

have regular military, put under the rules, and discipline, and control of the military authority, than to have the Mounted Police under control of the Department of the Interior. I only mention this because the hon. Minister of Justice knows that amongst the papers which have been brought before Parliament, it has been very properly said—I think by Bishop McLean, of Saskatchewan—that the Mounted Police were the cause of the rebellion. I think it is said as clearly as it can be said, and I admit frankly that it is my opinion that if there had never been mounted police in the North-West there would have been no rebellion. Hon. gentlemen will remember that at the commencement of the trouble many people believed that the mounted police would be able to put a stop to it, but we all know how inefficient they proved. I am ready to believe that they are men of great merit and perfect character and so on—I do not mean to reflect in any way upon them personally, but I speak of the system, and when trouble occurred we at once found that the only force we had at our disposal to deal with this difficulty were the forces at the command of the Militia Department. I hope that the Government will take this matter seriously into consideration. I think it is the general feeling in the country that the time has come when Canada should have its army. It may be a small army, but it would be a better way of defending the country than enrolling men in the mounted police.

HON. MR. READ—I cannot agree with the hon. gentleman when he states that had there been no Mounted Police in the North-West there would have been no rebellion. The police could not have caused the rebellion. They certainly did not cause the raiding of the stores, the rifling of private property, and the taking possession of Government property. Then as to the efficiency of the police, it is true that a portion of them were at Prince Albert and remained there; but what would have become of the people of Prince Albert if they had left them; and what would have become of other places if the police were not there to protect them? As far as I have been able to judge, I think the police have shown themselves to be most efficient. What

could a handful of men in a vast country like that do? The force has been small; but it has been efficient for its numbers. There was a time when there was an enquiry as to what the police were doing at Prince Albert when they were required elsewhere. No doubt they were acting under orders, and there is no complaint of a want of action on their part when their services were required.

HON. MR. WARK—It appears that some hon. gentlemen are mistaken about this Bill; its object is to increase the infantry force, instead of the Mounted Police. I might remark that in reading the general report, I consider that our militia ought to be made much more effective than it is. I was struck with the general remarks at the close of the commander's report. He speaks of the short time devoted by the militia to acquiring a knowledge of drill, and says:—

“Under the present arrangement of only calling out the rural regiments every second year, the men composing them have only, at most, two trainings during their service of three years, that is, if they happen to enlist during the year of the training and before it takes place. If they enlist just after the training, then they have only one during their whole service, which means eight days' actual drill; because, though nominally they have now twelve days, yet out of that, one day for joining and one day for leaving and two Sundays must be allowed. The consequence is that these men go back to civil life with such a faint smattering of the duties of a soldier that it fades away, and if an emergency should arise and these men were called back to service, they would have to be treated as recruits; whereas, if they had twelve days' steady drill each year for three years, they would be none the worse citizens and would carry with them enough knowledge of a soldier's life to render them fit to join the ranks at once, if the necessity of calling them out again should arise.”

It strikes me that it would be much better when the Militia pass through their three years' training that they should be still enrolled as a reserve, but different from the ordinary reserve. When enrolled for three years longer they should be occasionally called out for drill, left in possession of their rifles, and furnished with ammunition to keep up their practice, and if called out once every couple of years, there would be, instead of 45,000, as at present, a force of 90,000 men, who knew something of the duties of soldiers,