

six granted, 1902 four applications and seven granted, 1903 eleven applications and six granted.

Foul Broods Act Not Enforced.

Hon. Mr. Dryden informed Mr. Eilber that the Department of Agriculture on Feb. 15 received from the Secretary of the Ontario Beekeepers' Association a copy of suggested amendments to the foul broods act. No decision had yet been reached. Complaints had been received of lack of enforcement of the present law, notably in the Counties of Norfolk and Simcoe.

The Premier informed Mr. Gallagher that Mr. McCallum, Government engineer, in 1902 did not report the advisability of building a bridge across Sydenham Lake, in Frontenac, nor a bridge connecting Howe Island with the mainland. The only reports made were verbal, and no record was kept.

Bills Introduced.

Dr. Reaume introduced a bill respecting the Windsor, Essex & Lake Shore Rapid Railway Company, which is asking for power to increase its capital from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000, and power to further increase the capital as the shareholders see fit on a two-thirds vote.

Mr. C. N. Smith introduced a bill extending the franchise of the Tagona Water & Light Company from ten to twenty years from October 7, 1902, and extending the franchise of the International Transit Company from 20 to 25 years from Nov. 15, 1902. The bill also seeks to make the franchises exclusive during that time and to fix the taxation of the two companies, together with that of the Lake Superior Power Company, the Algoma Steel Company, the Algoma Central & Hudson Bay Railway Company and the Algoma Commercial Company during the 25 years at altogether \$5,000 per annum. The town also wishes to undertake not to exercise during the 25 years the right of purchasing the property of the said Tagona Water & Light Company.

The following bills were also introduced:—Mr. D. C. Cameron, respecting the Townships of Neebing and Papinonge; Mr. Richardson, respecting the Town of Newmarket; Mr. St. John, an act respecting the construction of local improvements in the Town of North Toronto; Mr. Tucker, to regulate the width of sleight runners.

Premier Ross has given notice of a bill respecting aid to the Algoma Central & Hudson Bay Railway Company.

Game Commission Report.

The report of the Ontario Game Commission for the year was laid on the table by the Provincial Secretary. The commissioners say that owing to the wet and cold weather during the hatching season our upland game birds suffered severely. In Essex, Kent, Middlesex and Lambton we started out in the spring with a good crop of old birds, but in many districts not a bird was to be found.

Great concern is felt about the future of that gamiest of all game birds, the quail; and the commissioners have had under consideration several plans for keeping up a fair stock of birds in the Province. The experiment of breeding them in confinement for turning down purposes will be tried this year on a small scale. Owing largely to the destruction of their haunts, woodcock have become all but extinct in many parts of the Province; but where local conditions are favorable, fair bags were made last fall. The same remarks apply to snipe.

Favorable reports were received from many of the duck preserves; and while, on the whole, duck may not have been as plentiful as they were in the season of 1902, still good sport was had throughout the season. It is gratifying to know that the black duck is coming to us in increasing numbers year by year, and this duck is considered by many to be among the best for the table.

Deer Were Plentiful.

Deer were plentiful in the north, and the number of sportsmen from the United States and Europe showed a

large increase. There were 5,707 deer licenses issued during the year, and 153 for moose.

The Canadian Express Company carried during the season 2,950 carcasses of deer, and the Dominion Express Company 416, a total of 3,366, an increase of 176 over 1902. Ninety-three head of moose were reported killed by licensed hunters. These figures give but an inadequate idea of the total number killed during the season. The beaver, the most intelligent and valuable of our fur-bearing animals, is increasing in numbers in some sections of the Province. But otter are still reported to be very scarce.

The commissioners oppose the use of automatic and repeating shotguns for sporting purposes, as natural causes alone are making the birds scarce.

The receipts of the department for 1903 were \$19,505.82, and expenditures \$9,308.10. The Chief Warden recommends that Wardens should devote all their time to the work when game needs to be protected, and they should be paid accordingly.

A General Fee Proposed.

There were 38 Game Wardens appointed during 1903, making the total 320. They reported a fair observance of the law.

The Chief Warden says:—"I am fully convinced that the time is not far distant when it will be necessary to collect a small license fee in the Province for the right to kill any species of game, to insure its better protection during both open and close seasons. This would have the effect of stopping country storekeepers employing boys to shoot partridge for export from the Province. It would also enable us to have more effective espionage in the back country where the practice prevails."

Causes of Insanity.

In his annual report upon the lunatic and idiot asylums of the Province, which was laid on the table of the House yesterday, Inspector R. Christie makes some interesting observations on the causes of insanity. He says: "One of the popular opinions of the present day appears to be that the vast increase of insanity is due to overtaxed energies, in consequence of the intense competition prevailing in almost every profession, business or employment. There may be individual cases to be credited to unmeasured efforts for the attainment of objects which in themselves are legitimate, but the asylum statistics do not show that any considerable proportion of their population is composed of patients of this class. The large mass of those registered is composed of those who are not possessed of that intellectual calibre which would award them any prominent place or position in society, but it is evident are drawn from a degenerate class whose mentality is of a low order, having no will power to resist or overcome the evils which beset them and which lead them to abandon the observance of such moral and physical laws as would protect them against the inroads of mental derangement. If, then, the abandonment of such moral and natural laws as should govern and restrain is the groundwork of degeneration and moral depravity which leads to excess, both physically and mentally, it is beyond question the main reason for the prevalence of this great scourge, and it is clear that if the evil is to be thoroughly combated it must be by the observance of a higher ethical code than that which has prevailed, and it is the duty of all philanthropic agencies to pronounce emphatically against the immoral and destructive influences which have been the cause and are continuing to be the source of so much distress and evil to society at large."

The admissions to the asylum for the year totalled 889, or a decrease of 127, as compared with last year, but the decrease is due only to the fact that there was not sufficient accommodation at the asylums for all the applicants. The total number of inmates

at the end of the year was 5,458, as compared with 5,372 the previous year, while the total number of insane officially known to the department, including those in jails and private asylums, was 6,236, or a total increase for the year of 183. The entire expenditure for maintenance of the asylums was \$715,918. There is an increase per capita, as compared with 1902, of \$11.15, due to the increased cost of coal, groceries and other supplies.

TELEPHONE CO. TAXATION.

SPECIAL PROPOSITION FOR THE CITY OF TORONTO.

The Assessment of Gross Receipts—Reduction in Assessment of Branch Lines.

On the suggestion of Mr. Hoyle, the Municipal Taxation Committee of the Legislature at its session yesterday decided to extend the application of the business tax to townships and unorganized municipalities. Very often in unincorporated villages, Mr. Hoyle pointed out, there were stores and mills which should be liable for the business tax.

So far as the smaller towns were concerned, said Mr. MacKay the substitution of the business tax for a personalty would deplete their finances. As a rule the personalty was a larger percentage of the whole tax and real estate was not very valuable. If, therefore, a business tax were adopted on the basis of a percentage of the real estate value, a big loss would result. The committee should examine carefully the result of the application of the bill to towns of from 2,000 to 10,000 population before reporting the bill.

Hon. Mr. Gibson, the Chairman, suggested that more information should be obtained on this point, and further discussion of the clause was postponed.

Telephones in Townships.

Mr. G. Lynch Staunton, of Hamilton, appeared for the Bell Telephone Company to point out the injustice of assessing the small branch lines in the rural districts \$200 per mile. The lines were purely for the personal use of the farmers, doctors and country residents, and were not used for the general business of the company. They were hung on small poles supplied by the farmers themselves. There would be only five or six telephones perhaps on 25 miles of such lines. To tax them as was pro-

posed in the bill would certainly put them out of business and result in great inconvenience. He thought that branch lines up to 25 miles should be exempt. It should be remembered that the company would pay the business tax on 500 offices in the Province.

Tax on Gross Receipts.

The question of the special tax on gross receipts was then taken up. Mr. Staunton said that the company was willing to allow the amount actually collected in Ontario to stand as gross receipts. It had been proposed to assess the receipts on a basis of 60 per cent. In fourteen towns that would mean an increased assessment of \$60,000 over what they were now paying on poles and wires. There was not a city or town that would not benefit very largely by the bill. In Brantford, for instance, their gross receipts were: tolls \$6,794, rentals \$14,795, a total of \$21,589. Their present total assessment was \$3,000. In Brockville they were assessed last year \$6,000, the Judge reduced it to \$2,000, and now under this special tax it would be put back to \$6,000, and in addition there were the real estate and business assessments, making \$8,000 all told.

Mr. Preston—I figure out that the assessment in Brantford will be \$2,000