

made to-day about a reflection being cast upon the Canadian militia by the old statute, which says than an imperial officer shall be appointed to the command, I felt it was rather incumbent upon me, feeling as I do upon the question, to make some remarks in reply. This has been the law for a very long time and if the hon. minister will look back at the debates and especially at the speeches of two of the greatest men who have ever lived in Canada—Sir John Macdonald and Sir George Cartier—giving the broad reasons why such a provision is placed in the statute, he will understand better the justification for it. The reasons given by these statesmen are given by men of greater knowledge than I could ever dream of being and by men, who equalled in knowledge the best men that we can find in the world. If we turn back to these reasons we will find something broader on this question than a mere question of there being a reflection upon the militia. I am as proud of the militia as any hon. gentleman here. I have felt in it all the interest that it was possible for a plain man to feel in the militia, especially in the early days, and yet I fail to see where this is any reflection at all upon the militia. I should be sorry to think that the best officers in Canada felt it to be a reflection upon them, to say that there were officers superior to them in capacity and in the knowledge of actual warfare in the great imperial army. I am proud to know that they are so much superior to anything we hope ever to be, because the world, in my opinion, does not hold their equal. The history of the greatest empire of the world has proven that. But there is a broader question than the one which the hon. minister has raised, and this is why I regret having heard the hon. minister make the statement that he has made. This question of Canadian militia has more than one side. The first duty of the militia is the defence of Canada, but there is a broader side, as time passes, its imperial side, which was disclosed not long ago, when the sons of Canada joined the great imperial army and did credit to their country and the empire. If we are ever in a war, it will be a war of the empire and not a war of Canada. We are a very potent part of the empire, but in the preparations for war, the formidable expenditure and everything that is necessary to protect the empire, we are very small compared with the British empire, and if we fight at all, we will be fighting with the British army, either in defending other parts of the empire or because the British army have come to our defence when we are assailed here. How futile, how small would be the efforts that we could make as against a great nation if we had not the British army with us? I cannot understand why it should be considered a reflection to have a British officer in command of the Canadian forces. We have proved the wisdom of having an

Mr. TISDALE.

imperial officer of great experience and capacity, although we have not always got one of that character, but we expect to, and I am sure that we have one now that we are all satisfied with. It seems to me that this is not a fitting time for making this change, and that there is no present necessity for it when we are so well provided as we are now with the gentleman we have in command of our militia. I say then that I regret that the hon. minister had no stronger arguments than those he has presented to justify this change. If I had attempted to do as he has done, I think I could have found some broader arguments in favour of such a change, or at all events looking forward to such a change as that he now proposes to make. In 1898 this proposal came up incidentally in this House, and the hon. minister was then, as I was, against it. He was the gentleman who was in power. I expressed my views and they are in 'Hansard.' When we were on that side of the House, and when we proposed anything in regard to the militia, we were opposed by the hon. gentlemen—not by the hon. minister himself—who then sat on this side of the House, and I will further say that when we were on the side of that House, we dealt with the militia without raising any political questions.

In the remarks which I made then, I admitted that the time would probably come when it would be wise to discuss the question. We then raised the pay of the imperial officer commanding our militia, and we did so because it was found that we paid much less than was paid by the other colonies, which in most cases had a smaller militia force. The correspondence which we then had with the imperial government was published in 'Hansard,' and I am glad to say that the increase of pay was agreed to unanimously. Our chief justification in raising the salary then, was the fact that it was conceded that we needed an imperial officer, and I want to know what has since occurred that has changed the necessity for that. To be a true soldier, and especially to be a true militiaman, you must be a true patriot, and I have sufficient faith in the patriotism of the officers of the Canadian militia to believe, that if they thought that a better man could be got from the imperial army—considering the greater experience he must have in war and in military matters generally than a Canadian could have, our Canadian militia officers would vote to retain the imperial officer.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. This Bill does not aim to prevent an imperial officer being appointed.

Mr. TISDALE. Of course it does not debar an imperial officer but I am afraid that in time such will be the result of it. As has been pointed out many a time, Canadians can now win their way to the position of general officer commanding through the British