

that it was the intention of the Government to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into and ascertain whether a promise of amnesty had or had not been made. Before the opening of the Session the Government decided not to appoint a Royal Commission, but to charge a committee with the duty of ascertaining whether an amnesty had been granted, which, if promised, would surely be granted. Were they to believe that RIEL did not know the intentions of the Government from those who were speaking for the Government through the Press. RIEL very properly said: "There is to be a Committee of Inquiry; I will not, therefore, submit myself to be tried for an offence when it is at this moment under discussion as to whether I shall be tried for it or not." Because the House should remember that an amnesty is not a pardon; it was more than a pardon. A pardon comes after the offence; an amnesty comes before the offence. The meaning of the word amnesty was not pardon, but obliteration; and the authority granting the amnesty forgets, as it were, that the act has been committed.

Hon. Mr. BLAKE—Because it is impossible to forgive what has not happened, so the amnesty does not precede the offence.

Mr. MASSON—The House decided to have a Committee of Inquiry. In the face of that decision, was there a fair-minded man who would say that RIEL was bound to come and offer himself for trial when at that very time they were enquiring into the question, whether he was entitled to a complete amnesty, and whether he should come to trial at all. RIEL, very properly, did not come forward at that particular time. During the session of Parliament could RIEL, who was a member of the House, come forward and deliver himself to the tribunal? They were told that it could clearly be proved that an amnesty had been promised. After the evidence was taken by the committee, the people of Lower Canada were told that they must not hurry the question, because the evidence must be sent to England, so that the Imperial authorities might see it. He (Mr. MASSON) was not casting blame on the Minister of Justice, but was showing that the action of the Government from the very beginning had been such as to induce RIEL

to believe that the question of amnesty was being honestly and fairly discussed with a view to ascertain whether he was entitled to an amnesty or not. Months afterwards, the papers had not been sent to England, and up to the commencement of this session the people of Quebec were led to believe that, on the evidence taken by the committee, RIEL was assured of his amnesty. The question had only been decided a few days ago, when the House resolved that so far from RIEL being entitled to an amnesty, he was entitled to banishment. The logical consequence of the vote of the House, given a few days ago, was that RIEL should be expelled. The only thing that remained for him (Mr. MASSON) to do was, to be consistent with himself. In the first place, there were doubts about the outlawry. In the second place, he considered that RIEL was entitled to his seat in this House, as he was entitled last year, and consequently he was determined to vote against any motion that would have the effect of turning RIEL out of the House, and in favor of any motion which would have the effect of retaining RIEL in his place.

Hon. Mr. CAUCHON hoped the hon. member from Terrebonne did not claim for himself all the consistency and patriotism there was in the House. The hon. gentleman complained that he was abandoned by those around him, but he had been abandoned before when his chief failed to vote on a resolution for a complete amnesty. The hon. gentleman contended that the proceedings of to-day were a consequence of the vote of the other day, but was it the same last year when LOUIS RIEL was expelled from the House. The hon. gentleman's object was to quash these proceedings in order that RIEL might be expelled a second time and that hon. gentleman opposite could go to the country and declare that they had done a very patriotic thing. The question was this—whether this judgment should be discussed. The House was not a court of error, and even though it was the party affected by this judgment was not here to ask revision. The English course was the proper one to pursue. If this was a judgment at all, LOUIS RIEL was no longer a member of this House and a writ must be issued for the election of a member to represent Provencher in this House. Otherwise the constituency would