

LEGISLATURE OF ONTARIO

SECOND PARLIAMENT—SECOND SESSION.

The SPEAKER took the chair at three o'clock.

PETITIONS.

The following petitions were presented :

Hon. Mr. Crooks—George Wright and others, of Toronto, for an Act to establish Mechanics' Liens.

Also—Joseph Gearing and others, of Toronto, for an Act to establish Mechanics' Liens.

Mr. Calvin—County Council of Frontenac, to amend the School Act.

Mr. Oliver—J. H. Farrington and others, of North Norwich, to amend the School Act.

Also—J. W. Elliott and others, of Dereham, to amend the School Act.

Also—County Council of Oxford, respecting the Municipal Loan Fund.

Mr. Prince—James Blair and others, of London, against the amalgamation of the Agricultural, Investment, and other societies of London.

Also—County Council of Essex, for an Act to incorporate the Sandwich, Windsor, and Leamington Railway Co.

Also—County Agricultural Society of Essex, for aid.

Thirty-two petitions for the prohibition of the liquor traffic were presented by various members.

BILLS INTRODUCED.

Mr. MACDONALD—To incorporate the Loyal Orange Association of Ontario.

Mr. DEROCHE—To incorporate the Quebec Mining Company of Marmora.

Also—To incorporate the Hubbert Silver Mining Company of Thunder Bay.

Mr. FAREWELL—For the improvement of water privileges. He said the object of the Bill was to allow parties to increase their head of water.

Hon. Mr. CAMERON—To amend the Act incorporating the Toronto and Nipissing Railway Company.

Also—To incorporate the Lake Simcoe Junction Railway Company.

Mr. WILLIAMS (East Durham)—Respecting the Omemeo, Bobcaygeon and North Peterborough Junction Railway Company.

Also—To amend the Municipal Institutions Act.

Mr. OLIVER—Respecting Fair Grounds in the county of Oxford.

Dr. BOULTER—To authorize the Law Society of Ontario to admit Charles Graham, of Madoc, to practice as attorney and solicitor.

Mr. DAWSON—To enable the corporation of Romney to alter, widen, and straighten a certain road.

Mr. PRINCE—To legalize the survey of certain lots in the township of Colchester, county of Essex.

HOMESTEAD EXEMPTIONS.

Mr. FITZSIMMONS asked whether it was the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill, during the present session, providing for a "Homestead Exemption Law."

Attorney-General MOWAT replied that it was not their intention to do so this season.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

On the order for Mr. Rykert's resolution, respecting the Executive Council,

Mr. RYKERT said that would stand.

Attorney-General MOWAT suggested that the matter had better be disposed of. It was to some extent a motion of want of confidence, and it was not usual to let such motions stand for so long a time.

Mr. RYKERT—I was not aware it was a motion of want of confidence.

Attorney-General MOWAT—It may be so considered with respect to some of the members of the Government.

Mr. CAMERON—Perhaps the other notice respecting the Canada Central Railway would resolve itself into the same thing.

AMENDMENT OF THE ELECTION LAW.

Mr. MACDONALD moved the second reading of his Bill to amend the Election Law of 1868, by providing that betting or

wagering shall be an illegal act. In doing so he said that in the State of Illinois there was a law to much the same effect. The Bill before the House provided that there should be no betting or wagering indulged in by electors upon the number of votes which may be given to any one or more persons at elections for the Ontario Legislature, or as to the person who will receive the greatest number of votes or a greater number of votes than another. His design was to give greater security to the electors, and to strengthen the provisions of the election law. It was usual and to some extent fashionable for gentlemen to bet a hat, a bottle of wine, or some other article on the result of elections. It was done very frequently as a mere matter of pastime, just as they would bet on a horse-race; but bets were sometimes made of large sums of money, so that it really became worth the while of those who wagered large sums to spend something to influence the election. This certainly was the case in the neighbourhood from whence he came at the last election; and it may have been that the elections were to some extent influenced by the practice of betting all over the Province. There were gentlemen who would corroborate him in the statement he had made respecting his own section of the country; and he considered something should be done to check the practice. The Bill had received the approval of a certain portion of the press, irrespective of political leanings, and it should meet with the support of the House and the country. He understood it was the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill regarding the purity of elections, and with respect to controverted elections, and he thought the provisions of his Bill might be added to it.

Hon. Mr. MOWAT—Our measure does not cover the subject of your Bill.

Mr. MACDONALD—Then there is all the more necessity for my Bill being passed.—The speaker remarked that no betting of any kind, whether for money, property, or other valuable thing, should be allowed, and he thought that principle should meet with general approval. The amount of the penalty he had left blank, leaving it to the House to say whether it would be willing that a penalty should be inflicted upon persons having no votes who might make bets.

Mr. FRASER, while deprecating the practice of wagering, thought that his honourable friend who had preceded him had a little special legislation on his own account which he wished to secure by the Bill. Like the "Heathen Chinee," his ways were a "little peculiar." He (Mr. Macdonald) was right in saying that in his vicinity the election was affected by betting, for he (the speaker) had understood that some of the honourable gentleman's friends had made such large wagers on the result of the Brockville election that their sinews of war came out short on account of the votes. He did not think that the Bill before the House would be anything but a piece of unwise legislation, for in the first place it did not make betting a corrupt practice. It would have been better had a Bill been introduced to prohibit all betting, for the principle of the present one only touched electors, and not the largest class of betters, who were really non-voters. Candidates had enough to contend with now, and this Bill would only complicate matters still more. Besides, in closely contested constituencies a candidate might be tempted to give odds to electors that his opponent would not be elected, and objection could be taken to those votes, thus rendering them void, and he would go in on a scrutiny. There were other objections to the Bill, and he hoped the preceding speaker would see the impropriety of introducing it, otherwise he (Mr. Fraser) would move the six months' hoist.

Mr. BOULTBEE thought this was a good Bill, as the betting in his constituency had been very disastrous, as although his party had paid all the bets they lost, the other side had not done the same. (Laughter.) Unless some provision were made to pay off the outstanding matters, he would have to vote against the Bill.

Cries of "Withdraw."

Mr. MACDONALD refused to withdraw his Bill. He was strongly convinced of the correctness of the principle involved, and he would stand by it, notwithstanding that it appeared to tread too closely on the corns of some hon. gentlemen. The press of the country had supported the measure.

Mr. FRASER rose to move a six months' hoist.

Mr. RYKERT claimed that he was out of order, having already spoken.

The SPEAKER confirmed this view.

Mr. McCALL said the practice of betting with poor men was used as a means of in-