

ditional clauses relating to other matters, and which do not affect, and cannot be very well brought in as amendments to the Government Railway Bill. I think the course proposed by the Government in this case is the correct one; we must have the two Bills as amendments to the Acts now on the Statute Book.

The motion was agreed to, and the House went into Committee on the Bill.

In the Committee.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—There are two clauses in this Bill: one providing for the adoption of a new method with regard to the crossing of railways, and the other with regard to a comparatively insignificant matter in connection with gates. It appears that a mode has been discovered and applied by which a railway approaching the crossing of another railway on a level sets in motion what is called an interlocking switch. That is to say, when a train of a railway crossing another railway on a level approaches within a certain distance—a quarter or half a mile—it sets in motion a piece of machinery which throws the rails of the other railway out on a switch so that another train coming along on that track would run on to the switch and thus avoid collision. It is automatic in its action. Of course it can be worked by men appointed for that purpose, but it is the automatic switch which the Government have asked authority to operate on their railways. Of course if the machinery can be made so that it will act infallibly there can be no objection to adopting it. Although under the present system a train is obliged to stop for one minute only at a crossing, everybody knows that a stoppage of one minute involves a considerable loss of time, inasmuch as it takes considerable time to stop a train, and a considerable loss of time to start it again, and get it up to its speed, besides involving a large amount of wear and tear to the rails at the crossing in bringing the train to a stand still. The first clause of the Bill is therefore intended to permit the Government to allow the crossing to be operated by means of this interlocking switch.

HON. MR. POWER—There is one point in the wording of this clause to which I would direct the attention of the Minister. Of course to a gentleman like the leader of the House, who is familiar with our Statutes, no further guide is necessary than is to be found in the wording of this bill; but to those who are not familiar with the Statutes, I think it would be desirable that the attention of the ordinary reader should be directed to the chapter of the Revised Statutes where the original enactment is to be found. I may say it took me some little time to find the enactment referred to. The number of the chapter might be introduced either in the first section or in the preamble:

HON. MR. ABBOTT—I think it is a very judicious suggestion of my honorable friend; perhaps it might be put in the preamble.

HON. MR. DICKEY—I confess I am still in the dark about this interlocking switch. We have it very considerably involved for this obvious reason: that if there is an interlocking switch which enables a Government train to put itself in a position of safety when it approaches a crossing, what is to become of the crossing train? The other train has the same right. It is not bound to stop, as I understand, but can go on at full speed, and how are you to prevent a collision under the circumstances? As far as I can see it will make still more uncomfortable the process of travel by railway. I cannot see how by passing this enactment to adopt such a device on Government railways you can make travel on a Government railway more safe than on a railway which crosses it. I cannot see what object there is in forcing the adoption of this Bill until we understand what the whole process of legislation on this subject is to be, which I am told is identical in the two bills. At present I contend that we are just as much in the dark as we were before on the other bill with regard to the interlocking switch.

HON. MR. ABBOTT—I have not the least desire to press the Bill; I am merely trying to get the business through, and as my non. friend from Sarnia said