

they have appointed a sub-committee to deal with it. I presume, probably the first of next week, a report will be made on the question.

The Senate adjourned until Tuesday next at three o'clock.

THE SENATE.

TUESDAY, January 21, 1913.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at Three o'clock.

Prayers and routine proceedings.

OFFICIAL STATISTICS OF CANADA.

MOTION.

Hon. Mr. POWER moved:

That the report of the Departmental Commission on the Official Statistics of Canada and the appendix thereto, be referred to the Standing Committee on Civil Service Administration for consideration and report.

He said: I was very much pleased when I found that the government had appointed a commission to consider the question with which this commission has been wrestling. There is, as every one knows, a great deal of duplication in the reports that are presented to parliament, and one of the results of the manner in which the business has been conducted is that the things which are most essential to be laid before the public promptly, are not published for a very long period indeed. For instance, there are public statutes passed each session. As a rule these statutes go into operation as soon as they are assented to by the Governor General, and they should be accessible to the public who are governed by them at the earliest possible date after prorogation. Now, as a matter of fact, that is not the case. As a rule, certain Acts are selected and distributed with the Gazette, but most of these Acts are not so distributed; and, further, the Gazette is a periodical which does not reach the great bulk of the population. It is clearly of great importance that the statutes should be distributed at an early day. As a rule, the distribution of the statutes takes place certainly not earlier than three months and, as a rule, not less than four months after prorogation. Hon. gentlemen

must see that this is a very serious abuse. The same thing is true of the journals of the Senate. They, of course, are not of so much importance, but they are of more importance than the weekly reports of the Department of Trade and Commerce, or the monthly unrevised statements of receipts and expenditures. I have not had an opportunity to consult the report with which this resolution deals, but I assume that it undertakes to deal to a certain extent with this question of the statutes. It has been said that it is very important that the monthly statements of receipts and expenditures should be made public. I cannot help thinking that it would be quite sufficient for all practical purposes if the summaries of these reports were published in the same manner as the summaries of bank returns are published in the Gazette every month, and instead of monthly reports, we might have, if it was thought desirable, quarterly reports. As I have said, I have not had the pleasure of reading this report, but I have seen summaries of it which I have no doubt were very imperfect, given in some of the newspapers; and from what I saw in the newspapers I gathered that the recommendation of this commission is rather in favour of either creating a permanent commission to deal with this matter, or creating a sort of sub department. For one, I do not look with favour upon either the creation of a commission or the creation of a sub department. A commission is a very useful instrument sometimes for obtaining information, but it is not the sort of body which is adapted to administrative work. There is nothing like individual responsibility, and some one person should be held responsible for the public printing. It seems to me that the person to hold responsible is the King's Printer. It is his duty to supervise the publication of all the public documents; and his duties, if they are not defined—and I am afraid they are not—could be defined by order in council. Much the better way would be to make it the duty of the King's Printer to take steps to prevent in future the abuses which have grown up in connection with these Bills. The committee to whom the report is to be referred have not a great deal to do, and