill No. 53 to amend the municipal act, by providing that municipalities may change the hour of nomination from noon to 1 o'clock. It was discussed by Mr. Cleland, who opposed it; Mr. Marter, who considered 1 o'clock would be more convenient to country people; Sir Oliver Mowat, who requested that the bill be sent to the Municipal Committee; Hon. Mr. Dryden, who suggested that the law be made general all over the country; also by Messrs. Whitney and McDonald. It was given its second reading.

Mr. Garrow's bill, No. 59, to refer line fence disputes to a surveyor, was explained by Mr. Garrow as one that would lessen the expense in settling these disputes. Mr. Whitney thought it would have the opposite effect. Sir Oliver Mowat thought the object of the bill was a good one, and Mr. St. John thought it would throw too much responsibility on surveyors. The bill was given its second reading.

Bill No. 60, by Mr. Reid (Addington), to amend the agriculture and arts acts by changing the Townships of Portland and Loughborough from Addington to Frontenac County was passed after discussion, in which Messrs. Dryden and Haycock took part.

Bill No. 60, by Mr. O'Keefe, to amend the Ontario voters' lists act of 1889 by making it possible to send notices regarding insertion or omission of voters' names, was given its second reading after discussion by Messrs. Gibson (Huron) and Whitney.

Bill No. 61, by Mr. O'Keefe, to amend the assessment act by making it possible to make out the roll in a much simpler manner. It was given its second reading.

Bill No. 66, by Mr. Beatty (Leeds), to amend the Ontario election act, 1892, by extending to cheesemakers and teachers the same privileges given to students, sailors and lumbermen as to voting who have to be away from home a portion of the year. Considerable discussion took place, the bill being finally withdrawn. Sir Oliver Mowat thought there should be no further exceptions made. Mr. Whitney said there were sufficient cheesemakers to warrant the change. Hon. Mr. Dryden said there were many other occupations that could be included. The discussion was continued by Messrs. St. John, Gibson (Huron), Whitney, McPherson, Willoughby, Davis, Haycock and Hon. Geo. W. Ross, who said he had no doubt if it was left to the Government they would formulate legislation to the same end before the next session. In view of this the bill was withdrawn.