

ONTARIO LEGISLATURE.

Third Parliament—Third Session.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,
THURSDAY, Jan. 31.

The Speaker took the chair at 3 o'clock.

Prayers were read by the Rev. Mr. Briggs.

PETITIONS.

The following petitions were presented:—

Mr. Creighton—Of Joseph Brown *et al.*, of Holland, praying for amendments to the Municipal Act respecting the grouping clauses.

Mr. Bell—Of Robert Leslie *et al.*, of Toronto, praying that exemptions from taxation may be abolished.

Mr. Macdougall (Middlesex)—Of T. G. S. Nevill *et al.*, of Ailsa Craig; also the Village Council of Ailsa Craig, praying that exemptions from taxation may be abolished.

Mr. Grant—Of John Carroll *et al.*, praying that exemptions from taxation may be abolished.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES.

Mr. Fraser presented the third report of the Committee on Private Bills.

Mr. Clarke (Wellington) presented the second report of the Committee on Printing.

Mr. Pardee presented the second report of the Committee on Railways.

BILLS INTRODUCED.

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

By Mr. Mowat—Bill respecting the Maritime Court of Ontario.

By Mr. Monk—Bill to amend the Jurors' Act.

EXTRAMURAL LABOUR.

Mr. MOWAT moved the second reading of the Bill to provide for employing prisoners without the walls of common gaols. He said the Bill corresponded substantially with the Dominion Act, the difference of course being that the latter affected persons sentenced to hard labour under Dominion laws, and the former, persons sentenced to hard labour under Provincial and municipal laws. The class who would be affected by this Bill were by far the largest class of those who were sentenced to hard labour. One estimate showed that the number was eleven times as great, while by another estimate five-sixths would be affected by this Bill to one-sixth by the Dominion Act. This showed the importance of extending the provision to our local laws. At present prisoners sentenced to hard labour were practically, as a rule, not subjected to hard labour, because it was found impracticable to employ such prisoners at hard labour inside the gaol limits. Grand Juries at Toronto had frequently asked for provisions such as were contained in the Bill, and the municipal bodies had also made representations on the subject to the Government and the Legislature. When such prisoners were not so employed, they not only became worse criminals than before, but they had opportunities of doing harm to their fellow-prisoners who might be less bad than themselves. The city authorities had been very urgent on the subject, and he believed it was largely in consequence of their representations that the Dominion Act had been passed. The present Bill was simply intended to enable the authorities to employ outside of the gaol limits prisoners who were sentenced to hard labour when that course was deemed expedient.

Mr. MEREDITH remarked that the Governor in Council could not always indicate the specific work at which persons might be employed, and that besides some classes of work could not be continued all the year round. Another question to be considered was in what proportion should the benefit of such labour be divided between counties and cities, or between counties and towns, as the case might be.