

Hon. Mr. Gibson suggested that the question be brought up at the beginning of next session, when a committee could deal with it in the period before the heavy work of the House began. This was agreed to, and the motion was withdrawn.

Mr. Macdiarmid (West Elgin) moved the second reading of his bill to amend the election act. One clause proposed to abolish the numbered ballot, which, he said, was intended to show to the Government how a man voted, and which, the Opposition contended, was a measure of intimidation and coercion. Other clauses, he contended, provided swift and certain justice for violations of the election act. The bill also contained a new form of ballot tending to lessen the danger of mistake by the voter.

Hon. Mr. Gibson said that two or three years ago the election act was thoroughly overhauled, and last year a provision had been embodied calculated to make it dangerous for irregularities to take place, especially by those who had in charge the carrying out of the provisions of the law. If the election law was again being overhauled some of the provisions of Mr. Macdiarmid's measure might be seriously considered. At the present time copies of the election law were being printed, as were also ballots for use at the election, and some of the suggested changes could not be made if adopted. The motion was declared lost on division.

Mr. Thompson (Centre Simcoe) also had a bill to amend the election act by providing for the voter himself placing the ballot in the box, and for other changes, and the motion for the second reading of this measure was likewise declared lost on division.

A Proposed Reduction.

Mr. Jamieson (South Grey) moved the second reading of his bill proposing a reduction in the membership of the House from 94 to 60. He made comparisons with representation in France, Germany, Great Britain and the United States in support of his contention that, according to population, Canada had more legislative representatives than any other country on the face of the earth. Redistribution by the Judges of the Court of Appeal every ten years, and on non-political lines, was provided for in the measure.

Hon. Mr. Harcourt alluded to the agitation for a reduction of the number of County Councillors, which would have been brought about twenty years ago if a working basis could have been found, as an illustration of the difficulties in the way of an attempt to carry out the hon. gentleman's propositions. In fact, with the rapid growth of the rich northern sections of the Province, the question of an increased membership was more likely to demand earnest consideration. It had been argued in some sections of the press that Toronto was

entitled to increased membership, and to support the claim comparisons had been made with some rural constituencies. That was hardly fair, as the latter covered great distances and presented greater difficulties in the way of communication.

Mr. Whitney, without expressing any opinion on the merits of the bill, dealt briefly with some of the arguments against it, contending that the members of the Government were again arguing that the House should not take a certain line of action because it had never been adopted before.

The bill was declared lost on division.

Civil Engineers' Bill Defeated.

Mr. Gross (Welland) moved the second reading of his bill respecting civil engineers, which has previously been detailed, and which has met strong opposition.

Hon. Mr. Gibson expressed the opinion that the House would not receive the bill without an exhaustive inquiry, and it was declared lost on division.

Mr. Preston's bill regarding boards of conciliation and arbitration for settling labor disputes, and Col. Ley's measure making the fender law applicable to all street railways, were read a second time.

The Municipal Act.

The municipal amendment act, 1902, embracing the clauses passed by the Municipal Committee, 1902, was discussed in some detail. Hon. Mr. Gibson inserted an amendment providing a penalty of \$50, and disqualification for a year for persons who vote more than once for Aldermen or Councillors in municipalities where the Councillors are elected by general vote.

Mr. Pettypiece (East Lambton) moved an amendment to suspend until April 1, 1903, instead of January 1, 1902, the operation of last session's legislation giving Municipal Councils power to prohibit the use of trading stamps. He said the constitutionality of the act had been attacked and was now before the courts.

Hon. Mr. Gibson thought no harm would come from a further suspension of the act.

Mr. Preston (South Brant) thought it would be rather an extraordinary proceeding.

Mr. Whitney was agreeable to the further suspension.

Mr. Crawford (West Toronto) said it had been understood that last session's bill settled the matter for all time.

Hon. Mr. Stratton was sure the people were satisfied with the legislation of last year. There was not sufficient cause for extending the time for another year.

On the yeas and nays being called the motion to suspend the operation of the act was lost.

The bill was reported and the amendments concurred in.