

On section 8,

Mr. OLIVER. This clause is in exactly the same position as clause 5. If the officer loses his life in the discharge of his duty, his family become dependent on the country in one way or another, and it seems to me that the least the government can do is to replace that loss to his family as far as it can reasonably be done.

The PRIME MINISTER. My hon. friend will find that section 10 provides for a rate of pension for the widow.

Mr. CLARKE. The argument of my hon. friend from Alberta (Mr. Oliver) is, and I entirely agree with it, that it should not be necessary for a man to serve for twenty years and then to lose his life before his widow or children can receive anything. If he serves only five years or ten years and loses his life in the service of the country, his family should be entitled to some consideration at the hands of the government.

The PRIME MINISTER. I have only to repeat what I said a moment ago, that if the intention of the Bill were to provide pensions for the officers of the mounted police out of the treasury of the country, the remarks made by my hon. friend would apply; but the object of this Bill is not to create a charge upon the country. It is expected that the fund to be created will be self-supporting, or that it will be supplemented by the treasury in only a limited degree.

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE. I presume that the case my hon. friend from Toronto has in mind is the case of a man who loses his life or is wounded in action. There is a scale of pensions in force which has been in existence since 1885, which is applicable to such a case.

Hon. Mr. HAGGART. I was going to ask the right hon. gentleman if there were any rules or regulations of the department applicable to such cases. This Bill is not to be considered as providing for pensions, but for a savings fund to which each man contributes, and it provides for the distribution of this fund in a certain way. I suppose the right hon. gentleman has had an actuarial calculation made for this purpose. But, besides that, there ought to be some regulation covering such cases as the hon. member for West Toronto (Mr. Clarke) refers to. I think perhaps the Minister of Justice is thinking of the Militia Pensions Act.

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE. We are making that applicable to the North-west mounted police.

Hon. Mr. HAGGART. That covers the whole thing.

Mr. OLIVER.

Mr. CLARKE. The clause we are discussing does not deal with pensions, but with gratuities, and there must be a service of twenty years before the widows or children are entitled to consideration. By what rule or actuarial calculation do you ascertain what amounts should be retained which will be the equivalent of the annuities to the widow or orphans of those who lose their lives in the service of the country?

Hon. Mr. TISDALE. There seems to be a misconception of the Act. It is not an Act granting pensions to North-west mounted police at all, but a different proposition altogether.

Mr. CLARKE. The title of the Bill is an Act respecting the pensions to officers of the North-west mounted police.

Hon. Mr. TISDALE. Yes, but this Act is not intended to cover all cases. It applies to contributors who belong to the force, but by the changes suggested, we are making it apply to people who do not contribute their share. I am not expressing any opinion as to whether that is wise or not.

Mr. CLARKE. Section 8 leaves it at the option of the government to determine whether a pension shall be granted at all or not.

The PRIME MINISTER. The Act is intended only to apply to those who contribute to the fund and in the cases referred to, where a man, disabled or killed, has not served his full time, they are dealt with separately by the government. Take, for instance, item 107 of the estimates, 'pensions payable to militiamen and mounted police and others on account of the rebellion of 1885.' This deals with men who were disabled in the service of the country, and in this we have followed the rule which was laid down in the Act of 1885 concerning the militia. I do not know that we can at present deal with such cases in any other way.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). I can hardly agree in the view expressed by my right hon. friend with regard to the scope of the Act. It does not make the amount of pensions depend on what was paid in, but on the length of the service. Even if there was not a dollar paid in, still those who served their full time would be entitled to a pension on that account. We are not discussing the details of the Act, and it will be quite proper for us to make any modifications which will extend the principle of the Act to the cases mentioned by my hon. friends from Toronto and Alberta. I am not in possession of all the information in the hands of the Minister of Justice, and I would like to know whether, in his remarks, he referred to the provisions of any statute?