

house to the peculiar method of procedure with which we are faced. I expressed the other day in a most courteous way my regret that a bill introduced by the government did not contain the usual explanatory note to enable hon. members on this side of the house to realize the meaning of the changes suggested.

Mr. CAHAN: I will tell my hon. friend that I learned my lesson the other day when the former Minister of Justice (Mr. Lapointe) pointed out to me a rule which I had not observed. That rule has been observed in connection with the proposed bill.

Mr. RINFRET: I surmise that that was the result of our remark. There is another matter of procedure to which I would refer. I think it is most unusual for an hon. minister to introduce a resolution from a department other than his own.

Mr. CAHAN: May I suggest to the hon. member that I am now the Acting Minister of National Revenue and I am authorized to introduce this bill.

Mr. RINFRET: Then I withdraw that part of my remarks. I am glad to see that the worth of the Secretary of State is recognized and that he is now given work outside of the rather narrow borders of his department.

Mr. CAHAN: I can assure my hon. friend that I have found sufficient to do in the State department.

Mr. RINFRET: I will admit that that point has no bearing on this particular instance, but we should not allow any minister other than the official or acting minister of a department to introduce in this house any matter affecting that department, even though it be to facilitate progress.

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the hon. acting Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Cahan) in the course of his remarks seemed to leave the impression that the bill to be introduced was a bill which he found in the Department of National Revenue at the time the present government came into office. The public, which understands very little about these matters, might assume from the minister's statement, that this measure was one which had come before the previous administration. If it was still in the department I think that would be *prima facie* evidence that if it had been before the cabinet for consideration it had been rejected by the previous administration.

[Mr. Rinfret.]

When the bill is before us we will be better able to indicate whether or not we on this side of the house will be in favour of its provisions. There are many bills prepared by departmental officials which do not meet with the approval of the ministry of the day. Whether or not that was a bill of that character we will only be able to ascertain when it is before the house.

I wish it to be quite clear that the hon. minister should not seek to leave the impression and I do not think he would wittingly do so, that the measure he is introducing is one which was favourably considered by the previous administration.

Hon. W. D. EULER (North Waterloo): Mr. Speaker, my memory is not as good as it might be or as I would wish it to be, and in the absence of the bill itself I am unable to say whether or not it is of the nature indicated by my hon. friend. However, I will take his word for it. I have a more or less faint recollection that a bill was prepared to which I had given my own consent or approval but which, according to my recollection, had never been considered by the preceding government. I think, also, as the acting minister says, the bill in itself is rather an innocuous one. It deals very largely with the administration of the department itself and no great departure from any existing principle is taken in it. I have of course to wait until the bill comes down to see its exact terms.

Motion agreed to and the house went into committee, Mr. LaVergne in the chair.

Resolution reported, read the second time and concurred in. Mr. Cahan thereupon moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 39 to amend the Customs Act.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

SUPPLY—AGRICULTURAL CONDITIONS

AMENDMENT TO MOTION OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

Right Hon. R. B. BENNETT (Minister of Finance) moved that the house go into committee of supply.

Mr. J. L. BROWN (Lisgar): Mr. Speaker, it is my intention before you leave the chair to bring to the notice of the house a question that we deem to be of prime importance, namely the position of agriculture in this country. I may say that before I sit down I shall move an amendment to the motion to go into supply.