

clusions. But I think the present Minister should read the main details of this vote, so that if my hon. friend finds that no part of the money is to be spent upon the drill shed he has referred to, he may have something further to say.

Sir ADOLPHE CARON. I must deny absolutely and teetotally the charge which the hon. gentleman has brought against the department during the time I was looking after it. I deny that political considerations ever guided me in the conduct of that department. That charge has been made against me time and again, and has been answered; and I would remind the hon. gentleman that he has, in his own province, an instance of a person appointed on the permanent corps by myself who never belonged to the party with which I am connected.

Mr. LISTER. I am surprised at the ex-Minister of Militia getting up and making the remarks he has dared to make. Why, Sir, there is his condemnation in the report of the Major-General in command, who condemns the whole administration of the Militia Department for the last ten years. It is a notorious fact, known from one end of this country to the other, that that department became absolutely corrupt; its administration was rotten from the top to the bottom; every report presented to this House session after session proved it; and the hon. gentleman found that he could only satisfy public demands by leaving that department and getting another. But the Government must not imagine that that exculpates them from responsibility for the maladministration of that department. While the present Minister may administer it fairly and well, it is the duty of the representatives of the people to call the whole Government to account. We had this matter investigated by a committee of this House. We charged the head of that department with favouritism in the awarding of contracts; we charged him with clothing the militia with material that was not fit for the soldiery of this country, and these charges were proved. Nay, more, Sir; the evidence showed more than a suspicion that all was not square and above-board in the dealings of that department with contractors. Why, Sir, the department issued invitations to three favoured individuals to tender for the furnishing of supplies, and those individuals arranged among themselves that one should furnish the tunics, another the trousers, and another the overcoats, and they fixed their own prices; one contractor not tendering against another for a certain class of goods, so that they received, year after year, the prices they thought proper to demand. The report of the General shows that the clothing of the men was so rotten that the trousers supplied to them had worn out in less than twelve days. We charged the department with issuing to the soldiery of this country inferior articles of clothing, and the report of the General this year proves that the

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.)

charges, which were made fruitlessly and vainly year after year, were well founded, and true to the very letter. No greater evidence of the scandalous administration of that office is it possible to place before Parliament and the country than the report of the General in command. The Government must answer for this, and we shall expect the hon. gentleman now at the head of the department to carry out his promise to reform its administration and prevent the corruption which has existed in the past. We shall expect him to purify it, in so far as he can; to make it non-political, and to make this force, which is discontented from one end of the country to the other, contented and efficient. We ask that, and any Minister who undertakes to administer the office and does not fulfil this expectation is not entitled to the confidence of this House or the people.

Sir ADOLPHE CARON. It is all very well for the hon. gentleman, by his loud-mouthed declamation, to try and convince the House of facts which never existed. For three months, the hon. gentleman will remember, the administration of my department was under investigation by the Public Accounts Committee, and expert evidence taken, and it was proved that the clothing served out to the militia force was superior to any that had ever been imported. When the motion of the hon. member for North York (Mr. Mulock) was submitted to Parliament it was voted down by the largest majority ever given in this House. Those are facts, and those facts I can appeal to, as a justification of my administration of the department. The hon. gentleman says that the force was in such a state that its efficiency was interfered with. Is it not a fact, and is it not a bright page in our history, that when the force under my administration was called upon to do service in Canada it proved itself equal to any emergency? The hon. gentleman knows that well; but he is only carrying out the policy of his friends—running down everything Canadian and Canadian institutions, running down the militia force, not because his criticisms may be of any use in improving the force, but because it is one of the institutions of Canada, and because my administration of the department was sustained by a vote larger than ever given before. It comes with very bad grace from the hon. gentleman to stand up here and try to put in "Hansard" his loud expressions, and ask the Parliament of Canada to put faith in his statements.

Mr. LISTER. I am amazed at the boldness of the hon. gentleman. He knows there was a resolution passed by this House condemning the administration of the Militia Department, and a gentleman, who is one of his colleagues, the Comptroller of Customs, felt so convinced that the department over which the hon. gentleman presided was inefficiently conducted, that he felt himself