

THE LEGISLATURE.

A SHORT SITTING BUT A GOOD DEAL OF BUSINESS.

Amendment to the Law of Appeal—
Mr. Balfour's Bill Respecting Mortgages—Fire Insurance Companies—Notices of Motion—The Coming Debate on the Provincial Exhibition.

FEBRUARY 18, 1889.

The sitting was an easy one to-day. The House sat for less than an hour and contented itself with advancing various bills a stage. The Opposition was without a spark of life. It generally is, in fact, when the leader is away, and he was away all this afternoon. It is very hard for Mr. Meredith to have to inspire and vivify such an inert, lifeless mass as his friends behind him. He seems to be getting tired of it and pays less attention to the affairs of the House this session than for some years past. This may be on account of his increased business, consequent upon his removal to Toronto from London, but it probably arises in part also from the hopelessness of his opposition having at last dawned upon him. Then Mr. Creighton, who used to be his chief lieutenant, and still sits at his left hand, has now other fish to fry, and has too much to do with Imperial finances to devote half his old attention to those of the Province. He has too hard work digging out his own surplus. The leadership devolves, then, upon Mr. French, but that gentleman is far too complacent to be a success as a critic. There is Mr. H. E. Clarke, of course, but his ability is altogether too transcendent to enable him to grapple with the questions of the Local Legislature. He will never be an entire success until he shines as a light in the shadowy Imperial Congress, founded on the beautiful dreams of Imperial Federationists. Of course there is, too, Mr. E. F. Clarke, but he is the Mayor; and after these there is nobody. So how can the Opposition be expected to be anything but slow and lifeless, and virtually dead, poor thing?

BILLS INTRODUCED.

The following bills were introduced and read a first time:—

To amend the Municipal Act—Mr. Graham.

To amend the Municipal Act—Mr. Clarke (Wellington).

To amend the Act respecting mortgages of real estate—Mr. Harcourt.

To amend the Assessment Act—Mr. Waters.

To give representation in the Legislative Assembly to the District of Nipissing—Hon. Mr. Hardy.

To make further provision respecting the Districts of Parry Sound and Muskoka—The Attorney-General.

Respecting appealing on prosecutions under Provincial Acts—The Attorney-General.

SECOND READINGS.

The following bills were read a second time:—

For the better protection of insectivorous and other birds—Mr. Clarke (Wellington).

To amend the Municipal Act—Mr. Stewart.

To amend the Registry Act—Mr. Wood (Hastings).

To amend the Ontario Elections Act—Mr. Balfour.

To amend the Municipal Act—Mr. Cruess.

All these have been previously referred to and explained in THE GLOBE. They were accompanied with brief speeches from the introducers and referred to their several committees. Col. Clarke's bill concerning insectivorous birds was referred to a special committee.

The House rose at 4 o'clock.

THE SAULT DEPUTATION.

The Sault Ste. Marie deputation which waited on the Government on Friday have not yet returned to that growing centre of trade. After the adjournment they had a long conversation with Hon. Mr. Hardy in regard to the Government lands situated in that part of the town in which a private company is developing water-power by means of an artificial channel. Mayor Biggins, Major Hamilton, Alex. Smith, D. Graham, together with Messrs. Conmee and Lyon, represented that it would be in the interests of the town that the Government should surrender to the company a portion

of these lands.

A VOTER'S LIMIT.

Mr. Cruess proposes in his bill to make 300 the limit of the number of voters for each polling subdivision in a municipality. The limit now is 200, the Legislature when the law was enacted having quite properly made that the number, because by some unforeseen accident or disturbance electors might be disfranchised. When the Wallace lams were at the zenith of their notoriety it was nothing for them to drive away voters with sticks and clubs, take possession of the polling booths, and do many other cowardly deeds to kill time and thereby disfranchise Liberals. There will be considerable opposition to the principle implied in Mr. Cruess' bill, and it does not appear that it will receive the sanction of the Assembly.

MR. GRAHAM'S BILL.

The clause in Mr. Graham's bill amending the Municipal Act is as follows:—No municipal corporation shall be required to fence or otherwise guard any ditch or watercourse running along any public highway when the depth of such ditch or watercourse does not exceed two feet.

INSURANCE COMPANIES.

The Hon. the Provincial Secretary laid on the table a return in regard to insurance companies doing business under Ontario charters, the amount of fire insurance at risk on the 31st December for each of the years from 1881 to 1887, the number of policies in force in each year, with other information. In purely mutual companies the amount of fire insurance at risk during 1887 was \$80,897,185 75; number of policies, 63,686; total losses paid, \$154,289 31. In mixed mutual companies amount of risks for same year was \$31,654,230 42; number of policies, 30,710; losses paid, \$188,087 96. With respect to joint stock companies the amount of risks for 1887 was \$11,190,612; number of policies, 10,446; losses paid, \$61,793.

THE PROVINCIAL EXHIBITION.

Mr. Awrey will move his motion regarding the Provincial Exhibition on Wednesday and it is expected that the debate will be protracted until a late hour, as a large number of members are marshalling facts and figures to present to the House on this subject. It will be farmers' day.

RESPECTING MORTGAGES.

The chief clause in Mr. Balfour's bill respecting mortgages of real estate is as follows:—No rules or regulations of any building or loan society, with reference to any mortgage or other security executed after the passing of this Act, shall be binding on the mortgagor or borrower, or any person or persons claiming under or through him, unless such rules and regulations be incorporated and fully set forth in the body of the mortgage or other instrument creating the security, and unless such rules and regulations be so incorporated and set forth. Any mortgagor or borrower, or other person claiming under or through him, shall be subject thereto whether the terms of the obligation be fulfilled or not.

QUASHING CONVICTIONS.

The Attorney-General proposes to amend the law regulating quashing of convictions in the superior court. As the law now stands a conviction is quashed on the ground of alleged invalidity arising from the error of the Legislature under the British America Act, there is no appeal from the decision of the judge. The bill

Mr. Mowat to-day removes

providing for appeals from

may be found necessary to

establish the validity of the Act under which the first decision was given. Police magistrates have frequently been annoyed by their decisions being finally overruled without giving them any chance to follow the case into a higher and more competent court.

TOLL ROADS.

A correspondent writes:—Two bills are before the Local House having for their object the abolition of toll gates. If the Legislature deem it in the public interest that such shall be done away with, they should compel the municipalities within a reasonable time to acquire such roads by purchase or arbitration on equitable terms. The permitting of counties to purchase and the compelling of companies to sell is a very one-sided arrangement, totally unfair to vested interests, and will, in most cases, be barren of results.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

Mr. McLaughlin—On Wednesday next—Inquiry of Ministry—Is it the intention of the Government to take steps to prevent the City of Toronto from charging exorbitant rates for water supplied the Toronto Asylum?

Mr. Harcourt—On Wednesday next—Address for a copy of the argument before the Privy Council as to the boundaries of this Province; the case submitted to the Privy Council by each of the parties to the reference; the Order of her Majesty in Council thereon; and also a copy of the like documents on the recent appeal to the Privy Council respecting the ownership of the lands in the formerly disputed territory.

NOTES.

The Committees on Railways, Public Accounts and Privats Bills will meet tomorrow morning (Tuesday).

The Attorney-General is so favorably impressed with the bill introduced by Mr. Balfour, authorising the returning officer to instruct during an election the deputy returning officers of Pelee Island by telephone, that he to-day signalled his intention of altering the bill so that its provisions can be applied to other places similarly situated.

Mr. Bronson has a short bill providing that assignees of insolvent estates must give notice in the newspaper contiguous to the district in which the assignment is made. Complaint is made that Montreal wholesale dealers advertise such assignments in that city, although the merchant thrown into insolvency is a resident within the Province of Ontario. In other words, the bill stipulates that such advertisements must appear in the press of Ontario.