

one remark which is that several militia pensioners are over 100 years of age, and as this seems a fitting subject of enquiry it would be advisable for the department to institute an examination into this portion of the expenditure.

SUPERANNUATION.

This service, involving an expenditure of \$240,000 in round numbers, forms the subject of a special memorandum by the Commissioners, and it is not necessary in this connection to offer any criticism on it.

MILITIA AND DEFENCE.

The total cost for services under this head for 1890-91, excluding the cost of departmental staff, amounted to \$1,279,000. Your Commissioners propose to take up this service under the respective sub-heads of votes.

Military Staff.—This item includes the pay and allowance of the Adjutant General and the several deputy adjutants general, and your Commissioners do not consider it necessary to make any remark thereon.

Brigade Majors.—In connection with this service, which cost last year \$14,200, your Commissioners deem it wise to call the attention of the Government to the evidence on this subject given by the Major General in command of the forces in Canada, who as will be noticed, does not favour the system of brigade majors at all, and in their place he would grant the deputy adjutants general assistance more in the nature of orderly officers from the permanent corps. This he states would be less expensive and more efficient.

Cartridge factory.—The sum of \$38,000 was expended last year on this service. Your Commissioners find that in the establishment there are a superintendent and assistant superintendent, two clerks, two foremen, and an assistant foreman; that an allowance is also made to the paymaster of the district, and further that 37 labourers were employed for varying periods last year, and in addition a sum of \$8,800 was paid for piece work. Your Commissioners would suggest that the attention of the department be called to the purchase of hardware, with the view of ascertaining whether it would not be desirable to see if such supplies, or other articles involving a considerable outlay, could not be procured with greater advantage to the department by tender on the open market.

Ammunition generally.—Cost in addition over \$15,000, the larger part of which is made up of sums expended for powder, for the supply of which no contracts appear to have been entered into. In this connection your Commissioners would call attention to the evidence given by the Deputy Minister of Militia and Defence with regard to the rifle with which the militia of Canada is armed, and while they do not wish to go beyond their province and venture on a question of public policy, yet they desire to give expression to their opinion that it might be ultimately more advantageous to Canada if a portion of the moneys which must necessarily be spent under these heads, in connection with a rifle that "is not fit to go to war with," were devoted to supplying a more serviceable arm.

Military clothing.—For this service the sum of over \$73,000 was expended in 1890-91 for various articles such as great-coats, tunics, trousers, etc., for the supply of which annual contracts are entered into. Your Commissioners do not deem it necessary to make any remark on this expenditure; they however would call attention to the evidence given touching the method of dealing with requisitions of various kinds; it seems to your Commissioners that some scheme could be devised whereby the correspondence and duplication of work arising out of the circuitous channel through which these requisitions flow, could be very considerably reduced, and in this they are borne out by the opinion expressed in the evidence given by the Major General.

Military Stores.—In 1890-91 cost over \$64,000 made up largely of miscellaneous expenditure in connection with the different district stores, such as repairs to various articles, maintenance of storehouses, rent of buildings, and items of a like character, involving a cost of nearly \$10,000. Of the stores themselves the chief items of expense