

January 22.

The Speaker took the chair at three o'clock.

Prayers were read by Rev. Father Bergen.

PETITIONS.

The following petitions were presented:—

By Mr. Wigle—From the Village Council of Kingsville, for certain amendments to the Municipal Act respecting the enforcement of statute labour.

By Mr. Wills—From the Loyal Orange District Lodge of South Hastings, for the incorporation of the Orange Associations of Ontario East and West.

Also—From the County Council of Hastings, for certain amendments to the Municipal and Assessment Acts.

By Mr. Massie—From the Township Council of Guelph, that the Bill now before the House respecting the burial plot in the town of Guelph may not pass.

By Mr. Morris—From Robert Birmingham and others of Toronto, for an Act to incorporate the Loyal Orange Associations of Eastern and Western Ontario.

THE ADDRESS.

On the 13th paragraph of the Address,

Mr. MEREDITH said that if anything were wanting to show the insincerity of hon. gentlemen opposite; in regard to the amendments presented it was supplied by the vote they had then recorded. Hon. gentlemen held that any amendment to the Address was a motion of want of confidence in the Administration of the day—(hear, hear)—and that it was the duty of the supporters of the Government to vote it down. If hon. gentlemen were sincere in that contention they had voted want of confidence in themselves. He expressed regret that hon. gentlemen should, during this debate, have attacked the hon. member for Stormont, one of the most sincere, honest, and outspoken men in the House, without any objection being raised by members of the Government or their friends. An attempt had been made by the Commissioner of Public Works to justify the conduct of the members of the Ministry in taking part in the Dominion elections. In what way could the Government take part in these elections except by the Ministers endeavouring, as they did in nearly every county in Ontario, to secure the election of their friends in the Dominion Parliament? Further, the distribution of the patronage (and this no member of the Government could deny) had been used to advance the interests of the Reform Government at Ottawa. A convention of gentlemen had been held in this city, which had resulted in the Government coming into the House and having a revision of the Voters' Lists made, which was, without doubt, solely for the benefit of their friends in Ottawa. (Opposition cheers.) Referring to the Voters' Lists Act, he pointed out four or five instances in which the Act worked unjustly, and the different decisions given in its interpretation by County Judges had caused much confusion. He trusted that the Attorney-General would bring in, during the session, amendments to the Act which would remove these disadvantages. He concluded by expressing the hope that the Attorney-General would consider the advisability of devoting a portion of the public funds towards aiding towns and cities in improving their drainage.

Paragraphs 13 to 17 were then carried. On paragraph 15,

Mr. SCOTT complained of the present system of presenting to the House the Public Accounts a year after the time to which they were made up. One of the objects of the House meeting in January was that the Accounts of the previous year might be presented to the members. He thought there was no objection to distributing the accounts during the recess, because they were of as much interest to the public at large as to the members themselves.

Mr. HARGRAFF took occasion to speak on the subject of indemnity, as he was not present yesterday. He read a letter from Mr. Sloan, a former Speaker of the New York Legislature, and now Secretary of Accounts, to the effect that the indemnity of members there had been raised from \$300 to \$1,500, and that all subsequent efforts to reduce the amount had failed. He thought it was desirable that the annual expenditure should be confined within the revenue, but the reduction contemplated by the motion regarding the indemnity would not effect that object.

Mr. MOWAT remarked that the labour involved in the preparation of the Public Accounts rendered it impossible that they should be brought down earlier, unless an addition were made to the staff. The only other way to overcome the difficulty was to change the financial year. The Government had that matter under consideration, and would probably propose that the year should end on the first of October, in order to bring the accounts to as late a date as possible. It was extremely convenient to all the members that the House should meet in January, and no good purpose could be served by their meeting earlier. He thought it was not desirable to depart from the old English rule of bringing down the reports only during the session.

Mr. SCOTT said that if the members had the reports in their hands before the House met they would be able to make themselves conversant with them.

Paragraphs 18 and 19 were then carried. On the last paragraph,

Mr. HARDY said before this paragraph was disposed of he desired to refer to a letter quoted by the hon. member for West Toronto with regard to an appointment made in the Central Prison. During his speech, the hon. member, as reported in the *Mail*, had produced this letter (the author of which he declined to name) to show that a criminal named Collingwood, from Brantford, had been employed in that institution at a salary of \$500 per year. The facts were that this man had been confined in the Prison for being drunk and disorderly. As he was a first-class carpenter, at the expiration of his term he had been employed to finish some