

THE ROSS RIFLE

¶The history of the adoption of the Ross Rifle as the arm of the Canadian Militia reflects great credit on Sir Frederick Borden and his advisers.

¶Why it was adopted has been told by Sir Frederick in the House of Commons and again at the recent Colonial Conference in London, when the subject of Imperial defence came up for discussion. Briefly, Sir Frederick had on occasion found it impossible to obtain a sufficient supply of Lee-Enfields from England. He did his best to induce one of the English factories to establish a branch in Canada for the manufacture of the Lee-Enfields, but failed. He then resolved to use a rifle of Canadian make. This resolution led to the adoption of the Ross Rifle, and to the erection of the extensive plant at Quebec for its manufacture.

¶The fact that the Ross Rifle fires the same .303 ammunition as the Lee-Enfield was no doubt an important consideration with Sir Frederick and his advisers. Another consideration of probably greater importance was stated by him at the conference in these words: "The maintenance of the Empire rests primarily on supremacy at sea," and in that connection I would like to submit the advisability—