

ciliation and the board of conciliation proceeds to negotiate. This negotiation can be carried out under the boards of conciliation that we have already under the Act of two years ago or it can be carried on by the very capable officer who is acting as the Deputy Minister of Labour. Well, the hon. Minister of Labour might say in addition that after you have gone through all that red tape—because there is a great deal more machinery about this Bill than anything else—after you have gone through all that red tape of establishing, first, your board of conciliation it is, if I understand the provisions of the Bill, open to you to establish a board of arbitration which would take upon itself the duty of making an inquiry and making some award in respect to the difference. What would be the advantage of that? The hon. Minister of Labour admits, as the fact is, under the provisions of this Bill, that when the award is made it may be absolutely disregarded by either one or both of the parties. What would you have accomplished? The hon. minister will say that you would have accomplished something by your inquiry. You can make your inquiry now as he is doing in British Columbia, you can have your board of conciliation under his Act of two years ago and you can accomplish under this Bill nothing that you cannot accomplish as conditions stand at the present time. It would seem to me that it would be very much better for the hon. Minister of Labour to devote his energies to some practical purpose, not to the establishment of a tribunal whose award might be disregarded by both parties, a tribunal which may not be attended by either of the parties because there is nothing in his Bill to compel either of the parties to attend, there is no penalty placed on either of the parties for not attending this board of arbitration—a tribunal which if once appointed may be left alone in its glory to make an inquiry without either of the parties paying the slightest attention to it. Under these circumstances no possible good can result. If the hon. minister would devote his attention to some practical scheme by which both parties might be brought into agreement for the purpose of arranging to be bound by the award of some tribunal I think in that way he would accomplish some result in the end by reason of the fact that both parties had agreed to be bound by the award of the tribunal. In establishing this tribunal under the forms of law, but whose award is not sanctioned by law and which cannot have the sanction of law to enforce it, are you not really putting an obstacle in the way of an agreement between the parties to be bound by the tribunal? If you can get capital and labour to come together and agree that they will be bound by the award of a certain tribunal you have accomplished something, because I believe that

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax).

when capital and labour have entered into an agreement of that kind they will abide by the result. If instead of doing that you simply ask these people to attend before a tribunal that they may absolutely ignore and if you permit that tribunal in the absence of one or both of the parties possibly, to make an award, you are going through a mere form in the end, and how are you going to accomplish anything in that way for the settlement of disputes between capital and labour? I do not regard this measure of the hon. Minister of Labour as one that is likely to produce satisfactory results, or, in fact, any results at all. I think it is a measure that will have about the same end, so far as practical results are concerned, as the measure which he introduced two years ago in regard to establishing boards of conciliation. In these questions at issue between capital and labour you must very largely have regard to public opinion, and I suppose the hon. minister is looking to the force of public opinion to enforce the award. But, I think in this he is starting at the wrong point. I think the time to invoke public opinion is when you are seeking to bring the parties into an agreement for the purpose of having an award made which both will submit to when it is once made; but I think if you invoke the force of public opinion to enforce an award after it is once made, after the inquiry has been made (it may be *ex parte*), you are expecting too much if you anticipate therefrom any very great results. These, Mr. Speaker, are the very brief criticisms which I would make of the Bill in its present form and at the present time. We may be justified in making an experiment of this kind which has been proposed by the hon. minister who has evidently devoted some thought and considerable attention to the subject, but I say from my own brief consideration of this Bill, and looking at what has been accomplished by the somewhat similar provisions of the Bill introduced two years ago, that I for one would not anticipate any very great results from it, and I would think that possibly it might stand in the way of obtaining agreements between capital and labour to be bound by arbitration. I do not think that legislation can possibly do a great deal in matters of this kind, at all events, in the direction in which the hon. minister is moving. You cannot by force of legislation, compel any man to work for a wage which he is not willing to accept, and you cannot by force of legislation compel any man to give a higher wage than that which he is willing to pay. You have to deal with matters of this kind, I admit, very delicately, but you have to deal with them wisely with the view of arriving at an agreement as early as possible in the history of the problem which presents itself to the government for solution, and I would think that the