

The Address—Mr. Bracken

an old institution in British parliamentary practice. It is a speech which is prepared by the government and read by the representative of the crown. The debate upon it is one in which custom gives the honour of moving and seconding it to two of the junior members of the house, junior members on the government side. It is a debate in which both tradition and custom favour, by these two men, speeches which shall not be too controversial, which see nothing to commend in the opposition and which see only virtue in the government. I wish to commend both speakers for the manner in which they have maintained the tradition so long established.

If they see only virtue in the government, this is one occasion when we can excuse them. If they see nothing to commend in the opposition, this is one occasion when we can forgive them. Without further comment on that particular aspect of the matter, let me say quite sincerely that this is one occasion upon which, without agreeing with all that these hon. gentlemen have said, we can commend them for their effort, and personally I wish to extend my congratulations to them on their contribution to the debate.

I shall refer to only one matter to which they made reference, namely, the departure of our present governor general and the coming very soon of a new one. Earlier this afternoon we paid our respects to Lord Athlone, who is shortly to leave us. With respect to the coming governor general, I am sure we shall all extend to him a sincere and generous welcome. He comes to us as an outstanding British citizen and a great soldier as well as the representative of the king. I am sure that all Canadians will welcome him in all three of these capacities, and I am equally sure that his duties here will be carried out in a manner which will bring credit to himself and to the crown which he will represent.

As custom provides, I shall reserve my further remarks until the next sitting of the house. I wish, therefore, to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion agreed to and debate adjourned.

On motion of Mr. Mackenzie King the house adjourned at 5.30 p.m.

Monday, March 18, 1946.

The house met at three o'clock.

WILD LIFE

PROVISION FOR APRIL 10 AS JACK MINER NATIONAL WILD LIFE DAY

Mr. J. R. MacNICOL (Davenport) moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 2, respecting the Jack Miner National Wild Life Day.

[Mr. Bracken.]

He said: I deem it a high privilege to move the introduction of this bill, seconded I may say by another great friend of the late Jack Miner, the hon. member for Cochrane (Mr. Bradette), which proposes that April 10 be proclaimed as The Jack Miner National Wild Life Day. It would seem to me that April 10 is a fitting day on which to initiate and proclaim such an act. At that time of the year all varieties of insectivorous birds return to Canada from their winter resting place in the south. Everyone knows the value of insectivorous birds to the country's production. At the same time these great wild fowl, the Canada goose, and ducks as well, are leaving their southern winter home and flying back to our own Arctic ocean area to nest. I cannot do better than quote what the late and celebrated Irvin S. Cobb said with reference to the late Jack Miner, because many words at this stage of the bill would be superfluous. Mr. Cobb said of Jack Miner that he was "the greatest practical naturalist on this planet." He was indeed the greatest conservationist of wild life on this planet, and in his memory I am very happy to move the introduction of this bill. I heard Jack Miner say on more than one occasion: "I am not so much interested in the number of spots on the woodpecker's tail as I am in the preservation of the species." That was his life work—conservation. He was Canada's greatest conservationist, and April 10, when the birds are coming back, would be a fitting time for schools, humane societies and other organizations interested in wild life to inform their pupils or members of the value to Canada of wild life conservation.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

RAILWAY ACT

POWER TO PROHIBIT SOUND SIGNALS AT CROSSINGS IN OR NEAR CITIES AND TOWNS

Mr. RODNEY ADAMSON (York West) moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 3, to amend the Railway Act.

He said: This bill is identical with the one I introduced at the last session of parliament. It merely extends the power of municipalities adjoining or contiguous to cities, but which are in fact physically part of the same metropolitan area, to pass by-laws dispensing with the statutory sound warning, by bell and whistle, at specified level crossings within the confines of the said municipalities. It confers the same power on urban municipalities which may be designated as townships or villages as on those designated as cities or towns, which have this power by authority of the Railway Act as it now reads.