

COUNTY COUNCILS ACT INTRODUCED.

Government Proposes Return to the Old System.

OTHER GOVERNMENT BILLS

Measure to Amend Unorganized Territories Act.

Question of Approving the Acoustic Properties of the Legislative Chamber is Now Under Consideration—Several New Private Bills Introduced in the Legislature Yesterday.

The brief session of the Legislature yesterday afternoon was marked by the introduction of several Government bills. Two of these, brought in by Hon. Mr. Hendrie, namely, the new railway act and the act creating a railway and municipal commission, will be found fully explained elsewhere in this issue.

Hon. Mr. Foy introduced a bill to amend "the unorganized territories act." There was some doubt in Parry Sound as to the validity of the selection of jurors, and the bill was to clear up the point. He hoped to have the bill printed and advanced as rapidly as possible, so that it might come into force at an early date.

The County Councils Act.

Hon. Mr. Monteith introduced the county Councils act. Under this, as previously explained, there is a reversion to the old system of representation by Reeves and Deputy Reeves, instead of by members elected from electoral districts, as is now the case. The ratio of representation set in the bill is 1,000 municipal voters. Thus, a municipality with 1,000, and not more than 2,000, persons on the voters' list would be represented by one Reeve and one Deputy Reeve; more than 2,000 voters would entitle a municipality to two Deputy Reeves, and more than 3,000 to three. Voting for Councillors takes place at the municipal elections. Councillors elect their own Wardens at the first meeting. Casting votes, in the case of equality in the election of Warden, shall be with the Reeves from municipalities having the greatest equalized assessment, or if two or more municipalities stand the same in this regard, the casting vote shall be recorded by the representative of the municipality having the greatest number of voters on its lists. Mr. Monteith, in explaining the bill, said the aim of the measure was that every municipality should be represented in the county Councils. After a reference to the ratio of representation, he said that, while the number of county Councillors would be increased, yet this would not be so to a very large extent. Under the present system the county Councillors of the Province numbered 510; under the proposed measure they would number 815. In regard to towns, it would, of course, increase the number of their representatives on county Councils.

Hon. Mr. Reaume, in reply to Mr. Gamey, stated that the improvement of the acoustics of the Legislative chamber was under consideration.

Would Amend Assessment Act.

In moving the second reading of his bill to amend the assessment act, Mr. Graham said that the clauses would make a uniform law for every section of the community. The bill would place Brockville on the same basis as Kingston or Belleville in the matter of exemption of incomes. At present Belleville is exempted up to \$1,000 for householders, and Brockville only \$700. If it were working no disadvantage this might be overlooked.

Mr. Clark (Centre Bruce) thought there were many reasons why the bill should not pass. In small towns the highest salaries paid were not often more than \$1,000, and if they were exempt most people would get off without paying anything but poll-tax.

Hon. Mr. Hanna, recognizing that there were several bills before the House dealing with the matter, and that some hardship resulted to those living in towns, thought it would be in order to let the bill go to committee.

The bill was read a second time.

First Readings.

The following bills were read a first time:—

To further amend the pharmacy act—Mr. Clark, for Mr. Downey. This provides that no incorporated companies shall keep open shop for retailing, dispensing or compounding poisons, drugs or medicines, except proprietary or patent medicines, unless each director is registered and has taken out a certificate as a pharmacist.

To amend the act respecting the incorporation and regulation of mining companies—Mr. Gamey. This would give power to mining companies to change from non-assessable to assessable companies with the permission of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

To amend the act respecting companies supplying steam heat, electricity or natural gas for heat, light or power—Mr. Smith (Soo), for Mr. Cameron.

To amend the act respecting joint stock companies for supplying cities, towns and villages with gas and water—Mr. Smith (Soo), for Mr. Cameron.

Mr. Fox gave notice of a bill to amend the local courts act.