

in the gallery on the fourth floor of this building?

Sir THOMAS WHITE: I think it was Homer Watson.

Mr. OLIVER: Is he still at large?

Sir THOMAS WHITE: As to these particular paintings, to which my hon. friend refers, I will not give any opinion to the committee but I would say that Mr. Homer Watson is one of our most distinguished artists. My hon. friend from North Perth (Mr. Morphy) suggested that some of our artists might be engaged in painting battle scenes. If you take a man out of his particular sphere he is apt to accomplish the opposite to an artistic result. I do not know whether we have any artists in Canada who are capable of painting battle scenes but we have some very deserving artists and I think that even at a time like this we should not overlook those members of the community, who mean a great deal to the country from the aesthetic point of view, who have to make their living like the rest of us and whose numbers I should personally like to see increased rather than diminished as the nation goes forward. We must not think, although we are sometimes prone to do it, that the only votes which should go through are those for dredging or public works. If we are to be what we expect to be we must keep the light burning in the realms of literature, art and science.

Mr. GRAHAM: Does the minister think that at this time it would be inflicting any great hardship on our artists if we did not have this vote? We are all more or less affected with financial stringency and we have been willing parties to asking any person who makes an income to contribute a good deal of it towards carrying on the war. Under those conditions, does the minister think that the people who want to be taxed to carry on a war would be willing to undergo the same operation even to encourage art at this particular time? The encouragement of art at the proper time, of course, is very laudable. At this particular time we are being asked to restrict our appetites, to control our food consumption and to contribute of any little means we may have in order that the financial condition in Canada may be kept equal to the demands upon it. In addition to that we are asked to send away our sons to fight an enemy who is a real enemy. Under these conditions does the minister think we ought to expend money

[Mr. Oliver.]

for this purpose, no matter how laudable it would be under ordinary circumstances?

Sir THOMAS WHITE: I was influenced by the same view that has moved my hon. friend to express himself as he has. I think his criticism would be amply justified if we had maintained the original vote. This country has been in the habit of voting \$100,000 a year to encourage Canadian art. This is not for the purpose solely of giving Canadian artists work. This National gallery lends pictures to all the cities throughout Canada, especially, I understand, in the West, so that the work is really a national work. The vote for the year preceding the war was \$100,000, last year it was cut down to \$25,000, and this year the amount placed in the estimates was \$8,000, but it was thought it would have a serious effect on the artists and sculptors, and it was decided to place an additional \$10,000 in the estimates, which will make the total vote this year \$18,000. I do not like to ask Parliament to spend money for anything other than practical purposes, especially during the war, but I feel a certain kindness towards men engaged in art and science. They do more for the nation than we realize, and I think we should be generous, rather than otherwise, with them. This is not a large amount. It is the amount barely necessary to take care of commissions which have already been given, and it will not have any appreciable effect on military efforts during the war. The money is paid out to artists. Some meritorious cases have been brought to my attention since the war broke out. We have some notable sculptors in this country, men who have brought credit to Canada by their work. Some of them have devoted their lives to the profession, and the war has caused a stoppage of orders. We have been gradually slowing down in the matter of this vote, but we think we have given fair consideration to these artists and sculptors.

Mr. MORPHY: It is quite true that the amount is insignificant, and hardly worth while talking about, but there seems to be a principle underlying it, and if the minister by governmental action is going to take care of all the individuals in Canada who have suffered by the war he will require a large appropriation. Our pension bill is going to be very heavy, and there is a continuous cry—and I think a proper cry—that more should be done for the returned soldier, for those who are entitled to pensions, for everybody who has suffered through the war. I wish to refer to a case