

COMPENSATION BILL GETS SECOND READING

Legislature Almost at One on Important Measure

MAY COME IN FORCE JAN. 1

**Liberals Urge Government to Hasten
Its Enforcement—General Demand
for the Bill—Slight Changes Likely
in Committee.**

Workmen's compensation held the centre of the stage in the Legislature yesterday. After seven years of waiting on the part of the working classes of the Province, the House has adopted the principle of an up-to-date measure, and the bill now goes into the committee stage to be considered in detail.

While the leaders of both parties in the House agreed that the bill was of such public importance that best results could most probably be secured if all discussion was of a non-partisan character, Mr. Rowell openly avowed his desire that this should follow, as he considered the enactment of this legislation of paramount importance to the workers. But it remained for Mr. Brewster to introduce the party element, and seek to discredit Mr. Rowell's attitude by declaring that the Opposition leader had not always entertained the high opinion of Sir William Meredith that he had expressed during the afternoon. Mr. Elliott quickly turned the tables on Mr. Brewster and showed that the position of the Liberal party was that they criticized the Government for delay in 1911 and would offer the same criticism now if no legislation had been forthcoming.

Hon. Mr. Lucas did not add much to the general explanation that he made when the bill was introduced and given a first reading. The second reading was preceded by the formal adoption of a resolution authorizing the appropriation of \$100,000 out of the consolidated revenue fund to the reserve fund required by the act. Mr. Lucas did not know if this would be sufficient, in fact it was quite possible that it would be more.

Date of Enforcement.

In moving the second reading of the workmen's compensation bill, Hon. Mr. Lucas said he had made all the observations of a general character before, but there was one point of criticism he desired to remove. This was that there was no date fixed for the bringing of the bill into force. He remarked that it was hoped the bill might be brought into operation during the present year, though, of course, the Government would naturally act upon the reports of the Commissioners. However, to end any discussion and to fix a date when it would definitely come into force he proposed in committee to introduce an amendment which would declare that in any event it would come into operation not later than January 1 next, or at an earlier date, which the Government might by proclamation declare. He thought that for many reasons it should be brought into operation by November 1.

Mr. Rowell, comparing the bill with the act as drafted by Sir William Meredith, noticed a very marked change in the amounts payable to the partially disabled class. It appeared to him that in the draft bill the basis of benefit for partial disability was the difference between the earning capacity of the man before he sustained the injury and after. That ap-