

tracts has rested with the Minister himself; but the Major-General recommends that a different system should be adopted, and that all contracts should be awarded under the supervision of a committee of staff officers. Parliament has paid \$10 a day for the services of men to inspect militia clothing who possessed very little knowledge as to the standard of such clothing. Does the Minister intend to adopt that part of the General's Report recommending a change in the mode of purchasing supplies?

Mr. PATTERSON (Huron). I do.

Mr. LISTER. The General's recommendation is this:

The system under which clothing, arms, equipment and military stores are now procured and issued to the militia, appears to me open to very serious objections.

The responsibility for purchasing stores, making contracts, viewing the stores furnished by contractors, as well as for their custody and final issue, is all vested in one office, regardless of the conflict of opposing interests, affected by the performance of duties of such widely different character. It would seem more in accordance with business principles to vest the responsibility for purchase and contracts in the financial or civil branch of the department, and give to the military executive the duties of custody, inspection and issue. This would be more easy since the amount of stores (exclusive of obsolete and condemned articles) in possession of the department amounts to little more than an "expense store" calculated to meet the current requirements of the militia, but not providing for any reserve.

Then the Minister, we understand, intends to follow the recommendation of the General, as I have read.

Mr. PATTERSON (Huron). Yes.

Mr. LISTER. Immediately?

Mr. PATTERSON (Huron). Yes; when the contracts have expired.

Mr. DENISON. From the statement made by the Minister, it appears that he proposes to do away with the Brigade-Major at Toronto, and, I suppose, the Adjutant-General there will do his work. I would suggest that a further saving might be effected by abolishing the Brigade-Major in Montreal and appointing a deputy Adjutant-General, who should be able to speak both English and French. The work there cannot be so difficult as in the Toronto district, which is the largest in the Dominion.

Salaries and wages of Civil Employees..... \$50,000

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.) Will the hon. Minister explain the decrease of \$5,825?

Mr. PATTERSON (Huron). This decrease is secured by abolishing the services of a number of civil employees, in accordance with the recommendation of the Major-General, who considers that this can be done without interfering with the efficiency of the service. The Major-General has made a tour of inspection throughout the country, and it is on his recommendation that this reduction is made.

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.) Is the reduction at headquarters or scattered throughout the Dominion?

Mr. PATTERSON (Huron). It is scattered over the Dominion.

Mr. BERGIN. In regard to the intention of the Government to remove the Brigade-Major at Toronto, of course his duties can be performed by the officer of the military school there, but in the Montreal district the military school is at St. John's.

Mr. HUGHES. I notice, in the Auditor-General's Report, that large sums of money are paid out every year for salaries of civil employees engaged in repairing certain works in connection with fortifications. Would it not be possible to have the work done, especially that of repairing fortifications, by the men of the permanent corps? If the men were on active service, the work would necessarily be done by them and not be given to outside men. I have seen, as I have visited different places from time to time, that civil employees are engaged doing work that men in the service should know how to perform. I think this is a matter worthy of consideration.

Mr. PATTERSON (Huron). The suggestion is a valuable one, and I will keep it in mind.

Mr. LISTER. The Minister has not yet given any explanation of the reduction in the item for salaries and wages of civil employees. Perhaps he will explain in what class the reduction has taken place.

Mr. PATTERSON (Huron). It is proposed to reduce the expenses connected with military stores all over the country, by dismissing a certain number of men, in accordance with the suggestion of the General.

Mr. McMULLEN. What work have these men been engaged at?

Mr. PATTERSON (Huron). They are caretakers, labourers and others in connection with the care of the stores in the various military districts.

Mr. LISTER. How are the stores to be taken care of, if the caretakers are discharged?

Mr. PATTERSON (Huron). If we accept one branch of the Major-General's Report, we must accept the other portions, and throw the responsibility on the Major-General.

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.) Is it proposed to reduce the salaries of the present employees, or to dispense with their services?

Mr. PATTERSON (Huron). I am dispensing with the services of superfluous men.

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.) What is the number of the men whose services will be dispensed with?