

shops were shut, the market almost deserted, and many of the merchants quitted the town; but the duties of the military officers, including my own, were never relaxed, except as the sickness of the departments diminished our assistance. Under these circumstances I advanced the Widow Fairclough 20 dollars, and on the 5th of July a further advance of 15*l.* sterling, to enable her to proceed to Upper Canada, where the order for payment would have followed her, but after reaching Montreal the cholera obliged her to return to Quebec.

On the 23d July I received the 12th list, in which her husband's name was included, but not agreeing precisely with her statement, for it proved he had received 50*l.* and not 40*l.* as his outfit.

This woman is now resident in Quebec with part of her family, the remainder having proceeded to Upper Canada. She informs me that she never experienced any distress, though, naturally, much anxiety to establish her family. She is a respectable woman, and is earning a decent livelihood.

With regard to the other case, in which Mr. Gough omits to name the individual, I do recollect the case of a man whose wife was confined whilst he was detained for some irregularity in his claim, of which no advice had been received, but an advance of money was made to him, as was uniformly the case under such circumstances.

Mr. Gough states, that both these individuals had the necessary papers; but he is in error, for in no instance, with or without advice, was any man or woman refused a settlement whose papers were in order. The difficulties occurred when their documents were insufficient; some of the men had lost all their papers, and to these a set of queries were put (of which I annex a form), so as to lead circuitously to their identity. A sum of money was lodged as an imprest with an officer of the department, to advance to them small sums from time to time; and if any really suffered distress, it was the result of their own improvident or intemperate habits, against which I could take no precaution.

It was quite impracticable for me to order a settlement to be made until I had some intimation of the sum which had been advanced in England; and even then, when this was noted on their instruction papers, I was not always secure; for, on such proof, when I consented to pay the balance to 12 or 15 pensioners who had arrived and were anxious to proceed, a subsequent letter from the Chelsea Board advised a further advance to have been made to them which had not been noted on their papers, and to which none confessed, though they were all examined and questioned on the fact.

I can readily conceive that Mr. Gough, in listening only to the distresses of these individuals as related by themselves, may have been led into error, but I regret that he did not see me, nor inform himself at my office, where his representation would have met with every attention, and I think in the character he assumes of interposing on the behalf of justice, he ought not to have failed in this particular. It was seeking that justice at a distance which would have been rendered to him on the spot.

But I do not mean to attribute blame to Mr. Gough, or to his zeal for the protection of these people; as it affords to me an opportunity of proving the labour and anxiety manifested by this department to give facility to a service, the nature of which, from the character and habits of the claimants, is full of such difficulties, which were aggravated by the excitement and mortality caused by the cholera. I have, indeed, rather overstepped the limits of my responsibility in looking to the exigency of the case more than to the proofs before me for my authority to act.

Thus, sir, I lay before you, for the information of the Commander of the Forces, a detail of the facts connected with the representation of Mr. Gough. I abstain from all remark on the system of the commutation itself, though many of these difficulties are inseparable from it, as belonging more immediately to the consideration of his Lordship; but I venture to recapitulate some of the principal inconveniences.

The orders from home for these payments arrive through the post-office, *via* Halifax, about a month to six or eight weeks after the arrival of the pensioners.

Many pensioners arrive, particularly from Ireland, whose instruction papers have been withdrawn from them, on payment of the first advance.

Some are provided with letters from the War-office, stating the amount advanced from home; but, in some instances, these letters have been taken from them. In many instances they have lost all their papers of every description.

Frequently it occurs that the rate of pension has been altered from a higher to a lower rate, and not corrected in the instruction paper.

I have, therefore, recommended to my Lords of the Treasury that these instruction papers should be taken from the pensioner at home, and a certificate in lieu, of a given form, addressed to the commissariat officer at the station to which they are proceeding; and that none should be allowed to commute after the sailing of the spring fleet, so that they might not arrive in this country when the winter has commenced.

Still, under any circumstances, there must be more delay in these settlements here than at home. There, these men are known; here, their identity must be proved by examination. There, they are paid in sovereigns; here, in small coins; and in each case there is an outstanding account with the masters of the ships in which they have arrived for provisions and other necessaries during their voyage.

Lieut.-col. Glegg,  
Military Secretary, &c. &c. &c.

(signed) R. J. Routh, c. c.