

SPEECH

DELIVERED BY

THE HONOURABLE W. J. BOWSER, K.C.

—ON—

The "Workmen's Compensation Act"

AT THE VICTORIA THEATRE, VICTORIA, B. C.,
MONDAY, APRIL 12th, 1915

The Chair was occupied by Mr. A. S. Wells, President of the Trades and Labour Council.

The Chairman: Ladies and Gentlemen: For a considerable time the organized labour movement of the Province of British Columbia has been endeavouring to secure a Compensation Act in this Province that would compensate those men who were injured in industry through accidents in the Province. We have spent a large amount of time, a considerable amount of energy, and considerable money in our efforts to achieve our object. And therefore, at this time, considering the fact that Mr. Bowser has introduced in the House a draft Compensation Act, we are desirous not only of having the Act criticized, but of having the Act explained to us, as workmen of this Province. And therefore, this meeting has been called.

I think when you look at the speakers on the platform tonight, you will recognize instantly that this is a non-partizan meeting. It is not a political meeting, but a meeting to discuss one of the vital questions which affect the wage-earners of this Province, in so far as it refers to compensation for injuries which are an absolute adjunct of industrial operations. And, therefore, we desire not only to have the merits of the Bill explained to us, but if there are any demerits in the Bill, we desire also to have them explained to us, too. Our object is not to make anything of a political nature of this, but to do our utmost during the time which will intervene between now and the time that the Act is placed on the Statute Book, to see that we secure a Compensation Act in this Province which at least shall be as good as anything which obtains in the Dominion of Canada at this time. And more than that, the organized labour movement of this Province is desirous of seeing, as far as possible, the misery and the want which is often entailed by industrial accidents safeguarded against. We desire more than