

THE LEGISLATURE.

DEBATE ON THE LAND IMPROVEMENT FUND.

Bills Advanced a Stage—Land Tax Sales—Government Measures Introduced—More License Commissioners—Notes Gathered in the Lobbies and Departments.

FEBRUARY 14th, 1889.

After the storm, the calm. There was a good deal of business done to-day, however, but none of it was particularly exciting. Mr. H. E. Clarke had recovered his equanimity, the Treasurer looked serene, Mr. Meredith was complacent and Mr. Waters was exceedingly busy. Quite a number of his bills came up during the afternoon, and he handled them with his usual ability.

Petitions were presented by Mr. A. F. Wood, Mr. Gilmour, Mr. Allan, Mr. Garson, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Davis, Hon. Mr. Mowat and Hon. Mr. Hardy. They concerned chiefly subjects already before the House. The following bills were then introduced and read a first time:—

An Act respecting limited liabilities of incorporated companies—The Attorney-General.

An Act respecting an oath under the Manhood Suffrage Act—The Attorney-General.

An Act respecting certain matters under the Land Titles Act—The Attorney-General.

An Act respecting registry offices—The Attorney-General.

An Act to amend the Municipal Act—Mr. Ingram.

An Act to amend the Act respecting mortgages and sale of personal property—Mr. Chisholm.

LAND IMPROVEMENT FUND.

Mr. Gibson (Huron) moved for a return of copies of all correspondence relating to the Land Improvement Fund between the Governments of Ontario and Quebec. The motion, he said, was an old-timer to most of the members of the House, but it was not for that reason a less important one. The money in question was owing for years back to the municipalities, but the Provinces were unable to settle the affair between themselves. Some held that the Dominion, as trustee of the fund, was responsible, but he did not quite agree with these. He thought the Dominion would cause it to be paid if it could reasonably do so under the present circumstances. He thought Quebec was to blame. He suggested that the Ontario Government should pay out the funds due the municipalities and charge them to Quebec Province, or, as an alternative, that they should bring suit against the Dominion to make it, as trustee of the fund, compel Quebec to pay up its share of the same.

The Attorney-General said it was a debatable question whether or not the Province was entitled to the particular moneys referred to here. In relation to school lands the arbitrators to whom the matter had been referred decided in favor of the Province, but there was no decision given in regard to the other matter. The Province had always contended that the grounds on which the arbitrators decided in favor of the Province in respect to the school lands were sufficient to justify the claim of the Province in regard to the Crown lands dispute. Not having been arbitrated upon, the matter was open to debate by the Dominion. It had been expected the matter would be settled by arbitration, but difficulties had prevented that, and it was possible now that action would be brought against the Dominion Government.

Mr. Meredith expressed his regret that so long standing a question as this should not long ago have been settled. Then he dragged out the ghost of the Inter-Provincial Conference, with arguments that bore a mysterious resemblance to those contained that morning in the journal that has the honor of being controlled by his near neighbor, Mr. Creighton. He argued, for instance, that because Mr. Mowat and Mr. Mercier were among the Provincial Premiers who passed the resolutions of two or three years back, it was most astonishing that they should not have settled everything that was open to litigation or question between the two Provinces, but, above all, this particular question that Mr. Gibson had brought before the House. It was really monstrous that when Mr. Mercier and Mr. Mowat

were "hob-nobbing" together they should not have arbitrated upon this question of the land improvement fund.

Mr. Mowat, who had sat quietly smiling and stroking his chin while Mr. Meredith was dealing these terrible blows at him, rose and remarked that there were some things on which he and the Premier of Quebec were agreed and some things on which they were not agreed.

Mr. O'Connor remarked that some municipalities had been anything but justly treated in connection with the affair and he thought the Government should do something. He had great confidence in the Attorney-General's "winning" qualities and felt that he would win if he undertook the case of the Province, believing, as he (the speaker) understood him to believe, that the Province was morally entitled to the money in question and that that right could be enforced.

Hon. A. M. Ross and Mr. Creighton and Mr. Blythe discussed the subject briefly, and the resolution was carried.

OTHER BUSINESS.

Mr. Waters then moved the second reading and the reference to the Municipal Committee of his bill to amend the Ditches and Watercourses Act. He explained that it was the old original bill, and it went to committee.

Mr. O'Connor moved the second reading of his bill to amend the Assessment Act, and that it be referred to the Municipal Committee. He explained that his bill, too, was the same that he had introduced last year and which had not carried. The bill related to the sale of lands for taxes, and has been previously explained in THE GLOBE. It was discussed briefly by Hon. Mr. Hardy, Hon. A. M. Ross, Mr. A. F. Wood, Mr. Balfour and was carried.

Mr. Waters moved the second reading of his bill to amend the Assessment Act, respecting assessment of personal property, etc., and was proceeding to explain it when Hon. Mr. Fraser remarked that if Mr. Waters had no objection he (the speaker) thought that it would be very much more convenient that this particular bill and the various other assessment bills should be discussed together on a day which the Government would promise to endeavor to make convenient for the purpose. Mr. Waters thought this was a very good idea and allowed his bill to stand for the present.

Immediately, however, he was on his feet again to move the second reading of his second bill to amend the Ditches and Watercourses Act, viz., that relating to the appointment of drain commissioners and the reconsideration of awards when drains or ditches do not carry off the water originally intended. Some of the difficulties of the bill were pointed out by Mr. Meredith and Hon. Mr. Hardy and it then went to committee.

FIRE INSURANCE LIMIT.

Then came Mr. Bishop with his bill to amend the Act respecting insurance companies. The amendment is to lengthen the maximum term of fire risks from three years, as at present, to five years. He read letters from several insurance companies approving of the five years' term, and argued that there was no good reason for restricting the maximum term to three years. Of course it would be still optional with the persons insuring to limit their insurance to three years. Mr. Bishop asked for a special committee to consider the matter. He didn't want it killed by the Municipal Committee, as it probably would be if it went there. It may be remarked in connection with this bill that it does not in any way refer to the constitution of live stock insurance companies, as Mr. Bishop first had intended to make it do; that will come up separately. Neither does the proposed extension to the five years refer to those risks at present restricted to one year.

Mr. Gibson (Huron) supported Mr. Bishop's motion.

Hon. Mr. Gibson (Hamilton) said the bill was a matter that was certainly worthy of consideration, and one that was open for debate; at the same time, so far as he could learn from insurance men generally, the feeling was largely against the proposed change. The Government were not committed against it, however, and it would receive proper attention. He didn't think a special committee was necessary, but the bill could go to the Law Amendment Committee instead of the Municipal Committee.

The motion then carried, the bill being referred to the committee named.

Mr. Lyon's two bills to amend the Act respecting the establishment of municipal

institutions in the Districts of Algoma, Muskoka, Parry Sound, Manitoulin, Nipissing, Thunder Bay and Rainy River, were read a second time.

Mr. Ferguson's bill to amend the Municipal Act relating to arbitrations was taken up by the hon. member, but on the suggestion of the Government was allowed to stand. The bill by the same gentleman to amend the Municipal Act was read a second time.

Mr. O'Connor moved to amend the Municipal Act by changing the law in relation to municipal fire protection, so as to enable certain townships now unable to secure such protection to be so placed that they may do so.

The House rose soon after five o'clock.

LICENSE COMMISSIONERS.

NAMES OF MEN WHO WILL ADMINISTER THE CROOKS ACT.

Prince Edward—Emanuel Davis, Picton; W. H. K. Allison, Picton; Mathew Benson, Sophiasburg.

Peel—Wm. Golding, Brampton; John D. Hickey, Cooksville; Wm. Clark, Caledon.

Thunder Bay—Donald McKellar, Fort William; W. J. Clarke, Port Arthur; Geo. O. P. Clavett, Port Arthur.

Lanark South—John McCann, Perth, in the room and stead of Samuel Garrett, resigned.

Haliburton—William Fielding, Minden; Thomas Howie, Burry's Green; E. B. Le Roy, Cobocok.

Lennox—Miles Fralick, Napanee; John Webster, Napanee; James C. Huffman, Napanee.

Middlesex East—J. W. Robson, Vanneck; Adam Nicol, Wilton Grove; Thomas Bedgood, Rebecca.

Victoria West—William Needler, Patrick Curtain, Lindsay; Donald Jackson, Woodville.

Dundas—John Sullivan, Mountain; Hugh Kerans, Winchester; John C. Munro, Grantly.

Perth North—Jacob Kollman, Millbank; George McPherson, M. F. Goodwin, Stratford.

Wentworth South—Edward Dickinson, North Glanford; Archibald Jarvis, Woodburn; Closson Vansickle, Jerseyville.

Hamilton—J. W. Murton, John Proctor, Nelson Humphrey, Hamilton.

Simcoe West—George Watson, Collingwood; A. B. McIntyre, John Reid, Stayner.

Algoma—William A. Quibell, Sault Ste. Marie; David Jackson, Bruce Mines; Alex. A. Smith, Sault Ste. Marie.

Victoria East—William Fielding, Minden; Thomas Howie, Burry's Green; E. B. LeRoy, Cobocok.

Halton—John R. Barber, Georgetown; Samuel Dice, Donald Campbell, Milton.

Dufferin—Thomas Tull, George Dodds, D. S. Lamont, Orangeville.

Oxford South—Edward Borland, Tilsonburg, in the room and stead of William S. Ferguson, resigned.

Lambton West—Edward M. Proctor, Archibald McLean, M.D., Sarnia; David Trotter, Petrolca.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

Mr. Drury—Bill to protect the beaches and shores of the Province against depredation.

Mr. Hardy—Bill respecting damage to lands by flooding same; also, bill to give representation to the District of Nipissing.

Mr. Drury—Bill to amend the Agriculture and Arts Act.

Mr. Craig—Order of the House for a return showing:—

(1) The number and location of Public schools in Ontario in which any language other than English is used in the work of teaching, either wholly or in part.

(2) A list of the text books in any language other than English used in such schools.

(3) The total number of scholars attending each of such schools.

(4) The number of scholars in each of such schools using text books in any language other than English.

The number of teachers in such schools who cannot use the English language in teaching.

Mr. Balfour—On Monday next, bill to amend the Act respecting mortgages.

Also, bill to amend the Ditches and Watercourses Act.

NOTES OF THE DAY.

ITEMS GATHERED IN THE LOBBIES AND FROM THE DEPARTMENTS.

The bill for incorporating the Ontario Inland Marine Mutual Insurance Company will be considered by the Private Bills Committee next Tuesday. Vessel owners are said to be pretty unanimous in the belief that they ought to have an insurance association of their own to be conducted on lines similar to transatlantic concerns.