

ONTARIO LEGISLATURE.

THIRD PARLIAMENT--SECOND SESSION.

THURSDAY, Feb. 8.

The Speaker took the chair at three o'clock.

PETITIONS.

The following petitions were presented:—

Mr. Pardee—Of the County Council of Lambton, praying for certain amendments to the Municipal Drainage Act.

Mr. Hay—Of the Township Council of Elma, praying that an Act may pass to legalize a by-law granting aid to the Stratford and Huron Railway.

Hon. Mr. Pardee—Of the County Council of Lambton, praying for certain amendments to the Municipal Drainage Act.

Mr. Hay—Of the Township Council of Elma, praying that an Act may pass to legalize a by-law granting aid to the Stratford and Huron Railway.

BILLS INTRODUCED.

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

Mr. Coutts—Respecting the drainage of certain lands, and to amend the Municipal Institutions Act.

Mr. Hay—To make the provisions of the Act respecting the property of the religious institutions of the Province of Ontario applicable to the Church of England in the said Province.

Mr. Ferris—To amend the Municipal Institutions Act.

Mr. Mowat—Respecting the administration of the estates of intestates dying without known relatives in Ontario.

Mr. Mowat—To provide for certain amendments to the Statutes of the Province as consolidated by the Commissioners appointed for that purpose.

Mr. Mowat—To provide for certain amendments to the law.

RETURNS.

Mr. Wood presented a return respecting the Brockwood Asylum; also a return of correspondence between the Ontario and Dominion Governments relating to the transfer of the River Trent.

DUES ON PINE TIMBER.

Mr. PARDEE moved, "That this House doth ratify the Order in Council reducing the special rate of dues imposed by Order in Council of 4th October, 1871, on pine timber taken from certain lands in the Muskoka and Parry Sound districts, which Order is to the following effect, viz:—Upon consideration of the Report of the Honourable the Commissioner of Crown Lands, dated the 18th October, 1876, the Committee of Council advise that subject to the ratification of this Order by resolution of the Legislative Assembly, in default whereof it shall be inoperative, the rate of dues imposed under the Order in Council of the 4th October, 1871, on pine timber taken from lands sold as timber berths on 23rd November, 1871, or from lands the locatees or purchasers of which were allowed by said Order in Council to sell the pine on the lands sold or located to them, be reduced to the same rate as is charged on pine cut under license in other parts of the Province, such reduction to apply only to pine timber cut on the lands referred to since 1st May, 1876, and in future till otherwise ordered." He explained that since 1869 the dues charged on pine timber, on lands under license, were 1½ cents per square foot, or 75 cents per 1,000 feet of lumber for standard logs. These rates, which were single dues, prevailed upon all the lands under license except those sold in the fall of 1871. At that time a sale of timber lands in the Muskoka district, to the extent of 487,000 square miles, was effected, and in this case double dues were imposed, namely, 2½ cents per foot of square timber and 30 cents per standard log. He contended that by reducing the rate the revenue would be benefited. A large quantity of superior timber, which would not be cut at all under the double rate, because it would not pay the lumbermen to do so, would no doubt be cut under single dues. The hon. gentleman proceeded to show that the expected gain to the Treasury by the reduction would be \$48,000. There were 328,000 acres of land under license, and 86,000 acres which the lumbermen had bought from settlers. The Government had received as much from the 86,000 acres under single dues as they had from the 328,000 acres under double dues, and it would be clearly to the interests of the