

POWER BILL GIVEN SECOND READING

**Mr. Rowell Says Commission
is Given Too Much Power.**

SHOULD BE INDEPENDENT.

**If Municipalities Are to be Controlled
by Power Commission They
Should be Represented on Board
—Mr. Gamey a Police Magistrate.**

In moving the second reading of his bill to amend the Power Commission act last night in the Legislature, Hon. Adam Beck pointed out that the commission was now supplying power from Niagara Falls to nine cities, fourteen towns and six villages. During the year contracts had been entered into with seven municipalities, and thirty other contracts were now pending.

One of the chief obstacles to the extension of the work of the commission was found in the existence of privately-owned plants. In some cases one of these would acquire the business of its rival, and exclude the municipality from enjoying the benefit of the commission's system. In other cases good water powers were available, controlled by the Government or the commission.

With the view of affording additional protection to human life, the powers of the original act are enlarged to make the provisions include wiring of buildings, that shall be brought under inspection of the commission. Control of rates is extended to include municipalities generating, receiving or distributing electrical power. When a surplus is found, the commission will have power to order its application and disposition.

The clauses dealing with the placing of wires and cables underground are justified in that poles on the streets are unsightly, they are a menace to public safety, and occasion loss when there is a fire. The commission may order wires to be placed underground if a municipality offers to construct the conduits.

Another Commission Suggested.

Mr. Rowell objected to the principle involved in the bill in increasing the power of the commission over the municipalities. He thought that the municipalities should have representation on the commission if the commission were to control their affairs. If these powers were to be vested in any body they should be given to an independent commission like the Dominion Railway Board, in which the people had confidence. Mr. Rowell suggested a Public Utilities Commission, to which all such matters should be entrusted.

Mr. J. A. Ellis (West Ottawa) spoke of the benefits resulting from municipal competition in power and light, and referred to the success of the system in operation for seven years in Ottawa.

May be More Salaries.

In explaining the bill to provide a salary for Hon. Adam Beck, Sir James Whitney intimated that they might in the future provide remuneration for the other members of the Hydro-electric Commission.

In speaking of the bill to appoint a member of the House to report on the new territory to be added to the Province, Sir James Whitney added a clause giving Mr. Gamey powers of a Police Magistrate while conducting his party.

The Legislature adjourned at 12.40 this morning, after passing the main estimates for 1913.

CANNOT TAKE OVER ETOBICOKE FRANCHISE

**PRIVATE BILLS COMMITTEE
GIVES TORONTO THE COLD
SHOULDER.**

Toronto had no chance before the Private Bills Committee of the Legislature yesterday morning to secure the right to take over a portion of the Mimico line of the Toronto & York Radial Railway. From the first the city's representatives faced a hostile committee. Street railway officials were on hand en masse. A large deputation from Etobicoke filled the room and made the place look more like a country fair than a legislative hall. To a question by a member, "Does the railway render good service to the public?" a universal cry of "Yes, yes," indicated that talk and argument were useless.

Mr. T. Herbert Lennox (North York) did not think it fair to give the city the right to take over the line without giving the township of Toronto notice.

Corporation Counsel Drayton made an earnest plea to take over a portion of the lines. He showed that the city was not endeavoring to secure franchises through the municipalities. There was not one five-cent piece in it for the city. Although the Etobicoke Council at first turned the city's plan down, it was now in favor of the proposal.

"Why do you want to take over only a piece?" was asked of Mr. Drayton.

"We are perfectly content to take over the whole concern," replied Mr. Drayton. "Our applications have been for the whole and not for the part." It was impossible to take over the whole line without authority from the Legislature. He was unable to give a guarantee that the city would take the line off the highway. The objection to the proposal which was borne in upon the committee was the effect on Toronto township, which would be served by a three-mile stub, the city operating eight miles of the line.

Mr. Chisholm of Etobicoke said Etobicoke was too small a municipality to take the line over. "Then let the stronger municipality take it over, and we will have public ownership, which is the slogan nowadays."