



EXTRACT FROM HANSARD.

NO. 57 13 FEB. 1914 DATE 12th December 1913. PAGE 1063-4

SECRETARY'S OFFICE.

SPEAKER

Hon. W. F. Massey

SUBJECT

Apiaries Amendment Bill.

APIARIES AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. Mr. MASSEY (Minister of Agriculture).—In moving the second reading of this Bill, I would just like to say that it deals with a branch of the agricultural industry of which I have had very little practical experience. It deals with the beekeeping industry and the export of honey. The Bill is the result of a conference which met in Wellington last June, and coming from the conference there was a deputation which waited on me in my capacity as Minister of Agriculture. I would like to acknowledge this: that although the beekeeping industry is one of the minor industries of the country, it is capable of great development, and some important developments have taken place in connection with the industry during the last two years. The beekeepers have now reached the export stage, and it may not be known to members that a very considerable quantity of honey was exported from New Zealand last year, and I believe the amount will be very considerably increased during the present year. Consequently it is the interest and the duty of Parliament to do all it possibly can to assist the people who are engaged in this industry. The members of the conference that waited on me admitted that the legislation of 1907—the last occasion on which an Act passed through Parliament dealing with the subject—was exceedingly useful to them, but that developments had taken place since the Act of 1907 was passed which are not provided for in the Act of that year. Since 1907 the conference of beekeepers had waited periodically on the Government of the day, and had urged on them the great necessity of making amendments in the law. When the deputation came to me at the commencement of the present session I promised to submit proposals to Parliament if they gave me the opportunity of doing so. That is to say, if they submitted their proposals to the Law Draftsman or a member of the legal fraternity, and had them put into legal phraseology, I would give Parliament the opportunity of agreeing to them or otherwise. I would like to call attention to this exceedingly strong statement which was drawn up and signed by each member of the deputation which waited upon me—

"The lack of this proposed Act is practically forcing into partial, if not complete, bankruptcy the beekeepers concerned."

This is a very strong statement, and I hope it is exaggerated; but it has proved to me the necessity of something being done by legislation for the people connected with the industry, and I again remind honourable members that the conference held in Wellington was representative of beekeepers from the North Cape to the Bluff. I will now explain the provisions in the different clauses. In clause 2 (1) the definition of "beekeeper" is extended to cover a person who may not at the time actually have any bees in his possession, but may have appliances that have been and are to be again used for bees. These appliances may be diseased, and ought to be subject to the provisions of the Act. Clause 2 (2) gives

a more correct designation of one of the diseases affecting bees, and adds a new disease—"Isle of Wight disease"—which has appeared in recent years in England, and is much to be dreaded. Clause 3 is merely a machinery amendment. Under clause 4 (1) beekeepers are required to "forthwith" take certain action. "Forthwith" is an arbitrary word, and it is desirable rather to make the action taken within a specified time. Clause 4 (2) provides power for an Inspector to employ an assistant in connection with his duties. Under clause 5 the substitution of the word "approved" for "new" in section 6 of the principal Act will enable the Inspector to authorize a beekeeper to employ a hive in use before, but perfectly healthy and satisfactory. Clause 6 (a) authorizes the employment of an assistant by the Inspector, and (b) authorizes the destruction of hives not properly constructed. Such hives are a source of danger, as disease may appear, yet pass unobserved. Clause 7 is another machinery amendment, authorizing the employment of an assistant by the Inspector. The powers proposed in clause 8 are most important. The industry is of such dimensions now that the introduction of diseased bees or appliances from outside might spell ruin to numbers of apiarists. For instance, Isle of Wight disease might be introduced. It is also necessary to have wide powers to deal with an outbreak of disease in New Zealand by confining it to one spot. Similar provisions exist in regard to the introduction of diseases of live-stock and of fruit. Clause 9 gives the Governor power to make regulations—(a) and (b) For dealing with diseased bees, appliances, &c., introduced or attempted to be introduced. (c) For the registration of apiaries. Commercial beekeepers in particular press for this to be done. It will enable our officers to get in close touch with all beekeepers, and they exercise closer supervision over disease. (d) For fixing fees that it may be necessary to charge for services rendered. (e) and (f) For the compulsory grading of honey. Now that the export of honey has been commenced, it is felt that it should be on the same basis as that of dairy-produce and hemp, the compulsory grading of which has been so beneficial in establishing confidences on the market. (g) For general purposes. These are the principal provisions of the Bill, and I move its second reading.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 2.—(1.) Section two of the principal Act is hereby amended by adding to the definition of "beekeeper" the following words: 'or who has in his possession any appliances that have been used in connection with apiculture.'

"(2.) Section two of the principal Act is hereby further amended by omitting the words 'Bacillus alvei,' and substituting the words 'Bacillus pluton'; and by inserting, before the words 'and any other diseases,' the words 'Isle of Wight disease (Nosema apis).'"

The Hon. Mr. MASSEY (Minister of Agriculture) moved to insert after "possession," the words "or allows to be kept on any land occupied by him."

Amendment agreed to, and clause as amended agreed to.

Clause 4.—(1.) Section five of the principal Act is hereby amended by omitting the words 'forthwith take,' and substituting the words 'take within a specified time.'

"(2.) The powers of entry conferred on an Inspector by the said section five may be exercised by any person authorized in writing in that behalf by the Inspector, and any person so authorized shall forthwith report to the Inspector the results of the examination made by him."

The Hon. Mr. MASSEY moved to add the following words to subclause (1): "and by omitting the words 'within a specified time to destroy by fire,' and substituting the words 'to destroy by fire within a specified time.'"

Amendment agreed to, and clause as amended agreed to.

Bill reported, and read the third time.

Seen.
J.S.M.
24.2.14.