

them in political life, I want to say for them that, while there may be and undoubtedly are at the present time extreme men in some of the higher places, the great body of the mine workers of the province are responsible and intelligent citizens.

After the Gillen award was made the matter went back to the men, and as is their practice, a vote was taken, and the award was overwhelmingly rejected by the miners. Then further negotiations, I think, took place between the representative of the Provincial Government and the miners, and citizens generally in the eastern part of the province, who were deeply interested endeavoured as best they could to bring about a settlement. It looked for a while as though there was going to be a general strike which would involve some 10,000 or 12,000 workmen, and which would have tied up absolutely the industries of the province, and would have prevented the Provincial Government from receiving a very substantial revenue;—because, as I have no doubt honourable gentlemen know, a very substantial part of the revenue of the province of Nova Scotia is derived from royalties. So I do not need to say a word to impress upon the Government and the honourable members of this House the very great importance of bringing about a speedy settlement of the difficulties.

The mine workers' executive met in Truro after the Gillen award was made, and they were invited to Montreal by the representative of the company. Some of them went up, and they came to an understanding which it was hoped would be agreeable to the mine workers. But that second Montreal arrangement was recently referred to the men, and their vote was again overwhelmingly against a settlement on the lines proposed.

I am not going to attempt to absolve the extreme leaders of the men for things they have done nor to make any excuse for them, because with some of them I have no sympathy whatever. At the same time, I do not want to be understood as exonerating the company, because my information, which I believe to be well founded, is that for a very considerable time before the British Empire Steel Corporation was organized, as well as since, the management of the companies composing it has been anything but politic in dealing with the men. My information is that they have contributed very largely to the crisis which is now confronting the people of Nova Scotia. So I think it is a safe basis to start from that there are faults upon both sides.

Hon. Mr. TANNER.

Now, honourable gentlemen, there is occupying a very high position in public affairs in Canada at the present time a gentleman who, I understand, holds to the principle, and it is probably a very sound principle, that there are more people interested in these labour disputes than the men and the management and the capitalists. As I understand it, he lays down the principle that the community is also interested. That capital, labour, management, and the community are all interested is a doctrine which the Prime Minister of the country lays down. Therefore it is that I am inquiring, on behalf of the community of Nova Scotia, as well as on behalf of the men and of those who have capital invested down there, what the Minister of Labour and his Department have been doing to bring about a settlement of these very important matters. I understand, of course, that the honourable gentleman is new to his office, and I suppose it is only fair to allow him some consideration. But, nevertheless, when such vital questions are outstanding, and such great interests are at stake, I would have expected that the Minister of Labour, instead of travelling out to the Pacific coast to take part in an election, would have travelled down to the eastern part of Nova Scotia in order to endeavour to bring about peace in this very serious labour difficulty. The duty which the honourable gentleman performed on the Pacific coast was very dear to his heart, and in a sense I do not begrudge him the pleasure. Under other circumstances I certainly should not. But I observe that after performing his duty there, as he saw it, he came to the province of Ontario, and, while these vital questions were pending in the industrial centres of Nova Scotia, he stopped off at some point or points in Ontario to address political meetings. I should have expected that the Minister of Labour, if he took his duty as minister to heart, would have been hastening eastward, as I suggested a moment ago, to endeavour to bring about peace. I observe that in the *Toronto Globe* he discussed the urgency of practical, cohesive effort and co-operation, and the great necessity of grappling with the questions which are confronting the Government. From what I have observed of the honourable gentleman since he has entered upon the important duties of Minister of Labour, as well as for some time before, he has been very free to give advice and at times very free to criticise. He seems to have been desirous of getting into the limelight by making speeches. Early in his career as