

THE LEGISLATURE.

QUITE A LITTLE BREEZE IN THE CHAMBER.

The House Resolves Itself Into a Love Feast, and Declares There is no Ill-Feeling Existing Inside Its Walls—The New Counties Bill Considered.

FEBRUARY 28, 1889.

The House had to-day the longest sitting yet of the session. It was in committee most of the time, and the proceedings were of a more than usually lively character. Such a falling-out and such a making-up are not to be seen every day. It must be admitted that, in spite of the long session, not a great deal of work was done. This was due, however, to the Opposition insisting upon discussing hour after hour the question of supplying Government institutions, though the question had been previously discussed quite a number of times even this session.

FIRST READINGS.

The following bills were introduced and first time:—

To amend the General Loan Companies Act—Mr. McMahon.

To amend the Municipal Act—Mr. Guthrie.

Enforcing orders under the Act respecting masters and servants—The Attorney-General.

Respecting steam threshing machines—The Attorney-General.

SHOPS REGULATION ACT.

The House then went into committee on Mr. Fraser's bill to amend the Ontario Shops Regulation Act. The amendment proposed by the bill have been previously explained, and were to-day briefly explained by Mr. Fraser. Mr. Clancy took advantage of the occasion to attack the bill generally, reiterating the arguments he used against it last year, when he was the most vigorous opponent of the measure. He received a reply from his own side of the House, Mr. Wood, of Hastings, rising immediately behind him and defending the bill as it was originally and the amendments now proposed to be made to it. The member for West Kent said no more, and the bill went through committee. A number of other bills were advanced the same stage, and the House then read a second time the following bills:—

SECOND READINGS.

The following bills were read a second time:—

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

Respecting damage to lands by flooding in the new districts—Mr. Hardy.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

QUITE A LITTLE BREEZE, BUT ANYTHING BUT A COOL ONE.

The House then took up the consideration of the estimates again. Mr. Meredith opened what proved to be a long and eventually rather a warm discussion by reading a couple of telegrams he had received from Mr. W. E. Sanford, of Hamilton, in connection with some remarks dropped the other day by Mr. Awrey, when the subject of tendering or not tendering for Government supplies was under discussion. The telegrams denied that the firm had ever supplied goods to the Dominion Government except by tendering in competition with other firms, which, Mr. Meredith continued, was a direct denial of a charge made by Mr. Awrey. Mr. Awrey was not in the House, for which Mr. Meredith expressed his regret, but Mr. G. B. Smith remarked that he understood that gentleman's contention to have been that the firm named was a retail as well as a wholesale firm, the argument having been introduced to prove another point the hon. member was making. The Commissioner of Crown Lands admitted that he did not recollect exactly what Mr. Awrey's contention had been, but Mr. Meredith, Mr. Creighton and Mr. Wood, of Hastings, contended that it had been that which had been denied in Mr. Sanford's telegram. The subject of tendering or not tendering for Government supplies, thus re-opened, was kept up by Mr. Clancy, Mr. H. E. Clarke, Mr. French and others, as against Mr. Hardy and Mr. A. M. Ross. Mr. Clancy complained that in the contracts for Kingston Asylum a Kingston firm, without tender, supplied over \$3,000

worth of goods; and the head of that firm was the vice-president of the local Reform Association, said Mr. Clancy, vehemently, in conclusion. Mr. Hardy said he had been quite ignorant of the latter fact until Mr. Clancy had then mentioned it. He then drew the sting of Mr. Clancy's sarcasm by pointing out that during the five years preceding the last, another firm in Kingston had received patronage totalling up to about \$16,000, and the head of that firm, said Mr. Hardy, was either president or vice-president of the local Conservative Association. The purchases for the various institutions were generally entrusted entirely to the discretion of the bursar, and the bursar of the institution in question happened to be an appointee of the Dominion Government, who had been retained in office by the Provincial Government since the latter had had charge of that institution, and who had the reputation of being a very shrewd man.

Mr. H. E. Clarke commenced a criticism of the expenditure on various public institutions, basing the same on the estimates for the coming year, and claiming the cost was generally too high. Mr. A. M. Ross replied that Mr. Clarke should argue from the actual expenditure of last year, in which case there would be no point to his arguments. The actual expenditure on these institutions fell short always of the estimates. Mr. Clarke flatly contradicted this. He continued his criticisms upon the same basis, and again and again failed to understand the explanation given by Mr. Ross and Mr. Hardy. Mr. Clarke's persistency in criticisms that were apparently based on entirely false premises at last brought down upon him rather a sharp remark from the Treasurer to the effect that the members of the Government could not be expected to furnish the opposition side of the House with brains, and another from Mr. Hardy, to the effect that Mr. Clarke ought to be ashamed of himself, the hon. gentleman referring to a striking example, the habit Mr. Clarke has of posing as a financial critic without first studying the facts of the case. This brought up Mr. Wood, of Hastings, who vehemently declared that his side of the House had been insulted, and would not stand such conduct from the Government. Mr. Meredith, too, came to the rescue, raised a point of order and insisted upon speaking to it. Mr. Fraser said he had no right to do this. Mr. Ross, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Fraser, Mr. Meredith, and Mr. Creighton all stood up together. Then they all sat down, the white wings of peace were opened over the Chamber, and in a calm and deliberate voice Mr. Harcourt, the chairman, delivered the following adroitly worded judgment, which had a subduing effect on both sides of the House.

both parties:—

The debates of this House have ordinarily been conducted with becoming dignity. On the present occasion there has been, in my opinion, some unusual provocation given on both sides of the House. I will, simply wishing to preserve the dignity of the House, ask both sides of the House to more closely preserve the well-known rules of order.

At being now six o'clock, the committee rose and reported and the Speaker left the Chamber.

EVENING SESSION.

BOTH SIDES OF THE HOUSE INDULGE IN A LOVE FEAST.

After the House went again into committee and the subject

that had caused such warm discussion an hour or two earlier was again a matter of debate. Mr. Meredith rebuked the Treasurer very strongly for having before dinner insinuated that Mr. H. E. Clarke had no brains, and politely insinuated in turn that if the members of the Opposition had occasion to borrow any brains they would hardly come to the Treasurer for them. Mr. Fraser replied that during the years he had sat opposite Mr. Meredith he had again and again uttered language considerably more bitter and less parliamentary than that which had been used by the Treasurer during the afternoon. It was not a very terrible thing to insinuate that one man had not as much brains as another. It was not always seriously intended, and, moreover, after all it was not unparliamentary. When hon. gentlemen opposite gave a Roland they must expect an Oliver. At the same time the hon. gentleman admitted that perhaps he had expressed himself a little warmly. Then Mr. H. E. Clarke and the Treasurer got up, one after the other, and expressed their admiration of each other, urging that the harsh words used by each concerning the other were used only in a Pickwickian sense. Mr. Hardy then rose, congratulated the House on the restoration of amity, and