

House of Commons Debates

THIRD SESSION—TENTH PARLIAMENT

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, April 8, 1907.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at Eleven o'clock.

FIRST READINGS.

Bill (No. 149) to incorporate the Rock Life Insurance Company of Canada.—Mr. Gallihier.

Bill (No. 150) to incorporate the Collingwood Southern Railway Company.—Mr. L. G. McCarthy.

Bill (No. 151) to incorporate the Live Stock Insurance Company of Canada, Limited.—Mr. Talbot.

Bill (No. 152) to incorporate the Ottawa Terminals Railway Company.—Mr. Talbot.

Bill (No. 153) for the relief of Victor Harold Lyon.—Mr. Gallihier.

SUCCESS OF LABOUR DISPUTES ACT.

On the Orders of the Day being called :

Hon. RODOLPHE LEMIEUX (Minister of Labour). Mr. Speaker, with your leave I would like to inform the House that the first experiment with the new Labour Bill has been highly satisfactory, the welcome news of this fact having just been received. As you are aware a strike in which about 1,700 men were interested and in which the collieries of Nova Scotia were also deeply interested was about to be declared at Springhill. An application for the appointment of a board of arbitration, required by the new law, had been made by the General Manager of the Cumberland Railway and Coal Company, Limited. The men were informed through the deputy minister of labour, Mr. King, that the law would apply and he told them what the consequences would be if the strike were declared.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. What strike is the hon. gentleman speaking of ?

Mr. LEMIEUX. Springhill. The men, I am pleased to say, publicly yielded and they have understood that if an investigation took place perhaps public opinion would not be with them. This morning we

received a telegram from Mr. Hector McInnes, of Halifax. It reads as follows :

Halifax, Nova Scotia, April 8, 1907.

I have pleasure in advising you that all the men at Springhill collieries have returned to work and no question was raised on their return as to open or closed shop ; under the circumstances it will be unnecessary to take any further steps on the application for reference submitted by Cumberland Railway and Coal Company.

(Sgd.) HECTOR McINNES.

I cannot express too highly my sympathy with the men and the trades union, who have so quietly and so openly abided by the new law which was passed by this parliament.

Mr. J. HERRON, (Alberta). I am pleased that the hon Minister of Labour (Mr. Lemieux) has been able to give us such an encouraging report regarding the success of the new Labour Bill in the part of the country to which he has referred, but I would like to ask him for further information regarding the coal strike in the Crow's Nest Pass and in the west generally where they are mining coal. I have a telegram here from Mr. Sherman, President of the Division of the United Mine Workers of America, located in the Crow's Nest Pass :

Fernie, British Columbia, April 6, 1907.

John Herron, M.P.,

House of Commons, Ottawa.

Government has refused to enforce Industrial Disputes Act against Taber Coal Companies who locked out men on April 2. As result referendum vote now being taken ; may result immediate strike at all mines this district.

(Sgd.) F. H. SHERMAN.

I wish to impress upon the minister the great importance of the government taking immediate action and of doing everything possible to avert trouble in the west as he states that he has been successful in doing in the east. Owing to the present conditions in that country we would look for a worse situation than that which occurred last year if this threatened strike should take place ; in fact it has already to some extent taken place as we are informed that a lockout has occurred. I would judge from the telegram received that all the