

Petitions.

The following petitions were received:—

From the Township Council of Etobicoke praying that the York County Council be not given control of the street railways within the county.

King Brothers Company of Whitby, Limited, have formed a joint stock company, with \$40,000 capital, to manufacture leather. They wish the Legislature to legalize a loan of \$10,000 from the corporation, the loan to be repaid in ten years.

Col. Leys presented the petition of the London Y. M. C. A. asking for incorporation.

The Town Council of Cobourg would like permission to encourage the building of summer hotels on the lake there by the exemption of improvements from taxation for a period not exceeding ten years.

Mr. Foy presented the petition of the incorporated Synod of the Diocese of Toronto praying that an act may pass empowering the Bishop of the diocese to suspend or remove an incumbent of any rectory, parish or mission when the interests of the church require such removal, and for other purposes.

Have Two Locations.

Mr. Tucker inquired how much money has the Engledue Company expended during last year in development purposes. Has the company purchased all or any of the 64,000 acres?

Hon. J. M. Gibson, in reply, stated that the Ontario Gold Concessions, Limited, assignees of the license of occupation granted to Messrs. Reid, Engledue & Kerr, report that they have expended about \$45,000 in exploring and developing blocks A and B of the concessions during the years 1897 and 1898. Of this amount there was expended on block B \$24,970. Concessions in block B have been patented to the company, having an aggregate area of 383 acres.

He regretted to say that the prospecting and explorations had not, so far as he had learned, resulted in the discovery of anything specially valuable. As to the larger of the two locations, it was said that nothing was discovered that would warrant any development, and as to the Shoal Lake location, he was not aware that, after very thorough prospecting, development work would be warranted by any discoveries made.

Fishery Overseers.

Mr. Powell—Is the Government aware that on the 1st of January last all the Dominion fishery overseers in the Province of Ontario were dismissed from their positions? Has the Government taken any steps to protect the interests of the Province by appointing fishery overseers? If so, how many were appointed during the month of January? Were any of those so appointed formerly in the employ of the Dominion Government? If so, how many?

Hon. Mr. Hardy, in reply, said he was not in a position to say whether all the Dominion Government overseers were dismissed by the Dominion Government. As the House was aware, the regulation of the fisheries has, under the decision of the courts, passed under the control of the Province, and

the Government has selected a number of fishery overseers, but as yet he has not appointed any. Arrangements are in progress for their appointment, and with that object the districts are being arranged. Mr. Hardy explained that it takes some little time to get the districts laid out, and as each overseer has to be appointed to a specific district the appointments cannot be made until the districts are arranged. Some of those who were selected were formerly engaged by the Dominion Government, but he was not able to say how many. There are, however, some Provincial officials who had been appointed by the Provincial Government, who are still in the service, and would be retained.

Hon. Mr. Harcourt gave a negative reply to Mr. Powell's question—Has the Government paid for all or any portion of the sidewalks surrounding the Toronto Normal School and Model School? If so, to what extent?

Will Get the Interest.

Mr. Matheson asked—Was the \$63,691 76 of the common school fund, transferred to the Dominion during the past year, paid in cash? If not, what was the date of the order in Council authorizing the Dominion to charge the sum as a debt owing by the Province to the Dominion, or, if no such order in Council was passed, what authority was given to the Dominion authorities to charge the sum as a debt owing by the Province to the Dominion?

Hon. Mr. Harcourt, in reply, said that an order in Council is not necessary to deal with a liability of Ontario to account for moneys which have been shown by departmental returns to the House and the public accounts to be the property of the common school fund. Our collections on account of common school fund for the years 1890 to 1896, inclusive, amounted to \$63,812 67. At the request of the Treasury Department this sum of \$63,812 67 was charged by the Dominion Government to the Province in the open, unadjusted accounts between the Province and the Dominion and placed to the credit of the common school fund. The moneys which Ontario collects from the sale of common school lands are not the property of the Dominion. Ontario is the medium for transmitting the collections to the common school fund, which is for the present time the indivisible property of Ontario and Quebec. Under the awards of 1870 and 2nd November, 1893, the Dominion pays Ontario and Quebec half-yearly the income, at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum, accruing upon the whole of the fund, and this income is apportioned between Ontario and Quebec in pursuance of the Consolidated Statute of Canada, chap. 26, sec. 5, proportionately to the relative numbers of the population of said Provinces respectively, as such numbers shall from time to time be ascertained by the census next before taken in each of the said Provinces respectively. The judgment of the Supreme Court dealing with the liability of Ontario to account for the collections was given only recently, and in the light of this judgment it was deemed important that the collections by