

that the public hear nothing about. In the autumn of 1911 we had two fair wage officers, both having their headquarters in Ottawa. If a disturbance arose at Vancouver it had either to take its course or we had to send a man to Vancouver. If a disturbance arose at Sydney or Halifax the same alternative presented itself. It occurred to me that it would be a great advantage if we had a man on the ground in Vancouver. I found in the Labour Department when I came to it two men both experienced and capable. One of them gave me entire satisfaction while he lived. The other is living still. I sent him to Vancouver and I think it is no exaggeration to say that during the past years he has prevented, by reason of his being right on the ground, forty or fifty labour troubles that would have developed into very serious disturbances had he not been there. I appointed another man and located him in my hon. friend's city of Saskatoon because I found that Mr. McNiven, whom I had sent to Vancouver, had too large a territory to cover. He might be in Saskatoon and a disturbance would arise suddenly in Vancouver. As my hon. friend from Rouville, who has had some considerable experience in the Department of Labour, knows, these difficulties arise sometimes in a few hours. I came to the conclusion that Mr. McNiven had too large a territory and that he might be in Vancouver when he was needed in Saskatoon, Edmonton or Winnipeg. I appointed another man in Saskatoon, another in Winnipeg and another here. I attribute the great saving in time to the fact that we have a larger number of these fair wage officers whose duty includes the exercise of their best efforts to prevent disturbances of this kind. I attribute to the increase in their number and to their being on the ground and taking hold of the matter earlier than they otherwise could, the prevention of many labour difficulties. I am surprised that the hon. member for Saskatoon should have referred again to the Thetford Mines matter. It is too trifling to think of for a moment. We reached a settlement most satisfactory to everybody and there has been no disturbance for a year. There was another element in the Thetford Mines case that slipped my memory the other night, and it

11 p.m. was that we had in Thetford Mines two rival, antagonistic labour organizations. One was a labour organization called the Catholic Associa-

[Mr. Crothers.]

tion, a local association, and the priest of the town took a very great interest in the welfare of the men and in getting them into the organization. The members of that organization were perfectly satisfied with the conditions and they passed a resolution to that effect. They had some safe guidance from their spiritual adviser, who had their best interests at heart. The other was the Western Federation of Miners. They had about the same number of members. The priest exerted his influence in one direction. Then hon. member for Megantic (Mr. Pacaud), who addressed a crowd of these miners on Sunday afternoon, unjustly, and without any reasonable cause whatever, denounced the Minister of Labour and the Government for party purposes, and had the pleasure of a strike on his hands a day or two afterwards. I do not think I would be justified in taking up any further time. At almost every annual meeting of the Trades and Labour Congress since 1911, and before I was placed in charge of the Labour Department, we had a resolution denouncing the Lemieux Act. There was a meeting in Vancouver where they were two to one in favour of the Act. I took occasion to tell them about the good qualities of the Lemieux Act, and I said that so long as I was at the head of the Labour Department that Act would not be repealed. I think my hon. friend from Saskatoon, before he again unjustly attempts to criticise the labour or any other department, will take reasonable means to ascertain what the facts are and, if he does, he will save this House and the country a great deal of time. That does not apply to this particular case only; it applies to many other cases. If the committee will pardon me, I will just say that we have hours, days and weeks spent in talking in reference to a matter without any effort being made to get at the facts from the true source, and when the facts are brought down it is found that there is absolutely nothing in it.

Mr. COPP: How many fair wage officers have been appointed?

Mr. CROTHERS: I think six.

Mr. COPP: Any in the Maritime Provinces?

Mr. CROTHERS: The gentleman who deals with such matters in Quebec takes in the Maritime Provinces.

Mr. COPP: The fair wage officer in Quebec looks after the Maritime Provinces?