

WEDNESDAY, March 12.

The Speaker took the chair at 11 o'clock.

### THE COUNTY COUNCILS.

Mr. DRURY presented 92 petitions, containing 2,500 names, from the Subordinate Granges of Ontario, for the reduction of the number of County Councillors.

Mr. MEREDITH on the third reading of the bill respecting the diocese of Huron stated that the bill did not contain a provision for the bill not affecting litigation. The bill was considered in Committee of the Whole, a clause added having the object named by Mr. Meredith, reported and read a third time.

### THIRD READINGS.

Following bills were read a third time:—Respecting a certain by-law of the town of Trenton—Mr. Sills. Respecting the Lake Simcoe Junction Railway Company—Mr. Freeman. To amend the Ontario Tree Planting Act—Mr. Monk.

### LAK E SUPERIOR TIMBER LANDS.

Mr. PARDEE, in reply to Mr. Meredith, said the Order in Council of 29th June, 1872, with regard to the right to cut and use pine timber on lands north of Lake Superior, was rescinded, on the 23rd May, 1873. The latest date on which the Order in Council was acted upon was just prior to that.

Mr. MEREDITH asked if the Order in Council had been rescinded or only altered to 50 cents an acre.

Mr. PARDEE said the Order in Council was rescinded.

### THE "ONTARIO GAZETTE."

Mr. ROSS (Huron) said, in reply to Mr. Creighton) that the receipts for the *Gazette* were not made up at any particular date. The sum of \$1,208 78 for 1883 was received up to an early part of the year. At the end of the year \$5,792 06 was due the Government by the printers on account of the *Ontario Gazette*, and as something was due them on account of the printing contract, settlement had not been made, but it was generally made after the session.

### DYMENT'S TIMBER LICENSE.

Mr. PARDEE, in reply to Mr. Meredith, said that A. Dymont holds a timber license in the township of Lefroy, which includes all the township with the exception of the whole of section 11, the north half of section 12, north-west quarter of section 13, south-east quarter of 26, the whole of 21, and the south half of 31. The berth was sold to Dymont at the timber sale of 1872, and the license issued 23rd January, 1871.

### PASSENGER ELEVATORS.

Mr. FRASER, in reply to Mr. Ermatinger, said the Government had been considering the necessity of providing for the proper construction of passenger elevators in buildings of a public nature, and for an inspection, but had been unable to do so.

### DRAINAGE INDEBTEDNESS.

Mr. CLANCY moved for a return showing in detail as to each municipality:—1. The amount of the original indebtedness of any municipality to the Province under the Ontario Drainage Act. 2. The number and amounts of the rent charges originally payable in respect thereof. 3. The sum paid on account thereof. 4. The amounts in arrear for such rent charges. 5. The amount of the rent charges yet to mature. And also, for a return of all correspondence and communications between any member or officer of the Government and any one on behalf of any of the said municipalities as to the said arrears, or the reduction thereof, when any such reduction has been made or of the claim of the Government in respect thereof, and also, of all Orders in Council reducing or readjusting the indebtedness of any of the said municipalities, and also showing the amount of the reduction in each case.

The motion was carried, amended as above.

### PREFERENTIAL CLAIMS.

Mr. FRENCH moved that in the opinion of this House it is desirable to extend 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, and that a Committee be appointed to bring in a bill on the subject.

Mr. MOWAT expressed doubt as to the jurisdiction of the House in the matter.

Mr. MEREDITH said that the present system was very bad and that something should be done. He thought the House might assume authority.

Mr. GIBSON (Hamilton) said it was very necessary that there should be legislation in the matter. It was a very frequent practice for wholesale dealers to set up a man with a large credit, and when the man found he was getting behind, a judgment was obtained.

Mr. MCINTYRE thought that in the absence of a general bankruptcy law it would not be easy to legislate effectually.

Mr. MOWAT said if the resolution stood, he would look into the matter further. The Government was now considering whether they should bring the Ontario statute in force without the action of the Dominion.

The subject then dropped.

### IRISH IMMIGRATION.

Mr. McLAUGHLIN 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 Ontario

Government and the Dominion Government, or any member or officer thereof, or with Major Gaskell, acting on behalf of the Irish Immigration Commissioners, and Mr. Hodgkins, on behalf of the Tukes Fund as to the special Irish immigration to Canada in the summer of 1883. He said the object was to supplement the return already ordered, and to give the House full information upon the subject. Carried.

### THE MERCER ESTATE.

Mr. HAMMELL moved for a return of a statement of the total value of the Mercer estate, distinguishing between real and personal property, and a statement of all payments made to Andrew Mercer, the younger, or on his behalf.

Mr. MOWAT said there had been some interruption in the payments to Mr. Mercer in consequence of the legal difficulties after the decision of the payments was reserved, but the question had been raised that the Dominion Government was entitled to the personal property, though the Privy Council had decided that the Provincial Government had the right to the real estate, which was the only question before the Privy Council. Until the matter was settled the basis upon which they had settled with Mr. Andrew Mercer, Jr., no longer existed. Though this was so, with the consent of his colleagues, he had, however, continued the payments.

Mr. CREIGHTON contended that the course of the Government on this subject had been unworthy of it, and asserted that Mr. Mercer had been treated very shabbily. He understood that the Attorney-General had been illegally acting as a pawnbroker, and proceeded to dilate upon the redemption of Mr. Mercer's watch.

At this juncture the member for North Grey was interrupted with cries of "Shame," and loud and prolonged hisses. He conveniently left that subject.

Mr. CREIGHTON resuming suggested that the arrears of interest should be paid to Mr. Mercer, taunted the Attorney-General with, when Mr. Mercer's furniture was sold for debt, instead of advancing the money for the debt, having bought them in and now holding them.

Mr. MOWAT—In trust for him at his own request.

Mr. CREIGHTON said that was more satisfactory, and continued to maintain that Mercer had been badly used.

Mr. FRASER said if they were to be continually charged with injustice, it would be due to the Government to state what kind of a character the man was. The Government would be compelled to go into the matter fully.

Mr. MEREDITH suggested that in the case submitted to the Privy Council the whole question of the right of the Province to escheats of this kind (real and personal property) as well as all other classes, should be decided.

Mr. MOWAT said with respect to the balance due Mr. Mercer, there were many judgments against him, and it was claimed that the creditors had the right to the balance.

The motion was carried.

### THE DUNKIN ACT.

Mr. PRESTON moved for a return showing the respective amounts paid by such municipalities in the Province of Ontario in which the Dunkin or other Temperance Acts are in force, towards the license fund of the district in which they are situated. Carried.

### THE MINING INTEREST.

Mr. MEREDITH moved an address to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor for a return of copies of all Orders in Council passed under the authority of the General Mining Act, creating, extending, adding to, or diminishing mining divisions. He said the mining interests on Lake Superior were of sufficient importance to justify the return.

Mr. PARDEE stated that in 1869 two Orders in Council had been issued relating to mining districts, one for the eastern part of the Province and the other to that part west of the 84th meridian to the height of land. Since then several Orders in Council had been issued, though the land had been sold from time to time under the general provisions of the Land Act of 1860.

The motion was agreed to.

It being 1 o'clock, the Speaker left the chair.

After recess.

### FIRST READING.

Mr. ERMATINGER—A bill to amend the Act respecting the administration of justice in unorganized tracts.

The House in Committee considered the following bills:—The Ontario Mortgage Act, 1884.—Mr. White. To amend the Act respecting pawnbrokers and pawnbroking.—Mr. Badgerow. To further amend the Act respecting joint stock companies for the construction or purchase of roads and other works.—Mr. Balfour. To amend the act respecting coroners' inquests.—Mr. Waters.

### THE PREMIUM NOTE SYSTEM.

Mr. O'CONNOR moved the second reading of the bill to amend the Act respecting mutual fire insurance companies. He pointed out that the bill proposed to repeal the clauses in the bill giving mutual insurance companies the power to sue in any Division Court in the jurisdiction of which they had an agency. In ordinary cases under the law relating to the division court as it now stands a man must be sued, if not where the cause of action arose, in the nearest division court to which he resides, and the law fairly well protects the defendant. In certain cases a change