

TO TRANSFER DAMS IN TRENT VALLEY.

Province Willing to Grant Dominion Application.

INSURE AGAINST WEATHER.

Farmers Mutual Companies to Meet Loss by Storms.

Establishment of Telephone Systems in Counties—Mr. Gamey's Motion Respecting People's Life Insurance Company.

The Ontario Government is willing to accede to the request of the Dominion Department of Railways and Canals for a transfer of the dams owned by the Province on the head waters of the Trent Valley Canal. These dams were built and are being maintained for the purpose of facilitating the floating of logs and timber and for improving local navigation. Many of them, owing to their age, require extensive repairs and partial reconstruction, involving an outlay of \$20,000. The necessity for storing water for the use of the Trent Canal, making the works a permanent necessity, will justify an outlay by the Dominion sufficient to gradually rebuild them in a permanent manner, and additional facilities will thereby be afforded the community served. The transfer will provide that Provincial rights as regards water powers shall be in no way prejudiced, and the owners of existing powers are to be guaranteed by the Dominion Government a continuance of them. The Dominion will be asked to refund to the Province the cost, \$31,194, of the Young's Point lock, which has been built in a substantial manner, making it a permanent part of the canal system.

Weather Insurance.

The Attorney-General yesterday introduced in the Legislature a bill to enable farmers to form mutual insurance companies for the purpose of insuring against loss by tornadoes, hail, drouth, lightning (not resulting in fire), or any other atmospheric causes. Companies formed under the act must not undertake a contract of insurance for a term exceeding three years.

Hon. Mr. Gibson also introduced an act consolidating and revising the statutory regulations regarding the Court of Appeal and Divisional Courts, showing precisely what are their respective powers.

Premier Ross informed Mr. Hoyle that the Treasury Department had no record concerning the closing up of the beet-sugar factory at Warton. No portion of the bounty for the last year's business had been paid as yet. It would be withheld pending the result of inquiry as to the payment of farmers for the beets supplied by them.

The Premier, in answer to Mr. Carscallen's question regarding the number of railways to the Albany River which had complied with the regulations of the House regarding the submission of maps, said that the regulations has been very indifferently en-

forced. The department instead of insisting on the maps had been content with one of the ordinary maps of the Province with the projected lines indicated upon it.

County Telephone Systems.

Mr. Tucker's bill to extend to counties the powers now held by towns and cities respecting the establishment of telephone systems was read a second time and referred to committee. The Attorney-General expressed himself as entirely favorable to the proposal in the bill.

Mr. Lee (E. Kent) moved the second reading of his bill to amend the jurors act by reducing the panel from 48 to 36. Hon. Mr. Gibson said that the panel would be too small, as when a jury was out and some of the remainder were challenged there might not be enough members to fill a second jury. The bill was withdrawn.

Mr. Lee's bill respecting the public schools act was given a second reading and referred to the Legal Committee.

Mr. Tucker's bill to regulate the width between the runners of sleighs was sent to the Agricultural Committee. The proposal is to have a uniform width of four feet. The reason given was that narrow runners resulted in the horses breaking up the road and sometimes caused accidents.

Second readings were given to the following bills:—Respecting the Town of Peterboro', Mr. Stratton; respecting the City of Ottawa, Mr. Powell; to consolidate the debt of the Town of Trenton, Mr. Morrison; respecting an agreement between the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada and the corporation of the Town of Barrie, Mr. Davidson; respecting the Hamilton, Grimsby & Beamsville Electric Railway Company, Mr. Hendrie.

Mr. Gamey's Motion.

Mr. R. R. Gamey moved for copies of all orders in Council authorizing an increase in the capital stock of the People's Life Insurance Company during the last two years, with the correspondence relating thereto. The commissions which had been allowed on the sale of the new debenture stock of this company, of which the Provincial Secretary was President, had been, he contended, unusually high; the annual statements for 1901 and 1902 showed extraordinarily large advances to agents, compared with the income, and dividends had been paid to the debenture stockholders in 1902 contrary to the Federal act providing against impairment of capital. He also referred to criticisms by two financial journals that Dr. Hunter, the inspector of insurance, was acting with partiality.

Hon. Mr. Gibson said no order in Council had been issued in reference to this company, and he did not know whether there was any correspondence, but if there was it would be brought down. Everyone knew that all insurance companies in their early stages had to suffer an impairment of capital in order to do business. The Canada Life and other large companies had done business for many years on an impaired capital. He did not think the House desired him to discuss the affairs of this company, and if there were any charges of favoritism or neglect of duty against the inspectors of insurance or loan companies they should be ventilated in the Public Accounts Committee, which might call the officers to give evidence under examination. Personally he believed there were no more faithful or trustworthy members of the public service than the inspectors of insurance and loan companies.

Mr. Stratton's Reply.

Hon. Mr. Stratton said the company was doing business entirely under the acts of the Legislature. The directors, in addition to himself, were D. W. Karn of Woodstock, C. Kloefer of Guelph, T. P. Coffee and F. M.

Holland of Toronto, none of whom were men who would be connected with a company not doing business legitimately and properly. He had not the facts before him to discuss some of the matters the member for Manitoulin had alluded to, but the Government insurance report for this year showed the company's receipts as \$156,218, and expenses of management \$34,474. As to the advances to agents, they were all eventually returned to the company, and all insurance companies adopted this policy. The gentlemen who had purchased the debenture stock had taken the risk and responsibility of the whole company on their shoulders and were absolutely liable for the policies of the company, and it could be hardly expected that the stock could be sold at the ordinary commission. The standing and statement of the company was one of the most satisfactory in the Province. He thought Mr. Gamey was inspired by a desire to attack the Provincial Secretary rather than to champion the cause of the policy-holders.

Prosecutors in Murder Trials.

Dr. Pyne will inquire of the Attorney-General whether the Government has abandoned the policy of retaining in murder trials the services of members of the Bar in the front rank of the profession.

In Committee of Supply on Thursday Mr. Hoyle was desirous of particulars concerning the grant of \$200 last year to the Summer School of Science, held at Norway Beach Park. The Minister of Education stated yesterday that Norway Beach Park is situated on the north shore of the Chats ("Shaw") Lake expansion of the Ottawa River, within three miles of Arnprior. A company was formed for the purpose of conducting summer studies, including science and nature lectures. School Inspector Cowley and Rev. J. A. Macfarlane of Ottawa were among the chief promoters of the summer school.

Mr. Cowley interviewed the Minister in support of a grant towards expenses. Botanical work was conducted by Mr. W. T. Macoun of the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa; Mr. R. B. White, President of the Ottawa Horticultural Society, and Rev. J. A. Macfarlane, director of the summer studies at the park. The course of studies was taken up by about thirty persons, while large audiences were frequently in attendance upon the addresses. Dr. Sinclair of Ottawa gave an address on "Animal Intelligence." The nature studies were intended for the teachers of eastern Ontario, and valuable work appeared to have been done. The grant of \$200 was paid in June, 1903, to assist in clearing off the expenses incurred for the school of 1902.