

was only distributed to day; but if hon. gentlemen have looked over it—it is very short—they will see that there could be no doubt at all in the minds of the committee. I may say the committee were unanimous; they did not occupy over an hour, or an hour and a half in examining the witnesses, and it is the most conclusive case that has ever been presented to the Senate, so far as I am aware.

The motion was agreed to on a division.

HON. MR. READ moved that the Bill be read the third time presently.

The motion was agreed to, and the Bill was read the third time and passed.

WEST ONTARIO PACIFIC RAILWAY CO'S BILL.

SECOND READING.

HON. MR. O'DONOHUE, in the absence of Mr. Plumb, moved the second reading of Bill (94), "An Act to incorporate the West Ontario Pacific Railway Company,"

The motion was agreed, to and the Bill was read the second time.

PAWNBROKERS' BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

The House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole on Bill (R), "An Act to make further provision respecting Pawnbrokers."

In the Committee.

HON. MR. GOWAN—The first and only clause in this Bill is very short. The House is already in possession of the principles upon which this Bill is based, and the enactment is short and simple, and will provide a remedy which has been suggested by the court and judges as necessary in order to secure those who are very open to fraud and impositions from being defrauded and imposed upon by persons who are disposed to do so.

HON. SIR ALEX. CAMPBELL—What is the rate of interest authorized by law?

HON. MR. READ.

HON. MR. GOWAN—I cannot exactly say the rate; it requires some computation. It is five-sixths of a cent per month on sums not exceeding four dollars, and I think, so far as I can state without computation, it is equal to about 17 per cent.

HON. MR. DICKEY—The Committee will be entitled to some further information on this Bill. It evidently refers to some existing law. As far as I know there is no law applicable to the whole Dominion at present on our statute book. There is the proposed consolidation of the statutes of the late province of Canada, and the acts passed in the province of New Brunswick, but this is an act that applies to the whole Dominion, and the reason I call my hon. friend's attention to it is that this Bill provides that—"Every pawnbroker who charges in respect of any goods pawned any higher rate than is authorized by law shall, on conviction be fined, etc." Now, as regards the application of this in parts of the Dominion where there is no existing law respecting pawnbrokers, it would be nugatory and would introduce rather an element of confusion into the statute. I also submit to the Minister of Justice that, with regard to this Bill, it would very properly be an amendment to the Act, or a clause to be introduced in the consolidation of the laws, if there is a chapter relating to this subject of pawnbrokers brought in—I suppose on the idea that it is within the purview of the Dominion Parliament—and this, certainly, would be a proper matter, if at all to be dealt with, to be included in that section.

HON. SIR ALEX. CAMPBELL—Should it pass both Houses, it will form part of the consolidation.

HON. MR. DICKEY—I do not know exactly about that. Looking at the Bill in its present form, and without knowing whether the other chapters are to be passed, it is very confusing and incomplete, because it speaks of charges now entitled to be made by law, and at the same time there is no law particularly applicable to that subject except the general law of interest, and the law of interest would be the one, in the absence of any