

# ONTARIO LEGISLATURE.

THIRD PARLIAMENT—SECOND SESSION.

WEDNESDAY, Feb. 7.

The Speaker took the chair at three o'clock.

## EXPLANATION.

Mr. HARGRAFT said he wished to make a correction in THE GLOBE'S report of some remarks he had made last night upon the School Bill. He was made to say that towns in which High Schools were situated should pay more for their support than rural sections. What he did say was that the changes proposed by the Bill, compelling towns separated from counties to pay a sum equal to the Government grant instead of one-half as at present, would work very harshly in the case of small towns; and he had given some statistics from the town in which he resided, showing that while the towns paid \$1,400 per annum in support of the High School, besides providing and keeping up the building, the pupils from the town were only about one-third and the outside pupils about two-thirds of those in attendance. He had said further that the surrounding counties should pay something to support a school at which so many of their pupils were educated. The amendment, if carried, would make that town pay about \$2,000 per annum to support the school at which only about 80 pupils from the town were instructed.

## REPORT BY COMMITTEE.

Mr. Springer presented the report of the Select Committee on the Bills to amend the Assessment Acts.

### TORONTO MUNICIPAL AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. FRASER said he wished, before the orders of the day were called, to direct attention as Chairman of the Committee on Private Bills, to an article published in one of the newspapers this morning, and he was sorry that this was the second time he had been obliged, as Chairman of that Committee, to make such a correction. The article was headed "Toronto's Municipal Bill," and it was to the first paragraph he wished to refer. It was in the following language:—"Some of the clauses in this measure have received very cavalier treatment at the hands of the Private Bills Committee. It may be supposed that the question about how the Mayor of such a city as Toronto is to be chosen in one which, at any rate, can bear discussion, and that what the promoters of the Bill had to say on the subject ought at least to have been heard. What may suit smaller places may be very unsuitable for one like the capital of Ontario; and it is not a matter which any member of any Parliamentary Committee, be he chairman of such Committee or be he something else, can dispose of by his mere *sic volo sic jubeo*, as we understand was the case in this instance. Such a way of despatching business may be expeditious, but it is not satisfactory, and in the end will serve no good purpose. It may or it may not be the best plan to appoint a Mayor of a city by the vote of the Council, and from among the aldermen themselves. We think it is the best plan; but whether it is not, we protest against any chairman of any Parliamentary Committee that ever was named disposing of the matter in any such arbitrary fashion."

He wished to say in the most distinct and unqualified terms that in so far as that article pointed to his conduct as Chairman of the Committee it was entirely contrary to the facts. Instead of taking ground against the particular feature of the Bill referred to, if he had an opinion at all on the subject it was in favour of that feature, though he had not given expression to any opinion. In the Bill there were four clauses; two of them intended to permit the aldermen of Toronto to retire annually in rotation after the next general election, and two clauses relating to the election of the Mayor by the Municipal Council. When these clauses had come up for discussion it had been moved by a member of the Committee that the whole four be struck out. Instead of his being in favour of doing that, he, as chairman, had suggested that as there were two distinct features embraced in the four clauses, the first two clauses should be discussed by themselves and the last two by themselves. On that suggestion the motion was altered so as to include the striking out of the first two clauses. After a full and intelligent discus-

sion by members of the Committee, without a single word having been said by him, the Committee had by a large majority—indeed almost unanimously—decided to strike them out. Then had come the discussion on the last two clauses—those relating to the matter referred to in the newspaper article this morning. In relation to those two clauses he had not said a word. He had not disavowed them or expressed any opinion upon them in any shape or form. After a motion had been made and seconded that the two clauses be struck out, so much had he not been in favour of striking them out that he had based himself in drafting a clause to be substituted for those two, in order that it might meet with the views of the Committee and the Bill come before the House in proper shape. He thought it was a matter to be regretted that when the chairmanship of a Committee such as Private Bills involved so much labour and anxiety, and when the duties of the chairman were at all times rather arduous than otherwise, his action should be entirely misrepresented. It was a great pity that in misrepresenting the Chairman's action a reflection should be cast on the Committee itself; for the Committee would not be worthy of its name if it would allow a chairman or any member to dictate any action if a majority were against it. In this particular case it was to be regretted all the more, when on the previous day there had appeared in the same paper a report by its own reporter of the meeting of the Private Bills Committee, in which what he (Mr. Fraser) had just stated, was made as clear as possible. He read from the report of the proceedings of the Committee, and went on to say that in the balance of the article he had been equally misrepresented. What he had done in the Private Bills Committee, and what he considered it was his duty to do, had been to say that the Government had considered the particular sections relating to exemptions from municipal taxation, and had come to the conclusion that if there was to be any legislation at all it should be of a Provincial character, instead of applying merely to the city of Toronto, and that such legislation should be initiated by the Government. The Committee as a whole, and without a dissentient voice, had considered this right and proper, and accordingly that particular provision of the Bill had been struck out. He might add that the section relating to that matter had been introduced in rather a crude shape—in blank, in fact—so that it was evident that the promoters of the measure had not very well considered what they intended doing. He could not help thinking that the article to which he had referred was calculated to bring the Committee into contempt. It was certainly entirely unfair so far as he was concerned.

Mr. BELL said he was present at the Committee as a promoter of the Bill, and considered that it had received a very fair consideration by the Chairman, clause by clause. Last year he (Mr. Bell) had been of opinion that the Chairman had treated the matter rather cavalierly, but he had no fault to find this year.

### MASTERS' AND SERVANTS' ACT.

Mr. O'DONOGHUE asked whether it was the intention of the Government during the present session to introduce a Bill amending the Masters' and Servants' Act, or whether such a measure is within its jurisdiction.

Mr. MOWAT said that it was not the intention of the Government to introduce such a measure this session. It was doubtful whether the portions of the Act to which he supposed the hon. gentleman referred were within the jurisdiction of the Legislature. This and a number of other such questions could only be finally settled by the Supreme Court.

### INQUESTS AT THE CENTRAL PRISON

Mr. MACDOUGALL (Simcoe), in the absence of Mr. Cameron, asked whether a coroner's inquest was held on the body of John McKelvy, who died in the Central Prison, Toronto, on or about the 14th day of May, 1875, and if so, by and before what coroner was such inquest held; also whether a coroner's inquest was held on the body of James Skye or Sobyler, who died in the Central Prison in July, 1875, and if so, by and before what coroner was such inquest held.

Mr. WOOD said that, in making his remarks the other evening regarding the Central Prison, the only evidence he had had before him was the statement he found in the report of the Inspector of Prisons. Since then, on investigation, he had ascertained that a *post mortem* examination had been held on the body of McKelvy by the Central Prison surgeon, and