

Mr. INGRAM. The strike commenced on the 12th February and the board reported on the 21st.

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. That would be nine days.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). When did the strike end?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. Instantaneously. The account does not say that the effect of the report was magical but it was almost the same. Yes, here are the words—'the effect was immediate.' So, the strike ended at once. Neither party was willing to assume the responsibility of refusing to act upon the advice of disinterested parties, doubtless men of standing in the community, men whose judgment satisfied the public as to where the responsibility rested. My hon. friend from Centre Toronto (Mr. Brock) used some strong language, I think stronger than he really meant. I do not think he would really wish to be remembered as having spoken in that strong way about the labour unions. I am going to be more considerate than my hon. friend. I think he spoke in the heat of the moment. I do not think that the men who comprise these unions are fairly chargeable with being unmanly or cowardly.

Mr. BROCK. I wish to state my position. We were speaking of the two organized parties, organized labour on one side, and railway companies organized under the law on the other. From the railway companies side damages can be collected, but not from the other. Therefore, as an organized body this is a cowardly body. I did not speak of them individually.

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. I understand what the hon. gentleman (Mr. Brock) said. The hon. gentleman is not satisfied with this measure, because he says it is not strong enough. I do not know how far he would be willing to go as an employer of labour. He may be willing to go a long distance. But probably there are employers close to him who would not be willing to go so far. Up to the present moment, I think I am right in saying, the employers generally would not be favourable to any law that would go further than what might be called a moral law, one that would bring to bear the pressure of public opinion. I doubt that the manufacturers, who are the great industrial employers, would assent to a stronger measure than this. If there is any stronger measure that they would assent to, I should be very glad to hear what that measure is. The hon. senior member for West Toronto (Mr. Clarke) has left the Chamber, and I cannot so advantageously refer to his remarks. He took exception to this Bill, putting it in somewhat different language from the other members, but with the same idea. He complained of the measure because it did not contain power to compel

Sir. WILLIAM MULOCK.

obedience to the award. Again I would ask him, as I ask my hon. friend from Centre Toronto, have they no regard for the power of public opinion? For that is the power to which we appeal, and, in the long run, I think it the most efficient of all powers that govern the action of persons who serve the public. At all events, in this age I think it is altogether fitter to appeal to the power of public opinion than to the power of the policeman or the sheriff. There are only two powers, the local power and the power of public opinion. For the present, at all events, this measure proposes to appeal to the latter only. Now, exception is taken to this measure as being confined to railways. The hon. member for Jacques Cartier said that the Conciliation Act gave all the powers in question. I have already pointed out that the Conciliation Act does not meet the case, simply because it could not be put in motion except by the consent of both parties. But supposing that consent were waived, it would still be inapplicable. A Conciliation Act applies to what are commonly known as industrial disputes, this measure is limited solely to disputes on railways, that may lead to certain consequences. Section 3 reads:

Whenever a difference exists between any railway employers and railway employees, and it appears to the minister that the parties thereto are unable satisfactorily to adjust the same, and that by reason of such difference remaining unadjusted a railway lock out or strike has been or is likely to be caused, or the regular and safe transportation of mails, passengers or freight has been or may be interrupted, or the safety of any person employed on a railway train or car has been or is likely to be endangered.

Then the minister may proceed. This is dealing with a special class of cases in which the general public have a special interest. Whilst the general public may be interested in a degree in an industrial strike between a private employer and his men, it is a different kind of interest altogether from the interest of the general public in the safe and satisfactory operation of public railways. In these the public have another interest besides the general welfare of the country, they are concerned directly in the safety of the passengers and the satisfactory transportation of freight and mails, all of which are essential to carrying on the trade and commerce of the country. It is a special case of special importance, in which the public are chiefly the interested parties. A railway company is given special rights and powers superior to those of the individual. It is given powers of expropriation, power to operate its railways even though such operation may endanger life and property under certain circumstances. It has extraordinary powers, powers to which the private interest of the individual must be subservient. The railways are undertakings to promote the