

Sir THOMAS WHITE: I was making an inquiry for copies this morning for myself and I was unable to obtain any. I was told they had been laid on the table of the House in 1917.

PAYMENTS TO SIR CHARLES FITZPATRICK.

Further consideration of the proposed resolution of Mr. Edwards—That, in the opinion of this House, the amount of \$5,000 received by Sir Charles Fitzpatrick for the fiscal years 1915-16 and 1916-17 to cover expenses in connection with the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, should be returned by the said Sir Charles Fitzpatrick to the Treasury of Canada forthwith, resumed from March 26th.

Mr. EDWARDS: Mr. Speaker,—

Mr. SPEAKER: If any other hon. member desires to speak, his opportunity is now. Otherwise, the mover of the motion would close the debate.

Mr. EDWARDS: The object for which the resolution was moved having been attained by the return of the money, I see no use in submitting it further, and I beg leave to withdraw the motion.

Motion withdrawn.

PROHIBITION OF EXPORT OF GOLD.

On motion of Sir Thomas White (Minister of Finance) the House went into Committee to consider the following proposed resolution, Mr. Boivin in the Chair.

Resolved, That it is expedient to amend the provisions of Bill 27, "An Act to provide for the continuance in force of a certain Proclamation made under The Finance Act, 1914," by providing that the Governor in Council, by proclamation which shall be published in the Canada Gazette, may from time to time and for any period or periods declare and proclaim that the export of gold coin, gold bullion, and fine gold bars from the Dominion of Canada shall be prohibited, except in such cases as may be deemed desirable by the Minister of Finance under licenses to be issued by him; and that such provision shall only continue in operation for two years after the termination of the present war.

Sir THOMAS WHITE (Minister of Finance): In common with Great Britain, the United States and other countries, Canada, for the protection of our gold reserves, has had in effect for some time past prohibition upon the export of gold coins, gold bullion and fine gold bars except under license from the Department of Finance. The prohibition which is at present in effect is under the authority of the War Measures Act. When the war is declared officially at an end the War Measures Act will of course lose its validity. As it is probable that there will be an unsettled financial

[Mr. Lemieux.]

period for the next year or more, as I explained in connection with the resolution relating to the continuance of an Order in Council in effect under the Finance Act of 1914, it is deemed advisable that the Governor in Council should have power to prohibit from time to time the export of gold if it should appear to them to be in the public interest to do so. This resolution, which I purpose embodying in Bill No. 27, to provide for the continuance in force of a certain proclamation made under the Finance Act, 1914, will enable us to do this.

It is an enabling measure only, and I have no doubt as to the propriety and necessity of its enactment. Whether or not we shall have to continue to prohibit the export of gold after the conclusion of peace, I do not know. If it is not necessary, we shall, of course, not use the authority we are asking Parliament to confer. If, on the other hand, it appears in the national interest and necessary for the protection of our gold reserve, the power will be available for the Government to exercise it.

Mr. CAHILL: Have many licenses been asked for, and how will this legislation affect the rate of exchange?

Sir THOMAS WHITE: The legislation will not have much influence upon the rate of exchange because I think the banks would not be disposed to send gold out of the country, even though they could obtain a handsome premium on it. I think that even without the legislation, probably a request from the Finance Department would result in the banks not sending money out of the country, but it is desirable that these matters should be regulated by authority, rather than be dependent on compliance with request.

So far as gold mining companies are concerned, the Treasury has consented to their shipping gold out of the country to be sold and refined in New York. It would hardly be fair, I think, to our gold-mining companies to prevent them sending gold to New York or to other parts of the United States to be refined and sold there, because New York funds are now at a premium of over two per cent. In order, however, to build up our gold reserve, the Finance Department has been purchasing gold produced in Canada and has been paying for it at the New York rate, so there is no unfairness to our gold mining companies, and we shall gradually increase our holding of gold. I explained pretty fully, in connection with the resolution relating to the continuance of the order under the Finance Act, our position with respect