

and the different states to pass any legislation they see fit, but I deprecate such legislation, for this reason. I do not believe that legislation upon the extreme lines they have seen fit to adopt is such as will in the end tend to their best interests. While I have this sympathy for the hon. member for Glengarry, and while the time may come when, if the United States should continue that class of legislation—and particularly if it should be aimed especially at Canada, as some of the state legislatures have done by mentioning Canada in particular—I should be prepared to go the whole length which the hon. gentleman proposes to-day, there is one difficulty which seems to me insuperable at present, and which has been explained by the Minister of Railways, and that is the difficulty of making such a law apply to the United States, by especially naming the United States, and not making it apply to other countries. The United States, in their legislation, do not designate any particular country, but apply it to all countries alike. But in order that a law of that kind might be of any adequate relief to us, we would have to specially apply it to the United States. That at present would be very difficult. In fact, I think it is impossible, and certainly it would be a very undesirable class of legislation. It would be a class of legislation which the United States so far have not applied, because their legislation applies to all aliens indiscriminately. In that they have the advantage of us; and although their legislation may hit us hard, we cannot say that it is aimed entirely at us, so far as I understand the laws they have passed in relation to this class of contracts. Then comes the question, in some respects possibly more important than the other. And that is that such legislation might involve our paying a much higher price for the construction of public works of a certain nature. It can hardly be urged that the general interests of the country would be served by our having to pay larger prices for the construction of public works, for the cost of which the people have to pay. That is a very grave consideration, especially in a country such as Canada, where we are building and will have to continue to build extensive public works if we go on improving, as I think we should, our different systems of transportation. Now, I do not agree with the hon. member from West Elgin (Mr. Casey) in saying that the Minister propounded an improper proposition in saying that the Government, so far as they could see their way to do it, would take care that on our public works, the work should go to Canadians. Mind you, he limited his proposition to the application of this rule in so far as consistent with the public interests. I do not care whether it is a Liberal or Conservative Government—of course, I have my preferences which party should control public affairs, but I apply the same principles

Mr. TISDALE.

to both—I believe that they should do everything possible, consistent with a due consideration for the public interest, to utilize the labour upon these public works for the benefit of our own people, along the general lines suggested by the hon. Minister. I understand that in some contracts where the contractor was an alien, the hon. Minister has insisted—and this was agreeable to both sides—that Canadian labour should be employed. So, though we cannot legislate on lines that would look like directing the law against one particular people, I, for my part, shall be prepared to strengthen the hands of any Government, Conservative or Reform, in saying—and I am prepared to say it and take the responsibility of it—that our public works should be carried on in this manner, so far as it can be done consistently with the interests of the public. And I want to say further, and I am glad to say it now that a subject has arisen upon which such a remark is pertinent, that, while I am not prepared to go so far as suggested by my hon. friend from Glengarry, and while all my feelings towards the people of the United States are of the friendliest character, I still hold that there is room here for two great Anglo-Saxon nations, managing their affairs on the lines of free government; yet, if they believe it necessary in their own interest to impose restrictions which are aimed especially at us, the time may come, if they drive us too far, when it will be our duty to say that we can get along without them as well as they can get along without us, and when, by express enactment of our legislature, we shall retaliate on the same lines. So, while I am not prepared to support the hon. member for Glengarry to the full extent he proposes to go, I am prepared, and I will insist, so far as I have any influence with our Government, that the rule of fair-play to our own workmen shall be applied so far as it is not inconsistent with the interests of the country at large. And I will go this much further—I will give my support in carrying out a policy of this kind, even to a Government to which I may be opposed. I think the thanks of this House and this country are due to the hon. member for Glengarry for the trouble he has taken—and it must have involved no little trouble—to gather the information he has laid before us, information which, spread upon the pages of "Hansard," will be of value in the future.

Mr. GIBSON. The hon. member who has just taken his seat gives a great deal of credit to the hon. member for Glengarry (Mr. McLennan) for gathering the information he has given to the House this afternoon. I notice that the hon. Minister of Railways and Canals also extended his sympathy to the hon. member for Glengarry. But neither of these hon. gentlemen has offered the hon. gentleman of the