

Legislature of Ontario.

WEDNESDAY, Jan. 29.

The Speaker took the chair at 3 o'clock.

PETITIONS.

The following petitions were presented:—

By Mr. Blake—From about 3,000 inhabitants of Toronto, praying that no charter be granted to the Licensed Victuallers Association. This petition was 13 yards long.

By Mr. McGill—From inhabitants of township of Pickering and Village of Raglen with the same prayer.

By Mr. Hays—From the municipal council of Oshawa, with the same prayer.

By Mr. Supple—From inhabitants of Pembroke with the same prayer.

From the members of the Toronto Bar in favour of the Bill in the Law of Evidence, signed by Hon. J. H. Cameron and 60 others.

By Mr. Strange—From the Northern Railway Company, against the charter asked for the Toronto, Grey and Bruce railway.

By Mr. Cockburn—From inhabitants of York and Ontario, for a charter for a railway between Toronto and Lake Nipissing.

By Hon. M. C. Cameron—From inhabitants of the city of Toronto, praying a charter for the Toronto and Lake Nipissing Railway.

By Mr. Wallis—From inhabitants of Toronto, praying for amendments in the Municipal Act.

By Mr. Scott—From 487 inhabitants of the township of Sydenham, praying for the incorporation of the Toronto, Grey and Bruce Railway Company.

By Hon. M. C. Cameron—From the Bishop, Clergy and Laity of the Church of England in the diocese of Toronto, in Synod assembled, praying for a reformatory for young females.

By Mr. Perry—From the Municipal Council of the town of Woodstock, praying that no alteration be made in the law relating to tavern keepers.

ERRATUM.

Mr. McLEOD called attention to an error in the Votes and Proceedings of yesterday, by which he was represented as mover of Hon. Mr. Wood's motion to refer the tavern-keepers' petition to the Municipal Committee. He was not disposed to father the Treasurer's acts in this way, and asked that the error be corrected.

WITHDRAWN.

Mr. CUMBERLAND asked leave to withdraw the petition of Mrs. Morton against the Act to extend the Erie and Niagara Railway.—Agreed.

PROTECTION OF GAME.

Sir HENRY SMITH, from the committee to whom was referred the Bill for the better protection of Game, reported the same with amendments.

PRIVATE BILLS.

Sir HENRY SMITH, from the Private Bills Committee, reported the Bill to incorporate the Ontario College at Platon, and the Bill to vest certain real estate in the Rector and Churchwardens of the Church of St. John, Port Hope.

GRAND RIVER NAVIGATION.

Hon. Mr. WOOD introduced a Bill respecting the Grand River Navigation Company.

REAL ESTATE OF INTESTATES.

Mr. SEXTON inquired whether Government intend to introduce during the present session any measure for the purpose of enabling administrators to dispose, by sale or otherwise, so much of the real estate of intestates as may be necessary to liquidate the debts and liabilities of such intestates.

Hon. Mr. CAMERON said it was not the intention of the Government to introduce any such measure in the present session; but the matter was of very considerable importance, and would engage the attention of the Government.

COMMISSION OF THE PEACE.

Mr. MAOHETT inquired whether the Government intend, at an early date, to issue a Commission of the Peace for the several Counties in Ontario.

Hon. J. S. McDONALD said the new law on the subject would necessitate the issuing of new commissions very early in the recess.

PUBLIC LANDS IN GREY.

Mr. SCOTT inquired whether the Government intend to make any abatement in the amount chargeable against public lands in the County of Grey, and whether it is intended to resume such lands as have not been paid for in full, nor settled upon, and if so, whether for re-sale or free grant, and when. He said that during the elections there was a great deal of talk in several of the Northern counties about the free grants. The view was also propounded by several of the candidates, that some abatement should be made of the amounts chargeable against the lands that had been settled upon by actual settlers. In many instances the settlers had been unable to pay, large arrears of interest had accrued, and he thought some consideration should be shown to them. He approved of the free grant policy so far as it went, but he thought they should look at home and settle the lands in their own immediate localities before they proceeded to settle these lands in the north-west.

Hon. J. S. McDONALD said the Commissioner of Crown Lands had already intimated that it was his intention, as soon as he could, to take up the subject—to obtain a list of all the lots upon which arrears were due, and to call upon the parties to pay up arrears—the lands being liable to forfeiture if the arrears were not so paid. As to remission of arrears, where there were cases of hardship, each case must receive consideration by itself. The Government had not yet decided what policy they should carry out in regard to those who were in arrears, or as to how much should be remitted. It was possible that before the house rose, the Commissioner of Crown Lands might get authority to deal with this matter, so far as the school lands were concerned—because these school lands were appropriated for a purpose which could not be disregarded. But, in regard to Crown lands, there was a power on the part of the Commissioner to remit. The whole question was one of a serious nature—particularly until they knew how far they could deal with assets, as regarded the school lands which had to be determined upon, in the settlement with Lower Canada. It was not the intention of the Government to depart from the policy they had announced, of continuing the free grants to the new townships.

Mr. SCOTT (Grey) said he had never advocated the giving of free grants in the old townships. He had merely wished to ascertain how far the subject had been under the consideration of the Government.

SHOP LICENSES.

Mr. PERRY inquired if it is the intention of Government to raise a revenue for Provincial purposes from shop, saloon and amusements licenses, and if so, in what manner.

Hon. J. S. McDONALD said that, until the liabilities between Upper and Lower Canada were settled, the Government did not feel called upon to impose any tax of any description. It was not the policy of any Government to impose taxes, when taxes were not required. If, subsequently, our surplus should be absorbed, and new taxes were required, it was very likely these licenses would come under the class of matters to be taxed.

IMPROVEMENT FUND.

Mr. BLAKE moved an address for copies of all petitions and correspondence touching the Land Improvement Fund. He said he made this motion in order to bring before the Government and the house the case—if he might so term it—of his own county, and, he believed, of other counties, on the subject of the Land Improvement Fund. He did not mean to press his motion for the petitions and correspondence, but moved it as a Parliamentary mode of enabling him to make a statement on a subject of deep interest to the people of these counties, and one which, in his judgment, ought to receive the consideration of the Government, anterior to the arbitration between Upper and Lower Canada. On a former occasion, when a question was put on this subject, it was stated, and rightly stated, by the Government that it would be impossible for them to act on any view of their own as to the land improvement fund, so as to deal with so much of that fund as was derivable from the proceeds of the school lands, in advance of