

HOUSE.

INDIGENT POOR AND HOUSES OF INDUSTRY.

Interesting Debate on Col. Clarke's Motion for Returns—Large Number of Petitions—Mr. Bishop's Insurance Bill—The Technical Education Report.

MONDAY, Feb. 4, 1889.

This afternoon's session was a little longer and a little more interesting than that of any day of last week. Col. Clarke's motion for poorhouse returns brought to their feet the leader of the Opposition and the Commissioner of Crown Lands, each of whom had a good deal to say on the subject. One or two had expected Mr. Awrey's motion in connection with the Provincial Exhibition to have come on, in which case no doubt an interesting debate would have occurred, initiated by the hon. member for South West-worth, but, for one or two reasons, at the adjournment of the House the motion was still on the order paper.

PETITIONS.

The following petitions were presented:—

Mr. Tooley—From the County Council of Middlesex, asking for power to grant aid to battalion bands.

Mr. Meacham—From the County Council of Lennox and Addington, praying for an Act giving townships the control of sales of lands for taxes and non-resident lands.

Mr. Tooley—From County Council of Middlesex, praying for an amendment to the school law respecting the number of trustees in incorporated villages.

Mr. Chisholm—From the County Council of Peel, asking that certain county officers be appointed by County Councils.

Mr. Waters—From the County Council of Middlesex, praying for an Act giving counties the power of appointing certain county officers.

Mr. Connee—From the Town Council of Port Arthur, praying for an Act empowering them to exempt certain railway lands from taxation within the municipality.

Mr. Waters—From the County Council of Middlesex, praying for an Act giving counties the control and maintenance of bridges 100 feet and over in length.

Mr. Meredith—From the London Street Railway Company, asking for legislation increasing their capital stock from \$40,000 to \$250,000.

Mr. Marter—From Town Council of Gravenhurst, re private bill.

Mr. Wood (Brant)—From the Town Council of Paris, praying for the abolition of all exemptions.

Mr. Snider—From Township of Woolwich, re municipal fire insurance.

Mr. Monk—From the County Council of Carleton, asking that the power of appointing gaolers, police magistrates and other officials be given to County Councils.

Mr. Leys—From the Council of the Town of Parkdale, asking for special legislation regarding the debenture debt of the municipality.

Mr. Lyon—From Joseph Wilson and 35 others, praying that the by-laws of the municipality of the Town of Sault Ste. Marie regarding the construction of water-works, electric light and water power be not legalised.

Dr. Gilmour—From the municipality of West Toronto Junction, asking for special legislation to meet the growing requirements of the town.

Mr. Leys—From the Land Security Co., praying for an Act increasing the powers now held by the company, the principal changes asked being that the company should have authority to increase the capital stock of the concern from time to time to an amount not exceeding \$3,000,000.

BILLS INTRODUCED.

The following bills were introduced:—

An Act to facilitate the purchase of toll roads—Mr. McMahon.

To amend the Act respecting mortgages on sales of personal property—Mr. Waters.

To amend the Municipal Act—Mr. Stewart.

To amend the Ditches and Watercourses Act—Mr. Waters.

THE TORRENS TRANSFER ACT.

The first question of the session was put by Mr. Monk, the Opposition whip, who wanted to know whether it is the intention of the Government to afford to the City of Ottawa and the County of Carleton the advantages of the Torrens Land Transfer

Act on the same terms as was afforded to the City of Toronto and County of York when first introduced; if not, whether it is the intention of the Government to allow the outer counties to take advantage of the machinery now established at Toronto at the general expense until the business shall warrant the County Councils in assuming the burden imposed by the Act of 1837 for the establishment of local registries.

The Attorney-General explained that the Government had no intention to make the city and county named an exception to the remainder of the Province. The terms accorded Toronto when the system was first introduced had been allowed that the Act might be better tested. He would mention, however, that as the system became fully understood, the fees received seemed to be sufficient to pay working expenses. As to the second part of the question, he would say the Government had not thought it expedient to make a provision of the kind suggested, deeming it better that the local registry offices should assume registration of transactions in the counties in which they were situated. To which latter principle the leader of the Opposition gave a cordial "hear, hear."

CONCERNING POORHOUSES.

Mr. Clarke, Wellington, moved an order of the House for a return showing the location of any houses of industry, poorhouses, or similar institutions for the care and maintenance of indigent persons now established in any of the cities, towns and counties in the Province of Ontario, at the total or partial cost of any municipality, and distinguishing those partly and those wholly supported by such municipality; the number of inmates permanently or temporarily lodged in each such institution during the years 1837 and 1838, and their age and sex, with a classification of the supposed causes of pauperism, and the length of detention of such inmates; where any have been committed for short periods; the dietary used in these institutions; the amount expended upon the erection and improvement of buildings since the establishment of any such institution, and the cost of lands connected therewith; the extent, if any, of land annually under cultivation, and the money value of returns therefrom during the years named; the annual money value, if any, of the products of the labor of the inmates; the per capita daily or annual cost of actual maintenance, during 1837 and 1838, of the inmates of such institution, less interest on invested capital, and plus the salaries of officials; the number and salaries of attendants, surgeons and other officials; the number of inmates of such institutions in each of the years named, regarded as imbecile, idiots or insane, and of the blind, epileptic or deaf and dumb; and the number of committals of inmates of any such institution to cells or other solitary confinement, as punishment, in 1837 and 1838, and the period during which they were so held in confinement.

The member for East Wellington made an interesting speech in support of his motion. His object in asking for the return was to elicit such information as might be of use to the counties to build houses for their poor. Notwithstanding what was said by the speakers at a recent gathering in Toronto, Ontario had more poor to support than ever before. Several counties had taken advantage of the law giving them the power to build refuges and poorhouses and had neglected the step taken. The hon. member then to read to the

House the following table which he gathered last summer of the working of poorhouses in the five following counties:—In Waterloo the inmates were in number 87, and supported at an annual cost of \$51 87 each; in Elgin there were 69 and the cost \$55 12; in Wellington 68, cost \$63 80; Middlesex 64, cost \$58 85; York 101, cost \$57 93. Comparing these figures with the cost of the institutions in charge of the Government, it would be found that county poorhouses are conducted at a much less expenditure. Mr. Clarke, before sitting down, expressed the opinion that county poorhouses ought to support men and women now maintained in Provincial institutions.

Mr. Meredith complained of a growing habit of professional paupers flocking into the centres of population and thereby increasing the burdens imposed on charitable organisations. He ventured to think that some legislation was necessary compelling each municipality to support its own poor. Care should be taken, however, against supporting professional paupers at the expense of the Province, as it was a well-known fact that such persons would do anything to gain admittance into institutions where they could be well fed, and thereby escape working for their living.

Mr. Hardy was glad that the member for

East Wellington had brought up the question, believing that a discussion of it in the House and country would be the means of educating public opinion towards the necessity of each municipality taking care of its own poor. As yet public opinion is divided regarding poorhouses, but there can be now no doubt that where they had been established good results followed. He did not favor the idea of any system that would encourage chronic paupers. This would be an unmitigated evil. With respect to complaints heard about lunatics being confined in gaols, the Commissioner of Crown Lands went on to state that many of these could not be admitted into the Provincial Asylums. They, for the most part, did not come under the class for which these asylums had been provided. The proper place for the class he alluded to was the poorhouse, unless it could be shown by medical examination that a course of treatment at the asylums would restore them to health mentally and physically. The hon. gentleman quite agreed with the other speakers regarding the influx of poor people to the centres of population, and felt that something should be done to put a stop to it.

The motion was then granted.

Mr. Clarke also moved the following resolution, being a sort of addenda to the first, and which was carried without any discussion:—

Order of the House for a return showing the amount paid out from municipal funds, either by direct grants or remission of taxes, in each city, town, village or rural municipality in the Province of Ontario, during 1837 or 1838, for the relief of poor and indigent persons, but not including any sum paid for the support of a house of industry or similar institution; the number of indigents a permanent charge upon any municipality in 1837 and 1838; and the number of such indigents who received temporary aid from municipal funds in 1837 and 1838.

RETURNS.

Just as the House was rising the Provincial Secretary, Hon. J. M. Gibson, made his first returns. These were copies of:—

An Order in Council dated Jan. 29th, 1889, commuting at \$850 per annum the fees payable to W. A. McLean, Local Master of the Supreme Court of Judicature for Ontario, and deputy registrar at Walkerton.

An Order in Council dated Jan. 31st, 1889, commuting at \$704 per annum the monies payable to Judge Lacourse, judge of the County Court of the County of Waterloo.

A report of Mr. E. B. Barron, stipendiary magistrate in the territory belonging to the Province of Ontario in the vicinity of Lake Abitibi.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

Mr. Bishop—On Wednesday next—Bill to amend the Act respecting insurance companies.

Mr. Monk—Bill to amend section 269 of the Municipal Act.

Mr. Waters—Resolution—That in the opinion of this House the time has arrived when the Government of this Province should submit a measure for the approval of this Assembly having for its object the procuring of money from the capitalists of Great Britain upon the security of Provincial bonds or otherwise bearing 3½ or 4 per cent., said moneys to be advanced to the farmers of this Province to enable them to pay off existing mortgages, at a very slight advance over first cost and not more than would cover the necessary expense of such loans, the farms to be the security for the money advanced, and the same to be repaid in such manner as may be desired.

Mr. Hardy—Bill respecting the formation of new counties.

Mr. Preston—Return showing the names of all publishers of Public school text books, with the respective books published by them and the prices thereof; also for all correspondence by or with the Minister of Education or any officer of his department respecting the prices or publication of Public school text books subsequent to that already brought down.

NOTES.

Mr. Bishop's bill regarding the Insurance Companies Act is the same as that introduced last session, and this year, he says, he does not mean to have it slaughtered by the Municipal Committee. It may be remembered that the bill proposes to amend the present Act as to allow of its covering the establishment and working of live stock insurance companies, which may exist quite independently of fire and life insurance companies. Mr. Bishop promises to startle the House with certain information he has so soon as the bill gets to second reading. There is one point in the bill, by the way, which would affect the present Act as it relates to fire insurance companies, viz., the proposal to make the maximum term for contracts