

the better observance of the Lord's Day can be more properly passed and executed by the provincial legislatures than by the Dominion Parliament. I must give the hon. gentleman (Mr. Charlton) credit for his perseverance in the face of, I was going to say, opposition, but I will say objections that have been urged against this measure which he has introduced year after year. I also give the hon. gentleman credit for being quite sincere in what he is doing. If he has not the satisfaction of seeing this Bill become law, he has the satisfaction of knowing that all over the country a great many people give him credit for his action in this matter. There is one misapprehension, however, which I desire to correct, and it is this: a great many people have the impression that the hon. mover is almost the only man in the House who is anxious to have better observance of the Lord's Day. That is an entirely false impression. I believe the great majority of hon. members are willing to do anything in their power to accomplish the object in view. The hon. gentleman has said that this is not a religious Bill. We admit that contention. The hon. gentleman says the object he has in bringing it forward is for the better protection of the workingmen of the country in the enjoyment of the day of rest. That is a good object, and we all sympathize with him in seeking to attain it, but it is a most difficult result to accomplish. I find that there are four sections in this Bill: the first relating to Sunday newspapers, the second to the canals, the third to railway traffic and the fourth to excursions. Well, now, if we wish to protect the workingmen of this country in the better enjoyment of this day of rest, it occurs to me that this Bill ought to be broader and wider, and ought to touch more subjects than it does. I suppose the hon. member (Mr. Charlton) thought that at the present time it was going as far as practicable, but nevertheless, it seems to me that it discriminates against a great many men who would have no protection in this matter and who are not included in the provisions of the Bill. I sympathize with the hon. member (Mr. Charlton) in what he says about Sunday newspapers. They are objectionable, and I trust the day will never come in Canada when we shall see Sunday newspapers spread broadcast throughout the country as they are in the United States. I believe, Sir, that the strongest protection to this day of rest is the moral sentiment of the people. If that is gone the day of rest will be gone also, but as long as we have such religious sentiment in this country, and as long as we have as high a moral tone as exists now, there is no danger of the Sunday newspapers getting a foothold in Canada. I see no reason at all for making a law with regard to the closing of the canals. That matter rests with the Government of the

Mr. CRAIG.

day. They are the servants of the people, and are supposed to do what is wanted by the people, but I presume that there are occasions on which the canals must be opened on Sundays. I, for one, am satisfied to leave that in the hands of whatever Government may be in power. I believe they will exercise all due caution, and will see that canals are not opened on Sunday except in case of absolute necessity. I am in favour, Mr. Speaker, of anything which will tend to the better observance of the Lord's Day. I believe at the same time, that we have great reason to be proud of the manner in which that day is observed in Canada. The workingmen of this country are to-day protected by provincial laws, and they are also protected by the moral sentiment of the people in the enjoyment of this day of rest. From my own observations in looking around, I have not seen that their rights in this respect are infringed upon, and if the hon. member (Mr. Charlton) will show to this House, that the rights of workingmen in this respect are not protected then I am sure that the House will only be too glad to assist him in accomplishing his object. While I am in sympathy with this measure, and while I am quite satisfied that the Bill should have a second reading, I am at the same time afraid that its fate shall be what it has been in the past, that it will not be able to run the gauntlet of the committee, and that we shall not be able to frame a Bill which shall accomplish the object which is aimed at.

Mr. CASEY. There is a great deal to admire and agree with in what the hon. gentleman (Mr. Charlton) has said in moving the second reading of this Bill. He has told us very properly of the beauties of the due observance of the seventh day of rest, called in the Bill, the Lord's Day or Sunday, and he has told us very truly that we should approach this question in a spirit devoid of religious prejudices. In all that I thoroughly agree with him. On the other hand, there is a great deal in many of the points which have been raised by my hon. friend from Durham (Mr. Craig), and I am inclined to doubt seriously whether this House is within its rights in even passing the Bill, as it stands, to a second reading. I propose to enlarge a little on some of those points, because the subject is one which requires to be cleared of the mists which appear to cling around it in the public estimation.

Now, the title of this Bill would lead us to believe that it contained general provisions for the better observance of the Lord's Day, and that it was in effect an attempt to provide for the people of Canada the only legislation that there is on this subject. If the popular mind accepted that view of the case it would be mistaken. The Bill does not make general provisions for the observance of the Lord's Day, but, as its author tells us, it deals only with the