

will go down in the history of this country as great railway pioneers and builders, would be guilty of unfairly treating their men. I do not approve of hon. gentlemen in this House speaking of men who are doing a great national work, as if they could not be fair to the men in their employment. I ask if any firm or corporation in this Dominion, having had in their employment so many tens of thousands of men, have ever in their history had so few labour troubles as those interests which my hon. friend so severely attacked. That is outside of the question; every case should be judged upon its own merits. I think we should be fair in discussing these matters both to the men and to those by whom they are employed. The hon. gentleman is usually fair, but he insisted to-day that it was the duty of the House, when Mackenzie and Mann came here last year for subsidies, to have held them up until they had done justice to the men. Was the hon. gentleman (Mr. Verville) not in this House at the time? Is he not the self-appointed exponent of the rights of labour; does he not so characterize himself; whose duty was it, if not that of the Labour member of the House, the workingman's friend, to have got up at that time, and in terms of denunciation to have pilloried Mackenzie and Mann. But the hon. gentleman was silent, not one word from him. That is not the worst I see in what I conceive to be nothing more nor less than a partisan attack made upon the Minister of Labour. What did the hon. gentleman (Mr. Verville) do when the Grand Trunk strike was the subject of debate and when members on this side of the House, eight of them, and the hon. member for South Renfrew (Mr. Graham), on the other side, and I think some others, stood here and in declamatory terms, slated—if I may use a vulgar expression—the management of the Grand Trunk railway for the manner in which they were treating the men who had not been reinstated in their positions? It has been said that this House did hold the Grand Trunk Railway Company up on that occasion and refused to pass their Bill until satisfaction was obtained for the men. The hon. member for Maisonneuve, the man who should have spoken on that occasion, never uttered a word; he was silent as the sphinx. It was noticed at the time by members on this side of the House, that the hon. gentleman said nothing. We expected, on an occasion when labour in this country was being fought by a great

corporation, that if any man in the House should speak it was the hon. member for Maisonneuve. He was in the House, but he conveniently made himself absent from the Chamber, and was absolutely silent on that occasion. How far will this country; how far will this Parliament, place any reliance upon the good conscience, the well-intentioned motives of a member who seeks, at a particular time for partisan purposes, to make a point against the Government, and who fails at another time to do justice to those whom he claims to represent?

There is a question as to who is right and who is wrong in this particular trouble. Hon. members all know, and the workingmen throughout Canada know, that when there is a labour trouble, and when the mine worker and the mine owner, or the factory worker and the factory owner, are at loggerheads, and a great industrial upheaval is about to take place, we have on the statute books of Canada the Industrial Disputes Act, which is calculated to avert the threatened evil. That Act is well known to every workingman from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and it is especially well known to workingmen who are employed in large numbers about great works. These men in British Columbia knew what that law was; they were told what the law was, whether they knew it or not. The correspondence placed in my hands, from beginning to end, does not show that these men, who, I think it fair to say, knew the law—they were supported at all events by the United Mine Workers of America, an international labour union whose leaders know the law—made any effort to obey the law, and their conduct in striking consequently became unlawful. My hon. friend from Maisonneuve is a labour man, a labour representative rather. Will he condone such a thing as the entering into an unlawful strike against an employer? I hope not. I think the hon. gentleman is too fair, after all, though partisan at times, to say that any body of men are to be entitled to wilfully ignore and break the law of the land. I do not think he will hold that men are right in so doing. I am informed by the Minister of Labour that from the beginning of the trouble until to-day the men never asked for a board of conciliation. Why? Do hon. gentlemen think that these men wanted a board of conciliation? The history of the thing is pretty long, as I read