

the employees, should be heard. I think this course would lead to more general satisfaction.

Mr. WOOD (Brockville). I am glad that my hon. friend from West York (Mr. Wallace) has brought this matter to the attention of the Minister of Railways and the House. Whatever the Minister of Railways may think of this subject, I can tell him that there exists a very strong feeling among the men on the Grand Trunk against the adoption of these new rules. I represent a constituency which forms the head of one of the largest divisions of the Grand Trunk Railway, and I know whereof I speak when I say that changes in the rules that have been approved by the Governor in Council, are extremely unpopular with the men they more particularly affect. Now, I hold in my hand a resolution passed by a very important body of trainmen strongly protesting against the adoption of these changes, which, it appears, the Minister of Railways has approved. Whatever may be said in favour of the new system—and it does not appear that any person in this House has examined the system sufficiently to pronounce upon its merits—

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. Do you think they would be able to pronounce upon it if they had examined it?

Mr. WOOD (Brockville). I daresay that my hon. friend from West Elgin (Mr. Casey), who has paid a good deal of attention to legislative matters of this kind, would be able to give a pretty fair opinion. Besides, there are railway men in the House, the hon. member for East Elgin (Mr. Ingram) and others. Yes, I do not hesitate to say to the Minister of Railways that there are members of this House who, on carefully examining the two systems of rules and comparing them, and taking into consideration the fact that the system in vogue in this country has proved, so far as I know or have ever heard, less injurious than the system adopted in the United States, could give us an opinion that would be of value. I have been told by railway men that the system in vogue in this country is better for the safety of employees and passengers than the system in vogue in the United States. But I submit to the Minister of Railways, in all fairness, that when adopting a change so important as this, at all events the large representative body of men known as the legislative committee of the trainmen should have been consulted. In these days, Mr. Speaker, large corporations have to be a little more carefully watched than in the days of old. We have had some instances, not only in the present session of this Parliament, but in recent years, to show a grasping tendency on the part of some corporations. And we know that the best solution of the difficulties that arise

Mr. CASEY.

between corporations and the employees is conciliation. We know that the principle of arbitration is always best. I submit, Sir, without wishing to say anything more on the subject, that before the Governor in Council was asked to approve of these rules, the representatives of the other side of the question should, at least, have been given an opportunity to present whatever objections they might have to the adoption of these rules.

Mr. McNEILL. I wish to say one word in regard to this matter. I think the hon. member for West York (Mr. Wallace) deserves our thanks for having brought this important subject to the notice of the House. The travelling public are deeply interested in this question, and it is evident that we would have no protest from the railway employees unless they had a grievance. It is a serious matter for the employees of a great corporation to come forward in this way, knowing that they do so at a certain risk, and I am satisfied there would be no such application unless there was a grievance. But I would like to call the attention of the hon. Minister to what my hon. friend from West Elgin (Mr. Casey) referred to, the fact that the employees are called upon to serve too long hours at a stretch. I called attention to that in the House some little time ago. I venture to think that it would be desirable that this House should limit by legislation, if necessary, the number of hours during which railway employees should be kept at work. I recollect when, a good many years ago, a great deal of attention was called to this subject in the old country, a good many accidents had occurred, and when the matter came up and was investigated, it was found that these accidents arose largely from the fact that the men were utterly worn out, that they were not in a condition to discharge their duties in such a manner as was necessary for the public safety.

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. My hon. friend will allow me to say that no doubt he is aware that in many branches of the railway service some legislation would be required to prevent men from working too long hours by their own desire. They are, perhaps, more desirous of working long hours than the railway companies desire them to work, because they get paid by the time. Therefore, in the legislation which my hon. friend has in mind, this fact would have to be taken into consideration.

Mr. McNEILL. I am not standing up in the House to discuss the interests of the employees as against the corporations, nor of the corporations as against employees, nor do I desire to make political capital with one class or the other. I am speaking now in the interests of the public as well as of the employees; and if it be ne-