

### Need of an Arbitration Board.

Then, five months after the strike had been declared, a board of arbitration was constituted by the President of the United States, and accepted by both parties as a tribunal for enquiring into and settling the matters in difference. Why, it may be asked, could this step not have been taken at the outset? (Hear, hear.) Why a reference to a board of arbitrators after the expiration of nearly half a year, and not before? (Hear, hear.) Why no public voice or *appeal to public opinion* before rather than after the strike? (Hear, hear.) It is, perhaps, impossible to say whether the existence of a properly constituted board of arbitration, to which either party might have appealed before the strike, would have afforded means of finally settling all questions in dispute; but one is warranted, I think, in believing that an investigation and award by a properly constituted board would have solved the difficulties and prevented the strike. If so, then the absence of the necessary machinery for the constitution of such an industrial court clothed with the necessary powers was responsible for the strike. (Hear, hear.)

### Canada Leads the Way.

We, in Canada, have advanced beyond this point. (Cheers) As you are aware, the act constituting the Department of Labor, which was assented to in July, 1900, was an act framed specially for the prevention and settlement of trade disputes. Since its establishment in the two years just elapsed the Department of Labor has been called upon on *eighteen different occasions* to lend its good offices to aid in the prevention and settlement of industrial disputes, and in no case where a settlement has been brought about by the department has the trouble broken out again. (Applause) Two cases very much in point come to my mind at this time, as illustrating what has been done by the Department of Labor in this connection. In the spring of last year the department received intimation from the miners in some of the bituminous mines at Cape Breton that a strike would be declared unless some immediate settlement of their differences could be had with their employers. The department was *asked to lend its friendly offices* under the act to bring about a settlement and prevent a strike. The department at once communicated with the manager of the company concerned, and, after a little correspondence, an arrangement was effected whereby both parties agreed to meet a representative of the Government and discuss with him the differences at issue, with a view to their adjustment. Conferences were held at the mines and at the offices of the company, at which both parties and the Government were represented. All the claims were discussed and adjudicated, and *an agreement satisfactory to both parties* drawn up and signed. Not only did this agreement have reference to subjects of dispute immediately under consideration, but it made provision for the constitution of boards of conciliation and arbitration, whereby future disputes might be adjusted between the parties themselves, and the possibility of strikes or lockouts in future thereby averted. At the time of this settlement not a day's work had been sacrificed, and since the settlement the harmonious relations established between the company and