

are going through a period when millionaires are numerous; I will give the Government a fair warning: the more the class of millionaires is increasing in any country the more that country's social foundations are shaken, you cannot create a large number of millionaires without impoverishing in a like measure a multitude of individuals. I see in this House the hon. member for St. Antoine (Sir Herbert Ames); I am quite certain he will not miss this opportunity and that he will rise and strongly protest against this Bill, on behalf of his good friends who have put their signatures to the official protest of the city of Montreal. I do not doubt that he will say to the Government: You are going too far; if State ownership of this railway is in order, you have only to use the power conferred upon you by the enactment of 1914. I will now ask the hon. member for St. Antoine, if the large firm which he is managing were threatened with bankruptcy, would the Government be ready to grant him the same favour they are to-day granting to Messrs Mackenzie and Mann? What is there to prevent another manufacturer from asking the same favour, provided he be as high up as these other gentlemen in the favour of the Government? He may say to the Government: There is only one way to prevent me from losing my millions, for I am on the road to bankruptcy; please be kind enough to take over the industry whose manager I am, and thus allow me to keep the millions I have dishonestly accumulated; in a word, you can well do for me what you have done for a railway system. Would not all the manufacturers have the same right to come and individually ask the nationalization of their undertaking, from a public utility point of view, just as Messrs. Mackenzie and Mann? It is under these circumstances, Mr. Chairman, that I will register my protest, in the name of the city of Montreal, in the name of the country workmen, because I say they are the great mass, that they form 80 per cent of the population of the country who shall have to pay the debt which they intend saddling upon the country to-day; and who can assure us that there is not more coming?

Mr. C. A. WILSON (Laval) (translation): Mr. Chairman, I will not ask you to keep your eye on me, for your official position does not permit you to watch anything but the hand of the clock marking the hours which will take us up to two o'clock that fatal hour of the day which shall follow this one.

I will not ask you to listen to me, because you are impatient, officially, to hear the two strokes of that clock which, like unto the mechanism of a safety vault, will open at two o'clock sharp the doors of the Public Treasury to-morrow morning, and thus allow the smiling Finance Minister to freely enter, the voice of the last keeper of the treasury having then been stifled.

In rising, Mr. Chairman, I have not the least pretension, not even the pretension that any argument I might make would in any way advance our cause. The only pretension I may have is based upon a most mathematical and mechanical truth, that I will only advance the discussion by twenty minutes and that is all. (What proposition is there now before us, Mr. Chairman? A money proposal.

When, in 1913, the closure was imposed upon us, I believed, in my "candeur naïve"—to use the poet's expression—that the Government then in power would only use such a measure under most extraordinary circumstances: when the country's safety would be at stake, when any invasion from any foe whatever, would put the country's security in dire peril. But not at all, Mr. Chairman, for the second time closure is applied, and it is about a money matter. The first time this measure was applied, if my memory serves me right, it was a question of some \$35,000,000 which the then government wanted to take from the national chest to make a gift of it to the mother country, England, for a well known, plainly stated object, there was no possible equivocation. The idea was to increase the empire's nava' force, to pay a certain amount to the imperial treasury, for the construction of three dreadnoughts, at an approximative cost of some ten or twelve millions each, if I remember well. We objected to that proposition made by the Government, although the House was perfectly informed as to the nature of this expenditure, of the application of this money, of how it should be employed, and for my part, I never thought, for one moment, that the \$35,000,000 which we were to put into the hands of the British Minister of Finance would be wrongfully expended; but we objected to the very principle of the Act, we said—and rightfully so—that if we had \$35,000,000 to spend, it were better to spend them for a Canadian navy than to aid the imperial admiralty, and events have justified us.

I will not further refer to that political episode, only to recall what I was saying