

LEGISLATORS' DAY OFF.

A Few Minutes Suffices for the
Sitting.

VOTE OF CREDIT OF \$450,000.

Legislative Chamber, Feb. 12.

There were many vacant seats in the Legislative chamber when Mr. Speaker Evanturel called for order to-day, and there was but a passive interest in the brief and formal proceedings which intervened before the adjournment. Quiet almost as intensely oppressive as that which reigns in the Senate at Ottawa pervaded the ornate hall of Ontario's legislators. The ladies' and Speaker's galleries were almost empty, but the public gallery contained a fair number of spectators, who had scarcely time to realize what was going on before it was all over. The presentation of a few petitions and the passage of a credit note of \$450,000 to maintain the public services pending the adoption of the yearly estimates constituted the actual work of the sitting. Mr. Gibson, the veteran representative of East Huron, was Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House.

PRAYERS OF PETITIONERS.

The petitions presented were as follows:—

Mr. Moore—From the Councils of Waterloo and Huron Counties for an amendment to the municipal act permitting County Councils to offer a reward to any person who shall pursue a horse-thief. Also from the Waterloo Council praying for legislation making it compulsory for every county or union of counties to establish a House of Industry for the care of their own poor.

Mr. Carpenter—For legislation that will relieve counties of the cost of maintaining boys at the Victoria Industrial School, and place the institution on a similar footing to the Ontario Reformatory for Boys, which is under the maintenance and control of the Government.

Mr. Field—From the united Counties of Northumberland and Durham for an amendment to the general road companies act by making a suitable specification by which a toll road should be constructed and maintained thereafter, making it com-

pulsory for each County Engineer to examine all toll roads owned by toll road companies in his county once a year at least, at a time to be fixed by the Warden of the county; and whenever the roads, or any portion thereof, are found not to be up to the standard specification, that it be the duty of the Engineer to order the tolls off immediately, the tolls to remain off until the road is properly repaired; and that any appeal from this action be made to the Provincial Road Inspector, and that the Government grant 25 per cent. of the cost of all roads purchased by municipalities within the next three years, this being considered necessary in order to equalize the difficulty that might arise between municipalities jointly interested in the same road.

Mr. Matheson—For an amendment to the registry act, so as to provide that every Registrar shall be entitled to retain in each year all the fees up to \$1,000, of the further emoluments in excess of \$1,000 and not exceeding \$2,500 75 per cent., in excess of \$2,500 and not exceeding \$4,000 50 per cent., and in excess of \$4,000 25 per cent., and that the expenses of the registry office in joint registry divisions be borne by the municipalities in proportion to the fees collected from each.

Mr. Middleton—For legislation to enable City Councils to appoint all the members of Court of Revision.

Mr. Matheson—For an amendment to the municipal act, compelling cities to provide proper accommodation at markets where fees are charged.

METROPOLITAN RY. LEGISLATION.

Mr. Richardson presented a petition which indicates the character of the legislation that the Metropolitan Street Railway Company is applying for this session. First the company will ask to have its first mortgage bonds and a mortgage securing the same ratified and confirmed. It wants its name changed to the Metropolitan Railway Co. Among the powers asked for are these:—To extend, equip and operate its line of railway within the County of Simcoe, and build, equip and operate branches in York and Simcoe; to make contracts with other companies for the use of rolling stock and for the purchase, leasing or owning of electric power; to grant to the Toronto Railway Company power to run cars over the tracks of the Metropolitan Railway Company to Mount Pleasant Cemetery, on Yonge street, and such other points as may be agreed upon, on terms to be arranged between the companies, or, in case they differ, to be settled by arbitration; to run its cars over the tracks of the Toronto Railway Company to the Union Station and waterfront, the city markets, the Toronto postoffice and such other points as may be agreed upon, on terms to be arranged between the companies, or, in case they differ, to be settled by arbitration; to acquire the assets and franchises and to operate the railway of the Toronto Suburban Railway Company (limited).

The franking privilege has long been enjoyed by the members of the Ontario Legislature during the session, and they have availed themselves of it in carrying on their voluminous correspondence with constituents, and in supplying them with Parliamentary papers. When to-day a notification was received by Major Delamere, the House Postmaster, from the Toronto postoffice, intimating that an order had come from Ottawa directing that hereafter all statistics and returns passing through the postoffice at the Parliament buildings should be subject to the usual rates of postage, there was a feeling in official circles somewhat approaching to consternation. Negotiations were immediately opened between the Ontario Government and the Postoffice Department with the object of inducing the department to reconsider the matter. The order does not affect the private correspondence of members, which, as heretofore, will be carried free.

QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED.

The following notices have been given:—

Mr. Miscampbell—Inquiry of Ministry—Was the furnishing of flour to Orillia Asylum for year of 1897 let by tender? If so, who tendered and amount of such tenders per pound? Did lowest tenderer receive contract?

Mr. Little—Inquiry of Ministry—Is it the intention of the Government to assist Public Schools that have organized continuation classes in connection with the same? If so, to what extent are they to be assisted?

Mr. Ryerson—Order of the House for a return showing the number and amounts of policies of insurance carried on the Parliament buildings of Ontario; the companies in which they are carried, the percentage paid for insurance, the names of the agents through which the insurance was effected, the rate per \$1,000 paid, any special conditions attached to the policies and the general provisions of protection against fire in the buildings adopted by the Government.