

Canadian officer may be appointed as Major General Commanding the Militia.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—Not the Major General, but chief of the staff.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—By clause 30, an officer called the Major General, may be appointed to command the Canadian militia. I am asking if the Governor General, by clause 36, will name that man if he is named the chief of the general staff?

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—I cannot be more definite than I have been. I said at the beginning it was not intended to take any action with regard to clause 30. That is what I am advised—I understood that clause was not to be acted on at present.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—Shall we strike it out of the Bill?

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—No, it may be used at some future time.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—If it is used, will the officer be chief of staff?

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—I cannot say.

The clause was adopted.

On clause 39,

39. Commissions of officers in the militia shall be granted by His Majesty during pleasure, and all warrant and non-commissioned officers shall be appointed in such manner and shall hold such rank as are prescribed by the regulations.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—Is that the same as the old law?

Hon. Mr. POWER—Except the word 'warrant'.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—Clause 42 is said to correspond.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—Is it the same thing?

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—I do not know that it is.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—Can we not be informed?

Hon. Mr. THIBAudeau (Rigaud)—Read it.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—I find it is greatly different.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND—Why does the hon. gentleman not explain?

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—I want to ascertain if the hon. gentlemen know the law.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—It reads:

Commissions of officers in the militia shall be granted by His Majesty during pleasure.

That is word for word.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—That is the officers.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—And the remainder of the section reads:

Non-commissioned officers shall be appointed by the officer commanding the corps.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—And the new law is, what?

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—In such manner as prescribed by regulation.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—There is a material difference in these two clauses. I am not surprised to hear the hon. Secretary of State say there is no difference, but I was surprised at the hon. gentleman from Halifax, for I do not know a closer critic in the House, almost to a fault. This amendment takes the power which was given, under section 42 of the Act of the old law, to the commanding officer, and declares that the appointment shall be made of non-commissioned officers by warrant and so on, by regulations made by the department, or, in other words it gives the power and responsibility to the Minister of Militia here to do that which in the English army, and which in the Canadian army prior to this proposed change is vested in the commanding officer.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—No, they are to be appointed under regulations to be made.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—And those 'regulations to be made' can have no other object than to vest the power in the central authority in Ottawa instead of with the colonels commanding the regiment. Who can know better than the colonels what men in the regiment are best fitted for the positions of sergeants, corporals and lance corporals? He is in contact with them every day. He knows exactly their ability. The captain knows the ability of each man in his company. A man may be well educated, a man may know his drill thoroughly and yet he is not capable of communicating that knowledge to the company that he is drilling. No one knows that better than my hon. friend to my left. There are some men particularly adapted for it. Why should the