

Mr. Crawford (West Toronto)—We will change sides for a while. (Continued laughter.)

Dr. Jessop (Lincoln) moved that the bill respecting the Port Dalhousie, St. Catharines & Thorold Railway Company, which has already passed the committee, be referred back to the Railway Committee.

Hon. Mr. Gibson thought that on all such resolutions the House was entitled to some explanation, and time should be given to such parties as may be interested to oppose the measure. He suggested that the motion be made a notice of motion, and this was agreed to.

Municipal Coal Yards.

On the motion for the second reading of Mr. Powell's (Ottawa) bill to authorize the establishment of coal yards by municipalities, Hon. Mr. Gibson said this was not an unimportant bill. It provided that where a combination of coal-dealers was shown to exist for the enhancement of prices at the expense of the consumer, the municipality may engage in the business. It was a provision which, however well it might look on the face of it, might be of far-reaching consequences. If such power were given municipalities they might similarly ask for other powers, such as dealing in bread, where there was equal danger of combination. He did not suppose this power would be given, yet he thought the bill should go to the Municipal Committee for consideration.

The bill was given its second reading.

Construction of Sewers.

Mr. Mutrie (South Wellington) moved the second reading of his bill to amend the municipal act by providing that the cost of constructing sewers shall be borne equally by property owners in the district benefited.

Hon. Mr. Gibson thought the House should be careful in dealing with such a radical measure as the one proposed. The present system of assessing the cost of sewers seemed to work satisfactorily. It would be well to hear the views of various municipalities on the question, an opportunity which will be afforded when the measure comes before the Municipal Committee.

Mr. Carscallen (Hamilton) moved the second reading of his bill to enable corporations having a solicitor, who receives a fixed salary, to recover costs in actions; the amounts so recovered to be placed to the credit of the municipality instead of going to the solicitor.

Hon. Mr. Gibson pointed out that a few years ago in cases where the solicitor was a salaried man costs could not be recovered by the municipality. That was changed two years ago, so that municipal solicitors received the costs, but the present proposal contemplated an advanced step, which had not been asked for by any other municipality than the one represented by Mr. Carscallen.

Parks and Library Boards.

Mr. Carscallen's bills to give municipalities of less than 100,000 population power to revise the estimates of Public Park and Public Library Boards did not meet with the approval of several Government members.

Hon. Mr. Gibson thought it a strange thing that municipalities should adopt the general provisions of the public library and public park acts, appoint commissioners or boards to operate them, and then express a desire to control those bodies. If the general law provided for too large an expenditure in regard to these bodies it should be cut down. He would much rather, for his own part, see a board entirely abolish-

ed than existing as the mere tool of the Council.

Hon. Mr. Harcourt expressed the hope that the bill in reference to Public Library Boards would not be pressed.

Mr. Carscallen said the bodies referred to always demanded the full amount legally due them, without regard to the finances of the municipalities. He did not think it any hardship that they should be under control of the body which had power to appoint them. There was a strong demand in Hamilton for some such control. Recent occurrences in Hamilton had shown that in the management of the library there had not been exercised that careful discretion which ought to have been displayed in the public interests. The bills will be dealt with in committee.

The House adjourned at 4.05.

*February 17/02.*