

counties. As the matter now stands there are some six or seven junior Judges in counties where the population is under 70,000. If the hon. gentleman in his Bill will drop the junior County Court Judges as the offices fall in, and not make appointments hereafter, he will save about \$15,000. That sum distributed among the present thirty-five or forty Judges would give them a salary of nearly \$3,000 each, which, in my judgment, would be a fair one. It appeared to me always unreasonable that the Minister of Justice should expect to get men qualified for the position of a Judge in a large county, where there is much litigation and no little of it complicated—to get them from the first or second ranks of the profession, at \$2,000 a year for the first three years, and \$2,400 subsequently. I trust the hon. gentleman will revise the whole scheme of paying the County Court Judges, and not put them on probation or make them do penance for three years. If fit at all, a Judge is entitled to \$2,400 or \$3,000, or whatever the amount may be at the outset. Another point I wish to draw the attention of the Minister of Justice to is this—and it is only repeating the statement the First Minister himself made to the House eight or ten years ago when this subject was under consideration—that is, that the junior Judges should be placed on a better footing; that there should be no distinction in point of salary between junior and senior. Both have precisely the same functions, the same responsibilities, the same work; and, therefore, I cannot understand the reason why the salary of the junior should be less than that of the senior. Besides, I have been always of the opinion, and think the hon. the First Minister was of the same opinion, that there should be a sliding scale in the salaries of those Judges. There is no reason why the Judge of the County Court in Peel, for instance, with a population of some 16,000, should get precisely the same salary as the Judge in Perth who has to administer justice to a population of 54,000; nor why the Judge at Halton, with a population of under 20,000 should receive precisely the same amount as the Judge in Wentworth, who deals out justice to a population of over 66,000. In my judgment a sliding scale should be adopted to meet these inequalities. But, in any event, I have been always of opinion, which I believe the Government held last year when the resolutions I submitted were tabled by the late Minister of Justice, that the salary of the County Court Judges, taking them all round, is not sufficient, and that the Prime Minister should not expect to get leading men in the first or second ranks of the profession to accept a position at a salary of only \$2,000 a year for the first three years.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I have no objection to the motion. I was unfortunately out of the House when the hon. gentleman commenced his remarks, of which I only heard the conclusion. I do not think it would answer any good purpose to discuss now the question of the salaries of the County Court Judges, as there is a prospect of the measure on this subject before the other House passing and coming here, when we shall have an opportunity of discussing it fully. No doubt both sides will approach the subject with a desire to meet the interests of the public in the efficient administration of justice in the Province of Ontario.

Motion agreed to.

#### RETIREMENT OF LIEUT.-COL. FLETCHER.

Mr. HOUDE, in moving for copies of all correspondence with the Department of Militia and Defence in relation to the retirement of Lieut.-Col. John Fletcher, late Assistant Adjutant-General of Military District No. 5, and to the bonus granted to him on his retirement, said: In making this motion I wish to call the attention of the Government to what seems to me both an anomaly and an injustice. You are aware, Mr. Speaker, that there has been in existence for many years a system of pensions for

Mr. CAMERON (Huron).

superannuated employes of the Civil Service. I cannot say that I am a great admirer of that system, but I am not going to discuss it at the present moment. What I wish to point out is the fact that those public servants who have the strongest claim on the gratitude of the country are precisely those who receive no pension when old age or ill-health compel them to withdraw from the service—I am alluding to salaried commanding officers in our active militia. Those men have greater responsibilities than most civil servants. They expose their lives for the country and yet they receive less pay than ordinary civil servants, and have no compensation at all. Take, for instance, the case of Col. Fletcher. He has been in the service of the country, as a faithful and competent officer, for over thirty years. He has exposed his life twice in meeting foreign invasions of our territory, and on two other occasions in upholding law and order in the presence of domestic riots. He has also done much for the organization of the militia in his Province, being all the time poorly remunerated, while civil servants, having far less responsible duties, were receiving fat salaries. Now, having left the service in his old age, he is offered a small bonus which, at best, cannot secure him a yearly revenue of more than \$200 for the support of himself and family. I cannot call that an equitable treatment of public servants according to their respective merits. It is to be remarked that Deputy Adjutants-General and Brigade Majors, though receiving the meagre salaries of second and third class civil servants, have to obey orders which take them from one place to another, and sometimes from one Province to another, to the great inconvenience of their families and to the great detriment of their private interests. I know that the present Government is acting under a law that has long been on our Statute books; but I think it is time to change it, and I think it is desirable that the Government, either this Session or early at another Session, should introduce a system of more equitable remuneration to those who serve the country in a military capacity, and give them salaries more in accordance with the importance of the duties with which they are entrusted, and more in harmony with the scale of salaries paid to other public servants. As long as civil servants receive pensions, I see no reason why retired Deputy Adjutants-General and Brigade Majors should not, *a fortiori*, enjoy the same privilege. Such a policy, I have no doubt, would be approved by this Parliament and the people generally, for it would be only too logical and just; at least, that is my humble opinion.

Mr. CARON. I shall have very much pleasure in bringing down all the papers and all the correspondence which my hon. friend has asked for in his motion. I must say that I believe that no class of public servants are more deserving of pensions or of retiring allowances than those who act upon the military force of Canada. I believe that men like Col. Fletcher, who have given their time and energies for a number of years, to the service of their country in that branch, should be treated on a footing of equality with others who serve their country in the civil branch. I think it is but just that militia officers, when forced to retire from infirmity or old age, should receive a retiring pension. However, in the present case when the papers are brought down, my hon. friend will see that Col. Fletcher has been treated as well under the law as it now stands, as the most favored who receive retiring allowances from the Government. It was previous to the time that I became head of the Department of Militia and Defence that Lieut.-Col. Fletcher was retired. He received on his retirement two years' salary amounting to \$3,400. That allowance, which was accorded to very few, was granted in consideration of the long services which he had rendered, and the manner in which he had always behaved in the different positions that he occupied in the Department of Militia and Defence.