

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: I have not read the Bill; can my right hon. friend give an explanation of its object?

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: I did give an explanation upon the first reading. It simply provides for an addition to the membership of the council, and to enable the western provinces to be more effectively represented. It is really of very minor importance, and it does not affect any interest whatever.

Motion agreed to, Bill read the second time, and referred to the Committee on Miscellaneous Private Bills.

WHITE PHOSPHORUS MATCHES ACT AMENDMENT.

Hon. T. W. CROTHERS (Minister of Labour) moved the second reading of Bill No. 37, to amend the White Phosphorus Matches Act.

Mr. GRAHAM: The object of this Bill, which the hon. Minister of Labour explained some days ago, is, I understand, to extend the time of getting rid of white phosphorus matches already manufactured, and also those on hand for sale.

Motion agreed to; Bill read the second time, and the House went into committee thereon, Mr. Blain in the Chair.

On section 1—extension of time within which matches may be used:

Mr. PUGSLEY: This section seems to be worded in rather an extraordinary way. It is declared in the first place by section 13 that the Act shall come into force on 1st of January, 1915. Then, by the second section, it is declared that the provisions of the Act "shall be held to have come into force on, from, and after the 1st day of January, 1916." It would take a Philadelphia lawyer to understand that.

Mr. CROTHERS: Section 13 of the Act as it now stands provides that as to the manufacture of matches made of white phosphorus, the Act shall come into force on the first day of January, 1915.

Mr. PUGSLEY: The Bill does not say anything as to manufacturing.

Mr. CROTHERS: Section 13 of the Act does.

Mr. PUGSLEY: But that is repealed.

Mr. CROTHERS: I am showing why we want to amend that Act. It provides, as to the manufacture of matches, that the Act shall come into force on 1st January, 1915; then section 2 is as to the sale and use, and it says the Act shall come into

force on 1st January, 1916, giving the manufacturers a year from the time they have ceased to manufacture the matches to sell the matches already manufactured. They ceased manufacturing on the last day of December, 1914 but during 1915 they did not sell what they had manufactured. This Bill is to enable them to do so for six months longer, and those who buy the matches to use them up to 1st January, 1917. The main object of the original Act, as the committee will remember, was the protection of the employees engaged in the making of white phosphorus matches, and that has been effected by the cessation of manufacture on the 1st January, 1915. As the law now stands, those who have sold any such matches since 1st January, 1916, would be liable to prosecution, and those having the matches in their possession for use would be liable. This Bill is simply for the purpose of giving the manufacturers six months longer to sell, and the people who are using them twelve months longer to use them.

Mr. MARCIL: Is there any danger in the use of those matches, or is it merely in the manufacture?

Mr. CROTHERS: The danger is chiefly but not entirely in the manufacture. The object of the original Act was to protect those engaged in the manufacture of white phosphorus matches. Some few employees had become diseased by inhaling the fumes caused by the use of white phosphorus in the matches. There have been cases in which the injurious effects of these matches have occurred. There was a prominent case in Prince Edward Island where a woman poisoned her three children by using the ends of these matches. Children playing with matches of this kind about the house are very likely to put them in their mouths. It is because of instances of this character that the Act provided that white phosphorus matches should not be used. This proposition is simply to allow for the sale of the stocks which are on hand, and those who have purchased them are given until the first of next January to use them.

Mr. PUGSLEY: A company manufacturing matches at Hampton, N.B., protested very strongly against the proposed legislation, saying that no injury had ever been known to have resulted from the use of white phosphorus in their factory. Have they withdrawn their objection? I understand that they were heard by the minister.