

Parliament of Ontario

OFFICIAL OPENING.

FRIDAY, Dec. 8.

Yesterday afternoon Lieutenant-Governor Howland, in his official capacity as the representative of Her Majesty, inaugurated the first session of the second Parliament of the Province of Ontario.

The ceremony took place under auspicious circumstances. The weather, although unsettled, was not disagreeable enough to interfere with the intentions of those who purposed to be present at the official opening of the House. The interest in the ceremony was deeper than that evinced on the previous day. At half-past two o'clock, half an hour before the opening of the House, the corridors were thronged with ladies anxiously awaiting admission to the galleries. When at length the doors were thrown open, the fair sex gallantly struggled forward, and in a few moments the galleries on the floor of the House, which had been assigned exclusively to the ladies, were filled to overflowing, and many of the fair visitors were compelled to remain unseated, while not a few were turned away for want of accommodation.

The upper gallery, which was set apart for gentlemen, was crowded to its utmost capacity.

On the floor of the House accommodation was provided for distinguished visitors. But it was found to be inadequate. The ladies stormed alike the benches of the Government and the Opposition, and the foremost men in the House were obliged to take refuge where best they could, leaving their chairs in possession of the feminine conquerors.

Amongst those present on the floor of the House were observed—Chief Justice Richards, Chief Justice Hagarty, Judge Gwynne, Judge Morrison, Judge Galt, Judge Adam Wilson, Vice-Chancellor Mowat, Vice-Chancellor Strong, Judge Duggan, Bishop Rathune, Archbishop Fuller, Rev. Dr. Topp, Rev. Dr. Jennings, Rev. W. M. Punshon, Rev. Dr. Ryerson, Rev. Father Jamot, Rev. Father McCann, Rev. Dr. Nelles, Rev. F. H. Marling, Rev. Dr. Vincent, Dr. McCaul, Rev. Dr. Griffin, Col. Shaw, U. S. Consul, Mr. Simmers, German Consul; Mr. Homer Dixon, Consul-General of the Netherlands; Hon. Wm. McMaster, Hon. D. L. Macpherson, C. S. Gzowski, &c., &c.

Among the ladies who occupied seats on the floor of the House were Mrs. Howland, Mrs. and the Misses Tilley, Mrs. E. B. Wood, Mrs. A. D. Shaw, Mrs. Cockburn, Mrs. J. C. Chisholm, Mrs. E. W. Harris, London, Mrs. Wilson, Mrs. Cummings, Mrs. and Misses Carling, Mrs. J. K. Kerr, Mrs. Cattarach, Mrs. W. Sutherland Taylor, Mrs. Wm. McMaster, Mrs. and Miss Topp, Mrs. J. McMurrich, Mrs. J. D'Arcy Boulton, Mrs. and Miss Muloch, Miss Richards, the Misses Crawford, Mrs. Williams, of Hamilton, Mrs. Lee, of Cobourg, Miss Parker, etc., etc.

At five minutes past three o'clock, the booming of cannon announced the approach of the Lieut.-Governor. In a short interval his carriage, escorted by his body-guard, drove up to the front of the building. At twelve minutes past three the Lieut.-Governor entered the House, and all on the floor of the House rose to receive him. He then bowed his acknowledgments and took the Speaker's chair.

The SPEAKER, standing on the right of the Governor, addressed him and said:—
May it please your Excellency—

The Legislative Assembly have elected me as their Speaker, though I am but little able to fulfil the important duties thus assigned to me. If, in the performance of those duties, I should at any time fall into error, I pray that the fault may be imputed to me, and not to the Assembly, whose servant I am, and who, through me, the better to enable them to discharge their duty to their Queen and country, hereby claim all their undoubted rights and privileges, especially that they may have freedom of speech in their debates, access to your Excellency's person at all seasons, and that their proceedings may receive from your Excellency the most favourable consideration.

THE LIEUT.-GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

The Lieutenant-Governor proceeded to deliver his Address, which was as follows:—
Mr. Speaker, and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly:

During no period in the history of Her Majesty's North American possessions can there be found recorded of any one of them a condition of prosperity which can at all approach that now almost everywhere exhibited in this Province, and it therefore affords me great pleasure to congratulate you on so favourable an aspect of our country's stride in the path of material advancement.

I regret to have to announce to you that in consequence of a protest by the Government of Quebec, the Dominion Cabinet declines to give effect to the award made in the matter of the division and adjustment of the debts, credits, liabilities and assets of Upper and Lower Canada, until a decision with regard to its validity shall be given by the Judicial Committee of Her Majesty's Privy Council. I ventured in this Chamber last year, without admitting that the judgment of the Arbitrators on the points submitted to them had realized the general expectations of the people of this Province, nevertheless to express the satisfaction which the result had afforded me, and also that I regarded it as final and conclusive, and that it had established forever the share of the public debt which this Province was bound to assume, as also the proportion of the general assets intended to become exclusively our own property. In this satisfaction I was glad to observe that the Legislative Assembly, then in Session, signified its con-

currance. The delay which will arise before effect is given to the terms of the award, necessarily postponing measures and arrangements of immense importance as well to the future of particular sections as to the Province at large, and which were based on the assumption of the award being final, is a matter which must cause general disappointment, inasmuch as such measures are for the present rendered impracticable. That the objection to the award should be urged on mainly technical grounds, is a consideration that intensifies the feeling of regret which a long interval of inaction will be certain to create. The people of Ontario, regarding the award as rendering them no more than bare justice in relation to the matters in dispute, had hoped that all questions between them and their sister Province of Quebec had been definitely adjusted; and I apprehend that they not only will be unable to view the present state of the case with indifference, but that they will not fail to see in it well-grounded cause for alarm; lest the re-opening of the questions involved in the arbitration should revive those political and sectional strifes which for years prior to Confederation had endangered the peace and quiet of our common country.

It is a matter of history that the general acquiescence by Upper Canada in the scheme of Confederation was in a great measure brought about in the hope that these strifes would be thereby allayed and for ever settled. If in this respect the people of Ontario are doomed to be disappointed, it will be owing to no act of theirs, but the responsibility of the consequences likely to arise from the revival of the old sectional questions and disputes of past years must rest upon others.

The liberal measures which the Legislature adopted at its last Session to improve our system of National Education by making the Public Schools free by law, by providing for their more efficient inspection, by giving stability to and elevating the profession of teachers, and by rendering practically symmetrical and coherent the Public and High Schools have been brought into operation, and they are likely to fulfil the most sanguine expectations of the friends of thorough and universal education.

The demand for regularly trained teachers has augmented from year to year, and the number of young persons desirous of properly qualifying themselves for the profession of teaching by a regular course of training is so largely increasing that it may be worthy of your consideration whether additional facilities should not be provided for that purpose.

Nor less useful do I think will prove the measures of the same Session for providing, by a new School of Technology now shortly to be opened for preparatory education of skilled men as engineers, managers and operators in the various mechanical and manufacturing establishments, and in the steamboat and railway systems of the country. When we find these establishments are springing up and dotting our country on every side, and a network of railways is covering its surface, we should be wanting in wisdom and common prudence not to provide, as every progressive people is providing, for the scientific and practical education of classes of men to conduct these vast and important operations, and thus develop the latent and unmeasured resources of our favoured land. No maxim of civil government is more sound than that each country should provide, as far as possible by its own culture and skill, for the supply of its own wants, and the development of its own resources—and it is unquestionable that money expended to educate men for these purposes is a most profitable public investment.

The returns from the Immigration Department will show that, as in the two previous years, the wise expenditure made for the promotion of immigration has again secured a large and desirable accession to our industrial population; and as a greater proportion than usual of the immigrants have come from the rural districts of Great Britain and Ireland, they are the better adapted to meet the requirements of our agriculturists, and of public works and other industries, and eventually to furnish a good class of settlers for our Free Grant and other lands.

Every exertion, as heretofore, will be made to induce a continued healthy immigration, as well as to organize facilities for the employment of the immigrants immediately on their arrival, and the subsequent settlement of such as may desire it upon our free grant lands.

I am to inform you that arrangements are in active progress for the establishment of a school of agriculture. A suitable site comprising 600 acres of land, of varied soil and easy of access to the public, has been purchased; and no time will be lost in bringing this important scheme into operation; whereby those of our youth who desire to follow agricultural pursuits may obtain the education specially adapted to their wants.

The highly beneficial results certain to follow the construction of main drains in and through certain swamp lands, for which a liberal appropriation was made by the Legislature, prompts me to recommend to your consideration the expediency of providing means by which individuals may borrow money at a low rate of interest, to improve their farms by tile or other draining.

I have lately appointed Commissioners, composed of eminent Judges and Counsel, to enquire into the operation and effect of the present constitution and jurisdiction of the several Courts of Law and Equity of this Province, with the view of ascertaining whether and what changes and improvements may be advantageously made so as to provide for the more speedy, economical and satisfactory dispatch of the business now transacted in the said courts.

A measure to provide for the payment of witnesses attending the trial of criminals, will be submitted for your consideration.

The financial accounts of the Province for the larger portion of the current year will be immediately laid before you. The Estimates, likewise, will be submitted at an early period.

In the discharge of the important duties that will engage your attention, I humbly trust that the Almighty may bless your endeavours to promote the public good.

The SPEAKER took the chair at 3:45 and called the House to order. He then

informed the House that he had received from the Judges certificates in the case of the election petitions in Prescott, declaring the election void; in Glengarry, declaring Mr. Craig duly elected; in Carleton, declaring the election void; in North York, declaring Mr. Boulbee duly elected; in Prince Edward, declaring the election void; in Stormont, declaring the election void; in East Toronto, declaring Mr. Cameron duly elected; in West Toronto, declaring Mr. Crooks duly elected; in North Simcoe, declaring the election void; in Welland declaring Mr. Currie duly elected; in South Grey declaring the election void.

The Clerk read these certificates, and on motion in each case of Hon. J. S. Macdonald, seconded by Hon. John Carling, they were ordered to be entered upon the minutes.

Hon. J. S. MACDONALD moved for leave to introduce a bill to provide for the administration of oaths of office to persons appointed as justices of the peace.

Mr. BLAKE rose to a point of order. As he understood the statute, it prescribed imperatively that the Legislature should forthwith order the certificate of the Judges to be entered upon the journals of the House, and give the necessary directions for the issuing of the writs and carrying the determination of the Judges into execution. It was quite correct for the Attorney-General to move that the certificates be entered upon the minutes, but it was also necessary that a motion should be made forthwith to carry the determination of the judges into execution, as the statute was imperative on that point.

Hon. J. S. MACDONALD said the moment the usual formal motions were made he would move for the issue of the writs.

Mr. BLAKE said the statute was imperative; nothing whatever should intervene between the presentation of the certificates and the motion for the issue of the writ. The formal motions were of themselves of little consequence but the delay caused by their introduction now might furnish very inconvenient precedents hereafter.

Hon. J. S. MACDONALD said the first duty of the House was to assert its independence by the passage of the usual formal motions.

The SPEAKER said the immediate issue of the writs should follow as a matter of course.

Hon. J. S. MACDONALD said, to please his honourable friend he was quite willing to withdraw his motion—(laughter)—and he would move that a writ be issued for the election of a member for Prescott in the room of G. W. Hamilton, whose election was declared void.

Hon. Mr. WOOD said he did not know that it was necessary to make any motion for the issue of the writs, in these cases. (Mr. Blake—Hear, hear.) The Speaker by virtue of the statute must issue the writ, and unless some change was to be made in the returns, the whole thing was accomplished by entering the certificates of the judges upon the minutes of the House.

Mr. BLAKE remarked that the statute prescribed, however, that the Assembly should give the order for the issue of the writs.

Mr. MACKENZIE said he was sorry to observe that there were dissensions in the Government as to the course to proceed. He thought it desirable that the five gentlemen should be agreed; but if the Treasurer was really not able to agree with the Premier, no doubt he would practice the virtue of resignation. (Laughter.)

The motion was then carried.

Hon. J. S. MACDONALD said the Government were not precisely a unit on all matters; they were not made of putty. (Laughter.) In introducing a new practice of this kind, it was not strange that there should be some difference of opinion amongst them, and they were there for the purpose of coming to some conclusion as to the best mode of conducting the affairs of the House under the new system. He moved that a writ issue for the election of a member for South Grey in the room of Abraham Lauder, whose election had been declared void.—Carried.

Hon. J. S. MACDONALD also moved that writs do issue for the election of members for Prince Edward, North Simcoe, Stormont and Carleton.

The motion was carried in each case.

Hon. J. S. MACDONALD then introduced his Bill respecting the administration of oaths of office, which was read a first time and fixed for a second reading.

The SPEAKER informed the House that he had received a copy of the Speech of His Excellency, which he would read if the House desired it.

The reading of the speech was dispensed with.

Hon. J. S. MACDONALD moved that the Speech of His Excellency be taken into consideration on Monday next. Carried.

FORMAL RESOLUTIONS.

Hon. J. S. MACDONALD moved that the votes and proceedings of this House be printed, being first perused by Mr. Speaker, and that he do appoint the printing thereof, and that no person but such as he shall appoint do presume to print the same.

That select standing committees of this House, for the present Session, be appointed for the following purposes:—1. On Privileges and Elections. 2. On Railways. 3. On Miscellaneous Private Bills. 4. On Standing Orders. 5. On Public Accounts. 6. On Printing: which said committees shall severally be empowered to examine and inquire into all such matters and things as shall be referred to them by the House, and to report from time to time their observations and opinions thereon, with power to send for papers, persons and records.

That if anything shall come in question touching the return or election of any member, he is to withdraw during the time the matter is in debate; and all members returned upon double returns are to withdraw until their returns are determined.

That if it shall appear that any person has been elected or returned a member of this House or endeavour so to be, by bribery or