

RE-ARRANGEMENTS AND TRANSFERS OF DUTIES IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE.

On motion of Sir Robert Borden (Prime Minister) Bill No. 2, to authorize re-arrangements and transfers of duties in the Public Service, was read the second time, and the House went into Committee thereon, Mr. Boivin in the Chair.

On section 1—transfers from one minister to another and from one department to another—amalgamate departments—orders hereunder to be laid before Parliament.

Mr. MURPHY: Does not the existing law with reference to the creation and organization of each department give the authority conferred by paragraph (a) of subsection 1?

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: I think there is such a provision with respect to the Department of External Affairs and possibly two or three other departments, but there is no general provision of this kind.

Mr. LEMIEUX: Would the right hon. gentleman specify the cases in which this Act might apply? Am I to understand that presently certain departments are to be transferred to the jurisdiction of one minister only?

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: I gave one illustration the other day which I think is quite appropriate. Patents, copyrights and trade marks have been attached for a good many years to the Department of Agriculture. We have under consideration the advisability of transferring these matters to another department.

Mr. LEMIEUX: Like the Archives, which, I think, was transferred to the Department of the Secretary of State.

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: Yes. There are some other illustrations to which I need not allude at the moment. It may be possible to combine some of the departments. This is a general power; it does not permit an increase of the number of departments, but it does permit the transfer of a department or of a branch thereof from one minister to another. It permits also an amalgamation of two departments under one minister.

Section agreed to.

Bill reported.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

Sir Robert Borden moved the second reading of Bill No. 3, to confer the electoral franchise upon women.

Mr. LEMIEUX: Might I ask the right hon. gentleman to postpone this Bill until to-morrow?

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: Would hon. gentlemen like it to stand?

Mr. MURPHY: Until the right hon. leader of the Opposition is here.

Sir SAM HUGHES: Could the Bill be distributed in the meantime?

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: The Bill is printed in English and French and distributed. As my hon. friends have been very good in expediting business, I certainly shall not press the second reading of this Bill this evening, particularly as the leader of the Opposition is not present. There does not seem to be anything else to do except to adjourn, and I move, therefore, that the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to and the House adjourned at 8.38 p.m.

Friday, March 22, 1918.

The House met at three o'clock.

ESTIMATES FOR 1918-1919.

A message from His Excellency the Governor General transmitting Estimates for the year ending March 31, 1919, was read by Mr. Speaker to the House and referred to the Committee of Supply.

EASTER ADJOURNMENT.

On the Orders of the Day:

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: May I ask if it is the Government's intention to have the usual Easter recess next week, which is Holy week, from Wednesday to the following Tuesday?

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: It is the intention to have the usual recess from six o'clock next Wednesday afternoon to three o'clock on the Tuesday following.

THE GERMAN OFFENSIVE.

On the Orders of the Day:

Sir SAM HUGHES: In view of the reports concerning a very severe engagement on the western front I desire to ask if the Prime Minister has received any word as to the progress being made by our troops?

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: Nothing has come in since the offensive commenced, except the report in the press. I have asked the Minister of the Overseas Forces to keep