

have been awarded a smaller pension than they would have been entitled to under this proposed Act in respect of his death, such widow and such children if they were domiciled and resident in Canada at the beginning of the war, shall be entitled during the continuance of their residence in Canada to such additional pension as will make the total of the two pensions received by them equal to the pension that would have been awarded if the person aforesaid had died in the military service of Canada.

Mr. ROWELL: The resolution now before the committee is to give effect to the report of the Committee on Pensions which has been considering this matter ever since the House opened, and upon this report the Government will introduce the Bill which that committee has already prepared and reported to the House.

Mr. LEMIEUX: Have you not already a Pensions Board?

Mr. ROWELL: This is to give it statutory authority.

Mr. McKENZIE: Has a report of that committee been submitted to the House?

Mr. ROWELL: Yes, it was submitted this morning. The Government now is submitting this resolution in the terms of the report of the committee, and proposes to introduce the identical Bill which the committee has already reported to the House. The members of this committee will be interested to know—and I mention it as indicating the consideration which the Pensions Committee has given to this matter—that twenty-nine meetings were held to consider the various aspects of this pension problem, and at least three sub-committees investigated particular phases of the question. The conclusions which are embodied in the report of the committee represent the mature judgment of its members. I cannot say that all the clauses of the Bill and all the conclusions in the report were agreed to by every member, but I can say that the majority of them were accepted unanimously, and where that was not the case the great majority of the committee were in favour of the conclusions reached. So that we have before us the considered conclusions of a very large and responsible committee of the House.

My hon. friend from Maisonneuve (Mr. Lemieux) has asked if we have not already a Board of Pensions Commissioners. Yes, we have. The House will no doubt be interested in a brief statement of the legislation relating to pensions for our overseas military forces. The first provision made for such pensions was by two Orders in Council of the 29th of April, 1915. These orders provided for the payment of \$264

[Mr. Rowell.]

per annum for total disability for the rank and file, and a similar amount for widows or dependent widowed mothers of those killed, and a scale of four degrees of disability. If hon. members are interested in the full report of the committee they will find it in yesterday's Votes and Proceedings at page 431 and subsequent pages. That was the situation when the House met in the early part of 1916. A committee was then appointed to take into consideration this whole matter of pensions to dependents and to disabled soldiers. That Committee, after very careful consideration, recommended a substantial increase, and the Government, by Order in Council, gave effect to the recommendation. That Order, passed on the 3rd of June, 1916, increased the total disability pensions for the rank and file from \$264 to \$480, and to \$382 for widows and dependent widowed mothers, and the scale of disability was extended from four to six degrees. The provision made by that Order in Council continued in force during 1916 and the greater part of 1917, but owing to the increasing cost of living, which became very manifest in 1917, and the representations

5 p.m. which were made to the Government that the existing scale was inadequate, the pensions were increased approximately 25 per cent by Order in Council of 22nd of October, 1917. The increases were from \$480 to \$600 per annum for total disability, and from \$382 to \$480 per annum for widows and dependent parents, and the scale of disability was extended from six to twenty degrees. This increased scale went into effect as from the 1st of April, 1917, and was in force when the House met last year.

The Committee of last year gave consideration not only to the amount that we should pay by way of pensions, but also to the pension legislation embodied in the existing Orders in Council, and its report to this House was accepted and subsequently given effect to by the Government by an Order in Council, passed in December, 1918. When the pension schedules were before the Committee last year they considered that the existing scale was as large as they were justified in recommending to the House. It appeared from the evidence given before the Committee last year that our then scale of pensions was higher than that in any of the other countries at war—that Canada was at the top of the list in providing pensions for dependents of those who had fallen in battle and for those who had been disabled in the service of their