

of the work the reports were regularly made to him every fifteen days. I presume that now, since the police have taken charge of the system, the reports are made to the police officers. So far as the general practice is concerned, the practice of the miners is to wash out a little gold from time to time in the winter to pay wages, but the general clean up is in June, July and August.

Mr. FOSTER. They cannot wash out much in the winter.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. Very little.

Mr. FOSTER. Do they make out a report on regular forms signed by themselves?

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I think so.

Mr. FOSTER. Has the hon. gentleman any of those blank forms?

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. We have them in the department.

Mr. FOSTER. Then, if the mining inspector is there, they report directly to him, and if not they report every fifteen days to his office. Do they send in the dust every time they report?

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I cannot say that they do. We have not any positive report about whether they do that or not. In some cases, the mining inspector must have given the parties a permit to pay on the wash-up in a month or two. The return seems to show that the inspector is satisfied that the people are responsible to whom he gives this credit. I cannot say positively that they pay every fifteen days.

Mr. FOSTER. Could my hon. friend lay on the Table the reports received regularly each fifteen days of all the placer mining operations showing the amounts washed, and the amount of royalty and what was sent to the Government.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I could lay on the Table a return showing the amounts produced by each mine and the amounts collected, but could not lay on the Table the returns that came from each mine, because we have not got them. The report shows exactly the amount produced by each claim and the amount collected.

Mr. FOSTER. All this goes to show how loose the machinery is for the accurate detection of the amount that should be received by the Government, and a report of that to the department. I think the hon. gentleman will have to give his officer there a regular woolling, to use a vernacular phrase. I know how it is. A man may attempt to operate a mine in British Columbia, and he will sit down for fifteen days and talk to his manager like a father as to the necessity, above everything else, of his sending in a weekly report, and he

Mr. SIFTON.

will send his manager out and hear from him once every Christmas.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. I am very much pleased to know that the hon. gentleman has a little sympathy for my position.

Mr. FOSTER. But mine managers have a little more freedom than the officers of the department. I would dock these men regularly part of their salary every month or fortnight that a report does not come in. It is too bad that we here, discussing Yukon matters, should be absolutely without information. The Minister himself is without it. He has tried to get it, has written over and over again without effect and when a new plan is made by the commissioner, down comes an intimation to the Minister by the nabob: I have changed all the arrangements, have made a brand new arrangement, but you are not to know what it is; it has gone into operation, and by and by, when I get a Sunday off and have nothing else to do, I will write you a synopsis of this system which I have put into operation. The system may be the best possible but that is not the way in which the department or Parliament ought to be treated. We are expending an immense amount on the Yukon, this country is all interested in its development, we are getting a large amount from it, but we want to know something as to the modus operandi, and the quick and regular transmission of information from the officers out there to the department here, so that in session time it may be given to the House is of primary importance. If there is any way by which we can perfect the machinery for collecting that royalty, the best consideration of the department and its officers is due to that question. If there be nothing in the future but this somewhat loose method, unless we can have some sort of analytical, scientific and sedulously persistent method of ascertaining and collecting this revenue, I think my hon. friend will come to the conclusion that the sooner some other system is adopted the better—a system of license perhaps, by which a sum might be paid which, even though it was a rough and ready way of getting at the revenue, would yet provide a way of avoiding the incentives to fraud which are, in the nature of the case, inevitable. I make these criticisms, not to find fault with the Government, but because of the circumstances. I quite acknowledge the difficulties in the way, but money—you have lots to burn—money, patience and intelligence, ought to overcome them.

Mr. SPROULE. What security does the hon. Minister take from those men who collect the royalty for the due fulfilment of their duties?

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. We have a blanket bond from the guarantee company covering all the officers.