

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—I should like to ask the hon. Secretary of State why he passed over the first Bill on the order paper, An Act to amend the Naturalization Act, on the ground that it was not circulated and then proceeded with the second Order of the Day with reference to the revised statutes, which stands in precisely the same position?

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—I stated that the first Bill on the order paper was not circulated, but the second was.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—But they are both on our files. I was in error when I stated that they had not been laid before the House. I find when looking at my file, that I had them, but the objection that I took in the first place is equally strong. Surely the hon. gentleman must know that no member of this Senate can by any possibility pick up a Bill with thirteen or fourteen clauses, and master it in a few minutes after he comes into the Chamber. The object of placing it on the notice paper is that every senator may have an opportunity of securing a copy of the Bill on which he is expected to express an opinion but in this case these three Bills are laid upon the desk at the opening of a sitting of the Senate when there is no possibility of knowing what the contents of them are, except as you go through each clause. I find, after my attention has been called to the fact, that the whole three Bills on my file were under my desk. I did not know they were there. I do not object to proceeding with these Bills; they are of a character that I do not suppose is open to particular objection. We have been tinkering with the Naturalization Act almost every session, wherever an individual case arises, particularly in the new Territories. In reference to the Bill the second reading of which the hon. gentleman has moved, the explanation is not satisfactory as to why an Act should be passed giving special authority for the translation of the statutes into French. I can understand that a blunder may have occurred such as he has indicated, but that I take it has nothing to do with the right of parliament to have translation made of all documents which become records of parliament. The 133 clause of the British North America Act provides:

Either the English or French language may be used by any person in the debate of the Houses of parliament of Canada, and of the House of the legislature of Quebec; and both those languages shall be used in the respective records and journals of those Houses; and either of those languages may be used by any person or in any pleading or process in or issuing from any court of Canada established under this Act, and in or from all or any of the courts of Quebec.

Now, certainly, the consolidated statutes become a record of parliament the moment the consolidation has been ratified by parliament. Hence the power vested in parliament to have them translated and printed to my mind is amply clear. I call attention to it because I really cannot see the necessity of a clause of that kind. Perhaps it is because I did not hear distinctly the explanation the hon. gentleman made. I should like to call his attention also to this fact; we are asked to pass an Act ratifying a consolidation of the statutes which we have never seen. If the hon. gentleman will refer to the journals of the House for 1885, he will find that Sir Alexander Campbell, before asking the Senate to legislate upon this question, laid the consolidated statutes on the table in order that they might be examined by any member of the Senate who desired to look at them. In this case we have not even the report laid upon the table. A Bill is introduced to confirm that of which we have not the slightest knowledge.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—The explanation I gave was this: the Revised Statutes of 1886, before the appointment of a commission of parliament, did not authorize the Governor in Council to proclaim the statutes when they left the hands of the commission. I read from the Act of 1903 when I was on my feet before, which declares specifically that the Governor in Council may issue a proclamation whenever the roll is signed, bringing the revised statutes into effect. Now the difference between the French edition of the revised statutes and the ordinary laws is this: there is no authority of parliament whatever for the French version, and the Department of Justice considered, after looking into the subject, that it was only right and proper in bringing them into force that it should declare that a similar roll in the French language should be deposited with the clerk of parliament,