

YUKON PLACER MINING ACT AMENDMENT.

Hon. ARTHUR MEIGHEN (Minister of the Interior) moved concurrence in the amendments made by the Senate to Bill No. 152 to amend the Yukon Placer Mining Act. He said: The amendments of the Senate are not at all material; indeed the word "clerical" could be used to describe them. I am prepared to recommend the acceptance of the amendments.

Motion agreed to.

DOMINION FRANCHISE ACT.

On the order for the House to again go into committee on Bill No. 12 respecting the election of members of the House of Commons and the electoral franchise.

Mr. GUTHRIE: May I ask the consent of the House to refer back to the committee of the whole the report made on Thursday last in respect of clauses 19 and 76. I beg to move:

That the report of the Committee of the Whole on sections 19 and 76 of the Electoral Franchise Act, Bill No. 12, received on the 24th of June, be referred back to the committee for further consideration and amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: This motion, of course, can only be made by unanimous consent.

Motion agreed to, and the House went into committee, Mr. Boivin in the Chair.

Mr. GUTHRIE: On Thursday resolutions were passed through the committee in respect to sections 19 and 76 of the Franchise Act. Section 19 is the section which provides for the appointment of a Chief Electoral Officer and fixes the salary of that official. Seventy-six is the section which provides for the payment of fees to election officials for the conduct of an election. It is only proposed now to amend the first part of that resolution, that applying to section 19 and the office of Chief Electoral Officer. The amendment which I now propose, and which I may say has been assented to by the deputy of His Excellency the Governor General, is as follows:

Resolved, that it is expedient to provide in the proposed Act respecting the election of members of the House of Commons and the Electoral Franchise (Bill No. 12) now before the House that the Chief Electoral Officer shall be from time to time paid the same salary and superannuation allowance as a puisne judge of the Supreme Court of Canada.

That he shall also be paid his reasonable travelling and living expenses while absent from Ottawa on the business of his office.

[Mr. Guthrie.]

That is the only change in the resolution. The formal motion to bring that change about I now beg to move and it is as follows:

That the resolution respecting the election of members of the House of Commons and the Electoral Franchise adopted on Thursday, the 24th day of June, 1920, be amended by striking out all the words between the words "paid for his services" in the third line of the resolution as printed and the words "Consolidated Revenue Fund of Canada" in the eighth line inclusive and by substituting therefor the following words, "shall be from time to time paid the same salary and superannuation allowance as a puisne judge of the Supreme Court of Canada: that he shall also be paid his reasonable travelling and living expenses while absent from Ottawa on the business of his office; that any sums payable to him hereunder shall be paid out of any unappropriated moneys forming part of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Canada."

I should perhaps explain the object of the proposed amendment. The Bill provided for the appointment of the Parliamentary Counsel of the House of Commons to the office of Chief Electoral Officer. I do not know that the matter received as full consideration as it perhaps should have received when that section was drafted. However, upon further consideration of the matter, and after consulting my hon. friend the leader of the Opposition, it is now proposed to appoint to the office of Chief Electoral Officer Mr. O. M. Biggar, K.C., of the City of Ottawa—a gentleman who is at the present time retained by the Government, in the capacity of counsel, at a salary of \$10,000 a year. Under the proposed resolution Colonel Biggar, as Chief Electoral Officer, would receive the same salary as a puisne judge of the Supreme Court. That salary now is \$9,000 a year, but in view of the resolution on the Votes and Proceedings as it appears to-day—and which, I assume, will be passed—the salary will be increased to \$12,000. So that Colonel Biggar as Chief Electoral Officer will be in receipt of a salary of \$12,000,—that would be \$2,000 more than his present salary. It was proposed in the resolution which passed the committee on Thursday to grant an allowance of \$2,000 additional to the Parliamentary Counsel for his work under the Electoral Franchise Act. So in reality there is no actual increase proposed by this amendment. Colonel Biggar, as Chief Government Counsel, now receives a salary of \$10,000, and when he becomes Chief Electoral Officer he will receive \$12,000.

When clause 19 as redrafted is placed before the committee it will be found that the first charge on Colonel Biggar's time will be his duties under the Electoral Franchise