

I especially wish to direct my remarks to the words "their dependents". Under the present act, if a pensioner receives less than 50 per cent pension and he dies, his widow generally speaking receives nothing. There are some regulations with regard to temporary assistance but she gets nothing in particular. I wonder if such a matter will come up before the pensions committee. If it does I should like to appear and to present arguments in favour of widening the regulations under the act somewhat after the manner of Australia or the United States. In Australia, I believe, when a pensioner dies his widow receives the pension that he enjoyed in his lifetime. If he received ten or fifteen per cent the widow gets the same. If such a matter does come before the committee, then I am satisfied with the resolution and I want to support it.

I should like to ally myself with the remarks made by the hon. member for Vancouver South (Mr. Green). In the riding I represent there are as many enlistments as there are in any other constituency, if not more. In the great war the part of the city of Toronto which I represent was one hundred per cent old country stock, and these men enlisted en masse. Many regiments were raised there. During the last twenty years, therefore, I have had a good deal to do with pension matters relating to soldiers, and since the outbreak of the present war I have come in contact pretty much with the same conditions as have been brought to the notice of the hon. member for Vancouver South. Soldiers not long in the army have been discharged for one reason or another—illness and so forth—and most of them are out of work. On telephoning headquarters at 159 Bay street I have been told on numerous occasions to send to headquarters men who had been discharged and were out of work, and I gather that the department is making an effort to rehabilitate discharged soldiers. I hope so. I trust that anything the department can do in that regard will be done. One man I sent to an employer to look for work was not taken on because he had been discharged from the army as medically unfit. I have every confidence in the minister and I know that he will do what he can towards rehabilitating men in jobs and making adequate provision for medical attention so as to enable them to be rehabilitated.

I wish to associate myself with what the minister has said with regard to the pension department. As I said, during the last twenty years I have had to do with thousands of cases and I have nothing but praise for the administration of the pension department. I have found the present head, General McDonald, most sympathetic, most considerate and most courteous. I have nothing but

praise for him and no complaints. I have also come in contact with many other members of the department; at least, I believe I have had dealings with as many of them as any other hon. member has had. I can say the same for them as I do for the head. I have taken every opportunity that has presented itself to say that, so far as I can see, the Canadian Department of Pensions is trying to do the best it can under the regulations. If the regulations are not wide enough that is the fault of the House of Commons, and I hope that the committee to be set up will work out something along the line I have suggested, so that there will be more consideration for widows whose husbands in their lifetime received less than fifty per cent. I trust also that something will be done with regard to rehabilitation and medical attention for those who are being discharged.

Mr. POULIOT: I hope that every official of the pensions department will have the words of the Minister of Pensions and of the hon. member for Davenport (Mr. MacNicol) illuminated in gold on parchment and framed, and hang it in the living room for the edification of posterity, so that it will be known that on this 3rd day of March they have been highly praised by the Minister of Pensions and at the same time by our genial and smiling friend the hon. member for Davenport.

Mr. HOWDEN: In connection with pension legislation there are one or two points which I think are worthy of consideration. It has been my lot for the last fifteen years to be a medical doctor and federal representative at the same time, and I can assure the hon. member for Davenport that if a great many persons have interviewed him with regard to pension troubles, I have been interviewed too. I agree with the hon. member for Témiscouata in this, that I have seen a great many men who deserved pensions and who did not get them, while I have seen quite a number who did not and do not deserve pensions who still have them. But I am not going to discuss that now because I fancy it is hopeless. We have to let it go.

There is this point, however. At this late date there are still men who were in the great war, who served faithfully and were not awarded pensions because apparently they were not severely wounded or anything of the kind. But they are in a deplorable condition, and only pensioners are entitled to consideration from the pension hospitals. Where these men are broken down and in failing health, whether as a result of their service overseas or not, the mere fact that they went overseas and offered their service at the risk of their lives entitles them to consideration