

tween those two countries, and that Canada would be the principal sufferer. But I did not expect to hear it pleaded by the Minister of Militia of this Government, or the gentleman who acts for him, that that war scare was sufficient to justify the unconstitutional expenditure of the vast sum of money which we are asked to vote to-night. If a war were really imminent, if there were any actual prospect of it, it might have to be done. But I am more than astonished to hear the Minister plead that that war scare was the cause of this large expenditure of money. If so, it shows greater weakness of heart on the part of Ministers than I ever gave them credit for, if they were so easily scared as all that. I admit that events were sufficient to make us think about the position of our volunteers, sufficient to make Ministers set to work to perfect a plan of equipment, and to induce them to ask Parliament, at the very earliest date, to consider a plan and to vote this money. But we went on, we settled the war of the seven against the other seven, and we began a lot of other matters. We had a long debate on the Budget, and on the 25th February this notice was put on the paper. It was after that notice was put on the paper that the Government ventured to sign contracts as if the money had been voted by the House. There, Sir, is the strongest proof of their unconstitutional action that could be required. I regret to say, taking it all into consideration, that I do not see at this moment how I can possibly, speaking for myself alone, agree to sanction the vote of this money, spent unconstitutionally as it has been in part, or was to be spent at least, and as to the other part of it, we are asked to vote for it without any explanation of what is going to be done with it. Sir, \$1,100,000 is too much money to put into the hands of the Government without explanation at the end of the sixth session of Parliament, and a few weeks before an election. I say boldly and frankly that whatever may be our consideration for the volunteers, our experience of the Government has been such that we cannot consider them fit to be trusted with that amount of money, without a shadow of explanation of what they intend to do with it, without a shadow of guarantee as to the purpose to which it shall be applied: and unless I get greater light as the discussion goes on, I shall have to oppose granting that money just now. I do not mean that the money should not be granted at any time, if it were judiciously appropriated, and after proper precautions were taken to ascertain what should be done with it. But I do not see my way just now, with all my old volunteer feeling, to sanction a vote of this extent, at this particular time, and under these circumstances.

MR. MILLS (Bothwell)—With regard to the character of the arms which the Government have bought, I wish to call the atten-

tion of the House to a report made by the Secretary General in South Africa, with reference to the wounded in the contest between Dr. Jamieson's forces and the Boers. The Secretary General says, in the report he has made:

As regards the nature of the wounds, there were no incised wounds, neither bayonets nor swords having been used. All injuries were gunshot wounds. Those made by the Lee-Metford were much cleaner and healed much quicker, almost all by first intention. One burgher, shot through the lungs, left the hospital a few days after admission, convalescent. The entrance orifice of the bullets was exceedingly small, and few of the larger vessels having been divided, the hemorrhage was, in consequence, slight, the wound closing almost immediately on itself. The exit was about the size of the entrance, and in all cases was much smaller than that made by the Martini. Where the bullet, however, had struck the bone, as in the head wound of a burgher, it completely shattered it. The wounds inflicted by the Martini were of a much more serious nature, viz.: larger, jagged, slow-healing, with bad entrance and worse exit. Judging from personal observation, I should say that there cannot be a doubt that the Lee-Metford bullet is inferior to the now antiquated Martini as a man-slaying projectile.

That report is of considerable consequence in a matter of this kind, where the Government are purchasing arms, because the character of the wounds inflicted is one of the important considerations to take into account in considering the efficiency of arms. But I have not risen to call the attention of the committee to that matter particularly; I wish to call attention to the very extraordinary position in which this question is at this moment. It seems from what the Government have said that Parliament was in session when this matter was first acted upon, and without inviting the sanction of Parliament, and without asking Parliament for any appropriation, the Ministers took on themselves to incur a large liability and charge upon the revenues of the Dominion. I do not think that in a long series of years, perhaps during the whole of this century, an instance can be found where Ministers have incurred an obligation such as has been incurred in this case, and I know of no case since parliamentary government was established, where Ministers undertook to make purchases with Parliament in session, without the sanction of Parliament. When Ministers have been obliged to act in a great emergency when Parliament is not in session, they have come down and asked for an Act of Indemnity from personal consequences of their disregard of the law. Ministers have in this case certainly wholly disregarded the principles of the law. It is true the Government may make a contract, it is true also that the Government may make an official appointment, but without an appropriation that contract must fall to the ground, and that official appointment become nugatory, where any salary attaches to the office. So the result is that for a long series of years no appointment has been made in England, and no contract entered into without the sanction of Parliament, or without some statutory arrangement by which the contract was to be laid before Parliament for its

approbation or disapproval after it had been made. There are instances where that has been done. There are statutes which specially provide for a case of that sort. This is not one of them. When the Finance Minister referred to the matter this evening, I supposed he referred to some statutes, of which I had no recollection, which gave him authority to make this purchase, and subsequently obtain for it the sanction of Parliament. But there is no such authority. Let me call attention to a case which the Minister of Justice no doubt remembers, the case of Buckley vs. Edwards, where, in New Zealand there were appointed by the Governor of the Island, on the advice of his Ministers, a chief justice of the Superior Court and certain other judges. The Government of New Zealand had appointed a certain number of judges and had provided for them. Subsequently, one of the Ministers was added to the list, for under the statute the number was not fixed, and the Government could add to the number. Mr. Edwards, who was a Minister, was appointed to the bench, and his right to sit their questioned by the succeeding Administration. The Court of the island was divided on the validity of the appointment, and the case went to the Privy Council. What did the Privy Council hold in that case? That this appointment was an invalid appointment, that it was the duty of the Government first to have asked and obtained the sanction of Parliament to the constitution of the office. The statement was that the Act contemplated that a salary should be attached to the office, and the Government had advised the Crown to make the appointment before Parliament could vote that salary. That is a case which illustrates what has been done here. Parliament was in session. If this was a matter of urgency, it would be sufficient ground for calling Parliament together. The Government propose to expend \$3,000,000, and they have actually made a contract which amounts to nearly \$2,000,000. By what authority was that contract made? By what authority was that charge made on the public treasury? There is no authority whatever, not a scintilla of authority. The duty of the Government, if there was urgency, was to have called Parliament together at an early day and asked for the necessary appropriation. That has not been done. The Ministry has entered into the contract, they have broken down every barrier by which the rights of Parliament are secured, if Ministers can go on and make contracts of this sort without the sanction of Parliament. This is a most serious matter. I do not say that the force should not be armed. I agree with that proposition. I do not say that more than necessary armament and equipment has been bargained for. I am inclined to think that it has not. I do not think the arrangement was an unreasonable one, but the sanction of Parliament should