

to assist in the defence of the empire in a real emergency.

Etc., they can do so.

Mr. MONK. I read that.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. Yes, but the hon. gentleman did not apparently heed it, did not seem to have understood it.

Mr. MONK. Oh, I understand it. I intend touching on that point in a moment, but I say at once, in order to answer my hon. friend, that if this scheme of centralization of military and naval power is put into execution, that part of the memorandum upon which the minister lays such great stress will become practically inoperative.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. Oh no, it is the basis of the whole scheme.

Mr. MONK. I can imagine it goes on a par with the lame excuses advanced by the Prime Minister, betraying to my mind his absolute ignorance of our situation, that in case war broke out under these circumstances, with our naval organization brought absolutely under this policy and everything laid down in this blue-book being carried out, the general staff, with its branches all over the empire having fully organized, he will summon parliament to know if our people are ready then to fight. I think I know the people of Canada well enough that, if all this is carried out they will not take refuge under that most unconstitutional argument which is on a par with what my right hon. friend said in Toronto the other day about the King of England being a suzerain. If the right hon. gentleman is correct in that interpretation, what I learned when a boy about the Crown of England, and what I taught in the university as a professor of constitutional law for many years, would have to be taken back as absolutely erroneous. I do not know what the heroine of Quentin Durward, a very pleasant novel, understood by a suzerain. She was speaking at a time of feudal tenure when suzerains existed. I am not aware that they exist now. But, if I understand the rights and privileges of the British Crown, it is subject to no such accident; it is continuous, it is absolute, it is sovereign; it goes on without any special transmission or succession. The King of England is the King of Canada practically. He concentrates in that power which we call the Crown all executive power, all the power that makes the laws, all the administrative power, subject, of course, in regard to the executive power to the limitation that now he acts through ministers who are responsible to the representatives of the people—

Sir, FREDERICK BORDEN.

a very important provision and, though he concentrates within himself the legislative power, and though all laws are really made by him, these laws are made with the consent and advice of both Houses of parliament. The legislative power is in him, as are the executive and judicial powers, and particularly with respect to the armed forces of the Kingdom wherever they are. I speak subject to correction, but I understand that this is a prerogative which has never been diminished in any way. The King is the chief commander of the military and naval forces. The House of Commons, in its widest aspirations, has never thought of depriving him of this special prerogative, nor have the people of England done so, being controlled by that wisdom which has ever characterized them. The King is the master of all armed forces—no suzerain there. But, as we all know—it would be taking up the time of the House uselessly to discuss the matter—the exercise of that power was held under control of the people for a long time in England by the Mutiny Act. This Act was passed every year. Hon. members of this House are familiar with the peculiar machinery which enabled parliament, although the command of the forces was in the hands of the Crown, by this yearly passage of the Mutiny Act to curb and restrain the exercise of that power. This continued until, I think, the year 1881, or thereabouts, when we had in England a regular military law. Moreover, parliament always exercised a very strong control over the military and naval forces by the annual voting of money. To-day, in England, as here, money is voted yearly, and without money you cannot have soldiers or navies. But the right, the prerogative, is in the King. If the King had the money, as he used to have in the old Plantagenet and Lancaster days, he would not require the annual vote of parliament to direct the army and navy as he chose. I may be mistaken, but that is the way I look at it. Therefore, I say this section 18 enunciates a new principle, when it says that the Governor in Council, may if it chooses, place the navy at the disposal of the British government. That is something new. If we could say that it was intended to facilitate the carrying out of the agreement as arrived at in London, if we could say it was in order to remove all doubt with respect to the principle which I enunciated a moment ago, well and good. But my right hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Laurier), who is a master of circumlocution and deceit, has, I think, placed this proviso in this Bill in order to be able to say to the people what 'Le Canada' printed in such heavy type, and I cited a moment ago, that in reality we—