

# HAVE FIRE DRILL MADE COMPULSORY.

Government Considering Question of Importance.

## LIBERAL MEMBER'S VIEW.

Member For West Middlesex Takes Seat on Tuesday.

The Question of a Two-cent Per Mile Rate on the Temiskaming & Northern Ontario Railway Met With Evasive Ministerial Reply—Borrowing Powers of Councils.

Compulsory fire drill and the placing of kindergarten children on the ground flats of the public schools are matters which the Government has under consideration in view of the sorrowful disaster this week in Montreal. The question was brought up in the Legislature yesterday afternoon by Mr. T. H. Preston, member for Brant, who analyzed the causes and deducted the lessons to be learned from the fire in a Montreal school, resulting in the death of a number of little children. The Premier and the Minister of Education both expressed their conviction that fire drill in the public schools was essential to the safety of the children.

The Government cannot be said to have any immediate contemplation of the adoption of a two-cent rate on the Temiskaming & Northern Ontario Railway. A direct question as to the Government's intention by Mr. E. J. B. Pense was met by Hon. Dr. Reaume with an evasive reply. It was a matter, the Minister said, that could only be answered by declarations of the Government from time to time.

The return from West Middlesex was read by the Clerk, and Mr. Duncan Ross, the member-elect, and son of Hon. Geo. W. Ross, will be introduced to the House on Tuesday by Mr. A. G. MacKay and Mr. C. N. Smith.

### Make Fire Drill Compulsory.

Mr. Preston (Brant) called attention of the Government to the loss of life in a schoolhouse in Montreal. Assurance should be made doubly sure that no such disaster should occur in Ontario. There were four causes: the kindergarten department was on the upper floor, the stairway was faulty in construction, there was no system of fire drill, and no fire escapes. He would like to see fire drill made compulsory in the schools of Ontario, and also all kindergarten classes on the ground floors of school buildings.

Hon. Dr. Pyne, Minister of Education, said that the Government already had the question under consideration.

The Premier declared that the fire drill was worth all the fire escapes and appliances which could be devised.

Mr. May (Ottawa) was glad to hear that the Minister was going to consider the advisability of making a change in the regulation of the school act. He had had the pleasure of being a member on the Ottawa School Board for many years, and they had been particular there to maintain the school drill, and especially in having the children of the kindergarten on the lower flats.

In the absence of Mr. Pense (Kingston) Mr. Preston (Brant) asked the following question:—"Is it the intention to establish a two-cent per mile passenger rate upon the Temiskaming & Northern Ontario Railway, and to

provide for it upon all railways hereafter voted subsidies by the Legislature?"

Hon. Dr. Reaume replied that the question involved a question of policy of an extended nature which could only be answered by a declaration of the Government from time to time.

"Of which this time is not one of which," commented Mr. Graham, leader of the Opposition, amid laughter.

### Borrowing Powers of Councils.

Mr. Downey moved the second reading of his bill to amend the municipal act, to empower a corporation to borrow money for the laying of pavements on debentures on a two-thirds vote of the Council. The bill was referred to the Municipal Committee.

Mr. Torrance moved the second reading of his bill to amend the municipal waterworks act to facilitate the election of waterworks commissioners. The bill was referred to the Municipal Committee.

Hon. Mr. Cochrane, replying to questions by Mr. Labrosse, said the Government had not received any bona fide offers for the mineral rights in the Gillies limits. If offers were received it was not the intention of the Government to accept the same, nor was it the present intention of the Government to parcel out the limits and sell or lease the same. Finally the Government had no intention of opening the limits to prospectors.

### The Mines Act.

In committee several clauses of Hon. Mr. Cochrane's bill to amend the mines act were passed. Some are intended to make the act more definite in respect to the powers of the mining commissioner. The provision allowing the issue of working permits in special cases where discovery has been disallowed was struck out as probably endangering the principle of discovery. The fee for miners' partnership licenses was fixed at \$5 instead of \$7.50, and for companies at \$20 instead of \$25, as in the draft bill.

The Minister, referring to a suggestion by Mr. Gamey, said a complete index as well as a synopsis of those clauses of the bill of particular interest to prospectors, had been prepared by the Mining Commissioner and would be included in the pamphlet form in which the bill would appear when passed.

Mr. Downey introduced a bill to amend the act respecting municipal sanatoria for consumptives. This provides for the expropriation of property for the erection of such sanatoria and for joint action where two or more municipalities unite to erect them.

### Mr. Hanna's Bad Break.

Walter Scott, late manager of the woodenware department, Central Prison, writes:—"In the Hon. Mr. Hanna's defence of the woodenware contract at the Central Prison I find statements which are incorrect and require amending. He states that varnish was bought by the late Government at two dollars per gallon, and that the same varnish was submitted to the firm from whom it was purchased and they quoted 75c per gallon.

Now, the facts are as follows: the late Government paid 90c per gallon for the varnish said to have cost \$2.

A sample of this varnish was submitted to the firm from whom it was purchased by Mr. Taylor (of the firm of Taylor, Scott & Co.). The varnish firm were not aware that the sample submitted was their own varnish, their quotation, however, was 90c per gallon. Mr. Taylor then stated that the price was too high. They again submitted a varnish reduced in price by adding benzine, this quality was quoted at 75c per gallon.

I have the firm's authority for making the above statement also my own personal knowledge, I having purchased the goods in question, that the price paid by the late Government was 90c per gallon, not \$2, as stated by Mr. Hanna on the floor of the House.

The books of the firm from whom the varnish was purchased are open to any who may wish to verify the above state-

ment, also any other information regarding their dealings with the late Government. The price given by Mr. Hanna of \$2 per gallon and the price paid, viz., 90c, show a discount of 55 per cent. on his statement. Many of his figures, if the real facts were known, might even show a greater discount than that.

In justice to myself, will you kindly give this letter prominent publication in your paper?