



"HE SEEKS THE SECLUSION THAT A CAUBEEN GRANTS."

AT THE MONOPOLY LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

AT the last meeting of the Monopoly Legislation Committee of the Provincial Legislature, Hon. Adam Antine in the chair, the application of the Universal Vampire Corporation for an indefinite extension of its powers, franchises and privileges, so as to enable it to acquire control of anything left in reach in Toronto, or within a reasonable or unreasonable distance thereof, as the case may be, in spite of any legislation to the contrary, came up for consideration.

The Vampire was represented by Mr. Grabsneak, Q.C., of the eminent firm of Grabsneak, Pillager & Squeezum, Mr. Verbose, Q.C., of Pompus and Verbose, and Mr. Wheezy Sprout, as considerable opposition to the measure was anticipated. It was contended that the bill was an infringement upon the vested rights of the Municipal Freebooters Company, which was ably represented by a distinguished array of counsel, including Hon. P. Twister, of Twister, Scalliwag and Boozey, Ananias Limberjaw Q.C., and Mr. Mullethead, who refused to be a Q.C. on the ground that the thing was getting altogether too common, don't you know. Mr. Larger, city solicitor, watched the proceedings on behalf of the city as a matter of form. There was also a large number of contractors, boodlers, promiscuous on-hangers, influential citizens and citizens who want to be considered influential, in attendance.

The members of the Committee, knowing that it wouldn't get to work until at least half an hour after the appointed time, strolled in leisurely and took their places. Hon. Adam Antine, after a brief conference with the leading counsel, called the Committee to business.

Mr. Grabsneak, on behalf of the Universal Vampire Corporation, said that the measure had been fully discussed and approved by the City Council, the guardians of the public interest. He need not do more than mention that his clients had vast financial interests at stake, interests which would be seriously imperilled if some of the limitations which it was proposed to introduce were imposed, to show them how unjust, how unreasonable,

what an unwarrantable interference with the rights of capital it would be to amend this legislation in the direction sought. He did not in the least wish to cast any reflections upon the Municipal Freebooters, but he would point out that, by an Act passed in the year 1856, the Universal Vampire acquired a potential right, a *locus standi* in the matter, which in no way could be interfered with by any subsequent agreement.

He spoke in this strain for half an hour, and his remarks were received with an amount of deference duly proportioned to the amount of capital he represented and the \$100 a day retainer paid him by the Vampire Corporation.

The chairman said that as the only opposition was likely to come from the Municipal Freebooters Company, their representative would be next granted a hearing.

Mr. Ananias Limberjaw, Q.C., said he represented a company possessing two and a half millions of capital—

MR. HAWBUCK, M.P.P. (in a deeply reverential tone)—"Gosh!"

Mr. Limberjaw—invested in good faith and on the prospect of being enabled to extend their operations. They claimed that the sphere of their operations under their contract with the municipality of Hogg's Hollow might be seriously interfered with by the powers granted to the Universal Vampire Corporation, of whom he desired to speak with all the respect due to their position in the world of finance. As to the Act of 1856, quoted by his learned friend, it was clearly *ultra vires*, if indeed it had not been repealed by subsequent legislation, and so on for about three-quarters of an hour.

Mr. Verbose, Q.C., ably replied on behalf of the Universal Vampire Corporation, and was followed on the other side by Mr. Mullethead (not a Q.C.)

The chairman suggested that the points of difference remaining between the two concerns could be settled by a compromise. After a consultation between the eminent counsel, an amendment was drafted embodying some concessions to the Municipal Freebooters, and everybody was apparently satisfied.

THE CHAIRMAN—"Well, if there are no other objections, we will take a vote on the bill as amended."

MR. TOYLER (pushing his way forward with difficulty through the crowd of boodlers and lawyers)—"Before that bill goes through I'd like to say a few words."

THE CHAIRMAN—"Eh? Who do you represent?"

MR. TOYLER—"Oh, a few thousand hard-working citizens."

MR. HAWBUCK (yawning)—"Say, this makes me tired. Guess we've hearn enough gab for one mornin'."

THE CHAIRMAN—"Well, I suppose we must listen to you. But please be as short as you can. The Committee can't sit much longer."

Mr. Toyler makes a short, pointed address, showing that the proposed legislation is directly contrary to the interests of the public, and gives away franchises of immense future value for nothing. The Committee listens with ill-concealed impatience.

MR. SQUAREMAN—"I'm here, Mr. Chairman, to present a few considerations from the same point of view."

THE CHAIRMAN (impatiently)—"We can't sit here all day. Your side has been already heard. (To the Committee.) Do you wish to hear Mr. Squareman?"

HAYSEED LEGISLATORS—"Naw!" "Naw!"

THE CHAIRMAN—"We can't hear any more objections."

MR. SQUAREMAN (retiring)—"You can hear the law-