

country. The militia expenditure to-day is \$5,500,000, still not more than one-thirteenth of our gross revenue. I do not mean to say that it would be fair to lay down the rule that because we began with a militia expenditure or one-thirteenth of the total revenue we should keep that ratio up, but I do think we should keep it up until we have reached the point at which we have created an effective and an efficient defensive force for Canada. Whether that will be \$6,000,000 or more I cannot say, but I should think it will not go very much beyond that sum. I do not think that the ratio between one and thirteen as to the revenue, will be increased in the expenditure on the militia. I hope that before we have reached a revenue of \$100,000,000, one-thirteenth of which would be about \$8,000,000, we shall have reached the maximum which will be required for our militia force.

I wish to make one additional observation with reference to rifle shooting which is one of the most important considerations and one of the best means by which we can get the most for our expenditure in this direction. The whole question of rifle ranges and rifle shooting is being considered by the Militia Council and it may be that I, or whoever is Minister of Militia, will ask at the next session or at some session in the near future for a lump sum with which to construct rifle ranges as rapidly as possible in every part of the Dominion where they are really needed. I should have said that in this expenditure of \$5,500,000 we have not included about \$800,000 which has been voted to the Department of Public Works for armouries and other militia buildings. We have decided upon certain plans for buildings which I think are of an economical character and which will be sufficient for the requirements. I hope in the near future we will be able to begin a system of building company armouries, or perhaps armouries for two or three companies jointly, so that we will have our militia comfortably housed in buildings which will not only afford store rooms for arms and equipment, but which will have a lecture room where the young militia men of the country can meet in the evenings and listen to lectures upon military or other useful topics.

Mr. WORTHINGTON. In reference to this question of armouries it is very comforting to know that all this is being done, but I would call attention to the fact that the drill shed at Sherbrooke has not yet been attended to and the regiment is in need of it.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. I shall call the attention of the Minister of Public Works to it; I think he intends to go on with it. Now I have to apologize for the long time I have occupied and for the very disjointed character of my remarks,

Sir F. W. BORDEN.

but I hope I have been able to give the committee some information and I shall be very glad to answer any questions in regard to the different items.

Mr. TISDALE. I am sorry indeed that from all the circumstances which were explained satisfactorily on both sides of the House at the commencement of this debate made it unavoidable that at this late date we should discuss this subject which is of such great importance to the country. It is now an old saying that it is comparatively useless to attempt to interest the House on this subject, but when the discussion as so often happens, is put off until so late in the session, it is still more difficult to interest the House or the public. I do not mean this as a lecture to the House or the minister. We have important changes in the system, we have an enormous increase of expenditure of which I do not complain if it is well applied, and if the object in view is successfully attained, yet it does seem unfortunate that it is always under some disadvantage, at a time of some stress and near the breaking up of the session that we have to discuss militia matters. It is particularly unfortunate this year because of these important departures of which I have spoken from the system under which we progressed reasonably well. We are now confronted with a much larger rate of expenditure with, I am free to admit, the chance of a larger force and a larger establishment. The question of expenditure with which the minister dealt last is probably the most serious one to the country. The expenditure I said was enormous, it is enormous compared with what we always have been in the habit of considering necessary; it is enormous compared with the amount that under the Conservative administration we managed to get along with. That is no reason why it should not be larger if we are sure and certain that we are proceeding on safe grounds and in such a way that we will be certain to get value for our money. I shall not go back further than two or three years ago when during the term of command of Major General O'Grady-Haley, my hon. friend (Sir Frederick Borden) startled us and the country by bringing down a militia estimate of \$3,500,000. He was fair enough then to state as he stated to-night that at least for some years he could hold out no hope of lessening the amount brought down for years to come. While I was addressing the House shortly then as I am doing to-night, I agreed that the expenditure, if the minister was certain his scheme as then outlined (which contemplated a force of 100,000 men, including the reserve) with the establishments that were necessary on the lines that have since been carried out, was not unreasonable, but I call the attention of the House