

PUBLIC OFFICER'S BILL.

SECOND READING.

HON. MR. SMITH moved the second reading of Bill (5) "An Act to amend the Act respecting Public Officers."

HON. MR. VIDAL—We have had no explanation whatever of this Bill. Surely we are entitled to get some explanation of a measure before it is read a second time.

HON. MR. SMITH—When the Bill passes a second reading we will have ample time for discussing it, when the gentleman who is to lead the House is in his place.

HON. MR. POWER—I presume that we are not to adjourn this week, as we had a long adjournment a short while ago, and it would be better in every way for the hon. gentleman to allow the second reading of the bill to stand over until the gentleman to whom he refers is in his place. The second reading of a bill is the proper stage to give the necessary explanations of it. There may be some pernicious principle concealed in this bill that we are unable to detect at the moment, and the better way would be to allow it to stand over for another day.

HON. MR. VIDAL—To my mind the bill is perfectly simple and it needs only a few words of explanation to make it perfectly satisfactory.

HON. MR. MILLER—It is very easy to give the House the explanation required. It is a bill of one clause which reads in this way :

22. The Governor in Council may direct "that whenever any public officer of Canada is required to give security as aforesaid, for the due performance of the trust reposed in him, and for his duly accounting for all public moneys intrusted to him or placed under his control, or for the due fulfilment in any way of his duty, or of any obligation undertaken towards the Crown, the bond or policy of guarantee of any incorporated or joint stock company, incorporated and empowered to grant guarantees, bonds, covenants or policies, for the integrity and

"faithful accounting of public officers or other like purposes and named in the Order in Council, or a conditional assignment of a deposit standing in the name of such public officer in the books of the Post Office or any of the Government Savings Bank, may be accepted as such security, upon such terms as are determined by the Governor in Council; but in the case of an assignment of a deposit as aforesaid, the interest shall be payable to the depositor in like manner as if no such assignment had been made."

It merely enables a public officer to give as security a deposit in a Government Savings Bank instead of the bond of a guarantee company. It is a very great advantage to parties who are placed in the position of being compelled to give bonds, for this reason—it enables them without paying any premium to a guarantee Company to furnish an equally satisfactory guarantee for the Government by the assignment of a deposit in a Government Savings Bank as security.

HON. MR. DEVER—I have not the slightest doubt that the legal gentleman who has just spoken has given a true explanation of this bill, but I for one do not propose to accept from an ordinary member of this Senate explanations which should come from the Government. Therefore I hold that this bill, and similar measures, when they cannot be explained by the leader of the House, should be postponed until such time as we can get the explanation from the proper authorities.

HON. MR. KAULBACH—It is a very simple Bill providing that an officer may deposit his money in a Government Savings Bank as security, and it remains with the Government as a guarantee instead of a bond.

The motion was agreed to and the Bill was read a second time.

OFFENCES AGAINST PUBLIC MORALS BILL.

SECOND READING.

HON. MR. VIDAL moved the second reading of Bill (21) "An Act to amend the Act respecting offences against public morals and public convenience."