

there. With regard to the remarks of the hon. member for Victoria (Mr. Plunkett), I will not waste the time of the house in replying to them because his ignorance of this subject is too profound. He should have consulted his predecessor, Doctor Tolmie, on the subject before discussing it here.

With regard to the Minister of Railways, he goes back to the introduction of what he says was a similar bill by a gentleman named Armstrong, the then member for Lambton. The minister says this gentleman brought up this matter year after year. So far as the records show he brought it up twice, and he received a much more favourable reception from the Minister of Railways of that day than I have received.

Mr. MANION: It was brought up four times.

Mr. NEILL: So far as I can see it was discussed only twice. The first year it was introduced late in the session and died on the order paper; in the second year, through the courtesy of the Minister of Railways, it went to the railway committee. It was discussed in that committee at considerable length, but they did not report favourably upon it. As a precedent for rejecting the bill the minister draws a parallel between it and the one introduced by Mr. Armstrong. Surely the minister knows that the two bills are totally different; Mr. Armstrong's bill had nothing to do with the matters now under discussion. His bill dealt entirely with the great lakes.

Mr. MANION: I said that.

Mr. NEILL: Where is the resemblance?

Mr. MANION: Simply because it was shipping, that is all. It was lake shipping, instead of coastal shipping.

Mr. NEILL: One dealt with shipping on the great lakes and the other with shipping on the coast; there was no parallel between the two. The minister has said that the bill standing in my name is not feasible. His only reason for making the statement seemed to be that he had certain telegrams. I believe if he would study them he would find that with one possible exception they objected to the measure being made to apply to traffic passing from the Atlantic to the Pacific and vice versa. Again, that is a matter which could easily have been adjusted in committee. As a matter of fact I had drawn an amendment to omit the objectionable part, as the minister might have seen in the press. Such an amendment would have avoided ninety per cent of the objections in the telegrams to which he referred.

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The extraordinary part of the minister's presentation was his admission that the section he read—I have not the act before me because I have been taken unawares—which states clearly and distinctly that the control by the board of railway commissioners extending to all vessels owned, operated, chartered or controlled by the railway companies has been cancelled by a circular. That has been the law for twenty-nine years, but the minister waves his hand and states that the provision was done away with, and that therefore it has no force or effect. How was it done away with? Why, they issued a circular! I never heard of a circular before.

Mr. MANION: That does not prove it is not true,—simply because the hon. member did not hear of it. There are many things of which he did not hear.

Mr. NEILL: Any person could give such a smart-aleck retort. The point is, why did I not hear about it? Because it is in the form of a circular. Was the circular issued to him, or made public? We do not know. One of the leading men in the service of the Canadian Pacific Railway had no knowledge of it. That section, as I read it and as the minister read it, is in force. It certainly is in force.

Mr. MANION: My information is that it is not in force.

Mr. NEILL: The minister states it is not in force by virtue of the grace of God and a circular.

Mr. MANION: I did not mention God.

Mr. NEILL: The grace of God should be left out; the minister is right there. I should have said it is not in force by the grace of the railway board and a circular! I am sorry that a person occupying the proud position of minister of railways should have to shelter himself behind a circular which has put out of existence a statute which has been in force for twenty-nine years. He said the provision has been done away with by a circular which was issued by the board of railway commissioners in 1911. That is an extraordinary situation. Are we to pass laws in this parliament and then twenty or twenty-five years later find that they have become ineffective because of a circular—not even an order in council?

Mr. MANION: As a matter of fact I stated that the law was never put into effect. I stated the order had gone out by circular that the law should go into effect on February 15, and that on March 28 by another