

No doubt, if the company has a great many consumers, they might find it a matter of economy to decrease the illuminating power of the gas and pay the penalty. And I am prepared to increase the penalty for undertakers furnishing a larger number than 4,000 customers.

HON. MR. POWER—The difficulty is, that there are two offences mentioned which are very different in their character. The coal which is generally used in eastern gas works has a good deal of sulphur in it, and to impose a heavy penalty because traces of sulphur and ammonia are detected in the gas would be unreasonable; on the other hand, it would not be at all unreasonable to impose a fairly severe penalty for supplying gas of insufficient illuminating power. I do not think that the penalties should be tied together the way they are.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—My hon. friend perceives that by this clause the two offences are placed in the same category, and for this reason: It is not only that the undertaker is furnishing gas which shows traces of sulphur and ammonia, but that it contains those elements to an extent beyond the standard fixed by the Minister of Inland Revenue which renders him liable to the penalty. It is impossible or extremely difficult to exclude sulphur or ammonia altogether, but if it exceeds the maximum quantity then it renders the producers liable to a penalty. The regulations fix both the minimum in one case and the maximum in the other.

HON. MR. POWER—I do not desire in any way to reflect on the integrity and honesty of the officials in the Inland Revenue Department, but one can see what a temptation may be put in the way of anyone who has to fix the amount of ammonia or sulphur that may be in gas. As I understand, there is much less ammonia and sulphur in the coal imported from the United States than in Canadian coal. What is to hinder an American from getting hold of the officer whose duty it is to report on this question, and make it very well worth his while to fix the amount of ammonia and sulphur so low as to let the American coal come in and shut out the Canadian coal? I do not mean to say that it is a probable thing, but still the clause is open to that, and I think we ought to

be very careful of what we are doing. The country has gone to great expense, and adopted a policy which injures a good many for the purpose of increasing the sales of Canadian coal, and I do not think we should do anything now which might possibly deprive the Canadian coal mines of very valuable customers.

HON. MR. CLEMOW—There are a great many difficulties respecting this Act and respecting this provision. For instance, the tests are only made periodically. During the quarter your gas may increase in illuminating power to a very large extent, but if you are once below the standard you are subject to a fine under this law. The same way with sulphur: one day you may have a quantity in excess of what is required by law, while on most occasions it is less. I think there should be an average for the manufacturer as well as for the consumer. As far as sulphur is concerned, it is utterly impossible to exclude it from the manufacture of gas so long as our own Canadian coal is used. Of course, if you say that provincial coal shall not be used, we will have to obtain it from the United States, or from England, but you must give us sufficient time to furnish purification machinery to meet the altered state of circumstances. The gas companies are under the supervision of the inspectors, and I know from my own experience that that is often a cause of great trouble. We had an inspector here who unfortunately became insane, and he reported our gas under the standard. Afterwards it was found that he had reported incorrectly, but it was only after great damage was done to our company.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—I think the general impression of the public, if the inspector found the gas below the standard, would be, that he was extremely sane instead of being insane. Perhaps my hon. friend, however, is justified in this instance in saying that the inspector was insane. The illuminating standard is fixed by this Bill; it is only the maximum quantity of ammonia and sulphur that may be in gas that is fixed by regulation. The process by which this sulphur or ammonia is to be detected is fixed by the schedule, and the regulations as to the quantity have to be made by the Minister of Inland Revenue. I think we may fairly conclude, although