

Still there is nothing to connect her with the victim. Even if we disbelieve the statement of Clara Ford that she did not know Frank Westwood, there is, at least, no proof that she did. Some one had seen her speak to him, which does not prove that she knew him or had acquaintance with him; and it is extremely difficult to believe that an acquaintance should have existed between such an apparently ill-assorted couple without some one knowing of it. Even if, moreover, we attach little importance to the testimony of a woman who declared that Clara had not men's clothing under her feminine attire, or to that of the kindly and communicative Mrs. Dorsay, still there is nothing on the other side.

But there is her confession. On this point it is difficult to speak. It is not easy to believe the evidence given in the witness box by the accused on her own behalf; neither is it easy to believe that the detectives behaved so badly as she said they did. Evidently, however, the jury were not satisfied with the conduct of the detectives, not as well satisfied as the judge seems to have been. And we cannot profess to be sorry that they took this view of the subject.

We fear there is some tendency among ourselves to abandon the old English method of regarding every one as innocent until he is proved guilty. The accused are tried by newspapers before they appear in court to be tried by the judge and jury—a shameless procedure and an outrageous contempt of court. Then detectives, in their zeal and desire for distinction, go beyond legitimate bounds. In old times a prisoner, when arrested, was asked if he had anything to say, and at the same time warned that his words might be used against him. This was required by law. Hardly ever was more attempted. There was no badgering of the person arrested, no pressing for compromising statements. We find it extremely difficult to believe that, in the case of Clara Ford, the detectives did not go beyond this; and it is much to be hoped that a stop may be put to such methods of procedure.

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### Parliament and the Railways.

THE debate in the Commons the other day on Mr. Mulock's Bill to prevent the acceptance of free railway passes by members while drawing their mileage allowance for travelling expenses was a singular one. The brief reports of it which appeared in the dailies afford an interesting study of the way in which the logical faculty of a good many members of Parliament works under certain conditions. It is encouraging, and marks, we believe, a distinct advance in Parliamentary sentiment, that no member was found willing to deny that the use of passes by members who have received and accepted from the public funds a liberal allowance for the express purpose of paying the fares from which the passes exempt them, is beneath the dignity of the honourable members, among whom the custom is, nevertheless, almost universal. The *Globe* reporter affirms that no member "had a word to say in defence of the practice of members accepting mileage allowance while travelling on passes," but, in apparent contradiction to this affirmation, tells us in another part of the same report that "Mr. Cockburn made no pretence of favouring the principle or any other part of the bill."

It may be admitted, at the outset, that the Bill appears to have been poorly adopted to accomplish the seemingly simple purpose in view. But, seeing that it was quite within the power of the honourable members to amend and perfect it in any direction they pleased, in Committee, that fact does nothing to remove the glaring inconsistency of those who, while professing to approve both its principle and its purpose, showed themselves ready and anxious to cast it uncer-

moniously out of the House. That this was the mental attitude of the great majority scarcely admits of doubt.

It may be worth while to glance at the various arguments which were made to do duty against the second reading of the bill of whose object almost every speaker intimated his approval. Mr. Casey, seconded by Mr. Foster, objected to a provision in the Bill which, in the opinion of both, would have the effect of prohibiting a member from travelling on a pass, even though he did not draw his sessional indemnity. It is by no means clear that the accident of drawing or not drawing the indemnity really affects the most important principle at stake. The Minister of Finance very properly objected that the House ought not to pass legislation prescribing how a member should travel and how he should not travel. But, so far as appears neither of these gentlemen even attempted to aid in mending this or other defects in order that the essential principles of the measure might be enacted. Mr. Fraser pointed out that this principle should be made applicable to any other mode of travelling as well as to railway travelling, but without attempting to save the principle by having the bill amended in the desired direction.

Mr. McLean strongly supported the central aim of the bill, but based his advocacy on very singular grounds. It is often open to question whether the advocate who supports a good cause by a bad argument does not really do it more injury than the opponent who combats it with a bad argument. Mr. McLean took the very untenable position, unless the report does him serious injustice, that the House intended the \$33,000 voted for mileage allowances to reach certain railways, and that the object of the House was defeated when this money failed to reach those railways. We venture to say that most persons in Parliament and out have hitherto been simple enough to suppose that the real intention of Parliament in voting the allowances was the ostensible one of saving the members from the necessity of paying their own travelling expenses while engaged in the public service, and that the thought of helping the railways never occurred to them. Col. Denison approved of Mr. McLean's thought and suggested that the mileage allowance should be capitalized and divided among the railways. Yet, Mr. McLean's straightforward appeal to his fellow-members to preserve Parliament in the respect of the people, and to remove the stigma from the House, was worthy of more attention than it seems to have received.

And so in turn each speaker, up to the number of twenty-eight, we think, with the exception of a few who, like Dr. Christie, Mr. Lister, and Sir Richard Cartwright, unhesitatingly accepted the principle of the bill, vied with the others in their ingenuity in conjuring up difficulties and objections. Perhaps the strangest position of all was that of several members, including Hon. Mr. Ouimet, Dr. Cameron, Dr. Weldon, and others, who contended that all railways which have received Government aid should be compelled to carry members free. On what premise such a proposal could be justified, save that of regarding the money thus given as the gift of government or Parliament, instead of an appropriation from the funds of the people, it would be hard to discover. We have always held that Parliament should assert, on behalf of the people, authority to control freight and passenger rates and otherwise guard the people's interests, in view of the public gifts and franchise conferred, but to claim for Parliament the right to compel them to carry free certain individuals whom it might see fit to designate would be to carry its authority to an extent which seems very nearly equivalent to denying the railway companies any real right of property in the roads supposed to be theirs. Mr. Laurier moved the adjournment of the debate, seemingly