

cessary to limit the number of hours that employees should work at a stretch when they do so voluntarily, then let it be done. It is clear to any one who chooses to think of the matter that engineers and others who work too long at a stretch, can only do so with the greatest possible risk to the public safety. I do not know the particulars of these new regulations that have been introduced, but I think we do know that heretofore we have been far more free from railway accidents in Canada than have our friends to the south of the line, in proportion to our population and to the number of trains that are running. If there is any likelihood of a system being introduced in Canada that would make the risk of accidents greater than heretofore, then it becomes a very grave matter, and one that deserves the serious consideration of the Government. I would urge upon the Minister to take up this matter seriously, and also to hear what the employees themselves have got to say on the subject.

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. There is not the slightest objection to that, in fact I am desirous of doing so.

Mr. CORBY. When in Toronto this week I was informed by a number of drivers and firemen that they had not yet received the new rules, although they are going into force on the 1st of July. I also had a conversation with conductors who complain that they are not getting time enough to study those rules if they are to go into force on the 1st of July. When it is remembered that many of these railway men have been working for the last 25 years under certain rules, the Government should be very careful to safeguard the public interest when they propose to enforce new rules in 30 days, because if the engineers and firemen received the rules now, they would only have 30 days in which to learn them. Representing, as I do, a large railway centre in the city of Belleville, the changing point between Brockville and Toronto, I must say that I think the men ought to have a fair show, they should have a chance to come down here and air their grievances, and should have been heard by the Minister of Railways and Canals before that Order in Council was passed. I am told on good authority, and by the men themselves, that they had a direct promise from the Minister of Railways and Canals that before that Order in Council was passed, they would be allowed to be heard with reference to their grievance. It may be said also that these men, who are earning their daily bread in working for the Grand Trunk Railway, are afraid to come here publicly and represent their interests; therefore, I say that we, their representatives, should stand up and protect them; and I, for one, irrespective of the Grand Trunk Railway or anybody else, pro-

pose to stand up here and urge what I think is fair-play in the interest of the railway employees. In the hope the Minister of Railways and Canals will appoint a day and allow the men to send a representative here and put their case before the Government, and if they have not been properly treated, I think the Government should rescind that Order in Council.

Mr. McMULLEN. I earnestly hope that the Government will move very cautiously in lending their sanction to any radical change as between the railways and those employed. Before the Government sanctions rules that apparently are to come into force on the 1st of July, I think an opportunity should be given to the trainmen to present their arguments on behalf of the reforms that they desire. Of course it could not be expected that the Government should send an invitation to any organization to come here and present their arguments. However, I concur with some hon. gentlemen opposite in the belief that the organization of trainmen should be allowed a reasonable opportunity of making any objections to any new rules before the Government grant their sanction to those rules, so as to protect the rights of individuals. We know well that all railway managers are anxious to get as much as they can out of their hired labour, and we cannot find any fault with that. But the rules should be so fairly adjusted, the scale should be so fairly balanced between the employees and the corporations that injustice should not be permitted to exist, and that the railway men should not be subjected to harsh treatment or obliged to work too long hours. I quite agree with what the Minister of Railways and Canals has said with regard to the men desiring to put in long hours so as to draw larger pay. Conductors and brakemen are generally paid by the hour, and they are anxious to put in more than ten or twelve hours a day, in some cases they would work 18 hours if they could get paid for that time. It is the duty of the railway company to see that men are not permitted to work more than, say, 12 hours, because if they do, the company is running a great risk, and the public safety is also endangered. We know that accidents have occurred by reason of the fact that trainmen have virtually fallen asleep at their post, and sometimes even loss of life has occurred thereby. Some protection should be given to the public in that regard. I do not know whether the new rules are imposing upon skilled labour more onerous duties than such labour was subjected to before, but I hope that in any new rules to be enforced, skilled labour will be protected against any injustice being done.

Mr. DAVIN. I wish, as representing a large number of railway men, to add my