

ELEVENTH HOUR RUSH PERVADES LEGISLATURE

In An Effort to Reach Pro-
rogation Today, Bill After
Bill Being

RAILROADED THRO'

Without Proper Consideration
or Discussion, With the Re-
sult That Province Gets
Very Slipshod Legislation.

(Continued from Page 1)

The committee took up the consid-
eration of a bill to amend the Work-
men's Compensation Act.

Mr. Baxter asked for a statement of
the salient points. Hearing that the de-
legations late in the session might very
well, he thought, become interviews in
the next session. There was not time
to have a proper consideration of this
bill and it must be taken as presented.

Hon. Mr. Byrne said he realized that
there was foundation for criticism
from the hon. friend, but the delay could
not be avoided. He could say that the
Government had secured the opinions of
the members of the Compensation
Board, by whom the Act was adminis-
tered, and had incorporated them into
the bill. There was an increase of the
allowance for funeral expenses from
\$75 to \$100, an increase in the monthly
allowance to widows from \$20 to \$30,
also an increase in the monthly
allowance for children. Formerly the
assistance given to a widow could not
exceed more than \$3,500. That had
been changed and there was to be no
limit. If a widow should marry the
second time she would receive two
years' payment. Under the former Act
the payment for permanent partial dis-
ability had been limited to \$1,500. The
amendments proposed there would be
a sliding scale at the discretion of the
Board under which the total would
not exceed \$25,000. It also was pro-
posed that in regard to first aid, the
full medical, nursing and hospital
expenses be paid out of the accident
fund. This would cause a heavy drain
on the fund, but he had information to
the effect that the Board would
decrease the assessment upon those
paying into the fund fifty per cent.
during the present year. It was be-
lieved that proper safeguards had
been furnished so that undue strain
should not fall on the accident fund.

Mr. Baxter said the explanation was
as full and ample as could be ex-
pected, but he would have dealt with this
matter in a way much different from
that in which the Government had ap-
proached it. The members of the
House should have information from
members of the Commission touching
upon this matter. They should have
placed before them facts which had
arisen in connection with actual cases
coming under notice of the Board. As
it was the House was embarking on an
undertaking without sufficient infor-
mation. By taking the bill up section by
section the House was going to get
little benefit beyond the correction of
the typographical errors. He would
suggest that the hon. Attorney-General
move the adoption of the bill and let
the House pass it.

Hon. Mr. Byrne said that in other
provinces suggestions of the members
of the Boards or Commissions were
accepted. Their opinions were taken
as carrying weight.

Mr. Baxter said that what he wanted
was the calculations of the members
of the Board, not their opinions. If
given information, he considered him-
self competent to reach an opinion.

Hon. Mr. Byrne said that he had no
figures which he could place before the
committee. It was believed, however,
that there would be an additional bur-
den of some \$50,000 or \$60,000. The
striking out of the limitation of pay-
ment to widows placed the Act upon
the same basis as the Act of other
provinces. Under the old Act a widow
might receive assistance until she had
reached an advanced age, and then by
the very terms of the Act, when aid
was most needed, he throw upon the
world. Action in this connection had
been taken up on information received
from the Compensation Board.

Mr. Tilley said there was no objec-
tion on the part of the Opposition con-
cerning the payment to widows. He
considered it a good provision. It
was unfair, however, to hurry bills of
this nature through in the dying hours
of the session. The Opposition as well
as the Government supporters should
hear the delegations which come to
give information relating to various
pieces of legislation. It might have
been well to let a matter of this kind
go over until next session. He could
not see why the assessment could not
remain as it was. After three or four
years' experience, the Board might
very well recommend a reduction.

Mr. Baxter said that reference had
been made to recommendations which
members of the Compensation Board
had made, and which had been incor-
porated into legislation. As far as he
could see, the members of the Board
had had no experience before taking
office some two years ago, and they
would have to creep before they could
walk. However, the members were
in a position to secure some infor-
mation. Instead of the House being told
in general terms what was considered
to be the proper thing to do in the way
of amending the Act, it could have
been given details concerning hospital
treatment and its cost. He had no very
great admiration for the ability of the
majority of the Commissioners forming
the Compensation Board. He
could draw his own conclusions, and
not take those of the Commissioners.
The latter were not experts, and were
of no outstanding ability. As far as
payment to widows was concerned,
there was a great difference between
the case of a woman widowed when
twenty years old and one widowed
when she was fifty. There was no rea-
son for giving payments to a young
woman for the rest of her life. She
should be placed on a different footing
from a woman of older years. There
should be a limit to what would be
paid her. A young woman could
easily fit herself for some vocation
early in her widowhood. It was true
that she should receive assistance. It
should be for a long period, but not for
the duration of her life.

Hon. Mr. Foster said that he was
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