

Absolute refusal of all leave asked by an officer of the militia to take part in an imperial war.

Now, I will go as far as my hon. friend and say there should be no provision by which, because a man joins the militia, he should be compelled to take part in an imperial war, but surely in the light of the experience of four years ago, when from one end of the country to the other there was such a unanimous uprising that the government, strong as it was, would have been driven from power if it had refused to allow Canadians to volunteer, it would not be fair to those who wished to serve the motherland to say: We will not allow you to serve because we do not wish to serve. If you do not wish to serve, do not serve; but in heaven's name do not prevent those who do. The last clause, taken with this one, is the most absurd:

Command of the Canadian militia by a Canadian officer appointed by the Canadian government.

I would like to see the Canadian militia commanded by a Canadian officer, but it is one thing to allow your Canadian officer to gain experience, to acquire training in the service of the empire and then to place him in command of the militia; it is another and a very different thing to prevent him hearing a gun fired or seeing an evolution except in a parade, and then say that only from this class of officers, which we have carefully restrained from seeing any active service and becoming fit to command a force, the commanding officer shall alone be selected. I cannot go so far as my hon. friend who has just spoken, and say that I will support the Militia Bill, because I do not know its contents, but if the object of that Bill is to make more and more useful our militia forces, and the proposals are likely to produce that result, I will support the measure as readily as any hon. gentleman who sits on the other side of the House.

I do not feel that I owe any apology for addressing the House. It seemed to me, and I do not believe that I was singular in my view, that this question which was brought up by the hon. member for Labelle was a most important one. I myself have never been able to see any reason for having a racial feeling between the two provinces, and yet, as a matter of common sense, surely one is only using the observation every one has when one says that when a general election is held in Quebec and one party is returned with seven followers and the other with fifty-eight, you can hardly expect the people of the other provinces to believe that the election was carried on upon absolutely political grounds, and that every vote was cast as the result of full discussion of political questions and a desire to promote the best interests of the country.

I certainly hope that whatever I may have failed to do, I at least have said nothing that will be offensive either to the hon. member

Mr. NORTHROP.

for Labelle or the hon. member for Montmagny.

Mr. E. A. LANCASTER (Lincoln). Mr. Speaker, I think the government and their supporters are paying a very poor compliment to the people of the country through their representatives in this House in the manner in which they are treating this debate. The people of Canada will draw their own conclusions from the silence of the government's supporters in regard to the questions brought before them in this debate. We have had suggested by hon. gentlemen after hon. gentlemen, during the course of this debate, from this side of the House, that a good many things, all named, all discussed, and all as carefully gone into as the short period of time at our disposal would permit, but clearly and distinctly put before the House, that ought to be attended to by the government and that ought to have been mentioned in the speech from the Throne, or at all events, if not mentioned in the speech from the Throne, ought to have been promised to be dealt with later in the session. We have had hon. gentlemen after hon. gentlemen giving strong reasons why the government ought to do something that is purely public, something that it is purely the business of the government to do, something that ought not to emanate from a private member of this House, but which it ought to be part of the duty of the government to take care of. The hon. leader of the opposition (Mr. Borden, Halifax) mentioned one important measure after another that he knows ought to have been considered and he was followed by hon. gentleman after hon. gentleman on this side of the House coming from different parts of the Dominion and pointing out to this government in clear and distinct language what they know the people with whom they come in contact desire. I may say that every year that goes by I am more and more convinced that it is the Conservative party that is in touch with the people and not the so called Liberal party. I say that these hon. gentlemen over and over again have brought these things to the attention of the government and yet we find that not a single member of the government will stand up and say where in these matters asked to be attended to by the hon. gentlemen who have advanced them are fallacious or why there should be delay in attending to them. No reason has been given by any member of the government why they should not be attended to now, or in the future, and no attempt has been made to show that the arguments which have been advanced by this side of the House are not well founded. I do not propose to go into these matters in detail, but I owe a duty to my constituents and to the people of the Dominion at large and I did not think that I ought to have allowed this debate to close without saying that these constituents whom I represent want these matters attended to, that the whole Dom-