

to a home and his case was diagnosed as spinal arthritis, and no permanent cure could be effected. The result was pitiful, his pension was cut off altogether, and the explanation given by the board was that they did not recognize spinal arthritis as a pensionable disability. He had exhausted all his money and was left to starve in a strange country, where he was saved by his wife's efforts to earn money. She keeps a little chicken ranch, and he drags himself around on his hands and knees to feed the chickens. He often falls into convulsive fits. Do you mean to tell me that that is the intention of the people of this country? This man finally got to Mayo brothers, and his case was diagnosed as sciatica which never could be cured. The same diagnosis had been made in many other cases, but there was no difference, the reply was that if it was sciatica it was not caused by war service. Gentlemen, you know the life of the signaller, but he was told by the Pensions Board that he would have to produce evidence that his disability was due to war service. This man I refer to had his pitiful pension first cut off because arthritis, which was the diagnosis of Mayo brothers and other doctors, was not pensionable. That is all I have to say about that. There is a case in point. I know there is not a living man in this country who would say that that man received fair treatment.

I wish to make some comments on this Bill No. 19. This Bill No. 19, as I interpret it, does not deprive a man of any pensionable rights. If a man has a right to a pension he has a right to it just the same as he had to his pay in the war. It is a right. Bill No. 19, in my opinion, is a bit of social legislation; it must not be confused with pensions. It should not be administered by the Pensions Board. We must recognize, gentlemen, that there are many men who can never be provided for by any pension act. I, for one and as a citizen of this country, speaking for the great mass of returned soldiers, say that I am not agreeable to having any legislation enacted which makes every man a potential pensioner. That is not right, and the returned men do not ask for it. But, as I understand it, it is proposed that when a man is unemployable and if he has served, this bit, call it kindness if you will, shall be given to him. If I thought for one minute that this bill was to take the place of any pensionable rights a man may have I would denounce it in the strongest terms, but I do not believe that that is the intention. It is proposed by some that this Act should be administered by the Pensions Board. I do not agree with that. It is a different kind of legislation. The Pensions Board deals with contractual legislation; this is social legislation. I am afraid that if it got into the hands of the Pensions Board many a man who would be entitled to a pension would be put off with this. We must guard against that. I think the age should be sixty instead of sixty-five.

Subsection 2 of section 9 of the bill reads:

Payment of allowance shall cease on death, but the committee may, in its discretion, pay to the widow, and widow or minor children of the deceased, or as it may direct, a gratuity of two months' allowances to enable them to make provision for their future care.

It says, "as it may direct". I think that should be struck out. It ought to be made compulsory, and I do not think that two months is anything like enough, because some of us are getting old, we have been through the fires. Some bear very honourable scars, and probably their period of usefulness is not very long, but that is not the case with our children. Take the case of the man who dies and is under the unemployable allowance. He is a widower, and has some children. He is given eighty dollars, or he may get it; it ought to be made compulsory. That is not enough to pay funeral expenses. It ought to be a year at least.