

the past few years. Till then, like Prussia, the United States had wisely husbanded their resources, and when the time for war came they put forth their strength with such effect as in a year or two made them one of the foremost military nations of the world. Why could not this example have been followed, rather than one which had led to most impoverishing results. Again, if war should come, he believed they would at once find the necessity for having had definite relations with the mother country on the question of defence and expenditure for war purposes. This was a matter which had not been attended to by the Government, and it was one on which a misunderstanding must almost inevitably arise; and hence it was to be regretted that it had not been settled at the outset. As then no offensive war was contemplated by the Dominion, 40,000 men must be a repelling force and, as a defensive force from border raids, such as that of 1866, it was altogether too costly and in excess of what was needed, while on the other hand, if intended as a nucleus of preparation, for possible war with the United States, it was futile and miserably inefficient. For such a purpose, all the elements of an army were, in reality, requisite. In either case, he considered the measure an act of the most monstrous folly ever proposed to be perpetrated on any people. He then contrasted the organization proposed under this Bill, with the existing system. In the first place, the volunteer organization was, undoubtedly, one which would be regarded with most favour by the people. They would dislike the force proposed by this Bill, because service would be compulsory and because, on the very face of it, the inefficiency of the measure as a whole was patent. According to the Bill now under consideration these 40,000 men went out at the end of the two years after having received a few hours drill yearly, and would be then as incompetent almost as the 40,000 who would be called on to fill their places. The system, altogether, was a most inefficient substitute for the existing one. This had admirably answered the purpose for which it was designed, and had the Government encouraged it, they might at any time have been able to get together 50,000 men, better drilled, more zealous and more willing and able to defend their country than the men now to be enrolled. He would not oppose the Bill on the second reading, but if certain alterations were not made in it at an ensuing stage, he would take the responsibili-

ty of moving an amendment. As to the fortification question, that was one which he would discuss when it came properly before the House.

Mr. Thompson (North Ontario) concurred in the views of previous speakers, that the effect of the proposed system would be to destroy the volunteer force. That force, he regretted to say, had not been sufficiently encouraged. Had more attention been paid to promote its efficiency, the people of the Dominion would be far better off with it, than they would be with the proposed militia.

Mr. Grant said it was all very well for honourable gentlemen to find fault, but it was easier to do that than frame a Bill. He thought the Minister of Militia deserved credit for his measure, and he hoped that he would see to it that, in connection with the force, a proper medical staff were organized. He would have much pleasure in voting for the second reading of the Bill, believing that in Committee the Minister of Militia would consent to any necessary amendments being made in order to increase the efficiency of the force.

Mr. Young would not follow on the ground taken by those who had preceded him; but would confine himself more particularly to the scheme of defence brought down by the Government. That scheme proposed a complete revolution. He contrasted it with the system hitherto prevailing. For the first time on this continent the germs of the European military system were to be introduced; conscription was to replace the volunteer system; and they were to have fortified cities and garrisons placed in them; so that, in almost every respect, their system was to be a copy of that obtaining on the Continent of Europe. To his mind, the change was not only altogether unwarrantable, but was one which must in the end, prove most disastrous. When it became known that, in the Dominion, the system of conscription was to prevail, whereas in the United States it did not, then the little immigration coming to this land at present, would soon become smaller by degrees and beautifully less. Besides, he regarded this measure as but a commencement. The end, they did not see. The system would, by-and-by, be expanded, and so would their fortifications, until there was no saying where the limit would be. The cost of the proposed system was, undoubtedly, a very material consideration, and, added to the existing debt of the Dominion, there would be an enormous