

rate rifle and no equipment. I trust that the Government will press the matter with regard to equipment. There is nothing more absolutely essential at this moment for the efficiency of our forces than is their equipment. That equipment can now be obtained in this country, according to one suggested plan, and a most efficient one. For my part, I think the Government cannot do better than accept the equipment which has been invented by Dr. Oliver, of Halifax, which seem to me to answer every purpose and to be as perfect as we can possibly get it. Whatever equipment the Government do get let them get it as soon as possible, and let it be as simple as possible, and free from any of the defects which have been found in the equipment of the Imperial Service. If we have the arms that are now in the way of being purchased and have the equipment, there is another thing which should be taken into account. There ought to be provision made for the purchase of heavy guns for defensive work. I think the Government would be exceedingly foolish if they propose to spend any money upon fortifications, because all modern experience shows that the most effective fortifications are those which can be thrown up with a spade, which require no skilled workmanship and which can be provided where they are needed in a very short time. The history of modern warfare has shown such fortifications as were thrown up at Plevna and elsewhere to be the most effective. There are some points, such as Levis, and other places, where, no matter what fortifications we may improvise, heavy guns are required to make them effective. I think the Government ought at any rate enter into negotiations or make inquiries as to the best method of placing heavy guns, either having them in this country, where they would be safe and accessible, or else have them prepared on the other side of the Atlantic, so that in a short time they could be brought here. That would be a very expensive thing; but at the same time, I think we ought to make a commencement of providing the heavy guns which would be necessary for such fortifications as we contemplate at Point Levis, or such as might be necessary to be thrown up in any part of the country where a defensive position was to be established. I think the Government, if proper restrictions can be provided, could be justified in asking for this additional amount. I think that they ought to be in a position to obtain the heavy guns I have spoken of, which are exceedingly costly and which cannot be provided for much less than the balance of the money that is in hand. I would like to ask the Minister whether any enquiry has been made with regard to heavy guns, or whether any proposal has been entered into for the supplying of them?

MR. DICKEY—With regard to the question of heavy guns, I can tell the hon. gentleman (Mr. O'Brien) that that has been

very carefully considered by the general officer commanding, and I think the country is very much indebted to him for the extreme care and moderation with which he has prepared his details of arms, etc., for the force. Very many Imperial officers might on an occasion like this have gone into extravagant expenditures looking to the equipment of our force, and in a way that was really not necessary. I think it is a motive of economy that has so far influenced the General in not advising the immediate purchase of any large siege guns such as the hon. gentleman (Mr. O'Brien) mentions. But he has all the information in the Department with reference to them and knows where they are to be obtained at very short notice. The question of equipment which the hon. gentleman mentioned is one of a good deal of difficulty. The British Government has had a good many equipments on trial and rejected them one after the other. They are just now experimenting with a new one, and it is a question whether we should adopt the Oliver equipment or wait until the British Government had completed their investigations. All these matters are being considered, but I think it is quite possible that some of this money will be expended in the supplying of equipment.

MR. MILLS (Bothwell)—What would be the cost of each equipment?

MR. DICKEY—I am not able to tell the hon. gentleman exactly. Dr. Oliver wanted to sell his patent to the Dominion and let us manufacture them ourselves in our own stores. That would probably be a more convenient way, because there would be an end to it. If you had to pay, say from \$2,000 to \$5,000 for the patent, you would have it and you could always use it. The only other way would be to pay Dr. Oliver a royalty for the equipment purchased, which would be I think a very dangerous experiment. It is, I believe, merely a question of a lump sum to pay to Dr. Oliver for the use of his patent, if it is determined to adopt it. I do not wish the committee to understand that the General has decided to recommend Dr. Oliver's equipment at all, because he has not come to any determination on that.

MR. MILLS (Bothwell)—What would be the cost of, say, such an equipment as is used by the British soldiers?

MR. DICKEY—Individually they are not expensive.

MR. O'BRIEN—About \$5.

MR. DICKEY—I do not think it would be even so expensive as that.

SIR RICHARD CARTWRIGHT—The total cost of equipment in that case would not exceed \$200,000.

MR. DICKEY—\$200,000 would furnish the whole force, and buy the patent, I should think.

SIR RICHARD CARTWRIGHT—Apart from the question of the \$1,000,000 which is not

accounted for yet, I want to know, what is the intention of the Government with respect to the \$1,000,000 which is asked for in the Supplementary Estimates. Is that intended to be part of this vote?

MR. FOSTER—Yes, it is. Although we have the statutory authority to make the loan, yet I think we are entitled to come to Parliament to ask a special appropriation, especially since Parliament is in session.

SIR RICHARD CARTWRIGHT—All you propose is to ask for the \$1,000,000 this year?

MR. FOSTER—There is something more in the Supplementary Estimates for next year, I think.

MR. CASEY—As far as I can understand from the hon. gentleman who has been explaining this matter, about £380,000, or \$1,900,000 worth, of rifles, guns, ammunition and general equipment has been contracted for already?

MR. DICKEY—The contract is only \$1,625,000 at present, so far as my advice is. Our agent is instructed to buy the rest.

MR. CASEY—And his estimate would bring it up to about the figure I have stated?

MR. DICKEY—That is correct.

MR. CASEY—In the first place it seems to me most extraordinary that the expenditure of a vast sum like this should be put in the hands of any one man. I can echo what has been said of Col. Lake by the hon. member for Muskoka (Mr. O'Brien), as far as I know him, and as far as I have had evidence from others. But Col. Lake is, after all, only one individual; and, although his judgment may be excellent, and his qualifications for selecting arms and ammunition perfect, I do not think that the policy of such a large expenditure should be left in the hands of one person. I think it is for the Government, after full consultation with experts of all kinds, to say how much they will spend on rifles, how much for guns, how much for Maxims, and so on, and to trust Col. Lake with the actual purchase.

MR. DICKEY—That is what was done.

MR. CASEY—Do I understand the Hon. Minister to say that the Government dictated what sums should be spent for each particular class of article to be bought?

MR. DICKEY—No, but they instructed Col. Lake what rifles he should buy, and how much he should buy, and how much artillery he should buy, and of what class; and Col. Lake closed no contract without the Government ratifying it. All I intended to convey was that as to the details, such as the inspection of the rifles, and all those details which necessitate personal contact, the Government had nothing to do with them, and knew nothing about them.

MR. CASEY—For that part of the work I do not think you could have better judgment than that of Col. Lake. What I objected to was, that any steps should be