

lation which tends, in the least, to the creation of an autocracy, but if the United States be one of the great free democracies of the world, as undoubtedly it is, every hon. gentleman who knows anything of the constitution of that country knows that the members of the Government of the United States do not sit in the Congress at all. They do not require to run an election, or to go to the people for a mandate. We are not departing from any principle of the constitution, because there is nothing in the British North America Act that touches this matter one way or the other, so far as I remember. We are departing, to this limited extent, from the provisions of chapter 10 of the Revised Statutes of Canada, but we are following a very good precedent in British practice.

Sir SAM HUGHES: This arrangement continues only to the end of the present war?

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: Yes. The hon. gentleman from Rouville (Mr. Lemieux) went into a long story, in which he was very much astray in his facts, as to Sir George Perley. Sir George Perley went across the ocean to discharge the duties of High Commissioner in June, 1914. My hon. friend refers to his having travelled backward and forward several times since. He has been back only once since, and that was during last year. The rest of the time he has been discharging the duties of High Commissioner, and, during the past eight or ten months, the duties of Minister of the Overseas Service. Some other hon. gentleman took the ground that we should have, in the position of Minister Overseas, a man of military experience. The Minister of Militia and Defence here in Canada, or the Minister of Overseas Service in Great Britain does not require to be a man of military experience. It is a civil office, just like any other office in the Government. Lord Derby, Minister of War in Great Britain, is not a professional soldier, so far as I am aware, nor do I know that the Minister of Militia and Defence in any of the great dominions of the Empire is a man of military experience.

The discussion which has taken place with regard to General Gwatkin is very largely irrelevant, because he is not under the jurisdiction of the Minister of the Overseas Service, but under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Militia and Defence here. So far as I know anything of General Gwatkin, he is very capable and very industrious, and I certainly never heard until to-day that

[Sir Robert Borden.]

the British Government declined to recommend him for the position which he now holds. I know that in September or October of 1916 he was very anxious, indeed, to be returned for duty to Great Britain, and he practically insisted upon the acceptance of his resignation at that time. Moreover, it should be borne in mind that, as far as the training of troops in this country is concerned, we have had two inspectors-general: General Lessard and General John Hughes. Besides this, every training camp in Canada has been under the direction of the most experienced and competent officer we could find who is on the spot all the time. I cannot enumerate all, but I remember a few of them at the moment: General Wilson, who was at Valcartier; General Logie, whom I met at Niagara and who was afterwards, I think, at Camp Borden; General McLean, and others.

The overseas command is vested at present in General Turner, who commands all our troops in Great Britain. I am sure that no hon. gentleman in this House would think for a moment of questioning either the experience or the ability of General Turner. He has made a distinguished name for himself not only in this war but in South Africa as well. I am in a position to state, so far as all military matters are concerned, that Sir George Perley acts by the advice of General Turner, with whom he is in constant consultation.

There was some suggestion that Sir George Perley desired greatly to have the position of Minister of the Overseas

Service. I should like to disabuse the minds of every member of this House on that question. Sir George Perley did not desire that position; he accepted it only at my urgent request. It imposes upon him very onerous and severe duties; and those duties he has discharged, in my opinion, with great ability.

Some hon. gentleman suggested that if there was to be a Minister of Overseas Service we should appoint General Turner. General Turner has direction of all military affairs and he fills his office with very great ability indeed. But if we should appoint General Turner, then, according to the arguments to which we have listened this afternoon, we should immediately require General Turner to come back to Canada and spend two or three months here for the purpose of running an election, instead of attending to his duties overseas. The very suggestion seems to show the lack of force, to use a very mild term, in the argu-