

# THE LEGISLATURE.

## Opening of Probably the Last Week of Session.

### THE PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

#### Hon. Mr. Fraser Puts the Cost at \$1,250,000.

Interprovincial Arbitration—Many Bills Advanced—Committees To-day—No Morning Sittings Yet.

TORONTO, April 27.

The members of the Legislature worked to-day as if they meant to finish up the business in hand without delay. There was nothing in the progress made to lower the hopes of those who wish to see the business closed with the week. It had been intended to have morning sittings beginning with to-morrow, but as several important committees are to meet in the morning it was decided to-night that the House should not assemble until the usual time, 3 o'clock.

#### Third Readings.

The preliminary business was brief and the House settled down to hard work on some of the many bills awaiting attention. The following were read the third time after little or no discussion:—

To consolidate the debt of the Town of Essex—Mr. Balfour.

To enable the Synod of Huron to consolidate and manage its trust funds—Mr. Meredith.

To amend the law respecting the municipality of Neabing—Mr. Conmee.

Respecting the Weston, High Park & Toronto Street Railway Company—Mr. Gilmour.

To consolidate the debt of the Town of Lindsay—Mr. McKay (Victoria).

To incorporate the Niagara River Railway Company—Mr. Tait.

For the removal of certain cases from a County Court to a High Court—The Attorney-General.

To amend the law as to barristers and solicitors in certain cases—The Attorney-General.

To provide for the consolidation of the debt of the City of London—Mr. Meredith.

#### Stenographers' Association.

The bill respecting the profession of Stenographers was, on motion, referred back to the committee of the whole to make the amendments which it was suggested were necessary. The principal amendment was one to allow all stenographic reporters actually engaged as such for not less than six months before the passing of the bill to become members of the association on registering and paying the fees. The name was changed to "Chartered Stenographic Reporters' Association."

The House went into committee on Hon. Mr. Ross' bill consolidating and revising the High School Acts. The discussion on the various clauses was not lengthy in any case, but the provisions were closely watched by the leader of the Opposition. The amendments to the present law proposed by the bill have already been outlined in THE GLOBE. The bill was reported without important alteration.

The House again in committee reported Hon. Mr. Hardy's bill respecting liens for labor on logs and timber and the payment of wages thereon, with a couple of amendments suggested by the hon. Commissioner of Crown Lands.

#### The New Parliament Buildings.

Mr. Fraser proposed in committee of the whole the vote of additional money for the Parliament buildings. Instead of \$150,000 additional, making \$1,200,000, as given in the notice of motion, he proposed to ask for \$200,000, making in all the even million and a quarter. The House listened with the closest attention to the Commissioner's remarks on this subject. He said:—In asking for a million and a quarter of money to complete the erection of this building I am glad to be able to assure the House, having regard to the tenders received during the past week for works for which tenders have been asked and the demands for the remaining work, that the building will be constructed and completed for that sum. Tenders were asked for four works, and tenders for three of these were accepted. The tenders for the fourth we thought too high, and we intend to advertise again. This is the case of the copper and tin work in connection with the roof. The work remaining for which tenders have not

yet been asked includes the interior woodwork, the interior painting and glazing, the grand staircase and some small matter of tile work in connection with the vestibule. The other works for which tenders have lately been accepted are plumbing and gas fitting, heating and ventilation and lathing and plastering.

Mr. Meredith—Are these given in round figures or at schedule prices?

Mr. Fraser—They are in round figures, and for those three works the total will be \$113,900 in round figures. As I have said, having regard to the amount of work already done, the fact that there are no extras in connection with that work and that special care is being taken that there shall be no possibility of extras, I can assure the House that \$1,250,000 will leave the building completed ready to receive its furniture. I may make a mistake of a few thousands one way or the other, but the cost can be put down at \$1,250,000. Already the roofing is under construction as to what is called the intermediates, the portions between the easterly and westerly wings. Before the 1st of June, we think we are safe in saying, the Lionel Yorke contract for these intermediates will be completed, and before the season is over the entire contract will be completed so as to be ready for the roofing. If everything goes well in the construction, and everything now seems to be going well, I will be disappointed if the departments are not within the easterly wing before the close of the next year, and I will also be somewhat disappointed if I am not able to welcome the Legislature at the session after the next. I think that the committee will be willing to vote, for a building of the character of this extensive and creditable structure, a million and a quarter of dollars.

Mr. Meredith—It is satisfactory to hear the explanations made by the Commissioner of Public Works, but if one were to be guided by the experience of the past one could hardly place the fullest reliance in his estimates. I can recollect my hon. friend making a strong statement regarding a sum of \$750,000, verifying it by figures which he produced. Perhaps he had not the same opportunities of judging, but he had equal confidence that \$750,000 would complete the building. He says the committee will have no difficulty in granting the vote. I don't see how the committee can help itself, for we are bound to go on. I think it shows the skill with which the hon. gentleman has manipulated perhaps as much his side of the House as the country. He began with a proposition of \$400,000.

Mr. Fraser—Five.

Mr. Meredith—I think I can remember his mentioning a sum of \$400,000, then half a million, then \$800,000—

Mr. Fraser—A million.

Mr. Meredith—Then a million, now a million and a quarter. I don't know where his stopping place is to be. If the House had been asked to take the plunge at once it would have hesitated. I quite agree that, having gone as far as he has gone we are bound to make this a creditable building, and no parsimony should be exhibited which would prevent it being made a building worthy of the Province of Ontario. It would be a great pity, having started, no matter what mistakes have been made, if for the sake of a small saving an unsightly building should be erected. Proceeding, Mr. Meredith said there were other necessary expenditures, as the furnishing, which, so far as it was what might be called permanent furniture, would really be an addition to the capital expenditure, and also the laying out of the grounds. He asked for an estimate of the total cost, including such expenditures.

Mr. Fraser said no estimate of that kind had been made. The beautifying of the grounds would doubtless proceed for years. As to furnishing, if all the departments were furnished with as little expense as his own the total cost would not be great. It would be a question whether the present desks in the chamber should be taken up or not. (This caused murmurs of dissent from both sides of the House, which led the Opposition leader to suggest that each member should be allowed to choose for himself.) Mr. Fraser said he perhaps had not better deal with that matter definitely at present.

The committee assented to the amount and the bill to formally make the grant was passed.

#### Interprovincial Accounts.

Mr. Mowat explained his bill respecting the settlement by arbitration of accounts between the Dominion and the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, and between these Provinces. He stated in brief the main points to be arbitrated. The Dominion had given credit to the Indians in the disputed territory for certain lands without the consent of Ontario and Quebec, and this Province disputed its liability; but if it was decided that Ontario was liable it would be a question for arbitration whether Quebec was also liable. Another question was as to the manner in which interest was calculated on the amounts due. The contention of this Province was that the interest should be compounded. Large sums had been collected by the Dominion for fishery licenses and in other ways in connection with the fisheries. Ontario contended that the Dominion had no right to collect these funds, and this would be matter for the arbitrator to deal with. Previous to the decision of the boundary question a provisional agreement was made that each Province was at liberty to deal with mines and timber on its own side of a provisional line. The Dominion