

simply to prohibit strikes to the injury of the railroads and the public, without going further, would be gross injustice to the workingmen. It would put them at the mercy of the employers. We say nothing of the alleged impossibility of enforcing such laws as those hinted at. The authorities may not be able to imprison ten thousand or a hundred thousand men for refusing to work, but they can imprison one or a dozen of their leaders, which would amount to the same thing in the end. But to do so would be to disarm the combatants on one side by taking away their only effective weapon, while leaving their opponents in full possession of the most destructive arms known to modern industrial warfare. It cannot be denied by the fair-minded and thoughtful that the possession of capital gives the employers an immense advantage. They may close their works and live comfortably for an indefinite length of time, long enough to starve every employee into submission, on the profits which they have made by means of the labour of these same employees. The only means within the reach of labour with which to meet the force of accumulated capital is combined labour. Forbid the widest possible combination of workmen of all trades and grades, compel each little group to fight out its own battle with its own employers, and you tie the hands of labourers, take from them their only effective weapon, and reduce them to their former condition of serfdom through the operation of the merciless law of competition.

Take for illustration the present strike, in its origin. The Pullman employees are groaning under what they claim was to be only a temporary reduction of wages, to the extent of twenty, thirty, or forty per cent. They demand a return, which they say had been promised them, to the former scale, or some approach to it. The company refuses, alleging that they are even now working at a loss on every car they make, and have been doing so for some time, simply to provide employment for their men. The men refuse to believe the statement. The company says, with apparent fairness: "You may appoint a committee from among yourselves, and we will allow them to inspect our books, and see that we speak the truth." The men reply in effect: "We are not book-keeping experts, and are not competent to discover the actual state of affairs in that way. But we will submit the question to arbitration." The company refuse to arbitrate, saying that there is nothing whether they shall continue to work at a ruinous loss, for the sake of meeting the demands of their employees. The men retort that, so far as appears, the company continues to pay its eight per cent. dividends; that there is, moreover, to offset any falling off in the price of cars, a great reduction in the cost of manufacture, etc.,

and ask why, if the facts be as alleged the company need hesitate to arbitrate, seeing that no arbitrators would decide that they should be required to do anything so unreasonable as that demanded of them, if their statements are frank and full. Now it is evidently useless at this stage of the industrial problem to repeat the old platitudes about the right of the company to manage its own affairs and the right of the men to quit their employment if they are dissatisfied. Many of the men would no doubt say: "This means that we shall, after long years of hard labour in the service of the company, which has made its wealth out of the profits derived from such labour, consent to suffer either slow starvation in the employ of the company which has grown rich on the products of our toil, or speedy starvation by quitting its employment with the probability of being unable to find work elsewhere." Left to settle the question between themselves and their employees the company would make short work of it. This would, evidently, be the result of such legislation as is being proposed. The sum of the whole matter is that such strikes must be stopped for the sake of civilization and progress, but cannot be stopped by simply throwing the workingmen back upon the old inexorable law of supply and demand. That law is outgrown and must be superseded by something better. Whether that something is compulsory arbitration in some form, in spite of all the difficulties which surround it, or some wiser alternative, is the question of the hour.

IS THIS FAIRLY PUT ?

Once upon a time there was a certain country which was ruled by a Government, a House of Representatives elected by the people, and an Upper House or Senate whose members were appointed by the Government. The Government was responsible to the House of Representatives, and could continue in office only so long as it had the support of a majority of these representatives. A certain member of the Government and a certain member of Senate, were, at the time of which we are speaking, members of a certain company organized for the construction of a certain railway. The Senator was president of the company and the Minister one of its shareholders. The terms upon which this company agreed to build the railway were that they should receive as payment all the money which had been voted, or which might thereafter be voted by the House of Representatives in aid of the construction of the railway, it being a constitutional law or usage that no such money grant could be voted unless introduced and recommended by the Government. The company in question afterwards transferred its contract for the building of the road to a certain contractor, on condition that he would not only build the road on the terms

agreed on by the company, that is to say, for the subsidies received and to be received from the Government and Parliament, but that he should further reimburse the company for expense already incurred to the extent of some hundreds of thousands of dollars. The company, on its part, bound itself to do its utmost to obtain further subsidies from the Government. Soon after this arrangement had been completed a general election was being held. The Minister in question, being also as aforesaid a shareholder of the company spoken of, and so a party to its engagements, applied to the Senator in question, the President of the Company, for financial aid in carrying on the election, so as to assure the triumph of his, the Minister's party and policy. Thereupon the Senator gave him a very handsome contribution for the purpose. This sum he immediately handed over to the treasurer of the Party fund, and afterwards, at various dates, during the progress of the contest, drew upon said treasurer for large sums as they were required for the use of the Party in the election struggle.

Time passed. The Party to which the Minister and the Senator belonged were successful in the contest. During the next three or four years the Government of which the Minister was a member proposed and Parliament voted various large sums as additional subsidies to the road in question, until the total amount of subsidies thus voted was over a quarter of a million of dollars. These various subsidies were paid to the order of the Senator in question, he being the chief shareholder, as well as the President of the company charged with the construction of the road.

Time passed. The Opposition by some means succeeded in bringing to light the facts above briefly stated, with many others of somewhat similar character, which we need not stay to particularize. These facts were brought prominently to the notice of the House of Commons or representatives, and the representatives asked to express their disapproval. The Minister in question thereupon arose in his place, admitted the general facts above stated, affirmed that he had done no wrong in accepting the large sum above mentioned from a party friend, and that the money had been used for legitimate party purposes. He further declared that he would not hesitate to do the same thing again, in similar circumstances. The majority of the representatives of the people, including his colleagues on the Ministerial benches, applauded his declaration and endorsed his position by their votes. This must mean that the transaction, as described, provided we have described it truthfully and without exaggeration or distortion, as we have tried to do, was, in their opinion, a proper and unobjectionable one.

Are the people of Canada, for the parable is for them, ready to accept the judgment of the majority of their elected representatives? Do they regard the transaction