

Hon. Mr. HENDERSON said that any man in good health ought to be able to stand three hours' drill. He meant one-and-a-half hour in each part of the day. What his hon. colleague had said was reasonable; and if it could be ordered so that all would have to concur in it, he thought it would be desirable; but not unless all the companies concerned had to concur in it.

Hon. LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION.—It might do very well to have such an arrangement for soldiers; but for the matter under consideration he thought it better to leave that part of the Bill as it was. For his part he deemed one hour's drill severe exercise, and he thought if some hon. members would turn out and drill for an hour some cold morning, they would find themselves pretty warm when the hour had expired. The law said that each Volunteer should attend drill not less than sixteen times in a year, and each drill not less than one hour and a-half. The Commander-in-Chief could not make such an order as was proposed, as it would operate against the Volunteers in the Town, who were chiefly composed of mechanics and clerks, who drilled from eight in the evening to half-past nine. The clause read thus: "The Commander-in-Chief may, from time to time, prescribe the qualifications of effective members of Volunteer Militia, provided that such qualification shall include, that each volunteer to be effective shall have attended drill, duly armed and accoutred, not less than sixteen times during the year, such drills not to be less than one and one-half hour, shall take the oath of allegiance, and have been inspected in uniform at such times as may have been ordered under the authority of the Commander-in-Chief." He therefore thought it better to leave the Bill as it was.

Hon. Mr. HENDERSON.—The object would be to save time; and to do that in one day, which now required two, would be a matter of some interest to many in the country.

Progress was reported, and the House adjourned for one hour.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

House again in Committee on Militia Bill.

On the clause imposing fines, &c., for non-attendance of muster being read—

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL remarked that this clause might be considered by hon. members as rather too stringent, and, therefore, as it was not a vital one, he had no objection that hon. members should strike it out if they wished.

Hon. Mr. HENDERSON thought that the clause was perhaps too strong, and that, therefore, some reason should be given why it was really necessary before enacting it. Militia officers should not have too great power.

Mr. HOWAT.—The discussion of this Bill appeared to him to be a waste of time, since there was scarcely any clause upon which hon. members could agree. He would therefore move that the Speaker take the chair. He was opposed to making the law any more stringent than that of last year.

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL.—The clauses of the Bill which had been already passed, tended to make the law less stringent.

Mr. McNEILL did not see any necessity for making the law more stringent than at present. The people of the Island were quite loyal enough to defend their hearths and homes, and if there was any desire to make them more loyal, the most effectual course to take was to do away with the land monopoly.

Hon. LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION thought the motion of the hon. member for Tryon a most extraordinary one at this stage of the proceedings. It should have been moved at the second reading. This Bill should have been a Government measure, as the one of last year was. That had been introduced by three members of the Executive, and any amendments made were in mere matters of detail. In Canada four or five years ago, the fate of a ministry was decided on a Bill of this nature. A similar thing had taken place in Britain in 1852. What would the Imperial Government think when they found that the Bill introduced by the hon. Attorney General, had been repudiated by other members of the Government. He remarked upon the tone of the British Government regarding the training of our local Militia, and observed that this Colony—not being regularly supplied with troops—needed such an organization more than any of the others. He would be sorry to see the Colony occupy the disgraceful position which it necessarily would, if the committee on this Bill rose without reporting.

Mr. HOWAT said that the present Bill would, when the objectionable clauses were struck out, be very little, if any different from that of last year. It was therefore wasting time to discuss it.

Hon. LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION thought that the object for which the hon. member for Tryon was elected appeared to be to criticise every measure brought forward, for he never originated one himself, good, bad or indifferent. He thanked God that they had no such member for any District in King's County. He had no talent himself, and his whole aim was to oppose everything which others brought forward.

Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL said that the hon. member for Tryon had taken the very worst course if he wished to shorten the debate upon the Bill. He could not see the necessity for making this Bill a Government measure, since it merely made a few alterations in the details of the old Act. To rise without reporting would not be a very respectful way of treating a matter brought to their notice by the Imperial Government. With the exception of two or three clauses, which he had expressed his willingness to have struck out, the Bill could not be objected to.

Mr. HOWAT.—The remarks of the hon. Leader of the Opposition were scarcely worth replying to. He would simply return the compliment which he had paid him, and say thank God there were so few of his stamp on the floor of the House, for if there were more we would soon be sold into Confederation. He did not know why the Militia Bill of last year required alteration so soon. It had scarcely had a fair trial.

Mr. BRECKEN would congratulate the Government upon the acquisition to their ranks of that political shuttle-cock, the hon. member for Tryon.