

the necessity for government pensions to the headquarters staff and the permanent corps of militia. It is now eight years since I first brought this matter before the House, and on several occasions since I have again introduced it to the attention of hon. members, but I am sorry to say that the subject has hitherto received but scanty consideration by either the government or the House. Now, however, there seems to be a very different feeling towards our Canadian militia, and I think this a favourable opportunity to again agitate this question.

Not only do we see a different feeling here but also in Great Britain, where the volunteers and militia are looked upon to-day very differently from days gone by. We have seen in the last eighteen months the colonies of Canada and Australia and the other dependencies of Great Britain coming to the assistance of the mother country in her South African trouble. We have seen thousands of our most stalwart young men flying to the standard and volunteering to serve their Queen in the militia. I believe some 40,000 men volunteered to go to South Africa from this country, but, of course, only a very small proportion were taken. I feel confident, therefore, that to-day this matter will receive more consideration than it did in the past, and I have no doubt the government are prepared to view it in a far more favourable spirit than in years gone by. As we know, the highest commands in regiments that we sent to South Africa were given to the officers from the permanent corps, which, to my mind, was the correct thing to do. Officers and men from the permanent corps went out to South Africa to uphold the honour of Canada, and right well did they do it. The names of Col. Otter, Buchan, Drury, Lessard and Pelletier and many others are household words not only in Canada but over the British Empire to-day. These were good men and true and deserving of all the credit given them and of the best treatment at the hands of the government. There is also another body of men which we must not forget, and that is the officers composing the headquarters staff in Ottawa. We all know that no army can be sent into the field unless thoroughly organized. It is no use sending battalions, however, well officered and however well trained unless the headquarters

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staff have seen that the transport and commissariat and everything connected with the troops are in good running order before the troops start out. I am glad to say that when our troops were sent to South Africa the headquarters staff, considering the little practice they had had and the little time at their disposal, did very well indeed. The headquarters staff one might describe as the boiler for the engine of war. The engine cannot run unless the boiler is in good trim, and no army can be sent out properly equipped and organized unless the headquarters staff is proficient. In speaking thus of the permanent corps, I have no desire to belittle the officers and men of the active militia, who were largely in the majority and did equally well. We all know that many men in the active militia left their business and professions, gave up all, to go and serve their Queen in South Africa, some even giving up their commissions and taking places in the ranks. We have in this House an hon. gentleman who sits on my right, the hon. member for North Victoria (Mr. Hughes), who went out and did his duty manfully and well. We have also men on both sides of the House, whose sons have upheld the honour of Canada, as we expected them to do, and therefore I do not wish, in speaking only of the permanent corps, to be considered as in any way belittling the services rendered by the active militia. But as it is concerning the permanent corps that my remarks to-day are particularly addressed, I have of course to confine my argument to their case.

In as few words as possible, I wish to explain what the permanent corps is. The permanent corps of Canada was started in 1871, when two companies of regulars were appointed as a nucleus for the forming of a school of instruction for the active militia. They now are composed of a thousand men of different branches of the service, infantry, artillery and cavalry. And their particular duty is to form schools and to train instructors, to instruct the ordinary city and country corps of the active militia. Now, the reason I am asking that this pension should be brought in is, that these officers and men are, to all intents and purposes, regulars, just as much as the regulars of Great Britain or France or Germany, and they get less pay than do the