

UNLAWFUL ASSOCIATIONS AND OATHS.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell) moved second reading of Bill (No. 7) further to amend the tenth chapter of the Consolidated Statutes for Lower Canada, respecting Seditious and Unlawful Associations and Oaths. He said: This Bill is of so simple a character, and as it seems to me, so commendable, as to require only a few brief words of explanation. The object of the Bill is to remove certain disabilities under which the Masonic body acting under the jurisdiction of the grand lodge of Quebec now rests. But I desire it to be well understood that the Bill makes no innovation and confers no new privileges. Before the union of the old provinces of Canada, I think about the year 1840, an Act was passed by the legislature of the province of Lower Canada, entitled "An Act respecting Seditious and Unlawful Associations and Oaths," prescribing certain penalties to oath-bound associations, for instance:

Every society or association, the members whereof are, according to the rules thereof, or to any provision, or any agreement for that purpose, required * * * to take any oath or engagement * * * not required or authorized by law, and every society or association, the members whereof, or any of them, take, or in any manner bind themselves by, any such oath or engagement,

- were made subject to certain penalties. But the last clause of this Act—which, let it be well understood, was passed by the legislature of Lower Canada about the year 1840, and which appears in the Consolidated Statutes of Lower Canada, provides:

And whereas, certain societies have been long accustomed to be holden in this province, under the denomination of lodges of Free Masons, the meetings whereof have been in great measure directed to charitable purposes—nothing in this Act shall extend to the meetings of any such society or lodge, holden under the said denomination and in conformity to the rules prevailing among the said societies of Free Masons; provided, such society or lodge has been constituted by or under the authority of warrants in that behalf, granted by, or derived from, any grand master or grand lodge in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

Now, at the time of the passage of this statute, all Masonic bodies in the province of Quebec were acting under the jurisdiction of the grand lodge of Great Britain. Subsequently the grand lodge of Canada was constituted, and, in 1885, a statute was passed by the united provinces extending the same exemption to Masonic lodges acting under the jurisdiction of the grand lodge of Canada. Again, subsequently, about the year 1870, the grand lodge of Quebec was formed out of the grand lodge of Canada. But the exemption and relief from these penalties respecting unlawful associations and oaths was not extended to the lodges acting under the jurisdiction of the grand lodge of Quebec. The object

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of this Bill is to give to the latter the same measure of relief which the Masonic organizations acting under the jurisdiction of the grand lodge of Great Britain and the grand lodge of Canada enjoy. As I have said, there is no innovation, and I take it to be wholly unnecessary to address to this House any argument whatever as to the propriety of passing the Bill which I have now the honour to ask the House to read a second time with respect to a society whose character is so high, whose members occupy so prominent a place in the country and whose purposes are so well known to be of a benevolent character. I move the second reading of this Bill, seconded by the hon. member for Lincoln (Mr. Gibson).

Motion agreed to. Bill read the second time, and House resolved itself into Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Mr. McKAY. I would move that another clause be added to this Bill. This measure is intended to exempt the Masonic order from all penalties they may labour under at present in respect of the law referred to. I think the same exemption should be extended to other charitable and benevolent associations, so as to relieve them from the disabilities under which they labour. I would move that the following clause be added:—

That all societies, associations and lodges, whose members are bound by oath, and whose objects are exclusively of a social, charitable and benevolent character, are hereby exempted from the penalties prescribed by chapter 10 of the Consolidated Statutes of Canada.

I move that this clause be added to the Bill for the purpose of relieving members of other charitable associations in the province of Quebec from the disabilities which they may labour under.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER. I believe that this amendment is out of order, not being relevant to the Bill which has just passed its second reading. The hon. gentleman cannot move it until notice is given the House.

Bill reported, and read the third time and passed.

CONTRACTS TO ALIENS.

Mr. McLENNAN moved second reading of Bill (No. 9) to prevent the letting of contracts to aliens. He said: Mr. Speaker, it may be necessary for me to offer some explanations in regard to this Bill. I have no fault or quarrel with the contractors who are doing work in this country, and I believe many of them are very good men. It is the principle and not the individuals that I object to. This Bill only deals with the letting of Government contracts. It does not interfere with the investing of capital in our country; neither does it in-