early age. A girl goes into a house and is seduced by her master. There is no doubt of the girl's previously chaste character; there is no doubt of the age of the girl, which, of course, must be established in order that there shall be an offence under this Act; there is no doubt about the improper intimacy of the girl with some man, because pregnancy follows, and the offence, according to the girl's own statement, has been committed by the person in whose employment she was, and in his house. Notwithstanding all that evidence, and notwithstanding the further evidence that there was no opportunity, so far as the parents knew, or so far as anybody else knew who was acquainted with the girl, for her to have intimacy with any other man than the one accused by her, yet on this point, and that is the crucial point in the prosecution, judges say, and with propriety in view of these words in the section: Yes, that is all true, but where is your evidence corroborating the statement of the girl and implicating the accused? You have established her previously chaste character, you have established everything else required, but you have not produced any corroborative evidence that the defendant is really the person who had improper relations with this girl. I say that, in many cases, that cannot be established under this provision of the code. If the circumstances I have mentioned are not sufficient corroborative evidence to establish that offence or to convince a jury, then it cannot be established, in many cases. Then it becomes the question whether it is desirable to have offences of that kind go unpunished because of the risk of opening the door to abuses which I need not mention, but hon. gentlemen who hear me will readily understand to what I refer; it becomes a question whether we should let persons who are really guilty go unpunished because of the risk I have suggested. Is the danger in this respect so great that rather than open the door to these abuses, we should allow guilty persons to escape? Now, those are the circumstances with which I wish to deal. The courts in Ontario have not decided precisely what corroborative evidence is necessary, or rather they have not decided what would be corroborative evidence within the meaning of the section I have just read. These cases are ordinary 'nisi prius' cases, cases that are decided before a judge and jury and, unless the judge thinks proper to reserve a case for the opinion of a higher court, no more is heard about it, the man is acquitted, and that is the end of it. One case has been reserved, but has not yet been argued, and that is another reason why I am willing that this Bill should not go much further to-night than a discussion of the points I have mentioned.

The case I refer to is that of the Queen vs. Vahey in which just such circumstances as I have mentioned came up. It was argued by the counsel who prosecuted that those circumstances would be the corroborative evidence that is required by the statute; and the judge reserved that question for the court. So far as I know or have heard, it has not been argued since and is now to be argued in Toronto. That is a case that ought to be made perfectly clear by legislation. I contend, as to the case I have mentioned, that the circumstances ought to be proved, that such a case should not stand on any different footing nor should there be any more required in prosecuting for such an offence than is required for the more serious one of rape or for the more ordinary one of larceny or embezzlement. If the House agrees with me, when we go into committee such an amendment will be moved.

The next point I submit is that there should be an amendment to section 744 of the code. That is to me an absurd provision. It occurs in the case of a judge refusing to reserve any question of law for the opinion of the court; that is where a judge who tries the case refuses to reserve a legal question, when asked, for the opinion of the court. The law, as it is now, provides that before the accused can appeal he must get leave in writing from the Attorney General, and with that leave in his hands he goes to the Court of Appeal, and on motion, notice having been given to the parties, he asks for leave to appeal. If leave is given, then the case comes on for argument. In that case the accused ought to have the right not of appeal but the right to go to the Court of Appeal, and at once ask for leave. That seems to me to be common sense, a very reasonable arrangement and every one with whom I have spoken agrees with that view. The party should not depend upon the whim or caprice or judgment of the Attorney General as to whether he should have leave to go to the Court of Appeal and ask from that Court leave to appeal on some important question which he thinks he should raise in the interest of the prisoner on trial in the way I have mentioned.

Then the other is a very important section indeed. Section 748 of the code allows the Minister of Justice to be a court of appeal. This is new legislation, so far as I am aware, in any country in the world. It is not the law in England, it was not the law in this country, we did not know anything about it until it appeared in our Criminal Code of 1892. It was acted on in the case of Mrs. Sternaman, and under that section she was given a new trial by the Minister of Justice. Another case was decided by the Minister in like manner. I submit that is a section which should not appear on our Statute-book. The Minister of Justice is a politician, necessarily so; he belongs to a party, and represents that party as Minister of Justice. In any case under this section and in every case there will be from this time on friends