

APPENDIX No. 4

By Mr. Scott:

Q. You have a great deal of discretion under the operation of the present Act?—
A. Yes; that is the law.

Q. You could take into consideration any special circumstances?—A. Yes.

Hon. Mr. OLIVER: Here is something I found in this book that seems to me to set the whole question of disability in a wrong light. On page 40, "Recommendations of the Pensions and Claims Board, C.E.F., as to pensions and other matters pertaining to the return of members of the Canadian Militia from active service to civil life," and this is the remark to which I wish to draw attention:—

"Men enlisting for Active Service in the Canadian Militia as privates bring to the service of their country a healthy body. The previous occupation of the recruit is not recognized as having any reference to the service which the soldier could give the State, unless it secures for him a higher rank than that of private, in which case the return made to him by the State in pay and pension is proportionately increased. The private soldier then is looked upon as offering merely a healthy mind and body to the public service. For practical purposes the market for healthy bodies is said to be the "general market for untrained labour." Upon leaving the Service any physical or mental disability which may have been suffered is estimated according to the extent by which it reduced the capacity of the individual concerned for earning a livelihood in the general market for untrained labour. It is to be noted that it is the impairment of capacity for earning, without reference to the former occupation or income, which is to be determined."

Now, my opinion is that this is radically and fundamentally wrong. That is applicable to a condition where the private soldiers are drawn almost entirely from the ranks of unskilled labour, but in the conditions which we have to deal with, the soldiers are not drawn either exclusively or even in the majority of cases, from the ranks of unskilled labour, and therefore we must, whilst we cannot consider each case separately we certainly must, in determining the average soldier's pay, put it higher than it would require to be if you only had to deal with men who in the majority of cases were men of unskilled labour.

By the Chairman:

Q. This recommendation comes from the Pensions Board, does it not?—A. I have no desire to impose upon the Committee my own opinion, I am simply explaining how we have been dealing with it.

Q. You are dealing with it on this principle, are you not?—A. On that principle. I may say that it is working out now, I think, pretty well.

Q. You think it is working out thoroughly satisfactorily now?—A. I do, with the exception of the different degrees of pension.

By Mr. Scott:

Q. The point up to the present appears to have been that no reduction of a pension that has been once established should be made, that is from the standpoint of the man. But if afterwards he has technical training and is able to increase his earnings, to reduce that man's pension on that account would be, do you not think, a mistake?—
A. Yes.

Q. That appeared to be the opinion up to the present time. Do I understand you to say that these cases should be reviewed from time to time and reduced if the occasion