

gives us a counsel of a perfection to which we cannot attain at once. Here we have been going on ever since Canada was Canada, at least since the union, and these drugs have been sold with practically no restriction. Now we are very much restricting the sale of them, and I think the better way would be is to be satisfied with a reasonable measure of protection for the public; and if this Bill becomes law and operates satisfactorily, there is nothing to hinder the minister the year after, introducing more drastic provisions with respect to opium. I do not see any reason why opium should be treated differently from the other deadly drugs. We have another measure before us intended to prevent the sale of opium in large quantities. The amendment is so worded that you cannot sell any proprietary medicine of which opium is a component part without a doctor's prescription. I do not know whether that was the intention of the hon. gentleman who moved the amendment or not; but that is the effect of it. First you have to have a doctor's prescription. If there is a well known proprietary medicine and the bottle which contains that medicine has on the label a statement of the percentage of opium which it contains, is that not sufficient? If you wish to use some simple remedy of that kind, why should you be obliged to obtain a druggist's certificate? I think that is going really too far. I shall be very happy to have the Bill pass and the use of opium altogether discontinued, but we should not be too hasty or drastic and should have a little compassion on erring human nature.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—I infer from the remarks of the hon. Secretary of State, that his own individual opinion is that the proviso in section 7 should all come out of the Bill. His speech indicates that that is his opinion. His argument was against the proviso. I have not compared the Bill, but, if I am rightly informed that the proviso was not in the Bill as originally produced in the House of Commons but was placed in there as a compromise, I think it was a very unfortunate compromise. The principle of the Bill is in section 7 without that proviso, and I think it would do a great deal of good if it were passed in that form, but that proviso weakens the Bill to an extraordinary extent.

Hon. Mr. POWER—The hon. gentleman may move to strike out that proviso.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—I will certainly vote to strike that proviso out if that motion is submitted to the committee. I cannot understand what is meant by that proviso that the importer or manufacturer or agent may make an affidavit, and that the minister may then, on the strength of that affidavit, permit the sale of the mixture without the contents being marked upon the label. It does not prescribe any particular contents of any medicine, but requires that there shall be publicity, that every bottle shall show, not all its ingredients, but these dangerous, poisonous ingredients which form part of most medicines, and which are perfectly safe when prescribed by a physician, but which are by no means safe in patent medicines used by people completely ignorant of what they contain and without any information on the label that they contain those ingredients. If the amendment of my hon. friend from Edmonton is carried, it will, of course, minimize the evil so far as morphine and opium are concerned. I know they are very dangerous drugs in the hands of people who do not know what they are using, and produce very bad results, that lives are lost and mental and even moral wrecks occur in consequence of the use of these drugs. However, I am not at all clear that there is not almost as much danger with regard to a great many of the other drugs mentioned in the list, and the true remedy would be to strike out the proviso, and if we are to have a Bill get one of some value. To retain the proviso would leave us very little better than we are without a measure at all.

Hon. Mr. SULLIVAN—All I can say is it will be a disgrace to the Senate to leave that in. At the third reading, I shall adduce circumstances that would make the most hardened criminal vote for my amendment.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—I shall vote to retain the amendment in the Bill as a measure of benefit, but at a later stage, when the motion to strike out the proviso altogether is before us I shall vote for that