

# ONTARIO LEGISLATURE.

## Sixth Parliament, Second Session.

(By Our Own Reporter.)

February 14, 1888.

The Speaker took the chair at three o'clock.

### ASSESSMENT ACT.

Mr. O'CONNOR presented a bill to amend the Assessment Act, which was read the first time.

### ROAD COMPANIES ACT.

Mr. MONK presented a bill to amend the General Road Companies Act, which was read the first time.

### MUNICIPAL ACT.

Mr. NAIRN presented a bill to amend the Municipal Act, which was read the first time.

### PRIVATE BILLS.

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

To authorise the trustees of the Toronto Burying Ground to sell certain lands—Mr. Metcalfe.

To confirm certain mortgages made by the churchwardens of Christ church, Hamilton—Mr. Gibson (Hamilton).

### THE BUDGET.

Hon. A. M. ROSS, on rising to make his financial statement as Treasurer, was received with loud cheers. He said:—Mr. Speaker,—In presenting to the House the financial statement and estimates a certain order of procedure seems to have been established and acted upon as most proper and desirable under the circumstances, viz., first to lay before the House the receipts of the year, comparing them, when necessary, with the estimates and with those of the previous year; next to review the expenditure in the same manner, afterwards placing before the House a statement of the financial position of the Province at the close of the year, and finally presenting the proposals for the present year under the estimates. I propose to follow that settled order of procedure, and to endeavor to lay before the House as briefly as possible the affairs of the Province in that form. First, then, I will take the receipts of the past year, and in doing so, as I say, make a few comparisons where they vary from our estimates. In this way we are able to give to the public and to those members who do not care to study closely the accounts for themselves a general idea of what have been the financial operations for the past year. First, then, we have received as the subsidy allowance the same amount as in previous years, namely, \$1,196,872 80, for interest on capital account \$279,111 10, and for interest on investments \$45,745 72. The next item is that of revenue from Crown lands. Our estimate for last year was \$758,000, and we have received \$1,113,142. This excess is due to the result of the timber sale last fall. For that sale we received \$399,958, which, deducted from the whole amount of receipts, leaves \$713,184 as the ordinary receipts from the Crown Lands Department for last year. Our estimate for this was \$758,000, so that our ordinary receipts were some \$44,000 less than we anticipated. The Commissioner of Crown Lands is greatly to be congratulated upon the result of the sale, and I am sure that hon. members on both sides of the House regret exceedingly that the Commissioner is not here to receive the honor to which he is entitled. (Applause.) There may be differences of opinion as to the time when and the terms upon which our timber lands should be placed upon the market. But I think the success of the sale is the best evidence of the wisdom of the Commissioner and the result has been highly satisfactory. (Applause.) I dare say that this sale will give rise to the old familiar objection that we are living upon our capital; and yet I do not see how any one can repeat the puerile objection that we should set aside our whole territorial revenue to be invested for the benefit of posterity. In this connection I think I may very pertinently ask the question, "What has posterity done for us?"—(applause and laughter)—and I think I may also ask, "How is it that these gentlemen who champion posterity so zealously that they object to our using the revenue of the Province for the present purposes of the Province—how is it that they see nothing objectionable in their friends elsewhere, by extravagance and folly,

heaping up a debt by millions and millions and leaving posterity to pay for it?" (Applause.)

### THE RECEIPTS.

We estimated the receipts from Algoma taxes at \$10,000; the actual receipts were \$15,247. This increase is the result of the year before last making provision for the collection of these taxes and offering inducements for prompt payment. We have received during the last year, under the operation of that statute, \$28,000, a large increase on the receipts of previous years. We have received from law stamps \$68,439, as against an estimate of \$65,000. For licenses we have received \$202,455, against an estimate of \$192,000. This surplus is accounted for by the fact that some payments on licenses were held over from 1886 and came into the revenue of 1887. From the Education Department we have received \$24,807, against an estimate of \$38,000. The cause of this falling off in the receipts from the Education Department will be seen by reference to statement No. 7 of the Public Accounts. There has been a small increase in the item of Model schools, and there has been a falling off in the receipts from the superannuated teachers' fund from \$18,095 in 1886 to \$1,439 in 1887, while the outlay in connection with superannuated teachers was \$58,295. The Act of 1885 will no doubt eventually wipe this out, but in the meantime for a number of years the Province will be saddled with an expenditure of some \$50,000 a year. I may say that this is a legacy left to the present Government by hon. gentlemen opposite and their irresponsible superintendent. The next item is public institutions, from which we have received \$84,004, as against an estimate of \$90,000, a shortage of \$14,000. It is almost impossible to estimate accurately from year to year the receipts from institutions, as very frequently the receipts of a number of years come in together. From casual revenue we received \$37,262, as against an estimate of \$30,000.

### MUNICIPAL INDEBTEDNESS.

In regard to the municipal loan fund, it will be remembered that in 1886 I stated that a settlement was in progress with the Town of Cobourg for a settlement of the debt of the town to the Province, namely, that new debentures should be issued for \$42,768, extending over twenty years. That was not consummated owing to the refusal of the Town Council to pass the necessary by-law. At the close of the year the municipality made an offer to the Government of \$25,000 in cash, in full settlement, and the Government agreed to accept this, subject to the approval of the Legislature; and we have, therefore, placed this sum of \$25,000 in the receipts for the year.

Mr. MEREDITH—Was the amount paid?

Mr. ROSS—Yes. We have also agreed to a settlement with St. Catharines for an unsettled balance due by that municipality. We have agreed to accept from St. Catharines new debentures to the amount of \$4,850, running for five years and bearing interest at five per cent. Our ordinary receipts for last year amounted in all to \$3,123,211, against estimated receipts of \$2,783,125, or we have received \$335,086 more than we estimated. This, of course, includes the amount of \$399,958 received from the timber sale; deducting this, we received last year \$54,372 less than we estimated. Then certain receipts outside of ordinary receipts are given in this statement. But there are the drainage debentures, which are merely a reinvestment of moneys paid in by the municipalities to whom loans have already been made; these reinvestments amount to \$33,270. There accrued during the year railway certificates amounting to \$247,982, renewals of which for forty years at \$12,500 a year were issued, and tenders invited for their purchase. They were allotted to the highest tenderer, the Northern Assurance Company, who bought at less than 4½—that is to say, \$19 25 for each \$100. The next item is \$122,211, new Parliament buildings, sale of land. Last session I informed the House that under the authority of the Act of 1886 tenders had been asked for for the sale of a portion of the asylum lands; that the tender for block A had been accepted at \$4,100 per acre, and the tenders for blocks B and C declined because they were too low.

### SALE OF ASYLUM LANDS.

Since then we again invited tenders, and accepted a tender for block B (12 acres) at \$5,100 per acre, and for block C (20 acres) at \$5,000 per acre. We also received from the Grand Trunk Railway Company \$8,420 for a strip of land 2½ acres, for which they agreed to pay the same rate as the highest tender.

Mr. MEREDITH—Who were the purchasers?

Mr. ROSS—Mr. A. B. Lee bought block B and the Land Securities Company block C. The terms of sale were one-fourth down, balance