

Province, and herein more particularly for the Lieutenant-Governor and the House of Assembly, in their legislative capacity at this time assembled; that Thou wouldst be pleased to direct and prosper all their consultations, to the advancement of Thy glory, the safety, honour, and welfare of our Sovereign and her Province of Ontario, that all things may be so ordered and settled by their endeavours upon the best and surest foundations, that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety, may be established among us for all generations. These, and all other necessities for them, and for us, we humbly beg in the name and through the mediation of Jesus Christ, our Most blessed Lord and Saviour.—Amen.

Our Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day or daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.—Amen.

WINDING UP OF JOINT STOCK COMPANIES.

Mr MOWAT moved the first reading of a Bill respecting the winding up of joint stock companies. He said the Bill was founded partly upon the law in existence in England adapted to our circumstances. Its general character was to afford companies the means of winding up by their own act. Hon. gentlemen familiar with legal matters knew the great difficulty there was in winding up an incorporated company—a difficulty so great as to be almost insuperable. It frequently happened that a company was no longer in a condition to carry on business without being actually insolvent, but there were rights to be disposed of amongst the shareholders and other matters which rendered the winding up difficult. So many joint stock companies are being established that it was also found convenient that there should be no easy method of winding up unless there was good reason for it. He trusted he had succeeded in preparing a measure which would meet the acceptance of the House.

The Bill was read the first time.

EMPLOYMENT OF PRISONERS.

Mr. MOWAT moved the first reading of a Bill to provide for the employment of persons sentenced to hard labour in the common gaols without the walls of the prisons. The Bill, he said, corresponded very nearly with that passed by the Dominion Parliament on the same subject, the operation of which, however, was confined to persons sentenced to hard labour under the laws of Canada, and did not affect those sentenced under the laws of the Provinces. It was found by experience that a large proportion of offenders sentenced to hard labour had been guilty of breaches of Provincial laws, and a great many suggestions had been made, from Toronto and other cities, that there should be provision to meet that class of offenders. He was not proposing to alter the law as to the class of cases in which hard labour should form part of the sentence, but simply to bring it in accord with the general sentiment that provision should be made for the employment of offenders against the provincial laws outside the prison walls. Great evils arose from persons being incarcerated in our gaols and having nothing to do. The prisoners themselves were often injured thereby; the less guilty were compelled to associate with the more guilty, and all manner of evils were apt to result. In view of those considerations, he presented a Bill for the consideration of the House.

Mr. CAMERON said it was quite impossible for him to say whether he should approve of the Bill or not. The class of persons to whom it could be applied was of course small, but he should certainly oppose any attempt to make persons work as common criminals upon the highways who were not guilty of something recognized as a crime. He mentioned the case of a Toronto merchant, who had

got trapped by a license detective in consequence of having unintentionally broken the License Act, and said that that gentleman—one of the most respectable merchants in Toronto—might be sent to gaol, and, under the operation of the proposed measure, be compelled to work on the highways as a common felon.

Mr. MOWAT said the proposed Act did not subject any person to hard labour who was not subject to hard labour by existing laws. If there were laws which unjustly subjected persons to hard labour, those laws ought to be changed. Whatever evil arose, arose from the difficulty of saying what classes of persons should be sentenced to hard labour and what classes should not. Hard labour was only annexed in cases where the offence was a crime, in the moral sense of the word.

The Bill was read the first time.

THE CONSOLIDATED STATUTES.

Mr. MOWAT moved the first reading of a Bill to confirm the revised Statutes of Ontario. He stated that the Bill was introduced on a recommendation of the Statute Commissioners. In the course of the work of consolidation a vast number of points arose as to the agreement of different Acts and clauses, etc., on which it was absolutely necessary that the Commissioners should arrive at some decision. It was extremely advisable that these volumes should be made the law of the land, behind which no one could go. In order that the decision of the Commissioners on any points might not be liable to dispute, they had recommended that the course taken in the Province of Quebec under similar circumstances should be also adopted here. A number of amendments were made by the Quebec Legislature to the code reported by the Commissioners, and they were, by a provision of the House, incorporated in the code, which was made the law of the land. The same question that arose here was afterwards suggested, viz., that there was room for the argument that persons might go behind the code, and question the correctness of the consolidation. To avoid such a contingency the Quebec Legislature passed a law giving effect to the code as it was. That was the simple object of the Bill he introduced in relation to the Ontario statutes, which he thought the House would agree was highly necessary.

Mr. CAMERON wished to know if the report of the Commissioners communicated where any doubt had arisen as to whether they had gone beyond or had fallen short of what the law was at present. It was very desirable that the revised statutes should be nothing more than the law of the land, and that persons outside of this House should not legislate for it. Unless the report stated what changes were made, it would be too much to ask the House to say that what had been done by the Commissioners should be adopted, however much they might respect the gentlemen who composed the Commission.

Mr. MOWAT said it would be utterly impossible to mention all the points of difficulty. There was only one case in which there had arisen any doubt as to the law. Unless the House assumed the consolidation to be correct, it would be quite impossible to have consolidation. It was better that the consolidation should be adopted, even if the Commissioners were unable to say that they had not made some mistakes, because, if there were any, the Legislature could set them right. To point out every doubt that arose in the minds of the Commissioners would be an endless task.

Mr. MACDOUGALL (Simcoe) said it would be very satisfactory to know if there was any case in which the law had been wittingly and purposely changed.

Mr. MOWAT—Certainly not.

Mr. MACDOUGALL said that if the Commissioners had sought to consolidate the law just as they apprehended it, the difficulty was a very small one. But he agreed with his hon. friend (Mr. Cameron) that they must preserve the prerogatives of the House.

Mr. MOWAT said the Commissioners had endeavoured to state the law just as it ex-