

AUDIT OFFICE, OTTAWA, May 12, 1897.

SIR,—The Bill now before Parliament for the abolition of the Superannuation Act provides that clerks on the permanent list of less than 10 years' service shall lose the advantages of the present Superannuation Act, and come under the provisions of the proposed Bill.

We, the undersigned clerks in your office, of less than 10 years' service, being affected by this Bill, beg leave to submit our views on the subject to you, and would ask your interest and such action as you deem proper to promote our interests.

We have no doubt the Government have no intention or desire to deprive us of any privileges which we enjoy under the present Act, as is evidenced by the consideration accorded clerks of more than 10 years' service.

We entered the service under the provisions of the present Act and claim that we are entitled under it to the same standing and consideration relatively accorded to the clerks of more than 10 years' service.

We would specially call your attention to section four of the present Act, where provision is made for the granting of a superannuation allowance under certain conditions to a civil servant whose period of service is under ten years, and to section ten of the same Act, where provision is made for the granting of a gratuity equal to one month's salary for each year of service to a civil servant who is constrained under certain conditions to quit the service, and if such a person is constrained through bodily injury received in the discharge of his duties, a gratuity equal to three months' pay for every two years' service, or a superannuation allowance not exceeding one-fifth of his average salary for the last three years, may be paid him, as well as to section eleven of the same Act, which quite clearly indicates that all to whom the present Act applies, those whose service is under ten years, as well as those whose service is over that period of time, are entitled under the Act to the same consideration, different though it may be in point of degree.

All these advantages will be lost to us should the Bill as it now stands become law.

And we would respectfully point out that the prospective benefits set forth in the clauses cited and which we now enjoy, have been a factor of great importance in connection with our provision for the future, inasmuch as the certainty apparently afforded by legislative enactment that in the event of misfortune a generous allowance would be granted by the Government, obviated the necessity for providing to the same extent as we might otherwise have done.

We would also observe that our position for making such additional provision—should our means enable us to do so—is now, owing to increased age, less favourable than at the time of our entrance into the service as a greater annual expenditure would be required to produce the same result.

It may be doubted, however, whether any such additional provision would be possible in the majority of cases. Indeed the reverse, it is to be feared, would be necessary. Most of those who would be affected by the proposed change are in receipt of small salaries and to them the compulsory increase of their yearly obligations, or in other words, a practical reduction of their income would involve the discontinuance of current policies of assurance, benefit and endowment, and the consequent loss of all they have already paid in connection therewith.

We are confident that if our case is brought to the attention of the Government, our desire to be placed on the same footing as the other clerks will be granted.

We attach hereto a copy of the Bill referred to, which, if amended in the manner as shown by the erasure of certain words, will not affect the principle of the Bill, and at the same not disturb existing rights under the present Superannuation Act.

Yours respectfully,

(Signed by employees in Audit Office having less than 10 years' service.)

The Auditor General.