

An instance of the unduly aggressive spirit of organized labor, where for the time it enjoyed almost complete power, has just come to light through the closing of the Galt mines at Lethbridge. If all reports are true, the labor organization there which had control over the workmen, sought to restrict the rights of the employers as well as the rights of individual workmen, to an arbitrary and unlawful extent. In this, as in nearly all similar instances, the closing down of the work will result in much greater suffering to labor than to capital. The first demand of the men for an increase of wages was perfectly legitimate. Such demands, whether made individually or collectively, are right and proper, so long as no unlawful acts are resorted to in order to enforce the demand. This is one of the rights of labor, to sell its producing power to the best possible advantage. But when the labor organization demanded the reinstatement of men who had been discharged for dishonesty, and followed this by a further demand for the discharge of men who had done more work than the prescribed rules of the association allowed for a day's work, it clearly sought to go beyond the limits of its rights and usurp the rights of others. In both instances the action of the labor association was such as to override the capacity of the employers, and the second demand was in addition an attempt to curtail the rights of individual workmen to earn, by greater diligence, a larger daily emolument. By all means allow labor the fullest freedom to organize in its own interests, but such organizations should not seek to trample upon the rights of either employers or individual workers.

### AN UNJUST SYSTEM.

It is high time some change should be made in the railway policy of this country, especially as regards chartering and bonusing railways in the Northwest. A number of objectionable features are known to exist in connection with railway chartering, which have worked greatly to the disadvantage of this country in times past, and the evil is still abroad and continues to be perpetuated. One of the most objectionable features in connection with the railway policy of the Dominion Government, is found in the customary practice of bonusing Northwestern railways with grants of land. In this way

nearly 4,000,000 acres more of the public domain in the Northwest have just been voted away by Parliament, in aid of Northwestern railways. On the other hand roads in Eastern Canada are given cash bonuses, and Parliament has now been called upon to grant about two and a quarter million dollars in aid of roads in Quebec, Ontario and the maritime provinces. Thus, whilst the aid extended to these eastern roads is chargeable against the entire Dominion, the Northwest being compelled to contribute its share toward them, the people of the Northwest are compelled to bear the entire expense of the aid furnished to roads in this part of Canada. This is practically the result of the system of bonusing Northwestern roads with land grants. The lands of the Northwest should by right belong to the people of this country, and instead of being locked up in grants to corporations, they should be kept open for free settlement. Dominion legislators may think they are acting very liberally toward the Northwest, when they vote away our lands to railway corporations; but when we consider the millions of dollars in cash granted eastern roads, which the people of the Northwest have to bear in connection with the inhabitants of the east, the matter appears in a very different light. Aid to Northwestern roads should be given in cash, and therefore chargeable against the Dominion and not entirely against the people of this part of the country. Monopoly has been forced upon the Northwest for the benefit of the east, and we are, moreover, paying excessive prices for manufactured goods for the benefit of eastern manufacturers. On this account the Northwest deserves some consideration at the hands of the Dominion, and in no portion of the country should the Dominion be more free to aid railway development than in the Northwest. In fact, the Dominion is morally bound to assist this part of the country; but we find that whilst in the neighborhood of \$12,000,000 cash has been granted to aid roads in the province of Quebec alone during the past few years, not a dollar has been voted to assist roads in the Northwest. Great stress is laid upon the vast sum expended in building the O.P.R., but even in this case the Northwest has been obliged to bear far more than an equitable share of the burden, to say nothing of enforced monopoly. The lands of the Northwest granted to the Company would more than pay for

the proportion of the expenditure chargeable to the Northwest, whilst in addition we are liable for our full portion of the public debt incurred through the construction of the road in other portions of the Dominion.

From every point of view in which the matter may be considered, the railway policy of the Dominion has been one of stinginess toward the Northwest. So far as the Dominion is concerned, the granting of our lands to the railways is no aid whatever. It is a grant which has to be borne entirely by the people of this part of the country, and which does not cost the rest of the Dominion a single nickel. Moreover, it is a policy which is working injury to the country. With the immense grant of land to the C.P.R., the further locking up of the public domain should have ceased. Every effort should be made to hold the public domain for settlement; but at the rate which our lands have been handed over to corporations of one kind and another, there will soon be very little left for free settlement.

It has been stated that by granting the railways aid in the shape of lands, instead of cash, the roads are made valuable immigration agents; but this is a very hollow argument at best. The railways depend upon the settlement of the country for their business, and before the roads can be made to pay, the country through which they pass must be fairly well settled. Land or no land, they must therefore be interested in the settlement of the country.

Northwestern railways are certainly entitled to consideration from the Dominion Government, especially in view of the disadvantages under which this part of Canada is compelled to labor, owing to the general policy of the Government. A cash bonus would also be of much more value to railway companies, than a considerably larger grant of land. It is but justice to the people of this part of Canada, who have to bear more than their share of the public debt, owing to the protective duties which work against this part of the country, that Northwestern railways should receive cash bonuses the same as eastern roads, instead of land grants. The latter practically come out of the pockets of Northwestern people alone, and are in no sense Dominion grants chargeable to the entire country.