

SIX DOLLARS PER ANNUM;
SINGLE NUMBERS 3c.

WHOLE NO. 5575

Legislature of Ontario.

THURSDAY, Feb. 6.

The Speaker took the chair at 3 o'clock.

BILLS INTRODUCED.

The following Bills were introduced and read a first time:—

Mr. Greely—To incorporate the Gananoque Water Power Company.

Mr. Coyne—To incorporate the town of Brampton. He explained that the reason why they did not avail themselves of the general Act, was that Brampton had not the necessary population; while, being the County Town, it was often inconvenient in legal proceedings that it had not the *status* of a town.

Mr. Cumberland—To incorporate the Toronto Trust Company.

Hon. J. S. McDonald—To provide for the inspection of Asylums, Hospitals, Common Gaols and Reformatories in this Province.

Mr. Cumberland—To amend the charter of the Grey and Simcoe Railway Company.

Hon. Mr. Cameron—To incorporate the Barnside Lying-in Hospital.

Hon. Mr. Cameron—To give an effect to an indenture bearing date 1st February, 1868, between Edgar Allan Meredith and others.

Mr. Beatty—To incorporate the Clifton Suspension Bridge Company.

Mr. Lauder—To authorize the Law Society to admit John Whitley as a member of said Society, and as a barrister-at-law.

Hon. Mr. McMurrich—To incorporate the Province of Ontario Lake Underwriters Association.

Mr. Sexton—To enable the Trustees of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of the Shaver settlement, township of Ancaster, to hold their church property under the provisions of the model deed of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Canada.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE.

Mr. SCOTT (Ottawa) moved that Hon. J. S. Macdonald, Sir Henry Smith, and Messrs. McKellar, Blake, Ferrier, Lauder, Cumberland and the mover, be a committee to assist Mr. Speaker in the direction of the library.—Carried.

THE FRANCHISE.

Mr. McKellar rose to a question of privilege. For some days past there had been reporters in attendance at the municipal and assessment committee. He was happy to see them there, and he was sure there was no member who would be at all alarmed or afraid of having anything he might say in the committee made public. But he found that one of the papers had wilfully misrepresented what had taken place in the committee. The *Hamilton Spectator*, in giving an account of the proceedings, said:—

"The municipal franchise is being given to all persons who should be assessed for the amount. Mr. McKellar, and all the former on the committee, voted against this motion, thus re-affirming the principle that the six or seven hundred persons in Hamilton, for instance, who have always enjoyed

and the information, he conceived, could be got there in much less time than from the clerks of the different municipalities.

The motion was carried.

COMMISSIONERS OF AFFIDAVITS.

The House then went into committee on Mr. Matchett's Bill relating to Commissioners of Affidavits.

THE FRANCHISE.

Mr. SCOTT (Grey) inquired of Ministers whether the Government propose to introduce any measure respecting the qualification of electors of representatives in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, especially with reference to the reduction of the franchise in towns forming a part of county constituencies, so as to equalize it with that required of electors in townships.

Hon. J. S. McDONALD replied that it was not the intention of the Government during the present session to alter the law in regard to the franchise.

COLLEGE AND EDUCATIONAL GRANTS.

Dr. BOULTER inquired of ministers whether it is the intention of the Government to include in this year's estimates the College and other educational grants heretofore granted to such institutions in Upper Canada.

Hon. J. S. McDONALD stated that the question was under the consideration of the Government. (Laughter).

THE ASSESSMENT ACT.

Mr. RYKERT moved the house into Committee of the Whole on the Bill to amend the Assessment Act. Yesterday he had promised to explain to the house the nature of the amendments proposed by the assessment committee. Inasmuch as some of the alterations were of great importance, and inasmuch as section one of the act did not define the changes contemplated by the committee, it might be as well to explain the nature of the amendments. When the committee first met, they decided in altering only the most material portion of the Act. In order to elicit the views of the country fully on this measure, circulars had been sent to the different municipalities, requesting their views on the subject, for although the committee was composed of men of experience, men who would be well qualified to judge of any proposed amendments, still the measure was so important that the voice of the country ought to be fully heard on it. And he was happy to state that although receiving upwards of 200 letters on the subject from different municipalities in Western Canada, there were only 25 or 30 sections of the Act, which the country seemed to think ought to be amended. He could further state that before these communications had been received, the committee had already disposed of nearly every amendment suggested by the municipalities—showing clearly that these gentlemen were fully capable of dealing with this important question. On that committee, he would further say, almost every resolution which had been passed met with unanimous approval. Many questions had been raised, in which there were considerable differences of opinion, but, as he had said, as little as possible was touched on, in anticipation of a more thorough Act next session. As chairman, he would, like the member for Bothwell, have to bear much of the disapprobation with which, doubtless, some of its provisions would be received; but he had gone through a little of that description of fire already, and was quite prepared to go through more. One of the first changes proposed by the committee was, that income from mortgages should be assessed. This was a question which had long been agitated; and it was found that a large number of municipalities, instead of asking that the interest derived from mortgages should be taxed, had asked that the mortgages themselves should be taxed. But the committee, exercising what he conceived to be a wise discretion, only decided to tax the income on mortgages. It was also ordered, in reference to sub-section 15 of clause 9, that everything having reference to mortgages, direct loans or purchase money of property should be struck out. But the committee thought it best to leave in the latter portion of the clause respecting the debentures of the Province or any of the municipal corporations thereof. This last was decided on in order to encourage the investment in such securities. The next alteration was made in sub-section 19 (of clause 9) which was repealed. This allowed the assessor to tax all personal property, no matter where found; even although the person assessed should be a stranger, and his greater than the amount of his property in the county. This large number of municipalities were in the habit of stating that the amount of their debts exceeded that of their property.