

# ONTARIO LEGISLATURE.

## THIRD PARLIAMENT—FOURTH SESSION.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,

January 13.

The Speaker took the chair at 3 o'clock. Prayers were read by the Rev. Dr. Young.

### PETITIONS.

The following petitions were presented:—

By Mr. Rosevear—From the Commission of the Port Hope Harbour Company for an Act to enable them to store grain, flour, etc., in their warehouses.

By Mr. Bethune—From Andrew Smith and others, of Toronto, for an Act to incorporate the Ontario Medical Veterinary Association.

By Mr. Mostyn—From Peter McLaren and others, for an Act to detach certain lots from the village of Lanark and annex them to the township of Lanark.

From Mr. Bell—From the city of Toronto, for amendments to the Assessment Act, relating to frontage tax.

By Mr. Monk—From the county of Carleton, for an Act authorizing them to sell certain lands.

By Mr. Hay—From the Stratford and Huron Railway, for amendments to their Act of incorporation.

By Mr. Deacon—From the county of Renfrew, for an Act to legalize certain tax sales.

### THE ADDRESS.

Mr. LAUDER resumed the debate on the Address. He said that if the congratulatory paragraphs were eliminated from it very little would be left. He supposed nothing more would be done with regard to the exemptions question than was done last session. The reference to Edison's invention of the electric light was a little peculiar. It was not yet decided whether it would be a benefit or not; and he thought the introduction of this reference in the Speech was premature. On the paragraph referring to the Voters' Lists Act, he took occasion to comment on the expense and annoyance to which the parties were subjected in the Lincoln Election case, and hoped that the measure to be introduced would obviate a similar occurrence in the future. He expressed satisfaction with the settlement of the dispute between Ontario and Quebec, contending that the event vindicated the course taken by Mr. Sandfield Macdonald, who had been subjected to much unmerited abuse at the hands of the Reform party and its organs in his lifetime. During the recent Dominion elections the Ontario Government, both individually and collectively, had thrown their sympathies with the men and the policy opposed to the people, and the people condemned the Dominion Government, and of course condemned the Ontario Government at the same time. (Laughter.) The Provincial Secretary and the Attorney-General, who had been absent from their duties frequently aiding their friends in the Dominion elections, were in duty bound to explain their conduct to the House. He anticipated a deficit for the present year, as the Province's sources of revenue—as the Crown lands and the timber limits—were falling off. The expenditure would therefore have to be immediately and rigidly cut down, if we desired to avoid direct taxation. He moved,

That the words of the said paragraph be struck out, and the following substituted therefor:—"That while we rejoice with Your Honour in the development of any enterprise tending to the advancement of the agricultural interests of the country, we are of opinion that it is of essential importance that the annual expenditure should be kept within the annual revenue of the Province."

Mr. PARKHILL had expected to find paragraphs in the Speech from the Throne promising a reduction in the expenditure, and especially in the salaries of members. He thought the country was as well governed in the time of Mr. Sandfield Macdonald, when the salaries of members and Ministers were much less than at present, as it was now. He disagreed with the mover of the Address in his statement that there was nothing in Senator Macpherson's pamphlet, and thought the Government would find that the country thought with him (Mr. Parkhill). He

moved

That all the words in the said paragraph be struck out and the following substituted:—"That while we rejoice with Your Honour in the development of all enterprise tending to the advancement of the agricultural interests of Ontario, we are of opinion that the administration of the affairs of this Province should be conducted with the utmost economy consistent with efficiency; and that in view of the general depression existing in the Province, the expense of legislation and civil government should be reduced, particularly as regards the salaries of Ministers and indemnity to members of this House."

Mr. FRASER, before he addressed himself to the matter in hand, wished to congratulate the hon. member for Monck on the very able way in which he had moved the Address, and his non-friend the member for Etgin upon his capital speech in seconding it. He had no hesitation in shaking hands with the hon. member for London upon his elevation to the leadership of the Opposition. He (Mr. Meredith) had taken the place of a gentleman who had gone to a position which he would fill worthily and in such a way as to bring honour to the Bench of Ontario. (Cheers.) He desired, also, to congratulate his hon. friend the member from East Toronto upon his having a seat in the House, and also upon his hairbreadth escape in East Toronto. It had been a common cry upon the opposite side that the leader of the Government had made a "descent" when he had accepted the Premiership of the Province. He could congratulate the member from East Toronto that he had come into the House to place before them in the most effective mode the most effective answer that could be made to that cry. (Hear, hear.) He was not endorsing that cry, but he wished to show that there was a great similarity between the position of the Attorney-General and that of his hon. friend, and where their positions differed they differed in favour of the leader of the Government. The Attorney-General came to take charge of the affairs of a Province that might well be called the Empire Province of the Dominion. (Cheers.) What had his hon. friend from East Toronto come down to? Not to be the Attorney-General of a Province, but to make a desperate struggle to get a seat in East Toronto, and when he had succeeded in getting elected his friends had not made him even first mate of the Opposition boat. (Cheers.) They left him to be only a deck-hand. (Cheers.) It had been intended that he should be captain, but the crew threatened to mutiny, and would doubtless have gone ashore had a change in the leadership not taken place. No higher position could be occupied in this country than that of Premier of the Province of Ontario, and those who decried that position and attempted to show that a man in accepting it was demeaning himself were saying that which was not based on fact or on good argument. They could only lower themselves as public men by decrying themselves, and it ill became any man to say that which could only have the effect of lowering himself. As the old saying went, "It was a dirty bird that fouled its own nest." (Hear, hear.) He thought he ought to congratulate the leader of the Opposition once more. Willing to make as strong an indictment as possible, after cudgelling his brains to discover something against them, he had been able to find only two subjects of complaint—the question of exemptions, and the distribution of the balance of the surplus. It was a highly creditable thing to the Government of this Province to be able to adduce out of the mouth of the leader of the Opposition, after they had governed and legislated for the Province for eight years, now, at the close of this second Parliament, no stronger an indictment than this. (Hear, hear.) One of these so-called grievances, as the Attorney-General had shown, had existed for twenty years, during which their friends opposite had been in office. More than that, Mr. Sandfield Macdonald had brought in the very Act that created these exemptions. (Hear, hear.) It was only within the last two or three years that this question had arisen, and opinions were not at one upon it. The city of Toronto, which had originally raised it, in its answers to the questions of the Committee of this House, had taken different ground to what it did a year ago, showing that the question was not, to the present time, ripe for legislation, and that it would have been premature for the Government to legislate upon the question while its special friends were not agreed among themselves. With regard to the distribution of the surplus, he was