

CIVIL SERVICE POLITICIANS.

Government Approves of Mr. Garrow's Bill.

MR. HOWLAND'S PROPOSAL.

He Wants All Amended Statutes Printed.

It Would be Expensive and Impracticable—Insurance Agents Will Not Be Licensed in Future.

Legislative Chamber, March 8.

Mr. Hardy was again in his seat when the House opened this afternoon, looking none the worse for his brief illness. He said, in answering a question by Dr. Ryerson, that Mr. Garrow's bill dealing with the interference of civil servants in elections represented the view of the Government. Mr. Howland's motion to have all clauses in statutes to be amended printed with the amendments in italics in order to facilitate reference during their passage through the House was referred to a special committee after being rather severely criticized by Mr. Hardy and other members of the Government. To a deputation of insurance men the Government this morning stated that they had decided to abandon the licensing of insurance agents.

CIVIL SERVANTS IN ELECTIONS.

Mr. Hardy, replying to Mr. Ryerson's question, "Is it the intention of the Government to dismiss, on the grounds of offensive partisanship or neglect of Government's business, any of its officials who took an active part in the late Dominion election?" said that the Government had not dismissed and did not contemplate dismissing any of its officials who took part in the last Dominion election. Many, or some, persons contended that Provincial public servants taking part in Dominion elections were quite within their rights. While properly debarred from taking part in Provincial contests, the same rules would not apply to Dominion elections. They were entitled to vote and therefore to take part in Dominion contests. The resolution placed upon the paper by the member for West Huron, however, represented the views of the Government, and if the House adopted that resolution civil servants would be expected to abide by it.

In answer to Mr. Howland's motion for an order of the House for a return from the clerks of the Police Courts at Toronto, Hamilton, London, Kingston and Ottawa of all particulars relating to the operations of the children's court, Col. Gibson replied that it might not be possible to get as full information as might be desired, but there could be no doubt that the information asked for would not only be interesting but useful, and an effort would be made to have as complete a return as possible, and he hoped it might be done in a very little time.

Mr. Davis, speaking upon Mr. Marter's motion for an order of the House for information of the amount of stock on hand, outstanding account and revenue in connection with the Central Prison on September 30 and December 31 for the past six years, replied that stock was taken at the prison once each year, on September 31, when the business year ended, and a complete statement was made out. If Mr. Marter would amend his motion in accordance with this the information could be brought down. Mr. Marter agreed to the suggestion.

In answer to Mr. Carnegie's question: "What are the regulations which govern the distribution of the statutes to Justices of the Peace and clerks of municipalities?" Mr. Hardy stated that the rule was to send the volumes to the

Clerk of the Peace, wrapped in paper with the name of the person for whom each volume was intended written upon it. If such person did not call to take the books within a reasonable time they were returned to the department.

Mr. Hardy promised that the return asked for by Mr. Marter of the business done during the last five years in the High, County and Division Courts of the Province would be prepared, although it might take some time.

PRINTING AMENDMENTS.

Some discussion was provoked by Mr. Howland's notice of motion that it be a rule of this House that all amending bills shall, when printed, set forth the section intended to be amended in full, with the proposed amending words or clauses in italics, and shall also indicate by brackets any words of the existing act proposed to be omitted. Mr. Howland explained that the object of his proposal was to secure more intelligent discussion of bills during their progress through the House, and to simplify the procedure in the courts. The present system required a great deal of labor for the lawyers and Judges in interpreting the law, and also while the committees were sitting in the morning, and the House in the afternoons and evenings, members of the House had no time to look up the statutes so as to see the effect of proposed amendments to them. As things are now bills were rushed through the House with one reading and a very imperfect knowledge on the part of what their meaning was.

Mr. Hardy replied that if some rule could be devised which would be the intention of Mr. Howland's proposal it might to some extent simplify discussion in the House. He was inclined to think, however, that the usual practice in a matter of this kind should be preserved; the usual practice in changing a rule was to refer it to a committee of the House, where the question could be thoroughly criticized and discussed. He was quite satisfied that there were many merits in the plan suggested, but there were difficulties that he feared were insurmountable. Take a bill dealing with the judicature act or some other large and comprehensive subject, where some 50 or 60 clauses would have to be republished. It would be impracticable to apply it here, and so with many amendments passed in the House. It would be easier, but would enormously increase the cost of printing and of procedure, and while for general purposes and for simple bills it might not be found impracticable, as a general rule it would be. It would not even be satisfactory in an ordinary bill, for it was sometimes proposed to amend a clause by laying down a general principle, as "notwithstanding anything in this act contained." If all the clauses of a bill were printed and all the amendments in italics the work of comparing the bill would be almost impossible. He thought it better that he should give notice that the standing orders be referred to a special committee if Mr. Howland would withdraw his motion. The principle might be put in operation, but to a limited extent, and the committee might evolve something that would be operative. Messrs. Howland, St. John, Ross and Gibson spoke upon the question, Mr. Gibson pointing out a number of objections to the proposed plan, and finally Mr. Howland withdrew his motion, Mr. Hardy giving notice of his intention to nominate the following committee, the Speaker, Messrs. Hardy, Gibson, McKay (Oxford), Whitney, Howland, Caven and Matheson.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

Mr. Flatt—Bill to amend the assessment act.

Mr. McDonald—Bill to amend the registry act.

Mr. Ryerson—Inquiry of Ministry: How many notaries public are there in each county of the Province?

Mr. Carnegie—Order of the House for a return of copies of all orders in Council, correspondence, etc., if any, relating to the appointment of a commission to investigate the conduct of the civil or public servants of this Province during the past elections for the Legislative Assembly of the Province and for the House of Commons.

Mr. Carnegie—Order of the House for a return giving copies of all correspondence between any member of the Government and any officer of the Northern Exhibition, held at Walkerton, relating to the withholding of money payable to prize-winners.