

APPENDIX No. 2

By Mr. Ross:

Q. Here is the case of a woman with a 50-acre farm, her boy goes to the front and says to her: "Hire somebody to work that farm," and because she has that farm she does not get a separation allowance, and if the boy is killed she does not get a pension?—A. She might get a pension provided she does not make more money out of the farm than the boy sent her; if she is making more money off the farm than the boy sent her she would not get a pension. Supposing the boy who had worked the farm sends home \$20, assigned pay to pay the hired man who takes his place, who has to get board of course as well, and that man works the farm as the boy did before he went, that mother is provided for. I suppose we would give a pension in a case where the profit which the mother got was not the same as she got before the son went away, and it was not sufficient to support her. We have had lots of cases where two sons were working a farm and where one went away leaving his brother to work it. If the one that stays at home works the farm and makes it produce very nearly as much as before the brother went away, and especially if he produces enough to support himself and his mother, then the mother is not entitled to a pension on account of her son being called overseas because the son that is called out is not her main support.

Witness retired.

Mr. N. F. R. KNIGHT:—Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, I appear before the committee, representing the soldiers' viewpoint altogether. We look upon pensions in the strict sense of compensation. It is true there is a great deal of talk going on today in Canada to the effect that the soldier can never be compensated for what he has done; we take that for granted. A great many men who have come back know what it is: the man who has been overseas never knows what it is to have confidence in his own ability to attempt things as he did before he went. I know that it is, when you know from day to day that you never will be well again no matter how hard you may try to get well. Now, there is no such thing as compensation, yet there is in all the provinces a compensation law under which a man who receives injury in the service of the State is compensated for that injury. Under those laws the basic principle has been established that all those who do incur injury in the public service to the State would in some way or other be compensated by the State. If that be the case, that has not been done. I have come into touch with several hundred cases, and had complaints and claims every day in my office from returned soldiers, I know something about them, but I am not going to give them, because, speaking generally, I am pretty well satisfied with the attention the departments have given us in our work, and I want to say that we have been most cordially treated. But there are things that are wrong, many things that are wrong. One of them is that when a man enlists he has to undergo examination; he has to pass a medical examination before attestation. Then when he is in camp he has periodical medical examinations; as soon as he goes overseas he has other examinations, and in all those examinations not one atom of disease was detected in the man's constitution, yet when that man incurs injury a medical board will say that he is not entitled to a pension because he was diseased before he enlisted. You have been talking this morning about venereal diseases; well, if you know what it is to have to sleep in dirty villages at the front where the people are not cleanly in their habits, some of them even do not get up at night in case of necessity, you can easily understand that men who find themselves in those surroundings can easily catch any disease in those dirty billets without any improper conduct on their part, and men have caught disease in that way. If the consideration which he should have is to be given to the soldier, some of those men who now have to deal with the matter, will have to come down a little from their high perches, before they sit down in judgment on the question of the soldier's disability. The first thing that a soldier after he has been months and months in the hospital, has to do is to go before a medical board.

[Mr. Norman Knight.]