

manency.

The Last Session?

Then Mr. Preston hinted that this might be the last session of the present Parliament.

Mr. Whitney—We have two years yet. In reply to the Hon. Mr. MacKay, Mr. Whitney made an explanation, and said their four years expired in January, 1909, or in March, 1909, if the time for the return of the writ were counted in. The House, he said, might not be called upon to meet for twelve months after that.

Mr. Preston—Then I have no reason to assume that an election is possible?

Mr. Whitney—You have no reason to assume either way.

Continuing, Mr. Preston made use of the word "gerrymander" in referring to the proposed redistribution, and the Premier expressed surprise that the hon. member should have any such apprehensions. The member for Brant retorted that the Prime Minister would need to be surprised if he went back over the work of his party at Ottawa. Mr. Preston argued that civic representation should be below rural representation. A city member should represent more population than a rural member. An analysis of the popular vote at last election, he pointed out, showed that the Conservatives had obtained 220,000 votes and the Liberals 213,000. This Liberal vote had only been some 10,000 fewer than the Liberal vote in 1902, indicating that the Liberals were not so much behind after all, while a few drifting votes had materially affected the result.

Educational Matters.

Referring to educational matters, Mr. Preston said that if it were the true intent of the schools to equip children for citizenship, surely it was important that the Government should see to it that all children available were at school as long as possible. From statistics already quoted Mr. Preston showed that the majority of children practically left school at the age of ten years, and in two-thirds of the Province he said the truancy law was a dead letter. The Department of Education, he argued, should take charge of the truancy law and perhaps appoint special officers. For illiterate children above the present school age in cities there should be compulsory night schools.

Province Will Control.

The age limit in child labor legislation should be raised, he said, so that these children could remain at school until they were fourteen years of age. The present distinction between high and public schools ought to be abolished, Mr. Preston thought, as well as the fees. What is now known as the high school course should be more optional, and pupils from ten to twelve years of age should be allowed a vocational course. It had been suggested that the Dominion Government assist in educational matters, but he hoped the Province would never allow educational control to go to the Federal authorities.

Hon. Mr. Whitney—It never will do so.

Mr. Hoyle (North Ontario) defended the three-fifths clause as being a distinct advance in temperance reform as compared with the policy of the previous Government. The Government were in possession of resolution after resolution, passed by churches and other institutions interested in the moral welfare of the Province, approving of the Government's announced intention to enforce the liquor license act. The principle of two-thirds majority was recognized by the churches. It was recognized by the great Church to which he belonged.

Mr. S. Clarke (Northumberland)—What's the name of that Church? (Laughter.)

Mr. Hoyle—If my friend was familiar with the churches he would know.

Proceeding, Mr. Hoyle said that Mr. Preston would not have adopted the line of argument he had but for the fact that he was going to retire from the arena of Provincial politics. Turning to educational questions, Mr. Hoyle said that a bill would shortly be laid

before the House which would provide for continuation classes. The speech of Hon. Richard Harcourt was the most suggestive on the subject with which it dealt that he had ever heard. The former Minister of Education had overlooked, however, that under the present Government the grants in aid of technical education had increased a hundred per cent. He claimed that the Government had adopted a progressive policy with regard to technical education, especially in respect of agriculture. In New Ontario during the past year 265 miles of new roads had been constructed, 949 miles of highway repaired and a number of bridges constructed at a cost of \$351,503. Public works had also been carried out in that district costing \$135,942, giving employment to nearly 10,000 men, and yet the member for the Soo said nothing had been done. Mr. Hoyle claimed that Conservatives had originated the idea of the Temiskaming & Northern Ontario Railway and the running of the line by the Government.

Increase Roads Grant.

Col. Atkinson (North Norfolk), after the customary preliminaries, referred to the good roads problem, and, he said, the only way better roads could be obtained was to encourage the municipalities in building them. At present the Provincial grant was one-third of the cost, but he would not object if this were increased to two-fifths, or even a half, if necessary. In such an event he would not say that the Government were "stealing clothes." Coming to educational questions, Col. Atkinson mentioned the fact that there was a greater dearth of teachers in Ontario at present than almost ever before. He claimed the abolition of the model schools was largely responsible for such a state of affairs. He thought with regard to license matters that the three-fifths clause was an imposition in the name of the Province. A commission had been appointed to inquire into prison labor matters, and he hoped that such an important matter would not be dropped after the elections, as was done with a report on the sweating system under the Government of the late Sir John A. Macdonald. Col. Atkinson took Mr. Gamey to task over certain timber limits, showing that, according to the latter's own statements, one square mile had been sold by the present Administration for \$60,000 and twenty square miles for \$50,000. Touching on license matters, the speaker mentioned an instance where license inspectors were engaged in revising the voters' lists, and he asked if such conduct was keeping license matters out of politics. The same thing, he claimed, was happening all over the Province. Just before concluding at 6 o'clock the speaker drew attention to the surplus of three millions as left by the late Liberal Administration having dwindled to half a million.

Some Second Readings.

Mr. Pense (Kingston) introduced a bill to amend the municipal act. This bill proposes to make bread loaves of uniform weight, two and four pounds.

The following bills were read a second time:—Respecting the Legislative Assembly; to amend the public lands act; to preserve the forests from destruction by fire; to amend the forest reserves act; to amend the supplementary revenue act; to amend the act respecting free grants of homesteads in the Rainy River district; respecting free grants and homesteads to actual settlers on public lands.

Mr. Hislop (East Huron) asked for a return of all payments made by the Province to the University of Toronto for salaries, erection of buildings, etc., during the past six years.

Mr. G. S. May (Ottawa) asked for a statement containing the list of Fair associations to which expert judges had been sent by the department for the last two years. He also asked for a statement regarding both special and permanent commissions appointed by the present Government.

The House adjourned at 6 o'clock.

Want Earlier Elections.

The Executive of the Ontario Muni-

pal Association waited upon Hon. J. W. Hanna, Provincial Secretary, yesterday in regard to a number of recommendations to the municipal act. The members of the committee proposed that the Legislature fix dates of municipal elections at a time so as not to interfere with Christmas and other festivities. A change in the present law is asked regarding the maintenance of persons in houses of industry, etc., and that cities be not forced to pay for their keep. A uniform weight for loaves of bread is asked. Provision for the taxing of county property for local improvements is also asked.

Picton Collegiate Institute After Aid.

Picton is desirous of following in the footsteps of Lindsay and Galt, and of establishing in connection with the collegiate institute in that town an agricultural class. A deputation representing Picton waited on the Minister of Education, the Hon. Dr. Pyne, at the Parliament buildings yesterday and asked that the Government should give assistance in carrying out the scheme. Dr. Pyne promised that the deputation's request would receive consideration.