

expressed a desire for legislation upon this matter. The farmers know better than anybody else whether they need this legislation or not. I have not heard from the Minister of Agriculture whether there has been an expression of opinion by a majority of the farmers of Canada for legislation along this line. If there has been, then it is right that we shall have legislation; but I am inclined to think it will be found that there has not been anything like a universal expression of opinion in favour of legislation on the subject of seeds. I am clearly of opinion—and I hope I shall be able to press this view on the attention of the House from time to time—that we are too apt hastily to introduce legislation of this kind. I do not think we sufficiently appreciate the fact that the farmers of Canada are quite capable of looking after some of their own business themselves; and I think there has been too great a tendency, not only in this parliament, but in other legislatures, to interfere with the farmer and treat him as if he ought to be in leading strings, and if his conduct required to be regulated. This measure, as has been said, necessitates an inspection, and inspection entails expense and patronage and other evils which do not result beneficially to the farming community. I am not at all opposed to this resolution passing; but I want before the Act passes, to have some definite statement from the minister, and some indication from the farming community as to their will in the matter.

Mr. HEYD. I regard the Bill before the House as one of the most important that we have had before us for a long time. When the government presents a railway Bill involving the expenditure of millions of dollars it is regarded as a very important matter. But when a Bill of this kind comes before us, it appears trivial; and yet associated with it are facts of such tremendous consequence that it is very important that we should consider it carefully and deliberately. This Bill is intended to prevent the fouling of the soil throughout the length and breadth of this country. I am surprised when I go through the country to see the number of farms completely covered with noxious weeds, which could have been entirely prevented if the care which we now intend to exercise had been exercised ten or fifteen years ago. The mere fact that the farming community have not asked for this Bill does not prove that the necessity for it does not exist. I am surprised at the ignorance which exists throughout this country upon the subject of seeds. That was brought to my attention a short time ago by a visit which I paid to the seed experimental station which we have in Ottawa. The necessity for this very Bill was there strongly impressed upon my mind. Farmers often buy seeds at \$5 or \$6 a bushel when they are really paying about \$30 a bushel for the fertile seeds; they be-

Mr. LENNOX.

ing loaded with twenty or thirty varieties of noxious weeds. It is to prevent this that this Bill is introduced; and before it passes the final stage, it would be well for hon. gentlemen who are interested in the matter to visit the seed-inspecting station and acquaint themselves with what this Bill is intended to do for the country.

Resolution reported, read the first and second time, and agreed to.

#### INQUIRIES, &c.

On the Orders of the Day being called:

Mr. E. F. CLARKE. Might I ask the hon. Minister of Railways and Canals if he has yet received from the commissioner he appointed to inquire into the cause of the accident at West Lorne, the report he was instructed to make?

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. Yes, I have received the report to-day, and I am having it copied.

Mr. CLARKE. Will the hon. gentleman lay the report on the Table?

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. Yes, I will do so.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN (Halifax). I moved some time ago for the correspondence between this government and the government of the North-west Territories on the subject of provincial autonomy. I do not think the papers have yet been brought down. I also moved some time ago for a return of all persons in the North-west Territories who had been naturalized within a certain period of years. I believe the return has been sent forward, but it has not been brought down.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. I will bring the matter to the attention of the acting minister.

Mr. J. D. REID. I would like to draw Mr. Speaker's attention to the telephone service which we have in the House of Commons. We have downstairs a long distance telephone which I use considerably, as I do at home, and I must say that the service we get here is disgraceful. In saying this I am expressing both my own sentiments and those of a great many other members. If a person is called in half an hour, he is doing well. I would like the Bell Telephone Company, if it is at all possible, to give us a long distance service in the House of Commons at least equal to the poorest that they give in other places.

Mr. SPEAKER. I shall be pleased to call the attention of the telephone company to the service, and I hope they will remedy the defect which the hon. gentleman complains of.