

Railway Men Oppose Bill.

We have also the protest of one of the most important labor organizations in this country—the railway labor organization—an organization second to none in point of numbers, and an organization which represents independent opinion and intelligent thought. The trainmen, the conductors, the locomotive engineers, the firemen, the telegraphers, have all pronounced themselves opposed to this legislation. In view of this, surely the government will allow this bill to stand until the whole question can be threshed out before a special committee. This bill is supposed to be in the interest of conciliation, but is the government itself adopting a conciliatory attitude? Is it setting a good example, when it says that because it has a majority at its back—and the great proportion of that majority is ready to do anything the government tells it to do right along—is it going to railroad this bill through the House, whether those in whose favor it is supposed to be are in favor of it or not?

Interferes With Men's Liberty.

It is a very grave matter when you come to interfere, as you are interfering in this legislation, with the liberty of the individual. The Minister of Labor proposes to restrict individual rights on behalf of the general public, he is going to prevent men from doing what they have a right to do today, and such a thing should only be done after mature deliberation. No good reason has been given why this bill should be forced through the House now. We are all in favor of legislation which will prevent strikes, because strikes are bad for labor, and bad for capital, and bad for the public; but while we want to get rid of this evil, I, for one, am not in favor of needlessly encroaching upon the liberty of the subject. I am a great believer in individual liberty, and I say that a matter of this kind ought to be considered very carefully, and I trust that the government will allow this bill to go to a special committee, where it will have that careful consideration which it has not yet had. (Hear, hear.)

Man Who Was Set On.

Mr. Duncan Ross—it is delightfully refreshing to see the change that has come over hon. gentlemen opposite. The hon. member for Kings (Mr. Fowler) is so anxious to discuss this question from an entirely different point of view from that taken by hon. gentlemen opposite two or three weeks ago that he is now discussing the ambition of the hon. member for Nanaimo (Mr. Ralph Smith). Well, there are ambitions. There are ambitions that are honorable, and there are ambitions that are otherwise. I think we can leave the ambition of the hon. member for Nanaimo to the judgment of this House and the judgment of this country. The hon. member for Kings has had his ambitions. He has been ambitious to be a landed proprietor in the Northwest; he has been ambitious to be a lumber king in the province of British Columbia; and possibly later developments will show what kind of ambitions the hon. gentleman has had. (Great uproar.)

At this point both sides of the House cheered and jeered. Mr. Ross saw he had put his foot in it, but appeared unable to find words which would assist him in the dilemma in which he found himself, and he looked correspondingly foolish.

Fowler Throws Down Gauntlet.

Mr. Bennett—Tell us about it.

Mr. Fowler—Go on; tell us the whole story. Let us have the whole story.