

which had been laid on the Table last Session, for the purpose of carrying out the suggestions made by the joint committee, and to include in the revision the statutes of last Session. The volumes which I laid on the Table half an hour ago include the results of the labors of those gentlemen, and supplement the labors of the chief commissioners. Those volumes will be found to carry out the suggestions of the committee of both Houses of last Session. The Acts of last Session are included, and a few further amendments which seemed to be necessary in order to give effect and completeness to the whole work. It is proposed that, after the revision has been adopted by Parliament at this Session, if it should be, the work should be finally issued, with the statutes of the present Session included, and that it should be supplemented then by a third volume, embracing the Statutes of the United Kingdom having reference to Canada and in force in Canada, Orders in Council which have the force of law in the Dominion of Canada, and other statutes which hon. members will find in schedule B of the volumes now on the Table, and which contain provisions which the commissioners did not deem it desirable to consolidate, partly because some of them relate to portions of Canada less than a whole Province, partly because some of them have a temporary character, and partly because some of them are of doubtful jurisdiction as between this Parliament and the Provincial Parliaments. When this is done the consolidation will be complete. In stating to the House that the recommendations made by the committee of last Session have been adopted, I should add one qualification. The report of the committee set forth a schedule of amendments which they desired to be made in the revision, and they closed with this general suggestion :

That each chapter be numbered and given a short title, thus :—“Chapter 1.—Of Interpretation of Statutes,” in lieu of the long title in the draft, and that all preambles be left out.

The reference to preambles is to the usual expression preceding every Act of Parliament, but not always preceding each chapter of Revised or Consolidated Statutes—“be it enacted by the Governor General,” etc. This suggestion has not been adopted, and it is not proposed to act on it. I understand it not to have been as formal a recommendation as the other recommendations of the committee, and there seemed to be reasons commending themselves to the judgment of the revisers why that suggestion should not be carried out. One is that the practice of having each chapter of the revision appear as a separate Act, is a practice which has been adopted in Ontario, and, I think, in all the other Provinces of the Dominion except New Brunswick and Nova Scotia; and it was the opinion of at least some of the gentlemen connected with the revision in those two Provinces that it would be more convenient, for uniformity and other reasons, such as convenience of quotation and convenience of reference in amending Acts, to adopt the practice pursued in Ontario. With this single exception the Statutes laid on the Table today embody the suggestions which were made by the committee of both Houses last Session.

**Mr. BLAKE.** The business which the hon. gentleman proposes to engage in is certainly one of some seriousness, and, I think, should demand a little more than that formal attention which he seemed to suppose the House should be called on to give it. If we give it no more than formal attention on this occasion, we shall on no occasion have given it more. The committee only considered it during the last Session of Parliament, and the time and circumstances under which the consolidation was brought down were such as to render it impossible for the mass of members to deal with it. I am glad to find it brought down at so early a period this Session, and I hope it will receive

something more from the House than the formal attention which the hon. gentleman bespoke. I think it ought to, because it involves certain questions which do not arise in ordinary consolidations, one of the most important of which the hon. gentleman incidentally touched upon. I refer to the grave and serious question which arises in our legislative transactions of the power of Parliament to pass certain laws which we assume occasionally to pass. The hon. gentleman has told us, what we were not informed of in the Speech from the Throne, that since last Session arrangements were made whereby the volume now submitted is made to contain the Acts of last Session, a perfectly proper proceeding; and he has informed us in general terms of the character of other changes which have been made. I took the liberty, in the short debate which took place last Session, of suggesting that we might find not merely additions, but perhaps also subtractions in the process of judicious delay, and I did not hear the hon. gentleman gratify our curiosity as to whether those expectations have been realised. Although he alluded to the Acts of doubtful jurisdiction, there is one rather large Act that was in the consolidation of which the jurisdiction is no longer in doubt; I refer to the License Act, commonly called the McCarthy Act. We know not if that will appear; if not, I suppose the hon. gentleman will inform us of the economy of space which has been gained by the subsequent labors of his commissioners. I do not propose to say anything with reference to the principle on which the consolidation has been effected just now. My hon. friend behind me pointed out last Session some circumstances, which I thought very well worthy of attention, with reference to the character of the consolidation. It is of great consequence that it should be framed upon just principles, and it seemed to me the suggestions of my hon. friend were such as might well have been attended to on the occasion of the further consideration which the hon. Minister of Justice tells us has been given to the statutes since that time. But these suggestions may perhaps be more fitly made at a later stage, when we understand exactly what alterations have been made in the volume.

**Mr. THOMPSON (Antigonish).** I may, in reply to the observations of the hon. gentleman, say that I did not, I think, express myself as desiring that the measure should receive only a formal consideration. I referred to the different stages as being matters of formal proceeding, and it may be that I expressed myself in a way to be misunderstood. I made that remark as a reason why I should enter into an explanation of the Bill at this early stage, and why I supposed it would be more suitable that I should explain now than at the second reading, when I did think the Bill would be passing through a formal stage. But I shall personally, and I am sure my colleagues will also, be greatly gratified if this Bill receive from the members of the House a great deal more than merely formal consideration. With regard to the observations which the hon. gentleman has made as to the statutes of doubtful jurisdiction, I perceive the hon. gentleman has misunderstood me again. The commissioners have not taken the liberty of putting statutes which have passed this Parliament into the schedule of Acts of doubtful jurisdiction. In referring to the subject of doubtful jurisdiction, I referred to Acts in schedule B as Acts which were in force prior to the union of the Provinces, which remain in force in the different Provinces in which they have been passed, and in relation to which, or to some of which, it may be doubtful whether this Parliament has authority to repeal or amend. The particular statute referred to did not, therefore, come within the category at all. The License Act was embraced among the Acts in force, before the decision of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, which was arrived at a