

Fifth Parliament --- Third Session.

(By Our Own Reporters.)

MONDAY, Feb. 15.

The Speaker took the chair at three o'clock.

STANDING ORDERS.

Mr. Gillies presented the eighth and ninth reports of the Committee on Standing Orders. The Committee recommended that the day for receiving petitions for private Bills be extended to Monday, 22nd.

RAILWAYS.

Hon. T. B. Pardee presented the report of the Committee on Railways.

FIRST READINGS.

The following Bills were read a first time:—

Mr. Monk—To extend the Land Title, 1885.

Mr. Clancy—To amend the Act to impose a tax on dogs for the protection of sheep.

Mr. Balfour—To amend the Franchise and Representation Act, 1885.

COUNTY COUNCILS.

Mr. DRURY asked if it is the intention of the Government to amend the Municipal Act so as to reduce the number of members of County Councils, or to appoint a Commission to inquire into the matter.

Hon. O. MOWAT—It is not the intention of the Government to appoint a Commission to inquire into the subject. I believe it is generally felt to be extremely desirable that the number of members of County Councils should be diminished. My hon. friend called the attention of the House to that subject the session before last, and a committee was appointed for the purpose of considering the matter, coming to some agreement, and reporting to the House. Questions were sent, a considerable number of answers were received, and some progress made in analyzing these answers. In consequence of the hon. gentleman not being here last session that committee did not report. That committee is really the best Commission that can be appointed. It is a matter on which great diversity of opinion exists, and I recommend my hon. friend to get the committee reappointed in order that they may complete their labours and report.

Mr. McINTYRE—For an Address to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that His Honour will cause to be laid before this House a return, showing the original expenditure made in the purchase of the grounds and erection of the buildings known as Government House; all expenditure since made in repairs and maintenance, or otherwise on account of the same, and of any estimate made, or to be made before such return is made, of the value of the said property; also the extent or area of said property and of all correspondence between the Governments of Ontario and Dominion, or any members of the same respectively, relating to the necessity for or maintenance of Government House. He believed that the Government had been careful in its expenditure under this head, and he was satisfied that the Lieutenant-Governors had been moderate in their demands, and that the expenditure had only been commensurate with the dignity of the office in this rich and important Province. However, he supposed there was no doubt that the management of this part of the public service was, and ought to be, under the supervision of this House, and that the House and the country should know how much Government House had cost in the aggregate. The public were not disposed to carp at the expenditure or enquire too minutely into it, but they required more information than they had at present.

Hon. C. F. FRASER—There is no correspondence between the Governments of Ontario and the Dominion on the subject, and I suppose the member will consent to his motion being amended so far as that is concerned. Then I do not think that these grounds cost the Province anything. At all events there has been no expenditure in the way of purchase-money since Confederation, so that that need not form any part of the motion. Without entering on a discussion as to Government House or the office of Lieut.-Governor, I may say that I am flatly opposed to the discontinuance of the office, and I am prepared to give good reasons at the proper time why it should be continued.

Mr. MEREDITH said that he thought public opinion was not in favour of abolishing the office, whatever might be said as to the mode of appointment. While they were on this subject, he would like the Government to consider the question of removing the close fence which now surrounded the Government buildings.

THE BUDGET.

Hon. O. MOWAT said that probably the

estimates and the public accounts would be distributed on Wednesday, and the Treasurer deliver his budget on Thursday next

STATE OF BUSINESS.

Mr. MEREDITH enquired when the Bill respecting the estates of deceased persons would be ready, and complained of delay in bringing down Government measures.

Hon. O. MOWAT—Fortunately my hon. friend has not had the experience necessary to show what it is practicable for a Government to do in this direction. (Laughter.) Having had that experience, I may say that all I can do is to be perhaps a little in advance of other Governments in bringing down Bills. (Applause and laughter.) I have managed to do that heretofore, and hope to be able to continue it. (Applause.)

Mr. MERRICK enquired when the reports as to hospitals and prisons would be brought down.

Hon. A. S. HARDY replied that they were in type, and he had already brought down three or four of the reports.

Mr. MEREDITH asked why only one copy of the Central Prison report had been supplied to each member.

Hon. A. S. HARDY said that it had been published only as a departmental report, but that more copies could be issued if they were required for legislative purposes. He had ordered an additional issue of two hundred copies, but the work had been delayed owing to the first few pages having been broken up without orders.

The House adjourned at 3:35.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

The Attorney-General—Bill respecting the law of conveyancing; also Bill for further improving the administration of the law.

Mr. Pardee—Bill respecting free grants and homesteads to actual settlers on public lands in the district of Rainy River.

Mr. Meredith—Address for copies of all correspondence and reports with reference to the claims of James Knott, for damages for the flooding of his lands in the Township of Chaffey by the construction of public works on Fairy Lake.

Mr. Hess—Bill to extend the operations of the Land Titles Act of 1885 to the county of North.

Attorney-General—Bill respecting return convictions by Stipendiary and Police Magistrates.

Bill respecting the auditing of criminal justice accounts payable to the Province.

Bill for improving the laws with respect to conveyance of property.