

hospital stores? I suppose it is the Surgeon-General of Militia?

Mr. PATTERSON (Huron). I understand the Surgeon-General makes out the requisition.

Mr. BERGIN. I fear the hon. Minister is mistaken. I have not been consulted since 1885.

Mr. BORDEN. I did not think it possible that any man acquainted with medicine or surgery could make out the requisition, judging from what I have seen of these supplies at the time of annual drills. The box of medicine sent to the camp I have been in for many years, contains things which are entirely out of date and are useless and worthless, and many of the requisite, simple remedies such as carbolic acid, are not to be found. I have represented over and over again in my reports, this condition of things but the same old box is sent back year after year. This is a matter which the Minister would do well to inquire into. If he would require the Surgeon-General to make out the requisition for the stores, he would probably get a more useful supply than he gets now. So far as the surgical department is concerned, nothing whatever is supplied. I do not know whether the department expects that the surgeons of this country are to be at the expense to supply all these things or not, but I can assure the Minister there is great need for reform in this branch of the service.

Mr. PATTERSON (Huron). I have noted what my hon. friend from Cornwall (Mr. Bergin) said this afternoon, and also what has been now stated by my hon. friend from King's (Mr. Borden), and I will pay special attention to the matter.

Mr. LISTER. The complaint my hon. friend from King's (Mr. Borden) has just made, is one I have brought before the attention of the ex-Minister of Militia three or four times. It is notorious that the medicines furnished to the different battalions are of such a kind as to call forth complaints and protests from the medical officers. Although the ex-Minister of Militia promised over and over again that this matter would be rectified, no steps were taken to remedy the things complained of by the medical gentlemen connected with the different regiments throughout the country. I ask the Minister now, whose duty it is to furnish this medicine, from whom it is procured, is it by contract, and on whose requisition? If there is a Surgeon-General, he ought to be the man to make the requisition, and upon him ought to rest the responsibility. If he is not consulted at all, and if some understrapper in the office undertakes to deal with it, I want to know it. We know that camp life does not agree with many of the volunteers until they become inured to it, and for the first few days of camp life, a great many of the soldiers

Mr. BORDEN.

take ill. It is exceedingly important that the medical men paid by the Government for the purpose of looking after the health of the volunteers should be properly provided with medicines suitable to the complaints for which the men are liable to suffer. I hope the Minister will be able to give me the information I desire to ask.

Mr. PATTERSON (Huron). There is a military hospital medical chest furnished from headquarters to each camp, and the surgeon in charge may supplement that with any articles he requires upon requisition.

Mr. LISTER. That is not correct. Surgeons have told me that they have had to pay for the medicines themselves. When the surgeon requires medicines, who makes out the requisition, and where does he get them?

Mr. BERGIN. When I was the commander of a battalion in camp, I found that nothing of any real use was furnished in those old, dirty, tin boxes, and I instructed the surgeon of the battalion to send prescriptions to the medical men in the town near the camp. I signed the requisition for these, and it was paid by the department, sometimes after a long kick.

Mr. LISTER. I know that the medical man who went out with the Lambton battalion paid for medicines out of his own pocket.

Mr. BERGIN. Then he was not as smart as a Lambton man ought to be.

Mr. LISTER. He had not been in Parliament. Can the Minister tell me anything about this? Where does that box of medicine come from?

Mr. PATTERSON (Huron). It is supplied from the military stores at Ottawa, I suppose, as a matter of course, to each camp.

Mr. LISTER. Are those supplies purchased by contract?

Mr. PATTERSON (Huron). I believe not.

Mr. DENISON. The way it has been managed where I have been in camp is this: The department furnish a medicine pannier, which is supposed to contain everything that is requisite for the camp. If certain medicines, which it is desirable to have, are not there, the brigade medical officer sends a requisition to the department and gets them.

Mr. BORDEN. For something over twenty years I have been in the active militia of this country, and the difficulty which has been referred to has been experienced by me during all that time. A box of drugs, very correctly described by the hon. member for Cornwall (Mr. Bergin), is sent into camp. It is largely useless, containing things that are no good, and lacking things that are wanted. I have been asked by the Deputy Adjutant-General each year to make a report, complaining of that condition of things, and he promised to forward it to headquarters.