

ONTARIO LEGISLATURE

Sixth Parliament --- First Session.

(By Our Own Reporters.)

THURSDAY, March 31.

FIRST READINGS.

The following bills were introduced and read the first time:—

To amend the Municipal Act.—Mr. Bronson.

To amend the Municipal Act.—Mr. McKay.

THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE.

On motion of Mr. MEREDITH the name of Hon. Mr. Clarke, which had been inadvertently omitted from the Library Committee, was added thereto.

THIRD READINGS.

The following bills were read the third time and passed:—Respecting the Fort George Assembly, to be henceforth known as the Niagara Assembly, Mr. Garson. To authorise the Directors of the Royal College of Dental Surgeons to grant a certificate of license to Marshall B. Mallory to practice dental surgery, Mr. Smith. To authorise the trustees of the Warwick congregation of the Methodist church at Warwick Village to sell certain lands, Mr. Graham.

QUEEN VICTORIA NIAGARA FALLS PARK.

Hon. O. MOWAT in moving the House into Committee on the Whole, on the resolution regarding the Queen Victoria Niagara Falls Park, said that the Falls of Niagara had for many years been the most attractive place of resort on this Continent, and that the interest in them was extending. In New York State information on this subject had been carefully collected. Last year eighty distinct excursion parties, organised by various associations, visited the Falls. In a single day they were visited by ten thousand people, and they were visited annually by from 200,000 to 300,000 people. Even before the State of New York took possession of the Park, the number of visitors was between 100,000 and 200,000 persons. The very statement of these figures showed that the Falls were interesting to all classes, and that they must have been visited very largely by persons of moderate means. A still more remarkable proof of the general interest in the Falls was afforded by the action of the people of the State of New York. They had lately purchased over 100 acres of land in the neighborhood of the Falls for an International Park, and had paid about \$1,500,000 for the land. This was all the more remarkable when it was remembered that the revenues of the State are raised by direct taxation, so that the people, in a State where manhood suffrage prevails, had voluntarily taxed themselves for this amount, in order to restore the scenery about the Falls. All the newspapers and all the parties had supported the movement. It was a no-party movement there, as here. In Ontario, too, there had been no opposition to any step that had been taken; his hon. friends opposite had manifested as much interest in the project as had the Government and its supporters. There was thus every indication that the people were fairly alive to the importance of the duty of

PRESERVING THE BEAUTY

of the natural scenery about the Falls. This was the object of the whole movement. All that was beautiful about the Falls was gradually being destroyed by the artificial means adopted for money-making purposes. The first step taken by the Ontario Government was to endeavor to induce the Dominion Government to undertake the work, and with that view the Legislature passed an Act to give the Dominion Government all the necessary power. Negotiations took place to induce them to undertake the work, and ultimately to induce them to undertake a portion of it. These

NEGOTIATIONS WERE UNSUCCESSFUL.

Although he could not speak with authority he believed that the Ontario members of the Dominion Government favored the project, but the other Ministers did not see the matter in the same light. Thereupon the Ontario Legislature passed an Act with a view to having the matter dealt with within its own jurisdiction. It was then contemplated to have the undertaking carried on by means of a private company, subject to the control and inspection of the Government, and it was ascertained that a company could be easily got up, and that they could establish and conduct the park profitably. The general feeling was, that if this could be done by a company it could be done by the Province, and that it would be better and more satisfactory to the people for the

PROVINCE TO UNDERTAKE

the work. In the preliminary proceedings they had the valuable assistance of three commissioners. The Act provided that the commissioners should have a survey of the property made in order to determine exactly what land it was necessary to include in the Park, and to ascertain by means of a conditional