

Hon. Mr. DRUMMOND—It is no part of the company's business to do it. They are permitted to do it for their own profit.

Hon. Mr. BEIQUE—The hon. gentleman did not follow the discussion on this point yesterday. The subclause prevents railway companies using electric power of that kind for the purpose of selling the same in the municipality without the consent of the municipality given by by-law. If the consent is given by by-law, the terms would be agreed upon and the municipality would be bound by its by-law and the board would have had no occasion to interfere, and the board would have to take that into consideration—to respect the agreement. We are merely providing for general cases as it may become advisable in large cities to provide for, at the expense of the city or otherwise, means to put the wires underground. If it is done for other companies, there should be machinery under this Act whereby railway companies would be compelled to likewise put their wires underground on such terms as the board would prescribe, having regard to the rights and interests of all parties.

Hon. Mr. LOUGHEED—There is an element I desire to point out in the amendment which, I submit, is extremely uncertain. Under clause (g), as contained in the Bill, there at least would be uniformity; that is to say, it would involve the passage of an Act of parliament prescribing the conditions under which wires would be placed underground. In that way railway companies and telegraph companies that come under this Bill would know exactly the responsibilities which they had to undertake; but now you will have them subject to the hysterical and spasmodic attacks which from time to time are made by municipalities for the purpose of carrying out what some agitator may submit to be desirable. That happens periodically. There are times when there is a cessation, so to speak, of those municipal demands which are so frequently made upon parliament. By and by some imaginary grievance arises, and you find the whole of the municipalities combining together. They become hysterical at the alleged encroachment on their rights and the monopolies of private corporations, and so on. You submit the board

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to the demands which may be made from time to time, not only by cities, but by every village municipality throughout the Dominion of Canada that railway companies be compelled to bury their wires. The hon. gentleman from de Salaberry was content the other day to limit it to cities, but I find it has grown so that municipalities and incorporated villages and other rural bodies may ask that the wires be buried. That would permit a township council to ask that throughout the length and breadth of the boundaries of its township the telegraph lines of the railway be buried. True, you say the discretion is left with the board, but it seems to me, when we are investing the board with authority, we should not vest it with unreasonable authority.

Hon. Mr. DRUMMOND—The board having to find none of the money with which to do it.

Hon. Mr. LOUGHEED—No. It is a temptation for that class of organization to make a demand upon the board to do unreasonable things, and I think it is an unwise discretion to extend it as far as the amendment.

Hon. Mr. POWER—With respect to the proposal to strike out subclause (g): the amendment which the hon. gentleman from de Salaberry proposes is one which deals with the railway company vis-a-vis of the municipal corporation, and it does not deal with the railway company face to face with the parliament of Canada. Paragraph (g) does. It deals with the railway companies in their relations to the parliament of Canada; and if accidents from electric light wires and other electric wires were of such frequent occurrence in other cities as they are in Ottawa, I think it would very soon become the duty of parliament to provide that all such wires should be placed underground. Paragraph (g) provides that if the parliament of Canada decide that these wires shall be placed underground, there shall be no grounds for damages on the part of the company, and I think that we had better retain that provision. The amendment of the hon. gentleman from de Salaberry does not provide for that case, and I quite agree with him that paragraph (g) is not worded just as it