

cation for it remaining on the statute book.

Toronto's Case.

Mr. Foy (South Toronto) said there was no reason why the act should apply to a large and growing city like Toronto, where more than one company could operate. The Legislature should remove obstacles from the way of providing an additional company. The Electric Light Company had agreed not to amalgamate with any other company. Perhaps technically they had not done so, but strange to say they had the same directorate, the same officers and the same building for repairs as the Incandescent Electric Company. The Municipal Committee had first adopted this amendment and the next day turned about and decided against the city. An arbitration with the Gas Company under the act would be an interminable affair and would be very expensive.

Mr. Hoyle (North Ontario) said that as a member of the Municipal Committee he had voted for the city, particularly as to their obtaining relief from the Gas Company, and he had heard no argument to cause him to change his opinion.

Improper Procedure.

Hon. Mr. Gibson said the object of the Conmee act was to prevent the confiscation of such plants by the arbitrary act of a municipal corporation. If the City of Toronto wanted to establish another gas company all they had to do was to come to the Legislature to get permission to do so. He thought that if the Conmee act prevented it, if they really wanted to do so, the Government and the Legislature would have no hesitation in passing a private bill granting permission. He did not think it was a proper procedure for the city to come to the House, and seek to gain private legislation by this means.

Mr. Whitney said there was no justification whatever for the proposed amendment. The general legislation should apply to Toronto as to the rest of the Province.

Relief for Toronto.

The Attorney-General moved the following amendment to the act, which he thought would meet Mr. Marter's views:—"Nothing in this section contained shall be deemed to amend any of the provisions contained in the act incorporating any gas company now operating in any city; nor shall it affect any acts amending such act of incorporation, nor the right of any such city under such acts to establish or procure the establishment therein of further works for the supply of gas, provided that any city corporation having under the act of incorporation and amendments thereof of any gas company operating in such city the right to establish or to cause or permit to be established additional or further works for the supply of gas in such city, shall have power to construct and establish such further or additional works and to pass necessary by-laws authorizing the levying of an annual special rate to defray the yearly interest on the expenditure therefor, and to form an equal yearly

sinking fund for the payment of the principal within a time not exceeding thirty, nor less than five years."

The reason, he thought, the House might allow this to go was that it should have been considered when measures regarding gas companies were framed in 1899. The hon. gentleman's proposed clause respecting electric companies was a matter for a private bill. The amendment he (the Attorney-General) proposed would re-

lieve Toronto from the Conmee act so far as concerned the relations with the Gas Company.

Mr. Marter then withdrew his proposals, and the bill as amended was read a third time and passed.

Law Reform Withdrawn.

Hon. Mr. Gibson then rose and moved the withdrawal of his law reform measure. He explained in some little detail his reasons for so doing, chief of which were the arguments advanced by a deputation of legal gentlemen representing the profession throughout the Province. Those gentlemen had told him that one effect of the bill would be to withdraw from one-half to three-quarters of the business now transacted by the High Court at the Assizes and transfer the same to the County Courts. While he had intended that the increase of jurisdiction should give to the latter courts a good amount of additional work, he had not intended that it should go so far. It would appear, then, that the recurring circuit work of the High Courts would be seriously hampered by the measure, and that was not desirable. Then, as he had intimated on a previous occasion, it was advisable that libel and slander actions and actions on municipal by-laws should not come under the jurisdiction of the County Courts, and in any event he would have withdrawn them. It had also been suggested that the increasing jurisdiction of the County Courts should be dealt with simultaneously with such changes in the High Court in the matter of appeals as might be thought necessary. That might call for Dominion legislation, of which there seemed little prospect this year. A Royal Commission had been suggested to deal with the matter of law reform. This he did not think advisable. As the result of the discussion which had taken place and the views expressed throughout the country information had been obtained which would aid the House in later bringing in a proper measure of law reform.

Mr. Whitney Agrees.

Mr. Whitney approved of everything that had been said by the Attorney-General. The latter had done his duty in introducing the bill, and had also done well in withdrawing it. Such a step would allow of the proper and right consideration of a matter of grave importance, and one on which no step should be taken without great care and deliberation. By next session it would no doubt be found that a suitable measure could be brought before the House. The Attorney-General would have every assistance from the Opposition in securing a proper and reasonable measure of law reform.

The bill was then withdrawn.