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W. B. WALLACE

HALIFAX, N. S.

November 24, 1909.

Dear Sir:

Replying to your letter of the 18th inst. I wish to state that I am quite willing to render any aid I can in connection with the subject.

From my observation of the operation of the Canadian Industrial Disputes Act, I am satisfied that it is an excellent measure and meets with the approval of all thoughtful Canadians. Neither the employers nor the employees surrender anything under it; they are entitled practically to all the rights they formerly had, but they secure by this measure a prompt inquiry and a thorough investigation as to alleged grievances.

The only alternative to such a measure would be Compulsory Arbitration, and Canadian opinion would be strongly against such alternative. Moreover, there would always be unsurpassable difficulty in enforcing its provisions.

As to the details of the Existing laws, I have very little criticism to offer. In its practical operation some difficulties have been met with.

At first both parties to the dispute were inclined in some cases to appoint as their representatives on the Conciliation Board recognized partisans or men whose opinion on the subject could be confidently counted upon at the outset. But employers soon found that it was expedient to select as their representative some one who was not closely identified with them and who would be recognized as having a mind open to conviction. Unfortunately some of the men selected to represent either the employers or in other cases the employees had final opinions at the start and were too much like the British farmer who in connection with the Corn Law Movement publicly thanked God that he was not open to conviction.

In recent years, however, it has been more generally realized, especially by the employers, that as one of the great purposes to be served by the Board was the effect of its report upon public opinion. It was desirable that the appointees should be men of an independent type. As a consequence of such a selection when an appointee of one of the parties and the Chairman of the Board were able to unite in a report or recom-

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