

ONTARIO LEGISLATURE.

FIRST SESSION — THIRD PARLIAMENT.

WEDNESDAY, Dec. 15.

The Speaker took the chair at three o'clock.

REPORTS.

Mr. DEROCHE presented the third report of the Committee on Standing Orders.

BILLS INTRODUCED.

The following Bills were introduced and read the first time:—

Mr. SINCLAIR—To authorise the Law Society of Ontario to admit Albert Monkman, of Toronto, to practise at the Bar.

Mr. CREIGHTON — To incorporate the town of Meaford.

Mr. ROBINSON — To incorporate the Kingston Street Railway Co.

Mr. ROSS (Huron)—To authorize the Corporation of the County of Huron to issue new debentures.

Mr. DEROCHE—To incorporate the National Trust and Investment Co. of Toronto

Mr. WATTERWORTH—To amend the Act to incorporate the Port Stanley, Strathroy, and Fort Frank Railway Co.

Mr. BAXTER—To enable the village of Caledonia to issue debentures.

Mr. WILLIAMS—To enable the Law Society of Ontario to admit Robt. A. Waddell as barrister-at-law.

ISSUE OF WRITS IN CONTESTED ELECTION CASES.

Mr. MEREDITH moved "That the Clerk of the House do prepare a return showing the dates of the receipt by him of the reports of the judges in the several contested election cases which have been tried subsequent to the last general elections in which the elections were avoided, and the dates of the issue by the Clerk of his warrants, and by the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery of the writs for the holding of the elections which have taken place since the last general election, and for copies of all instructions given to the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery in reference to the issue of such writs, or any of them." The hon. member remarked that in passing the Election Act of 1868 the Legislature laid down the principle that elections should be held all on one day, and the Government should not exercise the power, which they previously exercised, of holding elections in such a manner as might conduce to the interests of their party. By the Controverted Elections Act of 1871 provision was made for the issue of new writs immediately after the reception of the reports from the judges in contested cases. In seventeen cases the elections were voided by the action of the Courts during the past year, and the writs to supply the vacancies were unreasonably delayed in many cases. Although the report in the Dundas case was made on the 6th July, the writ was not issued till 4th September; the report was received for South Essex on 5th August, writ issued on 26th August; report for Wellington received 13th July, writ issued on 26th August. When the report was brought down it would appear that the delay was not due to the action of the Clerk of the House or the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery, and that the Government of the day had interfered to prevent the writ being issued immediately after the judge's report was received. It was said that in the case of Dundas political reasons had induced the Government to delay the issue of the new writ, and he demanded an explanation from some member of the Government of the reason for their interference which caused the delay. In the case of Wellington and South Oxford the delays occurred in consequence of the efforts made to secure a seat for the Treasurer. The exercise of that power by the Government was, however, not only wrong in principle, but was a direct violation of the statute. His object in moving for the return was to fix the responsibility of delaying the writ on some person, and in the event of it being found that the provisions of the statute were not sufficiently stringent, the Legislature might enact additional provisions to compel the issue of writs in contested election cases immediately