

few words. I must confess that I was a little puzzled when I read the clause granting, as a matter of right, passage to members of parliament, but, on reflection, I thought that there was a good deal in favour of it. What struck me at the outset was that the clause was rather sweeping in its terms, and if the railway companies had not been for years granting passes as a general rule, at least to members of both Houses of parliament, the clause might have been somewhat exacting in its nature. But, they have not adopted that practice for nothing. They must have adopted it, either because they considered it as due in justice to members of parliament, or for the purpose of placing themselves in a better light before members of parliament. It seems to me that it is undignified for members to remain in that position, and we should have no alternative than either to make it compulsory on the railway companies to grant passes as a matter of right, or to enact such a law as would prohibit them from granting any passes at all. It has been suggested by some railway companies, in the memorandum which has been distributed to members of this House, that if the government deem it proper that the members of parliament should have free passes on railways, the government should pay for these passes. The government might well afford to take that position. But, on the other hand, the government might well afford to take this position with the railway company, that this machinery is created for their own benefit, and I may say for their exclusive benefit. It is machinery which is going to entail an expenditure of at least \$100,000 a year to begin with, a large expenditure which the government would be justified in calling on the railway companies to bear their share of, and the railway companies can better afford to let the public bear the expense of this railway commission and to submit to the granting of passes as is suggested. I have not had time to refer to the Revised Statutes for the purpose of ascertaining if the principle is recognized of charging companies in such cases as this with bearing the expenditure occasioned by the measure, but I know it obtains anyway in the province of Quebec and in the province of Ontario. In the province of Quebec I know that this practice obtains as far as gas inspectors

and other inspectors are concerned. Their salaries are collected from the companies interested, because the inspector is appointed in the interest of the public; but as certain companies are the occasion of the appointment, and as it is for the purpose of controlling their action in the interests of the public, the companies are made to bear the expense. It has been suggested to me by hon. members near me that this principle obtains in the insurance department. I know it does, and in a number of other instances. It seems to me one might very readily compensate the other, and the railway companies might submit to that with good grace, and they would not be the losers by it. I would have no objection to adopt one course or the other, but there is only the one alternative: we must either close the door to this practice which has obtained for a great many years of granting passes to members of parliament as a favour, or declare that members of parliament shall have those passes as a matter of right.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL.—I have no desire to continue this discussion, but I should like to call the attention of my hon. friend to the clause as it reads, and which we are asked to adopt, and ask him and other lawyers, who are in the habit of giving opinions upon the construction of statutes, whether this clause does not go much beyond what even those who are advocating compulsory free passes, ever intended. From the discussion, it is quite evident to my mind how the vote will be, and for that reason I do not propose to continue the discussion further at the present moment; but notice will be given so that at the third reading of the Bill we may have an opportunity of recording our votes upon this compulsory principle. I would ask my hon. friend who has just spoken, and appears to be as keen a critic and interpreter of the wording of a clause as any member of the Senate—I do not wish to be understood when I say that I am drawing any invidious distinction between lawyers—does not this clause go much beyond what even parliament intended it to go? In the first place it provides that the transportation shall be upon any train of the company, and then in the latter portion of the clause, it provides not only that they shall have free transportation for themselves, but also for the staff