

Mr. Boyd's Suggestions.

Mr. Boyd (North Grey) thought that several amendments might be made to strengthen the bill. The company should be bound to complete the line within two or three years; six years was too long. Clauses should also be included providing that the line should not be allowed to sidetrack a lot of towns and villages, nor should the latter be put in the position of having to offer bonuses to get the line to give them fair treatment in this regard. He was also of opinion that the terminals and car ferry which had been spoken of would not suffice for the crossing of the gap between Fitzwilliam and Tobermory. An ice breaker would be needed, and altogether an expenditure of \$1,000,000 would be required on this

work. He would support the measure if it was strengthened by amendments which he had outlined, and others which might be suggested.

The bill was given its second reading.

The Municipal Act.

In committee the Attorney-General withdrew several clauses of his bill to amend the municipal act, pointing out that they would affect pending litigation. The clauses withdrawn made radical changes as to "injuring and outlet" liability.

Mr. Thompson (Simcoe) moved that a clause be added providing that where a man's property was enhanced by a new drain or improvements to drains he should not be compelled to pay an increased assessment on the property so improved during the period that he was paying for drainage improvements.

After a brief discussion the amendment was withdrawn, and the bill as amended was reported.

Hon. Mr. Davis was not ready to go on with the municipal amendment act, 1901. The Attorney-General stated that he was preparing a new clause for this bill, which would provide that in cases of separation of farm lands not only should the County Councils approve, but arbitrators appointed under other sections would have power to consider the question of separation.

The Registration Act.

When the Attorney-General's bill to amend the statute law was taken up in committee several Opposition members objected to a clause applying manhood suffrage registration to Sault Ste. Marie and Deseronto. Messrs. Duff (West Simcoe), Dr. Barr (Dufferin), Hoyle (North Ontario), and Whitney argued that the act should apply to many other towns equal in population to Deseronto.

The Attorney-General said that Deseronto had, like Niagara Falls and other frontier towns, a floating population. It was to meet the difficulties arising from this state of affairs that the act was to apply to Deseronto and the Soo. Hon. Mr. Stratton supported this view, and also pointed out the growing importance of the two towns mentioned.

Mr. Russell (East Hastings) also spoke effectively in the same strain.

Mr. Whitney contended that the proposal had only political purposes in view. At the last election trains were run northward from Deseronto and from the north into the town, and Conservatives were refused passage either

way. He could not understand why any great corporation should seek such a privilege.

Dr. Barr said the section was a sop to the Rathbun Company in order to make the member for East Hastings solid.

Mr. Russell emphatically denied this.

Mr. Kidd (Carleton) suggested that the provision apply to townships.

The committee reported progress.

Public Accounts.

Mr. Charlton (North Norfolk) presented the report of the Public Accounts Committee.

Col. Matheson urged that in future the Public Accounts Committee should meet earlier in the session. Under present conditions the committee had the greatest difficulty in getting a quorum. Members on the Government side were chiefly to blame, but it was remarkable how quickly these would rush into the room to vote down any motion which they feared the Opposition members might carry. It would be well if the committee could meet immediately after the budget speech. He was glad that some changes were to be made, which would simplify the public accounts, and save a great deal of trouble in examining the expenditures. Further improvement could be made, however. A list should be published of persons getting moneys from more than one source. There should also be a detailed statement as to the expenditure on colonization roads. In this connection he said that in Conservative constituencies only \$13,000 had been spent, while in Liberal constituencies the amount spent was over \$100,000. He objected to amounts being published in lump sums, such as those referring to Cobourg Asylum. It had been stated to him that during the last elections Conservative workmen had been sent down from Toronto to work on the asylum until the election was over, when they had been discharged and sent back. He had also been told that the cab hire of Ministers and Government officials attending funerals was included in some of the charges in public accounts.

No Political Schemes.

Hon. Mr. Stratton said that in regard to colonization roads it was difficult to know exactly in what constituencies they were situated, as many of them ran through various ridings. The engineer in such cases used his own discretion as to which constituency they charged with the roads, and there was no force in the argument that they were built for political purposes. There was no desire on the part of any head of a department to withhold any information he could possibly give. He did not know of any member of the Government who had charged cab hire for private purposes. It was not the case so far as he was personally concerned, and he was quite confident that it could not be charged to any other member. He thought that perhaps some changes might be made in details of public accounts to meet some of the suggestions advanced, and would look into the question.