

simple. Who puts up the thousand dollars deposit? Is it the poor honest man in the county whose conscience is pricking him about the manner in which the election was conducted? Not at all. There is a committee to deposit the money, and they want to contest such and such an election. They get the thousand dollars, which is put in the hands of a lawyer—not in the hands of a country lawyer generally, because they are afraid he might keep it—but it is put in the hands of a lawyer from Montreal or some other city, who holds it closely in his pocket, delivers it to the prothonotary, takes a receipt and says to the prothonotary: Do not make a mistake, I want that thousand dollars to be given back to me, and not to Mr. So-and-so.

Mr. CASGRAIN. That is hard on the Montreal lawyers.

Mr. COCHRANE. That is the way it is done.

Mr. BERGERON. I have been protested three or four times, and I know how it is done. What is the next step? Probably the last man in the county, a man that you would not trust with a dollar bill, a man without reputation or honour, he is secured to make the petition, and then you have three or four country lawyers who have been starving for four months, and who think there is something in it, and whether it is true or not, what the petitioner says, and even if the election was mostly honourably conducted; if there is a man in the county who has done anything wrong, or if one can be bribed to perjure himself for \$25, he is brought forward. That is what members of parliament are subjected to now. Political life is not such a beauty after all. It is not such a grand thing to be a politician. We are subjected to blackmailing every day as it is, and why should we draw down more blackmailing upon our heads. I have not that blind confidence in the judges of the land that would induce me to allow them, without any reason whatever, to examine my political conduct. Are we not the highest court in the land in this parliament? Can we not, and should we not protect ourselves here? Whenever there is a question of a judge before parliament, show me the man who will rise in his seat and say what he thinks about it. They are afraid. There are a number of lawyers here, and those who are not lawyers may be sultors, and they all know that judges are human, and so they are afraid. They are not any different kind of men from what we are. They are generally old politicians. Would the Minister of Finance, for whose judgment I have much respect, manacle and chain the member of parliament in the hands of these men. I approve of the sentiment which guided my hon. friend (Mr. Casgrain), in making his amendments to the election law, but I tell him that law is

not enforced in the province of Quebec. It may be in force, in some cases, in the district of Quebec, but I have been in many counties at elections in 1897, and the law was not carried out. The law is too rigorous to be enforced. It provides that hotels shall be closed the day before an election, as well as the day of an election, but so far as I could see, the people did not seem to know there was such a law upon the statute-book. Not only were the hotels open the day before the election, but they were open on polling day as well, a thing which was strongly forbidden under the old statute. I was surprised that the legislature of Quebec should pass such a rigorous law, but whether they passed it or not, it has never been enforced. I repeat once more that we should legislate in this parliament, and do everything in our power to have elections conducted honestly and honourably, and cheaply. Good, but let us not make laws which would be so stringent that they could not be enforced. I ask my hon. friend to think of these observations, and not take such a radical step.

Mr. D. K. ERB (South Perth). I would like to ask the hon. member for Montmorency why he proposes by his amendment to make a distinction between cities and country districts in regard to the conduct of elections. As I understand, he proposes to prohibit the sale of liquor outside of cities on the day before polling, as well as on polling day, but to allow the sale of liquor in cities on the day before polling. My idea is that if it is an undesirable thing to have liquor sold in country places on the day preceding the election, it must be equally undesirable in cities. He contends that the sale of liquor on the day before the election in country districts is likely to cause electors to get into an intoxicated condition before the election, so that on election day they are led to the polls like sheep. Does not the same thing exist in cities, or are the people in cities more moral than the people in country districts?

Mr. CASGRAIN. The only reason I made this distinction was that in my experience the same abuses do not exist in cities as in country districts. At first I included cities, but on representations being made to me to that effect, I excluded cities. I have no objection to including cities as well as rural districts.

Mr. CLANCY. I do not think the hon. gentleman's amendment goes far enough even then. The experience of almost every member of this House, if he has been any length of time in public life, must be that liquor is often a more potent influence in elections than money. For weeks before an election men have been debauched and kept in a state that was disgraceful. I think an effort should be made to stop the use of liquor during the whole time of an election