

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. I must say I am very pleased to be able to teach my hon. friend (Mr. Haggart) something.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. Section 25 is new. Section 26 takes the place of sections 16, 17 and 18 of the present law, divisions and changes to be made by regulation. This is found by experience to be absolutely necessary.

Mr. CLARKE. How are they made now ?

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. They are prescribed in certain cases by the statute. But, in view of the development of the country, the change in centres of population, the new provinces being carved out and so on, it is very desirable, in fact necessary for the proper and efficient administration of the militia, that these matters should be placed in the hands of the Governor in Council.

Mr. CLARKE. Orders re-adjusting the districts I suppose, will be available for parliament ?

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. The committee will see that the country is taking no risk in giving this power, because the regulations become part of the law and must be laid on the table of the House within ten days after the House meets each year.

Mr. CLARKE. And the Militia Reports, too, I suppose.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. Yes, and the 'Canada Gazette' contains these changes.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. There is really no change in the law, because under section 17 all this can be done as it is to be done under this new Act. It is simply better drafting—I think that is all.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. Section 27 is substituted for section 22 of the present law. The section of the present law reads :

The active militia force shall consist of regiments and troops of cavalry, regiments and field batteries of artillery, companies of mounted infantry, companies of engineers, regiments and batteries of garrison artillery, battalions and companies of infantry, and naval and marine corps—

That of course, will be struck out.

—in such proportions as Her Majesty appoints ; and the strength of each such regiment, troop, battery, battalion, company or corps shall be regulated and officers appointed to from time to time, by Her Majesty.

The clause in the new Act reads :

The active militia shall consist of such corps as are from time to time named by the Governor in Council ; and the Governor in Council may, at any time, disband any corps or portion of a corps, if he considers it advisable so to do.

Section 28 is substituted for section 24 of the present law, section 23 of the present Act being omitted. Section 24 provides for an oath to be taken before a commanding officer.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. There is a little change in the oath. Will the minister explain what the object in making that may be.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. To make it more—

Mr. CLARKE. To make it more binding ?

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. I do not think it can be that. Would the minister be good enough to read the two.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. The present law provides :

Every active militiaman shall sign a service roll in which the conditions of his service shall be stated ; and every officer of militia, on appointment, and every man on enlistment, or re-enlistment, shall take an oath in the form following, that is to say :—

'I, A. B., do sincerely promise and swear (or solemnly declare) that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty.'

Which oath or declaration may be administered by the commanding officer of the troop, battery, company or battalion, as the case may be, who has taken the same oath before a justice of the peace.

And the change proposed, so far as the oath is concerned is :

I.....swear that I will well and truly serve Our Sovereign Lord the King, his heirs and successors in the..... for the term of.....years or until lawfully discharged, dismissed or removed, and that I will resist His Majesty's enemies and cause His Majesty's peace to be kept and maintained, and that I will in all matters appertaining to my service faithfully discharge my duty according to law. So help me God.

That is copied, I think, from the English oath. Is there any objection to that form ?

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. The only objection is that whereas the old oath was simply a promise to bear true allegiance to the Sovereign, which is plain, practical and democratic, this oath reads to 'Serve our Sovereign Lord the King.' Perhaps the hon. minister's trips across the water have put these notions in his head. Where did he get the phraseology ?

Mr. CLARKE. Is the King our war lord under the constitution ?

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. I will look into that ? Section 29 refers to the permanent force, and replaces section 28 of the present law, subsection 1. It is re-drafted, and simply increases the force from 1,000 to 2,000. Section 30 replaces subsection 2 of section 28 of the present law. Sections 26 and 27 of the present law are left out—there is no need of them, as the power they confer is given elsewhere. Subsection 3 of section 28 of the present law is omitted.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. What does that subsection provide ?

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. I would point out here, as I did before that there is no pro-