

ONTARIO LEGISLATURE.

THIRD PARLIAMENT--FOURTH SESSION.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,

Wednesday, Feb. 19.

The Speaker took the chair at 3 o'clock.

Prayers were read by Rev. J. C. Antliff, B.D.

PETITIONS.

The following petitions were presented:—

By Mr. Currie—Thirty-six petitions from Welland praying for certain amendments to the Municipal Act respecting the market tax on farm produce.

By Mr. Parkhill—From the County Council of the county of Simcoe, respecting distribution of ballot papers to returning-officers.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES.

Mr. FRASER presented the twelfth report of the Committee on Private Bills, which was adopted.

Mr. FRASER presented the tenth report of the Committee on Railways, which was adopted.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS.

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

To amend the Municipal Act—Mr. Mowat.

For the administration of justice in the northerly and westerly parts of Ontario—Mr. Mowat.

To make certain provisions respecting Magistrates' Courts—Mr. Mowat.

THIRD READINGS.

The following Bills were read a third time and passed:—

Respecting the Brookville Mutual Building Society—Mr. Cole.

Relating to the Toronto Hospital—Mr. Chisholm.

HIGH SCHOOLS.

Mr. CURRIE moved, "That in the opinion of this House all moneys granted by the Legislature for High Schools should be apportioned between counties and cities according to the ratio of population in each, as compared with the whole population of the Province." He advocated a return to the old practice of dividing grants among High Schools according to population. Formerly counties received about four cents per head of population for that purpose, whereas now the amount varied from less than half a cent to about fifteen cents. He compared the amounts received by counties under the old and new regulations, contending that great irregularities in the apportionment of the money existed, and that many counties would have received much larger sums under the old system than under the new. He desired to approach the subject without any political considerations. The system of inspection was entirely too costly in proportion to the amount distributed. He thought it would trouble the Hon. Minister of Education to explain the difference in the amounts of grants to High Schools in different counties. In one part of the constituency of Monck the amount received was four and a quarter cents per head, and in another part of the same constituency, belonging to a different county, the amount was seven and three-quarter cents, while in a county adjoining it was fifteen cents. He could not see, if it were right to divide Common School moneys on the basis of population, why it would not be equally right to adopt that principle in regard to High Schools. The tendency of the present system was towards centralization of authority, and to place too much power in the hands of Inspectors. Throughout the country it was often thought, too, that favouritism was shown to schools in different sections.

Mr. SPEAKER pointed out that the motion could not be put from the chair, as it involved a different appropriation of the public money than had been recommended by the Crown.

Mr. CROOKS said that he was anxious to have the discussion on the motion take place, and the proper mode, no doubt, to bring the matter up would be when the Education Estimates were under consideration. He desired to say that the hon. gentleman who made the motion was entirely in error if he supposed that any well-founded charges of favouritism could be brought against the Inspectors. He liked to bring all these insinuations to a head, and last year the House had the opportunity of seeing how he had been able to refute a number of unfounded charges brought in the public newspapers.

Mr. CREIGHTON called the attention of the Speaker to the fact that a Bill had been introduced by the hon. Minister of Education, and read a second time, which changed the mode of appropriating the public funds.

The motion was not put.

THE MERCER ESTATE.

Mr. LAUDER moved, "That it be an instruction to the Standing Committee on Printing to order the printing in Sessional Papers, and for distribution to members of this House, the Return No. 34 of last Session, relating to the estate of the late Andrew Mercer."

Mr. MOWAT said that a return would be brought down to the House in a few days which would furnish all the information asked for, and in a neater shape than that in which the hon. gentleman proposed it should be brought down. He asked the hon. gentleman to allow his motion to stand until the returns were made, which was agreed to.

APPEALS.

Mr. Clarke (Norfolk)—Order of the House for a Return showing the number of appeals to the Court of Appeal in this Province, including County Court appeals, and the number of appeals in the last two years from this Province to the Supreme Court, showing in each case the amounts claimed, the costs incurred, the nature of the action, so far as those particulars appear from the files of the Court, and the result of such appeal. Carried.

SCHOOL OF TECHNOLOGY.

Mr. BELL moved for an order of the House for