

right of forming themselves into organizations. Capital is forming organizations, and we do not on that account denounce capital. Labour has the same right, and I verily believe, after having tested the labour organizations on a pretty large scale, that if the owners and managers of large establishments would grapple with the question without any prejudice; if they would realize that in a country like this where industries are growing bigger every day the masses employed must grow bigger every day; if they would make up their minds to the fact that labour men have families, and that they have duties to perform to those families, that they have rights to protect; if they would recognize that there are two sides to this important question; the labour problem would be solved without much difficulty. I have not been made acquainted with the cause of the difficulty in Montreal. I fully realize the delicacy of the situation in which the government are placed; but all the same I am not sure but my hon. friend from Toronto is to a large extent right in asking the hon. Minister of Labour, if not to-day, as soon as possible, to take the House into his full confidence. This is a question in which the whole country is interested; parliament is sitting, and we have some right to advise, for after all the government is only a committee of the House; I invite the hon. minister—perhaps it is not necessary for me to do so—to proceed as speedily as he can in the settlement of the difficulty, which is of national importance.

Mr. W. F. McCREARY (Selkirk). Mr. Speaker it would seem to me, from the statement made by the hon. member for the St. Lawrence division, Montreal (Mr. Bickerdike), that it is a very small matter of contention between the parties. We have in the west many labour unions of various kinds on a firm footing. The city of Winnipeg is a city of unions, and my experience has been that where unions have been formed, they have been beneficial both to the employers and the workingmen. I have never known unions to work an injury, and I think the longshoremen of Montreal are quite justified in forming a union to better their condition. The hon. member for St. Lawrence said that the only point of contention was that the ship owners refused to recognize the union.

Mr. HEYD. What do you understand by the phrase, 'recognition of the union'?

Mr. McCREARY. That they will deal with the officers of the union in regard to wages and other matters.

Hon. Mr. HAGGART. Does it not imply that they will employ none but those belonging to the union?

Mr. McCREARY. It does not necessarily imply that, unless the by-laws of the union so provide. The association which the hon. member for St. Lawrence belongs to is a

union of the shippers of Montreal, which they have entered for their own benefit, for the purpose of charging proper rates of freight, getting proper rates of insurance, and so forth. Then the Manufacturers' Association—what is that but one of the greatest unions in Canada, and, so far as we are concerned in the west, one of the most tyrannical? And yet we are told these longshoremen are not to form a union to protect themselves. There is another phase of this question which has been presented by the hon. member for North Norfolk (Mr. Charlton), that is, that these unions have no right to import from the United States men who have had experience in the same line. If the hon. member for North Norfolk were so particular about not making use of Americans, we would not hear such long speeches from him, for he goes over to the states to get a good deal of his inspiration for these speeches. The Americans are coming to our country in large numbers, to work our mines and develop our prairies, and I do not think there will be much harm done if one or two come across to help the suffering longshoremen of Montreal to protect their own interests.

With regard to employing the military to suppress the unions, I am against that all the time. The moment you do that you are going to do an injury not only to the cause of labour, but to the militia system of Canada. I was speaking the other day to a man in Winnipeg, a member of a union, who had been at one time chairman of the Trades and Labour Council. He intimated to me that there were likely to be strikes. I remonstrated, saying I thought they were going a little too far. He said they were not, as prices of everything were so high that they needed higher wages. Then we proceeded to discuss the militia and its relation to the unions. He said the time was coming when men would have to choose between belonging to a union and belonging to the militia. I asked him, 'What would you do in that case?' He said: 'I am an old soldier. I was in the expedition to Manitoba under Lord Wolseley, I also served at the time of the rebellion in 1885, and I am still in the militia, but if I have to resign one or the other, I will resign the militia and not the union.' If that spirit gets into the militia of Canada, if a man becomes convinced that he cannot be a consistent union man and belong to the militia as will be the case if you persist upon calling on the militia to suppress strikes, that will disrupt this whole Dominion. I do not think it comes with good grace from men who belong to unions themselves to object to those poor longshoremen belonging to a union. We have union in every calling from the clergy down. We have unions among manufacturers, lawyers, doctors, and I am glad to know that the farmers in eastern Canada are forming an association. We have the

Hon. Mr. TARTE.