

my mind, and when any person says that I am a partisan of the soldiers and an advocate of their requests to Parliament, I gladly plead guilty to the charge. I think it is very unfortunate that we have to deal with this matter in this hurried way. I admit the necessity at the moment, but I must again call attention to the misfortune of so important a matter being brought up in this way so that we have to decide without even an opportunity of ascertaining whether or not any statement made in this House is true as a matter of fact.

The honourable gentleman who spoke just now referred to the present practice of pensioning every soldier who served in France to the full extent of his disability, whether or not the disability had existed previous to enlistment. I took the liberty, by his permission, of interrupting him to say that I had personal knowledge that such is not the case. Now it becomes a matter of difference between the honourable gentleman and myself.

Hon. Mr. CALDER: On the evidence before us.

Hon. Mr. TAYLOR: He feels sure that it is the case; I feel equally sure on the evidence before me that it is not the case; and at this stage we are unable to decide, but must form a conclusion on a statement which may or may not be correct.

I referred the other day to the evidence which I had in my possession—at the moment it is in the possession of a member of the other House, who had it for use before the Committee there—in what is known in the departmental records as the "Stevenson case." Stevenson was serving in France; he was blown up, and dug out of a shell hole. When he was dug out his arm was twisted, and he has never yet straightened it. He applied for a pension, and the Pension Board refused on the ground that his disability existed prior to enlistment. It is true that he had injured the arm when he was a child, but he had been found fit to be a soldier, and had taken a prominent part in the athletics of his regiment. He appealed to the Appeal Board, which disagreed with the Pension Board, and came to the conclusion that his disability must have been aggravated in France, because he could not possibly have served for sixteen months as a soldier if he had the disability all the time. So they referred him back to the Pension Board. The Pension Board, without any examination to find out what the extent of his disability was—presumably they had had no examination before, because they had come to the conclusion that he was not entitled to

any pension for the disability as it existed before this time—upon being told by the Appeal Board that he was entitled to a pension made a purely arbitrary assessment. I say that on the strength of a letter from a member of the Board to the Minister in charge of the Department, which letter forms part of the file that I handed my colleague in the other House. They made a purely arbitrary assessment. Without any examination of the unfortunate man they found that he was 25 per cent disabled, but that only 5 per cent of that disability was due to active service, and they pensioned him off at \$3.75 a month. That man will read in the records that the Senate has made a decision on a matter—not of such great importance as some others to which I will refer—on the statement of an honourable gentleman here that no such case could arise. I say it is unfortunate that we cannot put these statements to the test and find out wherein we have gone astray. I presume the honourable gentleman is just as honest in his statement as I think I am in mine.

Hon. Mr. CALDER: If the honourable gentleman will allow me. It is not my statement; I am speaking only on behalf of the Committee; and the point that I wish to make is that the evidence before us indicated exactly what I have said, and that we have had nothing to the contrary. I am very sorry that my honourable friend did not bring this point up at the two sittings of the Committee which he attended. I repeat that I am not saying this on my own behalf.

Hon. Mr. BELAND: That is the existing law.

Hon. Mr. CALDER: That is the existing law. I repeat that all the evidence that came before us in all our discussions is contrary to the statement made by my honourable friend. We may not have had all the evidence; but I do not want the honourable gentleman to understand that I am making that statement on my own behalf, because I am not.

Hon. Mr. TAYLOR: I was appointed a member of the Committee yesterday, and attended all sessions since, and no evidence on this subject was offered to the Committee yesterday or to-day. If it had been, I would have challenged it, and would have gone to the Commons and got the evidence that is in the possession of my colleague there. So you can see how unfortunate it is that we are not in a position to put matters like this to the test. However, as I see it, there is no matter of really serious moment to the ex-