

Mr. LOUNT moved for a Select Committee, consisting of Messrs. Cameron, Ferguson, Coyne, McColl, Hays, Clarke, Williams (Durham), Wallis, Summerton, Grahame (York), Boyd, Oliver, Lauder, and the mover. In doing so, he said he did not propose at this stage to go into the merits of the work, in detail; nor to attempt to show that there did not exist at the present time sufficient means of transit afforded by the canal and railway facilities now constructed to supply the immediate demands or the future requirements of the country. Neither did he intend, for he did not think it advisable, to draw comparisons with other routes or projected routes. He would confine himself simply to explaining, in as few words as possible, the motives that actuated him in asking this committee to investigate and report on the present position, the practicability, and the probable advantages that might, not unaccountably, and with not too sanguine a hope, be expected to result from the construction of this canal, for he thought it but right that he should justify himself for occupying the time and attention of this House in the discussion of this subject. He would endeavour by all fair means to remove the obstructions that were in the way, and to prove incorrect the calumnies and unjust utterances that had been too lightly made in this chamber as to the means used in the past, for its advancement to the present—to vindicate the character and the reputation of those who have nourished and fostered it from its inception—to convince hon. members that the object sought is worthy their most earnest consideration, and that the means of obtaining that object are about to be realized if properly encouraged. They have been told, on what ought to be considered good authority, but which authority for the present he was free to dispute, that the Huron and Ontario Ship Canal was what is generally termed a "job,"—that it is got up in the interest of jobbers—that former parliamentary committees were, in fact, composed of dishonourable men, and that at the last session of the Dominion Parliament the committee that gave this subject their full and most careful consideration, were so button-holed and importuned, that they reported favourably to escape the annoyance—that wine and other liquors were freely used to sway their judgments, destroy their intelligence and sap their honour.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL—It's perfectly true. (Laughter).

Mr. LOUNT said if these grave and serious charges were true—if no other means could be found to procure this favourable statement—if this job, as it has been called, has no other foundation to rest upon—if on its own honest merits it cannot commend itself to the intelligence of this House and the country except through the medium of undue and improper influences, then he would earnestly and sincerely say—the sooner they were made aware of the fact the better for all concerned. But, if these charges are false, then the reputation of the work, and the good favour of those connected with it, should be cleared from the blot and stigma cast on it, and on them; and for the purpose of learning if they be guilty or not guilty, he asked that this committee be granted—a committee consisting of men who could and would pursue their enquiries free from the reproach of permitting undue influences and improper practices being used upon them—free from the tampering that could bring discredit to their names. (Hear.) And when the whole subject, has been fully examined into, weighed, and considered—he felt sanguine it would rise like the Phoenix from its ashes, redeemed, regenerated, and disenthralled. (Hear, hear.) Should, however, the judgment of this committee prove adverse to his hopes—should it be true as alleged—then he desired it to be known here and elsewhere, so that the confiding and the unwary might no longer be deceived. (Hear.) For many years he had marked the steady determined progress of this scheme; and hon. members might as well endeavour to stem the progress of civilization as to check this living actual necessity for the country's advancement. After a glowing reference to the successful accomplishment of the Suez Canal, the Atlantic Cable and the Pacific Railroad, Mr. Lount traced the progress of the present scheme, which would not be supported by the stolid and cautious Englishmen and the shrewd and business-like American, unless, he said, it commended itself to their judgment. The work was practical and the money for it could be raised, and would be remunerative. Referring to the practicability of this work, hon. members were, of course aware, that it had for its object the shortening of navigation between the head waters of Lake Superior and the seaboard by about 400 miles; the enabling of sea-going vessels of 1,200 tons burthen to leave Europe and land their freight at Chicago, Milwaukee or Thunder Bay without transshipment; and to depart from thence with their millions of bushels of grain, produce and cheapened food for the old world shores. This, he was informed, was in every way feasible, and upon information not given by interested parties, but based upon the opinion of Sir John Hawkshaw, the most distinguished engineer in England, and confirmed by many other able minds. (Hear.) However, to ascertain the truth of these statements he asked a Committee to investigate and report. The advantages likely to flow from its construction were of great moment. He believed it was a project fraught with the promise of widespread blessings both to themselves, to the inhabitants of the Red River Territory, to the people of the United States and of England. It would become a connecting link in the chain of navigation between the Old World and the New, for when it is constructed vessels could leave European ports, laden with their manufactures and their emigrant population, to sail direct for Thunder Bay, Chicago, or any of the Western ports. And from a recent statement they learn that from the head of Lake Superior to the Pacific it is only 1,979 miles, of which but 500 miles was land traffic, the rest being capable of being made good navigable communication. And might

LEGISLATURE OF ONTARIO.

MONDAY, Nov. 22.

The SPEAKER took the chair at three o'clock.

The following petitions were presented:—

From the Village Council of Petrolia, praying for an Act to enable the Erie and Niagara Railway to extend their line, by Mr. Baxter; also, from Township Council of Enniskillen; also, from John Ormond and others, of Moore; also, from Geo. S. McPherson and others, of Enniskillen, by Mr. Baxter; and John McOlson and others, by Mr. Luton, to the same effect.

From Ronald Fraser and others, of Kenyon and Charlottenburg, praying that an Act be not allowed to pass permitting D. L. MacDonald to cut a canal to his mills, by Mr. Blake.

From John Hamilton and others, of Hawkesburg, for an Act to vest certain property in the hands of trustees; also, from the Village Council of Hawkesbury, by Mr. Boyd.

From the Town Council of Perth, praying for an Act to separate Perth from the county of Lanark, by Mr. Code.

From John McDonald and others, of Ingersoll, for the annual election of Aldermen, by Mr. Oliver.

From the Grey Township Council, for a share in the Land Improvement Fund, by Mr. Hays.

From the Church Society of the Diocese of Huron, praying for an Act to enable them to sell certain lands in Goderich Township, and also to legalize a sale of lands in Galt, by Mr. Carling.

From G. H. Mills and others, for an Act of Incorporation, by Mr. Williams.

From John Sheridan and others, of Watt, Muskoka District, for an Act of Incorporation, by Mr. Cockburn.

From Richard Fitzgerald and others, praying for the separation of the municipalities of Carden and Dalton, by Mr. Cockburn.

From the Town Councils of Seaforth and Barry, the Village Councils of Welland, Thorold and Portsmouth, and the Township Councils of Burford, Derby, Aldboro', Camden and Howick, praying for the establishment of a school for the blind.

From James Agnew and others, of Kingston, Charles R. Atkinson and others, of Chatham, F. M. Fairbairn and others, of Peterboro', R. Sutherland and others, of Walkerton, and of James Shanly and others, of London, for the passing of an Act to render the Benchers of the Law Society elective.

Mr. CLARKE introduced an Act to amend the law respecting the powers of executors and administrators.

Carried, and the second reading fixed for Thursday.

RETURNS.

Hon. Mr. CAMERON presented a Return to an Address, showing a copy of the petition or application of William James Nicholls for certain lands in or near the Muskoka District, together with all Orders in Council and correspondence had with him touching the same; and also a Return, showing the receipts and expenditure, during the last two years, of the Canadian Institute of Toronto, the number of meetings held during the last twelve months, &c.; and also, copies of all correspondence since last session of the Legislature, between the Chief Superintendent of Education and the Government, respecting the contemplated changes in the Grammar and Common Schools Act.

POWERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, &c.

Mr. BLAKE introduced a Bill to repeal an Act, intituled an Act to define the privileges, immunities and powers of the Legislative Assembly, and to give summary protection to persons employed in the publication of sessional papers.

The Bill having been read a first time, the second reading was fixed for Monday next.