

within a few days. I might also state that a preliminary report was brought down some days ago. I tried to get a copy of it in the other House, or see it, but it was in the possession of members who were very much interested in the subject and I was not able to get it. When the other papers that I have called for are brought down I hope that these other documents will be brought down as well.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—There is no objection to complying with the request made in this motion, and if there are any other papers in connection with the case not called for in this motion, I shall endeavour to have them all laid before the House at the earliest possible moment. Should the Printing Committee in the other House order that they be printed, it would not be necessary to have them re copied for this House. However, we will have them laid before the House.

Hon. Mr. McINNES—The only object I have is to get possession of them in a reasonable time.

THE INSOLVENCY BILL.

SECOND READING.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL moved the second reading of Bill (A) "An Act respecting Insolvency."

Hon. Mr. McCALLUM—Give us an explanation of the bill.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—I scarcely think that I should be justified in wearying the House with so long a statement as I made last year explaining the provisions of this bill. I can inform my hon. friend that there are no changes in the principle of the bill as it passed last session. The changes that have been made in the bill are more verbal in character than affecting the principle involved in an Insolvency Act. It was found, on a close study of the bill, that so many changes were made in it last session that there were some incongruities, and they have been changed, but the alterations are more in the verbiage than anything else.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—If it is important, in the interest of the people of Canada, that an insolvency law should be placed on the

statute book, I presume that the one under consideration is as free from objections as any that could be devised, except on a few points which were discussed in this chamber last year. Since the House rose last year, however, I have failed to observe any great demand in the country for the passage of an Insolvency Act. In Ontario the law now authorizes the distribution of the estate of insolvent debtors in two ways, one in the event of a party failing a creditor can come in, much in the same way as under the law in the province of Quebec. The law also provides for the distribution of the assets amongst the creditors. The only difference between that law and the one under consideration is that the Ontario Act omits to provide (as the province had not the power) for the discharge of the insolvent; so that, as far as the two larger provinces are concerned, Ontario and Quebec, there is really at the present moment no great necessity for the passing of an Insolvency Act. The Ontario Act has been passed in New Brunswick since last session, and I have no doubt it will be adopted, if not in the same words, at all events in the same spirit, in all the other provinces. Under those provincial Acts the expense is much less than under the machinery provided for in this Act. Under the circumstances, we should consider whether there is really any necessity to pass this bill. We devoted a great deal of time to the subject last session, and no doubt improved the bill very considerably. One does not desire seriously to go into the consideration of the measure now unless there is some assurance that it is to go beyond this chamber, and that there is a reasonable probability of its being passed in the House of Commons. I am, of course, unable to make any observations on that point, as I do not know what the sense of the House of Commons would be on the subject, although I recognize, as every one must, that there is no great necessity for such a law at present. I do not propose to oppose the bill at this stage, but shall be very glad to hear the opinions of other hon. gentlemen.

Hon. Mr. MACINNES (Burlington)—In every mercantile community an insolvency law is necessary. I am aware, as the hon. gentleman has stated, that there is an insolvency law in several of the provinces. There is none, however, in the province of