

R E P O R T.

THE Committee appointed to ascertain what original Bills, pending in Your Honorable House, have been destroyed by the late Fire, and to report the course that may be proper to take with respect to such Bills, to enable Your Honorable House to proceed with them from the different stages at which they had arrived, beg leave to REPORT:—

That the calamity which rendered it necessary for Your Honorable House to impose upon Your Committee this solemn duty, having deprived them of the means of access to those sources of information upon which Your Honorable House and Your Committee have hitherto been able to depend as guides in the practice and proceedings of Parliament, Your Committee have been compelled to proceed without any elaborate search for precedents upon the present occasion.

Before proceeding to do this, however, it is proper that Your Committee should state that they find it laid down in Mr. Bramwell's work on Bills, page 28, That "if the written copy of the Bill presented to the House should in its progress be lost, the House, on being informed by a Member that the Bill is missing, will permit another Bill to be presented, but the proceedings must begin *de novo*," and he refers to the "63d volume of the Journals of the Imperial House of Commons, page 185, Jesuits' Bark," as his authority. They also find it stated in a Note to the second volume of Hatsell, page 267, that "25th May, 1786. The House being informed that a Bill which had been read a first and second time was missing, the House gave leave to present another copy of the said Bill. The like happened in the case of the Bark Bill, 17th March, 1808, and the foregoing precedent was acted upon."

It has been suggested that a similar case once occurred in the House of Assembly of Upper Canada, but Your Committee have not been able to find it, and have not deemed it of sufficient importance to delay their Report, with a view to a further search.

The latter of the two first mentioned cases, however, expressly applies to a Bill which had as yet not engaged the attention of the House in Committee, and was one in which no great public inconvenience could be felt in proceeding upon it *de novo*. And the latter, except that in Upper Canada, of which the Committee cannot of course speak, were cases of Bills of a private rather than a public nature, to which the same remark is still more strongly applicable.

In the present cases, however, where several Bills of the utmost importance to the public have already received the fullest consideration of Your Honorable House, Your Committee consider that the substantial points to be ascertained, with a view to the public interest, is the actual state in which each Bill was at the time it was last under the consideration of the House. When that is once ascertained to the satis-

faction of the House, Your Committee can see no necessity, upon any general principle, to treat them as in any other stage of Parliamentary progress towards completion, than that in which the calamity by which they were overtaken found them.

In accordance with this view, Your Committee have prepared Schedules, numbered from 1 to 10, inclusive, in which all the Bills introduced into Your Honorable House during the present Session, are classified, and have also appended to their Report copies of those Bills, as the same were printed under the authority of Your Honorable House. To these Schedules, accordingly, Your Committee most respectfully beg leave to refer Your Honorable House.

The whole nevertheless humbly submitted.

ROBERT BALDWIN,
Chairman.

2nd May, 1849.

SCHEDULE No. 1.

A List of the entire number of Bills introduced into Your Honorable House during the present Session, up to the time of the interruption of the proceedings of the House on the 25th April last.

SCHEDULE No. 2.

A List of such of those Bills as had passed both Houses of Parliament, and received the Royal Assent.

SCHEDULE No. 3.

A List of such of those Bills passed both Houses of Parliament, but which appear not to have received the Royal Assent.

SCHEDULE No. 4.

A List of such of those Bills as had passed Your Honorable House, and appear to have been sent to the Honorable the Legislative Council.