

COMMITTEE ROOM 435,

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

THURSDAY, May 8, 1924.

The Special Committee appointed to consider questions relating to Pensions, Insurance and Re-establishment of Returned Soldiers informally met at 4 o'clock p.m., the Chairman, Mr. Denis, presiding. Members of the Committee and of the House were present to receive a deputation of the Amputations Association, who are now holding their Convention in Ottawa.

The CHAIRMAN: Ladies and Gentlemen,—It is a very agreeable duty for me indeed to receive, together with the Committee, the members of the Amputations Associations who are now visiting Ottawa.

This morning I met Mr. Speakman, who is a member of our Committee, and who is known to be most assiduously devoted to the cause of the returned men. I knew that this organization was visiting Ottawa now, but I had not had the opportunity of meeting them. Mr. Speakman told me this morning that we would have the privilege this afternoon of meeting the Amputations Association's representatives who are here now, and immediately I expressed to Mr. Speakman my very great pleasure in learning that the Committee would have this opportunity of meeting these representatives. I immediately sent a personal letter to all the members of the Committee inviting them to be here at four o'clock, and I wish to thank the members of the Committee who have responded so generously and in such numbers to my invitation. They have come here to meet representatives of the returned men, and they deserve to be congratulated.

This morning, upon reading the newspapers, I came across a paragraph which I think I shall read to the Committee as part of my opening remarks. This appears in the *Ottawa Citizen* of this morning and has reference to the parade of yesterday, reading as follows:—

“There has seldom been seen a more thrilling spectacle of a finer illustration of the sacrifices of patriotism than that when they marched in fours along Wellington street and up to the Centre Block to the Parliament House led by the men with crutches and artificial limbs in the front ranks. Men stood and watched the Veterans go by, and as they did so had to swallow lumps in their throats or force back tears from their eyes.”

I think, ladies and gentlemen, that description depicts very, very well our feelings towards the returned men, and more particularly toward those who have been afflicted with infirmities. Whoever we are, to whatever political party we belong, whatever might be our creed, there is one thing which bears very strongly upon every one of us, and it is this: that the returned men must be looked upon as heroes and as men to whom this country is indebted to a degree that it will never be able to repay. Therefore, welcome do I say to the representatives of the returned men who are here now. I wish to welcome you in this building, which is your building, and to this Parliament, which is your Parliament, and I will say further that only for your efforts and sacrifices this magnificent pile on Parliament Hill, the pride of the nation, might never have been built.

Now, I will not take up the time of the Committee any longer but I will say to you men who are here now, don't tell us what you are here for; we don't want to know. You are here to visit us and we are glad and happy and proud to receive you, and you are welcome. Perhaps you are here to express some