

will see no objection to the government taking the Land Titles Act in hand, because all that it provides for is that in regard to wills made in the United Kingdom, the same facilities shall exist in the North-west as exists for wills made in eastern Canada.

WELLINGTON BRIDGE, MONTREAL.

Mr. M. J. F. QUINN (St. Ann's, Montreal). Before the Orders of the Day are called, I would like to draw the attention of the government to an item which appeared in the *Montreal Daily Witness*, on the 2nd of April. It is headed: 'Wellington Bridge; Alarming statement from an Ottawa Civil Engineer':

Mr. J. L. P. O'Hanley, C.E., of Ottawa, has addressed a letter to the Governor in Council calling attention to what he terms 'the dangerous state of railway bridge on the Lachine Canal at Wellington Street, Montreal.' What he finds fault with is the construction of the pivot pier, which, he says, 'with the water out of the canal, and maybe with the water in, is liable to collapse at any moment, and sure to do so sooner or later. Its immunity hitherto has been due to the cohesion of the material of the foundation in resisting the disintegrating action of water. This being an unknown factor, cannot, and should not for an instant be relied on, nor, with precious lives and valuable property in the balance, should it for a moment hold.' This is now so far advanced, he adds, that if anything is to be done it must be done promptly and one of two alternatives chosen—either building a new pivot pier between this and the opening of navigation, which, with fair management, should not take more than three weeks, or to close the bridge to traffic till next winter.

I wish to ask if any inquiry has been made concerning the condition of the bridge, or if there is any proof of the danger mentioned here by the engineer.

The PRIME MINISTER (Sir Wilfrid Laurier). The attention of the government has not been called to this correspondence in the *Witness*. But, I may say that I received a letter from Mr. O'Hanley on this subject, and the matter is now being investigated.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—OFFICIAL DESPACHES.

Mr. R. TYRWHITT (South Simcoe). Before the Orders of the Day are called, I would like to draw the attention of the government to the fact that reports have been received almost daily from Col. Otter in South Africa, and these reports are not given to the public through the press until possibly the following day. I would like to remind the government that people in this country who have relatives in South Africa take great interest in what is transpiring there, and should receive at the earliest moment information with regard to their friends. I would like to ask if a message was received this morning.

The MINISTER OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE (Mr. Borden). There was a report received this morning, which will be communicated to the press in a few minutes. It is necessary that the officers of the department should look over the reports before they are given to the public. The reports have invariably been given to the public at the earliest possible moment, and will be so in future.

Sir ADOLPHE CARON (Three Rivers). I can understand that under certain circumstances it may not be well for the government, for obvious reasons, to communicate all telegrams or information received; and there may be matters which could not be communicated to the House for a similar reason. I am not prepared just now to state what the reason might be. But I may say that when we had similar troubles in the past, though of less importance, but still deeply interesting to the public, the government not only chose to communicate the telegrams to the press, but the Minister of Militia of that day used to communicate to the House every day the telegrams as they came in, that is, when they were of such a nature that they could be made public. I do not at all find fault with the government in the present in-