

ONTARIO LEGISLATURE.

18th Parliament, Second Session.

(By Our Own Reporter.)

February 7, 1888.

The Speaker took the chair at three o'clock.

POLICE MAGISTRATES.

Mr. PHELPS presented a bill to amend the law respecting police magistrates, which was read the first time.

MUNICIPAL ACT.

Mr. SMITH and Mr. CLARKE (Wellington) presented bills to amend the Municipal Act, which were read the first time.

PRIVATE BILLS.

The following private bills were presented and read the first time:—

Respecting Trinity church, Toronto—Mr. Leys (Toronto).

Respecting the St. Catharines & Thorold Street Railway Company—Mr. Garson.

To incorporate the William Hall, of Peterboro', Protestant Poor Trust—Mr. Stratton.

To empower the executors of James Sparking to sell certain lands—Mr. Leys (Toronto).

Respecting the South Norfolk Railway Company—Mr. Morgan.

To authorise Eliza Howson and others to sell certain lands—Hon. Mr. Fraser.

To renew the charter of the Saugeen Valley Railway Company—Mr. Meredith for Mr. Biggar.

MORTGAGES.

Mr. GIBSON (Hamilton) presented a bill to amend the Act respecting short forms of mortgages, which was read the first time.

LICENSE COMMISSIONERS' EXPENSES.

Mr. LEES moved for an order of the House for a return, showing all estimates of expenses of License Commissioners, and in connection with the enforcement of the Canada Temperance Act, approved by the Provincial Secretary of Ontario, for the years 1886-87 and 1887-88, including the salary and expenses of police magistrates.

After a brief discussion of an explanatory character the resolution was carried.

DIVISION COURT COMMITMENTS.

Mr. HARCOURT moved for an order of the House for a return, showing the number of persons committed to gaol in each county in the Province under Division Court process during the year 1887; the number of those who remained in gaol for a period exceeding one month, together with the number of those against whom the judgment recovered was for an amount less than ten dollars. Carried.

Mr. GRAHAM moved the resolution of which he had given notice, in favor of admitting the press reporters to the gallery during the reading of prayers by Mr. Speaker. He said:—I have several reasons for placing that resolution before the House. (Laughter.) I may say that I think this is a custom which cannot be defended.

An hon. member—What is?

Mr. GRAHAM—Having the doors closed during our prayers. It is suggested in the press that the members of the House do not pay the attention during prayers that they should. I have never seen anything of that kind myself, and if there is a notion of that kind abroad the only way to disprove it is to allow the reporters of the press to occupy the gallery during the prayers. The only thing I regret is that I did not make my resolution wide enough to admit the public at large. I would have no objection at all to amend it at this time. I can see no reason why the public should not be admitted during the prayers. I am satisfied that the good sense of the public would prevent anything unseemly during the prayers.

Mr. SPEAKER read the resolution, announcing Mr. O'Connor as the seconder. It was found, however, that Mr. O'Connor was not present, and the resolution could not be voted upon. Great laughter was aroused by this ending of the affair.

Subsequently on motion for adjournment,

Hon. Mr. MOWAT said—I might explain that the reason why prayers are offered before the doors are opened is that it is sometimes found necessary to discuss a matter of privilege before the doors are opened. It was thought better therefore to begin with prayers, so that such a discussion might go on before the doors were open. Otherwise, when such a question was to be discussed with closed doors, the people would have to be turned out of the galleries. There is no particular object in having the reporters here during prayers, for the prayers are read and they know all about them. (Laughter.) Perhaps, however, an exception might be made of the reporters,

for it would not be much trouble for them to go out if it became necessary to close the doors. It is hardly worth while to renew the motion since there is the reason I have mentioned for the existing practice, and the change would perhaps involve others, which might not be convenient.

Mr. MEREDITH expressed the opinion that if the doors were to be opened, the public as well as the press representatives should be admitted. The subject had been a good deal discussed, and no harm should result from the change. The easiest way out of the difficulty would be to make the change proposed. These matters of privilege seldom come up, and they could be discussed before prayers.

Hon. Mr. MOWAT—Those would not want a blessing. (Laughter.)

Hon. Mr. FRASER said he had in his experience known one or two cases in which subjects were debated with closed doors. It would be inconvenient to clear the galleries after the people had once come in, in order to maintain the ancient privilege of members to have a subject debated with closed doors. If prayers were to be used at all they should precede everything that was done.

COMMISSIONS.

Mr. MEREDITH moved for a return of copies of all commissions of inquiry issued during the years 1886 and 1887; the subject of inquiry in each case; the names of the commissioners, their salary or other remuneration, and a statement of the expenses of each such inquiry. Such return to show whether the commissioners or any of them held any, and if so, what other office or employment in the public service of the Province. He explained that his object in moving the resolution was that the House might know to what extent the Government had made use of the powers vested in them of appointing commissions and the expenses so incurred. While he did not doubt the qualifications of those appointed in the various cases, their remuneration in some cases, it seemed to him, would be a considerable tax upon the Province when officers of the departments might as well have performed the duty. He noticed also that gentlemen had been appointed who held high positions in the Civil Service. If these were given extra remuneration for this work a principle laid down by gentlemen opposite was violated.

Hon. Mr. MOWAT said he had no objection to the motion. It would seem from the mover's speech that he objected whether members of the Civil Service were appointed or not. The practice was to appoint these officers when such appointments did not interfere with their regular duties. No remuneration was given them other than their regular salary, but expenses they incurred, of course, were paid.

The resolution was carried.

TIMBER DUES.

Mr. MEREDITH moved for a return of copies of all Orders in Council or other regulations, with regard to timber dues, passed since the 1st day of January, 1885. Carried. The House adjourned at 3.55 o'clock.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

Mr. Ingram—On Friday next—Bill to amend the Act to provide for the payment of witnesses for the Crown.

Mr. Stuart—On Monday next—Bill to amend the Coroners Act.

Mr. Meredith—On Friday next—An address for a return of the writ of superseas for the removal of James Guilbouce from the commission of the peace for the County of Peterborough; also copies of all

petitions or other applications for the removal, and copies of all correspondence with reference to such petitions or applications of the said removal, and also of copies of all reports to the Executive Council or his Honor the Lieutenant-Governor with reference to said matters or any of them.

Mr. Harcourt—Thursday next—Return showing (1) amount paid up to this date for land expropriated for Niagara Falls Park purposes, to whom paid and dates of payment.

(2) A detail statement of all moneys expended by the Government (other than for the purchase of land) through the Park Commissioners or otherwise during 1887, and for what services and to whom paid.

(3) All moneys received by the commissioners on account of the sale of buildings or on any other account during 1887.

(4) Names of all parties appointed to any office in connection with the park up to this date, showing also the nature of their employment, their salaries and the dates of their appointments.

Mr. Blyth—For an address for a return of all Orders in Council with respect to the investment of sinking funds of municipalities under the Municipal Act.