

THE HIGHWAY ACT.

Hazen's Back Trail Measure Sharply Criticized by the Opposition--Passed Second Reading.

The bill to amend the Highway act was considered by the legislature in committee on Thursday evening, Mr. Slipp in the chair.

Mr. Lowell objected to the principle that the government had the appointing of the Highway board, and he did not think it was right that one of the men elected by the people as a councillor in parishes where there were three councillors should not be allowed to serve on the board. In very few parishes of the province were there three councillors, and it was pretty hard legislation to say that one of them was not capable of expending the money for the highways. Why not allow all three to serve on the highway board, or if one must retire, allow the majority to say who, and not have the government make the choice. St. John county had had a good road act, and he thought it should be retained.

Mr. Pinder thought that under the act now before the committee the control of the Highways was left with the people. The government furnished a large share of the money to be spent on the roads, and it should have some say in the expenditure. He thought the composition of the Highway board was about as fair to all parties concerned as it could be. He thought it was fair to use the roads and raise a part of the money, and fair to the government, which is responsible for a large share of expenditure.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell was of the opinion that the member for St. John county had not taken the whole section into consideration and acquainted himself with the act, otherwise he would not have spoken as he did. He thought no injustice was done because one member could not serve on the Highway board where there were three councillors in the parish. In every parish the government itself spent as much money or more than was raised in that parish, and it was unreasonable to say that the government should not have a representative on the Highway board. Two county councillors elected for a parish would be members of the Highway board, and the other member of the board to be appointed by the parish. No person thought of saying it was unjust or unreasonable because one councillor was left of the board of revisors, neither was it unfair that one should be left off the Highway board. Misrepresentation of the Highway act had been the order of the day for the past year all over the province, just as the county councils who were willing to give the act a fair trial were misrepresented. He believed the provision for the election and constitution of the Highway board was as fair legislation as could be devised.

Mr. Sormany did not see how under the bill the Highway board was responsible to the Municipal council. He thought it was rather responsible to the government.

Hon. Mr. Hazen said that the county councillors themselves are the Highway boards, and it was impossible to get closer to the people than were the councillors elected by each parish. The county council had full power to fix remuneration for members of the Highway board or to pay them nothing for their services. The council also fixed the amount of wages to be paid to men employed on the roads. The board was responsible to the council for all expenditure, and had to give an account for every dollar paid out, which, he presumed, would be published along with the other accounts, and the rate-payers could see just exactly what was done with their money, and if they were not satisfied, they could turn out the councillors and try new ones. This system placed very large control in the councils and made them directly responsible to the people for the expenditure of the money and the maintenance of the roads.

Mr. Byrne suggested that as the county councillors are elected for two years it would be impossible to get clear of a member of the Highway board who did not prove satisfactory every two years, and might not be at might be better to allow the county councillors to appoint the Highway board the first year. He suggested that it be appointed by the government.

Mr. Copp said he believed the money should be handed over directly to the municipality, give them whatever could be spared from the provincial treasury, make them responsible for keeping up the roads, and tell them they would have to raise whatever balance was necessary. He did not believe the province would ever get a satisfactory road law by partial control by the municipal council, with a string kept on it by the government. He believed the province was almost a unit for absolute and complete control by the municipal council, with a government grant should be given directly to the county council, and Mr. Burgess enquired how the money they should appropriate it. Under the

bill the government fixes the amount to go to each parish.

Hon. Mr. Hazen explained that the amount for the several parishes was apportioned from the best information in possession of the board of works as to the needs of respective districts. That was the provision of the Highway act of 1904, and seemed to have worked well, and he had heard very little complaint in that regard.

Mr. Sweeney said that under such a system of apportioning the grant by the government, it was just possible that one parish would get a very large and fair grant, and another equally deserving, would be cut out entirely. Why not leave the distribution entirely in the hands of the county council. The chief plank of the hon. gentleman when in opposition was that they would give the county council absolute control of the Highways, and they were bound to carry out their promises in that regard and meet the wishes of the people.

Hon. Mr. Hazen said he did not think anything would be gained by discussing at the present stage stage whether the government had kept its pledges or not. He thought it would be far better to consider the detail of the bill free from political pledges. As regards the distribution of the grant for the highways and having regard to the population in the many districts, and of the amount to be raised, of the length of the roads in the parishes that had to be kept up and taking everything into consideration, he believed the province would get a fairer distribution if it was left with the Board of Works. In the county council there were two or three dominant minds, and if left to them they would very likely get more than an equitable share for their parishes. The Chief Commissioner would have due regard to the needs of every parish.

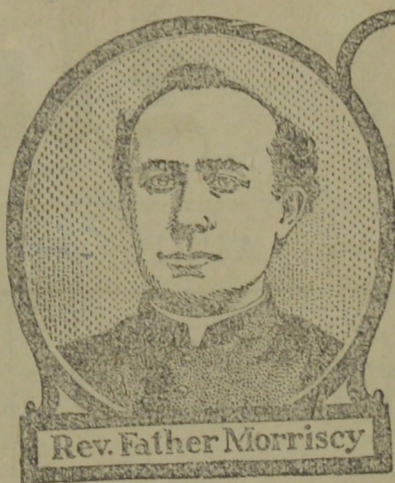
Mr. Robinson thought no injustice would be done by allowing three councillors on the Highway board where there were three elected to a parish. Some parishes were large, and the needs better represented by three councillors than two. He believed that in the past there had been a lack of system in the distribution of the road money. Why not adopt a system similar to the distribution of the school money? The needs of the roads in a particular parish could not be judged from the population, and while it was true that a newly settled district sparsely populated might need large government grants for the roads, it was also true that the roads were destroyed and worn out more quickly in a thickly populated district.

MR. COPP'S CRITICISM.

Mr. Copp agreed with the Premier that the House should try and a good road law and discuss it irrespective of political affiliations. Up to the time of the road act 1904 there had been dual responsibility in connection with the maintenance of the road, and it was found that often times men appointed by the councils and those appointed by the government were not working in harmony and a large part of the road monies was thereby wasted. He took the ground when the act of 1904 was under discussion that either one body or the other should have full responsibility. That either the government should take full control of the roads or that they should give the county councils complete control. The county could not be more closely interested than was the county council, and he believed that the whole care of the road should be placed in the hands of the councillors who are elected directly by the people. He did not see any necessity for a secretary treasurer of the Highway board.

Hon. Mr. Hazen said there must be some person on the board to keep the minutes of its meetings, records of its appointments, make reports to the government, and a lot of other similar work. As it was desirable that the secretary be a permanent official, and the councillors are elected every two years, and might not be at the council longer than one term, it was thought best that a secretary be appointed by the government.

Mr. Copp said he believed the money should be handed over directly to the municipality, give them whatever could be spared from the provincial treasury, make them responsible for keeping up the roads, and tell them they would have to raise whatever balance was necessary. He did not believe the province would ever get a satisfactory road law by partial control by the municipal council, with a string kept on it by the government. He believed the province was almost a unit for absolute and complete control by the municipal council, with a government grant should be given directly to the county council, and Mr. Burgess enquired how the money they should appropriate it. Under the



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Hon. Mr. Morriscy said the government recognized there was great differences of opinion as to the best way to apportion the road grant. If the members of the House would themselves apportion the grant it would be perfectly satisfactory to him and relieve him of a lot of responsibility, but he did not think such a plan was possible. The people elect a government to administer the affairs of the province and would hold the government responsible for honest expenditure. If the provincial revenues were simply handed over to the county councils, the government would have absolutely no check nor means of securing honest expenditure. The best the Board of Works could do in apportioning the road monies was to act upon the information it had regarding the needs of the various districts. A new and thinly settled district might require more on its roads than an older settlement, much more wealthy and with more people. Those were matters that must necessarily be left very largely with the Board of Works, but at the same time the Highway board for each parish had the say as to how and where the money should be laid out and who would do the work.

Mr. Woods told of some of the difficulties of securing a fair expenditure of the road monies under dual responsibility, and agreed with the principle that one body of men should be responsible for the condition of the road. Under the bill that body was the Highway board elected by the people and directly responsible to the people. It was true that county councillors were sometimes forgetful and neglectful of their duties if left entirely to themselves, and he knew of one parish where last year only \$5 of road tax was collected.

INCREASING THE BURDENS.

Mr. Lowell said that in the County of St. John every one of the three councillors for each parish had the spending of the government grant, and he thought it was not just to have it go abroad that the County Council of St. John was not willing to assess itself for the road. The bill before the Committee was taken almost wholly from the St. John County Road Act and he did not believe the present government had brains enough to draft a highway act in fifty years. There was nothing in this bill to show that the Municipal Councils had anything to say about the expenditure of the money. The government was creating a lot of needless machinery and heaping more burdens upon the people. He did not see any reason for appointing a paid Secretary-Treasurer to do work the County Officials were already doing.

The Secretaries of the Highway Boards would not act without salary and that meant just that much money taken out of the people. The municipalities already had a Treasurer and an Auditor and the road money should go through the hands of a lot of officials appointed by the government. The councillors elected for parishes were the ones to know the needs of the county and they should have the control.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell pointed out that a large number of the county Council of St. John live in the city and knew absolutely nothing about the needs of the country roads.

Mr. Lowell spoke at some length and contended that they, he and Mr. Munro said the bill before the committee was precisely in line with the platform of this side of the House where they were in opposition. The County Councillors elected by the people who would constitute the Highway Board and absolute dictation as to who the officials of that parish would be. The Highway Board would meet and divide the parish into as many districts as they saw fit and appoint commissioners. The commissioners would subdivide the districts and appoint surveyors whose duty it would be to notify the people and call them out for road work. The bill gave the people the option of doing statute labor and if they paid road tax in cash it went direct to the commissioner and spent it right there in that district. He felt that the province would welcome this measure which gave the management and control of the high-

(Continued on third page.)

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Woman Assaulted.

Brookville, April 22.—As Mrs. Lillie, wife of Dr. C. B. Lillie of Athens, was leaving her mother's home at 9 p.m. Tuesday, she was brutally assaulted and gagged to see a patient and found her semi-conscious by the roadside in front of her home on Elgin street.

Mrs. Lillie has been the recipient of anonymous letters, and no doubt this is the outcome of it.

The local chief of police is investigating.

Expects 200,000 Immigrants.

Ottawa, April 22.—W. D. Scott, superintendent of immigration, stated to the Commons' committee on agriculture and immigration yesterday morning that he expected the immigration to Canada this year would total 200,000 and that 70,000 of these would come from the United States.

As a result of the rigid inspection system in force at ports of entry during the past year 4,500 immigrants been turned back as undesirable.

Charivari for Aged Bride and Groom.

St. Catharines, April 22.—Last Thursday at Vineland, Charles Mayer, aged 77, married Mrs. Barbara Battenhouse, aged 72. They went for a short wedding trip and returned on Tuesday night.

The young people of the neighborhood gathered and gave the aged couple a charivari, which they took very kindly, the groom handing out a good-sized banknote to buy refreshments with.

When a horse picks up a nail in his foot, what does the driver do? Does he whip the limping, lagging animal and force him along? Not unless he wants to ruin the horse. At the first sign of lameness he jumps down examines the foot and carefully removes the cause of lameness. What is called "weak stomach" is like the lameness of a horse, only to be cured by removing the cause of the trouble. If you stimulate the stomach with "whisky medicines" you keep it going at every day the condition is growing worse. A few doses sometimes of Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery will put the disordered stomach and its allied organs of digestion and nutrition in perfect condition. Ninety-eight times in every hundred "Golden Medical Discovery" will cure the worst ailments originating in diseases of the stomach. It always helps. It almost always cures. To cure constipation use Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets. They're sure.

The cheapest tea to use is not the lowest priced. You can buy tea a few cents a pound cheaper that will make a drink, but if you want an absolutely pure, healthful, cleanly-prepared tea use "Salada." It is infinitely more delicious and decidedly more economical than other teas, because it goes further.

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500 pair of the latest styles Men's Trousers, all pretty patterns, slaughtered to pieces special for tomorrow and all next week.

Wise people will benefit by it

- \$2.25 Men's Trousers, special for tomorrow - \$1.19
- 3.50 Men's Trousers, special for tomorrow - 1.99
- 3.25 Men's Trousers, special for tomorrow - 1.79

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