

PROVINCE OVERRIDES THE MUNICIPALITIES

Takes Away Authority Over Some Officials

LIBERAL PROTEST TIMELY

**Hon. W. D. McPherson Admits There
Are Isolated Cases and Premier
Promises Government Will Give
Matter Consideration.**

What was declared to be a demand for real self-government on the part of municipalities was brought out in the Legislature yesterday during the discussion of the bill of Mr. William McDonald (North Bruce), the purport of which was to give municipal Councils full control in connection with the appointment of Medical Health Officers. He stated that complaint had been made that the powers of Councils had been taken away. Municipalities could appoint a Medical Health Officer, but if he did not turn out satisfactory they could not dismiss him without the consent of the Provincial Board of Health. He knew a case in a municipality adjoining that in which he lived where a doctor ran up a bill against the municipality of \$1,600. There was an outbreak of measles and the doctor thought it a good opportunity to make the bill high and the municipality had to pay. It resulted in the defeat of the Reeve, who stood behind the Medical Health Officer.

Taking Advantage of Law.

The member for North Bruce maintained that they must not centralize power too much to-day in the Government of Ontario; they must not take away from the municipalities their full rights in regard to the officers they appoint and the men they pay. "There is no man in this Assembly who is more anxious than I am to see the public health of this Province maintained," remarked Mr. McDonald, "but I am of the opinion there are some Medical Health Officers taking advantage of the law as it stands and imposing bills on the Councils that they would not put in if they did not know the Provincial Board of Health would have to consent to their dismissal before they could be put out of office." He knew of one municipality in the county of Bruce which wanted to dismiss a doctor, and Dr. McCullough of the Provincial Health Department wrote back saying that he would not consent to it.

Minister Says Isolated Cases.

Hon. W. D. McPherson (Provincial Secretary) said there were in the Province a large number of Medical Officers of Health, and if there had been any particular grievances on the part of the municipalities one would think that the number of instances would be overwhelming. He had made inquiry as to the facts in regard to this, and he found that complaints by the municipalities as against their health officers are comparatively few in number, and that where there had apparently been a case made out by the municipality against the medical officer the municipality was satisfied with the way the Provincial Board of Health had acted.

To the request that he withdraw his bill, Mr. McDonald said if other members found no objections in their part of the Province he would not press the matter to a vote, but in his locality it was certainly a burning question. The case he had particularly referred to was in Mr. Came-

ron's riding, the township of Sullivan, in the county of Grey.

Serves His Purpose.

Mr. J. C. Elliott (West Middlesex) admitted that a medical officer might get unpopular with the municipality on quarantining and other matters, but it came to be a question whether in the interests of public health such an invasion of the rights of self-government, as some termed it, was justified. He thought an amendment to the effect that if cause was assigned it should be necessary to have the consent of the Provincial Board.

Mr. McDonald withdrew his bill on the understanding, as he humorously put it, that the Provincial Secretary would put matters right.

Mr. Irwin Hilliard (Dundas) had a bill on a similar subject, and explained that it provided that in the case of a dispute between a medical officer and a municipality as to salary the matter be referred to the County Judge.

One Law for All.

Hon. Mr. McPherson said he saw no reason why a Medical Health Officer should be treated in a different category to any other officer in the corporation.

Government Will Inquire.

Mr. V. A. Sinclair (South Oxford) supported Mr. Hilliard, and Mr. McDonald exclaimed: "They are now really behind my bill. There is something in this. The Provincial Secretary is not in touch with the situation in this Province. He may know what is going on in Toronto, but he does not know what is going on throughout the rural parts of Ontario. If you men on both sides who represent rural constituencies would stand up and speak your minds there would be something doing." (Laughter.)

Premier Hearst suggested the withdrawing of the bill and the Government would give the whole matter its best consideration.

Mr. Hilliard said he had really accomplished his object, and he would withdraw the bill.

Land Patents Inquiry.

When Mr. Dewart asked his questions relating to the issuing of land patents, Mr. G. Howard Ferguson held that it was a matter for a motion for a return.

The member for Southwest Toronto thought the questions were so few that they might be answered without requiring a return.

Hon. Mr. Ferguson—It involves the searching of the files of the department over a very considerable time and a lot of work. The proper way is to ask for a return.

Mr. Dewart—Can the hon. member state when that will be brought down?

Hon. Mr. Ferguson—As soon as it can be.

Mr. Dewart (with a smile)—Thank you.

Mr. Dewart's questions were: How many patents of lands have been issued, under the mines act, in the District of Sudbury to corporations since February 8, 1905, in addition to the six patents of land issued to the Canadian Copper Co. on the 13th day of December, 1916? To what corporations were such patents issued; on what dates; and in what townships were the lands situated? Were the regulations with regard to timber preservation taken advantage of by those who staked claims, and were they so relieved from doing the necessary development work required by the mining law of Ontario? If so, in what cases?

T. & N. O. Accounts.

In view of the statement of Hon. T. W. McGarry in his reply to Mr. Rowell last week that the T. & N. O. Railway was not in the same position politically as the Intercolonial Railway, and that its accounts should not be printed in the public accounts, Mr. Hartley Dewart introduced a bill to amend the T. & N. O. Railway act to provide that any member of the House may inspect the accounts of the Commission, and take extracts from the books.

Mr. Dewart also introduced a bill to amend the Legislative Assembly act so that the payments of any sums for any service to any person through any Government Commission or board may be regarded as the