

Feb 3/02

MEMBERS SNOW-BOUND.

SCANTY ATTENDANCE AT THE LEGISLATURE YESTERDAY.

Export of Natural Gas From Welland—Deputation To-day Will Ask For Government Control of Liquor Traffic—Legislature Notes.

The snowstorm wrought havoc with the attendance at the Legislature yesterday, for at no time were there quite a score of members present. It is probable that a stickler for rules might have found business transacted without a quorum. There was little business done, the session not lasting beyond twenty minutes. It is probable that the speakers in the budget debate to-day will include Dr. Jessop, Mr. Lee, Mr. Miscampbell or Mr. Hoyle and Mr. Pattullo. It is expected that the Opposition will move an amendment.

Mr. Pense Introduced.

Immediately after prayers the Premier and Hon. Mr. Harcourt retired to the entrance to the chamber, and, returning, escorted Mr. Pense, the new member for Kingston, to the Mace, where he was introduced. Mr. Pense advanced to greet the Speaker, and took his seat, the third from the far end in the front row, amid loud Ministerial applause.

Dunlop Bill Refused.

The Speaker read a report from Chief Justice Falconbridge and Mr. Justice Street on the merits of bill No. 1, an estates bill, the object of which is to give effect to an unsigned will of the late John Dunlop of Oxford County. The Judges report against the bill, saying that to pass it would be to make a will for a man who died intestate.

Feb 3/02

Export of Natural Gas.

Hon. Mr. Gibson, replying to Dr. Pyne (East Toronto), said:—The Ontario Government had no control over the disposition of natural gas produced in the County of Welland. The exportation of it was the subject of Dominion jurisdiction. Gas was now being exported from Welland to the United States, and licenses of occupation had been granted by the Province under which pipes may be laid across the Niagara River.

Returning Officer's Appointment.

Mr. Whitney asked: Was Alexander Merner, who was appointed returning officer for the election for North Waterloo on October 7, appointed by order in Council? If so, what was the date of the order? If not so appointed, by whose direction and authority was his name inserted in the writ of election?

Hon. Mr. Gibson said the statute does not require a returning officer to be appointed by an order in Council. He is appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor on the recommendation of his advisers. The law provides that where a Sheriff or a Registrar is dead, or has been removed, and no successor has been appointed, that the writ of the election shall be addressed to such other person as the Lieutenant-Governor may appoint to be returning officer. There was no Sheriff or Registrar at North Waterloo at this time, so that Mr. Alexander Merner, who was acting Registrar at the time, was appointed returning officer.

Size of School Sections.

Dr. Barr (Dufferin) moved the second reading of his bill to amend the public schools act. The bill provided for the removal of the restriction that the boundaries of school sections cannot be changed within five years. The population of several school sections in his constituency had increased considerably, yet no change could be made for some years.

Hon. Mr. Harcourt said the Education Department had had considerable correspondence from that one locality concerning the failure of the law to suit that locality. However, the law appeared to work satisfactorily elsewhere. He proposed that the bill be referred to the Legal Committee.

The bill was read a second time.

The House adjourned at 3.40 p.m.