

## SOO GUARANTEE IN LAST STAGES.

The Legislature Rejected the  
Three Months' "Hoist."

THREE VOTES CHALLENGED

Other Members Admit That  
They Are Creditors.

The Argument on Their Right to Vote  
Postponed—Morning Session Will  
Start to Hasten Prorogation.

What is known as the "Soo" bill was practically carried last night in the Legislature by a straight party vote of 48 to 45. The vote was on a three months' "hoist" amendment, which was negated by three, but before the main motion was put Mr. Whitney challenged the right to record a vote by three of the members, Messrs. Conmee and Bowman, and Hon. J. R. Stratton, on the ground that they were interested as creditors. Mr. Hendrie and Mr. Beatty announced that they were also creditors, and, though they were opposed to the bill, asked a ruling as to their right to vote. As the hour was late, it was decided to defer the argument on these points until to-day. In the endeavor to finish the session this week it was previously agreed that the House should meet to-day at 11 a.m.

### Soo Bill Debate.

Mr. Downey resumed the debate on the second reading of the "Soo" bill and the motion to give it a three months' hoist. He claimed that the securities offered were not gilt-edged, and proceeded to read what he called a contract between Messrs. Conmee and Bowman and Foley Bros. for the construction of the Algoma Central Railway. Mr. Conmee endeavored to explain that this was not signed by him, but Mr. Downey refused to listen and read the document through, to the applause of the Opposition. He claimed that the bill was a dangerous precedent, and threatened the independence of Parliament. He declared that the Opposition were prepared to drop all other issues and go to the Province on this bill alone, and stake their future on it.

Mr. Pettypiece showed that the development of the "Soo" industries had meant millions to the manufacturers and merchants of western Ontario. He read a statement from a commission merchant of the "Soo," showing heavy purchases of farm products from the county of Lambton alone, and adding that if the "Soo" industries continued he was prepared to purchase the entire amount of farm products raised in that county. He was astonished that the member for West Lambton (Mr. Hanna) worked against the interests of his constituents by opposing the bill.

Mr. W. J. Hanna, in a brief speech repudiated the insinuation that he was acting as the representative of the United States Steel Trust, and with regard to the references to the Conservative leadership, he said: "We on this side are not following a leader who ties our hands and gags us, and chokes down our throats, whether we will or not, the principles that we have been advocating for years." They were following a leader of whom they were

proud, and it was flattering that that following included men whose Government supporters regarded as competent for leadership.

Dr. Willoughby said if this bill were passed the people of the country would soon declare that the Government was unfit for the position it held. The Government was acting under pressure from members of the House who were personally interested in the legislation.

### Where Did It Come From?

Mr. C. M. Bowman, referring to the assertion that Mr. Conmee and himself had forced the Government to introduce this legislation, said: "As far as I am concerned, there is not the slightest foundation for any such charge, and I believe my reputation in this House is such that when I make that statement every member will believe it. I have never approached the Premier or any member of the Government, and attempted in the slightest way to press this measure upon them."

Continuing, Mr. Bowman declared that no such agreement as that read by Mr. Downey had ever been executed between Foley Bros. and Conmee and Bowman, and in support of his statement he read a letter from Mr. M. H. Foley, asserting that his firm had never performed any work under contract with Conmee and Bowman on a 10 per cent. or any other percentage, and that it had been all done on regular and schedule prices, and any representations to the contrary, were absolutely without foundation. Mr. Downey had, said Mr. Bowman, like the leader of the Dominion Opposition, used a document that had not come into his hands in a regular way, and would not venture to get up and state from where he got it. The Government in introducing this legislation had acted in the best interests of the Province. Conmee and Bowman had obtained the contract in the usual way in competition with other contractors, and there was nothing in it or in his relations with it that he had any desire to conceal or in regard to which he felt the slightest shame.

### A Trade in Documents.

Mr. Hanna said it would be most satisfactory to the House if the actual agreement under which Foley Bros. were doing the work for Conmee and Bowman were turned over for inspection.

Mr. Conmee—I have got a copy of it in my hand. Will the hon. gentleman show me his contract with that Canadian Oil Company? (Applause.)

Mr. Hanna asked permission to see the document, and Mr. Conmee consented on condition that he was shown the agreement read by Mr. Downey.

"I will trade," said Mr. Hanna, and Dr. Willoughby then crossed the floor with the document handed him by Mr. Hanna. In exchange for it he got Mr. Conmee's contract.

Mr. Conmee, glancing at the paper in his hands, said: "This is just a lot of extracts."

Mr. Hanna—Extracts from this contract, correctly quoted.

Mr. Conmee—This is not a contract at all. It shows the fairness of hon. gentlemen opposite. The document which they had is a stolen document.

There was considerable further cross-firing until Mr. Speaker interfered, suggesting that the members get together afterwards.

### Worthless Bonds.

Mr. Foy was opposed to the bill, for he declared the Government should not go into the loaning or banking business. If the bill passed there would be innumerable applications for assistance of a similar kind from various parts of the Province. He argued that the bonds of \$30,000 per mile, which were offered to the Government as security for \$6,750,000 were spread over the whole road of 225 miles, whereas only a short section at each end was constructed, and therefore the bonds on the balance would be worthless. He claimed that aid to manufacturing industries instead of an incident was the primary object of the bill, and not the completion of the Algoma Central. The first installment of aid was \$265,000 for salaries, and the second a loan of \$2,000,000, and no one knew how great the third might be.

### Few Specific Criticisms.

Hon. Mr. Gibson said that the House had heard wholesale denunciation of the management of the Soo industries, but had heard few specific criticisms. The Opposition showed more care and industry with reference to the connection of two members of the House with the Algoma Central than they did in discussing the Government's proposals. They violently attacked these two members and assumed everything against them. There was the bitterest tone to the debate which he had ever heard in the House. He thought the Opposition should be ashamed of their attitude towards fellow-members. He claimed that when the Soo industries were completed they would have a monopoly of the power there, with the whole of Lake Superior at their back, and for the development of electrolytic processes the place would be unrivalled. The commission of the Dominion Government returned from Europe convinced of the commercial practicability of electric smelting, and no better place could be found in the world for its application. He remarked that the only Opposition speakers who really devoted their attention to the financial aspects of the proposal were Mr. Matheson and Mr. Garney. The former figured out wrongly that the companies had liabilities of \$10,519,000, but even on that basis of calculation there were assets of \$11,490,000, leaving a surplus of \$880,000. The latter made up liabilities of \$14,000,000, with assets of only half as much. The Attorney-General showed that the real liabilities were \$8,594,425, for which there was complete provision in assets, and that, in addition, the companies would have a practical working capital of over \$4,000,000. As to the allegation that the securities were not good, he thought that when the Bank of Montreal and the Imperial Bank accepted them they were good enough for the Government. But when it was considered that they had the railway and bonds in addition he thought the Opposition trifled with the intelligence of the House in objecting to the securities for the loan.

### Lost in Wonderment.

Mr. Whitney was lost in wonderment why people with such extraordinarily large and good securities had to come to the Ontario Government for a loan of only \$2,000,000. In reply to the Attorney-General's statement that the Government still held the land and timber grants of the railway, he said he was informed that 80,000 cubic feet was taken off last year. He did not know what influence the United States Steel Trust and the Standard Oil Trust had in "Soo" affairs, but he was convinced that they had not worked against the scheme to raise more capital. He urged that the proper place to look for aid was the Dominion Government, because if it did not put on an adequate duty, of what use would be the \$2,000,000 loan? Each one of the financiers mentioned by the Government as back of the reorganized company was able to supply alone the \$2,000,000. Why did they not do so? Because they were all afraid of the securities. In reply to the criticism of the Government that he had not treated the question fairly, he read a letter, which he said was from one of those most deeply interested, thanking him for the broad view of the "Soo" industries which he had taken. He declared that the Attorney-General, in his first speech, did not understand the documents from which he read, and later acknowledged it, and made amendments in accordance with the views of the Opposition. And yet the Government proposed to put \$2,000,000 of the people's money into a scheme which they did not understand. Instead of the United States Steel Trust impeding the finances of the "Soo" industries, some people believed that they were the influence which prevented Sir Wilfrid Laurier from putting a duty on steel rails. In further reply he read a letter from a well-posted New York gentleman, that Messrs. Berwind, Terry, Rea and Trowbridge, who were said to be the eminent financiers behind the reorganized company, were interested in and associated with Standard Oil and United States Steel interests.

### Public Sentiment Favorable.

Premier Ross, in concluding the debate, refuted the statement of Mr. Whitney that there were members on the Government side of the House who wished the scheme to be defeated. How did he know? The Opposition leader had declared also that the people were