

Mr. CLARKE. The result was the emasculation of last year's Bill and the presentation of the present Bill, and I think the minister acted very wisely in accepting the suggestions that were made to him. My hon. friend from Winnipeg (Mr. Puttee) who takes a great deal of interest in matters affecting the working classes, tells us that this Bill is acceptable to the railway employees whom the minister had the pleasure of meeting, and he says that the reason it is acceptable to them is because it does not affect them in any way. They are perfectly satisfied with the provisions of the Bill, because it does not affect them in any way. That I believe is the fact, except in so far as the findings of the arbitration commission may affect them through its effect on public opinion. I hope the Bill may have some good effect, and I am not going to offer any opposition to it; but I have not heard any sufficient answer to the question propounded again and again on this side of the House, why, if this measure is going to work satisfactorily—and I sincerely hope it will—its provisions are only made applicable to railway disputes instead of being made applicable generally to all industrial disputes in the Dominion of Canada. The minister has nothing to fear from making the application of this Act general. I am satisfied that the measure is so harmless, if I may be permitted to use that expression, that its application to all the industries of the country would not be opposed by the working classes. They are always willing to place their side of a case before arbitrators or before the public, and I am perfectly satisfied that if they were all brought under the provisions of this Bill, they would willingly accept it and it might do some good.

Hon. Mr. TARTE. The Bill of my hon. friend is based on the Arbitration Acts passed in the United States. The first two states to establish boards of arbitration were the state of New York and the state of Massachusetts, in 1886. Fourteen other states have since passed similar laws. These states are: California, Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Missouri, Montana, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Ohio, Michigan, New Jersey, Connecticut and Indiana. The state boards in the United States are composed, just as the Bill of my hon. friend provides that this board shall be composed, namely, of three members—one an employer, one an employee, who is generally appointed at the recommendation of the labour organizations, and the third of another class. The state board of arbitration may be invoked by the desire of both parties to a dispute, or the board may interfere itself.

Mr. CLARKE. Are the Acts compulsory, then?

Hon. Mr. HAGGART. What are the powers of enforcement?

Hon. Mr. HAGGART.

Hon. Mr. TARTE. When both parties agree to submit a labour dispute, the result is binding. Only in Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, Illinois and Wisconsin have state boards been appointed; in all the other states the law has been a dead letter. The report of the Industrial Commission, which I hold in my hand, and which is a very interesting document says:

It is very difficult to estimate correctly the amount, nature and value of the work of the state boards of arbitration.

The resumé of this report is that these state boards have not done much. There are only three or four states in which they have done some active work. Outside of these states they have not accomplished anything. As some hon. gentlemen who have spoken on this Bill have said, it cannot do any harm. I hope that it will do good; but if we are to judge of the results of this legislation by the results which have been achieved in the United States, I am very much afraid it will not do as much as some of our friends expect it will. However there is no harm in trying, and, so far as I am concerned, I am glad the hon. Minister of Labour has introduced this Bill. We have not so far tried any device for settling our labour disputes, which are becoming dangerous, and it is time we tried something. On that account I think both sides of the House will be pleased that the Minister of Labour is doing something, and if he does not succeed, he will try to do something better in another year.

Motion agreed to, Bill read the second time, and House went into Committee thereon.

On section 1,

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. I move to insert in the fourth line the word 'may' between the words 'strike' and 'interfere.'

Mr. CLARKE. What is the object of inserting the word 'may'? According to the argument of the hon. gentleman, the reason this Bill is enacted is because these strikes do interfere with the carriage of mails, etc. Is there any doubt about it? What is the sense of putting in the word 'may'? It destroys all the arguments made this afternoon for this legislation.

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. I think the hon. gentleman's objection is well taken, and I will not press the amendment. I was asked to make it, but I had not read it very carefully.

On section 3,

Mr. CLARKE. I suppose by this the government take power to appoint two members of the committee, and three if necessary. The minister may appoint the two first and name a third in case none of the parties make a selection.