

CANADA

House of Commons Debates

OFFICIAL REPORT.

Friday, May 6, 1921.

The House met at Three o'clock.

RAILWAYS, CANALS AND TELE- GRAPH LINES

Mr. J. E. ARMSTRONG (East Lambton) presented the sixth report of the Select Standing Committee on Railways, Canals and Telegraph Lines.

STANDING ORDERS

Mr. P. F. CASGRAIN (Charlevoix—Montmorency) moved that the first report of the Select Standing Committee on Standing Orders be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

QUEBEC STEAMSHIP COMPANY

Mr. CASGRAIN moved:

That the petition of the Quebec Steamship Company be received forthwith, subject to the additional charge provided by Rule 89, paragraph 3 (a).

Motion agreed to.

FIRST READING

Bill No. 137, to amend and consolidate the Acts respecting Quebec Steamship Company.—Mr. Casgrain.

CIVIL SERVICE ACT AMENDMENT

Hon. E. K. SPINNEY (Yarmouth) moved that the first report of the Special Committee to which was referred Bill No. 122, to amend the Civil Service Act, 1918, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

CRIMINAL CODE AMENDMENT

Right Hon. C. J. DOHERTY (Minister of Justice) moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 138, to amend the Criminal Code.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the Bill covers quite a number of proposed amendments to different articles of the Code as it now stands. I will indicate briefly those that are of the most importance.

There is a provision to make it an offence to have illicit connection with any feeble-minded girl or woman, and the definition of feeble-minded is taken from the English Act.

There is a provision giving a Recorder's Court jurisdiction, as well as the recorder himself, and power, if a court of record, as it is in Montreal, to keep its records. This is a provision made necessary by recent decision to the effect that while the recorder acting, not as the Recorder's Court, had the extended jurisdiction of two magistrates, the Recorder's Court itself had not that jurisdiction. The business had been carried on for years on the assumption that the court had at least as much jurisdiction as the individual recorder. It is to correct the situation that the provision is introduced.

There is a provision repealing a proviso that was inserted in the Senate to the Bill that was passed by this House at the last session, which proviso had the result that on trials for seduction the judge might instruct the jury that if they did not think the evidence showed that the accused was wholly or chiefly to blame, they might acquit. The purpose of this amendment is to re-establish the Bill as it was passed by the Commons. There is a special provision also to prohibit illicit connection with Indian women. It has been found that there was necessity for special provision in that regard.

Another provision of the Bill is to make illegal the possession of bombs without lawful excuse.

Then we have a provision with regard to the existing law in connection with the necessity of permits for the possession of firearms. There has been very general representation that the existing law operated too rigorously, lent itself to abuses and subjected citizens to unnecessary annoyance. This matter has been pressed from many quarters. The hon. member for Muskoka (Mr. McGibbon), the hon. member for North Perth (Mr. Morphy) have been particularly insistent upon the necessity of reform. The hon. member for