

MIGRATORY BIRDS BILL.

THIRD READING.

Bill F, an Act to amend the Migratory Birds Convention Act.—Hon. Sir James Lougheed.

PRIVATE BILL.

THIRD READING.

Bill 12, an Act respecting W. C. Edwards and Company, Limited.—Hon. Mr. Belcourt.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH BILL.

CONSIDERED IN COMMITTEE AND REPORTED.

On motion of Hon. Sir James Lougheed, the Senate went into Committee on Bill 37, an Act respecting the Department of Health.

Hon. Mr. Bradbury in the Chair.

On section 2—department:

Hon. Mr. POWER: I was pleased to learn from the honourable leader of the Government yesterday that it was not proposed to add to the members of the Cabinet. I suppose that is a promise that we can rely upon.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: Yes. As I said yesterday, it is not the present intention to create another portfolio. This department will be administered by one of the present ministers.

Hon. Mr. BOSTOCK: I gathered from the honourable gentleman's remarks yesterday that it is the intention of the Government to centralize all the medical services of the different departments in this new department; but, on thinking over the matter, I believe it would be of interest to the House if my honourable friend could give us some idea as to how that is to be done. He mentioned yesterday the medical branch of the Militia Department, for instance.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: My honourable friend must have misapprehended what I said. I did not say it was intended to centralize. I said it was desired to co-ordinate the different activities of the Government in connection with public health. That might be done in many ways. It is not proposed to take from any other department the duties which are peculiarly germane to that department itself; but there is nothing to prevent a co-ordination of the work being carried on between the department so charged and the Department of Public Health. I am not prepared at the moment to say how it will be worked out, but some policy of that kind will be adopted.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED.

Hon. Mr. DE VEBER: I would like to ask the honourable gentleman whether the Government has decided as to which department of the Government, or which minister will administer the new Department of Public Health.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: No decision has yet been arrived at.

Hon. Mr. DE VEBER: Because I would like here to make a protest against it being under the Department of Agriculture. That department has for many years spent millions of dollars in trying to stamp out mal de coit, that is, syphilis among horses, and diseases amongst cattle, pigs and sheep, but they have refused to spend any money on any member of the human family. Naturally the Minister of Agriculture has wished to spend all the money on horses, cattle, sheep and pigs—anything that has a commercial value, but has looked upon the life of the human being as having no value at all.

Section 2 was agreed to.

On section 3, subsection 3—transfer of officers to Department of Health:

Hon. Mr. POWER: This subclause provides that—

The Governor in Council may, subject to the provisions of the Civil Service Act, . . . transfer to the Department of Health any officer, clerk or employee now in the employ of His Majesty or of either or both Houses of Parliament. . . .

While I do not undertake to say that the Bill, on the whole, does not mark a step in the right direction, it is not perfectly clear that the result will be as satisfactory as the minister thinks. Take, for instance, the Quarantine Act. That is, as I understand, now administered under the Immigration Department. Well, it seems to me that it is natural that a ship bringing in a load of immigrants should be under the control of the officers of the Immigration Department, and the question is whether the proposed constitution of a new department to take charge of all these quasi medical cases will be better than having the work done by the Immigration Department. I myself have some doubts about it. The medical work is essentially a part of the work of the existing department. The same thing is true to a great extent of the Adulteration Act and also of the Public Works Health Act. Will the work that is now done by the officers of these three departments be better done under this new department? I do not say it will not, but I feel very doubtful about it.

Section 3 was agreed to.