

the state of Massachusetts in 1877. The writer describes with great satisfaction how the state board, intervening at the right moment held a public inquiry, summoning the parties before them, and reached an award and gave it to the public. Both parties immediately accepted the award, and peace was restored. The article proceeds to argue in favour of a settlement of disputes by the aid of public opinion, the principle upon which this Bill proceeds. After the general scheme of the Bill that is now before the House became known to the public, I received communications from persons outside of the railway world inquiring why we did not extend the provisions of the Bill to the industrial world generally. One of these communications was on behalf of a very large and influential section of the labour world. I think that, from the tenor of that letter, we have a right to assume that the very considerable section of workmen represented by that order would rejoice if some peaceful measure such as this were within their reach, so that, in the event of their having trouble, they also might get the benefit of this measure. But I replied saying that the Bill was, at present, limited to the railway world; but that, if it proved satisfactory and public opinion, represented by employers and employees, demanded its extension to other classes, I was sure that parliament would accede to that demand. I think the time has come when both classes—indeed the whole community—might well address themselves to the question of endeavouring to devise means for the settlement of the labour question. I do not regard this country as on the brink of some great upheaval, as some hon. gentlemen seem to suggest. There is enough common sense among the people to demand what they conceive to be their rights, but yet not to go too far. They may go much farther at times than is wise, but they will not go to too great extremes. But seeing that, in my opinion, the time has arrived, I desire to give some practical form to that opinion; and I would suggest whether it would not be in the interest of all classes, employers and employees, if both sides should seek to bring together a representative committee of men of both classes, to thresh out this question and see if they could not find a solution, perhaps somewhat in the lines indicated. Such a discussion and the conclusions arrived at would, perhaps, bring to bear upon the question such a force of good will and impartial opinion as to make it effective practically in all cases of industrial war. At all events, I do not think we are warranted in assuming that parliament cannot make effective legislation in this direction. Therefore, I go so far as to express the hope that the public will seriously consider this proposition and assist in trying to solve the question. To-day, I received a letter from a large employer of labour in the city of Montreal. There is a

Sir WILLIAM MULOCK.

passage in the letter, which, perhaps the House will allow me to read. The suggestion comes from him that there should be legislation. Speaking of labour organizations, he says:

That these organizations have the power to negotiate and arrange any matters of interest affecting the particular trade or calling with which they are connected. Failing to accomplish this by amicable negotiation, the matter to be brought into court and regularly tried, in the same way as any other civil matter, and in the event of a failure to comply with the decision of the court, pains and penalties to follow, the same as in any other case in dispute. I know this is a large order, but we have to face the problem now in a most unsatisfactory manner.

This is from an employer of labour. My hon. friend from Vancouver this afternoon, alluding to some remarks made by the hon. member for Centre Toronto (Mr. Brock), asked whether the employers would be willing to be bound by rules. Well, this is a letter from an employer who suggests the extreme procedure of having a board established by law, and the award of that board to be binding as in a civil court, and enforceable by all the fines, penalties, sheriffs, and powers that the law can supply. I only cite it to show that there is a feeling abroad in favour of some such solution of this question. Therefore, I suggest to those who take an interest in the matter that they should try and organize themselves into a free deliberative body in which both sides may meet and debate the question, and see if some good cannot come out of it. At least no harm can come. I submit it is our duty as good citizens to make every effort to bring about some agreement. You cannot suppress the question. It will be present on every occasion. Therefore, instead of deploring and wringing our hands when we are confronted with labour troubles let us rather as wise men set ourselves to work and try to solve the difficulty. However, I am travelling outside the record of the particular Bill before the House. My Bill is not limited to railways. I should say no more at present than to submit it for the consideration of parliament, feeling sure that if it becomes law it will meet all reasonable expectations.

At six o'clock, House took recess.

After Recess.

House resumed at eight o'clock.

SECOND READINGS.

Bill (No. 139) respecting the St. Mary's River Railway Company.—Mr. Oliver.

Bill (No. 140) to incorporate the Cardiff Railway Company.—Mr. Oliver.

Bill (No. 141) respecting the Medicine Hat and Northern Alberta Railway Company.—Mr. Davis.