

not want to discuss the matter longer if sub-clause 2 is going to be cut out; but if not, I will do so.

Mr. ROBB: I can see some force in the observations of my hon. friend. This clause was inserted in connection with the Imperial War Conference of 1918; but while it has been found useful, it is not absolutely essential. I therefore move that subsection 2 of section 29 be struck out.

Motion agreed to.

Section as amended agreed to.

On section 30—Assignments in case of joint applications:

Mr. BOYS: What is the intention of this section? There is no reason why there should not be a provision requiring the registration of an assignment in the Patent office, but is it the intention of this section that any assignment not registered shall be invalid? If that is the purpose of the section I think it is a mistake, and my remarks in connection with subsection 2 of section 29 would be equally applicable to this section. I can quite understand that you want to have assignments registered, and it is very proper that they should be registered. It would, therefore, be advisable to provide some penalty if assignments were not registered. I fear, however, that the section as it stands might be constructed to mean that if assignments were not registered they would be void. There is no reason why they should not be perfectly good as between the parties to the assignment, although invalid as against third parties.

Mr. ROBB: The commissioner tells me that this section has been in the act ever since it has been on the statute book.

Mr. BOYS: Even if it has, I do not think that is sufficient reason. Can the minister tell me whether he considers the section to mean what I have indicated, namely, that an assignment is bad in any event if it is not registered?

Mr. ROBB: We might let the section stand for further consideration.

Mr. STEVENS: I might point out to the minister something which I know must impress him, that is, the exceedingly complicated nature of the bill, which is really a complete revision of the Patent Act. I have been trying in my own way to give a reasonable amount of study to it, but the more I see of it, the more I learn about it, the more convinced I am that I know comparatively little about it; and I do not believe that, except

for a very very few, others have a much greater knowledge of the bill than I have. If there ever was a piece of legislation that should go to a special committee, where the representatives of the department and, if you like, the representatives of the manufacturing interests, as well as chemists and others who are engaged in the laboratory and other investigatory work, might be invited to give their views upon it, this bill undoubtedly is legislation of that character. It is exceedingly difficult to criticize intelligently the sections of such a bill as this, the contents which have not been carefully studied, because we are met with just such answers as the one the minister has given us, which unquestionably has a good deal of force in it, if one understands it, and that is that the section has been in the act ever since we have had an act. On that account one hesitates to disturb it because it may have some other relations which we should not like to interfere with. But the minister's reply is scarcely satisfactory in view of this fact: as nearly as I can learn, in constructing the new act the draughtsman has lifted out of the British act whole sections and just conveyed them into this legislation. I have no reason whatever to assert that they are not entirely fitting; but certainly the House is not passing intelligent judgment on that fact under the present circumstances. Nor do I know that any of us are able intelligently to criticize the bill. The only way in which we can consider legislation of this kind is to have it go to a committee who can hear the views of the officials of the department and others who are conversant with the subjects it deals with. I am afraid it will be impossible for me to present properly the views I have in mind on several sections in the bill owing to their highly technical nature. One hesitates to speak dogmatically about a technical matter in the way we are forced to speak in the House, where one might by a little questioning get a correct understanding of ordinary subjects. But this is only one instance of the difficulties that are to be encountered in this bill. As we proceed and come to clauses 38, 40, 41 and 42, which are the main sections of the bill, I, at any rate, shall be quite reluctant to give my consent to the bill. I do not suppose that it makes much difference whether I do that or not; but certainly I cannot agree to the bill going through as it stands. I feel we are going to make errors that perhaps will be serious to many of the interests of the country; whereas if the bill went before a special committee it could be studied with some degree of that thoroughness and effect which it deserves.

Mr. HANSON: I agree with a great deal that has been said by my hon. friend. I have