

he objected entirely to the proposition that the Attorney-General should act in a judicial capacity in regard to any such matter. It was simply proposed to place the Crown in the same position as private individuals.

Hon. Mr. CROOKS also explained that the intention of the Bill was to give the Crown the same advantages in the matter of taking possession as any ordinary lien. That is if the property is vacant an heir takes immediate possession; if it is occupied, he raises an action of ejectment. These were the powers it was proposed to give the Crown, without the necessity of going through the present cumbrous and expensive process.

After Mr. Prince had spoken in defence of the Bill as it stood, the first three clauses were passed with verbal amendments.

On the fourth clause, Mr. CAMERON moved that the following words be added:—"Provided always that nothing in this Act shall deprive any person to the title to the lands escheated who would have had a title had this Act not been passed."

Hon. Mr. MOWAT said the only objection he had to this amendment was that it was perfectly useless.

The amendment was lost, and the fourth and remaining clauses of the Bill passed. The report was received by the House, and the third reading ordered for to-morrow.

BENEVOLENT, PROVIDENT, AND OTHER SOCIETIES.

Hon. Mr. MOWAT rose to move the second reading of the Bill respecting the incorporation of Benevolent, Provident, and other Societies, and in doing so called attention to the fact that it was followed by another Bill for the incorporation of Joint Stock Companies by letters patent. It was proposed to provide for the incorporation by a general law of all Companies, the incorporation of which was presently within the jurisdiction of the Legislature, and Societies to which the other existing Acts of Incorporation do not apply, and the objects of which are legal. He proposed to repeal the existing Acts, and in the general Act which he proposed to introduce he intended to improve their provisions in various respects. No Company would be excluded from the right of obtaining a charter from the Crown, acting through the Executive Council, for any object within the jurisdiction of the Legislature. Everybody who had given any attention to the matter must recognize the importance of such a general law, and in fact it had been so recognized in the country for a long time. There were, he stated, a variety of Bills for the incorporation of companies and societies on the statute book, but it had always been found that there were cases in which special legislation was necessary, even where pretty much the

same principles were involved. The consequence was, that there always was a very great amount of Private Bill legislation. In 1860 an attempt was made to enumerate the various classes of companies and societies to be incorporated, and also to obtain judicial incorporation for companies. This latter was thought necessary to obviate the difficulties that sometimes occurred in consequence of informalities in the proceedings taken. Mr. Dunkin was the gentleman who endeavoured to consolidate the general law, but, notwithstanding the care which was exercised in the work, it was found that it did not cover all the ground. In 1861 the law was passed providing for obtaining Acts of Incorporation for certain purposes through the Governor-in-Council, and since Confederation, various amendments had been made to the Acts referred to, and the Bill for the incorporation of companies enlarged so as to embrace any object within the power of the Legislature. The provisions of Bill No. 5 were, in some respects, similar to former measures on the same subject, and in others there were changes. No. 4 referred to all cases which it was not intended that the subsequent Bill should cover. He argued that there was no reason why legal societies should be compelled to hold their real or personal property in the names of trustees, as they were at present. It was extremely inconvenient for them, which was the reason why they came to the Legislature to ask for incorporation. Provident, benevolent, and all legal societies should be exempted from this disability, and should be allowed to hold property in their own name. The existing law did not provide for the incorporation of political societies, which he considered was unreasonable so long as these societies were not illegal. We were an eminently political people, and there was no good reason why Reform or Conservative clubs should not have the benefit of incorporation, or be prevented from holding property in their own name. By the proposed Bill it was intended to do away with almost the entire Private Bill legislation which so encumbered the business of the House, and he pointed to

the recognition of the correctness of the principle given by Great Britain and the United States. Private Bill legislation, he contended, was open to many objections. It was both cumbrous and ineffective, for through the pressure of business generally upon the House, little attention was paid to it. He insisted upon the necessity of some such measure as that proposed, and argued that so far as the Bill related to companies he had a precedent before him in the Dominion Parliament. He had inserted in the Bill such provisions as promoters of such measures found necessary, and he confidently asked the House to accept the measure, which he was satisfied would effect a great saving in trouble and expense, as well to the societies and companies interested as to the members of this House. He moved the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. MERRICK thought it would be advisable to postpone the consideration of the Bill until the House was better filled. Some days ago objections had been raised to the Bill, and he had had no opportunity of giving it the consideration he desired to give it, and which would enable him to discuss the provisions of the Bill intelligently. There were a great many members absent who would take exception to the Bill, and he himself found some grave objections to the general principle.

Mr. CAMERON said the main principle involved in the Bill was whether there should be a sweeping provision that any number of men might be incorporated for any purpose they chose, not being for purposes of trade or for purposes mentioned in the schedule of the Act. He thought this might prove a dangerous provision, for there was scarcely any body of men conceivable that might not be incorporated and hold a certain quantity of land. It used to be considered that land should not be placed in the hands of corporate bodies in the way this Act would place it in the hands of the societies incorporated under its provisions, unless there was good reason for giving the necessary power. He did not know that the expenditure and trouble involved by Private Bill legislation had become burdensome, and he thought the expenditure was met by the fees the persons had to pay seeking incorporation. He had had no opportunity of considering the provisions of the Bill, not having seen it until that day. He, however, thought it questionable whether the fifth section of the Bill would relieve the Government of the difficulty in which they had become involved, and whether it would apply to the society they sought particularly to incorporate. He was not aware whether from the nature of their organization the incorporation would be such as they would desire. He for one was not prepared to adopt the principle that every kind of incorporation might take place simply by going before the judge of the County Court and making certain statements, which the judge must certify, if they did not conflict with the provisions of the Act under consideration.

The Bill was then read a second time.

JOINT STOCK COMPANIES.

Hon. Mr. MOWAT moved the second reading of the Bill respecting the Incorporation of Joint Stock Companies by Letters Patent.

Mr. CAMERON wished to know if the leader of the Government had had under consideration the propriety of introducing some method of winding up Joint Stock Companies. This was a matter of very considerable importance. They had had no legislation in that direction yet, although there had been plenty of Acts of Incorporation.

Hon. Mr. MOWAT said he quite recognized the importance of endeavouring to find some easy and inexpensive means of winding up Joint Stock Companies. He had given the matter some attention, but was not prepared to introduce a measure this session. The Bill was then read a second time.

HIGH AND NORMAL SOCIETIES.

Hon. Mr. FRASER brought report upon the Normal and High Societies Bill. The House adjourned at 5:5

NOTICES OF MOTION.

Mr. Lauder—On Thursday next: Address for return. (1.) Of copies of all Orders-in-Council passed during the year 1873, relating to the Municipal Loan Fund, and the Act of last Session relating thereto. (2.) All correspondence and telegrams between the Government and municipalities, their officers, or other persons regarding the settlement of the said Municipal Loan Fund, and the said Act and schedules thereto. (3.) A statement of all charges made in the schedule of the Act of last Session since the same passed to a third reading.

Mr. Hodgins—On Friday next: Address for a return showing the number of civil and criminal cases entered for trial at the several assizes throughout Ontario since 1870, and showing the number of cases tried, and the number remanets and criminal causes left over at each such assize.