

## HYDRO-ELECTRIC TO RETAIN CONTROL

**Sir James Whitney Will Not  
Press Amending Act.**

**FORM IS TO BE CHANGED.**

**A Legislative Cure for Stock  
"Watering."**

**Mr. J. W. Johnson Would Prohibit  
Issues of Bonus Stock—Is Over-  
capitalization Responsible for  
High Cost of Living?**

The Ontario Railway and Municipal Board is not to obtain control over municipal electrical power enterprises for some time to come; the friends of cheap power are hopeful again. This abrupt change in the situation came in the Legislature yesterday afternoon, when Sir James Whitney surprised the House by a graceful retreat from the position previously taken by the Government. When the bill turning over to the Railway Board the wide powers as to the regulation and inspection of municipal electrical power companies, now held by the Hydro-electric Commission, came up for its second reading the Prime Minister asked that it be allowed to remain upon the order paper indefinitely.

"There is some doubt," said the Prime Minister, "as to whether the jurisdiction over the power transmission system should rest with the Hydro-electric Commission or should be under the Railway and Municipal Board. This is altogether a new question, and it is difficult to define what the proper legislation should be. I have discussed the matter with some of the engineers interested in and connected with the scheme, who have pointed out that at least a portion of the jurisdiction should be allowed to remain with the Hydro-electric Commission, if not all of it, at any rate until the final completion of the lines and the handing over of the lines to the municipalities.

**Hydro Engineers Should Inspect.**

"Further," he continued, "it is quite possible, in fact probable, that further construction will be entered upon by the Hydro-electric Commission, and many additional miles of transmission line will be necessary; therefore, having regard to the doubt about the jurisdiction and to the necessity which, according to the engineers, exists for the Hydro-electric Commission to have some jurisdiction, notably that of inspection, and to the fact that further construction will be entered upon, I am not disposed to press this bill in its present shape, leaving it standing on the order paper till I can have further

consultation with the engineers; because whatever its final form may be there are several provisions which experience has shown the necessity of being added."

"Do we understand," asked Hon. A. G. MacKay, "that the bill in its present form takes the power away from the Hydro-electric Commission and gives it to the Municipal Board?"

"In its present form, yes," replied Sir James.

**Leave Commission in Control.**

The shelving of the bill is understood to mean that the representations made to the Government will result in matters being left much as they are at present, and that the Hydro-electric Commission will be able to continue its policy of standardizing construction and equipment throughout the Province.

**Statute Revision Bills.**

A number of statute revision bills were given second readings, passing the House with no amendments and little discussion. During the consideration of the chartered accountants act, Hon. A. G. MacKay raised the principle of making the members of an organization liable for its debts, since it was given power by the Government to fix or vary its fees.

**Not a Trading Association.**

Hon. J. J. Foy explained that the institute of Chartered Accountants came under the same heading as an ordinary company in which there was no personal liability. This view of the matter was questioned by the Liberal leader, who pointed out that such an organization could not be considered as in the same class as a trading company.

"They are given the right to fix their fees," he continued. "If they make the fee \$5 when it should be \$10 to cover expenses I don't think outside parties should have to suffer."

**Wide Power for Land Surveyors.**

Hon. Mr. MacKay also objected to the wide power given land surveyors in the act governing their association. A section gave them a right to acquire real estate "for the purposes of the association." Hon. Mr. MacKay referred to the lack of definition in the bill of what the "purposes" were, and to an explanation by Hon. Mr. Cochrane that the section was intended to give them power to acquire property for headquarters, buildings, etc., he declared that it should be so stated in the bill.

"No one," he warned, "is able to deal with real estate more advantageously than land surveyors."

**Way With "Watered" Stock.**

Mr. J. W. Johnson of West Hastings has a bill which he thinks will put a damper upon over-capitalization. He declares that the high cost of living can be traced partly to this phase of industrialism; that companies forced to pay dividends on great quantities of "watered" stock must charge high prices for their products. Mr. Johnson, in his bill, of which he gave notice yesterday, seeks to fix the capitalization of a company as close as possible to the amount actually expended or about to be expended for buildings, equipment, and other necessary matters.

His bill also aims to prohibit companies from issuing bonus stock as an incentive to investors to take the preferred issues.

Mr. W. F. Nickle, Kingston, gave notice of an amendment to the public health act, giving municipalities the right to make regulations as to the storage of rags and other rubbish.

Mr. W. H. Hoyle, North Ontario, moved the first reading of a bill to amend the line fences act, also of one to amend the voters' lists act.

Mr. Allan Studholme, East Hamilton, moved amendments to the municipal act providing two-year terms for members of the Board of Control, and changing the date of election from New Year's to some earlier period.

**Budget Debate To-day.**

This afternoon the Legislators will plunge into the first real contest of the session—the debate upon the Budget. Hon. A. J. Matheson will deliver his Budget address, and as he does not expect to occupy the attention of the House very long the debate should be well under way before the House adjourns. Practically all the Liberal members of the House are preparing to take part.