

NO MORE PRIVATE BILLS.

General Law Will Govern the Matter of Bonuses by Municipalities on Terms Decided Yesterday.

The Municipal Committee yesterday morning resolved upon the adoption of a policy in regard to the question of bonuses to industries by municipalities. The matter came up in connection with Mr. Pardee's bill proposing a return to the bonus law of 1888.

The Attorney-General said it was not necessary to discuss the principle of bonusing, as it seemed to be clear that a majority of the committee and of the Legislature were in favor of a return to the bonus laws. It was quite clear that they felt that the present system of bonusing by special legislation by way of private bills ought to be done away with. It was merely a question, therefore, for them to consider what the provisions of the general law should be. Mr. Pardee's bill was practically a revival of the old bonus law of 1888, which has been repealed in 1892. The addition of various restrictions to the law of that time had been suggested, and it was for the committee to consider what these should be. It had been suggested that a percentage, say one-fifth, of the ratepayers should have power to prevent a bonus being submitted, and also that a vote of one-fifth of the ratepayers should prevent a by-law from being carried.

Mr. Pattullo took practically the same position as Mr. Gibson. While opposed on principle to bonusing, and especially to bonusing by way of private bills, he favored a general law if they were to have bonusing at all.

After considerable discussion a vote was taken on the main provision of the bill, which will now provide that a bonus by-law can be carried by a two-thirds vote of the qualified ratepayers, with this important proviso—that a three-fifths vote will carry unless one-fifth of the ratepayers vote against the bonus. The other provisions of the bill are to be revised and submitted at a further meeting.

The Attorney-General made this important statement, that when the Legislature adopted this bill they would adhere to it in future and allow no more violations by way of private bills. This statement was applauded by the committee. It is also understood that the committee's definition of a bonus will include loans, land grants and exemptions.

Col. Mutrie's bill to regulate travelling on public highways by requiring that portable and traction engines travelling on the highway shall stop and make no noise when passing vehicles, and shall carry lights at night, was reported, with the exception of the clause regulating their speed. Mr. Donald Guthrie, Q.C., Guelph, appeared in support of the bill.

The principles involved in Mr. Pattullo's bill to amend the assessment act were approved and the bill reported. The first clause provided for the exemption of all property owned

by educational institutions, although it may not be immediately contiguous to the college. The second clause provided for the exemption of funds held by trustees for charitable purposes, being designed in part to prevent double assessment. Mr. D. E. Thomson, Q.C., promoted the bill, while City Solicitor Caswell opposed it.

Mr. Foy's bill to exempt the property of children's immigrant agencies from taxation was passed, with amendments, making the bill applicable to Children's Aid Societies incorporated in the Province, and specifying that the property to be exempted must be actually in use.
