

in the Senate five or six weeks ago; it was passed by the Senate, and sent down to this House, I think, about three or four weeks ago.

Mr. BLAKE. It came down on the 9th of March.

Mr. PLUMB. But it was distributed in this House at that time. But all Senate Bills are sent to hon. members, and those who take an interest in the proceedings of Parliament read those Bills to find out what is going on in the other House. This Bill had its first reading in the Senate on the 25th of January, and its second reading on the 1st of February. My hon. friend from West Durham (Mr. Blake), who has objected to the lateness of the period at which the Bill was introduced, made himself sufficiently acquainted with the details of a petroleum Bill to-day, notwithstanding his multifarious duties, to make a speech of one hour's duration, and yet he says he has not time to become seized of the provisions of this Bill. Perhaps the proverb that "where there's a will there's a way" would not be inappropriate in the present case. I am surprised that such a discussion as has been indulged in should have come up at so late a period of the Session. I regret that my hon. friend from Bothwell (Mr. Mills) should overload the subject before the House with a long discussion relating to the marriage laws and other matters equally irrelevant. The hon. gentleman, doubtless, knows perfectly well that there was great difficulty in passing any naturalization laws which would protect the citizens of the German Confederation. He knows that, according to the laws of that country, it was almost impossible to prevent great difficulty happening to natives of those states who become citizens either of this country or of the neighboring Republic. He knows that in some instances gentlemen of position, who held property in the United States, on returning to the land of their birth, were there seized and compelled to do military service in that country. Those arrangements have been made for the protection of those who were properly naturalized under the regulations agreed upon between the two Governments. If the hon. member had examined this Bill, as probably he would have examined another which he was desirous of putting through, he would within one hour have satisfied himself of its provisions, and would probably have been willing, as he is always able, to discuss those provisions. The leader of the Opposition could, with that grasp of mind which always characterizes him, have mastered all its complications; and I think even a layman could understand them with very little study. I trust that the discussion upon this Bill will be proceeded with notwithstanding the objections made by the hon. member for West Durham. I know it is of great importance to this country. I know there are gentlemen in this House who have paid the greatest attention to it, and to whom we are greatly indebted for the intelligent interest they have taken in this measure. I trust that none of the objections which have been urged against that law will disappoint those gentlemen in doing for their late countrymen, and those who will be their present countrymen, what they have endeavored to do in having this Bill prepared and brought down to Parliament.

Mr. McDONALD (Pictou). I was much surprised indeed to hear the legal objection of my hon. friend the leader of the Opposition. I do not think there is anything whatever in the objection that the Bill from the Senate was not distributed until a day or two ago.

Mr. BLAKE. To-day.

Mr. McDONALD. I think my hon. friend is mistaken. I think it was yesterday or the day before. At any rate, I admit that the Bill from the Senate has not been distributed for any length of time, and the complaint would not be unreasonable, were we to suppose that my hon. friend did not see that Bill until it came down here. But it was

Mr. PLUMB.

printed almost, if not quite, a month ago, and distributed to every member in this House. I regret the delay in the Senate made it impossible to take up the question earlier; but it is a matter of too much importance, in view of transpiring events, to allow a mere technical objection to stand in the way, if the Bill on its merits should be such as to demand the attention and consideration of this House. Now, with reference to the legal objection taken by my hon. friend, I frankly admit I was surprised to hear it. I need not say that I, in common with every man that knows him, have the highest respect for any opinion he may give on any question of jurisprudence, and therefore it is that I am the more surprised to hear him give such an opinion on a question, which to me, and to high legal authorities elsewhere, appears so plain and distinct. My hon. friend says the fourth clause of the Bill interferes with that clause of the Union Act relating to property and civil rights. Now, I take the liberty entirely to dissent from that view. The clause, neither in its bearing, neither in its working, neither in its results in any manner whatever, nor in its political or legal relations, can bear that construction. I suppose my hon. friend will not deny that under the British North America Act, all legislation of whatever kind that is competent to any Parliament in Canada, is within the competence of this Parliament, Aliens and naturalization are expressly given to this Legislature, and all questions relating to those two subjects are naturally included. I need not say naturally, because that very important question has been decided by the highest authority in the country, that when any particular subject is within the competence of this House, and this House legislates upon that subject, such as civil rights and property connected with that subject, and which is involved in the legislation necessary to effect the object of parliamentary relation, that subject must, as a matter of course, follow the main and principal subject itself, and become the peculiar legislation of Parliament. That appears to me to be the principal so thoroughly well settled by the Supreme Court, so thoroughly recognized by every legal man, that I do not think I transgress in saying that I was surprised to see my hon. friend take that position. But I need not, even to sustain the legality and constitutionality of that fourth clause, resort to that principle at all. The clause did not pretend to affect the principle of civil rights. My hon. friend will see there is a vast distinction between giving mere power to an alien to hold property and to regulate and control property in the hands of an alien. I need only illustrate the principle by asking what would be the result in this country at the present moment, and continuously hereafter, if that was sound law? Why, we would have the curious spectacle in a free country of intelligent and energetic people coming from other countries and being unable to hold in this country a single dollar's worth of property, either personal or real, until they had, by a residence of three or five years, entitled themselves to become naturalized British subjects.

Mr. BLAKE. Not at all.

Mr. McDONALD. I beg my hon. friend's pardon. The proposition is an insult to the intelligence of the country; it would be an insult to the common sense of every legal mind. Therefore, either on that ground, the proposition could not be sustained, for, as I stated before, the principle of the Bill flows naturally from the section giving us control over aliens and naturalization. Let me take the Province of Quebec, to the representations of which my hon. friend appeals. The clause of the Bill says that a citizen of the United States residing in Montreal, and doing business there, who has not become, or who has not had time to become, naturalized, but who is living in assumed waiting for the period to expire when he may become naturalized, and appears to be, and during