

# RAILWAY CHARTERS.

## LEGISLATURE'S COMMITTEE GETS DOWN TO BUSINESS.

### Deals With a Large Number of Applications—One Company is Refused the Privilege of Having Licensed Hotels Along Its Line.

Hon. J. S. Hendrie was unanimously re-elected Chairman of the Legislative Railway Committee on motion of J. P. Downey (South Wellington) and Dr. Anderson (South Essex), at its initial meeting yesterday. There was a large attendance, including Hon. Frank Cochrane and Hon. Dr. Reaume.

In expressing his appreciation of the reappointment, Hon. Col. Hendrie said many matters came before the committee — particularly applications for incorporation and for charters — which should have very serious consideration. It was necessary frequently to determine the bona fides of such applications, whether charters were being sought in order to project business enterprises which would contribute to the development and convenience of the country, or whether the applications were speculative, and charters were sought simply for the purpose of hawking them around looking for bidders, and franchises secured to head off legitimate enterprises. The committee had a serious responsibility in determining the circumstances and dealing with all applications solely in the public interests.

The committee promptly dropped into work. The bill to incorporate the Nickle Range Railway, a mining road in the north, secured the endorsement of Hon. Mr. Cochrane, who declared it to be needed, and was reported with minor amendments.

"It is a pleasure to deal with an enterprise that has proved its bona fides by nearly completing its road-bed," commented the Chairman.

The bill to incorporate the Wahnapitae Railway, a branch of the Canadian Northern, traversing mining country greatly in need of railway facilities, was also reported. The clause to permit the company to build and operate hotels occasioned debate. It led to the question of liquor licenses.

"If you don't give them the privilege, they'll go and get it from the Dominion Government," said the Chairman.

"Personally, I'm against it," said Hon. Mr. Cochrane. "We don't want liquors sold in proximity to forest reserves."

"Isn't it against the policy of the Government to have any more licenses in that country?" asked Col. Hugh Clark.

"You'll have the whole question of licenses on your hands some day if you start," warned Mr. Studholme.

"The travellers are appealing for better accommodation all over," observed Hon. Col. Hendrie. "I'm afraid people won't build good hotels without assurance of licenses."

Hon. Dr. Reaume concurred. He thought the public would get better accommodation if the railways were permitted to build and operate hotels.

"There is a good hotel in operation in Algonquin Park without a license," said Mr. Downey.

"Yes," observed Hon. Mr. Cochrane, "and it's tried hard enough to get one."

On a vote the clause was struck out. Hon. Dr. Reaume voted for it and Hon. Mr. Cochrane against it.

Mr. McNaught (North Toronto) was not present when his bill to incorporate the Western Central Railway was called.

"Let me say this," quoth Col. Hendrie. "When members have bills before this committee they had better be on hand to attend to them if they want the committee to attend to them."

The bill was proceeded with. It sought power for the company to build a line through the western part of Ontario, and to guarantee the bonds of subsidiary terminal, navigation, rolling stock and elevator companies. The solicitor admitted that, although the road was incorporated in 1905, a survey had not been made yet.

"Why don't you build a bit of your road before you come here asking all these powers?" asked the Chairman. "We don't want to discourage railway building, but we don't want to encourage the granting of charters to companies that won't do anything."

"Hawking charters around," was the way Hon. Mr. Cochrane described it. "You haven't done a solitary thing," the Minister added, "and you come here asking all sorts of things. It is simply ridiculous," he commented.

"They would give us much greater privileges at Ottawa," ventured President Drummond, of the company.

"This is not Ottawa—thank God," observed Hon. Mr. Cochrane emphatically.

The clause was struck out. "Come back when you have done something," counselled the Chairman.

An extension of time was granted, on condition that \$250,000 was spent during the coming year. If the company lays its line within five years it will get its powers.