

THE SPEAKER INDISPOSED—YET MORE PETITIONS BROUGHT IN—SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

Legislative Chamber, Feb. 21.

Mr. Speaker Ballantyne being ill with a severe cold, Dr. Jacob Baxter, who so ably presided over the Legislature for the four years from 1886 to 1890, was, in accordance with the statute, elected Speaker pro tem. on motion of the Attorney-General, seconded by Hon. Mr. Dryden. Dr. Baxter thereupon took possession of the chair and presided over the deliberations of the House for the day. These did not prove to be very important, nor did they require much time for their disposition. The order paper has, however, reached now a respectable length and presents a considerable array of business.

PETITIONS.

The following petitions were presented:

—By Mr. Bronson—From Ottawa City corporation, asking the right to produce and apply for practical purposes electricity, and to issue \$50,000 of debentures for the construction of a trunk sewer in Dalhousie Ward without submitting a by-law to the ratepayers; from the same and the Ottawa Electric Street Railway Company and the Ottawa City Passenger Railway Company, praying for the passage of an act to validate a certain agreement; from the Ottawa Electric Street Railway Company, praying for power to dispose of their property and franchises.

By Mr. Barr (Renfrew)—From Mr. W. B. McAllister and others of Pembroke, for amendment to the act incorporating the Pembroke Southern Railway Company. The additional power is desired for the purpose of building and operating a railway from Pembroke to Renfrew, with the usual powers regarding land over which the railway must pass.

By Mr. Barr (Dufferin), Mr. Snider, Mr. Tait and Mr. Wylie—In favor of allowing Municipal Councils to raise revenue by taxing land values.

By Mr. Hudson—From the editors of The Deseronto News, Deseronto Tribune and The Tweed News, in favor of amending the libel law; from the Hastings County Council, to reduce the number of County Councillors.

By Mr. Allen—From the corporation of the Town of Harriston, to consolidate the debt of the said town.

By Mr. Barr (Dufferin)—To amend the law relating to the holding of inquests in such a way as will obviate the necessity for the holding of an inquest on the body of a prisoner unless there is reason to believe the deceased died from violence or unfair means or by culpable or negligent conduct on the part of anyone.

By Mr. Hiscott—From the Council of St. Catharines, to validate an agreement between the Council and the St. Catharines & Niagara Central Railway Company.

By Mr. A. F. Wood—From Hastings County Council, asking an increased grant to the Public Schools of Ontario.

By Mr. Stratton—From Peterborough County Council, asking for power to make triennial instead of annual assessment.

By Mr. Awrey—From Wentworth County Council, protesting against the passage of any special legislation respecting Burlington Beach, but asking that the same be left to a committee to be appointed by the Township of Saltfleet; from the same, in favor of a two-cent a mile passenger rate.

By Mr. Wood (Brant)—From Paris Town Council, asking that lands upon which places of public worship are erected shall be assessed just as other lands.

By Mr. Garrow—From the Wingham Council, to compel each county or group of counties to erect and maintain houses of refuge.

By Mr. Meadham—From the Council of Lennox and Addington, in favor of a two-cent a mile passenger rate.

By Mr. E. F. Clarke—From a number of Toronto editors, in favor of amendments to the libel law.

By Mr. Balfour—From the newspaper publishers of Leamington, asking the same.

By Mr. Clancy—From the Council of Chatham, asking that pipes and poles and wires laid by gas companies on public streets and squares shall be assessable as real property.

By Mr. Kerns—From Halton County Council, in favor of a two-cent a mile passenger rate.

By Mr. Awrey—From Wentworth County Council, in favor of the appointment by County Councils of all officials paid by them; from Wentworth Council, in favor of the reduction of tolls on toll roads.

By Mr. Meredith—From the publishers of London, in favor of amendments to the libel law.

By Mr. Hudson—From Hastings County Council, asking for the reduction of fees of all county officials appointed by the Executive Council.

By Mr. Tait—Asking for the definition of the term "citizens" in the Toronto Street Railway charter; for the providing of proper safeguards for the conduct of a vote on the Sunday-car question, when the same may be held, and for determining a reasonable interval to elapse between such votes. The petition is signed by Hon. G. W. Allan, Principal Caven, J. J. MacLaren, N. W. Hoyles, R. Kilgour, T. West, D. W. B. Gaskie, S. R. Heakes, Mary Shortreed, John A. Paterson, Henry O'Brien, A. Sampson, H. J. Cody, W. J. Gage, J. K. Macdonald, Beverley James, F. S. Spence, Dr. A. Sutherland, A. MacMurchy, D. J. O'Donoghue, J. W. Bengough, and A. E. O'Meara.

FIRST READINGS.

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

By Mr. Snider—To amend the landlord and tenant act.

By Mr. Barr (Dufferin)—To amend the act respecting sale of goods entrusted to agents.

By Mr. Paton—Respecting the railway debentures act of the Township of Floss.

By Mr. Tait—To amend the act incorporating the People's Life Insurance Company.

By Mr. Conmee—To amend the Separate School act.

By Mr. E. F. Clarke—To authorize the trustees of the Congregation of the Holy Blossom to convey certain lands.

Mr. O'Connor presented the first report of the Committee on Standing Orders.

THE COMMISSION ON FEES.

Mr. Meredith asked the following question of the Attorney-General:—"Has the commission referred to in the speech of his Honor the Lieutenant-Governor at the opening of the session, with respect to the mode of remunerating and appointing certain Provincial officials, been issued? If so, who are the commissioners?"

Sir Oliver Mowat—Mr. Speaker, the commission has not yet been appointed.

LICENSE LAW IN HAMILTON.

Mr. Clarke asked the following question:—"Did the Government in the years 1892 or 1893 instruct Mr. J. K. Stewart, Provincial Inspector of Licenses, to inquire into the operation of the license law in the City of Hamilton, and as to the accommodation provided by the places to which licenses were given in that city? Has the Provincial Inspector made a report to the Government in relation to these matters, and, if so, did he find that places were licensed which had not the requisite accommodation?"

Hon. Mr. Harcourt replied as follows:—"Mr. J. K. Stewart, Provincial Inspector, was instructed in 1893 to inquire into the operation of the license law and the accommodation provided by the places licensed

in the City of Hamilton. He has made a report in relation to these matters. His report shows that the accommodation provided by some licensed premises was not strictly in accordance with the provisions of the license act in that regard."

Mr. Clarke asked if the report could not be brought down.

Hon. Mr. Harcourt said he had no objection, if the hon. member made the usual motion to that effect.

ELECTION SCRUTINIES AND THEIR COST.

Mr. Willoughby asked:—"In how many cases, since the introduction of the ballot, have petitions been filed against the return of members to this Legislature, and in how many cases has a scrutiny taken place, and what was the cost, in each case, of the scrutiny?"

The Attorney-General said the return would occasion a great deal of trouble, but he would endeavor to have it down in a day or two.

TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES.

A notice of motion stood in the name of Mr. Balfour for a return giving certain details regarding persons temporarily or permanently in the employ of the Government on Dec. 31, 1893, and other information of a similar character. The motion did not come up, but on the Attorney-General's motion for the adjournment of the House Mr. Meredith rose and deprecated the inclusion in a return which he had originally asked for of matter which he did not ask for, and delaying the return simply that such matter might be included in it.

Hon. Mr. Hardy said the report was practically ready, and the additional information included on the motion of Mr. Balfour would occasion little or no delay. In the case of his own department it would be only a question of a few hours.

Mr. White asked about a return ordered last session as to the withdrawal of mining locations from sale.

Hon. Mr. Hardy said he would have the return brought down as soon as possible.

The House adjourned at 3.30 o'clock.