

usury. It is neither in the interests of the lender or the borrower that restrictions of this sort should be imposed; no doubt the effect will be to induce capitalists to withdraw money from investment in this country, and the rate, instead of being reduced, will actually be increased. It is perfectly obvious if we introduce the restriction in one matter we can not stop then. We cannot impose restrictions on one class of lenders that we do not impose on others similarly situated. But here upon a measure that would be regarded by many a measure of subordinate consequence, we are about to lay down a principle which cannot be confined to this measure, but must be applied to the same thing, seeking to invest money in this country. I would therefore move that the Committee rise.

Mr. SPROULE. I do not think the hon. member for Bothwell is right. If we have to-day a legal rate of interest of 6 per cent. for all debts that have accrued, on the worst kind of security, then I think that as you lessen the security you can afford to lower the rate of interest. Many storekeepers in the country are doing business on the strength of their accounts and they get no security at all for payment. If after a certain length of time these men come to collect their accounts they find that the law allows them only six per cent. If a company loans money to a farmer the principle is generally adopted that it does not loan for more than half the value of the farm. Landed security is the best security, and if we are to say that the legal rate of interest shall be 6 per cent. upon the worst security, then upon the best security why should we not say that it should be more?

Mr. GIGAULT. The hon. member for Bothwell, a few days ago, when the Bill affecting the Crédit Foncier Canadien was before the House, voted not to allow that institution to loan money at a higher rate than 6 per cent., but now he is opposing a reduction in the rate of interest. I voted to allow that company to lend money at a higher rate than 6 per cent., and I think we should adopt the same rule for all monetary institutions. I thought that on account of the crisis in France, we should allow that company some more latitude. If we had four or five millions more of French capital in this country to compete with British and Canadian capital, the rate of interest would be lowered. I think it was not fair to say to the Crédit Foncier Canadien: You shall lend your money at 6 per cent. or close your doors, while we allow other institutions to lend money at 7, 8, 9 and 10 per cent.

Bill reported.

On motion for the third reading,

Mr. BÉCHARD. I voted for the amendment because I thought it was preferable that the Bill should pass with the amendment than that it should pass in its original form. I repeat now that the rate of interest at 8 per cent. is too high, and I believe other hon. gentlemen in this House are of the same opinion. I therefore move that the Bill be remitted with instructions to amend it so that the rate of interest imposed by the company shall not exceed 6 per cent.

Mr. McCARTHY. There has been no notice given of this amendment, and therefore it is not in order.

Mr. SPEAKER. I think, according to the 67th rule of the House, the amendment is not in order, because according to that rule there can be no important amendment to a Private Bill in Committee of the Whole, or at the third reading, unless one day's notice of the same shall have been given.

Mr. BÉCHARD. I have seen it done many times.

Mr. SPEAKER. Not with Private Bills, it may have been done with Public Bills.

Bill read the third time and passed.

Mr. MILLS.

COMMERCIAL TREATIES.

House resumed the debate on Mr. Blake's proposed amendment to Sir Leonard Tilley's proposed motion for the House to go again into Committee of Supply.

Mr. MILLS. I propose to address the House briefly in reply to the observations made by the First Minister on the amendment proposed by the hon. member for West Durham. The right hon. gentleman, at the head of the Government, has laid down a number of propositions in reference to the motion of my hon. friend for West Durham, to which I cannot subscribe. I neither concur in the principles he has enunciated, nor in the line of argument he has adopted. The hon. gentleman said in the first place that England would not give her consent to the principles laid down in the resolution before the House, and that it was not our interest that she should do so. The hon. gentleman also stated that we were quietly feeling our way in precisely the same direction. The right hon. gentleman next contended that if the policy set out in this resolution were acted upon it would lead to the separation of Canada from the United Kingdom. Now, Sir, I do not concur with any of the statements which the right hon. gentleman has made. Let us consider for a moment what are the principles of the motion before us. Sir, the arguments which the hon. gentleman addressed to the House this afternoon were similar to those which were addressed to the old Legislature of Canada and to the people of England when we asked for responsible Government in this country. A good many members in this House no doubt will recollect a pamphlet that was issued many years ago by the late Chief Justice of Canada, Sir John Beverley Robinson, in which he argued that if local self-government were conferred upon the colonies it would lead to the separation of the colonies from the Mother Country. He said that the Governor of a Province was an Imperial officer acting under instructions from the Colonial Office, and he asked how he could possibly obey the instructions received from the Colonial Secretary and at the same time act upon the advice of responsible advisers in this country. He held that the necessities of his position rendered it impossible that responsible Government could be established in any of the colonies. That inference was denied by those who were friends to the introduction of responsible Government; it was combatted by Mr. Baldwin, Mr. Lafontaine and other gentlemen acting as leaders of the Reform party. Those hon. gentlemen said that it was perfectly consistent with loyalty to the Empire and with the continuance of the connection that the people of the colonies should exercise the rights of self-government, that so far from leading to the separation of the colonies from the Mother Country it would tend to strengthen the bond of union which existed between them. We had had almost a half century for the trial of this experiment, and we have little doubt as to who was right in the line of argument which they adopted. We find, instead of the bond between the colonies and the Mother Country being weakened by an extension to the colonies of the principles of self-government, it has been strengthened. The people instead of being dissatisfied are satisfied, their own opinions are respected, their own views are acted upon, and there has been no time in the history of the country when the bond of union between the British North America Provinces and the United Kingdom was stronger than it is at this moment. The same reasons which necessitated the adoption of responsible Government, which made it right and proper we should exercise control over our local affairs, have made it necessary that we should seek for a wider sphere of government than that which we have enjoyed. We are not asking for the introduction of any new principle, we are simply asking for the extension of an old principle, to new circumstances; we are met by an old