

Minister of Education Proposes
Important Improvements in
the Education Law.

A NEW SUBJECT.

Provision For Instruction in Agriculture
in Schools.

THE BUDGET DEBATE.

Mr. Stratton Concludes an Able and
Effective Speech—Proposal to Tax
Companies Discussed.

Parliament Buildings, Feb. 16.

The Minister of Education this afternoon introduced his bill to improve the education act, which proposes to make several important amendments to the present law. Perhaps the clause of most general interest is that which makes provision for the employment of special instructors who possess the necessary qualifications to give instruction in agriculture in the separate, public and high schools of the Province. This course of instruction, which is not to supersede the instruction of the teacher in charge of the school, is to be as far as practicable during the last school period of each afternoon, and shall be open to all residents of the school section or municipality. The law respecting continuation classes is also amended with a view to improving this useful branch of the educational system and making the classes more effective. Another clause is intended to improve the educational facilities among the scattered settlements of St. Joseph and Manitoulin Islands

by reducing the number of sections, and making provision for conveying children to the schools and home again at the general expense. There are a number of other clauses which are calculated to improve the educational system where experience has shown amendments to be necessary in order to meet the changing conditions. The debate on the budget was continued by Mr. J. R. Stratton of West Peterborough, who concluded his speech,

which was interrupted by the adjournment yesterday. Mr. Stratton for an hour and a half spoke most ably and convincingly upon the political questions of the day, replying effectively to the contentions by the Opposition. When the House adjourned he was surrounded by members, who congratulated him upon his excellent speech.

Improving the Education Act.

Hon. Geo. W. Ross this afternoon introduced his bill to improve the laws respecting the public schools. The measure proposes several important changes to the act, especially with reference to the continuation classes, and makes provision which will enable the School Boards to establish continuation classes without interfering with the organization of the staff, so that no teacher need be dismissed in order to introduce the system of continuation classes in either one grade or another. It also provides that the County Councils shall pay for the maintenance of the continuation classes a sum equal to the equivalent of the Government grant, as in the case of high schools, and such further sums as the County Council may deem expedient. The clause making the public school leaving examination a qualification for entering the continuation classes in certain cases is repealed, as not having any advantage, and the high school entrance examination or some higher examination is made the qualification.

Agriculture to be Taught.

The bill also makes provision for the employment of graduates from the Ontario Agricultural College to give instruction in the schools. The clauses referring to this subject are as follows:—

"(1) The Council of every municipality may, subject to the regulations of the Education Department, employ one or more persons holding the degree of Bachelor of Science of Agriculture or a certificate of qualification from the Ontario Agricultural College to give instruction in agriculture in the separate, public and high schools of the municipality, and the Council shall have power to raise such sums of money as may be necessary to pay the salaries of such instructors, and all other expenses connected therewith. Such course of instruction shall include a knowledge of the chemistry of the soil, plant life, drainage, the cultivation of fruit, the beautifying of the farm, and generally all matters which would tend to en-