

giving an incorrect impression if I were to leave the House under the impression that it was a one-sided measure. At the same time, I would perhaps be conveying an equally erroneous impression if I were to say that it had the hearty approval of the railway companies. Yet I think I am correct in saying that some of the largest railways in Canada view it with hope. I think there may be in some quarters a prejudice against it. I am able to say, in regard to the Intercolonial Railway that the measure has the approval of the Minister of Railways. Well, I met a delegation of railway men with Mr. Hall, and we discussed this subject at very great length on many occasions, and it has not been my good fortune on any occasion to have met a set of men more zealously anxious to arrive at a proper solution of the labour question, than the men who assisted me with their advice in the preparation of this Bill. By common consent, we did not think it advisable to invite the reporters to be present during the preparation of the measure. There are delicate questions to be discussed between employer and employee, and there is always more or less an attitude of standing on guard assumed by the one towards the other. At the same time, I must testify to the unqualified loyalty of the representatives I met towards the companies under whom they served; and, having reached the conclusion that we could provide a law for the settlement of railway disputes by appealing to public opinion and the consciences of the men concerned, it was to me most gratifying to be assured by the men that, so far as they were concerned, the House and the country might depend on it that the railway operatives of Canada would loyally stand by the decisions of the board of conciliation and award.

Mr. CLANCY. I understand the hon. member for Vancouver to state that the trade unions of Canada approved of compulsory arbitration.

Mr. SMITH (Vancouver). What I did say was that in the majority of cases the labouring men had showed a disposition to agree in any decision arrived at by the government authorities.

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. The House and the country may rest assured that if this measure becomes law, the railway men will be found loyally supporting the government boards of conciliation and award. I am not in a position to speak of the other classes, but I may say that the committee which assisted me gave that as their opinion, and I have no reason to doubt that the railway companies will equally loyally abide by the decisions of the boards of conciliation and award. They are as amenable to public opinion as are the employees, and if we can get the employers and employees in Canada to respond to public opinion in their dealings with each other, we will have

Sir WILLIAM MULOCK.

made some progress towards solving the labour problem. I am not one of those who hope to ever see an end to labour troubles. These troubles are incident to industrial life, and arise from natural self-interest. It is most natural that the employee should seek to better his position and that the employer should endeavour to make his enterprise as profitable as possible. The workingman wants a higher wage and the employer is anxious to make more money out of his investment. That is a condition of affairs which we will always have, and the more industrial progress Canada makes, the greater our industrial activity, the more frequent will be these frictions. It is idle to suppose that there ever will be an ideal state of affairs when every body will do everything desired by the other, and no man will have to stand up and battle for himself. But in connection with this question, it may be observed that the Bill does not travel beyond railway disputes, and while I might be asked the reason, I think that perhaps the bare statement of the question answers itself. The railway companies are creatures of parliament for the benefit of the public. They are not created for the benefit of any corporation or labour. They are created to serve the general community; and whilst both employer and employees have a deep interest in the working of the road, there is a still greater interest concerned, and that is the public interest. Therefore, on an occasion like this, I submit that the public have a *locus standi*, have a right to intervene and see that if the employer and employees fail to operate the road satisfactorily, then the public will do its best to see that the road is properly run and at the same time provide means for justice being done to employer and employee.

Mr. CLANCY. Through what channel?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. Through the channel suggested in this measure. While, as my hon. friend from Cumberland (Mr. Logan) has suggested, it might be desirable to extend this principle beyond railway companies, yet this Bill does not go beyond them. My hon. friend from East York (Mr. Maclean) suggested last year that this Bill should be made to extend to telegraph companies. There are also coal companies and many other companies, monopolistic in their character, and which perhaps might properly be brought within the provisions of this Bill. I hope that this measure, if it becomes law, will prove so satisfactory in its operations as to lead to the extension of the principle into various other industrial channels. My hon. friend from Cumberland made a valuable suggestion, which I am glad to endorse. It does seem to me that the employers and employees of Canada would do well to recognize that the labour question is here to stay, that strikes and lockouts will always be resorted to