

if his time and energy had to be devoted to these petty quarrels, whose fault was it but that of my right hon. friend himself? If he had exercised his proper authority, these petty squabbles would have been avoided, and he would have been free to devote his time and energies to the war.

But there is much more to come. The Minister of Militia and Defence proceeds to give the reason why he insists upon having control. The reason he gives is simply this: that he could administer things better than they were administered in England, and he gives a specific example. Sir, everybody within the sound of my voice is aware that persistent rumours have been coming from England, by everyone who has come back from there during the last two years, that the equipment which the Canadian troops took with them to England, and which was purchased in Canada, had to be scrapped as soon as our troops reached England, and cast aside as of no value whatever. You, Sir, have heard that charge. Everyone has heard it. Well, Sir, it was an extraordinary condition of things if it was true. Here we are in the midst of a great war, incurring an enormous expenditure. My hon. friend the Minister of Finance (Sir Thomas White) in his zeal has very properly constituted himself a Peter the Hermit of a Holy Crusade, not only against extravagance, but even against unnecessary expenditure. He has advocated retrenchment on every possible occasion, and he did right; he only did his duty. But while he was preaching economy we have the evidence here, in a letter which I shall quote, that equipment amounting to millions of dollars was cast aside in England as of no value whatever, and all that money was lost. Am I exaggerating? Am I stating a thing which I cannot justify by actual evidence?

5 p.m. I quote from this same letter of the Minister of Militia to the Prime Minister, in reference to the control of the forces, dated the 23rd of October. The Minister of Militia says:

I spoke to you at the time about the rejection of all our stores and supplies of every description, and proved to you that the excuses—

Mark the word.

—of the British officers were totally without foundation. You have my memorandum at the time, proving the utter falsity of their bogus excuses regarding our wagons.

Here is the evidence that the Minister of Militia told the Prime Minister what was

being done with our equipment and supplies in England. As soon as they reached there, they were scrapped, thrown on the ash heap, and the Minister of Militia says this was done by British officers without any cause whatever. The Minister of Militia in using that language took a very great responsibility upon himself. It is no light charge to make against the British officers that they scrapped all those supplies without any cause whatever. The fact, however, remains that for ten months those supplies continued to be cast aside without the matter being rectified. One of two things is true: either those goods were scrapped or cast aside for cause, or they were cast aside without cause. If they were cast aside for cause, the reflection is upon the Minister of Militia, that he supplied the Canadian troops with unserviceable articles of inferior and unsound quality. If, on the other hand, the Minister of Militia was right, and the British officers were wrong, it is for him to show what the truth was. To-day, however, without knowing whether my hon. friend is right, or whether the British officers were right, the fact remains that for ten months the Minister of Militia continued to send overseas contingent after contingent, division after division, armed and equipped in Canada at great cost, and that as soon as those troops arrived in England, all that equipment was cast aside. For ten months in Canada we continued equipping, and in England the British authorities continued scrapping. This is the condition which we have before us today.

The Minister of Militia stated to the Prime Minister in the same letter that the Pay and Medical services were chaotic, and he added, after Canada had obtained control:

We have reorganized and reformed the Pay and Medical services in Britain and to-day have placed the Force there on a good basis.

As to the Pay service I have nothing to say, as I have found no particulars in the correspondence in regard to it. As to the Medical Service, I have found nothing more than I have stated, namely, that it was deficient, but we have a good deal of information in the public press upon this subject. I think, however, that my hon. friend was well advised and made an excellent move when he secured for the Medical service of the Canadian troops in England the services of Dr. Bruce of Toronto. Dr. Bruce is one of the eminent men of his