

a page of 'Hansard.' The object of asking the question was to have the information published.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: The rule is absolute; the answer ought to go on 'Hansard.'

Mr. BORDEN: I have not the rule under my hand at the moment, and I do not know. I do remember that the subject was discussed on a previous occasion, and His Honour the Speaker made some observation with regard to the practice.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: Here is the rule, No. 37:

If a member does not distinguish his question by an asterisk, the minister to whom the question is addressed hands the answer to the Clerk of the House who causes it to be printed in the official report of the Debates.

Mr. SPEAKER: The practice seems to me to be growing of late—and it should be more carefully avoided—of putting on the Order Paper questions which require answers containing long lists of figures, and which should more properly be made as a notice of motion. Owing to the desire, I suppose, to give the information, these questions are allowed to pass, and their being printed occasions a conflict with the rule which was established some years ago, that nothing should go on 'Hansard' except what was read in the House—excepting, perhaps, figures given in the Budget Speech, by the Minister of Finance. That rule was laid down, and has been adhered to ever since. It was with reference to questions of this kind that the matter was discussed in the House some time ago, and it was decided then that in such cases, after an exhibit of what was proposed to go into 'Hansard', the answer should be filed with the Clerk of the House. That was my understanding, and since then I have been endeavouring to follow that rule, although I have given no instructions with regard to questions and answers.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: A member has the privilege of putting a question. If the minister thinks that it should stand as an order for a return, he has only so to declare, but if he chooses to answer the question, then the rule provides that the question be handed to the clerk and that the clerk shall put it on 'Hansard.'

Mr. BORDEN: I have not the slightest objection to the answers being printed in full; I understand that the practice which has been observed in this regard was established some years ago. When the

answer is very long, I agree with my right hon. friend that it would be better for the minister to ask that the question stand as a notice of motion for return.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: There seems to be a misapprehension here which should be corrected. The rule provides that answers can be given orally or in writing. Sometimes an answer which is given orally contains a long list of figures, and, the figures not having been read, they should not go into 'Hansard', but if the member does not ask for an oral answer, and the answer is given in writing, the rule is that the answer shall be given to the clerk, who puts it upon the pages of 'Hansard.'

Mr. BORDEN: That does seem to be a plain statement of the rule. It is a matter in which I have not interfered in any way whatever, nor has my right hon. friend, as I know. In cases where the answers are long and cumbersome, it would be better in future, I think, for the ministers to let the questions stand as notices of motion. But in cases where that is not done you have the answer printed, as the rule seems to require.

Mr. J. J. HUGHES: But I suppose when the answer appears the question will also appear in the same 'Hansard' so that it may be intelligible?

Mr. BORDEN: Certainly.

#### SUBURBAN TRAIN SERVICES.

On the motion of Mr. White for Committee of Supply:

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: I wish to call to the attention of the Government and to discuss very briefly the matter of suburban train service in and out of Halifax. It is not, of course, a matter of national importance, but it is of very considerable local interest just at this moment. I have had the advantage of several interviews with the hon. the Minister of Railways on this matter, and I wish to acknowledge his courtesy in this respect; but I feel that the subject is now of such importance that I owe it to my constituents to discuss it here. Between Halifax and Bedford, a distance of about ten miles, is a well settled suburban district traversed by the Intercolonial railway throughout its entire length. As the Prime Minister knows, this district is located upon Bedford basin, an extension of Halifax harbour, and is an exceedingly popular residential district in the summer season and, to a very large extent in the

[Mr. J. J. Hughes.]