

tures, the debentures to be issued not to bear any higher rate of interest than the ones that are outstanding. The Company believe that they can issue debentures at a lower rate of interest and save a large amount of money by retiring outstanding ones. They wish also to have authority to dispose of certain lands at Sarnia or Point Edward, where they have more lands than they require. They ask for authority to convey it to such purchasers as may wish to acquire it. I understand that the town of Sarnia desire to purchase some of it for a park, and the Company have now no authority to sell.

The motion was agreed to and the bill was read the second time.

REPORTS ON PRIVATE BILLS.

TIME EXTENDED.

HON. MR. ABBOTT moved that the time limited for receiving reports on Private Bills which expires to-day, be extended to Friday the 24th day of June next.

The motion was agreed to.

PUBLIC STORES BILL.

THIRD READING.

The House resolved itself into a Committee of the whole on Bill (20) "An Act respecting Public Stores."

In the Committee.

HON. MR. POWER—With respect to the third clause, it gives unlimited powers to the contractors officers and workmen of the Department, "to apply such marks or any of them in or on any such stores." Possibly this might be limited to a case where the contractors or officers are acting under the orders of the Department; but as the clause reads it would authorize the workmen of any of those departments to apply those marks, even though the workmen had no instructions to do so; and any workman who did apply those marks without authority from the Department would not be liable to any penalty for so doing.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—It will be perceived that there is a limitation in this clause "to such stores," that is to say to public stores. Public stores, as described in sub-section C, include "all stores under the care, superintendance or control of any public department as herein defined, or of any person in the service of such department;" so that the power given in clause 3, is only to apply marks to the stores of the description mentioned in sub-section C. The importance of being able to have those marks impressed upon public stores in a summary way, in respect of contracts, arises probably from the fact that contractors' materials, delivered often at great distances from any departmental control or supervision, are advanced upon—that is to say, they are taken into calculation in the work, and it is necessary to prevent those stores, after having been placed on Government property and under Government control, from being seized upon for contractor's debts after the Government have acquired a right in them by advancing money on progress estimates.

HON. MR. POWER—The explanation is quite satisfactory.

The clause was agreed to.

On the 5th clause.

HON. MR. POWER—I should like to ask the leader of the House why the distinction is made in the 5th and 6th clauses between the offences mentioned in those two clauses. The 5th clause provides that anyone who destroys or obliterates Her Majesty's mark on public stores shall be guilty of felony and liable to imprisonment for any term less than two years; the 6th clause provides that the offender shall be guilty of a misdemeanor if he receives such stores without lawful authority. I know that there is some difference between the two offences; that the one in the 5th clause is somewhat more serious than the other, but I do not see any object in perpetuating the distinction between felonies and misdemeanors. I think the procedure which is applicable to a misdemeanor is quite sufficient in the case of this offence, which is not after all such a very serious one.

HON. MR. READ.