

#### CLAUSES DEFERRED.

##### Toronto Bill Considered Before Private Bills Committee of Legislature.

When the Toronto bill was before the Private Bills Committee yesterday the clauses giving the city power to prune, remove, transplant trees, etc., without notice to owners of adjoining property, to charge a fee for testing all water faucets, and to make an annual contribution to the Firemen's Compensation Fund were ordered to stand over. These clauses were regarded as contentious, and the committee was not prepared to deal with them off-hand.

Those portions of the bill confirming the agreement with the Board of Harbor Commissioners, the extension of Crawford street and the civic guarantee of the bonds of the Municipal Loan Association were passed. The clause relating to the agreement with the Toronto-Hamilton Highway Commission was not dealt with. It is the intention to incorporate this as part of the Toronto-Hamilton highway bill.

The bill incorporating the Municipal Loan Association was reported to the House. Mr. J. W. Johnston (West Hastings) thought the rate charged was too high, but it was pointed out that in many cases the security was none too sound, and provision would have to be made against some losses.

The Galt bill was also passed.

#### WHITNEY MEMORIAL HIGHWAY.

##### Deputation From Dundas Asks For Roadway.

A "Whitney memorial highway," from Ottawa to Morrisburg, was urged upon the Provincial Government yesterday by a deputation from Dundas and the surrounding counties. Mr. Irving Hilliard, who succeeded the late Sir James Whitney as member for Dundas, introduced the deputation, which was received by Premier Hearst, Hon. G. Howard Ferguson and Hon. F. G. Macdormid. It was pointed out by speakers on the deputation that the Ottawa-Morrisburg route would serve the purpose of connecting the capital with that portion of the Province and the great east-to-west route, as well as the proposed Ottawa-Prescott road, and would be available at the same time by a much greater area. No figures were presented with regard to the financing of the project, the object of the deputation being to have the Government advised as to the advantages of the route.

The Premier was considerate. He expressed sympathy with the enterprise, and made it clear that in discussing a highway north and south in that section of the Province the representations made on behalf of the Morrisburg route would be kept in mind.

#### OUR PROVINCIAL FINANCES.

Ontario is as a foolish youth endowed with perfect health and phenomenal strength wasting his substance in thoughtless debauchery simply because he has sufficient endurance to do so without paying immediate penalties. Every foolish waste must some day be paid back, and great strength and endurance cannot do more than postpone the day of reckoning. Direct liabilities now aggregate \$40,405,000, a really sobering total compared with \$20,668,000 for the year ending with October, 1909, and still more sobering when compared with ten years ago, the total for the fiscal year 1904 being \$11,709,650. Of the debt of that earlier year about half, or \$5,840,004, was treasury bills issued on account of the Timiskaming Railway. Indirect or guarantee liabilities at the earlier date were \$2,600,000. These had grown to \$9,060,000 in 1909 and \$9,647,340, chiefly composed of the Mackenzie & Mann guarantee, in the fiscal year ending with October last.

In 1904 the total revenue of the Province was \$5,977,179. Of this the Dominion collected \$1,314,660 and turned it over to the Provincial Treasury as subsidies. The sale of assets, deceptively treated as revenue, brought, through the Woods and Forests Branch, \$2,650,782. The Province levied about a million of its own taxation, \$420,627 being obtained through the taxed corporations and \$458,679 in succession dues. The sale of assets, which is the chief support of Provincial expenditure, has continued from year to year. Last year it yielded \$2,340,659 of a total income of \$8,196,196. This is one of the most serious features of Ontario's financial position and operations. Had a reasonably provident timber policy been adopted the annual growth could be made to restore the annual depletion. The timber yield would then be virtually an assured crop, and could be honestly classed and safely treated as revenue. But as every sale leaves the Province poorer in timber and brings nearer the time of exhaustion, the Province is merely sitting idly and tolerantly by while the Government plays the prodigal with its inherited estate.

Plunging deeper and deeper into debt while at the same time selling assets is an exhibition of the rake's progress, for which the full penalty must be paid in burdensome taxation. Last year's grand total of expenditure was \$20,076,461. The revenue to meet this, omitting the two and a quarter millions received from the sale of assets, was \$8,236,000. As this situation is not due to the war or any other exceptional influence, there is no outlook, under existing conditions, for anything other than more borrowing, more expenditure, and more debt from year to year. Ontario's prosperity has been largely due in the past to immunity from taxation. A great estate well managed provided for real needs, and could provide for real needs on the present scale of development. But improvident sale and alienation, expanding extravagance, and an easy neglect of opportunities have brought their natural result.

The Province can safely bear the burden. Greater debts to be contracted can also be carried. There is the poor satisfaction, often advanced in apology, that most Provinces and States are in no better financial position, while many are worse. That is no excuse for reducing the Province to what may be regarded as a common level of debt. The burden will be felt though the cause of the pressure may not be discerned. It will be felt in every factory and workshop, in every store and office, and in every domestic circle. A knowledge of this should make the people determined to retrieve what has been lost, to equalize income and outlay, and to restore the easier conditions of a wisely economical regime.