

The SPEAKER took the chair at 3:10 p.m.
PETITIONS.

Mr. Scott (Ottawa).—From the City Council of Ottawa, praying that an Act may pass to enable the corporation to sell certain lands. Also, the petition of the Sisters of our Lady of Charity, praying to be incorporated.

Mr. Carnegie.—From the Rector and Churchwardens of St. John's Church, Peterborough, praying for an Act to amend Cap. 87 of 27 Vic.

Mr. Fraser.—From the Trustees of the Friends' or Quakers' Seminary, of Prince Edwards, praying for an Act of Incorporation, and for other purposes.

Mr. Blake.—From the Kincardine Mechanics' Institute, praying aid.

Mr. Beatty.—From Sullivan, Caverno, and others, of Lockport, praying for power to sell certain lands.

Mr. Fraser.—From the Township Council of Beverly, praying that an Act may be passed to confirm a certain survey.

REPORTS.

Mr. Rykert presented the 2nd report of the Standing Orders Committee.

Mr. Scott (Ottawa) presented the 1st report of the Printing Committee.

MIDLAND RAILWAY CO.

Mr. WILLIAMS (Durham) introduced a Bill to authorise the Midland Railway of Canada to consolidate its mortgages, and for other purposes.

STREETSVILLE AND PORT CREDIT JUNCTION RAILWAY.

Mr. COYNE introduced a Bill to incorporate the Streetsville and Port Credit Junction Railway Company.

GRAND JUNCTION RAILWAY.

Mr. GRAHAM (Hastings) introduced a Bill to enable municipalities along the line of the Grand Junction Railway to grant aid thereto, and to legalize certain by-laws granting aid to said road.

REGISTRARS.

Mr. EVANS introduced a Bill to amend the Act respecting Registrars.

THE SALE OF POISONS.

Dr. MCGILL introduced a Bill to amend the laws relating to the sale of poisons.

REGISTRATION OF TITLES.

Mr. BLAKE introduced a Bill to declare the true construction of 13th Eliz., chap. 5.

Mr. BLAKE introduced a Bill to amend the Registration of Titles (Ontario) Act.

CHURCH LANDS.

Mr. CRAIG (Russell) introduced a Bill to enable the Canada Presbyterian Church of Osgoode to dispose of part of their lands.

Mr. CRAIG (Glengary) introduced a Bill to enable the Trustees of Presbyterian Church, connected with the Church of Scotland, in the Township of Kenyon, to dispose of certain lands.

The above Bills were read a first time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion of Mr. SCOTT (Grey), leave of absence was granted to Mr. Hooper, the member for Addington, for five days, on account of ill health.

REPLIES TO ADDRESSES.

Mr. CAMERON presented replies to addresses for information concerning Bank accounts of the Province, and the number of lunatics in the Province and in the different institutions, &c.

Hon. Mr. RICHARDS moved that the House go into Committee of the whole House

on Thursday, to consider the following resolutions:—

Resolved.—That, in the opinion of this House, it is expedient that the Lieutenant-Governor in Council should have authority to reduce the price of any Crown or clergy lands sold previously to the 1st of July, 1867, when it shall appear that such lands have been sold at prices beyond their fair value, and that such prices remain unpaid; also to make such abatement of the arrears of interest upon the unpaid instalments of the purchase money of any Crown or clergy lands sold prior to the said date, as may appear equitable and just; and also by Order in Council to confer such authority upon the Commissioner of Crown Lands.

2nd That such reduction and abatement should be confined to cases in which the purchasers from the Crown, or those claiming under them, are in occupation of such lands as actual settlers, and residents thereon. (Hear, hear.)

Hon. J. S. MACDONALD moved the second reading of a Bill to make the members of the Law Society of Ontario elective by the Bar thereof. The Attorney-General, who was almost inaudible in the gallery, said that last year the leader of the Opposition brought in a Bill similar to this; but at that time the objection was taken that the Law Society being a corporate body had a right to be notified. The real object of the present Bill was to create a more satisfactory mode of controlling the affairs of this large Society than the mode which had hitherto prevailed.

Mr. BLAKE rose to a point of order. This was a private Bill, and the Attorney-General had introduced it as a public one. Mr. Blake quoted from a ruling made by the Speaker last session in support of his point of order.

Hon. Mr. WOOD thought that the Speaker could over-rule his ruling. (Laughter.) He was of opinion that the Bill should be allowed to go to a second reading.

Hon. J. S. MACDONALD said that after the ruling of last year he would not press for the second reading of the Bill, and would withdraw it.

CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS BILL.

Atty.-Gen. MACDONALD moved the second reading of the Bill to amend the law relating to Election Petitions, and for providing more effectually for the prevention of corrupt practices at elections for the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. The hon. gentleman briefly explained the provisions of the Bill, stating that it was compiled from the English Act, which had given great satisfaction in its working. The main object of the Bill was to place the trial of controverted elections in the hands of the Superior Court Judges, and thus avoid the delays and expensiveness of the present mode. There could be no doubt that the present Bill would be a vast improvement on the present way of trying these disputed questions.

Mr. McKELLAR expressed the pleasure the House must feel at the introduction of such a Bill. He had been a member of the Legislature for a number of years—he thought the Attorney-General was the only member present who had a longer experience—and he could bear testimony to the defective state of the present law. The House would give every assistance to make this Bill as perfect as possible. There was no doubt that a great many methods of corruption existed which it was impossible to reach by any other methods than that proposed in the Bill. They were aware that cases had occurred in which candidates, although appealed against, retained their seats until just before the close of Parliament, during which time the petition was being considered by the House. This was most objectionable, and he hoped that under the proposed Bill this state of things would be changed. He would promised the Government every assistance in his power to perfect the Bill, which he was glad to see they had introduced. (Cheers.)

Mr. BOYD said that he was willing to endorse the remarks of Mr. McKellar, and considered that the Government would have been wanting in its duty if they had not brought down this Bill, which formed a very fitting addition to the election law passed two years ago. The provisions of that Bill could not be effectively carried out without the provision of the machinery referred to in the Bill. It was satisfactory to know that the Government had had all the doubts and misgivings with which it regarded the measure, when introduced by the hon. leader of the Opposition, resolved. The measure did not show any ingenuity on the part of the framers;

for it showed—if he might use the term—a greater slavishness towards the English Bill than did that of last year, introduced by the hon. member for South Bruce. He would like to see a provision introduced into the Bill providing that an oath should be administered to members on entering the House that they or their agents had not, directly or indirectly, been guilty of any act of bribery. He would like some definition of the vague term, "undue influence," used in the Act. Did it include a provision preventing members of the Administration visiting constituencies, and by the promise of reward making an attempt to corrupt these constituencies?

Mr. BOYD said they were supposed to be sitting at the feet of a political Gamaliel, and he would like to have the confirmation for which he had asked. He hoped that if the present provisions did not reach so far a clause would be inserted in the Bill to meet this evil. Mr. Boyd referred to an instance where a member of the Government had stated to a constituency that so long as they stuck to him he would stick to them. (Laughter.)

Attorney-General MACDONALD—Hear, hear.

Mr. BOYD deprecated the use of such influence by the Administration; and if any provision was introduced intended to prevent such acts it would have his earnest support. (Cheers.)

Hon. Mr. WOOD attacked the hon. member for Prescott for his strictures on the Government. He said the hon. member had never put forth many original ideas in this House.

The hon. member for Prescott was fond of talking of original ideas; but he (Hon. Mr. Wood) would ask him if he had a subjective conception of an objective reality. (Loud laughter from the Opposition benches.) The hon. member for Prescott had so many original ideas that he might expect to go down to fame with Shakespeare, Milton and Wordsworth.

Mr. McKELLAR—And with Wood. (Laughter.)

Hon. Mr. WOOD again returned to the subject of original ideas, and said that those of the hon. member "sprang from his head like the warrior that sprang from the head of Minerva." (Loud laughter.) He concluded by saying that when controverted elections came before the Judges there could be no difficulty in deciding what was undue influence.

Mr. THOS. FERGUSON rose amid laughter. He proceeded to read from certain resolutions with regard to prevention of corrupt practices at elections—resolutions of which notice had been given by Mr. Blake.

Mr. BLAKE rose to a point of order. He objected to have the resolutions read and commented upon before he had had an opportunity of explaining them. They were not yet before the House.

Mr. FERGUSON said it was far better to prevent corruption than to take measures to punish it.

Mr. BLAKE—Hear, hear.

Mr. FERGUSON said that he had been thirteen years in the House, and had come to the conclusion that outside of cities and towns, perhaps, constituencies could not be got to accept money for their votes. He had an idea he would submit to the House, and it was this—let every man who had a vote be compelled to vote, as he was compelled to perform statute labour. This plan would do more to prevent bribery than the passing of a thousand laws.

Mr. BLAKE—What would you do suppose the unfortunate voter had not made up his mind to vote for either candidate? (Loud laughter.)

Mr. FERGUSON said that unless the voters were weak-minded men they could easily make a choice.

The Bill was read a second time, and ordered to be referred to Committees of the Whole on Friday next.

THE JURY LAW.

Mr. McCOLL (Elgin) asked whether the Government intends, during the present session, to introduce a Bill to amend the Jury Law so as to make it less expensive, by dispensing with the second class of selectors.

Hon. J. S. MACDONALD replied in the negative.

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAINAGE ACT.

Mr. McKELLAR inquired whether the Government intended making any amendments to the Drainage Act of 1869, during the present Session.

Hon. Mr. CARLING said that such was the intention of the Government, but he was unprepared at present to say what the amendments would be.

On motion of Atty-Gen. MACDONALD the House rose at twenty minutes to five.