

FIRST DIVISION IN LEGISLATURE.

Party Strength Tested Over the County Councils Bill.

THIRTY-EIGHT MAJORITY.

Hon. Mr. Ross Advises Govern- ment to Go Slow.

Heavy Day's Work in Committee—

Pratt's Hunting Bill—Government Undertakes to Adopt Principle and Bill is Withdrawn—Debate on Budget Resumed by Mr. Thompson (Wentworth).

On the amendment offered by Mr. Hislop to read the Government county Council bill three months hence the Legislature divided last night for the first time this session, after an interesting debate. The vote was 18 to 56, giving the Government a majority of 38. The occasion attracted a considerable attendance in the galleries, which were all well filled. The debate was closed by Hon. Mr. Ross, who pleaded for a year or two's consideration of the measure, and Premier Whitney, who in the course of his remarks said he hoped to see Toronto represented approximately by ten members. During the afternoon a large amount of legislation was advanced through committee and second readings. The vote was taken about 10.30 o'clock, after which Mr. Thompson (Wentworth) resumed the debate on the budget and spoke until 11.40.

Some Questions.

Premier Whitney objected to the belated introduction of a bill by Mr. Ferguson for the incorporation of the long-distance Telephone Company, and it was allowed to stand.

In reply to Mr. May, who asked the question for Mr. McDougall, Hon. Mr. Pyne read a list of the street addresses in Toronto of the members of the University Commission. As the names of the members were not given the information merely indicated that the members must all be Toronto residents.

Mr. May was informed by Hon. Dr. Pyne that it was not the intention this session to place Ottawa Model School on the same footing as regards salaries as Toronto.

Hon. Mr. Matheson, in reply to Mr. Harcourt, said that £1,200,000 of Temiskaming bonds had been underwritten in London by responsible parties; he had received no information as to the flotation so far; the whole of the details of quotation and underwriting had been left to the Bank of Montreal; the Government received 96 5-8 for the bonds, the 5-8 being paid to the Imperial Government for stamp duty.

Mr. Crawford's bill to amend the high schools act was referred to a Select Committee. Mr. Neely's similar bill was also referred to the committee.

Hunting With Dogs.

Mr. Pratt made a forcible plea for his bill to prevent the use of dogs in hunting deer. The opposition to such a measure came from those who were more anxious to kill the deer than protect them. Mr. Pratt also advocated a \$100 license for Americans. Estimating a moose head as worth \$75,

he reckoned that every American sportsman carried \$290 worth of game across the border yearly.

Dr. Reaume stated that the Government was at present reviewing the game laws and preparing necessary amendments, among which were Mr. Pratt's suggestions. He therefore requested the withdrawal of the bill, to which Mr. Pratt assented.

Widening Sleigh-runners.

Mr. Tucker's bill to widen sleigh-runners was discussed pro and con by a number of members on both sides of the House. It was referred to the Municipal Committee.

During the discussion of Mr. Carscallen's bill to amend the assessment act Premier Whitney reiterated his warning as to the danger of making any changes in the assessment act. However small, they would lead to infinite confusion. If any changes were to be made, as experience might show, the act should be dealt with as a whole. Hon. Mr. Ross signified his acquiescence.

Second Readings.

The following bills were also read a second time:—

To amend the municipal act—Mr. Pat-
tinson.

To amend the municipal act—Mr. Ma-
haffy.

To amend the municipal light and
heat act—Mr. Carscallen (Hamilton).

To amend the municipal waterworks
act—Mr. Carscallen (Hamilton).

To amend the assessment act—Mr.
Carscallen (Hamilton).

To amend the municipal act—Mr.
Carscallen (Hamilton).

To amend the toll roads expropria-
tion act—Mr. Brower.

To amend the assessment act — Mr.
Auld.

To amend the municipal act—Mr. Fox.

Mr. Kidd withdrew his bill to amend the municipal act, and Mr. Fraser his bill to aid the Volunteer Firemen's Association. Hon. Mr. Foy undertook to consider the principle of the latter measure.

A large number of private bills were passed through the committee stage, and about a dozen more were given second readings.

County Councils Bill.

In moving the second reading of the Government bill respecting county Councils, Hon. Nelson Monteith said it had been thought wise last year to withdraw the bill after having prominence given to it. Since then people had discussed the measure, and a large element regarded the change with pleasure. The proposal to go back to the state of things prior to 1896 met with great approval. The bill aimed to give increase support to the townships which had been subordinated by the act of 1896.

Mr. Hislop did not think the bill would be in the interests of the communities considered. The present act had worked

remarkably well, though at first causing dissatisfaction, which was to be expected. As time had gone on it was seen how well it had worked, and the faults became less pronounced. The present bill was a step back, and not in the direction of improvement. There had been a difficulty in getting good men to accept seats on the county Councils. If permission were given for Reeves to have seats on the county Councils the present bill would not be needed. He concluded by moving in amendment that the bill be read that day three months.

A pause occurred, no one rising on the Government side. Mr. Duff presently got up, however, when Premier Whitney interposed.

"The hon. member cannot have observed that it is 6 o'clock," he remarked. It lacked ten minutes of the hour, but the Speaker rose, intimating that he would be in the chair at ten minutes past 8.

Varied Views on the Bill.

Mr. Duff strongly favored the Government's bill. The Government was standing by the attitude it had adopted in Opposition, and its position had met