

twenty years any more than a period of ten years. Suppose one of these men in the suppression of an insurrection loses an arm or a leg and cannot thereafter perform his duty as an officer; then if he has served only five years or ten years or fifteen years he gets no pension at all. The committee is handicapped by having no precise statement as to what this is going to cost the country under the present conditions. Unless it would impose a very excessive burden on the country I would be inclined to go the length of saying that any man who is constrained to leave the service by reason of injuries received in the discharge of his duties ought to have a pension—subject, it may be, to the payment of five per cent of his average pay for the remainder of the time which is necessary to make up the twenty years. Some scheme of that kind would be fair. I regret that my right hon. friend has not seen fit to have some actuarial calculation made as to what that would cost. I hesitate to move an amendment in that direction in the absence of precise information as to what it would cost the country. Had I that information I might move to amend the Bill. Perhaps the right hon. gentleman would give us more time for consideration.

The PRIME MINISTER. There is no objection to allow that section to stand.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). I think the right hon. gentleman recognizes with me that there is ground for consideration.

The PRIME MINISTER. I see the point.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). The right hon. gentleman says that if you fix any period whatever, you will have a man coming within a few months of it, and that a difficulty would arise in that case. I would be inclined to take the bull by the horns, and to say, that if a man is injured in the discharge of his duties he would be entitled to a pension; the government deducting from his pension 5 per cent for each year until the period of twenty years is made up. I would be inclined to do that, assuming that it would not impose too serious a burden on the country, and as to that I am not in a position to judge at present.

The MINISTER OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE. When the Militia Pension Bill was introduced last year, a very careful statement was made by the Finance Department which went to show that taking our previous provision, which was that an officer retiring should receive one-tenth of his pay as a gratuity for every year he had served; taking that as a basis, and 5 per cent for twenty years, it was calculated that there would be no charge really on the country, in other words that the Militia Pension Bill was costing the country no more than the previous system of gratuity.

If there has been no system of gratuity in the mounted police, it is clear from the statement which I refer to, that the expense of this Bill to the country would be equal to one-tenth of the pay of each officer for each year he has served—

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). I cannot quite follow what the minister has said.

The MINISTER OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE. I said that prior to the passing of the Militia Pension Act of last session, a provision was made for the retirement of officers, which was as follows: One-tenth of the officer's pay at the time of his retirement for every year that he has served, is to be allowed; that is to say, if an officer receiving \$1,000 a year has served twenty years, he would get \$2,000 on retirement. On the basis of twenty years at 5 per cent contribution per year, under the Bill we passed last year, it would not cost the country anything. If there is no 10 per cent provision in the North-west Mounted Police Act, and I think there is not, then the cost to the country will be exactly that 10 per cent of a man's pay for every year he has served.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). How much did this gratuity amount to annually in the militia?

The MINISTER OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE. I forget at this moment, but I should think that since this government has been in power it has amounted to something like \$5,000.

Mr. OLIVER. It does not seem to be a question of what the cost is. It is a question of what is fair and right. If I read the section correctly, it seems to me that it misses the important purpose of a pension. Under the provisions of the Bill we give a pension to an officer who has served his full term in the force for the reason that he has become incapacitated for further service in the force or for earning his living outside the force. The man who is incapacitated by reason of bodily injury received in the discharge of his duty, at whatever period of his term of service, is in exactly the same position as the man who has served twenty-five or thirty years; and I humbly submit that it is not only for his advantage, but in the interest of the country, that he should be dealt with in the same way. If a case arises in which an officer is compelled to risk life and limb, it is only fair that having risked his life and limb in the service of the country, he should not be at a financial loss. The country should stand the financial loss so far as that can be done. I would suggest that this is the purpose of a pension, and, with all due deference, that purpose is not met by this section.

Section allowed to stand.