

SECOND PARLIAMENT—FIRST SESSION.

The SPEAKER took the chair at three o'clock.

PETITIONS PRESENTED.

By Mr. Deroche—The petition of the County Council of Lennox respecting the distribution of the Municipal Loan Fund.

By Mr. Coyne—The petition of the County Council of Peel, praying for certain amendments to the Jury Law.

By Mr. Webb—The petition of Donald McCall and others, public school teachers of the East Riding of the County of Northumberland, praying that no alteration be made in the law relating to the Superannuated Teachers' Fund.

By Mr. Patterson—The petition of the Huron and Ontario Ship Canal Company, praying that some steps may be taken to enable them to construct their work.

Also—The petition of the City Council of Toronto, combined with the County Councils of York and Simcoe, to the same effect.

By the Hon. Attorney-General Crooks—The petition of James Burns and others of Toronto, praying for certain amendments to the License Law.

By the Hon. Mr. Carling—The petition of the Great Western Railway Company, praying that the Act now before the House to extend the powers of the Canada Southern Railway may be modified.

By Mr. Springer—The petition of A. E. Shanty and others, of St. Clements, praying for railway communication from Berlin to Waterloo.

Also—The petition of George Hughes and others, of Hawkesville, to the same effect.

Also—The petition of Peter Shirk and others, of Bridgeport, to the same effect.

Also—The petition of L. Muller and others, of Midelburg, to the same effect.

Also—The petition of Elias Snider and others, of Waterloo, to the same effect.

Also—The petition of Isaac Wenger and others, of Elmira, to the same effect.

Also—The petition of E. W. B. Snider and others, of St. Jacob, to the same effect.

By Mr. Deroche—The petition of the County Council of Frontenac, praying that the Act to legalise a bye-law of the county in favour of the Kingston and Pembroke Railway do pass.

Also—The petition of the County Council of Lennox, praying for certain amendments to the election law.

BILLS INTRODUCED.

Mr. Coyne—To amend the Act respecting County Courts.

Mr. Fairbairn—To amend the Act respecting Common and Grammar Schools in Ontario.

Mr. Rykert—To amend the Act respecting the power of the trustees to sell certain lands.

Mr. Blake—To amend the Act respecting the establishment of Registry offices in Ridings, and to amend the Registration of Titles (Ontario) Act.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

Mr. PERRY moved that leave of absence be granted to the member for Halton (Mr. Barber) till Tuesday next, on account of ill health. Carried.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS.

Mr. BLAKE moved that during the remainder of the session Government orders appearing on the paper be called on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, after the other orders of the day have been disposed of. He did not wish to propose an additional day for Government orders, and therefore moved this arrangement. Carried.

THE MUNICIPAL LAW.

In reply to Mr. Patterson, Mr. BLAKE said the Ministry did not intend during the present session to introduce measures to revise and amend the municipal law.

DESTRUCTION OF TIMBER BY FIRE.

Mr. OLIVER moved for a select committee to inquire into and report as to the best means of protecting the valuable timber of this province from the ravages of fire. He explained that owing to the construction of railways, and the carelessness of railway men, more valuable wood had been destroyed in several counties than would have sufficed for the use of these counties for ten years. Then there was the practice of leaving valuable timber to rot on the ground, on account of some slight defects in the wood. He thought that speedy measures should be taken for the protection of what was a valuable source of wealth to the Province.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT said this was a large subject, and one that could not be hastily disposed of. It had been calculated that quite as much timber was destroyed by fire as was brought to market. He thought that the House might see its way to mitigate that evil, but it could hardly be done this session, for a great many persons would have to be consulted. He might state that one firm was now cutting 160,000 logs that had been burned over last year. If that timber were not cut this winter it would be practically useless, for timber that had been burned over would be without value if not cut down immediately.

The motion was carried.

THE SOUTH GREY INQUIRY.

Mr. LAUDER moved, "That a select committee be appointed to enquire into the truth or falsity of certain statements contained in numerous sworn affidavits published in certain newspapers, to the effect that one Lewis, acting in concert with others, and who was recently a Government Inspect-

tor of lands in the townships of Melancthon and Proton, in the county of Grey, had during the last election for said county represented to the inhabitants of said townships that he was authorized by the Government to state 'that if the voters of Proton voted against Mr. Lauder, one of the candidates, they should have the full benefit of the low estimate which had been made of the value of their lands, but not otherwise.' The said committee to enquire into the circumstances connected with the alleged improper interference of said Lewis in said election, and the authority on which he so acted. Such committee to report the result of such enquiry to the House.

Mr. LAUDER with the evidence taken by them. The committee to have power to send for persons, papers, and records." He had stated the facts on a former occasion. He charged nobody then; he charged nobody now. (Hear, hear.) The words he used were that the Government had given Lewis instructions. He had never charged the hon. the President of the Council with having authorized him. The words he had heard used were that the Blake Government had done so, and those were the words he used. He had stated what he had heard with respect to the hon. the Commissioner of Public Works. He did not know whether it was true or not. (Hear, hear.) He should be glad to know. He did not know whether the conversation he had spoken of between this man and the Commissioner of Public Works really did take place in the hon. gentleman's bedroom. He merely wished to know whether Lewis had his sanction. If so, the hon. gentleman was greatly responsible for what Lewis did. He objected entirely to be held responsible for stating in that chamber that the hon. the President of the Council, said so and so to this man. He did not know that he did. He merely stated what was notorious in the country, and which he said was a subject which demanded investigation. The President of the Council must not think he was going to make him responsible. The people must know who was responsible for these statements of Lewis. They would know, and the Government could not shirk the question.

Mr. MACKENZIE—The shirking is the other way.

Mr. LAUDER said he never shirked anything. (Laughter.) He was quite willing that this motion should be voted down. (No doubt of that!) He then moved for a committee.

Mr. SCOTT, of Grey, said the parties who had made the affidavits referred to by Mr. Lauder were perfectly reliable men. Lewis had a right to go to South Grey, provided that he went on his own responsibility. But it had been asserted that he did not go there on his own responsibility. Mr. Lauder did not charge that the Government had interfered, but had said that it was alleged they had interfered. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. BLAKE said it would be recollected that Mr. Lauder, having put on the paper a notice of motion different from the preceding one, had asked leave to have the substituted one put in the place of the former. This was agreed to; in fact the Government had agreed that the substituted motion should come up on last Friday.

Mr. LAUDER said he did not so understand it.

Mr. BLAKE said that the gentleman had accepted it for Friday, and that he (Mr. Blake) saw the gentleman's friends turn round to him and say—"Don't accept it." (Hear, hear.) He (Mr. Blake) had heard them say so. Then Mr. Lauder had an opportunity of bringing up the motion on Monday, but did not accept the opportunity. But now the Government had no objection to his motion, although its irregularity was quite as great as on a former occasion. He (Mr. Blake) entirely objected to the system proposed to be introduced, of founding inquiries in this House on a mere statement made in a newspaper, and on statements published without authentication. He never referred to what was published in a newspaper, unless it were a glaring attack upon himself, but there was one thing to which he must now refer. A sheet published in this city had made a statement in reference to the matter now before the House. That sheet had stated that the majority for Mr. Lauder, in Proton, was in March last 198; but at the recent election had been reduced to 6; and the sheet had called the country at large to see how enormous a reduction had taken place in Mr. Lauder's majority, and that it was caused by unfair means. Mr. Lauder knew that this statement was glaring falsehood; he knew that his majority in Proton, in March last, was only 108 instead of 198 as had been spread abroad through the country. (Hear, hear.) That was the true statement, and yet Mr. Lauder had the manliness to leave uncorrected the false statement in order that more points of sting might be hurled against the Administration. The records of the House showed the poll books in the possession of the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery showed—that Mr. Lauder's majority in March last was only 108. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. LAUDER said that the majority included the township of Melancthon.

Mr. BLAKE said the statement in the newspaper was confined to the township of Proton; and this was a wilful falsehood, uttered and repeated by that sheet, and scattered over the length and breadth of the country. He (Mr. Blake) would say more. The numbers in Proton in March and December had been exaggerated. There were 21 voters who voted for Mr. Lauder in March last who voted against him in December; and this was giving him the benefit of every man whose name was the same. The total poll in Proton at the former election was 155; at the recent election 122; so Mr. Lauder polled at the last election within 23 votes of what he had polled in the month of March. (Hear, hear.) Practically, the very great change in his majority was effected, to a large extent, by the fact that a larger poll was had in Proton the last election than there was had the former one. He would now show to the House another instance of how undesirable it would be to grant committees on the assertion of a newspaper. The sheet to which he had before alluded had been telling the country that the Commissioner of Crown Lands took his Bible oath, when he accepted the Speakership,

that he would perform some duty or other, and that he had violated his pledge. The country had been flooded with repetitions of this charge. But all the old members of this House knew—the younger members knew—it was well the whole country should know—that the charge was a wilful and audacious falsehood; for the Speaker takes no oath (Cheers.) Here was an instance of a newspaper writing a deliberate lie in order to injure a member of the Government. Was the House going to grant a committee on a charge made by a newspaper of this stamp—a newspaper that was the common sewer for all the lies in the country? (Applause.) That same newspaper had charged the Commissioner of Crown Lands that as a Catholic his co-religionists would never forget that Mr. Scott, the father of the separate school system, having as a public man solemnly pledged himself to that measure, endeavoured to prevail upon Mr. Angus Morrison and Mr. Thomas Daly to vote against Sandfield Macdonald, who was then charged with carrying the measure through the House. This charge had been repeated.

Mr. LAUDER—What has that to do with the Proton affair?

Mr. BLAKE—I hope the gentleman will not interrupt me.

Mr. CUMBERLAND—The House is not discussing the Commissioner of Crown Lands. (Cries of Order.)

Mr. MACKENZIE—The Premier is showing how foolish it is to rely on the statements of a certain newspaper as ground for appointing a committee.

Mr. CUMBERLAND—There are affidavits. (Cries of Order.)

The SPEAKER ruled Mr. Cumberland out of order, and expressed a hope that there would be less interruption.

Mr. BLAKE continued. The motion by Mr. Lauder, as it now stood, was based on the ground that a newspaper had published certain things purporting to be affidavits. He was pointing out to the House and the country that that newspaper was in the habit of deliberately lying about public men, and deliberately stating things known to be untrue. He would now prove this to the House by reading the following telegram and letter:—

[TELEGRAM.]

STRATFORD, Dec. 27, 1871.

To Hon. R. W. Scott, Commissioner of Crown Lands:—

Your message arrived in my absence. I will write to *Telegraph* contradicting the charge as without slightest foundation; untrue in every particular, as to your having written me to vote against the Bill. Your letters were addressed to friends asking them to support me.

T. M. DALY.

[LETTER.]

STRATFORD, Jan. 27th, 1872.

MY DEAR SCOTT,—

Read *Telegraph* attacks. In reference to above, I hereby authorise you to state that the statements therein contained in regard to myself are untrue in every respect. I never received such a letter from you, nor did I send any letter to my constituents purporting to have been written by you, in either 1862 or 1863, the latter being the year I voted for your "Separate School" Bill. I personally stated to Mr. Ross Robertson in December last, a few days after the first attack upon you by his paper, that he had been imposed upon, and that you had not, by letter or by request, either in 1862 or 1863, or at any time, ever asked me to vote against your School Bill. On the contrary, I had voted and spoken in favour of the principle on 5th March, 1863 (not 1862), and only opposed it at a later stage by voting for two amendments made by Hon. J. H. Cameron.

I regret the *Telegraph* should persist in attacking you without first ascertaining the facts; and also that it still persists in using my name, after my having told Robertson that the slander cast upon you is false.

I am, dear sir,

Faithfully yours, as ever,

T. M. DALY.

Mr. Blake went on to say that though this letter was communicated to the newspaper that had made the charge, in December last, yet the same charge had been repeated ever since. Mr. Blake read a telegram from Mr. Angus Morrison, in which he decisively and emphatically that Mr. Scott, directly or indirectly, ever induced him to vote against the Separate School Bill. Mr. Blake continued. He had shown that the charges made by a newspaper that did not come within the list of respectable newspapers, had been refuted, but had still been persisted in. The House would agree with him that no charge made by such a paper ought to form *per se* the grounds for striking a committee.

Mr. LAUDER—And THE GLOBE?

Mr. BLAKE—Yes, and THE GLOBE. No newspaper charge *per se* should form the grounds for striking a committee. The House would now understand why he had called on Mr. Lauder to produce affidavits. He had stated that he had the original affidavits. When any member of the House came forward and said he had affidavits and was ready to produce them, he vouched for the authenticity of the documents. The House was seized of the affidavits by the importance it attached to the assertions of any one of its members. Mr. Lauder knew something of these affidavits; he stated they were sent to him voluntarily, and it seemed that he had to do with their going to the public. He did not and could not deny the fact, for interspersed amongst the affidavits was a letter from a Mr. Ludlow to Mr. Lauder, and a letter from Mr. Lauder to Mr. Ludlow. Mr. Lauder, having a seat in this House and an opportunity to ventilate his grievances, and did not choose to wait a few days until the House met, but rushed into a newspaper, and sent his grievances all over the country, accompanied by inflammatory comments indicating his (Mr. Blake's) connection with what was alleged to have occurred; and then Mr. Lauder, having spread these charges broadcast over the country, came and demanded a committee of enquiry. (Hear, hear.) Yet Mr. Lauder would not take the responsibility of making a charge. He would make no charge against the Pres-