

Mr. Pattullo's resolution went a little too far. The only exception which that resolution made was in case of fire, although there were other evils just as disastrous. He did not think there could be any doubt in the minds of any who carefully read the amendment to the amendment that the majority referred to there was two-thirds of those voting. If a thousand came out and voted yes, and only 25 voted nay, the condition specified would be easily met. Clearly, however, it was never intended to open the door as widely as that. Mr. Whitney had said we must not be deprived of our freedom; we must not be muzzled. Who did he mean when he spoke thus? Mr. Whitney further declared, "Does not an individual vote away his property, and why should we be any more restrained than the individual?" But that was not the spirit of the municipal law. The system which prevailed under that law was one of limitations as to borrowing powers, and it was sought to protect the rights of minorities. There would always be found in every community sanguine individuals animated by vast expectations, who would spend every dollar possible to-day, trusting to the future to make ends meet, and leaving to communities yet to come that debt which they never would be able to pay. Therefore it was that the law surrounded municipalities with limitations of their right to run into debt; and the cry was for greater limitations and against opening the door, so as to prevent municipalities rolling up millions of debt. Mr. Whitney was not correct in saying that when the bill to restrict the bonus-granting power was introduced it was a conspiracy against the manufacturers. It was not a Government measure, and the petitions in support of it were not inspired or sought for by them. The measure was introduced by the late Mr. Balfour, a man of independent mind, and who held the strongest views on this question. He formulated his own resolution and his own bill. The Government were divided upon the question, and Mr. Hardy himself moved a couple of resolutions in favor of relaxing the restrictions which Mr. Balfour proposed, and lost them. One of the amendments was to substitute a three-fifths for a two-thirds vote, and a second that where there were manufacturers of similar commodities already established they should not be called upon to pay part of the bonus. That showed that it was not any attack by the Government upon the manufacturing industries. Mr. Whitney was simply conjuring up a bogey. When the vote took place there were nearly as many on the Conservative side stood up for the bill as there were on the Government side, and when the measure went through there was no division at all. As settled, the House was unanimous upon the bill. The discussion had been useful as showing the weak points of the bonus system, and the results which follow the adoption of too rigid a policy in regard to the granting of bonuses. Under the circumstances it was perhaps better that the resolution and the amendments thereto should be withdrawn.

Mr. Pattullo then said that, having heard what the trend of the Govern-

ment policy was likely to be this session, he would withdraw the resolution, trusting at some time in the future for an unanimous expression of opinion from the House.

The House then went into committee on the bill to further improve the San Jose scale, which was passed and stands for third reading.

Second Readings.

Mr. Garrow moved the second reading of his bill to amend the municipal act, which provides means by which any ratepayer who has paid for a local improvement work may take summary measures to have the work kept in repair. The bill was given a second reading, as were also the following measures:—

To amend the prisons and asylums inspection act—Mr. Davis.

To amend the public libraries act—Mr. Ross.

To amend the municipal act—Mr. Garrow.

To amend the law respecting the liability of trustees—Mr. Garrow.

To amend the act respecting wages—Mr. Garrow.

Respecting the closing and sale of disused cemeteries owned by municipalities—Mr. Garrow.

The House adjourned.

Bills Introduced.

Mr. Auld's bill to amend the Ontario tree-planting act enables the Council of the township in which a police village is situated to pass a by-law bringing into force the bonus clauses of the tree-planting act so as to enable the bonuses for tree-planting to be paid out of the funds of the police village.

Mr. Pardee's bill to amend the ditches and watercourses act enlarges the definition of the word "owner" in the act so as to include tenants for life and in tail, or for a term of years not less than ten. Also declares the act to apply to the drainage of lands for mining, manufacturing and other purposes as well as for agricultural purposes.

Natural Gas Men Complain.

A deputation representing the Ontario Natural Gas & Fuel Co. waited upon the Government this afternoon and complained that the tax levied upon natural gas companies was excessive in comparison with the imposition upon other companies. The deputation were introduced by Mr. German, member for Welland, and consisted of Messrs. B. B. Osler, Q.C., Eugene Coste, D. A. Coste, S. Rogers of the Queen City Oil Co., and Donald McGilivray of Port Colborne. John A. Auld, member for South Essex, was also present at the interview. The spokesmen for the company were Messrs. Osler,

Coste, sen., and Rogers. Mr. Osler said the company had spent on plant and in running expenses up to date the sum of \$750,000. The net earnings in 1897 were \$59,000, and last year \$66,000. There had been a shrinkage in the supply of gas of 60 per cent. A property of this kind was short-lived, and it was only fair that the owners should, if possible, get their capital back and a fair return besides. The tax levied upon this company was \$7,500, which