

tain registration. The member for Moosejaw (Mr. Knowles) mentioned a case that has occurred frequently and that will occur very often in the future: people hold public meetings and collections are taken up for charitable purposes. If in such cases no registration is made, a criminal offence is committed and the persons in charge of the meeting are liable to a penalty not exceeding \$500 or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding three months.

Sir THOMAS WHITE: I do not agree with my hon. friend in that.

Mr. PUGSLEY: The gentleman who drafted the Bill seemed to think that that would be the result, because he specially exempts collections made at churches during divine service. The fair inference is that the meaning of the draftsman was—I am satisfied that this would be the meaning attached to the Act by any court—that except in cases where collection was made during divine service, persons making collections for these purposes without registration would be criminally liable under this statute. It is true that they could not be prosecuted without the consent of the minister, but it is one thing to be amenable to the criminal law and another to be saved from prosecution through the kindness or the sympathy of the minister. I do not think that any person should become criminally liable for acts which are thoroughly laudable in their character and which should be praised instead of being punished. The minister ought to do as suggested by the amendment of the member for Pictou: make this Act relate to war contributions. Give a definition to war contributions; do not mix up the contribution with the organization which may be the means of collecting the money. I think also that the hon. gentleman should accept the reasonable suggestion of the member for East Middlesex (Mr. Glass). All members of the committee will give full credit to the member for East Middlesex for a desire to make the Bill as perfect as possible. If the minister will accept these suggestions, I am sure that he will in the end have a statute which will bring about the desired object. If he insists on the Bill going through in its present form, a good deal of confusion will result; many people will find themselves in the class of criminal offenders, although their sole object may have been to do their best in the way of collecting money for charitable purposes connected with the war.

[Mr. Pugsley.]

Sir THOMAS WHITE: One reason why I find myself unable to accept the suggestions of the member for Pictou and the member for St. John that the Act should apply to contributions and not to charities, is that such an amendment would change the entire purpose of the Act. This Act is not directed at contributions; it is to regulate organizations appealing for contributions, and to these organizations the general name "charities" is given, because their objects are charitable.

Mr. PUGSLEY: If the Bill is intended to apply to organizations, why is the word "fund" used? Surely a fund is very different from an organization.

Sir THOMAS WHITE: My hon. friend is altogether too intelligent to be deceived for one moment by his own argument in that respect. He knows that the word "fund" has two meanings, just as the word "charity" has two meanings. A fund may relate to the money possessed by an organization; on the other hand, the organization may be called a fund. For example, The Patriotic Fund is the name of an organization; The Red Cross Fund is the name of an organization. Therefore there is no ambiguity in including the word "fund" in the term "War Charities." In this Act the organizations are dealt with, not the contributions which these organizations may obtain. We have had a wide, edifying, and somewhat desultory discussion of this Bill. One thing we have succeeded in doing: we have used up the time of the committee from 3.30 to 6—which may be a desirable thing to do at this time. It is not my intention to go on with this Bill this evening; I therefore move that the committee rise, report progress, and ask leave to sit again. In the meantime, I shall be glad to consider whether the amendment suggested by the member for East Middlesex with regard to the matter of exemption to churches is necessary. Personally, I do not think it is.

Mr. PUGSLEY: I am sorry, indeed, that the minister, in taking the very laudable step of asking the committee to rise in order that the amendments suggested, particularly that of the member for East Middlesex, may be considered, should have recurred to his habit of scolding the members of the committee. My hon. friend says that we have succeeded in occupying the time of the committee since half-past three. What are we consulted by the minister for? Why does he submit these Bills for our consideration? If my hon. friend feels that we