

of \$54,700,000. The history of these funds is instructive, but I must not take the time for further comment on special cases.

20. Faulty construction of the framework of funds, inadequate contribution rates and abuses in administration, have done much injury to the cause of superannuation. Fortunately, these defects are in no wise inherent; on the contrary, they are all of them avoidable. No superannuation system which is framed to suit complex modern conditions can be financed on the basis of the ludicrous contribution rates which were fondly deemed adequate for schemes now moribund—schemes which provided, it may be, for far different allowances and benefits. Let the cost of the scheme be honestly and carefully ascertained, and let it be provided for in straightforward fashion, and it will prove manageable because it will be well worth while. As to improvements in administration, these will follow the general toning-up of public service conditions of which we are all aware to-day.

21. I began by saying that the retirement problem is in reality but one of a series of problems; and I end where I began. You cannot, by any device known to man, control this retirement problem unless you have first seen to it that only efficient persons are appointed, and unless after that you have made the environment and the other conditions of service such that a general efficiency will be maintained. That a proper retirement measure is a powerful aid in maintaining that general efficiency, no one will deny; but it is, after all, only one phase of a larger problem. But here I am intruding into a field in which Civil Service Commissions live, move and have their being: a field from which it becomes me to withdraw forthwith.

### MILITIA RECORDS OFFICE.

The casualty branch of the militia department for the past month has been receiving an average of 200 queries per day from relatives of the men reported wounded or missing at the front. A staff of a little over 600 is now employed in the branch looking after the records and keeping track of the individual members of Canada's army. Some complaint has been made by anxious relatives who have had to wait a week or ten days or perhaps more, before receiving replies to their queries for detailed information as to the character of the wounds received by those about whom inquiries are made, or whether any information has been received in cases where the men have been reported missing.

The officials in charge of the branch, which is under the capable supervision of Mr. Frank Beard and Miss Maloney, in every case answer all inquiries at the earliest possible moment. It is pointed out, however, that it takes at least seven days to

get replies from England to the cabled messages of inquiry which are going forward at all hours of the day and night. These inquiries have to be sifted out in London and re-directed to the hospitals or battalions where the individual cases in question are located. Everything possible is being done to expedite the giving of information to relatives, and it is found that there must be considerable unavoidable delay in many instances.

### WELL DONE!

*"I'll not dance with a young man here while my brother is in the trenches."*

With these words a popular young woman put on her hat and left a patriotic-social affair when it reached the dancing part of its program.

To the shower of congratulations and approving comments called forth by her action *The Civilian* begs to add its congratulation.

Would we had more such girls!