

the Mint, formerly operated by the British authorities, has become a Canadian institution. Since the passing of the Statute of Westminster we have witnessed a great development of our autonomy.

I have gone through this Bill, and at the first glance there appears to be no clause that calls for criticism. Perhaps explanations of one or two points may be required of the right honourable gentleman, but these will no doubt be forthcoming in committee.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: In the Committee on Banking and Commerce.

Hon. Mr. LEMIEUX: Is it the intention of the Government in administering this Act to transfer to Canada practically the body of the admiralty law of England?

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Practically, but not wholly.

Hon. Mr. LEMIEUX: But practically?

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Yes, practically. It is considered that part of the admiralty law is applicable only to a small country, and that part is changed.

The motion was agreed to, and the Bill was read the second time.

The Senate adjourned until to-morrow at 3 p.m.

THE SENATE

Thursday, February 22, 1934.

The Senate met at 3 p.m., the Speaker in the Chair.

Prayers and routine proceedings.

HOSPITAL SWEEPSTAKES BILL

MOTION FOR SECOND READING— DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. G. H. BARNARD moved the second reading of Bill A, an Act with respect to Hospital Sweepstakes.

He said: Honourable senators, this Bill is identical in form with the one which passed this House last session. On that occasion the principle was thoroughly discussed; therefore I do not deem it necessary to deal with this measure at any great length.

The purpose of the Bill is to empower the Attorney-General of any province to authorize a committee to conduct sweepstakes or lotteries within the province, and to make regulations for their conduct, specifying how much of the proceeds shall be applied for the benefit of the hospitals and what percentage

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND.

shall be allowed for expenses and for prizes, and providing, of course, for proper audits. I cannot emphasize too strongly that this is not a proposal to enable any individual or group of individuals to make private gain. The safeguards in the Bill are such that the money to be derived from the sweepstakes can be devoted only to the uses mentioned therein.

With regard to the need for the Bill, the financial necessity of the hospitals, in many provinces at least, is greater to-day than ever before. I may say that the main revenue of the hospitals in the province of British Columbia is derived from three sources—provincial grants, municipal grants, and moneys which come in from patients in the hospitals who are able to pay for treatment and accommodation. The Government has been in the habit of giving the hospitals a per capita allowance in accordance with the number of patients treated by them, but owing to the financial straits in which it has found itself this allowance has been materially reduced. Furthermore, owing to a certain overlapping, or alleged overlapping, of taxation in my province, the Government has taken revenues which the municipalities assert should belong to them. In the past, in order to make up for this, a proportion of those revenues was returned to the municipalities; but now such grants are practically wiped out. The result is that the municipalities are no longer in a position to give as much financial aid to the hospitals as they did in the past. With regard to the revenue from pay patients, it is sad to relate that the business depression has so seriously reduced the incomes of patients that the hospitals have found great difficulty in collecting the amounts owing to them from that source. In fact, about a year ago I read a statement to the effect that one hospital of considerable size had been able to collect only fifty-three per cent of the debts owing to it in the previous year. That was 1931, if I remember correctly, and I can assure honourable members that in this respect conditions have not improved.

Since the last session of this Parliament the Royal Commission in England which was inquiring into the whole question of gambling has filed its report. That report is unfavourable to the holding of lotteries or sweepstakes in aid of hospitals or for any other purpose. I may say that from a reading of the report, in the short time that I have had at my disposal, I have not found it particularly convincing.

The opposition is based upon two grounds, the first being that lotteries and sweepstakes,