

WEDNESDAY, Feb. 27.

The Speaker took the Chair at three o'clock.

TORRENS LAND TRANSFER.

The petition of the Land Law Amendment Association in favour of the Torrens system of land transfer was read to the House.

COMMITTEE REPORT.

Mr. PARDEE presented the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Railways.

FIRST READINGS.

Mr. O'CONNOR—Bill to abolish distress for rent.

Mr. LAIDLAW—Bill to amend the Consolidated Municipal Act of 1883.

Mr. WATERS—Bill to amend the Act respecting Coroners' Inquests.

Mr. GIBSON—Bill to amend the Public Health Act.

Mr. HARDY—Bill respecting Water-Works and Gas Companies.

Mr. HARDY—Bill respecting License Duties.

THIRD READINGS.

The following bills were read the third time :—To further amend the Act incorporating the Roman Catholic Bishops of Toronto and Kingston in Canada in each diocese. To authorize the township of Colchester South to borrow certain moneys. Respecting churchwardens in the diocese of Toronto.

CREDITORS' RELIEF ACT.

Mr. MOWAT, in reply to Mr. FRENCH, said it was not the intention of the Government to issue a proclamation bringing into force "The Creditors' Relief Act, 1880," which was intended to provide for the equal distribution of judgment on debtors' estates. He had no power to decide whether the provisions of the said Act of them, are *ultra vires* of this Legislature. The Provincial Act had been passed under an arrangement that the Dominion Parliament should pass a similar Act, which had not been done. The Provincial Act contained a provision that the Act should not come into force until the proclamation had been issued, in view of that arrangement. He had not been considering the matter of extending the principle of cap. 118, sec. 1, R.S.O. (which prevents confessions of judgment), to cases where, by collusion with, or other act of a debtor, a creditor procures a fraudulent or speedy judgment, to the prejudice of other creditors.

HORSE DISEASE.

Mr. ROSS (Huron), in reply to Mr. BRERETON, said his attention had been called to the necessity for introducing legislation tending to control the spread of contagious diseases among horses, but as the member for South Ontario had introduced a bill with that end in view he had decided to defer the subject.

LAND IMPROVEMENT FUND.

Mr. ROSS (Huron), in reply to Mr. O'CONNOR said credit has not been given to the Province of Ontario for any moneys due said Province upon account of the Land Improvement Fund upon Crown Lands. He had called the attention of the Deputy Minister of Finance to the omission and he had not received any answer. Payments would be made to the municipalities as soon as the money was received from the Dominion Government.

Mr. PARDEE said, in reply to Mr. MERRICK, that Jonas Cornell was not now nor has he been since 1882 in the employment, temporary or otherwise, of the Province.

NORMAL SCHOOL READERS.

Mr. ROSS (West Middlesex) said, in reply to Mr. BRODER that instructions had been given by the Department of Education as to the use of the text-books known as the "Royal Readers" in the Normal or Model Schools, and these instructions would be found on page 74 of his report. No recommendations or report had been asked or received from the principals of such schools. It is the duty of the Department, fixed by statute, to supervise or proscribe text-books to be used in Normal or Model Schools.

ONTARIO REFORMATORY.

Mr. HARDY, in reply to Mr. KERNS, stated that Mr. Wood, the late Treasurer, had established the position of Matron of the Ontario Reformatory for Boys, and transferred Mrs. Fitzgerald, formerly of the Deaf and Dumb Institute, at Belleville, to the position of matron. She had been on the list since January, 1883, with a salary at the rate of \$400 per annum. Owing to the fact that a house could not be found for her near the Reformatory, an appropriation had been taken to finish two cottages, one of which was to be assigned to her use. It was only within the present month that the cottage had been ready for occupancy, and she had been notified to take possession and enter upon her duties on the 1st March. The only duties, owing to the want of residence, which she had thus far performed were learning the duties of the position, and making herself familiar with the work required of her.

POLICE MAGISTRATES.

Mr. FRENCH asked for a return of all the correspondence relating to the appointment of police magistrates in the villages of Merrickville, Cardinal, and Prescott.

Mr. MOWAT explained that with regard to Prescott they had received an application from the Council to ap-

point a police magistrate for that place, and as it was a border town, the salary small, and the gentleman suggested in every way fit, the Government had pleasure in acceding to the request. As to the assertion that the application had been made by the Council at its last session he did not know that they were any less fitted to express an opinion upon the subject, or to represent the ratepayers in the matter. It was quite true that the succeeding Council had petitioned against the appointment. Yet as Mr. Dunn had been communicated with it was considered best to allow the matter to stand.

Considerable discussion followed, in the course of which it transpired that the Mayor of Prescott was said to be at the bottom of the agitation against the appointment of Mr. Dunn. The motion passed.

A CASE OF LICENSE.

Mr. BRERETON moved for a return of all correspondence and papers in connection with the refusal to grant a license to Mr. Bradley, of the Lambert Hotel, Port Hope.

Mr. HARDY stated that there was a private and anonymous letter, and it would be a question for the Government to say how far they were justified in spreading the letter on the journals of the House.

Mr. BRERETON said he understood that the anonymous letter had been the grounds upon which the license was refused.

Mr. HARDY said it was not so, though the letter might have started the enquiries which resulted in the license being refused.

Mr. MEREDITH asked if the letter would be brought down.

Mr. HARDY said his present impression was that it would not. If it were marked "private," it would not be brought down; if not, then the Government would consider the propriety for doing so.

Mr. MOWAT said he could not refuse to consider as confidential communications of an anonymous nature. Many persons write letters and—it might be from cowardice—refuse to disclose their identity, and they were in some cases the means of unmasking wrong-doing. With regard to the letter, he remembered the Messrs. Blake asking for the production of the letter, and he had advised the refusal to furnish it.

Mr. MEREDITH suggested the motion should be postponed until the Government were ready to say definitely whether they would bring the letter down.

Mr. FRASER did not see the necessity for postponing the motion, as the Government were quite ready to adopt the responsibility. He contended that though Mr. Bradley might want the communication brought down it was clearly for the purpose of making the machinery of the House available for a purpose for which he had found the courts of law insufficient.

The motion was carried.

THE INDIAN ANNUITIES.

Mr. CREIGHTON moved an address to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that he will cause to be laid before the House copies of all correspondence between the Government of Ontario, or any member thereof, and the Government of the Dominion, or any officer thereof, respecting any claim for arrears or annuities due to the Indians, or the Dominion, on behalf of the Indians, under treaties for the relinquishing of territorial rights on the shores of Lakes Huron and Superior, known as the "Robinson Treaties." He rehearsed the steps taken with regard to the matter of the claim for increased annuities consequent on the realization of large sums from the timber and lands ceded to the Government by the Indians. He contended that the Provincial Government in 1875 had consented to the payment of the increased annuities pending the settlement of the claim, but the Government had refused to make a statement of the amount realized from the timber on the ceded lands, on the ground that the Government did not know where the boundaries of the lands were.

Mr. MOWAT said the matter was not to be considered as if the Indians were being deprived of some money they were entitled to or would otherwise have obtained, but the fact was that it was merely a claim by the Dominion Government which the Province disputed. They want us, said he, to pay money which we have said we are not liable to pay. Now, if the hon. gentleman had been in the House of Commons urging the Dominion Government to settle the matter he could have understood the position of the member for North Grey. The Dominion Government, however, claimed at first that the Ontario Government was liable to pay the whole amount of the annuity, and Quebec had nothing at all to do with it. In his legal opinion upon the matter he had taken the ground that the annuities were not payable by Ontario, but if liable at all she was only so in conjunction with Quebec, and that the claim, if a valid one at all, was one against the old Province of Canada. When the agreement had been made to refer the matter to the courts it was for the purpose of deciding these points, and if they would turn to the Public Accounts for last year they would find that the Dominion Government had come round to his position, and they were now charging the claim to the old Province of Canada—that is Quebec in conjunction with Ontario.

Mr. MEREDITH—Do you admit that basis?

Mr. MOWAT—No, the amount has only lately been made known. He did not make any admission at all.