

LEGISLATURE OF ONTARIO.

FRIDAY, Nov. 26.

The SPEAKER took the chair at three o'clock.

The following petitions were presented:—

Mr Eyre—From J. M. Fernis and others, of the East Riding of Northumberland, praying for an Act to set apart the East Riding of the County of Northumberland into a new county.

Mr Williams—From the Corporation of the Township of Mara, asking that power asked for by the P. H. L. and B. Railway be granted.

Mr Williams—From the Corporation of Orillia, with a similar prayer.

Dr. Baxter—From the Township of Seneca, praying for the erection of an Asylum for the Blind.

Mr Smith—From the Township of Harwich, with a similar prayer.

Mr Pardee—From the Township of Sarnia, with a similar prayer.

Dr. Baxter—From D. Thompson, M. P., and 30 others, of the township of Seneca, asking for powers to extend the Erie and Niagara Railway.

Mr Smith—From the Township Council of Harwick, praying for an Act to Legalize the Survey of the Town of Chatham.

Mr Swinarton—From Thomas Elder, Reeve of Mono, and 102 others, praying for the separation of South from North Simcoe.

UPPER CANADA COLLEGE.

Mr. CHRISTIE wished to make a statement with the permission of the House. His attention had been called to the fact that he had been reported during the debate arising on his motion for a Committee of Enquiry into the affairs of Upper Canada College to have used the words "grossly immoral conduct." He desired to withdraw the word "immoral," and substitute the word "improper"—reading "grossly improper conduct," instead of "grossly immoral conduct." He did this because he felt that in the use of this one word inadvertently he may have given cause of offence to some of the late officers of Upper Canada College. He wished, however, to give the House distinctly to understand—and he never personally charged any of those referred to—that such charge of "grossly improper conduct" was made at some former time.

PETITION OBJECTED TO.

Mr. LOUNT raised an objection against the petition from the township of Mulmer, which was, he contended, in contravention of the rule of the House, that aid should not be asked in petitions.

Some conversation took place upon the point, and the petition was eventually received.

RAILWAY COMMITTEE REPORT.

A report was presented by the Railway Committee, stating that the Toronto, Simcoe and Muskoka Railway Company, and the amendments thereof, were in accordance with the statements of the Bill. Agreed to.

The Committee on Standing Orders also presented a report.

FIRST READINGS.

The following Bills were read a first time, and referred to the Select Committee on Private Bills:—

Mr. Rykert—An Act to Incorporate the Canada Air Line Railway Co.

Mr. Oliver—To incorporate the Canada and South Western Air Line Railway Co.

Mr. Ferguson—To give D. A. Macdonald leave to construct a canal in the township of Kenyon.

Mr. Carnegie—To incorporate the Mississipi Navigation Company.

Mr. Lauder—To confirm the survey made by F. F. Passmore, the Provincial Land Surveyor of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th concessions of the township of Melancthon.

Mr. Strange—To incorporate the Kingston and Madoc Railway Company.

Mr. Lauder—To vest certain real estate in the Trustees of the Macnab Street Wesleyan Methodist Church, in the City of Hamilton, with power to sell and convey the estate and to convey the proceeds of the sale in the erection of a new Church.

Mr. Perry—Respecting Fair Grounds in the County of Oxford.

Mr. Clemens—To consolidate the Montreal Fire Insurance Companies doing business in the Province of Ontario.

Mr. Carnegie—To amend the incorporation of the Peterborough and Haliburton Railway Company.

Mr. Carnegie—To amend c 61 of 24 Vict, entitled "An Act to consolidate the debt of the Town of Peterborough, and to authorize the issue of debentures, and for other purposes.

Mr. Carnegie—To appoint Trustees for certain lands belonging to the Presbyterian Church (connected with the Church of Scotland) of Dummer and Asphodel, in the County of Peterborough.

PUBLIC NOTARIES.

The House went into Committee on Bill (No. 19) respecting the appointment of Notaries Public.—Hon. Mr. Macdonald.

Mr. Scott (Ottawa) in the chair.

The Bill was reported without amendment and ordered for third reading on Tuesday next.

THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL BILL.

Hon. Mr. CAMERON moved the second reading of Bill (No. 2) "To amend the Grammar School law of the Province of Ontario." In moving the second reading of this Bill, he wished to remove the apprehensions which had been expressed that the object of the Chief Superintendent of Education was to destroy the smaller Grammar Schools in the country. At the outset, he would deny that there was any such intention on the part of that gentleman, whose sole object had ever been to foster the

Grammar Schools, in order that a higher system of education, than could be obtained in the Common Schools, might be placed within the reach of as many as possible. The object of the learned Superintendent was to popularize the measure, by bringing the Grammar and Common Schools under the same management. The intention was to form a Board of Trustees, to be called the "Board of Public School Trustees," who should be elected directly by the people to control the Grammar as well as the Common Schools. Another object was, to do away with the necessity that now exists, that pupils in Grammar Schools must of necessity learn the classics, and to make it optional with the parents of the children whether pupils should confine themselves to the branches of an English education, which, in this country was perhaps more useful than a classical education. In order that classical education might not be entirely overlooked, it was provided that it might be taught in Grammar Schools, and provision was also made for the establishment of what was called "Collegiate Institutes," where the classics could be taught; so that in country schools the rudiments of an English education might be taught, and the higher branches of education in the Grammar and Collegiate Schools. In offering this Bill for the consideration of the House, it was not the intention of the Government to say that the Bill would be withdrawn if its provisions were not accepted, but it was their intention to admit of Amendments, and to accept suggestions from the House. He desired, however, that the honourable gentlemen would not be influenced by narrow considerations—not to let the fear, lest it might injure some Local Superintendent in whom they might have perfect confidence, prevent them from regarding the interests of the whole country. He could only say that those who fancied that the Superintendent was inimical to the smaller Grammar Schools were mistaken, for that gentleman, during his connection with the educational institutions of the country, which had existed for a quarter of a century, had even shown a desire to elevate their standard. To him, more than any one, we owed the high system of education which we possess. The changes which were to be made by the measure before the House were, first—the formation of a Board of Trustees. In order that another element might be introduced besides that of the electoral, power was to be given to the County Councils, under certain circumstances, to appoint trustees. Second—making the learning of classes optional, instead of being as at present, compulsory. Third—the changing of Grammar Schools to High Schools, which was merely a change in name. These were the principal changes that were intended to be effected by this measure, and he felt satisfied, from the manner in which the Superintendent had laid this and the Common School Bill before the country, and the favourable manner in which it had been received by the people wherever its object had been explained, that it was calculated to suit the requirements of the country. Of course it was not possible to make a measure which would give entire satisfaction to every one concerned. Governments were only able to do the best they could, and they trusted that in this measure, in which no political or party question could be introduced, both sides of the House would assist them as much as possible.

Mr. RYKERT had no doubt the Government intended to do all they could towards improving our Grammar Schools, but he held the same objection to this measure which he expressed at the meeting of the Grammar School Committee. He felt it his duty to give that objection to the House, and to leave it to them how to act in the matter. He here proposed that the School Acts should be consolidated and improved. It was a grave mistake on the part of the Legislature of this country to have on their statute books so many Acts, the amendments to which were of such an intricate character that no person of ordinary intelligence who were supposed to know the laws of the country, could give them their right interpretation. The House had advanced on several occasions the opinion that

they ought not to be forever tinkering their Acts. If there was any one Act that should not be meddled with too often, it was the Education Act. It was one with which everyone ought to be familiar, and he would like to know how any common person could dissect the various amendments to that law when even professional men found it difficult to interpret them. He was pleased, however, to know that the Government were willing to accept amendments from the House. He would be very sorry to advance his opinion against that of the Government, or of a majority of the House; but he was convinced that it was necessary to have the laws consolidated. He was willing to pay as high a tribute to the Chief Superintendent of Education as any man in the House. He agreed with the hon. Secretary that we were indebted to him more than to any man for the high state of education which exists in our Province. It was owing to his efforts that the Commission which was appointed in England two years ago were able to report that the Common School system of this Province was the best in any of the civilized countries of the world. Notwithstanding all this, he (Mr. R) was bound at the same time to say that there were certain causes in the measure before the House, which were objectionable. It was proposed to amalgamate the Common and Grammar School systems. If there was anything objectionable in the Bill it was this. It was with the greatest difficulty that School Boards could be established in counties, and men of sufficient intelligence found willing to form them. If this amendment should be introduced, the result would be that men who by reason of their ability were fitted to fill the position, would be driven from the School Boards because they would not submit to go into an electoral contest. If the matter were left in the hands of the people the Grammar Schools would suffer. He said this advisedly. In Lincoln (his own county) there were more Grammar Schools for the population than in any other county in the Province. They had seven Grammar Schools, and they found it very difficult to keep them in existence. Yet it was proposed to leave it to the people to say whether they should sup-