

THE ENGLEDEUE DEAL DEBATED

Hon. Mr. Gibson's Statement in the House.

Legislative Chamber, April 6.

The debate upon the motion offered by the Commissioner of Crown Lands endorsing the agreement with the Engledue syndicate occupied the entire attention of the House to-day, with the exception of a few minutes devoted to routine proceedings. The debate was brisk, the speakers on the Opposition side of the House imparting spice by insinuations respecting the personnel of the syndicate and the alleged relations between its members and the Government. Mr. Haycock not only endorsed the transaction, but advocated the application of the principle, with some slight modifications in details, to any offers from syndicates or companies making similar propositions. When the vote was taken a few minutes after 1 o'clock the division lists showed a majority of 30 for the Government.

BONUS BY-LAWS.

Upon the motion that bill No. 43, respecting the Town of Thorold, be read a third time, Mr. Howland moved in amendment that the bill be referred back to committee, with instructions to amend the same by inserting a clause providing that it shall not go into effect until the question has been submitted to the ratepayers properly qualified to vote on money by-laws and carried by a majority of not less than three-fourths in number of those voting representing a majority of the assessment.

Mr. German pointed out the practical impossibility of carrying any by-law under the terms of the amendment.

Mr. St. John supported the amendment as being correct in principle.

Hon. J. M. Gibson suggested that the hon. gentleman's purpose would be served by placing himself on record, and he hoped that he would not put the House to the trouble of dividing. The Port Dalhousie bill had been allowed to go through without opposition, and he deprecated the selecting of one or two bills and passing others. He had not seen that the hon. member for South Toronto had given notice of amendment to the bills relating to Dray-

ton or Kemptville. The amendment proposed was without precedent in the municipal history of the Province, and the hon. gentleman should not endeavor during the last hours of the session in the application of these bills to impose a new principle that has never yet been approved of. He submitted that the hon. gentleman had better withdraw his opposition to these bills. Taking all these bills together, one case with the other, there has been a sort of tacit acquiescence in allowing these bills to go through, not in the form in which they were originally introduced. The House and the public should understand distinctly that these bills to which a two-thirds vote has not already been given and the requirements of the municipal act have not been met the Private Bills Committee insisted that they should go back to the people and again submit the by-laws to the qualified ratepayers.

Mr. Howland withdrew his amendment, and the bill was read a third time and passed.

The bills to confirm by-law No. 241 of the Village of New Hamburg (Mr. Moore) and respecting the Village of Drayton (Mr. Tucker), which are of a similar nature to that respecting the Town of Thorold, were also given third readings without opposition.

THE ENGLEDEUE CASE.

Hon. Mr. Gibson moved "that this House doth ratify and approve of a certain agreement and license of occupation granted to Col. W. T. Engledue of Byfleet, Surrey, England, and others, of certain locations in the Rainy River district, bearing date the 17th day of February last." The hon. gentleman said that in view of the fact that all the papers and correspondence had been printed and submitted to the House he would have felt inclined to support his motion by very few words by way of explanation had it not been for the fact that hon. gentlemen opposite and the Opposition press in the Province seemed to have come to the conclusion that some political capital was to be made by opposing the action the Government had seen fit to take. As the attempt had been made to turn the question to political advantage, it seemed to be necessary that a few observations should be made by way of justification of the course taken by the Government. The negotiations which led up to the agreement began last summer, early in the month of July, and they were practically completed in the month of October. He proposed to show that the Government had in view was the encouragement of the introduction of English capital into our mining regions in the northwestern part of the Province, that the action of the Government had already resulted in gratifying evidence of its success, that there had been an entire absence on the part of the Government of anything like want of good faith, and that so far as the imputation of jobbery was concerned or the charge that in making the arrangement they were conferring favors upon their friends in Ontario under the pretext of dealing with English capitalists, these accusations were entirely unfounded. The papers showed on the face of them that the sole motive of the Government was to assist and promote the mining industry in the northwestern part of the Province by the introduction of foreign capital. It would be seen that in the letter of the Attorney-General, then Commissioner of Crown Lands, to Col. Engledue, dated 8th July last, the opinion was expressed that it was only with a view to the further introduction of British capital into the Rainy River district that the proposal could be even considered. In August Col. Engledue, after his return to England, wrote to the Commissioner of Crown Lands stating that the terms which had been proposed by the Commissioner were not such as to enable him to enlist sufficient capital in the enterprise. It would be seen that the first appearance of Mr. J. K. Kerr in the negotiations was when he first casually met Col. Engledue on a visit to London, England, and the Government knew nothing of Mr. Kerr in the matter at all until after that visit to England and after the negotiations were well under way. The House should understand that in his own country Col. Engledue was a gentleman who had been deemed worthy of being entrusted with an important mission so far back as 1891, when the Salisbury Government sent him to British Columbia to report upon the condition of the crofters settled there. He was a