

Tuesday, December 14, 1926

The House met at three o'clock.

GOVERNOR GENERAL'S WARRANTS

Hon. J. A. ROBB (Minister of Finance): I desire to lay on the table a statement of the Auditor General as to governor general's warrants issued since last session, and expenditures thereunder; also a statement of the Auditor General as to treasury board over-rulings of his decision. Hon. members of the House will be interested to know that the Auditor General says in his report that there have been no treasury board over-rulings of his decisions since last session.

INDIAN LANDS

Hon. J. H. KING (for the Minister of the Interior): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of the Interior I beg to report that there were no remissions on sales of Indian lands during the fiscal year ended March 31, 1926. I desire also on his behalf to give notice to the House that no irrigation regulations have been enacted under the provisions of chapter 61, section 57, of the revised statutes. The Minister of the Interior also desires to give notice to the House that no orders in council relative to water in the railway belt have been passed under the provisions of the statutes of 1913, chapter 45, section 4.

CIVIL SERVICE

BILL TO ABOLISH CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION AND PROVIDE FOR BUREAU OF EXAMINERS

Mr. P. A. SEGUIN (L'Assomption-Montcalm) moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 2, respecting the Civil Service. He said:

Mr. Speaker, the object of this bill is to abolish the Civil Service Commission as it exists to-day, in order to simply replace it by a board of examiners who will judge of the qualifications of the candidates applying for positions in the civil service and of those who are in line for promotions.

This bill in effect does away with the complex nature of the present act, while relieving the budget of some few hundred thousand dollars per year.

I am of the opinion that the present system has not in any way bettered the service and that it is a heavy burden, useless to the state.

This bill, it seems to me, has therefore its usefulness.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

[Mr. Cahan.]

PELEE ISLAND CABLE

On the Orders of the Day:

Mr. E. J. GOTT (South Essex): I desire to inquire from the Minister of Public Works if the repair work on Pelee island cable has been abandoned for the season, and if so is there a possibility of connecting the island with the mainland for the winter months? I wish also to inquire as to how far the work has progressed?

Hon. J. C. ELLIOTT (Minister of Public Works): I will be very glad indeed to make inquiries and ascertain the exact position of the work referred to by my hon. friend and give him the information he desires.

ATHABASKA ELECTION

On the Orders of the Day:

Mr. D. M. KENNEDY (Peace River): Will the Prime Minister inform us if we can have the report of the Minister of Justice in connection with the inquiry held into the Athabaska election in 1925 tabled within the next few days?

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): I cannot say offhand whether the report is in the Department of Justice, but if it is I will undertake to say that it will be laid on the table of the House.

GOVERNOR GENERAL'S SPEECH

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The House resumed from Monday December 13 consideration of the motion of Mr. L. Auger for an address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his speech at the opening of the session.

Mr. C. H. CAHAN (St. Lawrence-St. George): Mr. Speaker, at the outset of the remarks which I wish to make I think I may say, on behalf of all members on this side of the House, that we concur most cordially in the welcome which has been expressed by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King), and by the leader of the opposition (Mr. Guthrie), to His Excellency the Governor General and Lady Willingdon. I have no doubt that their sojourn in this country of ours will prove both a pleasure to them, a profit to us and a service to the crown which His Excellency represents. I do not imagine, Sir, despite the report of the Imperial conference committee and the remarks which have been made thereon by the Prime Minister, that His Excellency will find the duties of the office of Governor General in Canada very much increased or very much diminished by the alleged changes mentioned in the report of that committee. The Governor General as a representative of