

The Bill was reported without amendment.

THIRD READING.

On motion of Hon. Sir James Lougheed, the Bill was read the third time and passed.

CANADA TEMPERANCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

FIRST READING.

A message was received from the House of Commons with Bill 26, an Act to amend the Canada Temperance Act.

The Bill was read the first time.

SECOND READING.

Hon Sir JAMES LOUGHEED moved the second reading of the Bill.

He said: Honourable gentlemen, it is proposed to amend the Canada Temperance Act by enlarging the scope of its provisions. At the present time, as honourable gentlemen know, the Act applies to prescribed areas in the province. It is now proposed that upon receipt of a resolution from a legislature requesting a vote upon the prohibition of the importation of liquors, the Governor in Council may issue a proclamation, which will make provision for the nature of the prohibition and also for setting in motion the machinery by which a vote of the province may be taken. We can discuss the provisions of this Bill more closely in Committee, and any further explanation that may be necessary can be given then.

Hon. HEWITT BOSTOCK: Honourable gentlemen, I think we ought to protest very strongly against the policy of the Government in bringing down a Bill of this nature at this time in the session. We were called here at the beginning of September for the purpose of dealing with the Peace Treaty, and the session has been continued until this second week in November, and during part of that time the Senate at any rate had very little business to transact. If it was the intention of the Government to bring down such legislation to be enacted, they ought to have brought it down earlier in the session, in order that every member of this House might have an opportunity of studying it and studying thoroughly the whole situation. But at this late day, when it is understood to be the intention to prorogue, there is placed in our hands a Bill which has been considerably amended in the House of Commons since it was introduced there. I sent for a copy of the Bill this morning and was handed a reprint of the measure as proposed to be amended in

Committee of the Whole in the House of Commons. The Bill, since it was introduced in the House of Commons, had been so much amended that the Commons considered it necessary to reprint the Bill with all the amendments, in order that members of the House of Commons might understand what they were dealing with. Since the reprint was issued the Bill has been further amended in the Commons. A copy of the Bill in its present form has only just been placed in my hands, and I have had no opportunity of looking at it. It comprises about five pages of very closely printed matter, and I do not see how any honourable member of this House, whether in favour of the Bill or opposed to it, can possibly consider it intelligently at this late hour in the session.

Hon. W. B. ROSS: Honourable gentlemen, I was in hopes that the honourable leader of the Opposition, before sitting down, would make a motion regarding this Bill. My first complaint with regard to it is one that has been already mentioned, and I do not need to occupy time in discussing it again: the other House has been in session for quite a long time, and I think it is unfair to us to ask us to deal with it in the dying days or the dying hours of the session.

Hon. Mr. MACDONELL: The dying minutes.

Hon. Mr. ROSS: There are questions concerning the principle of the Bill, and when we go into committee there will be questions concerning all the details, which will have to be very carefully dealt with, and I do not see how we can deal with this very important measure as we ought to do if prorogation is to take place this afternoon.

There is this further consideration. The House will be in session again certainly before the end of March, because it will be necessary to pass a Supply Bill by that time. There is Cox waiting for this Bill, and there does not seem to be any reason on earth why it could not stand over until the next session of Parliament without injuring any person in any way whatever. I can understand men who are perhaps on the whole sympathetic with this Bill, after a proper consideration and discussion of it, and being prepared to vote for it, still insisting that this House should receive moderately decent treatment from the House of Commons in connection with important legislation of this kind.