

THE ALIEN LABOUR LAW.

The Double-Faced Policy of the Laurier Government.

A Law Which Was Never Intended to be Enforced.

Barefaced Attempt to Deceive the Workingmen of Canada.

In the year 1885, the Congress of the United States passed an Alien Labour Law, under the operation of which numbers of Canadian artisans and labourers were prohibited from working in that country.

Representations were repeatedly made by the Canadian authorities to the Government at Washington, protesting against the enforcement of this harsh and unfriendly measure. These representations were, however, of no avail. Complaints were general from our border cities that workingmen who lived in them, but who were employed in the United States, were obliged to become citizens of that country, and remove their families there, or be deprived of employment; while, at the same time, United States citizens who resided on the other side of the line were permitted to come over to Canada and work here without let or hindrance. This condition of affairs was loudly protested against by our workingmen, and the aid of the Canadian Parliament invoked on their behalf.

In the session of 1890, Mr. George Taylor, member of Parliament for South Leeds, introduced in the House a Bill which was an exact copy of the United States Alien Labour Law, prohibiting the importation and immigration of foreign-

ers and aliens under contract or agreement to perform labour in Canada. Mr. Taylor's Bill was referred to a Committee, which reported that they had examined witnesses and had ascertained that the United States Alien Labour Law was being oppressively applied to Canadians. The Committee recommended that before the passage of the Bill the attention of the United States authorities should be directed to the matter, and if our workingmen were not relieved from the grievances complained of, Parliament should pass a measure dealing with the subject.

Mr. Taylor introduced his Bill in succeeding sessions, but it failed to pass the House, owing to the desire of the Canadian authorities to secure the cessation of the enforcement of the United States Alien Labour Law against our workingmen, rather than place a law similar to that of the United States on our Statute Book.

In the fall session of 1896, Mr. Taylor again introduced his Bill, but at the request of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the measure was not pressed, so as to give the Liberal Government the opportunity of further negotiation with the United States. In asking Mr. Taylor not to proceed with the Bill, the Premier, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, pledged himself as follows: "I will claim the privilege of asking him (Mr. Taylor) not to proceed further at present. . . . If, after having taken