

ONTARIO LEGISLATURE.

FOURTH PARLIAMENT—SECOND SESSION.

FRIDAY, Feb. 18.

The Speaker took the chair at 3 o'clock.

PETITIONS.

The following petitions were presented :—

Mr. Badgerow—Of Yorkville Council; also of the township of York.

Mr. McMahon—Of the town of Dundas.

Mr. McCraney—Of the township of Norwich, praying for amendments to the Assessment Act.

Mr. Gibson—Of the Council of the township of Grey, for the abolition of market fees.

ad first readings

Mr. Harcourt—A Bill respecting peach trees.

ad second readings

To amend the Ontario Drainage Act.

To further improve the School Law.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES.

Mr. PARDEE presented the tenth report of the Committee on Railways, which was received.

FIRST READINGS.

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

Mr. Hardy—A Bill to amend the Act respecting the registration of births, marriages, and deaths.

Mr. Mowat—A Bill to incorporate by letters patent, and to fix the regulations of timber slide companies.

Also a Bill for the release of dower of married women in certain cases.

Also a Bill to extend the powers of the Law Society of Upper Canada.

THIRD READINGS.

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

Respecting the Phoenix Mutual Fire Insurance Company of Ontario.

To amend the Act respecting the registration of co-partnerships and business firms.

To make provision for the Administration of Justice in the county of Dufferin.

THE DRAINAGE ACT.

Mr. MEREDITH moved for a return showing :—

(1) The amounts expended for drainage works in the townships of Moore, Sombra, and Sarnia, in the county of Lambton; (2) the dates when such expenditure was made; (3) the amounts which have been repaid on account of such expenditure; (4) the amounts in arrear on account of such expenditure, and for what years such amounts are due. His object was to call the attention of the House to the unfortunate state of things regarding the assessments under the Drainage Act. There was a considerable loss accruing to the Province in many cases. Under the Drainage Assessment Fund there was a very large amount in arrear. This was especially the case in the counties of Lambton and Elgin. He thought that the system could only be continued by summary collections. There was also one municipality, Cobourg, which yet owed a considerable sum on account of the Municipalities Fund. These arrears should not be permitted to run on in his opinion.

Mr. FRASER said he knew that there were some townships in difficulty in that respect. The law was first put in force by the preceding Government. Of necessity, and owing to the circumstances, there were many and various complaints. The law was altered by the present Government by giving the municipalities themselves the right of construction of drains. The people, however, were again complaining that the works were not properly completed. It was shown, therefore, that they could not enforce the strict letter of the law for payment of the arrears. They had to try and effect an amicable settlement. Papers would be brought down showing all the difficulties and obstructions, and he was sure they would justify the delay of the Government in the matter. He trusted that an early arrangement would be arrived at.

THRESHING MACHINE ACCIDENTS.

Mr. GRAHAM moved, "That in the opinion of this House it is desirable that there shall be some legislation calculated to lessen the number of accidents arising from the use of steam threshing machines by parties who have little or no knowledge in the use of steam engines." He said that so many accidents occurred from this cause that he thought some legislation was necessary.

Mr. FRASER could hardly see how legislation could work a reform in the direction indicated. He had given the subject some attention, and had concluded that the best remedy was to employ competent men to take charge of engines.

Mr. GRAHAM said he had been requested by owners of manufactories of threshing machines and also by insurance men to introduce such a motion. He would, however, withdraw the motion.

Mr. MEREDITH thought that accidents from explosions might be guarded against. After some little further discussion the motion was withdrawn.

Mr. HARCOURT moved for an order of the House for a copy of the annual account of the Burwar of the University and Colleges at Toronto.

The motion carried.

RIVERS AND STREAMS BILL.

In the absence of Mr. Lauder, Mr. MEREDITH moved for an order of the House for copies of all correspondence between the Government, of any member or Department thereof, and other parties, relating to the improvement of the inland streams and waterways of the Province. Also, all correspondence relating to or asking for legislation regarding such streams and waterways, and the rights and privileges of fishing the floating of the timber therein. The object, he said, was to arrive at the basis upon which the Government had introduced the Bill regarding streams and rivers.

Mr. PARDEE said he had only received one letter from a lumberman, named H. D. Smith, in Victoria county, suggesting some alterations in the Bill.

The motion was carried.

THE ASSESSMENT ACT.

Mr. CREIGHTON moved the second reading of