

ONTARIO LEGISLATURE.

FOURTH PARLIAMENT—THIRD SESSION.

(By Our Own Reporters.)

TUESDAY, Jan. 24.

The Speaker took the chair at three o'clock.

PETITIONS.

The following petitions were presented :—

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By Mr. Cook—The petition of D. Davidson *et al.*; also of V. Messier *et al.*, all of Tiny, praying that the Bill to incorporate the town of Penetanguishene may pass.

By Mr. Harcourt—The petition of the Township Council of Grimsby praying that the Bill to divide the township of Grimsby may not pass.

A QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE.

Mr. HARDY said that before the order of the day was taken up he wished to refer to a question of privilege and to make an explanation. In Saturday's issue of the *Mail* newspaper he found an article, not in the editorial column, but in another column, headed "Disgraceful Garbling. Mr. Hardy Captured in 'Flagrant Delicto,'" having reference to the question which had been brought up in the House by the hon. member for North Grey and the hon. member for East Grey on Thursday night. The *Mail* was, he supposed, in possession of any information on Thursday which they had for Saturday's issue, and might have made any charges or accusations which they intended to make on Friday morning, so that they could have been answered, or the attention of the House and country drawn to them on Friday, but for some reason it was left over until Saturday morning before the charges were put into print. This was, therefore, the first opportunity he had had of calling attention to some of the statements in that article—statements which should not have been made after his explanations given two evenings before. There were two classes of charges made. One was that certain portions of the report of Mr. John Smith, Dominion Immigration Agent at Hamilton, were not printed in his (Mr. Hardy's) annual departmental report. It went further, and said that they were struck out of Mr. Smith's report. If by that was meant that these portions were struck out of the original manuscript then he gave it a flat denial. The original manuscript remained on file just as it was received. Any emendations that he had made he made upon the printer's proof, as in fact he had never seen the manuscript until this discussion arose two days ago. As to refusing to print certain portions of the report, that he not only admitted but defended, but he took care, and he desired the House and the country to understand that wherever he did not print a paragraph or clause he inserted a line of asterisks, showing he did not print the full report, but only extracts from it. That appeared from the report which he held in his hand, and there was no concealment. Hon. gentlemen opposite were not misled, because they had the report last session, and if they had thought that there was anything wrong they could have asked to have had the original brought down, and therefore he assumed that they had taken the same view that he had. He had only to say that he justified that entirely. There was nothing secret in it; it was done openly; the House was informed of it; and he was prepared to justify what he had done, and to give the public good reasons therefor. Another and grave charge was that he had falsified that report, either by putting in words which were not in the manuscript, or by leaving out words, or by changing the form of expression which Mr. Smith had used. He took the opportunity of giving that the most unqualified denial. There was another matter—the hon. gentleman had never seen the manuscript or asked to see it, and his (Mr. Hardy's) word therefore in denial ought to have been sufficient at least until the contrary was shown, not only to the House but to every newspaper in the country. A paragraph of the *Mail* article sub-headed "Falsification No. 3," contained the following sentence: "The demand from the United Kingdom for all kinds of breadstuffs and dairy products has been exceedingly good during the year, with high prices; during the same period there has been a lively demand for barley at more than average prices." This was a plain statement of facts, but Mr. Hardy was not satisfied with it. He thought it needed explanation, and so to the sentence about prices he added these words with his own Ministerial hand: "With a keen competition amongst the United States buyers." The naked fact of an increase of prices might have been in some way a point in favour of the N. P., but Mr. Hardy was bound not to let it go in that shape, and so he forges for Mr. Smith a sentence in explanation." He then read from the manuscript report in Mr. Smith's handwriting the above-quoted sentence, concluding with the words, "with a keen competition amongst United States buyers." (Cheers.) He would hand that report to Mr. Speaker, or to the hon. member for North Grey, who was man enough not to repeat the accusation after he (Mr. Hardy) had given it a denial on Thursday evening. The report relied on by the *Mail* and the hon. member for North Grey was taken from the Ottawa Blue Book. Mr. Smith was a Dominion Government officer, and merely sent a copy of the report to his (Mr. Hardy's) Department. How did they find that to read in the Ottawa report? The last sentence was left out, for what reason he did not know, perhaps for the very reason that the writer of that article imputed to him (Mr. Hardy).

Mr. MEREDITH rose to a point of order. The hon. gentleman had no right to make accusations against the Dominion Government in speaking to a question of privilege.

Mr. SPEAKER was of opinion that Mr. Hardy had gone about as far in that direction as he was entitled to go.

Mr. HARDY said it was necessary for him to make these observations. Hon. gentlemen opposite derived their information from the Ottawa report, and he wanted to show that upon comparison it did not correspond with the manuscript sent to his office by Mr. Smith. The Ottawa

authorities certainly omitted portions of the report, and they had a right to do so. But the omissions that they had so made were not marked with asterisks or stars, as was the case with the omissions made in his Department. Therefore the Dominion report was no standard by which to judge his. There were a number of passages in the report referring to the North-West Territories as a desirable field for immigration. These he struck out with the exception of one or two, and it had already been admitted that he acted properly in so doing. He would point out another peculiarity in the Ottawa report. It was there stated that "the exhibits from Manitoba attracted great attention" at the Hamilton Fair in 1880. In the report as it was issued from his Department, and also in the original manuscript, it was stated that the "exhibits from Muskoka attracted great attention." He did not think there were any exhibits from Manitoba at all at the Hamilton Exhibition of 1880. (Hear, hear.) It was a very curious thing that the word "Manitoba" should appear in a Dominion report, and he called the attention of hon. gentlemen opposite to the fact. Another paragraph was struck out of the Ottawa report, which read, "There is a large enquiry springing up in the Northern and Eastern States respecting the Dominion and North-West Territories, and a fair immigration may be reasonably expected if means should be taken to disseminate the desired information." This was omitted doubtless because they thought, and thought rightly, that this was a matter upon which the public could form quite as good an opinion as Mr. Smith. He (Mr. Hardy) had, in dealing with this report, made omission of all advertisements of the North-West Territories, and of such clauses as were nothing more nor less than advertisements of local Hamilton interests. He was not going to give Hamilton a local puff. It was none of his business to do so in his Departmental report. He had omitted also allusions to a report which had been made by the Great Western Railway and the Hamilton & North-Western Railway, two other Hamilton enterprises. Was there any reason why his department should publish these? There were also some allusions to local factories. Was there any reason why he should publish these? It might be said that he ought to have done so in order that immigrants might know where such factories existed and in order that they might obtain employment there. But these reports were not made for the immigrants and were not distributed among them. They were not sent abroad. They were made for the people. He had only to say in conclusion that the ground he had taken was the ground which, he apprehended, was taken more or less by every department with its own officers. This was that statements not relating to specific questions of fact, and which were merely the opinions of the officer making the report, or which related to collateral matters, could be given in full, in extract form, or might be omitted entirely in the discretion of the head of the department. He was the judge. He could only characterize the course of a leading and important journal that would hold its charges over, lying in wait, for twenty-four or thirty-six hours and then publish them on Saturday so that no reply could be conveniently made to them before now—for they all knew that a great many members went out of town on Saturday and were not here on Monday—as a most unworthy course. It was the most cowardly piece of journalism that had ever come under his notice in this country. (Cheers.)

Mr. CREIGHTON rose to speak, but was declared by the Speaker to be out of order. The question was one of privilege.

Mr. CREIGHTON asked if the hon. the Provincial Secretary would lay the manuscript report on the table.

Mr. HARDY said he would send the report across the floor to the hon. gentlemen, and did so.

THE BOUNDARY QUESTION.

Mr. MOWAT desired to say a few words before the debate on the Address was resumed. His hon. friend from East Toronto (Mr. Morris) who, he observed, was not in his place, had asked him to make some statement as to the private negotiations that had taken place with respect to the disputed territory between himself and members of the Dominion Government. He had not at the time felt at liberty to make any statement upon the subject, but in consequence of his hon. friend having pressed him as he did, he had communicated with the Minister of Justice, and had obtained his authority to state what had taken place. He would mention first that, despairing after negotiations had gone on for some time of their resulting in anything, they had sent a despatch to the Government at Ottawa, stating their case, what they claimed and what they complained of, with a view of obtaining from that Government a statement of any proposals which they might choose to make. That despatch has not yet been answered. It was sent during the latter part of last year, and he (Mr. Mowat) had hoped that a reply would come before the House began its session, but it had not yet been received. These negotiations referred to the importance of effecting a final settlement, and in the meantime of making some provisional arrangements in regard to the general government of that country. They had stated in various documents, which had been made public, that no proposal whatever was made to this Government for a settlement of the boundary question, and no proposal was made with reference to provisional arrangements in regard to the government of the disputed territory in the mean time. On the other hand they (the Ontario Government) had repeatedly made proposals for effecting some arrangements as to provisional government. It was only right that their jurisdiction should be recognized there, and that they should have the right of dealing with the lands and timber of that territory—keeping an account of some pending final settlement of the whole question. These suggestions had been made, as hon. members knew, but they had not been accepted by the Dominion. Nothing further of substantial importance took place in the negotiations until a new proposal was made to them (the Ontario Government) with reference to a final settlement of the question. It was the first proposal which they had had from the Dominion Government looking towards a final settlement, and it was this:—that the Ontario Government should agree to a new arbitration. They were asked to agree that a new arbitrator should be appointed in the person of either the late Lord Chancellor of England, Lord Cairns, or the present Lord Chan-