

posal may be excellent, but the details should be submitted to the committee. Is the hon. gentleman going to fill the vacancy at Quebec, and what Brigade Majors are to be dispensed with?

Mr. PATTERSON (Huron). For 1892-93 the amount voted was \$30,875 for the district staff. I intend readjusting that staff so as to effect a reduction of \$7,000. Where a Deputy Adjutant-General commands a school of instruction, he will fill the place formerly occupied by a Brigade Major. In the case of Brigade Majors alone, I expect to effect a saving of the whole sum of \$7,000.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. Will that involve a reduction from thirteen to six?

Mr. PATTERSON (Huron). Vacancies have occurred from time to time. The opinion has been expressed by this House that it would be desirable to abolish the Brigade Majors, and I propose to adopt that suggestion and carry it out, a similar recommendation having been made by the General commanding.

Mr. LISTER. What is the total number of Brigade Majors?

Mr. PATTERSON (Huron). There have been eight.

Mr. LISTER. Are you going to abolish the office of Brigade Major altogether?

Mr. PATTERSON (Huron). Yes.

Mr. LISTER. Is that how you will effect the saving?

Mr. PATTERSON (Huron). Yes.

Mr. LISTER. Is it the intention of the Government to increase the active militia force of the country?

Mr. MACDONALD (Winnipeg). Have any steps been taken to raise two or more troops of mounted infantry or dragoons for Manitoba. A reduction in the number of troops has taken place during the past year through the disbandment of the 91st and 95th, and it is generally understood that their places will be taken by a similar number of mounted men. Has anything been done to that end?

Mr. PATTERSON (Huron). That matter is under the consideration of the department. In reply to the hon. member for North Brant (Mr. Semerville), as to the strictures that appear in the Auditor-General's Report respecting vouchers, I may say the money overpaid was refunded in the case mentioned. The matter having been brought to my attention, I will be careful that nothing of the kind occurs again. In reply to the remarks of the hon. member for West Toronto (Mr. Denison) and the hon. member for Lambton (Mr. Lister), I have only to say that I propose to conduct the department on a purely business basis. I have confidence in the General commanding, and I shall be influenced very much by his suggestions and

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.)

his advice, having regard also to my knowledge of this country and the fact that ours is a citizen soldiery. I intend to endeavour to place the militia on a thoroughly efficient footing, and no corps will be kept in existence which does not maintain its efficiency and discipline. I recognize the fact that it is absurd to have a paper militia of considerable nominal strength, when in reality the force is not up to the mark. I propose, with the advice and co-operation of the General commanding and the officers of my department, to place the militia on such a footing as will be satisfactory to the House and the country.

Mr. CHARLTON. Have any steps been taken for the purpose of rendering the force more effective by supplying the men with the most modern improved small-arms? The Snider rifle is rather antiquated, and if our volunteers were brought into actual conflict, and were called upon to cope with troops armed with more modern weapons, they would be placed at a serious disadvantage. I suppose this matter has received the attention of the Government, and the committee will be glad to know whether any changes are to be made, and what course the Government contemplate adopting in this matter.

Mr. PATTERSON (Huron). That matter is also under consideration. It is one that will involve a very large expense. So many changes and improvements are continually taking place in small-arms that, until something definite is established, it would be inadvisable to incur a very large expenditure. But the matter will receive the most careful attention, and when the time comes to ask Parliament to vote money to replace what I must admit is now an antiquated form of rifle with a more modern weapon, I trust the proposal will receive the hearty support of hon. members on both sides of the House.

Mr. CHARLTON. There will be no disposition manifested on the part of the Opposition to criticise or question any necessary expenditure the Government may adopt to make the force an effective one. I hope the Government will not hold this matter under consideration too long. If we need a volunteer force at all, we need an efficient one, and if we are ever called upon to face the enemy, the time may come unexpectedly and suddenly, and I think it is perhaps questionable whether the economical policy of refusing to incur necessary outlay for making a thoroughly efficient force is a good one. I would urge upon the Government to consider the propriety of placing that force upon an efficient footing by supplying them with the most modern and improved type of small-arms at an early date. In my opinion, it would be better to reduce the force, and to have the part which is kept in commission well armed than to have a much larger force with inferior arms. In this age of the world, if it is necessary to have a militia force at all, it should be well equipped and efficient. We