

partments are largely political, the transaction of business in our departments is of such a political character that the party in opposition hesitates to go into a department to transact business as members of parliament on account of the political sympathies pervading the whole branch, from the head down to the lowest messenger. This is a regrettable condition of affairs. It is something which demands the attention of the government, and the sooner we can end this condition of having a political party transact the business of the country and doing business for one side of politics only, and the institution of a system of under secretaries, entirely free from the political affinities which characterize the service to-day, the better it will be for individuals and the better for the country.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND—The hon. leader of the opposition is generally fairer in his remarks than he has been in dealing with the Lemieux Act. He has failed to notice, in his experience during the last three years, that any good has come of that measure. We all agree with him that it is a measure to prevent strikes and not settle them, and although the Lemieux Act is directed towards that end, my hon. friend does not know that in the first twenty-four months of its existence, out of 52 threatened strikes no less than 48 were settled under its provisions. It has been so successful that attention has been drawn to it in some of the old countries of Europe, and, personally, I have been in contact with ministers of the Crown in Austria, Italy, France and Belgium who have asked me to send them copies of that law as being an improvement on their own legislation. This is to the credit of the government. My hon. friend wonders why the government asks for the creation of a Department of Labour. The whole press rings with applause at the creation of this new portfolio. I have heard hardly any criticism. Of course I have heard from some quarters that it was perhaps time to rearrange the divers departments and perhaps amalgamate one or two of them that could well be brought together; but as to the important question now before the Senate, all will admit that we have reached a point where a Minister of Labour should

Hon. Mr. LOUGHEED.

be in the cabinet. The work of that department has gone on increasing every year. Strikes are threatened from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Demands are made upon the department every week, and every day, to try and prevent strikes which loom up in many parts of the country. We should all be agreed, therefore, upon the importance of this department and of the work that has been done by this government since 1896 towards bettering labour conditions and the relations between capital and labour.

My hon. friend thinks this government has done nothing in the matter of Civil Service reform. Did he not admit last year that the Civil Service Commission was a commendable step? We have brought the inside service under an influence other than political, and henceforth the nominations will be made according to merit. I for one, will be disposed to vote in favour of bringing the whole of the outside service under the Civil Service Commission. We have quite a number of cabinet ministers but we have no under secretaries, as my hon. friend remarked. He thinks that this country is overgoverned, and that we have too heavy a ministerial staff. It may be that our cabinet could be well reduced by one or two units; yet within the next few years, in a rearrangement, it will perhaps be found that some departments may be united, but that the present number of ministers will have to be retained. My hon. friend spoke of large corporations administering their affairs in other ways than the federal affairs are administered. If my hon. friend would go to large corporations like the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Grand Trunk Railway, and add up the salaries paid to the directors, managers, superintendents, and vice-presidents, he would see that the salaries that we are paying to our cabinet ministers were very small indeed. I do not deny that in many departments, perhaps in all, a certain number of employees should be dispensed with. It may be that the staff is too large, and that a private individual, paying out of his own pocket, would apply the pruning knife, and dispense with a certain number; but we all know the difficulty of coping with this matter, and bringing down the staff of the various departments to a just