

Mr. BLAKE. And you are better paid than he is.

Mr. BOWELL. You are better paid than I. I never got \$600 out of the North-West. I do not wish the hon. gentleman's remarks to go abroad that the officers' mess, either of the volunteer force or the militia, is paid for by the Government.

Mr. WATSON. I do not wish to state that the cost of the officers' mess is paid by the Government.

Mr. BOWELL. But you did say so.

Mr. WATSON. I do not wish to say that, I will take that back; but I say there is too much attention paid to the force in cities and towns, in the more civilised portions of our Provinces, than there should be. More money should be spent where it would be of more service. There is no reason why 2,000 men should not be ready in Manitoba and the North-West, in cases of emergency, to protect that country. The young men of that country have proved themselves during this trouble equal to the emergency. Those men should have had the advantage of being drilled, because petitions were sent in from different points asking that they be organised and have equipment furnished to them, but those appeals were refused. Fortunately very few of the men called into action have lost their lives except among Boulton's scouts, who, unfortunately for themselves—I do not know whether it was on account of not being drilled—lost a few of their men. I hope the First Minister will take into consideration the advisability of organising the volunteers for the protection of the whole Province in case of emergency.

Resolution concurred in.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD introduced Bill (No. 144) to authorise the augmentation of the North-West Mounted Police.

Bill read the first time.

THE CONSOLIDATED INSURANCE ACT OF 1877

House resolved itself into Committee on Bill (No. 20) to modify the application of the Consolidated Insurance Act of 1877.—(Sir John A. Macdonald.)

(In the Committee.)

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. I think it would be as well to call the attention of the Government and the House generally to the Bill as it now appears, re-printed as amended. It is not my intention to resume the very lengthy discussion which took place in committee on the details; but, at the same time, I think it would be well to understand whether the Government have fully considered the Bill now before us, which is not exactly in accordance, if I understand the matter right, with the intentions of either the Finance Minister or the members of the Government generally. There are two objects, as I understand, which the Government designs to attain in this Bill. First of all, they intend to grant relief to certain friendly societies, which, it was alleged, were in considerable danger of being visited with certain penalties if they proceeded to grant the ordinary benefits to their members, under the existing state of the law. As to that there can be no question, and I have no doubt the House will be unanimous in desiring that these friendly societies should be relieved from any possible consequence to which they might unwillingly expose themselves; but there is another, and rather important consequence, which flows from the Bill now before us, and that is this, that a totally new and distinct class of societies, known as the mutual societies, will, under this Bill, be placed in line, so to speak, with the older societies which have been conducting their affairs on well recognised principle and which go forth to the country as having

Mr. WATSON.

received a Government inspection, which prevents the possibility of any of the persons doing business with them losing any portion of their insurance money. I wish it to be distinctly understood that, for my part, I have no objection at all that these various mutual societies should do business with those who chose to do business with them; but I can see, and if I understood rightly the remarks of the Minister of Customs and the Minister of Finance (the latter of whom is unhappily not here), they also see that there is in the Bill, as it now stands, a very considerable danger that these two classes of companies which do business on different principles should be confused together in the public mind; and it did appear to me there was a great deal of force in the contention made by the representatives of the older companies, that a separate measure should be introduced for the purpose of legalising the other companies to do business. This is a Government measure; the Government is responsible, and they will be held of course responsible, for any mischief which may hereafter arise, should the prophecies of the older companies as to these mutual societies be fulfilled. I repeat I do not at all desire to prevent mutual companies from doing business; but the First Minister will understand that there is an Act on the statute book which guarantees to the public that the various insurance companies which are put under the supervision of the Superintendent of insurance companies and which report year to year to him shall have a reserve, which it is his business to examine into and audit, and that this reserve shall be one which will effectually protect all persons doing business with them. I understood that it was not the opinion of any of the parties more immediately charged with the promotion of this measure that the members of the mutual society would be or could be similarly protected, and I think therefore it is unfortunate that, as undoubtedly will be the case if this Bill, as it now stands, becomes law, the two classes of companies should be confounded together in the public mind. No doubt certain precautions have been taken, after long discussion, and certain statements are required to be made in these various policies, but, speaking from a practical standpoint, it appears clearly to me, and I think to most of those who heard the discussion, that one main object of the mutual companies was that they should be brought under this particular Act in order that they might be able to say to the public at large that they were companies making deposits with the Government and affording precisely the same security to the public which the old line companies, as they are called, are able to afford. As far as I can judge, they do not afford that security, and, although I do not desire to prevent them from doing business, I think it would be expedient that the distinction between these two classes of companies should be more clearly defined than it is in the Bill now before us.

Mr. BOWELL. If the Government and the members of the committee and those members of the House who attended the Committee on Banking and Commerce have not made up their minds on this question, it is not because it was not amply discussed. I think I may very properly call this Bill the first lieutenant to the Franchise Bill. Eight long days were occupied in the continuous discussion of this question before that committee, and no other business was allowed to interfere in any way with it. The present Bill makes provision for the protection of those insured in the societies to which the hon. gentleman has alluded; they are exempted from the operation of the Insurance Act and of this Bill. The question of having a separate measure to govern this particular class of companies was discussed for some days, and the Finance Minister took decided objection to having a separate Bill placed upon the Statute Book to govern any class of insurance. He desired by this Bill to bring these companies within the provisions and