

wered him by some more or less minute criticism of phrases and words when the idea is infinitely plain, an unworthy answer, an answer which should not have been made by a government that is so susceptible to criticism in this regard.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. I do not admit the criticism of my hon. friend. I say that the Bill as brought down originally gave evidence of the best draftsmanship that could be produced in connection with it and that the amendments which were made were not made for the purpose of differently expressing the original intention but for the expression of a different intention.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Does my hon. friend deny that in clause 15 there were words that were absolutely meaningless?

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Nothing of the sort.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I say there were.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Nothing of the sort. I say the contrary. I say that the original clause which was brought down showed better draftsmanship than does the clause in the form in which it is now.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I deny that.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. If my hon. friend the leader of the opposition understands so thoroughly what my hon. friend from Beauharnois has in mind in proposing this amendment, he had better explain it.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. It is not my province to explain it. I think there is a very well defined idea and the only suggestion which the hon. minister has made is a quibble—I do not use the word in an offensive sense, but I cannot think of any other at the moment to express my meaning—as to certain forms and expressions. He says that the word 'section' is not found in the legislation of the Northwest Territories. Then the hon. Minister of Justice with a triumphant wave of his hand asks my hon. friend what he means. The answer of my hon. friend is that if the word 'district' is a better word the word 'district' can be used. But, I say that there were words in clause 15 which I have just referred to which had no meaning. We have had legislation submitted by the government to this House on many occasions which required extensive amendment. This is one of the many illustrations that I can call to mind. We had legislation of that kind brought down by the government last session. Take for instance the Railway Act of two years ago; there were over 1,000 amendments made to that Bill in this House, notwithstanding the fact that the government paid \$2,500, I think it was—

Mr. STOCKTON. Double that.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. More than that, perhaps to special counsel in New Brunswick for the purpose of drafting it. And yet the

Minister of Justice was extremely critical of this amendment, the plain intent of which is evident, even if it is not couched in every respect in the exact words in which it would be couched if my hon. friend from Beauharnois (Mr. Bergeron) had behind him a Department of Justice, with his deputy minister and his half dozen or more of assistants, and with four or five lawyers from outside, to help him in choosing the exact words that would best express the meaning he intended. The Minister of Justice asks what the intention of the amendment is? I have not read it carefully until this moment, but I think I can see in it a very plain meaning. It seems designed to express, in somewhat plainer terms—outside of any verbal inaccuracies, such as those to which the minister called attention—the idea that the Prime Minister at least had in his mind when he first introduced this Bill with its clause 16. I am not responsible for my hon. friend's (Mr. Bergeron's) amendment; I did not see it or know of it, or of his intention to move it, until I saw it on the order paper. All that I desire to say at this moment is that I do not think that under the circumstances it is a fair way to treat an amendment put forward such as this, or a fair way to answer the hon. gentleman who presented it in a very moderate and able speech, to say that it contains some inaccuracies of drafting, such as have occurred even in legislation brought down by the hon. Minister of Justice himself. I do not say that with the idea of taunting the Minister of Justice (Mr. Fitzpatrick). I have always recognized his ability and spoken of it. I regard him as an able lawyer, and a man who fills his position well. And he knows, as every one knows, who has had anything to do with the drafting of statutes or other difficult documents, that it is impossible for a document of that kind to be at once framed in a way which will be above criticism as to its verbiage. The hon. gentleman will remember that, after this House had spent a great deal of time—too much time, according to hon. gentlemen opposite—on the Transcontinental Railway Bill two years ago, it was found necessary to bring in, during the following session, a Bill to correct an error so obvious that every member of this House should be ashamed that it escaped his attention in the first place, an error so obvious that when our eyes were directed to it in that following session, every one of us wondered how it could have escaped his notice in the first place. Under these circumstances, I think my hon. friend from Beauharnois is entitled to more respectful answer than that given by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Fitzpatrick).

Mr. BERGERON. If it is only to the wording of this amendment that the hon. gentleman's (Mr. Fitzpatrick's) criticism is directed, I am quite willing that my amendment should be treated as the Prime Minis-