

of them left now, and I do know some of them are in very poor circumstances. When some of them get sick I know that others have to support them in the hospitals, and in many cases their comrades have had to put up their funeral expenses. Speaking as one who went out on the prairies some thirty-five years ago, I can testify to the worth of this body of men. Even yet I do not think that justice is being done to them under this bill. I do know that when the rebellion broke out in 1885 these men were placed under Militia orders and served as militia men during the whole of that time. The others who took part in that rebellion were granted, I think, some 240 acres of land each as scrip. I do not suppose the government purposes giving these men that allowance at this time, but I am very glad to see that at all events they are placing them beyond the pale of what must be for many of them real want. I am personally acquainted with many of them, and I have sometimes wondered how they have lived, some of them on less than fifty cents a day. I think the minister is to be commended for at least giving them this justice at this time.

Mr. STEVENS: I am simply going to voice what has already been said as to the desirability of this legislation, and to say that the minister is undoubtedly to be commended for bringing in this legislation at this time.

My hon. friend from Saskatoon (Mr. Evans) has just referred to a matter which is distinct from this particular measure; that is the recognition of the claim of these old members of the force to scrip. What they are asking is not only recognition in the form of granting them scrip, not so much that, but it was obvious some blunder or oversight took place immediately following the rebellion which they feel left a certain reflection upon the force, that they had not been serving within the military forces, whereas all the records I think indicated that they certainly had. They have asked for that scrip for the purpose of definitely settling their due, their right. However, that is a matter that does not come up under this legislation. This legislation is going to do a measure of justice at least to some of the most deserving citizens of Canada, and I personally am very grateful to the minister that he has brought it in during this session, and that we shall now be rendering at least a measure of justice to these very deserving veterans.

The other subject perhaps is one which the minister will bear in his memory and give some further consideration, and perhaps when this section of the grievance, if I might

[Mr. Evans.]

so term it, has been removed, it will allow a purer and a whiter light to play upon their other modest demand, and I hope that at a future day it will result in the same measure of justice being done.

Mr. KNOX: I wish to add my word of congratulation to the minister for at last having brought this legislation before the House. A number of us have been pressing for something of this kind both in the last parliament and in the present one, and it is very, very satisfactory to us to find that this legislation is at last being put through.

As regards the issue of scrip to the mounted police, we are not pressing it at the present time, but I would like to say, as the last speaker did, that we hope the minister will keep that in mind, because I would like to point this out: There are very many mounted policemen who are eligible for scrip to whom the pension will not apply, for the reason that a man has to be in the force for some twenty years before he is eligible for pension, and many of these men have been in a much shorter term than that. Many of them are not getting a pension, and yet they were discriminated against as regards the issue of scrip. I merely state that in passing. I rose to congratulate the minister for bringing down this measure.

Mr. SPEAKMAN: I would like to ask a question for information, and I need not say that in common with the other members of the House who have spoken, particularly those who have been on the prairies a good many years and have come in touch with this fine body of men, that I am glad to see this legislation brought in. I notice that the resolution provides for pensions to "officers, their widows, and constables." That means, I presume, that the widows of officers are pensionable, but not the widows of constables. Is that the interpretation?

Mr. LAPOINTE: Yes, that is the old law.

Mr. SPEAKMAN: So I understood. I just rose to inquire whether the wording expressed the exact intent of the act, or whether it was misleading.

Resolution reported, read the second time and concurred in. Mr. Lapointe thereupon moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 115 to amend the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.