

service they rendered in the pioneer days. To be perfectly frank I believe, on looking into the matter, the contention is very sound. The number is limited and is becoming fewer more quickly than in any other class.

Mr. LAPOINTE: The old members to whom my hon. friend refers were looked after in 1925 or 1924. All the rates of pension granted to those old men who had served in the force and who had retired at a time when the pension was very low, were readjusted and those men were granted pensions based on the rate of pay prevailing in 1919. I think parliament was satisfied at the time and I never before had a bill go through the house with such commendation as I received on that occasion. I have under my hand a list of those old pensioners with the rate of pension they were receiving prior to the legislation of 1924 and the rate of pension they have been receiving since. As a matter of fact the present rate of pension is two and in certain cases three times as much as they were formerly receiving. For instance, one man who had a pension of \$328.50 has since the legislation of 1924 been receiving, \$766.50 and the others are in the same proportion. This bill deals with a special class.

In 1919, under a statute which was passed that year, the governor general in council was authorized on account of the high cost of living due to the circumstances prevailing at that time to grant a bonus, in addition to the salary, to the men of the mounted police. That bonus granted in 1919 was renewed every year until 1924. In that year, a new rate of pay was adopted which incorporated with the salary the bonus, which had been paid as an act of favour since 1919, and the new rate of pension since 1924 has been based, of course, on this new rate of pay which included the bonus. The men who had been receiving that bonus since 1919 and who retired between 1919 and 1924 were not granted a pension based on the bonus as well as the salary, and this amendment is for the purpose of counting for pension purposes the bonus which they received during those years as part of their salary. I think that is only fair.

Mr. BENNETT: Oh yes.

Mr. LAPOINTE: But to go back and increase again the rate of pension of the older members of the force who really have been receiving a substantial increase since 1924 does not seem justified because they never received that bonus.

Mr. BENNETT: The only point was that this gentleman seemed to think that a limited number of them have not received the treat-

ment which they had expected, but I am frank in saying to the minister that the correspondence which he and I had in connection with the matter related to the measure which is now before the house. That is according to my memory; I have not my file here; I wrote the minister from Calgary. This amendment is merely to convert the bonus into salary for pension purposes.

Mr. LAPOINTE: Exactly.

Mr. BENNETT: And that is all. The limited number that I thought were affected were dealt with to some extent by the legislation of 1924.

Mr. LAPOINTE: Yes.

Mr. COOTE: May I ask whether there are any pensions payable to widows of members of the force other than officers?

Mr. LAPOINTE: No.

Mr. COOTE: Then before the bill passes I want again to bring to the attention of the minister the case of the widows of some of the privates in the mounted police force. I know this matter was taken up with the minister, by the mounted police and others last year. May I draw to his attention again one case which will, I think, bring out very clearly the point which I have in mind, and that is the unfairness of the present pension provisions so far as the widows of privates are concerned. The widows of officers are pensioned but the widows of the non-commissioned officers and constables are not pensioned, and I fail to understand why the minister when he was bringing in this bill to amend the act did not make some provision for the widows of the non-commissioned officers and men. There are not many of them, and it would not cost the country a great deal to take care of them.

Here is the case of Mrs. Shaver. She is the widow of a Sergeant Shaver who died from pneumonia contracted through exposure on duty some years ago. The sergeant had thirty-three years service in the Northwest Mounted Police and was entitled to pension long before he died. I quote:

Mrs. Shaver is very run down and has to go into a hospital as soon as there is a vacant bed. She has allowed herself to get run down by not taking regular meals, trying to save her money, as she has been out of work for the past four months. I was wondering if the R.N.W.M.P. Veterans were doing anything for widows of ex-members of the force. I feel that Mrs. Shaver is a very deserving case. I know you know her case as well as I do, and I am sure she will appreciate anything you can do for her towards getting her a pension. I do not know yet which hospital she will be going to.