

SUPPLY.

House again resolved itself into Committee of Supply.

(In the Committee.)

Militia pay and allowances—Permanent Corps and Active Militia..... \$45,000

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. The Minister of Militia might explain why this grant of \$45,000 is necessary, and to what services he proposes to apply it.

Mr. DICKEY. The militia vote of last year, as presented to the House, was \$482,000. Subsequently, during the session, without any particular reason being given to the House, it was cut down by the sum of \$82,000; so it passed the House at \$400,000 odd. It was intended, I understand, at that time, to promote economies in the permanent corps, and in the expense of the attendance of members of the active militia of the schools of instruction. But, though something was done in this respect, the department was not successful in keeping the expenditures within the \$400,000. They did not go over the original amount asked for; had that amount of \$482,000 been taken, this vote would not have appeared. But they are \$45,000 short on the expenditure for the permanent corps and militia attending the schools, and this vote will be applied to those purposes for the current year. But the militia vote for last year has not been all expended. However, owing to the Order in Council passed some years ago, the old practice of transferring votes from one purpose to another within a department has ceased, and, therefore, we are not able to apply the unexpended amounts on the other militia items to this service, and we are obliged to come to Parliament for a specific appropriation. This is really asking for leave to appropriate some of our unexpended balances to the particular item I have referred to.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. What items do you expect to save on? As I understand, the Minister contends that although this is apparently an additional vote, he won't exceed the sum total, because he will save in other quarters.

Mr. DICKEY. There was a vote for the purchase of arms, which has not yet been used.

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.) What is the amount of that?

Mr. DICKEY. Between \$65,000 and \$80,000. That was the reason the other amount has been reduced.

Mr. MULOCK. At this stage, perhaps, it would be interesting if the Minister of Militia could inform the committee whether he has adopted any policy, subject to the endorsement of the House, as to the expenditures upon permanent corps. There is a

general feeling throughout the country that too large a portion of the grant for militia purposes is being spent upon the permanent corps. It was argued at the inception of this feature of our militia service, that the establishment of permanent corps would have the effect of placing in various parts of the Dominion, schools where men could obtain the necessary qualifications to entitle them to command companies or battalions. This system has been in force for many years, and has resulted in the establishment of a small standing army in our country that is gradually eating up the grant for militia purposes. As to whether it is accomplishing the object to which I have alluded, I can offer no opinion myself; but I can say that I have received the advice of reliable members of volunteer regiments high up in the service, and I will give to the Minister of Militia the opinions that I have received from them upon this question. With reference to schools established for the purpose of qualifying gentlemen to take commands, I am told that they practically fail to accomplish that object. Under a former system young men were enabled to attend military schools at other than business hours during the day, to receive instruction, and in due time to qualify themselves for commands. At that time there being no barracks, no permanent corps, the young men boarded in their own residences, and were able to discharge their ordinary avocations, the hours of the schools being adapted to the demands of their occupations. But with the establishment of these permanent corps, a new plan has been inaugurated. Now the candidates are obliged to go into barracks, they have to give up all their other callings during the time that they are in barracks, and are obliged to undergo considerable expense. I may say that on this point, I am not giving my own opinion now, but I am giving the opinion of men high up in the militia, one of them being an official enjoying deservedly the confidence of the country, who has seen a great deal of militia service, has been for years in the service, and is as high up as any Canadian can be. He is at present engaged as actively in promoting the militia service as is any man in Canada; and I give you his opinion, amongst others, to the effect that the graduates of the permanent corps to-day are not any better qualified to take commands than were the graduates of the old military schools conducted as I have mentioned. He gave me as an illustration his own experience. This gentleman told me that he had received his certificate under the old regime, and although a considerable interval had elapsed between his qualifying and receiving a command, yet when he was gazetted as a subaltern, he found himself thoroughly qualified to take command of his company, and in due time he obtained a first-class certificate, and now he is a field officer of the