

moral issue that Manitoba should be allowed to extend her boundaries, even to allow her to have within 70,000 square miles of the area of the Province of Ontario.

Mr. Allan Studholme (East Hamilton) called the five-mile strip "No Man's Land." The Government, he said, had failed to look into the future. It was willing to take any old thing that the Dominion Government would give it. If a private railway had wanted to go where this railway is going both the Dominion and the Manitoba Governments would give it more than Ontario was getting.

New Bills.

Mr. Proudfoot (Centre Huron) introduced a bill to amend the municipal act, which would allow municipalities to raise money for a temporary purpose. At present a corporation guaranteed bonds for which no sinking fund had been provided. They could pay certain electric railway bonds which have been guaranteed, and in consequence the company defaulted. The municipalities are thus in a hole and seek relief.

A bill introduced by Hon. W. H. Hearst, Minister of Lands, Forests and Mines, extends the operation of an act now in force to pay a bonus on copper, nickel and cobalt refined in the Province. The present act was to operate for a period of five years, and Mr. Hearst's bill is to continue it for a like period.

Mr. Evan E. Fraser (Welland) has a bill to repeal the clauses in the municipal act allowing municipalities to give cash bonuses to manufacturers, except by way of fixed assessment or total exemption for a period of ten years. Mr. Fraser will also introduce another measure providing that a bonus by-law to carry must be assented to by three-fourths of the vote at an election held for the purpose.

West of the Mattawa the line of the C.P.R. is the boundary north of which the hunting season extends from October 16 to November 15, and south from November 1 to 15. Capt. A. H. C. Machin (Kenora) introduced a bill to amend the game and fisheries act to have the open season north and south of the C.P.R. extended from October 16 to November 15, and he will also seek to shorten the open season for muskrats.

The city of Toronto's bill was introduced and read a first time. Mr. W. K. McNaught has charge of it.

COMPANIES OPPOSE FRANCHISE BILL

Large Deputation Protests to
Hydro-electric Commission.

STRONG LANGUAGE IS USED

Hon. Adam Beck Says Commission Has
Had Power All Along—Present
Legislation Makes More Clear—
Bill Will be Amended—A Further
Conference.

If one could typify the throng that gathered in the Railway Committee room of the Legislature yesterday, it seemed like a fight of gladiators. On the one side was arrayed the Hydro-electric Commission to hear protests against and defend the legislation which is being sought in the amendments to the Power Commission act and the municipal franchise act, both fathered by Hon. Adam Beck. On the other side was an imposing lineup of eminent counsel, headed by Hon. Wallace Nesbitt, K.C., holding a brief, as he stated, for 136 franchises representing an investment of \$85,000,000; Mr. A. W. Anglin, K.C., for the Toronto Electric Light Com-

pany; Mr. S. Johnston, representing Trent Valley interests, and City Solicitor Waddell, Hamilton.

Strong Language.

"Pernicious legislation, dishonest and immoral," were the terms used by Mr. Anglin to describe the clauses in the municipal franchises act which prevented any further extension of franchise rights which had not been assented to by the people without a reference in the event of any proposed extension to the ratepayers.

"You are clipping our wings," said Mr. Waddell. "You are taking away the powers of our Council. You will soon be running all the municipalities in Ontario."

"Not at all," replied Mr. Beck. "You have not objected to the bill in the four or five years in which it has been in force. We are simply giving the people the right to pass on these things."

Mr. Nesbitt crystallized his objections as affecting the section of the Power Commission bill in which the right is given to acquire all or part of a plant, and leave the remainder to the owner and only pay for the part so expropriated.

"That clause was in the original bill," said Mr. Beck. "It is a matter of compensation."

Mr. Nesbitt also objected to the breaking of solemn contracts of the municipalities, which, fixing rates and the definite time of franchises, had an aspect of permanency. He did not like the idea of an expert of the Commission passing upon equipment, and perhaps ordering an expenditure of \$100,000, which other engineers might not think warranted.

Want Restraint.

In regard to the clause providing for companies to put their wires in conduits which might be constructed, he thought some restraint should be put upon the capacity of these works so that they should not be built for requirements much in advance of this day, requiring the corporation to pay an arbitrary charge for facilities not needed. Mr. Nesbitt quoted legal opinions that the "Legislature should not take away that security for private property for the protection of which the Government itself was established."

Mr. Anglin said that his company wanted only a fair deal. In reply to Mr. Beck's statement that the company would be compensated for any loss it might sustain, he said it did not care to leave the question of compensation to be decided by anybody. It did not think the Hydro-electric Commission the proper tribunal to deal with such matters.

Mr. Beck said the municipalities themselves might enforce the regulations, but Mr. Anglin preferred the Commission as the lesser of the two evils.

Vested Rights.

In dealing with the bill respecting the extension of franchises, Mr. Anglin claimed that if there have been valid franchises created according to an existing law at the time, there should not now be passed any law which would invalidate that franchise. By the regulation that existing franchises could not be extended without a vote of the people, there had been created vested rights which it was not proper that the Legislature itself should take from those to whom they had been given.

Mr. Beck pointed out that this was not the purpose of the section of the act at all, and this would not be the effect of it.

"Then if this section does not do that," returned Mr. Anglin, "it is of no effect. And if it does I wish to say that in my opinion the section must be qualified as a piece of pernicious legislation, dishonest and immoral."

"That is enough," replied Mr. Beck at this; "we don't want that sort of language here."

"We are only here," returned the Chairman, "to hear objections to the bill. We are not discussing the act now. It has only just come from the printers, and it is going to be amended."

A further conference will be held between the Commission and a subcommittee representing those present, at which certain amendments will be drafted, and the operating difficulties of the legislation discussed.