

House, should be given the opportunity of becoming conversant with the contents of the measures introduced, when the speech explained that measure on its introduction is delivered. Let me quote from Sir John Bourinot :

It is usual on the introduction of a Bill—on the motion for leave—to explain clearly and succinctly its main provisions ; but it is not the practice to debate it at length at that stage, such discussion being more properly and conveniently deferred to the second reading when the Bill is printed and the House in a position to discuss its principle. Sometimes, however, a short discussion may arise on some features of the Bill on the motion for its introduction, as there is no rule to prevent a debate.

That is quite true, but, when on an important Bill, such as that creating new provinces in the Northwest Territories, the main speech of its introducer is made on the motion for leave to introduce, I think the Bill itself should then be in the hands of hon. members, so that they might be seized of its contents before it is introduced.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. So far as my information goes, and I think it is accurate, this is not the English practice.

Mr. WHITE. I do not know what the English practice is.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. In this country we have been accustomed to explain Bills on their second reading, but in England all important measures are fully exposed and explained on their first reading by the minister in charge.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I do not think there is much difference between the right hon. gentleman and myself regarding the practice, but the question is whether the practice is carried out, and the only difference between us is as to the practice which was pursued in this case.

PRIVATE BILLS.

NORTHWEST TELEPHONE COMPANY.

House in committee on Bill (No. 28) to incorporate the Northwest Telephone Company.—Mr. Turriff.

Mr. BOLE. The point I desire to raise is whether it is advisable we should endorse the principle of incorporating more telephones. A Bill somewhat similar to this was introduced in the Manitoba Legislature a few weeks ago and was opposed by the council of the city of Winnipeg, which I have the honour to represent in this House. They opposed it chiefly on the ground that as the policy of taking over the business of telephone companies by the government was in the air, it would not be advisable to incorporate any more companies, and the Bill was sent back to the committee in order that

Mr. WHITE.

they might carefully inquire into the whole question of having telephone business conducted by the government. When the Bill before us was introduced into this House, I regret very much that I was not present and therefore unable to put on record my objection ; and I deem it now my duty to reflect the opinion expressed by the city of Winnipeg, an opinion with which I am in full sympathy and accord. I have in my hands a resolution passed by the city council of Winnipeg on February 20, last, which is as follows :

That as this council have a reasonable hope that the telephone system may in the near future be under government control, they would look with disfavour on the granting of any new telephone charters as complicating the situation, and hereby instruct our solicitors to oppose any such legislation now contemplated at Ottawa.

With the spirit of that resolution I am fully in harmony. A telephone business, being essentially a monopoly and an important public utility, it is dangerous to have it in the hands of a private corporation. A great many cities throughout the United States, and I think in Canada also, have made thorough inquiries into this subject. The city of San Francisco had an application before it for a charter for a local exchange, but representations were made to the council that the telephone business was essentially a monopoly, and therefore no new telephone company should be chartered and the application was not granted. Instead, the city of San Francisco appointed a commission to inquire into the whole subject, and the commission reported. This is the last clause of its report, as published in the bulletin of the League of American Municipalities in November, 1904 :

Inasmuch as a telephone was essentially a monopoly, that it would simply increase the burden on the citizens when they increased the number of telephone companies. There is no other public utility with which we come in contact where there are so many objections to competition.

That is the mandate of a commission which has made extensive inquiries, which visited all the important cities on the Pacific coast and examined into the conditions.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Will the hon. gentleman tell us exactly what commission that was, I did not quite hear him.

Mr. BOLE. A commission was appointed by the city of San Francisco to inquire into the whole question of the telephone business. An application was made by certain promoters to the city of San Francisco for permission to construct and operate a rival telephone business in San Francisco. Representations were made to the city council that to multiply telephone lines would be a nuisance, and the city council therefore