

people of Canada are too large minded to have any idea of their self-importance being hurt by leaving the control of these depots to Great Britain and joining with her in the expenditure. I think we would be glad of the opportunity. We are too large-minded to believe that we have the knowledge or will have for years, whatever our military attainments may be at the present time, and with the education imparted in our schools they will improve, there is no doubt, but at the present time we have not the experience or the knowledge or the opportunity nor are we able even to go to the expenditure that the imperial government would necessarily assume in the defence of these ports. In conclusion, I say that this proposal is another blow at the joint defence of the empire by Canada and the British army and the British navy. I quite agree that our participation outside of Canada should be voluntary, but we must know that even if we put our whole population under arms we would be nowhere if we had not the British navy and the soldier to fall back on. We adopt the British uniform with pride, we consult the British war office and endeavour to get the best of their men to teach us; we should have a close union with the mother country in the defence of the empire. If I gave the name of the old veteran whose letter I have read it would astonish some of you, and I join with him in the statement that it will be a sorrowful day for Canada when the Union Jack and the uniform of the last British soldier disappear from Canada.

Mr. SPROULE. I shall not say much on this subject because I am not a military man. I can only speak from the standpoint of the man on the street to whom the Minister of Finance has alluded more than once in another connection. It is interesting to one who has been in this House for some years to remember the criticism made by the Liberal opposition on the militia expenditure when the Conservative party was in power, and to compare it with what the Liberal government is doing to-day. I remember when the Liberals used adversely to criticise an expenditure of \$2,250,000 on our militia, and I remember how they declared that we were a peace loving and an agricultural people and that the cities were driving us into this extravagant outlay. I remember how they declared that militarism was a detriment to the progress of the industrial life of Canada. But, since the Liberal government came into power the militia expenditure has increased from \$2,413,000, to, we may say, \$6,000,000. Inside of ten years there has been an increase of about 300 per cent, and yet the political predecessors of the men who now support the government, denounced an expenditure of two and a quarter million dollars while the Liberals of to-day sit there calmly voting \$6,000,000, and think it is all right.

I do not wish to imply that I am absolutely condemning the defence scheme the minister has mapped out, or the expenditure proposed, because I believe that as time goes on we must in the fulfilment of our duty recognize that there should be an increased expenditure on our militia. I am merely referring to the unfair criticism made by the Liberal party against the Conservative government which expended only one-third of the present appropriation. The principle of making militarism part of the curriculum of high schools or colleges I do not altogether approve of. There is quite enough now to attract our young men from the farms without adding to it what will undoubtedly be an additional attraction. We must also remember that it is from the agricultural and industrial classes that we hope to draw our best men in the hour of need, and that class will get little benefit from the expenditure of this money, because in the main not more than ten or fifteen per cent of these young men ever get to the high schools or colleges—perhaps not more than eight per cent go to colleges. I see that the minister is smiling at that.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. I was smiling at something else, but I may say that it was not intended to apply the scheme simply to high schools. It will be applied to all schools so far as it can be and at the earliest age possible.

Mr. SPROULE. That would remove part of my objection, but there still remains the important consideration that this would be another attraction to take the youth of our country off the land. Civilized communities generally are now making an effort to keep the young men on the farms, and this proposition will I fear militate against efforts in that direction. I agree with every word said by the hon. member for Norfolk (Mr. Tisdale) in regard to the scheme under which we propose to take over the defences of Esquimalt and Halifax. I consider that a very unwise proceeding. These forts are not alone for the protection of Canada in the east and in the west, but they are outposts of the empire; they afford protection to British commerce on the high seas and the very fact that Britain has one of these outposts on the Atlantic and another on the Pacific, always in touch with the imperial army and navy, through which means warships can be readily brought into communication with them, is a stronger deterrent to those who might contemplate attacking us than could possibly be any scheme under which Canada would alone undertake the control of these fortifications. There is a great deal in what was said by my hon. friend (Mr. Tisdale) when he referred to the fact that the constant improvements in armament which require ever increasing expenditure, could better be looked after by the imperial army than by us. If we are to keep pace with these always changing