

not less important, we have had the testimony also of an hon. gentleman who is not a military man, but who supported this proposal quite as strongly as any of the military gentlemen have done. Now, I do not think it would be convenient, nor would it tend to the advancement of the business of the House, for me to anticipate the remarks which I intend to make, when I bring down the Bill. I shall, therefore, make only one or two observations. It is perfectly true, as has been stated by my hon. friends, that we have failed in the past in Canada to make adequate provision for the permanent force of this country. It has been pointed out that the duties to be performed by the permanent force are most important. The members of this force are the instructors, the educators, of the active militia. That I have always held to be their proper sphere. And it is our duty, even more so than it would be if they were simply for the purpose of doing garrison duty, to provide for these men in such a way that the country shall be sure of always having men fitted for the important duty which devolves upon them. That cannot be done under their present rate of pay without providing pensions for them. Something has been said with reference to the rate of pay. I shall not go into that here, but I am at one with my hon. friends who are of the opinion that it ought to be larger than it is. However, we will have done a great deal towards making up for this deficiency if we pass into law the Bill which I shall bring before the House, and which will provide, somewhat on the lines of the old Civil Service Superannuation Act, for a retiring allowance after a service of twenty years. My hon. friend from Victoria, B.C. (Mr. Prior) has referred to the desirability of granting pensions to non-commissioned officers and men. I may say to him, and to the House, that it has seemed to me for a long time that there was no reason why a distinction should be made between the North-west Mounted Police, who are granted pensions, and our permanent force, which is called upon to do duty somewhat similar. I shall therefore propose as a part of my Bill that the law which now applies to the pensioning of non-commissioned officers and men of the North-west Mounted Police shall equally apply to the non-commissioned officers and men of the permanent militia. We find it very difficult now to get suitable men to do the important work of the permanent force. I hope after my Bill becomes law that we shall have very much less trouble in that regard. It is not proposed, as my hon. friend seemed to imply, that we shall ask for any contribution towards the fund from the non-commissioned officers and men. It will be somewhat similar to the old Superannuation Act, except that no contribution

is required from the non-commissioned officers towards any fund; they receive their pension without any deduction being made from their pay during the time they serve. That, I think, is proper. I will just state this one further point with reference to what the Bill contains. I do not feel that we can go so far as that in the case of the officers, and I propose to ask that an annual deduction, as in the case of the old Superannuation Act, perhaps a little larger, shall be made from the pay to the officers. But I think it will be found that the return which is proposed will be very large, so large that the officers will cheerfully make this subscription.

One further point. My hon. friend from Victoria, B.C., did not point out, although I presume he is aware of the fact, that at the present time, and for many years past, we have been in the habit of giving, under an order in council, passed a long time ago, a gratuity to the officers and men of the staff and of the permanent force upon their reaching the age limit. We propose now practically to convert the gratuity to which they would be entitled, which is one-tenth of their pay at the time of retirement for each year of service, we propose now to discontinue that gratuity, but to give it in the form of a pension; so that the officers of the permanent force will not only get what the annual amount they contribute to the fund would give them, but in addition they will get all they would have been entitled to under the present system, converted into an annuity; that is to say that the government is practically purchasing an annuity with the gratuity which they at present receive. They will get the gratuity which they would have had, and in addition they will get the full benefit of the amount of money which they will be asked annually to contribute out of their pay. My hon. friend from Victoria, B.C., referred to many other matters which I would like to touch upon, for instance, the Royal Military College, the interesting calculations made by Col. Geo. Denison, the cartridge factory, and the supply of rifles, &c.; but it seems to me that these matters could be discussed, as they doubtless will be, much more conveniently when the militia estimates are brought before the House.

Motion agreed to, and House went into committee.

Commissioner's branch for agriculture and dairying, including cold storage on steamships, on railways, at warehouses and creameries, and for expenses in connection with trial shipments of products, and for securing improvements and recognition of the quality of Canadian farm products, \$140,000.

The MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (Hon. Sydney A. Fisher). I desire to add the following words to this item: