

suggestion which has been made by the hon. member for West Toronto. Here is a man who has been for one or two years in the service, and he has contributed very little to the fund; but, he has the misfortune to be disabled. Then, the hon. member for West Toronto says, he ought to have a pension. I am not prepared to say that he should not have, and I think the country ought to be rich enough to provide for him. I am sorry to say I have a case for my consideration of a constable who lost his right arm in the discharge of his duty, and a very good man he was. He was disabled, and all we can give is a very small pension of a little more than \$100 a year under the provisions of the Act we have. I would like very much if the law permitted me to give him a larger pension, but I am afraid the only way to deal with the case is to come to parliament and ask for an appropriation.

Mr. OSLER. I am not referring so much to an officer who has served one or two years, because his case is a hard one, and I agree that it should be dealt with separately, but I am referring to an officer who has almost or nearly served his full time, when he has been disabled, and when perhaps one or two years of further service would have entitled him to the full pension. Would it not be possible to provide under such circumstances that he might continue to pay his percentage to the pension fund so that he would be entitled to his pension?

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). If the right hon. gentleman (Rt. Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier) will look at the preceding clause he will see that his answer to the hon. member for Toronto (Mr. Osler) is not an adequate one at all. The previous clause provides that in case an officer becomes entitled to a pension by reason of having been employed in the Civil Service for a certain period, or by reason of having been a non-commissioned officer or constable, from his pension shall be deducted 5 per cent for the necessary number of years. What is the objection to making exactly the same provisions with regard to this? Suppose an officer is injured in the discharge of his duties, after having served fifteen years, he would be entitled to no pension under the Act as it stands. Why not say, that such a man shall be entitled to a pension but that for the first five years you will make a deduction from his pension, equivalent to the amount he would have paid had he served for the balance of the twenty years? It seems to me that it is not only perfectly feasible but perfectly fair.

The PRIME MINISTER. The point is not new to me, for I have discussed it with the officers of the department. The difficulty is to draw the line. My hon. friend speaks of a period of fifteen years, but if the man has served for ten years or twelve

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years he ought to be entitled to a pension on the same reasoning. In the previous Superannuation Act there was a provision under which an officer became entitled to a pension after twenty-five years. That was reduced to twenty years, and now my hon. friend (Mr. Borden, Halifax) suggests it should be fifteen years. The difficulty is to draw the line. I feel great sympathy with the idea presented by my hon. friend (Mr. Borden, Halifax) and I wish it could be worked out in some way. We have fixed the limit at twenty years and there would be great difficulty in departing from it.

The MINISTER OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE. In reference to what the leader of the opposition has said, I may say that when we introduced the Militia Pension Bill last year, of which this Bill is a copy, we carefully considered the matter and I felt as he does that twenty years seemed to be a long term. However, we decided that twenty years was a safe period to fix, and that in any case short of that, it should be a subject of special consideration in parliament. The clause under discussion is framed in the interest of the officer, by which if he desires it he may leave the service and get back the money which he has paid in. I may say to my hon. friend from Toronto (Mr. Clarke) that it does not follow that an officer who is seriously wounded shall for that reason leave the service, because it is quite possible that he may continue to serve out his whole twenty years and get his pension.

Mr. CLARKE. The clause has reference to an officer who is constrained to leave because of bodily injury.

The MINISTER OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE. It does not say he must leave. If the government wishes him to leave in the interest of the service, then a special arrangement could be made. This clause is in the interest of the officer to enable him if he so chooses, to take the initiative and get his money back.

Mr. CLARKE. If that is the intention the clause should be made clearer.

The MINISTER OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE. Perhaps so.

Mr. CLARKE. What is the practice in the Imperial service? If an officer has been incapacitated after two or three years service does he get a pension?

The MINISTER OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE. I think the practice is that in such cases a special pension is arranged. However, the Imperial Pension Act differs materially from this.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). I do not exactly see why you should select a period of