PROVINCIAL LEGISLATION OF 1894.

Some important laws and amendments have been added to the long list of Ontario's statutory enactments by the work of the session which has just completed its labours. Several of them are apparently simple; but, on closer examination, they are found to be far-reaching in their effects.

Let us commence with the Act to amend the Registry Act, 1893. By reducing the fee for registering a mortgage a great reduction will be made, amounting to about twelve per cent. on the gross income of nearly every registrar in the Province. Owing to the numerous clauses which have been added from time to time by loan companies and others to the ordinary short form, the cost of registering these instruments has been materially increased, until the average fee for registering mortgages, in Toronto, for instance, is $2.55, or even more. By the amendment now in force, if the mortgagee or his solicitor writes on the back of the mortgage, "not to be registered in full," the document shall not be copied, but simply entered in the abstract index and receiving book, and the fee for registering in such a case shall be one dollar. That this is a wise provision, and entirely in the interest of the public, no one can dispute. The fees for mortgages are always paid by those least able to afford it—the borrowers—and any relief, however small, in the individual case, is of importance. It is, perhaps, worthy of remark that the fact of the mortgage not being copied takes away a safeguard against fraud, which may work harmfully. Several cases have occurred, we are credibly informed, where a fraudulent mortgagee has made an alteration in the duplicate mortgage in the registry as well as the one in his own possession. The chances of detection would be much less under the new system, where the only check would be the short entry in the abstract book.

The important element, however, is the reduction of registrars' incomes. About one-third of the instruments registered are mortgages. In each of the Toronto offices, this would make about 1,700 mortgages during the year 1893. The cost of copying each mortgage is roughly estimated at forty cents. The total fee is $2.55. This leaves $2.15 to the registrar, so that the Act takes away $1.15 profit to the registrar on every mortgage. This makes the aggregate loss nearly $2,000 a year to each office.