

in Council confined their duties to the West. However, it was the seedable wheat of the West that was particularly in mind, as the reports of our seed grain officers were to the effect that there was danger that such portion of western wheat as was fit for seed would likely be purchased particularly by American seed commission merchants, and that we might find ourselves without sufficient seed. I should say that the intention was that the municipalities should do the purchasing, and in the main they did so, the efforts of the commission being directed to calling the attention of the municipal officers to the requirements of the time and urging them to take all possible means to see that there was sufficient seed for the municipality. I rather think the scope of the commission was later extended, but I shall leave that for the minister himself to define.

CRIMINAL CODE AMENDMENT— DIVORCED PERSONS.

On the Order for the second reading of Bill No. 4, to amend the Criminal Code, Mr. Pugsley.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: The hon. member for St. John asked me to move the second reading of this Bill. The purpose of it is to relieve from the charge of bigamy persons who have contracted marriage in a foreign country after a divorce procured in such foreign country, under certain conditions which are set forth in clause 4 (a). I was instructed by the hon. member for St. John that it was arranged with the Minister of Justice that the Bill should be referred to a select committee, and, that being the case, it is unnecessary that I should say anything further about it.

Motion agreed to and Bill read the second time.

ACT RESPECTING COMPANIES.

On the motion of Mr. A. K. Maclean for the second reading of Bill No. 43, respecting Companies.

Mr. MACLEAN: I desire to move the second reading of this Bill. As I stated on the introduction of the Bill, it was prepared by a committee of the Canadian Bar Association and I think all the members of that committee are members of the Bar in the western provinces; at any rate the Bill was submitted to me in the form in which it is now before the House, and I undertook, on behalf of the President of the Canadian Bar Association,

Sir James Aikins, to introduce it and to ask the House to refer it to a select committee for consideration. Hon. gentlemen will see, upon looking at the Bill, that it is largely a compilation made from the Companies Acts of the western provinces, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, some sections being taken from the Ontario Act. I do not approve of a great many features of the Bill as it stands. Being a compilation, it naturally has the weaknesses which Bills prepared in that manner usually have. However, I am authorized to say that those who are responsible for the preparation of the Bill are not wedded to its exact provisions.

It is the desire of the Canadian Bar Association that we endeavour to secure uniformity in company legislation throughout all Canada, and its provinces. There is also a desire on the part of the legal profession in Canada—and many others outside the profession as well—for uniformity in company legislation throughout the Empire. Such uniformity is desirable in the interest of trade and commerce. It would mean a great deal for Canada if our company legislation were, as far as possible, in conformity with the English Companies Act. It would facilitate business transactions and encourage investment of capital in Canada if British investors knew that our law respecting corporations was substantially the same as that which obtained in England. The matter of uniformity of company legislation has been considered by the Imperial conferences on more than one occasion. I have before me a memorandum that was prepared for the Imperial Conference of 1911 by direction of the British Board of Trade. At that conference the following resolution was adopted with regard to the uniformity of formation, management and winding-up of joint stock companies:

That it is desirable so far as circumstances permit to secure greater uniformity of the company laws of the Empire, and that the memorandum and analysis prepared on this subject by the Imperial Government be noted for the consideration of the various governments represented at the Conference.

In the same memorandum I observe a resolution which had been passed by the Chamber of Commerce of Victoria, Australia. I should like to read this resolution, because it expresses what I wish to say concerning the desirability of adhering as closely as possible to the English Act. It is as follows:—