

Mr. Williams (Hamilton)—From the Hamilton Masonic Hall Association for an Act to amend their Act of incorporation.

Mr. Paxton—From T. Cooper and others, of Rama, that unsettled lands may be re-sold to actual settlers.

REPORTS.

Atty.-Gen. MACDONALD presented the first report of the Standing Committee on Private Bills. The committee reported Bill No. 23, entitled an Act to enable the Trustees of the Canada Presbyterian Church in Osgoode to convey part of the church lands to other trustees for a burial ground. The committee also recommended that the fees, except the actual cost of printing, be remitted on the said bill, it being in connection with a religious institution, and of a character which might be exempt, under the rules and practice of the House. The committee also recommended a reduction of the quorum to nine.

Mr. RYKERT presented the fifth report of the Committee on Standing Orders.

Atty.-Gen. MACDONALD presented the second report of the Standing Committee on Railways. The committee reported the Toronto, Simcoe and Muskoka Junction Railway Bill, with an amendment to the last clause.

COURT PROCEDURE.

Mr. RYKERT introduced a Bill to amend the Act regulating the procedure of the Superior and County Courts.

MARYBORO'.

Mr. ANDERSON introduced a Bill to repeal 33 Vic., 73 chap., entitled "An Act to divide the township of Maryboro' into two municipalities."

IMPRISONMENT FOR DEBT.

Mr. BLAKE introduced a Bill to abolish imprisonment for debt.

The Bill was read a first time; second time to-morrow.

MISTAKEN TITLES.

Mr. BLAKE introduced a Bill for the protection of persons holding lands under mistaken titles.

The Bill was read a first time.

TORONTO, GREY, AND BRUCE RAILWAY.

Mr. BLAKE introduced a Bill to amend the Act incorporating the Toronto, Grey and Bruce Railway Company. He explained that this was a Bill presented by the Corporation of the Township of Carrick. Without any notice to that township an Act was passed last session, whereby provision was made by which, at the instance of the majority of the electors, or Reeves or Deputy Reeves, of any number of townships, it was compulsory on the County Council to pass a by-law for what was known as sectional bonuses. The Act to which he alluded provided that, being approved of by a simple majority of a group of townships, a particular township should pass a by-law levying a rate on another group. Thus, without any application from the township of Carrick, or any notice from it, certain provisions entirely novel to our municipal law, as we understood it, were forced upon this township. The result of this law was that a group of three out of five townships interested in a railway, and the other two not requiring it, could force these latter two townships to impose a tax for railway purposes. A measure of this kind was entirely opposed to the whole spirit of our municipal institutions. The township of Carrick had no interest in the projected railway; for it was to be served by another railway running through a part of the township. Though the representatives of the Township of Carrick did not wish the railway, the majority of the Reeves of five or six other townships imposed the tax, the Township of Carrick having no voice in the matter. He could not conceive that the House would sanction a sectional measure of this description, or allow the imposition of taxes without giving the township the opportunity to speak. He made these observations because he saw that it was proposed to introduce the principle to which he objected into railway bills that were yet to come before the House. In his judgment it was an injurious thing that this principle should be introduced in any railway bill, or that the freedom of municipalities should be taken away from them. (Hear, hear.) If the House should differ from the opinions he had expressed, then he would say that it was perfectly clear the subject ought to be dealt with by a general law. (Hear, hear.) It was because he was not a member of the Railway Committee that he ventured to introduce this Act.

The introduction of the Bill was seconded by Mr. McKellar.

BILLS.

Hon. Mr. WOOD introduced the following Bills:—

An Act respecting the Grand River navigation.

An Act to legalize certain by-laws passed by the Corporation of the Township of Granby, and certain agreements made between the said Corporation and the Great Western and Grand Trunk Railways.

A Bill to enable the Church Society of Huron to sell certain lands in Brantford.

A Bill to amend chap. 71 of Con. Statutes of Canada, respecting charitable and philanthropic and provident associations.

ST. ANDREW'S SOCIETY, PETERBORO'.

Mr. CARNEGIE introduced a Bill to amend the Act appointing the trustees to deal with the church and glebe property of the St. Andrew's Society, Peterborough.

ST. GEORGE'S SOCIETY, LONDON.

Mr. CARLING introduced a Bill to incorporate the St. George's Society, London; also (seconded by Mr. Cameron), a bill to incorporate the Sisters of St. Joseph, in the diocese of London.

ASSESSMENT LAW.

Mr. TROW introduced a Bill to amend Assessment Law.

MUNICIPAL LAW.

On the orders of the day being called, Mr. McKellar asked the reason why the Committee on Municipal Law had not yet been struck?

Hon. Mr. CAMERON said that the Bill was still in the hands of the printer. He could not state the date at which it would be introduced.

Mr. BLAKE said if there was any Bill that ought to have been presented in such a shape that the printer could at once have got it out of hand, so that it could have been distributed before the recess, it was the Municipal Bill. The fact was that now they would not get it till about eight or nine days, when they would be in the most busy part of the session, and it consequently would not receive the attention which was desirable.

Hon. Mr. CAMERON explained that there had been changes made in the arrangement of the Bill since its first introduction, which had necessitated its resetting in type.

Mr. McKellar—When is it likely to be brought down?

Mr. CAMERON—As soon as the printers get through with it.

The matter then dropped.

SCHOOL BILL.

Hon. Mr. CAMERON then moved the second reading of the School Bill. He said the explanations of the Chief Superintendent appended to the draft of the Bill, which had been distributed, rendered his task comparatively an easy one. The Bill proposed to make very few radical changes in the Common School system now in force. One change which was proposed, and which might be considered a radical one, was to make education compulsory, which had not hitherto been the law in this country. It was found that there were a great number of children of school age throughout the Province who did not attend any school. Our Common Schools were maintained almost entirely at the public expense, and the public were not receiving the full value of their contributions if a very considerable portion of the community were not deriving the benefits of the schools and while deriving them reflecting them upon the public in becoming more useful members of society. It was, therefore, considered desirable that all children of school age should, for a certain portion of the year, attend school, in order that they might derive the benefits following such attendance. There were, he thought, about 34,000 children of school age not attending any kind of school, in the Province. In cities, towns, and incorporated villages the inconvenience arising from a large number of children not being employed, and not attending school, was found to be very considerable, and added, no doubt, very materially to the size of the criminal calendar of the country. The second principle that was introduced was that all public schools should be free. Of the 4,500 schools that are now in operation, only about 300 are not entirely free. These few have rate bills, and it was considered desirable—as it had been for a number of years the principle to allow school sections to have free schools or not as they might think fit, and as every year the free schools had been increasing—to make the whole subject to one control, and to be free. These two principles were the ones introduced into the Bill which might be considered new. The Bill also proposed to introduce into the Common Schools subjects of education which had not yet been taught in those schools—such as the elements of natural history, agricultural chemistry, mechanics, and agriculture. It was considered that the Common Schools might do a very useful work in giving the young an idea of those branches which it would be necessary for them to enter upon to earn a livelihood in the future. The subjects that would be taught would not be above the comprehension of the young, and yet might tend very materially to benefit the country by developing knowledge and skill which would be found exceedingly useful in the future. There was an amendment proposed also as to the manner in which school sites were to be obtained. At present school trustees could only obtain a site when the person who was owner wished to sell or grant it, and in consequence it was frequently found that the most eligible sites could not be obtained, the trustees not having the right of selection. It was proposed to give them this power, and to decide the price by arbitration. Then provision had been made for what was supposed to be an improvement in the inspection of schools, by the appointment of county inspectors in the place of the local superintendents. Provision was made as to the manner in which the county inspector was to be paid, and qualifications necessary, to be determined by the Council of Public Instruction, which had also to determine the manner and time of the examinations. In the counties provision was also made that the County Councils should appoint the inspector, and in cities they would be appointed by the Board of School Trustees; in counties, the inspector would be paid partly by the Government and partly by the county, and in cities the same regulations as now in force would continue.

Mr. McKellar—What about towns?

Mr. CAMERON—Cities and towns are in the same category. Provision was made that there should be at least one inspector appointed in each county, and if there were more than fifty schools in the county it was optional with the County Council whether it should appoint an additional inspector. Inspectors could be dismissed by the body appointing them, or by the Lieut.-Governor in Council in cases of misconduct; and provision was made that the officials now discharging the duties of local superintendents should be continued in their office until their successors were appointed; also that the election of trustees should take place in July instead of January.

Mr. McKellar—Why is the time changed?

Mr. CAMERON—Simply because it is considered that it will be more convenient.

Mr. McKellar—Then the school year will commence in July?

Mr. CAMERON—Yes. It was also provided that the name of Common School should be done away with, and that of

Legislature of Ontario.

FIRST PARLIAMENT—FOURTH SESSION.

FRIDAY, Jan. 6.

The SPEAKER took the chair at 3:25 P. M.

PETITIONS.

Hon. Mr. Cameron—From the Synod of the Diocese of Toronto for amendments to their Act of incorporation.

Mr. Scott (Grey)—From S. McRun and others for an Act to incorporate the North Grey Railway Company.

Hon. Mr. Carling—From Bishop Walsh for an Act to amend Act 8 Vic., cap. 82.

Mr. Clemens—From the County Council of Waterloo for certain amendments to the Assessment Law.

Mr. Lyon—From the Ottawa Board of Trade, with the same prayer.

Mr. Rykert—From Chas. C. Grove and others, of Bertie, for an Act to enable them to construct a certain railway. Also, from J. N. Blake, of Toronto, for an Act to admit him as Attorney-at-Law.

Mr. Currie—From the County Council of Middlesex for increased aid to education. Also, for an amendment to the Act respecting prisoners.

Hon. Mr. Wood—From C. R. Wilkes, of Brantford, for an Act to amend Acts 14 and 15 Vic.

Mr. Secord—From the Mechanics' Institute of Dunnville for aid to Mechanics' Institute.