

NO CONTROL OF GAS COMPANIES.

Report That the Power Bill Will be so Amended.

MANY THIRD READINGS.

A Number of Measures Passed by Legislature.

Important Announcement Expected in Reference to the School Text-book Question—Morning Sessions of the House Will be Held if Necessary to Bring Session to a Close.

The actual business of the Legislature will certainly conclude this week. Splendid progress was made at the two sessions held yesterday, a number of Government bills being read a third time, including the Toronto General Hospital bill, the act amending the veterans' land grant act, the two railway bills (for his efforts in relation to which Hon. Mr. Hendrie was complimented), the act to prevent fraud in the manufacture of cheese and butter, the municipal amendment act and the assessment amendment act.

Hon. Mr. Ross intimated that the "power bill," the second reading of which was by agreement declared carried on division, would be opposed, and a lively discussion on this measure may be expected. It was reported last night that this bill is to be amended in its committee stage by striking out references to gas companies. In other words, it is not proposed that gas companies, either as to rates or in any other respect, shall come under the jurisdiction of the Hydro-electric Power Commission, which will be entrusted with carrying out the provisions of the bill. The reference to gas companies, it is said, was inserted in the measure by mistake. The commission, it is thought, will have all it can do in dealing with the cheap power problem, and as there has been no agitation for or pressure upon the Government to take up the questions relating to the supply of gas, this point will most likely be dropped.

School Text-books.

Before the session closes it is expected that a pronouncement will be made on the question of school text-books. The Government's Education Department measure gives power for the appointment of commissions to deal with this or other questions relative to education. Some of the contracts of the companies now printing text-books do not expire until the fall, and it is probable that Government action will not be taken until then. There is a feeling, however, that the Government has already in contemplation steps whereby its promises as an Opposition and since coming into power to secure text-books to the scholars at the lowest rates will be put into effect at the earliest possible moment.

San Jose Scale.

Mr. McCoig called attention to an article in The Chatham Planet, which stated that many orchards in the western districts had been killed by the San Jose scale, and asked if the Government would send an expert to report on the

matter.

Hon. Mr. Monteith said that an expert had already reported, and that the people in Kent county were not alive to their opportunities. They had the means, but would not act. They had the stamping out of the scale in their own hands, as in other districts.

Premier Whitney, with the consent of the leader of the Opposition, moved that on and after to-morrow the House would hold two sittings a day, the Speaker taking the chair at 11 and leaving it at 2, and taking it again at 3. He did not know that there was any strict urgency for the provision, but it was just as well to have the power in case of necessity.

Hon. Mr. Ross had no objection. He supposed all the Government legislation was down, and that the supplementary estimates would be down that day.

Premier Whitney thought the printers might have the estimates ready for to-day.

Public Ownership Not Yet.

Mr. Bowyer thought the Government should insert a clause in the bill respecting steam, electric and street railways, which was referred back to Committee of the Whole for amendment, providing for the Government to take over any railway at the expiration of its municipal franchise.

Premier Whitney said the Government would not even propose to take power to do such a thing. It was the reverse of wise to attempt to anticipate what might arise under entirely different circumstances. There was no use trying to settle the affairs of the world in advance of time.

Hon. Mr. Ross was very glad that the clause permitting Sunday concerts was struck out.

Premier Whitney supposed he should say so too. It had been inserted at the suggestion of the Grimsby Park Company.

The bill and that for the appointment of a railway and municipal board having been read a third time, Hon. Mr. Hendrie said that a great deal would depend on the way the latter bill was construed. The gentlemen appointed to regulate street railway and municipal affairs would have a large responsibility cast upon them, and he trusted the Government would get the right men to fill these very important positions. To a certain extent he had to apologize to the House for the long time he had engaged them upon this important measure, but he trusted that the result would justify him.

Premier Whitney wished to say what was well known, that the House was much indebted to Mr. Hendrie for the time and consideration given to these two measures. (Applause.)

Students at Hospital.

On the third reading of the bill respecting the Toronto General Hospital Mr. Currie once more protested against the exclusion of students not attending Toronto University except under special regulations. He could see no reason why any medical student of any college should not receive instruction in the hospital under his own faculty. This was the practice, he said, in Edinburgh Infirmary, at McGill, and until recently in the Toronto General Hospital.

The usual resolutions respecting the regulation and operation of motor vehicles upon highways, and relating to the transmission of electrical power to municipalities, were referred to committee of the whole House to-day.

Third Readings.

The following bills were read a third time:—

Respecting the Toronto General Hospital—Mr. Hanna.

To amend the act to provide for the appropriation of certain lands for the volunteers who served in South Africa and the volunteer militia who served on the frontier in 1866—Mr. Cochrane.

Respecting steam, electric and street railways—Mr. Hendrie.

For the appointment of a railway and municipal board—Mr. Hendrie.

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

To amend the manhood suffrage act—Mr. McGarry.

To amend the act to prevent fraud in the manufacture of cheese and butter—Mr. Monteith.

Providing for the exemption of woodlands from taxation—Mr. Downey.

Respecting the town of Petrolea—Mr. Montgomery.

The municipal amendment act, 1906—Mr. Hanna.

A debate occurred in committee on the bill to amend the public schools act, upon the clauses providing for a minimum salary for teachers, in which Messrs. Thompson, Hoyle, Hislop, Munro, Harcourt and Ross participated.

Hon. Mr. Ross charged the Government with keeping the effect of the bill in the dark. It was not clear whether the teachers would be benefited or not. There might be an increase of \$300, or of \$100, or of a trifle, or there might be a reduction. The Minister of Education was hardly dealing fairly with the House. If no further information could be got the Opposition would only have to let the matter go under protest.

The bill was reported.

The Assessment Act.

Progress was made in committee at the evening session with the assessment amendment act, 1906, which was read a second time. One of the clauses of the measure makes it clear that no subordinate lodge of any registered friendly society, "or any officer thereof in respect of any business of such subordinate lodge" shall be liable to any business assessment.

Hon. Mr. Matheson's bill confirming the agreement extending the Provincial guarantee of one-half of the Soo loan (\$1,000,000) for six months was read a third time. So also was the municipal amendment act of 1906.

There was considerable discussion on the automobile bill, which was read a second time. The measure is a combination of bills introduced by Messrs. Lennox and Sutherland, and of amendments and additions made while they were being discussed in the Municipal Committee. The stringent clauses of the bill, which have been fully explained, were passed without amendment of note. On the clause prohibiting the use of "a searchlight," Hon. Mr. Hanna, whose name the bill now carries, suggested that this should be made to read "swivel lights." Mr. Duff and others suggested that the bill should fix the candle power of lights to be carried. Finally Mr. Hanna accepted the suggestion of Mr. Sutherland that it read "no motor vehicle shall carry what is known to the trade as a searchlight."

"What does that mean?" asked Mr. McNaught.

"I don't know," replied the Provincial Secretary, amid laughter. "We'll have to leave it to the Magistrates."

The Premier moved the second reading of the act to provide for the transmission of electrical power to municipalities. Hon. Mr. Ross intimated a desire on the part of the Opposition to discuss the measure. By agreement the second reading was carried on division, and the bill will be discussed in committee before the third reading is moved.

Hon. Mr. Hanna moved the first readings of two Government bills. One respecting the Hospital for Epileptics, a new institution, gives the Government the same powers in regard to the establishment as are now exercised in respect to other asylums. Another measure amends the act respecting asylums for the insane by aiming to discourage the sending of insane people to jails, and providing for their speedy removal to asylums.

Mr. Craig moved that the bill to regulate the width of sleigh-runners be given the six months' hoist, but on the suggestion of the Premier he deferred the motion until the bill comes up for the third reading to-morrow.

The House adjourned at 9.30.