

rine and Fisheries. We have some Bills now before the House dealing with the question of marine. It is natural to expect that these Bills will be referred to this committee. I repeat, the committees have no jurisdiction except upon matters formally referred to them by the House. That is the reason why we propose this resolution—because we wish to investigate in Committee on Marine and Fisheries the whole question of lobsters and oysters, and so we wish the House to refer to the committee that part of the report of the department relating to the subject, so that the committee may have authority to deal with the question.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. What would be the objection to referring the whole report?

Mr BRODEUR. I do not see any objection, except that it might lead to dealing with all the matters mentioned in the report.

Mr. FOSTER. But that is what the committee is for.

Mr. SPROULE. I think the Minister of Marine and Fisheries (Mr. Brodeur) is hardly correct in what he says concerning the Committee on Agriculture. The present procedure had its origin in the work of the Committee on Colonization, appointed many years ago, to which were referred questions on agriculture, with the authority to send for persons, papers and records and to report to the House. This they did. On that basis, the committee was afterwards known as the Committee on Agriculture and Colonization, and the order of reference instructs that committee to send for persons, papers and records, and to take evidence on any of the subjects in which the committee is charged with the duty of inquiry. I think the report of the Minister of Agriculture is submitted to the committee by the House. Whether rightly or wrongly, this is the procedure followed by the committee. But all the committees except the Public Accounts Committee, if I understand aright, can do the same thing. Of course, the Public Accounts and the Auditor General's Report are referred to that committee every year. The Committee on Agriculture, by virtue of their order of reference, inquire into everything relating to the subject matter over which they have jurisdiction and report their observations to the House. I think these are nearly the words of the order of reference.

Mr. BRODEUR. Perhaps I may be permitted to read the motion to which I have referred. It is the motion usually made immediately after the committees are formed:—

On motion of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, it was resolved, That the Select Standing Committee.

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tees of this House shall severally be empowered to examine and inquire into all such matters and things as may be referred to them by the House; and to report from time to time their observations and opinions thereon; with power to send for persons, papers and records, with the exception of the Committee on Debates and that on the Library of Parliament.

That is the source of the jurisdiction of the committee.

Mr. FOSTER. That is in accordance with what I said in the first place, when I asked whether the whole report might not be referred to the committee. The committee will have control of it when it gets there, and, of course, they cannot investigate everything at once.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN. They will have to take up one matter at a time. This motion is in accordance with the view expressed in the committee.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. All I suggest is that, instead of making it necessary to come here fifteen or twenty times with applications, it might be more expedient to refer the whole report to the committee. Of course, the committee will not embark upon any investigation if it is not desirable to do so. As a matter of organization, it would seem advisable to refer the whole report. I think the minister should take the matter into his consideration.

Mr. BRODEUR. It is not done in the case of the other committees. I do not say whether it would have been advisable to adopt that plan or not.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. So far as the Committee on Agriculture is concerned, I think that, if this practice is not followed, the committee has proceeded as though that had been the case. In order to keep matters strictly regular in the future, I think this reference will have to be made, for the Committee on Agriculture is appointed under the same procedure as the others, and no special reference is made to it. It is true that, as my hon. friend from East Grey (Mr. Sproule) has pointed out, each committee has authority to send for persons, papers and records and to examine witnesses on oath. But that power is only ancillary to the jurisdiction of the committee, and an inquiry must be founded upon a reference to the committee of some matter by this House. It may be that the long practice of the Committee on Agriculture will be considered as authority to the committee, for it has reported for many years upon matters that do not seem to have been strictly referred to. Therefore, it may be held that a practice has grown up which will justify the committee in continuing as in the past.

Motion agreed to, and House went into Committee of Supply.