

and registration system such as I have referred to.

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. In answer to my hon. friend's inquiry, I would say that the subject of insuring letters has received the attention of the department, but at present we do not see our way to suggesting that change. To do so would, in the first place, require the department to equip the cars with burglar-proof safes, which alone would amount to a very large sum. An estimate was made for me of the cost of such equipment, by the president of the Bankers' Association, and my recollection is that according to his estimate such an equipment would involve an expenditure of between one and two million dollars. Therefore, inasmuch as there is, as my hon. friend correctly said, an express company doing that branch of the public service to-day, I have not felt warranted in suggesting it to the House. With regard to the 5-cent registration fee, that was imposed many years ago on the advice of the then Postmaster General, the hon. member for Lanark (Mr. Haggart). At that time the House discussed the question as to whether 5 cents was too high, and the majority of the House concurred in the recommendation creating the change, when it went into effect and has continued ever since. I myself have often felt that 5 cents was too high, but I am not yet prepared with any scheme upon the subject. But I would tell my hon. friend that in regard to the class of remittances he alludes to, of a dollar or under, and involving a registration, that objection will be removed on the 1st of July, when the postal note system will go into force, and I think it would not then be necessary for letters to be registered containing anything but postal notes, they being payable to order, and payable at particular places.

Motion agreed to, and Bill read the first time.

INSOLVENCY LEGISLATION.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. Before the Orders of the Day are called, I desire to draw the attention of the hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce, who is leading the House, to a very important question that is now before Parliament; and if necessary, I will conclude with a motion, in order that I may make the few remarks that I desire to make. I refer to the Insolvency Bill introduced by the hon. member for Laval (Mr. Fortin) in a very able and luminous speech, showing that that hon. gentleman has taken a great deal of trouble to grapple with that important and complicated question. But I wish particularly to draw the attention of the Minister of Trade and Commerce, who fortunately, in regard to that question, is at this moment leading the House, to what I regard as

its paramount importance. I know it is a question involving a great diversity of opinion among hon. gentlemen on both sides of the House. I have had occasion during a somewhat lengthened residence in England to learn how very important it is to the commercial interests of Canada that some measure of insolvency should be adopted by this Parliament that would relieve the commercial mind of Great Britain and other countries from the impression that they are under great insecurity in trading with this country on account of the risk of being subjected to most unjustifiable and improper loss. I had occasion again and again to listen with great mortification to statements made by commercial men in the great commercial metropolis of the world, pointing out the frightful injustice they had suffered, the losses they had sustained, because a few parties in Canada had obtained their property, and were enabled to divide it among their friends and others in whose hands they wished to place that property, absolutely ignoring all the claim of the persons from whom the property came. I have great reason to know that the effect of that is to place commercial transactions with Canada at a very great disadvantage, and that disadvantage could, I believe, be very easily obviated by a judicious measure in regard to insolvency. I draw the attention of the Minister of Trade and Commerce especially to this subject at the present moment, because one of the hon. gentleman's colleagues, Mr. Dobell, is not now present in the House or in the country. Mr. Dobell and I attended a very large and important meeting of the British Empire League, presided over by His Grace the Duke of Devonshire, during the time I was recently in London, when Mr. Dobell happened to be there at the same time.

Mr. SPEAKER. I suppose, the hon. gentleman means the hon. member for Quebec.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. I beg pardon for naming him—I mean the hon. member for Quebec West; but it was in his capacity as Mr. Dobell that he was acting with me on that occasion. At that meeting the hon. gentleman seconded a resolution which was moved by myself, pledging ourselves to press on the Government of Canada the great importance of the introduction and passage of a measure through this Parliament in respect to the question of insolvency; and, having undertaken that duty, and in the absence of the hon. gentleman who acted in London with me at that time, I wish to take this opportunity of redeeming that pledge by pressing on the Government what I regard as the great importance of this measure, a measure that hon. gentlemen know perfectly well, however ably it may be handled by the hon. member for Laval (Mr. Fortin), and notwithstanding the great time and care he has bestowed on the subject, it is impossible to hope can pass