

and Russell and ex-Warden Macdonald of Grey spoke in favor of county control.

#### Trading Stamp Bill.

A meeting of the special committee appointed to consider the measure introduced by Mr. Graham regarding trading stamps was held yesterday. Mr. Graham explained that his measure had for its object the empowering of municipalities to prohibit the use of trading stamps within their boundaries. Messrs. W.B. Rogers and E. M. Trowern, representing the Retail Merchants' Association, who were present by invitation, expressed themselves as heartily in favor of the measure. The committee decided to report the bill, amended, so that the trading stamp companies should have until January 1, 1902, to go out of business, and also a clause allowing merchants or manufacturers to issue coupons redeemable by themselves.

#### The Speaker's Reception.

The annual reception and at-home of Mr. Speaker Evanturel was held in his apartments in the Parliament buildings last evening. The artistic rooms were thronged by a happy crowd, who thoroughly enjoyed the informal and open-hearted hospitality. Premier Ross, the members of the Cabinet and all the members of the House, Mayor Howland and many prominent citizens were present. A splendid musical programme was rendered, in which the following took part: Majors Manly and Boyd, Capt. Wyatt, Messrs. Lawrence Boyd, S. Beckett, T. D. Ward, Rochereau de la Sabriere, Chas. Musgrave (pianist) and Dr. Richardson. Sergeant-at-Arms Glackmeyer was an efficient master of ceremonies.

#### MAY BUY GAS COMPANY.

##### City is Freed From the Operation of the Conmee Act by Action of Municipal Committee.

In the Municipal Committee yesterday, after a lengthy discussion, the clauses in the City of Toronto bill providing that the city be exempt from the operation of the Conmee act were adopted. This action, if approved by the House, means that the city may go into the electric lighting and gas business on its own account. Mayor Howland, in explaining the city's position, said the intention was to get over the difficulty in the way of Toronto installing its own lighting plant. He gave an account of the city's troubles with the Consumers' Gas Company, and said that the Conmee act provided for an offer to the existing companies, followed by costly arbitration, and ending, perhaps, without a bargain after all.

Hon. Mr. Gibson said he had seen it suggested that the city take over the company and issue its own debentures to the stockholders.

"No sensible man in the city would make such an offer," the Mayor replied.

Ald. Urquhart, who said he appeared for the people who believed in municipal ownership, declared that if the Gas Company had not a legal they had a practical monopoly. Mr. Marter and Mr. Carscallen spoke in favor of the clause being allowed to pass.

Mr. Henry O'Brien, solicitor for the Toronto Electric Light Company, asked that, inasmuch as the clause was aimed at the Consumers' Gas Company, it be so stated, and the electric companies be not included. Corporation Counsel Fullerton replied that the electric companies had evaded the non-amalgamation clause, as they had the same directorate and officials, and he did not think they should get any further protection.

Mr. Conmee, the author of the act complained of, declared the latter covered all the relationships between the city and the company, and the city was trying to secure an unfair advantage.

On a vote being taken the clause was carried by a large majority.

The clause in the same bill providing that property owners adjoining subways should bear a portion of the cost thereof was opposed by Messrs. J. W. Mallon, Hugh MacMath, R. W. Prittle and A. T. Hunter, on behalf of residents near the Lansdowne avenue crossing, and was thrown out by the committee.

The committee reported Col. Mutrie's bill providing that valuations for county purposes may be made by selecting certain parcels, say 5 to 8 per cent. of the land, instead of examining the whole; Mr. Brower's bill allowing townships to revert to the old ward system, and Mr. Preston's bill, as amended, providing that the assessment may be taken in all cities between May 1 and Sept. 30. Mr. Tucker's bill to compel hawkers to pay a license for taking orders for goods throughout the country for future delivery, and Mr. Ellber's bill providing for the addition of 10 per cent. to taxes returned on May 1 as unpaid, were thrown out.

#### CHANGED THEIR MIND.

##### Private Bills Committee Approves the Union Station Bill on its Being Reconsidered.

In the Private Bills Committee the Station street bill, which was thrown out on Tuesday, was reconsidered. Mr. A. B. Aylesworth, for the G.T.R., said he thought the committee had not considered the question on its merits. They had looked upon the bill as though it were a measure dealing with the establishment of a cab stand at Station street, whereas it was simply desired to give the railway powers to make regulations regarding the stand, which should have the same force as by-laws.

Corporation Counsel Fullerton strongly opposed the granting of such powers. Station street was a public place, which the public had a right to use without being bound by regulations of any railway company. If such powers were granted it should be by general