

should know, that Great Britain should know that we are taking no retrograde step in this regard and that we are content with the statute as the statute formerly was upon this question. I have been met and others may perhaps have been met with this reflection while visiting in the old land: 'You speak and boast of your loyalty and you pride yourself upon being a part of the British empire. What are you doing for the British empire? Your loyalty is very cheap. It is costing you nothing for the maintenance of your independent status or for the support of the army or the navy'—I would like to be able to point to the fact that we are not taking any retrograde step in this regard not only as regards the speeches made on the stump, at social gatherings, or elsewhere, but I would like to be able to point to the statute-book and say: We are doing something and we are willing to do something to maintain the integrity of the empire. The Minister of Militia and Defence (Sir Frederick Borden) has repeated that the only underlying principle upon which the existence of the militia is based is the defence of the country. The same might be said in regard to every armed force. No armies are organized now for aggression or conquest. They are ostensibly for the protection of the country and of the trade of the country in which they are formed. It may be that their warfare may be waged a long way from home as we may have to protect the interests of Canada a long way from Canada, but if we would regard ourselves as a part of the empire we would be able to bear our share of the burden and responsibility of the empire and in so doing we would be doing something to show that in this regard we are not taking any retrograde step. We ought to be willing to give Great Britain the support of our statute legislation so that they may see that there is no doubt upon the question, and if doubt or ambiguity exists, let it be eliminated by expressing in unmistakable language that we are not taking any backward step, that we are holding as firm to those principles that we have professed in past years to-day as ever we have done and that we are ready and willing as ever to assist the empire. I believe that in doing so we are simply expressing the sentiments of our country. I do not think that there is any part of Canada, that there is any political party in it, that there is any province in which there is any sentiment of disloyalty. We are proud of the empire to which we belong and I believe that there are thousands of Canadians who would be willing to wipe away the reproach which is cast upon us to-day by the question; What are you doing and what are you willing to do for the maintenance of the empire? We are all intensely interested in this ques-

Mr. RICHARDSON.

tion and we ought to be willing to make good our professions. If we take a little step in advance of other parts of the empire what does it matter? It is only our right, it is only our duty. We have no standing army, we have no navy, we are contributing very little in that regard, but if we are able to say: 'We have a militia in Canada, an armed force, and we are not only willing to stand up in defence of our borders at home but for the defence of the empire, wherever we are called upon,' we would have the backing of the whole of the Dominion of Canada in doing so.

Mr. MACLEAN. Hon. gentlemen opposite are losing the real point that I raised this afternoon. The hon. Minister of Militia and Defence says that the militia of Great Britain cannot be ordered without the United Kingdom. He to-day is taking power to move the militia of Canada out of this country and in moving them out to say when they go forth that they must go forth only for the defence of Canada. He has limited the movement of the force of Canada by putting it on the statute-book that if they go without the country they can go out in order to assist in the defence of Canada. That is an unfair position to put the people of Canada in. They want to be free and this parliament ought to be free, if the power is given to move the militia out of Canada, to send them out for any purpose, the defence of the empire or the defence of Canada. I think there is no good reason why a limitation of this kind should be made. I agree with my hon. friend from South Grey (Mr. Richardson). These are growing times, the empire is growing and if Canada can lead the empire, can lead Australia, New Zealand and other colonies, and if we say we are ready not only to maintain our own defence but to send our forces without Canada to assist in defending the empire we are only going along the line of progress. I agree also with what has been said about the loyalty of Canadians. We have no doubt as to the loyalty of Canadians. I would be very willing to see my hon. friend from Labelle Minister of Militia in this country. I would just as soon see the chief command of the forces of Canada in the hands of a French Canadian as in those of a British Canadian. I have every confidence in him and I am sufficient of a Canadian to say that I want to see the supreme command in Canada in the hands of a Canadian. I will never be ashamed of it. I say that we have men in this country competent to command our militia. There is not a citizen of this country not capable of being Minister of Militia and that being the case do not put a restrictive meaning on the position that we in Canada are prepared to take. Let it be known to all the world that not only are we prepared to defend our own country, but send our troops outside of Canada not