

and I never had to hawk after these positions.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. I think I ought to say that the hon. member for Sherbrooke (Mr. Worthington) is not the gentleman to whom I referred. He never discussed with me the question as to the successor to the Ross Rifle Company.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. Oh, no, the agent has a much greater man. I might as well be frank and say I understood it was a gentleman from Montreal, a multi-millionaire, the representative of the Vickers-Maxim Small Arms Company. I got word from across the water that that was done.

Mr. FOWLER. By cable?

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. It came at all events. When this notice was put on the paper a year ago, I looked for a motive. I thought it very strange that an officer who had served with me in South Africa, fighting the battles of the empire, under the same commander, should not have come and spoken to me on the subject.

Mr. WORTHINGTON. What have you got to do about it?

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. I am just coming to that. It was strange that a gentleman, a member of the great Conservative party, following the same noble leader, would not have come to me and said something to me about it. Now I come to what I have got to do about it. Soon after the notice was put on the paper last year, the hon. member for Beauharnois (Mr. Bergeron) notified me that Dr. Worthington had something terrible against me. He is going to expose you, said Mr. Bergeron, and your grafting in connection with the Ross rifle. And he asked: Is it not possible for you to pay back the money?

Mr. WORTHINGTON. I thought you knew Bergeron better than that.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. What right had any member of the Conservative party to hint about graft?

Mr. FOSTER. You are hinting at it.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. I am meeting charges made. It was insidiously whispered in the saloon and the back lanes that the member for Sherbrooke (Mr. Worthington) was going to drive me from public life. The hon. gentleman's friends said: Sam. Hughes is to be exposed in graft and driven from public life. That is why the matter was fought to a finish by me in the Public Accounts Committee and the hon. gentleman and his friends driven to the wall every time. And whenever he raises his voice against the Ross rifle, he will be driven into a corner. He should have known that I could not be so easily stampeded. He was within seeing distance on more than one occasion—but perhaps he was not in a

position to see much—when better men than he failed to stampede your humble servant. He should have known therefore that one such as he could not stampede me. He saw that in another land than this. It will take a much better and bolder man than the hon. gentleman to stampede your humble servant. He has failed in his agitation. He has failed most signally. I have telegrams from different parts of the country demanding that the Mark III Ross rifle be placed in the hands of our militia for shooting this year. I take this opportunity of urging on the minister all due diligence in placing that rifle—which is now perfected as nearly as possible—in the hands of our soldiers. I have no doubt that the rifle is still open to improvement. No doubt there is still some slight imperfection. There is now—I would not call it a defect—but a very slight imperfection, but the material at hand did not allow of our making the improvement. In the next issue however that improvement will be absolutely carried out, and we shall have a rifle the most perfect and complete in the world.

I shall not refer to defects further than to say this. I have been told by militia officers that the reason that they have been against the rifle was the reports furnished them by gentlemen in connection with the government at Ottawa. I shall not refer in detail to the accidents supposed to have taken place at St. John, Eastman and Lethbridge. At St. John the accident was a trifling affair. The cocking piece and a small spring had flown back and struck the man in the face. The rifle was not rendered unserviceable but was perfectly serviceable the moment the spring was put in place again. The Eastman rifle had been tampered with. The sear had been tampered with and the bolt dismounted, the retaining washer had been left out in putting the parts in place again. Evidently whoever took the parts out was, like the boy with a watch, unable to put them back into their proper places, and to this the accident was due. It was not due to any defect in the arm itself. But it is very strange that the accident should have occurred in a locality so convenient to the hon. member for Sherbrooke (Mr. Worthington). The hon. member referred to my reports of the Springfield tests. All that I have to say is that I have read to the House the reports of the Springfield tests of the American rifle, and I leave the House and the country to judge whether the Lee-Enfield is worse than the Ross rifle at Springfield. In both cases defects have been developed.

I shall not take up time discussing at length the cost of the rifle. On that subject, I have but a few words to say. I have the report of the British War Office showing that their rifles, in the preliminary stages, were paid for at the rate of £5 5s. and £5 18s. for others. This would repre-