

Mr. LEMIEUX: I am not sufficiently familiar with the intricacies of the tariff imposed by this item to realize the exact extent of the duty on moving picture films. There may be something in the argument of my hon. friend that we should not over-tax this particular business. But these moving picture shows are always filled to the limit. The theatres on Bank, Sparks and Sussex streets are always crowded, and very frequently people may be seen waiting at the doors. If any reduction of the proposed additional taxation is intended, I suggest that it be made on tea.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: These films are usually one thousand feet in length and the tax of 3 cents per lineal foot amounts to \$30 per reel. Since the introduction of the resolution it has been pointed out to me that at the beginning of the year contracts were made for the year with the manufacturers of films for the lease of films and there is now no way in which the persons entering into these contracts could protect themselves. The item as it now stands would be an injustice to such persons, but, as amended, with the additional tax on the exhibitors of films which I propose to submit to the committee, we shall receive as much revenue and the taxation will be more fairly distributed.

Mr. FIELDING: Some years ago, in one of the revisions of the tariff, an item was inserted prohibiting the importation of posters and handbills depicting scenes of crime and violence—I think my recollection of the phraseology is correct. We found that large numbers of printed handbills and posters were being brought in from the United States depicting scenes which could not fail to have an unpleasant effect. I think that item is still in the tariff, and we all agree that it is a wise provision, but I do not suppose that under the wording of the tariff as it stands, that provision would apply to moving picture films. Some of the films which are being brought in today certainly depict scenes of crime and violence and are not of a very elevating character, and I suggest that my hon. friend discuss the matters with the customs officials. Let us make sure that while we prohibit handbills depicting scenes of crime and violence, we do not allow moving pictures to be brought in which are just as bad or worse. It is true that we have censors in each province, but if we use the machinery of the customs to prevent the importation not only of handbills but of

[Mr. A. K. Maclean.]

films depicting scenes of that character, it would be a step in the right direction.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: I move:

That the following words be added after item 657a:

"Provided, however, that the goods hereinbefore enumerated shall be exempt from the rates of duties of customs specified in section 3 of the Customs Tariff War Revenue Act, 1915."

The purpose of that amendment is to provide that the Customs Tariff War Revenue Act, which imposes 5½ per cent under the British preference and 7½ per cent under the general tariff, shall not apply to these several items.

Mr. MOWAT: It is evident that the picture show people have been making to the acting minister representations which have induced him to make this reduction, but I am glad to hear him say that the revenue is not to suffer by that. The point I wish to make is this, that I think he should impress upon the picture show people the fact that the kind of plays that are being shown are not at all popular with a large part of our population. I am not now discussing those pictures depicting crimes and things of that sort that are demoralizing, but the picture show people are utterly without discretion as to what films they bring into Canada. Whilst some of the pictures are very good and some of the parts are taken by the best actors and actresses, yet there are others which show altogether the seamy side of life and not our life. The consequence is that our people are getting to think that the proper way to live is as depicted on the screen. We constantly see pictures which depict, not the best kind of American people and their life, but the less desirable class. I would respectfully suggest that the Acting Minister of Finance if he is again approached for lowering of the proposed tax should tell the picture show people that, unless they are more discriminating, unless they think more of and find out more about the character of the films they bring into Canada, they will not receive further favours so far as many members of this House are concerned.

Sir SAM HUGHES: I desire to ask a question concerning the importation by the Government of Canada of films for various purposes. Does the minister know whether any such films have, in the last two years, been ordered by the Government of Canada from American concerns?

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: I have no knowledge of there being any importation of films by the Government.