

meet the difficulty to allow a stamp to be used with the full name of the member? I agree with my hon. friend that it would be a great hardship to require a member to write his initials on 5,000 or 10,000 envelopes. My stamp has not been used without my consent, and I do not believe the stamp of any other member has been used without his consent; and if the full name of the member were used, I think it would meet the requirements of the case.

Sir WILLIAM MULOCK. At an earlier date in the session this matter was brought to the attention of the House by the hon. member for St. Antoine division of Montreal (Mr. Ames). It appeared that the rubber stamp of a member had been affixed to large quantities of correspondence said to have contained some business advertisements or circulars. Many members on both sides received complaints from the public that this was an abuse of the franking privilege. The matter was fully discussed and the opinion pretty generally expressed that the use of a rubber stamp was open to abuse and should be discontinued. I said I would be governed by the advice of the House, and the House unanimously expressed itself in favour of abolishing the use of the stamp. In accordance with that decision, we are endeavouring to carry out the wish of the House by not recognizing these stamps, and recognizing only the members' initials.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. The initials or the full name?

Sir WILLIAM MULOCK. The initials only. In order to make no mistake I inquired if that was the wish of the House, and the suggestion was assented to unanimously. True that will occasion some little labour, but nothing very serious, and I would extremely regret a reversion to the old system, which was more open to abuse. A member may good naturedly allow some one to have access to his stamp and that permission may be abused. We cannot be too strict in not allowing our franking privilege to be used indiscriminately.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. There might be a way of getting over the difficulty without running the risk of any abuse. Of course, stamps are used at present. They are used in the departments by ministers and deputy ministers, and I presume they are employed without any abuse. In that case there is the routine of the department to prevent abuse, but if we insist on a member initialling every document he sends out—such documents, for instance, as his own speeches to his constituents—that will entail on him considerable labour. I would suggest that in cases of that kind, the rubber stamp might be used provided the member himself brings to the postmaster the documents he desires to have mailed. Thus you would

Mr. SAM. HUGHES.

have all the protection which the routine of a department gives to the use of a stamp. I myself have had two or three times documents sent me inclosed in letters, which documents bore what purported to be the initials of a member of parliament and which related to matters in which he was not concerned at all, such as accounts, for instance, and matters of that kind. Of course even if a member puts his initials on a document, there still may be abuse, but we have to trust to the good faith and honour of the members not to abuse their privilege.

Sir WILLIAM MULOCK. Perhaps that might meet the case. If my hon. friend will allow the matter to stand until I have conference with my officers, I will see if we can arrange it in that way.

EDWARD NORMAN LEWIS, M.P.

Bill (No. 142) for the relief of Edward Norman Lewis, a member of the House of Commons—Mr. Fitzpatrick—was read the second time, and House went into committee thereon.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I am very glad to have this Bill introduced. I looked into the circumstances attending the case, when they were first brought to my notice at the commencement of this parliament, and I was rather impressed with the view that the case of the hon. gentleman did not come within the terms of the statute referred to. However, as there may be some question about that, I think this is a very proper Bill to pass. It might perhaps be worth while to make some little amendment in the general law governing trifling cases of this kind. There does not seem to be any particular connection between the independence of parliament and the signing of a bond for a trifling amount as surety for a postmaster.

Hon. CHARLES FITZPATRICK (Minister of Justice). I quite agree with my hon. friend as to the necessity of amending the law so as to avoid any repetition of such cases. After all, this is a very trifling technical breach of the law, and it is hardly fair that a member of parliament, who has committed it, should be obliged to go through this formality. It has occurred to me that it would be well also to amend this Bill so as to provide that the disqualification shall cease. That is not made clear in the Bill. I move therefore that the following words be added after the word 'Huron' in the second line of the first clause:

Is hereby declared not to be ineligible as a member of the House of Commons, or to have been or be disqualified as a member thereof to sit or vote therein by reason of any matter, cause or thing therein recited and—

There is no reason why we should hold the whip over this gentleman's head all the time.