

the barrel and the receiver. One of the criticisms made by a few of the critics has regard to the attachment of the barrel to the receiver and it is a very judicious criticism. The old attachment in Mark I was on fine thread. In Mark II it was changed to a large single coarse thread and that has been found in odd cases to work loose. It has been abandoned. Then the safety catch is another of the objectionable features. And speaking on this one thing, the hon. member for Sherbrooke said it was criminal on the part of the Minister of Militia to allow it to go before the people.

I was pointing out what the people of the United States have been doing in rifle matters. In 1900 they modelled their first short Springfield rifle. In 1901 it was adopted; in 1902 it was perfected. And in 1903 it was put into the hands of the troops. I have here their latest issue of instructions and I commend this to the Minister of Militia. These instructions were issued on March 3, 1904, revised April 18, 1906, and reissued on February 14, 1908. They are entitled: Instructions regarding the use of the United States service rifle. Although the rifle has been in the hands of the troops all these years, though it has been perfected from time to time, nevertheless we find instructions issued in regard to the safety catch in these words. I quote from the Instructions:

#### Precautions.

If it is desirable to carry the piece cocked with the cartridge in the chamber, the bolt mechanism should be secured by turning the safety lock to the right. In this position it is important that the safety lock be kept turned fully to the right, since, if it be turned to the left nearly to the 'ready' position and the trigger pulled it is possible that the sear may not engage the cocking shoulder. Should this happen the rifle will be discharged upon turning the safety lock fully to the ready position. Under no consideration should the cartridge be left in the chamber.

Identically what is pointed out if the safety catch in old Mark II does not engage properly. But, unlike the American rifle, the Canadian rifle—the Ross rifle—has amended this defective safety action. The English government have a safety action on the old long Lee-Enfield which is absolutely dangerous. And here is the instruction in the new work of the United States government, showing that on the 14th of April last, their safety catch is still absolutely unsafe, whereas as soon as we found any difficulty in the safety catch of the Canadian rifle we amended it, and it is as safe to-day as if the rifle were not loaded. So the only real criticism that was made against the safety of the rifle, so far as the safety catch is concerned, has been exploded. Let me point out that, before the safety catch in the Mark II Canadian rifle could do any harm, the

rifle must be loaded, the safety-catch must be pushed in only half way, the trigger must be pulled so as to disengage the sear, and the safety-catch must then be released again. You must go through all these unlikely performances before an accident can occur in the Canadian rifle. In the American rifle they still have the danger, all must, and do, warn their soldiers against it.

Now, there is another criticism made, honestly made, and one worthy of note, and that is that the sights on the short barrel are so close together that one cannot get proper range in firing. That is known the world over.

But there is a critic of another class to whom I shall refer. He is a gentleman who is after personal preferment, possibly gain of some sort, or, possibly, after the scalp of his neighbour, with no fair justification. This is the class of critic you will sometimes find—whether in this case or not, we shall see later on. Before proceeding further, I desire to give a little history of rifles. And I may say that had this motion presented by the hon. member for Sherbrooke (Mr. Worthington) been couched in somewhat different terms, if it were expressed in a little different tone or by any other man, it might have had some encouragement from me. For, I feel that the Minister of Militia (Sir Frederick Borden) is more or less open to serious condemnation for his apathy—not to apply any harsher term—in trusting, as he has done, in the past, to his ordnance officials to too great an extent. He failed to send out instructions, similar to those I have shown in the American book, as should have been done in the case of an issue of new rifles. At all events, as responsible head of the department, the minister must be held answerable for this. I think the minister should have given more personal supervision to this important matter; he should have made sure that his ordnance officers, of one class and other, knew their business. I do not think they did know their business. I have no desire to injure any man, but I have no hesitation in saying that the gentlemen who have been in charge of these matters have not always been up with their business. I will go so far as to say that many have strong personal animus and may have been endeavouring to kill this rifle. That should not be tolerated by the minister. Had I anything to say about the matter, the head of such an officer would soon drop in the basket. If I saw such work as has been going on here, such confidential reports given away as have been given away, and encouragement given to destructive criticism, drastic action would have been taken; and, if that had been done, the matter would have gone along much more smoothly. I condemn the minister for not giving out instructions when the rifles were issued. He is now issuing these instructions when it is practically needless. He