

Notices of all intended applications for private bills are required to be published in the Official Gazette and newspapers of the district interested in the proposed legislation, for at least two months before the consideration of the petition. This rule is constantly suspended on the recommendation of the Standing Orders Committee on sufficient reasons being given to the Committee by the promoters.

In the House of Commons there is already practically all the machinery necessary to carry out the procedure in vogue in England, should the existing rules relating to Private Bills be amended in the same direction.

The Chairman of Committees of the Whole or of Ways and Means could easily discharge the duties of the same officer in England, whose not least important functions are those connected with the progress of Private Bills in Parliament.

In the Canadian House of Commons, the duties of examiners of petitions and bills have been practically discharged by Clerks of Private Bills Committees. The Clerk of Standing Orders follows in the newspaper all the notices for private bills, and informs the Chairman whether the Standing Orders have been complied with or not. The Committee are mainly governed by his report on these preliminaries and other points relative to the notice and the petition.

In the case of Railways, the most important subjects that come before the Committees—involving as they do, large questions of public policy and sectional or local interests—the House of Commons not long since adopted a Model Bill (see appendix E), "in accordance with which all Private Bills for acts of incorporation of, or in amendment of acts incorporating Railway Companies shall be drawn"—copies being obtained on application to the Clerk of the House.

This Standing Order has much facilitated legislation, and saved the time of the large and important Committee which supervises this class of bills.

It is now provided that before any Railway Bill is considered by the Committee, "a report shall be first submitted to the Committee by the Examiner, stating that he has examined the same, and has noted, opposite each section, any variations from the provisions contained in the Model Bill; and to ensure uniformity, the Examiner shall revise and certify every Private Bill passed by the Committees, and the reports thereon, before they are presented to the House.

This duty is now performed by an efficient Clerk of the Private Bill Committees in connection with the Law Clerk, and has worked on the whole satisfactorily. Under the direction of the Clerk of the House, these officers print and supervise all private bills. It is their duty also to report on all amendments in the Senate to Commons' Bills, before they are taken up in the latter body.

If the Chairman of Committees were to have his duties enlarged in accordance with English practice so as to act in conjunction with the Officers of the House, an improvement would be made, and a greater guarantee for efficient legislation given to the House.

But the Senate does not appear to possess the same efficient machinery that exists in the House of Commons for the initiation and consideration of Private Bill legislation. This arises chiefly from the fact that so few Private Bills have ever been introduced in that House that the attention of its members has never been fully directed to the subject, and its staff for important Committee work of this character is very limited. In the case of Divorce Bills, to which the Senate have chiefly devoted themselves, their rules have been much improved of late years, and a more legal and judicial character given to their procedure. In this particular the House