

new crime, a new indictable offence, created under the terms of this clause. Who wants to see a little newsboy chased by a policeman down the street, kept in the cells Sunday night, and brought before a magistrate on Monday morning for the offence of selling newspapers on Sunday? Would not such a law tend more to the demoralization of the newsboys than anything they are apt to see published in any Sunday newspaper in Canada? As to the importation of immoral matter from abroad, we have a law against that, and it should be enforced.

Then there is an exception made in favour of the gratuitous publication of religious papers on the Lord's Day. I know, as a matter of fact, that a great many people who subscribe to church papers, have them distributed some time on the Lord's Day, either after service at the church door, or to the children at Sunday school, or in some other such way. These papers are not gratuitously distributed, but distributed to subscribers who have paid for them, and this clause would utterly prevent the distribution of such papers in that way. I do not know whether the hon. gentleman wishes to accomplish that, but his Bill certainly would have that effect. Then, how are you to define "religious publications"? I asked for that definition on a former occasion, and have never yet had a clear explanation. We have amongst us some colonies of Mormons. Those of us who are not Mormons do not look upon propagandist literature of the Mormon church as being very good Sunday reading, but the Mormons no doubt will claim that it is religious literature and as such entitled to be circulated on Sunday. I do not know but that such literature might be as bad reading for our young men and maidens as, let me say, the Sunday "World." Then there is a sect in Canada, whose tenets I do not intend to dispute at all, who believe that the day we keep as Sunday should not be kept as a holiday at all. They keep the Saturday instead, and make it a point of doing as much worldly work on our Sunday as they can without scandalizing their neighbours, and, in some cases, they do it rather ostentatiously. In the western end of my county a man was put in jail for that offence, and a great deal has been said and published about it, which has been circulated by the press of that Seventh Day Advent Church, under the head of religious literature, although its object is to destroy the obligation of keeping the Sunday. I do not think that a better observance of the Lord's Day would be promoted by the circulation of such literature.

As this Bill is not what its name would lead us to expect, a Bill for securing a better general observance of the Lord's Day, as it is a Bill which I believe to be beyond the powers of this Parliament and within the powers of the local legislatures, as it concerns a matter which has been amply dealt with by the local legislatures, I think

the House should hesitate very much before passing it to a second reading. I submit my views on this point to those who lead the House in matters of law and policy, and shall submit to their ruling in the matter, but that is my personal and strong opinion on the subject.

The PRIME MINISTER (Mr. Laurier). If I were to follow my own judgment in this matter, I would have no hesitation in saying that, with the exception of clause No. 2, the whole of this Bill is ultra vires of this Parliament. All the other clauses seem to me to come clearly within the purview of the provincial legislatures, but I remember that, on a former occasion, the late Sir John Thompson, when Minister of Justice, held the view that clause No. 1 came within our jurisdiction. I confess that I could not see very clearly then, nor can I yet, the force of that opinion, but I am disposed to yield now, as I was then, to the opinion of such an eminent authority. On that occasion, Sir John Thompson agreed to accept this Bill, in so far as the two first clauses were concerned, but would not entertain the other clauses. I am disposed to adopt the same view, but I must say to my hon. friend that when the Bill comes to the committee, I think the whole of section 1 will have to be reconstructed. If we adopt the view held by Sir John Thompson, that we have the right to legislate, in so far as newspapers are concerned, I have no hesitation in saying that the sale of newspapers should be prohibited on Sunday. I cannot see any good reason why an exception should be made in favour of newspapers to the general law prohibiting selling on the Lord's Day, but while I have no hesitation in coming to this conclusion, I submit to my hon. friend that there are, perhaps, strong reasons for recasting the clause, because, if it were to go as it is now, it might be construed to mean that the proprietors or managers of newspapers cannot engage in any work on the Sunday, even for the purpose of preparing the publication of their newspapers on the Monday. This, perhaps, would be straining somewhat the moral obligation, which rests upon all Christians, to observe the Lord's Day, but I imagine that in this age, with the extension the press has taken, every one must admit that newspapers have to be published on the Monday morning, and that necessarily the labour of publication must commence some time during the Lord's Day. That has become necessary by the condition of our civilization at present. Therefore, when in committee, I shall be obliged to ask my hon. friend to reconsider that section so as to make it operate only in so far as the sale of newspapers is concerned.

As to the rest of the Bill, I think that the objections which were raised by Sir John Thompson himself are still good, that there are very strong reasons, indeed, why the Parliament of Canada should not interfere with the traffic by railway. The traffic by