

SPEEDY LEGISLATION.

PROVINCIAL HOUSE CREATED NEW LAW IN THREE MINUTES.

Passed a Final Amending Bill Before Prorogation — Closing Ceremonial and Address of the Lieutenant-Governor—Many Members Present.

Contrary to usual precedent, the Legislature transacted Provincial business at its prorogation sitting yesterday. The Government benches were well filled with members, while Messrs. T. R. Mayberry (South Oxford) and Valentine Stock (South Perth), the only Opposition representatives present, had their ranks augmented by Chief Justice Meredith, Mr. Justice Teetzel, Mr. Justice Riddell and President Falconer, all of whom occupied members' benches to the left of Mr. Speaker.

These gentlemen remained in their seats while the House held its short business session, when they were reinforced by Hon. Robt. Sutherland, former Speaker of the House of Commons.

Hon. J. J. Foy presented a one-clause bill as a statute law amendment, providing that the measure passed during the session relative to a technical change in the conduct of tax sales in Muskoka shall "not apply to pending litigation or cases finally determined prior to the passing of this act."

The bill went through its three stages in exactly three minutes—one stage per minute. Mr. Hoyle presided momentarily while the measure was going through Committee of the Whole.

His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor entered with Sir James Whitney, and was accompanied by a number of officers of the garrison in military dress. His Honor was uniformed as a field officer, discarding the customary civil service uniform.

For nearly fifteen minutes Lieut.-Col. Delamere, the Assistant Clerk of the House, enumerated the list of 165 bills passed by the Legislature, to all of which his Honor gave his assent. Others passed had previously secured the gubernatorial approval. He then read his valedictory from the throne as follows:—

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly:

Although this the first session of the twelfth Legislature of Ontario has not occupied a long period of time, the number, the variety and the important character of the enactments placed upon the statute book bear witness to the intelligence and the industry with which you have applied yourselves to the performance of your public duties.

Recent events have made it again clear that constant watchfulness is necessary to prevent interference with the jurisdiction of this and the other Provinces through the medium of Federal legislation, and it is to be hoped that a permanent understanding will be reached by means of which this danger may be removed.

A number of the measures enacted during the present session have been the result of the revision and consolidation of the statutes—a work which will be found to be unusually thorough in its nature.

Further legislation has been found necessary to facilitate the work of the Hydro-electric Commission and enable the Government to supply electrical energy through the commission at a minimum price to the public, while observing its obligations to investors.

I observe with satisfaction that a special committee of the Legislature will meet during the recess to investigate and report upon necessary amendments to and changes in the assessment law of the Province.

At the last session of the late Legislature a carefully prepared basis for a scheme of law reform was adopted, and I am glad to notice that full consideration of such scheme by you has resulted in the enactment of "an act for the better administration of justice, to lessen the number of appeals and the cost of litigation, and for other purposes."

Among the other public measures to which it is my privilege to give assent are: Bills respecting the financial year; to amend the audit act; to amend an act passed in the seventh year of his Majesty's reign intitled an act to provide for the transmission of electrical power to municipalities, to validate certain contracts entered into with the Hydro-electric Commission of Ontario and for other purposes; respecting escheats and forfeitures; for expediting the decision of constitutional and other Provincial questions; respecting high schools and collegiate institutes; respecting aid to the Canadian Northern Railway Company; respecting public schools, and to provide for prompt punishment for personation at elections for the Legislative Assembly.

I observe with satisfaction that the supreme authority of the Legislature to pass laws relating to the subjects assigned to it by the British North America act, which was attacked in recent litigation respecting the bed of Cobalt Lake, has been fully vindicated by the unanimous judgment of the highest court of the Province, and that at the same time it was determined that the particular legislation which was the subject of the attack did not, as was contended, infringe upon the rights of the persons by whom the attack was made because the claim put forward by them was entirely without foundation.

It also affords me pleasure to be able to congratulate the Province on the satisfactory state of the public finances, which continue to show a substantial excess of revenue over expenditure.

I thank you for the liberal appropriations you have made for the public service, which will be expended with a proper regard for economy and efficiency.

In relieving you from the further performance of your duties, I desire to thank you for the great public service you have rendered, and to join with you in expressing the hope that the blessing of Almighty God will rest upon our country and our people.

In the absence of Hon. W. J. Hanna, the Provincial Secretary, who, with Hon. Messrs. Beck and Hendrie, were the only Ministerial absentees, Hon. Dr. Pyne, Minister of Education, officially announced prorogation. The first session of the twelfth Ontario Legislature thus became a matter of history.

The feature of the occasion was the large attendance of members. There were 48 Government supporters, two members of the Opposition, and Mr. Allan Studholme, the Labor party.

The 9th Field Battery, under command of Captain Brown, fired a salute of ten guns to mark the arrival of his Honor at the Parliament buildings. The guard of honor was furnished by the Queen's Own Rifles and the escort by the Royal Canadian Dragoons.