

providing the department with now. I have always believed, and I believe now, as a civilian having no military knowledge, that when we have good men in this country, men of ability willing to devote a large part of their time and to incur personal expense to assist in drilling our young men in order to make them soldiers, available in time of need for the defence of this country, the country has received too much at the hands of these men and that the members of this House have not come to this House with a view of assisting them as much as they should have done. I think the officers in our militia should receive greater encouragement and that they should not be called upon to pay out large sums of money for the purpose of helping their particular corps. I know men in the province of Ontario who, being too proud to allow their battalions to go down, have put their hands into their own pockets for the purpose of making their battalions a success, and I have known these very same men to leave their battalions a great deal poorer than when they joined them. Why this should be is beyond all comprehension. I think we should give them all the encouragement we can reasonably, consistent with the other expenditures which we make throughout the country.

THE MINISTER OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE. I would like to say one word in respect to the question of tents for the cadets. It is quite true that the Militia Department was in the habit of loaning a certain number of tents to the cadets, and as far as I know, they were well taken care of. But since we have taken to drilling the whole militia every year in camp, we have had to use all available tents and at the same time we found the demands on the part of the cadets increasing so that there was no alternative for us but to stop issuing them. We also had to consider, when the question became a large one, as to whether we had the right or not to issue these tents. The very same point that I suggested a moment ago in regard to rifles and ammunition, arises in reference to the supply of tents. I do not know that parliament authorizes us to supply tents. As to the damaged tents, I did hope that we might perhaps give these to the cadets, but my officers advised me that there was only one way in which that could be done, and that was by offering them at auction and have some one bid them in. I suggested that, but I do not think that suggestion was accepted. We must offer everything at public auction. There is no alternative, but I should be very glad indeed to facilitate in every way in my power the securing of these tents by the cadets or by some one in their behalf.

Mr. SPROULE. Am I correct in understanding that all of these cadet corps will be supplied with rifles? Is it only cadet

corps in connection with collegiate institutes and high schools that will receive them, or cadet corps raised in any portion of the country?

THE MINISTER OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE. Cadet corps in any portion of the country.

Mr. SPROULE. Is there any limit as to age in the cadet corps?

THE MINISTER OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE. Yes, there is an age limit of fourteen.

Mr. SPROULE. The cadets must be between fourteen and eighteen years of age?

THE MINISTER OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE. Yes.

Mr. SPROULE. Then the issue of rifles will apply to any cadet corps in any portion of the country?

THE MINISTER OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE. Yes.

Mr. SPROULE. I see that a large share of this vote is for clothing and stores. How do you buy clothing and stores? Is it by tender or do you just give an order to a large house?

THE MINISTER OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE. The clothing during the last two or three years has been purchased from the same contractors with whom we made a contract three years ago. The Sanford Co., who were the contractors when I came in and who have been most satisfactory, and a firm in Montreal by the name of Workman, which has done a great deal for us and which has also been very satisfactory, are the contractors. The contract was made for three years under the late government, and although when I came into office I did not think it was a good arrangement I was glad to be able to state in the House last year that the system was a wise one. As a matter of fact we terminated several three years contracts, because the then Minister of Justice reported that they were illegal. We advertised for tenders in all the papers in all the cities of the Dominion, and I am bound to say that I never had so much trouble about anything in my life. A firm took a contract for about \$70,000 which knew nothing about the work and absolutely failed to deliver any goods whatever. We had to go back to the Sanfords and ask them to do the work for us. After that experience, and on the advice of my officers I have felt that it was wiser for us and better in the public interest to stick to the bridge that has carried us safely over. I am satisfied that the prices we are paying are not extravagant. That matter is carefully looked into and a report made on it. Although the price of cloth increased last year we were able to get our clothing made at practically the same rates as before and very satisfactorily.