

Fourth Day.
20 April 1907.
MILITARY
DEFENCE.
(Mr. Deakin.)

must be of a certain power. We can have a factory for ourselves, but it must be on such a scale that in time of war its complete output might prove utterly insufficient.

If, however, we are able to supply your naval requirements, or some of them, at your own rates, that is to say, the rates you would otherwise pay, making a fair allowance for any differences, that would be of great advantage to us. We do not want to make any business profit out of it, but we desire to have a factory always at work and on such a scale that when the time of war arrived it might readily be enlarged to meet even war necessities.

As regards the arms, Sir Frederick Borden has anticipated all that it is necessary to say. We have been driven to do business with private suppliers simply because the War Office could not supply us. Whenever we wanted arms the War Office wanted them most, and they had them first.

Mr. HALDANE: I think that was during the war, Mr. Deakin. I may say that just now we shall be only too glad to execute orders for any number.

Mr. DEAKIN: Exactly, you are always ready to execute orders when neither of us is under pressure. That is what has driven us outside. We know the value of the War Office criticism, but we also know that the War Office looks after itself before it looks after us, and when it is eager for arms or ammunition we have to wait. Any arrangement which can overcome that and put us on a basis that for any reasonable demand we should be entitled to a certain proportion of your output of anything we do not make for ourselves, would be a great improvement. Just as you wish to know in advance what support you may expect from each part of the Empire, each part of the Empire is entitled to know what support in the way of arms and material it is entitled to expect from you in emergency.

Mr. HALDANE: I think we can do business on that basis.

Mr. DEAKIN: I hope so. I may say we do not take a narrow view of our military obligations or their development. The movement the public with us are taking to most kindly, and which has most promise in connection with our military strength, is the Cadet movement. We hope to have at least 30,000 cadets next year under training without counting those who have already passed through, and my colleague, who is sanguine, thinks we shall have 40,000 or 50,000 in a short time. They get a fair training with handy little rifles, amongst others the Westley-Richards, which is in favour. We had tenders a little while ago in which a Belgian firm who make a specialty of such rifles offered to supply these Westley-Richards at about 37s. or 37s. 6d., whereas from Great Britain they wanted 39s. We took the 39s. weapon without a moment's hesitation. That was to help British industry to turn out British weapons for British men. Although we have no complaint against Belgian workmen, it is not our business to encourage their factories when we can help factories for the manufacture of small arms here. We do not take a biased view, but where we cannot supply our own needs we do desire to support the factories of this country.

The training of cadets, of course, is a matter which will tell more in the future than in the present. We are passing them through now at the rate of some 16,000 a year. In our largest State, New South Wales, my colleague reminds me that they have been passing them through at that rate for a number of years. The consequence is that in a rudimentary