

the position of Amabel Township, where the railway lands are assessed at \$15 an acre and the farm lands on either side \$30. The taxes of the railway are \$6 a mile, and their bonuses amount to \$43,000. He claimed that to charge the railways a fair share of taxation would help to keep the young men on the farm.

Mr. McEwing of West Wellington declared that in the three townships of West Wellington there were 57 miles of railway that had been bonused to the amount of \$131,000, and their taxes last year were \$180.60, or 40 cents an acre.

Mr. Slater of North Waterloo pointed out that the railways on their own showing were earning over and above expenses \$1.212 a mile, or \$150 an acre on their land, and stated that the net earnings of farm land was not over \$1.50 an acre.

Mr. Hyatt of Prince Edward said the people of that riding would not support a Government that took ten years to right the present unjust conditions.

The question of taxing franchises was then taken up. G. Lynch Staunton, K.C., of Hamilton spoke for the telephone company and contended that a franchise was personalty, the taxation of which it was one object of the bill to abolish. He further claimed that when a company had been taxed on its realty it had been taxed on its franchise, because realty was assessed at what it was worth to its owners; that was, at its earning power. Mr. Hugh Baker, manager of the telephone company for Ontario, pointed out that the company was assessed now for the municipalities and for the Province and that the shareholders' dividends were taxed, and said this would be a fourth tax.

Mr. A. C. Thompson spoke for the single taxers and pointed out that every holder of a valuable corner lot was taxed for the franchise he enjoyed in its possession. He thought company franchises should be taxed.

Mr. Henry O'Brien, K.C., spoke for the Toronto Electric Light Co., and contended that the planting of poles in the highway was a legitimate use of it, just the same as driving a coal cart over it. He held that overtaxation would drive capital away from necessary enterprises. Solicitor MacKelcan, for Hamilton, and Solicitor Caswell, for Toronto, urged that the cities should be allowed to make their own assessments of franchised companies. They held it would not be just to divide up among the municipalities of the Province the revenues of those cities. Mr. D. E. Thomson appeared for the Toronto Board of Trade in support of the taxation of franchises. He held that when a franchise was valuable it should be taxed like other property. The committee adjourned till Friday morning.

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OSGOODE HALL NEWS.