

# ONTARIO LEGISLATURE.

## Sixth Parliament, Second Session.

(By Our Own Reporter.)

Jan. 27, 1888.

The Speaker took the chair at three o'clock.

Petitions were presented from the County Councils of Welland and Lennox and Addington praying relief respecting the confinement of insane persons in the common gaols.

### REGULATION OF LABOR IN STORES.

Hon. Mr. FRASER presented a bill respecting the closing of shops and the hours of labor of young children and persons therein. He explained that the objects sought to be attained by the bill might be fairly defined under two heads. For want of a better term he might describe the first provisions as involving local option, under which provision was made for regulating the closing of shops in cities, towns and villages. It was provided that the Municipal Council might pass by-laws which would regulate the closing of shops generally or any class of shops. Where at least three-quarters of the storekeepers of any city, town or village municipality or of any class of those storekeepers petition the Council that the stores generally or those of the particular class in question be closed during the year, or any part of the year, at any particular hour of the day, it shall be compulsory on the Council to pass a by-law to that effect. The Council was at liberty to repeal a by-law so passed in respect of the whole or any class of the stores except on petition of one-third of those affected by the repeal. The organ of gentlemen opposite gave its readers the impression that it was proposed to regulate by statute the closing of shops all over the Province. There never was any such intention, and a simple reading of the paragraph in the Speech from the Throne referring to the subject would have indicated that there was no such intention. The Government recognised that what would be a good regulation for one place would not suit another. In this respect the bill was to be purely permissive. So far as the obligatory clauses were concerned, they were in the direction to which the House committed itself in the Factory Act. Under the Factory Act it was no longer legal to employ any boy under 12 or any girl under 14 in a factory, and even over that age no woman and no boy over 12 could be employed for longer than ten hours in any given day, or 60 hours in any given week. Under this bill it was proposed to limit the hours during which young persons might be employed in shops to 74 in any particular week, no limit being fixed for a day, because the number of hours' work per day in such places must be regulated very much by the particular business carried on, the day of the week or the season. The Government did not commit itself to the number of hours named, trusting to the discussion in the House and in the country to assist in reaching a conclusion on this point. The Government asserted the general principle that the time had come when protection should be given to young people employed in shops against being kept at work for hours so protracted as to be injurious to health. It was possible in this young country to avoid falling into the errors of older lands, which have become, as it were, vested wrongs, to the injury of the people, and which it was exceedingly difficult now to eradicate. In details as to hours or age the Government was not committed to a limit. But, going no further than this city, it was often found that while a great majority of the dealers in any line might be desirous of closing their places of business at a given time, but a few objecting, all would be obliged to keep their stores open in self-defence.

Mr. MEREDITH—In the case of a man and wife keeping a little store, would they be obliged to close their place also?

Hon. Mr. FRASER replied in the affirmative. The hon. gentleman was always complaining of the centralising tendencies of this Government, and of the people not being allowed to manage their own affairs. Here was a case in which the regulation was specifically left to the people, and still the hon. gentleman was not satisfied. He would not be satisfied. (Laughter.) The term "young person" in the bill was made to apply to boys under 14 and girls under 16 years of age.

Mr. MEREDITH asked if there was legislation of this kind in any of the neighboring States which would be of assistance in discuss-

ing the bill.

Hon. Mr. FRASER said the Government did not wait for the States to legislate on a subject, but sought to do what was best for the people. (Cheers.) There was, however, an English statute dealing with part of the same ground covered by this bill—that regulating the number of hours during which young people may be employed in shops.

Mr. MEREDITH said he supposed the bill would be allowed to stand in order that members might examine it and get the opinions of their constituents upon it.

Hon. Mr. FRASER—Certainly; that is the object of introducing it early.

The bill was read the first time.

### PROBATES AND LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION.

Hon. Mr. MOWAT presented a bill respecting ancillary probate and letters of administration. He explained that this was the outcome of suggestions made at the recent London Conference. Letters of probate or administration had to be taken out in the place where the deceased person had been domiciled, and letters taken out in England did not entitle the persons to bring actions in this Province, and vice versa. It was proposed by this bill to authorise persons taking out letters in other Provinces of the Dominion to bring action in Ontario, and to make the same apply to Britain and other British Provinces on proclamation of the Lieutenant-Governor, the object being to secure reciprocal advantages before bringing the law into effect as regards the places referred to.

Mr. MEREDITH asked if the Attorney-General had considered the advisability of extending the measure to the neighboring States.

Hon. Mr. MOWAT—I have not.

The bill was read the first time.

### ALIMONY.

Hon. Mr. MOWAT presented a bill relating to alimony in certain cases. He explained that the object was to provide that the magistrates or police magistrate trying cases of non-support might decide the amount of alimony to be given where the amount claimed was not large, appeal being allowed to the judge of the Division Court.

The bill was read the first time.

### SUPPLY.

The estimates for expenditures to be made between the opening of the year and the voting of the regular Supply Bill of the session were presented and voted in the usual way.

The House adjourned at 3.45 o'clock.

### NOTICES OF MOTION.

Mr. Garson—On Tuesday next—Bill respecting stationary engines and engineers.

Mr. Waters—On Wednesday next—Bill to amend the Assessment Act.

Also, bill to amend the Municipal Act.

Also, bill to amend the Ditches and Watercourses Act, so as to make it applicable to the waterways in the lands and under the roadbeds of railway companies.

Also, bill to enable widows and unmarried women to vote for members of the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. French—On Monday next—Bill to authorise the appointment of fire guardians and the better prevention of bush fires.

Also, bill to amend the law respecting interest on mortgages and penalties for default.

Mr. Leys—Bill to amend the Land Title Act of 1885 and for other purposes.

Mr. McKay—On Wednesday next—Bill for the prevention of accidents by fire in hotels and other public buildings.