

ONTARIO LEGISLATURE.

FIRST SESSION — THIRD PARLIAMENT.

MONDAY, Nov. 29.

The Speaker took the chair at three o'clock.

CROWN LANDS OFFICE.

Mr. LAUDER moved for a return showing the receipts of the Crown Lands Office in its different departments during the year 1875, up to the date of said return, as far as can be ascertained. He said that in view of the fact that the revenue of the Crown Lands Office had considerably fallen off of late years, while the expenditure had increased and additional appointments been made, it was important that the House should be informed of the receipts of the Office up to the latest period before the estimates were voted.

Mr. PARDEE regretted that the hon. member had not felt himself able to move for an ordinary return without making charges against the Department. The Crown Lands Office, equally with other Departments of the Government, had nothing to conceal in regard to its administration, and the cause for any diminution in the receipts from the woods and forests branch would readily occur to hon. members. The return asked for would be brought down at the earliest possible moment.

The motion was carried.

RESIGNATION OF DR. WORKMAN.]

Mr. LAUDER moved for a return of copies of all correspondence and papers under the control of the Government relating to the resignation of Dr. Workman, late Superintendent of the Toronto Lunatic Asylum, and the appointment of his successor. He reminded the House that the Province in the resignation of Dr. Workman had lost the services of a valuable servant, whom it would have been desirable to have retained even if only in an advisory capacity. The appointments made of gentlemen to succeed Dr. Workman had been very unfortunate.

Mr. MOWAT said that Dr. Workman's resignation was his own voluntary act, which he had put on the ground of the long period for which he had served in that important position which he had occupied. He had stated that he thought the time had come when he ought to be relieved from the arduous duties of that office. He (Mr. Mowat) had had several personal conversations with—and he was not sure but some correspondence also—for the purpose of urging him to withdraw his resignation, but in a long conversation Dr. Workman had assigned various personal reasons, chief among which were the long time he had served and the age at which he had arrived. He had thought that under these considerations the remainder of his life should be spent in a more peaceful position. He (Mr. Mowat) agreed with his hon. friend with regard to the ability and zeal with which Dr. Workman had discharged the duties of his office, and there was nothing whatever in the correspondence asked for which he had any desire to conceal from the House. With regard, however, to the gentleman who had in the first instance been appointed to succeed Dr. Workman, he (Mr. Mowat) entirely differed from the hon. member when he asserted that his appointment was a mistake. He was a man of the very highest ability. He had had asylum experience of the most valuable kind to one taking charge of the Provincial Lunatic Asylum, standing the highest in a list of some eight or ten first-classmen. He had held an important position in an institution of the kind in the West of England.

The motion was carried.

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Mr. CROOKS presented the Public Accounts for the year 1874. Also, statement of receipts and expenditures for the nine months ending 30th September, 1875. Also, a return showing the amounts appropriated to the various municipalities in Ontario under the Municipal Loan Fund scheme; the amount appropriated by by-law in the various municipalities, with the principal and the interest thereon, up to November, 1875. Also, the report of the Immigration Department for 1874.

THE ADDRESS.

Mr. WILLS resumed the debate on the

Address. He joined in the regret expressed at the death of the late Lieut.-Governor. He agreed with hon. gentlemen that the Election Law had resulted in more decorum in elections, but regretted that under it some gentlemen had been deprived of their rights for the smallest possible breach of the law. By the Ballot Act, the papers could be destroyed within four weeks, while the Municipal Act gave six weeks within which a protest might be made. The extension of the ballot to voting on by-laws would have, he thought, a very doubtful effect. The hasty legislation which had taken place showed the advantage of a second Chamber. Nothing required more care than the distribution of Government aid to railroads. In England such aid was never given except for military purposes, though our possession of a large surplus made the circumstances different in this country. The power of municipalities to loan money to railways had led to many of them becoming immersed in debt. There was a doubt as to the constitutionality of Acts giving this power, and he hoped the Government would give the matter their most serious consideration. He was not in favour of spending so much money on immigration, and believed it would be better expended in finding work for the immigrants when they arrived. They ought to turn their attention to the emigration from Canada to the United States, and should endeavour to stop it. He regretted the retirement of the Chief Superintendent of Education, but thought this might be the best time to inaugurate a new system. He called attention to the small salaries paid to school teachers, who ought to be selected from the best specimens of humanity we had. A measure to extend the accommodation for lunatics ought to have been brought down before. He thought the Government should turn their attention to the sanitary condition of our towns and cities. The sanitary by-laws were badly carried out, and the result was the prevalence of diseases which might be prevented. He called attention to the advisableness of making the end of the financial year the 1st October if the House was to be called together in November. Both sides of the House were agreed in supporting the payment of criminal witnesses.

Mr. DEACON complained that the Address contained very few measures of real reform, and claimed that to hon. gentlemen opposite was not solely due the credit for the Ballot Act. He contended that the Act had been inefficient in its working, as was evidenced by the number of rejected ballots. He suggested that the rejected ballots should be referred to a judge, who after examining them should send the result to the returning-officer, who should amend his return accordingly. There was no reason why ignorant voters should be deprived of their franchise because they were unable to grapple with the complicated machinery of the ballot. The school law he considered was very defective. As to the proposal to apply the voting by ballot to municipal by-laws, it was not worthy of support, because the people had had no experience in the ballot at municipal elections, where it would not be a success. When municipalities were afflicted with the railway mania they were too ready to vote excessive sums in aid of different roads, and such by-laws should not become law until they were submitted and approved by the Provincial Legislature. The House had always been prepared to vote large sums for immigration purposes, and had made the same mistake as Missionary Societies in that sufficient attention had not been devoted to people at home, to Canadians who desired to settle. The rights of the settler and of the timber licence-holder should be more strictly defined and better understood, and he (Mr. Deacon) would introduce a motion with that object during the session. If more attention were paid to encouraging native squatters instead of voting large sums to bring foreign immigrants here, who shortly left the country, the general interests would be promoted, and fewer of our immigrants would leave for the Western States, where probably they could obtain greater prosperity. The question of the Public Accounts was one on which the Government should not be boastful, for an opinion prevailed that the Accounts had not been fairly investigated and audited; and, in appointing the Public Accounts Committee, the Government should not claim more than a small majority. He claimed that the Opposition had forced upon public attention the necessity of paying witnesses in criminal cases, which should apply equally to the Crown and the prisoners. In view of the important measures carried by the Sandfield Macdonald