

has spent about half the amount the department has allowed him, before he has got it. I believe there is no matter coming before the Department of Militia and Defence, in which there is as much negligence as there is in paying these claims.

Mr. HUGHES (Victoria). The matter has been up, and I am informed by the officers of the department, that in the great majority of such cases, under my predecessor, the claims have been settled before the troops left camp. Even where the injury is only apparent, the claim is settled in the most expeditious manner. Since I assumed office I have closed up several cases, and in every instance, the officers of the department were most anxious first to get at the facts and then to do ample justice to the man whose horse was concerned.

Mr. CARVELL. The fault is not in the district officers. It is quite true that when a horse is injured in camp there is always a board of inquiry, which makes a finding, but that finding is not carried out for months, or sometimes years. I do not want to name officials who have been derelict in their duty in this matter, but I can give the minister facts that are within my knowledge, of what has taken place within the last two years, and I can give him the names if necessary.

Mr. HUGHES (Victoria). A great many men in the volunteer force throughout the country think that they have no means of communicating with the department, or with their member of parliament. When the militia law was being passed, I took the ground that it should be made clear and distinct that every man who became a volunteer loses no right which he possesses as a citizen. While in camp or on duty he is subject to the King's Regulations and to the Army Act; but at other times he is as free as any other citizen. Therefore, there is nothing to prevent him communicating with a member of parliament or unofficially direct with myself, and if any communication of this kind is received by me, the district officer will be called on at once to make an explanation why the matter has not been attended to.

Mr. MACDONALD. Without going through the official channels?

Mr. HUGHES (Victoria). There is no need of that. This country would be worse than Russia if a volunteer could not communicate with his member of parliament or with the minister direct.

Mr. MACDONALD. What about discipline?

Mr. CARVELL.

Mr. HUGHES (Victoria). What right has an officer of a company to control the men of his company during the 350 days of the year that they are not under him in camp? That would be the worst sort of tyranny. A private can take any action against his officer, provided he is not on duty or in uniform, and the only recourse the officer would have against him would be in the civil courts of the country.

Mr. MACDONALD. That is a new theory.

Mr. HUGHES (Victoria). It is not a new theory. It is the militia law of England, which has been in force for many generations. The citizen loses no privilege by becoming a volunteer. While on duty, of course, he does, but during any other hour of the year he is a free man.

The army officers on the British militia list were not free, they were subject to the King's Regulations and the Army Act throughout the year, because the great majority of them had served in the regular army, and were receiving allowances on that account; but the men of the militia force in England were never subject to the King's Regulations, and the Army Act except when on duty.

Mr. ROBB. This afternoon the minister made the statement that from his experience only those who received a military training in their teens made good soldiers. Now, the minister himself is a gallant soldier, he has given evidence of that in Canada and in Great Britain, and he is a fair man, and I ask him if he thinks his statement of this afternoon is not a little unfair to the farmers who in 1866 and 1870, left their ploughs and went out to take up arms to defend their country? Was his statement not a little unfair also to the men who accompanied him to South Africa and won honour and glory for Canada on the veldt.

Mr. HUGHES (Victoria). I fail to see any unfairness. I want to tell my hon. friend a thing which perhaps he did not know, that the men who turned out in 1866 and 1870, could pick off black squirrels on the top of a maple tree with a rifle when they were ten years of age. That is in harmony with the very statement I was making. These young farmers like the young men from the west, are trained along those lines and I want to train all the boys of the country in the same way so that when they take a rifle in their hands they will be able to pick a squirrel off a tree or a wood-chuck off a stone pile.

Mr. MACDONALD. I want to know whether my hon. friend's doctrine in re-