

Mr. INGRAM. I am not discussing that point, but what I am saying is that many people hold that they should be held quite as responsible as the employers of labour. I may also say that in Australia, as far as the matter of conciliation is concerned, there is a difficulty. Sums of money have been paid to persons who have acted on the boards of conciliation. It was discovered that these men derived by reason of their being selected as members of the boards of conciliation, a larger amount of pay than they could otherwise make, and that by reason of that they adopted means of creating and fomenting strikes and difficulties between capital and labour. For that reason the people objected to those boards of conciliation almost altogether. This is the objection they found to boards of conciliation in Australia, and I would be very sorry indeed if the conditions are the same in Canada as they are in Australia, because, if the conditions are similar the same difficulty would occur in this country. The hon. minister stated to-day that this Bill is based largely on the lines of a Bill introduced in the United States. If that be true, then the conditions will arise here perhaps that have arisen in the United States. For instance, when a difficulty occurs between the railway companies and their employees and both object to take part in a conciliation to settle the difference, I presume that under such circumstances the Bill would allow the Department of Labour to have a compulsory investigation irrespective of either or both of the parties. If the result of the deliberations of the department is published in the 'Labour Gazette' in order to create a public opinion against the party who dissents from the award, I cannot see anything particularly wrong about that. If a railway company does what is right to its employees they can have nothing to fear from fair and reasonable investigation. On the other hand if the employees are not willing to enter into conciliation, and if on investigation the government finds that the employees are to blame, then it would be in the interest of the country that such a public opinion would be created as would compel the employees to resume their occupation. Let me give an instance of what has occurred right here in the city of Ottawa. There is a difficulty between the trackmen and the Canada Atlantic Railway Company. I understand that two responsible gentlemen offered their services to the Canada Atlantic Railway officials to try and bring about a fair settlement and that the offer was refused. Now, what followed? I do not know of this personally, but I am told it, and if I am wrong I shall be willing to withdraw it; I am told that all the heavier engines of the Canada Atlantic Railway are in the shops to-day, that the company is afraid to trust them on the line because the track is not in the condition it would be if the trackmen

Mr. PUTTEE.

were continuously at work. If that be true, then some interference should take place on the part of the Department of Labour, because it has gone beyond the question as between the Canada Atlantic Railway and the trackmen, and loss of life and accidents may occur at any time. If the company is not reasonable and will not have their affairs investigated, then they should be shown up in their proper light before the people of this country. I do not think that the Bill goes far enough to enable the board to get sufficient information to arrive at a proper conclusion.

The POSTMASTER GENERAL. Turn to section twelve.

Mr. INGRAM. Section twelve reads:—

12. For the purpose of such inquiry the board shall have all the power of summoning before it any witnesses, and of requiring them to give evidence on oath, or on solemn affirmation, if they are persons entitled to affirm in civil matters, and produce such documents and things as the board deems requisite to the full investigation of the matters into which it is inquiring, and shall have the same power to enforce the attendance of witnesses, and to compel them to give evidence as is vested in any court of record in civil cases; but no such witness shall be compelled to answer any question, by his answer to which he might render himself liable to a criminal prosecution.

It would appear from this that they might obtain the necessary information to arrive at a fair conclusion. I am not a lawyer, but from my reading of the Bill it would appear that there is no provision to enforce the findings of the board because there are no penalties provided. However, when the Bill comes up in Committee we will have greater scope to discuss its different provisions. I want to assure hon. gentlemen in this House that so far as the railway employees of this country are concerned, this is the first instance of any legislation being conceded to them without their specially asking for it and in which they are considered exclusively the only workmen that should be legislated for. I do not know whether or not this parliament has the right to legislate as regards matters affecting the manufacturing industries, or whether that is within the purview of the provinces. I know that in the province of Ontario we have what they call a Mutual Arbitration Act, but I am bound to say that so far as I know that Act is practically a dead letter. It can only be acted upon by mutual consent, and to my knowledge there never has been a case where, by mutual consent, it was put in operation. However, that may be, if the provinces have power over these matters, then if the legislatures are not doing their duty they must be held responsible to the people.

Mr. F. D. MONK (Jacques Cartier). We are bound to give to any legislation tending to improve the relations between employers and employees all the help we possibly can.