

on an occasion of grave importance, reduced to writing, mistake or misunderstanding an impossibility.

That brings us to the main question, the state of the militia at the present time and the proposals made by the hon. Minister of Militia and Defence for its betterment. I must say that his presentation of his request for increased expenditure and of his very broad and ambitious scheme for the improvement of the militia of Canada is of very great interest and requires a great deal of consideration. For my own part, I am prepared to join with parliament in approving of an expenditure even beyond what I might myself consider necessary if those in charge of the militia of this country considered it necessary for the advancement of our national defence. While this scheme is of such magnitude that it will startle some people, there is no question that if it is practicable and is properly and carefully carried out it will lay the foundation of a magnificent scheme of defence. On general lines I approve of the policy proposed, but, when I do so, it must be understood that we are not relying solely upon expenditure, and that this expenditure will be supplemented by successful work in other lines. If we are to have an effective system we must be prepared to face the expense, but my hon. friend the Minister of Militia and Defence must not forget that, if we are to entrust him with this very large sum of money, the expenditure of that money must be supplemented by efficient instructions, work and results, so that we may have a proper and efficient actual fighting force, supplemented with the same sort of reserve. Owing to the South African war and to other troubles which my hon. friend mentioned, he must remember that the expenditure on a peace footing has been very much less than the larger sum he now asks, as all of the present estimates for the militia are on a strictly peace footing, and I admired the courage and straightforwardness of the hon. minister when he said that we will have to stand this increased expenditure for three or four years.

THE MINISTER OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE. Probably five years.

Hon. Mr. TISDALE. My own opinion is that if we embark on this scheme and it can be made a success, it is probable that the annual grant required will never become less. I am not afraid of such an expenditure, especially if the country continues to make progress at its present rate. I believe that if such an expenditure as this is worth while, we should undertake it at once and with our eyes open. With the great development of our industries, production and population, with a prominence that is given to great imperial and colonial matters in the old country, I am most optimistic with regard to the future of this country for no country under

heaven to-day offers the inducements to the immigrant that Canada does. We have seen a great colonial minister resign from the highest place that the ambition of man can contemplate in order to fight the battle of closer union between the various portions of the British empire. That battle is of the utmost importance to Canada for when it is won we will have an illimitable market, a market for more than we can produce for scores of years to come, and we will have flowing to our shores all the immigration we desire, and the best immigrants in the world. I do not agree with my hon. friend from North Norfolk (Mr. Charlton) who the other day said that we will in a few years to come ship wheat from Port Arthur into the United States because the population of that country will increase in that time by 20,000,000. If this closer union between the empire and the colonies takes place we will be more likely to see immigrants coming in large numbers from the United States into Canada than to see immigration flowing into the United States from any other country in the world. We should do our share in promoting closer relations with the motherland. We should not halt at the tariff preference which has been granted by the Canadian government to the British people, but back up the efforts of the great imperial statesman I have mentioned in his efforts for mutual preferential trade relations between the empire and the colonies. Back him up not only by sympathetic words but by acts as well. While this government declined to take up the question of defence on the lines submitted by the imperial authorities, they pledged themselves that they would see to it that our militia would be improved and we should not be deterred by the fear of expense from fulfilling that pledge. Therefore if the Minister of Militia and Defence goes on with this scheme on the lines suggested, carefully and with a view to the best interests of the militia, I should say that the scheme was a good one. If we are to have a militia force it must to some extent be commensurate with what would be required by the experiences of war. While the enlistment should be smaller than what would be necessary in case of war it is very wise to have all of these auxiliary services, munitions of war, clothing, medical supplies, and camp equipment, in an efficient condition. Not only must we have a full supply of materials but these must be supplemented by proper instruction of those who will have charge of and those who will use them in case of need. All of this will cost a great deal of money. Owing I presume to the large appropriations for which he has had to ask for other purposes, the hon. gentleman has not asked an appropriation for the additional arsenal which he promised us last year or the year before. The hon. gentleman is committed to it but we can wait for it a short time as it is one of the most