

perhaps I cannot ask so much from my hon. friend, that we should have sufficient confidence in a Minister who makes a study of these things to know that he will not be easily gulled as to the quantity of sulphur and ammonia. If he tests the gas, the proportions which should exist are everywhere recognized, and are to be found in any treatise or book dealing with this particular subject. The proportion of these elements which may be permitted to remain in gas, without seriously affecting its quality, is not subject to any dispute, so I do not see how there could be any deception practised on the Minister. He should know from books and experienced persons the maximum that ought to be there. He has the process prescribed to him by this Act, by which he can find out what is actually in the gas, and unless we could assume that he could be bribed to make an insufficient regulation, I do not see how any difficulty could arise.

HON. MR. POWER—The hon. gentleman probably knows very well that I did not dream of attributing anything of the sort to the Minister. Possibly the Minister of Inland Revenue does test everything that comes under his Department: he may test the gas, he may taste the whiskey and smoke the cigars, and test everything of that sort, but it is not to be presumed that it is the duty of the head of the Department to make himself familiar in all these things which come under the jurisdiction of his Department, so that he shall be directly and personally responsible for everything that is done. The Minister does, as the hon. gentleman from Kennebec said a while ago the president of a bank does: if the subordinate whose proper duty it is to look after a certain matter reports to him, he assumes that the official has done his duty and gives effect to the report. It has happened before, and it may happen again—in fact, we have had instances within a comparatively short time where crooked transactions have taken place in a Department of the Government here, and I do not think that important interests should be left at the mercy of any subordinate officer of the Government.

The clause was adopted.

On the 6th clause,—

HON. MR. CLMEOW said: I do not see how they are going to carry that out.

The pressure varies in every place; it depends entirely on the locality of the city and the levels. In Toronto, where they have a very level place, the pressure is very different from what it is here or in Quebec, although the Toronto people do object very seriously to it. I have a letter here from the manager of the Toronto Gas Works in which he says that he thinks it is a dangerous power to place in the hands of the Government. It is almost an utter impossibility to regulate the pressure: every gas company must regulate its own pressure. I do not see the object of putting that clause in the Bill.

HON. MR. OGILVIE—I can see the object very well: it is the easiest thing in the world to know why. In small towns, if they put on a little extra pressure they can make the meter register from 10 to 30 per cent more. I have, myself, for an experiment, tried it in the city of St. Joseph, Missouri, and by putting an extra pressure on the gasometer we could raise the quantity of gas going through the meters in the town 25 or 30 per cent. without the consumers being much better off for it. I do not say that any Canadian companies do it, but it is possible. Then, as to different pressures between high and low levels, everyone knows that the high level gets more pressure than the low level. In Montreal we often have first rate pressure on Dorchester street when they have poor pressure below. The pressure is regulated by the quantity of gas used. If they are short of gas and the pressure is taken off, you do not use so much. I have seen it tested and proved, and I know that if a dishonest company wished to put on extra pressure they could force from 10 to 25 per cent. more gas through the meter than with ordinary pressure, and you would not be better off in the way of light.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—I am very thankful to have this explanation; for two reasons: In the first place, my hon. friend has shown the necessity for this provision in much clearer language than I could have employed; and, in the second place, he has explained what has hitherto been an extraordinary phenomenon to me, that although the price of gas has been reduced twice or three times in the city where I live, my bill for gas used in the same house, with the same number of burners,