

Mr. Whitney's Bill.

Mr. Whitney introduced a bill to amend the election act. The following are the principal features:—The returning officer shall be a resident of the electoral district. On the day of nomination the returning officer shall announce the names of the deputy returning officers. Each deputy returning officer shall be a resident of the polling subdivision in which he acts. The deputy returning officer shall be sworn in by the returning officer.

The ballots shall be printed by the Queen's Printer, and the numbered ballot shall be abolished. The ballots and printed directions to voters to be furnished by the returning officer to the deputy returning officers two days before the poll. Each poll clerk shall be a resident voter in the polling subdivision in which he acts. Agents shall not be given certificates allowing them to vote in polling places other than where they reside. The oath of the deputy returning officer shall be taken by the returning officer.

The returning officer is to attend at the polling place half an hour before the opening of the poll; he shall count the ballots to be used, in the presence of the candidates or agents, who shall be allowed to examine the same; that the ballot-box shall be placed on a table; that he shall give a statement of the result, whether requested to do so or not, and the candidates or agents shall be allowed to write their names across the flap of the envelopes after they have been sealed. The ballot-boxes are to be delivered to the returning officer by the deputy or the poll clerk. The returning officer is empowered, when a deputy returning officer has failed to sign his return, to count the ballots and sign the statement himself. A re-count may be had where the majority is not more than 100.

Bribers, receivers of bribes, personators and persons who exercise undue influence are to receive six months' imprisonment, in addition to the money penalty of \$200. Persons who vote more than once are to suffer three months' imprisonment, in addition to a similar penalty.

Initiation of Prosecutions.

The most important clause is the provision that where at an election trial the evidence shows corrupt practices or other illegal acts to have been committed, the persons shall be tried at once, and the Judges are directed to appoint counsel to prosecute them, either the County Attorney and another counsel to be named by the solicitor for the petitioner, or a counsel to be named by the court, and all counsel and witness fees to be paid by the Province. Returning officers and other persons altering or falsifying poll books, etc., to receive six months' imprisonment, in addition to a money penalty. Provision is also made for the protection of witnesses who give evidence in good faith.

After Mr. Whitney had read the summary of his bill Hon. Mr. Gibson announced that he was preparing one which embodied many of the same amendments.
