

MAY DISCUSS STATUS OF ALIENS AT THE NEXT SITTING OF PARLIAMENT

Ottawa, Jan. 2.—The status in Canadian courts of alien enemies resident in the Dominion is a matter which may be the subject of legislation at the approaching session of parliament. Since the outbreak of the war several judicial decisions have been rendered with regard to the rights of alien enemies resident in Canada. In a number of cases where citizens of countries at war with Great Britain, resident in Canada, have appeared as plaintiffs in litigation, the defence has been set up that being alien enemies in Canada they are incapacitated from enforcing any rights in Canadian courts.

In some of the decisions rendered this view has been practically upheld. On the other hand, Mr. Justice Hodgins, of Toronto, and other judges have ruled that all persons in Canada of German or Austro-Hungarian nationality should be allowed to enjoy the protection of the law so long as they quietly pursue their ordinary avocations and do not engage in acts of a hostile nature. The question of the rights of an alien enemy has not, except in a few isolated cases, been dealt with in the courts since Napoleon and Crimean days so that the need of parliamentary action to definitely settle the matter is believed in official circles to be pressing.