

sembled thousands, and where you would think even respect for the multitude that assembled to hear them would have been sufficient to cause them to supply a remedy. I do not want to jest in reference to this matter; but I make the practical suggestion, that in the report of the department we should have in concise shape a statement as to the condition of the drill sheds, and other military buildings in the country. I humbly submit again: that if you wish to maintain the efficiency of the force some regard must be had to what is just and right, and regiments and battalions must be dealt with in a fair, honest and equitable manner. If in looking over the different estimates voted there is found a certain battalion in a certain place given, not only \$10,000 or \$20,000, but \$50,000 without the municipality in which that battalion is located contributing one cent, and on the other hand, a rule made by the Government: that we will give you a certain amount if you supply the other certain amount, and if that cannot be done within your means, well, then, you can find your means as best you can.—I say, it must be disheartening to that battalion which is equal in efficiency and worth to any other battalion, to find such a state of things existing, and yet that is the condition that has existed with reference to the different battalions in this country. You find in the report, drill sheds on which money is expended for painting, and other little extra fixings,—which expenditure is right and proper, I do not doubt; but, I ask, how is it that you pay for painting and ornamenting the halls of certain battalions, and that another battalion is left for months and months with a drill shed, part of the roof of which is lying on the ground, has been lying on the ground, and which the Government and the Minister know has been lying on the ground. I do not make these remarks from any selfish stand-point, but I speak on the broad ground, that if you are going to discriminate as between battalions, and if you are going to deal with some battalions in this unfair way, that you will tend to deprive them of the patriotic spirit of which they are possessed. I speak particularly of the Dufferin Rifles, because I happen to know a little more in reference to them than to any others, and I say that nothing can more tend to dispirit them, than such a course of treatment, and nothing can speak more highly in reference to the spirit that prevails among the militia, and the militia officers of the country, than that under such discouraging circumstances, they have maintained the efficiency of their battalions. I say again, that it is a grave omission that there is no reference made in this report to the condition of our military buildings, and when the Minister asks a vote of \$93,000, he ought to be in a position to be able to tell us what buildings he intends to repair, and what buildings are in a state of disrepair, so that we may know that the money is not for painting or adorning certain buildings, which

however desirable, the building can do without, but that it shall be first applied to repairs that are absolutely necessary. Then we should be able to vote this money intelligently. I lay no charge against the Minister; he is new in his department; I believe he will discharge his duties fairly in that department; at the same time, it seems to me that the reform he must inaugurate is not simply to bring down a report of the architect as to a few buildings, but to give us a concise report of all the different properties that we may have, with their state of repair, so that when he is asking us for a grant of this kind, he will be able to tell us just where he intends to expend the money, and the House can form a judgment as to the fairness or desirability of his proposals.

Mr. PATTERSON (Huron). I have been delighted to listen to the eloquence of my hon. friend, and I regret to hear him confess that he does not himself belong to the force. Should he think proper to join it, I will advance him as rapidly as the rules of the force will permit, because I think he will be an ornament to it; but I would fear the disaster that must befall the drill shed if he were accustomed to speak in it very often. I can only promise my hon. friend that I will know no political distinctions in the management of the Militia Department. I think the greatest possible misfortune that could befall this country would be the introduction of political distinctions into the management of our militia force, and I will treat my hon. friend, so far as the interests of the riflemen are concerned, on the most-favoured-nation terms.

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.) I think it is a matter of regret that the reasonable demand of my hon. friend has not been acceded to. The hon. Minister says that of the \$91,000 which he asks for he proposes to expend \$70,000 in construction and repairs. My hon. friend refers to a drill shed in his own town which he says is in a bad state of repair, and he asks what drill sheds the Minister intends to expend this money upon. My hon. friend paid a compliment to the head of the department itself; and I want the hon. Minister to take special note of the charge he makes against the department, that the petty huckstering that has distinguished and disgraced the Public Works Department of this country has been carried out in the Militia Department as well, though of all departments in the public service, the Militia Department is the one into which above all others party considerations should never enter. But if my hon. friend has given the facts, political exigencies and not the welfare of the force have been the controlling influence in that department in the past. And I am surprised that the ex-Minister of Militia should hear such a charge made against the department, and not have a word to say in reply. If he chooses to accept it in silence, the House will draw its own con-