

That may be, I do not know; but it would strike me as most extraordinary that ministers of the Crown, unless they were under some disability or under some control of the ex-Minister of Militia, would permit him to use language of that kind if they could well contradict him. Those are things which are well calculated to lessen confidence and cause recruiting to fall down, as has been described by the Minister of Trade and Commerce. If it be true that this fighting has been going on in the Cabinet; that the ministers cannot get along together; that the outgoing Minister of Militia had no confidence in the Minister of War Overseas or in the Minister of Finance, and that there was a general broil all around, how can they expect the people of this country to have confidence in any of them, either separately or collectively? That being the case, and the evidence of it being that this gentleman was sent about his business and that he has been telling abroad and plainly what his ideas were, why he went out and what he did with the other ministers while he was with them, and no one denying his statements, we have a right to believe these stories the ex-Minister of Militia has been telling.

A great deal of objection is raised to the taking of a plebiscite; it is said that this question should not be submitted to the people. The Minister of Labour says that we are insulting the people by speaking to them about a plebiscite, but there is a very good authority to the contrary. We were all delighted the other day to see in this House Mr. Balfour, that excellent representative of English ideas and politics. When the House of Lords turned down the Lloyd George Budget and said that they would not pass it until it was referred to a decision of the people, there was a good deal of talk that that course should not be taken. Mr. Balfour, however, is reported in the English House of Commons as saying:

Why should the people object to this course? Why are you told that you are insulted, that the Lords insulted you? It is a most extraordinary thing that the House of Lords should insult you by simply asking you your opinion.

That is what Mr. Balfour said about the plebiscite to which the House of Lords sought to have that question referred at that time, and I would not find it easy to understand how it is that myself or any other member of this House is insulting the judgment of the people of this country by asking their opinion on a question of this kind.

When we were elected over five years ago, there was no talk of war. We had on

[Mr. McKenzie.]

the statute book for fifty years a law in connection with the militia under which it was always regarded as optional whether men went to war or not. There was no war in sight at the time, and we have from the people who sent us here no mandate along that line at all. At this hour of the day, when the five years have expired, when we are in a sixth year which is not constitutional, and which is only a term that we have given ourselves by our own act, and when we are representing only ourselves in this House and not the people by the voice of the people, it is only fair and just, when a new question of this kind is coming up for decision and judgment, and when we have no mandate from the people on this point, that the people should be called upon to lead the way as to what they want done on this question. There is no question in the world about the people being behind us in whatever we do to bring this war to a successful issue. At the same time, when there is evidently no great hurry, so far as the Government is concerned, there is no excuse why we should not submit this matter to the people. One would gather from some of the speeches made on the other side of the House that there is a great hurry about this matter; that it should be forced along very hurriedly; that it is a great shame to delay it for one minute, and that the law is to be put into force immediately. I find on the Order Paper this notice, dated May 23:

Sir Robert Borden—The following proposed resolution:—

Resolved,—That an humble address be presented to His Most Excellent Majesty the King, in the following words:

To the King's Most Excellent Majesty:
Most Gracious Sovereign:

We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of Canada, in Parliament assembled, humbly approach Your Majesty praying that you may graciously be pleased to give your consent to submit a measure to the Parliament of the United Kingdom, to amend the British North America Act, 1867, in the manner following, or to the following effect:

"An Act to amend the British North America Act, 1867."

Be it enacted by the King's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords, Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1. Notwithstanding anything in the British North America Act, 1867, or in any Act amending the same, or in any Order in Council, or terms or conditions of union, made or approved under the said Act, or under any Act of the Canadian Parliament, the term