

sand rifles in Great Britain.' It will be remembered that this was during the South African war, at a moment when we wanted 10,000 rifles. We had sent away to South Africa a large number of the rifles we had—and we had all too few—and it was desired to purchase 10,000 yet, not 1,000 could be procured in the whole United Kingdom.

"It was impossible to secure a thousand rifles in Great Britain during the time of the South African war, and I thought that it was the duty of this government, under the circumstances, to make as soon as possible some arrangement by which our rifles could be manufactured in Canada. I was in England in 1900 and went to the Birmingham small arms people and tried to induce the company to come to Canada. I quite recognize the desirability of our having, if possible, precisely the same rifle in Canada as is used by the British army, because of the militia of this country should ever be called out for war, it would be better that we should have the same rifles. We have one, however, which differs so little from the Lee-Enfield that there will be no trouble on that score.

It was found impossible to prevail upon the Birmingham Small Arms Company, or any other small arms manufacturer in England, to come out here and start a factory. About that time Sir Charles Ross happened to be here. He had not then come to Canada for the first time, but, as the hon. gentleman must know, had been living in British Columbia, and had spent a great deal of money there in developing water-powers and establishing electrical works. He was introduced to me, I think, by Mr. Mackenzie of Messrs. Mackenzie & Mann, and brought other letters from the most reputable men in Canada. He explained to me that he had a rifle factory in the United States, and was selling sporting rifles, rifles similar to what are being manufactured here now. He said that he would be willing to establish a factory to manufacture rifles for Canada with the same bore and to use the same cartridge as the Lee-Enfield rifle. It seemed to me that it was a patriotic thing on my part to recommend and on the part of the government to accept this opportunity to secure a factory which would turn out rifles for Canada."

These are the grounds then, Mr. Speaker, upon which I justify the adoption of the policy of manufacturing, or having manufactured in Canada, our own rifles. Somebody may say: Why did you not construct a factory yourself; why did you not become your own manufacturer? I frankly admit that that may be a question fairly open to argument. We took the view that it would be better to allow Sir Charles Ross to manufacture his own rifle and so we adopted that policy. We knew that he had the capital to do it, we thought that the better course, we made a contract with him, as I shall show presently, and he pro-

ceeded to construct his factory. What was the rifle that we agreed to adopt? I have already said that it was a rifle of the same calibre or the same bore as the Lee-Enfield. It had a slightly different action but the difference was not serious. Of course the parts of that rifle would not be interchangeable with those of the Lee-Enfield, but that is not a serious drawback.

Mr. SAM HUGHES. There is no Lee-Enfield that is interchangeable with its neighbor.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. So I believe. What was this rifle? It was known as the Mannlicher rifle, the rifle with which, as the hon. gentleman (Mr. Worthington) told us to-day, the whole Austrian army is armed. He said that that army was armed with that rifle in 1896. The British army was armed with the Lee-Enfield before 1896; so that, that is not a very grave or serious complaint against it. The Mannlicher, I believe, is considered to be as good a rifle as there is in the world. At any rate, Austria is a warlike nation and I think we may fairly assume that the rifle that is good enough to satisfy the generals of the Austrian army may be good enough to satisfy the militia of this country. What did I proceed to do? Knowing this, I proceeded, after consulting my colleagues, to bring together a committee of the best men I could find in Canada, as I believed, to examine this rifle and report to me as to whether it was a fit rifle to adopt in this country. Whom did I appoint on that committee?—General Otter, now the chief of the general staff, one of the most distinguished Canadian soldiers, a man whose name is honored not only in his own country but in England as well, a man who was offered, the other day, one of the best commands in the gift of the War Office in England; Colonel Gibson, for many years an active militiaman, a man who took his part in repelling the Fenian invasion and a man who was for years and years the president of the Dominion Rifle Association. Colonel Hughes, who is well known in this House and the country, was the third man whom I appointed on that committee.

Mr. FOWLER. Colonel Sam?

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. Colonel Sam. There is no other Colonel Hughes.

Mr. SAM HUGHES. Yes, pardon me; there are two more in the same family.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. When you speak of Colonel Hughes in this country every one knows who is meant. Colonel Anderson of the Department of Marine and Fisheries, a distinguished engineer, and Major Gaudet, at the head of the Dominion arsenal, a man of great experience and possessing technical knowledge, were also members of this committee. Those gentlemen met, the Ross rifle was handed to them,