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OFFICIAL DISCOURAGEMENT OF VOLUNTEERING.

Comment has been freely made in Ottawa upon the fact disclosed by the daily press that the pay of certain Civil Servants who paraded with the Guards and 43rd Battalion in connection with the Hull strike disorders, had been stopped for the day they were absent from the Departments. In extenuation the explanation is semi-officially made that the military service has no direct connection with the deduction, which was made under the general rule by which these clerks can only be paid for the days they are actually present and sign the attendance book.

The circumstance, however, brings forcibly before the notice of the public the inadequacy of the pay allowed the militia when called out in aid of the civil power. Take the case of these very departmental clerks, for instance. Their regular pay, for a day of six hours, averages a good deal more than two dollars; very few civil servants receive less than that. They were called out for service in Hull, paraded at 5 a.m., and were dismissed at 7 p.m., and for this day of 14 hours they will receive fifty cents! The municipality of Hull will have to pay this fifty cents per man, but the cost to the men themselves will be three or four times that amount. It is not creditable that such injustice to the volunteers should have been allowed to continue until the present, especially when the frequency of the demands for their service is considered, and it is to be hoped that the Minister of Militia will give this matter his serious consideration, with a view to providing payment of at least two dollars a day for each private soldier called away from his business to aid the civil power.

There is another matter to which we invite the earnest attention of the Minister of Militia, and that is the evil example set by the Government in the recently promulgated regulations restricting or forbidding military duty by Civil Servants. It is a matter of notoriety that there have been not only Members of Parliament but also Cabinet Ministers openly opposed to the Militia expenditure and bent upon discouraging the force, but the weight of popular opinion has been so decidedly on the other side that these hostile influences have had little effect. It is unfortunate, however, that now, when on the one hand the Militia Department is evincing an interest greater than ever before shown in the welfare of the force, there should be on the part of

other departments this publicly proclaimed discouragement of volunteering.

In all the Dominion there is not a class of men who can better spare time for military duties than can the Civil Servants at Ottawa, and none can more conveniently be spared from their official duties. In each department the staff is quite large enough to assume for a few days the extra work made necessary by the absence of any members called off for military duty, and the inconvenience suffered is nothing compared to that which the banker, the merchant, the manufacturer or other employer cheerfully consents to in order that his employees may do their share of military duty. The Government requests and expects this sacrifice on the part of the public. It is not expected that the militia shall be recruited from the unemployed or shiftless classes of the community. The proud boast has always been made that the best young men in every community are to be found in the ranks of the volunteers, and it is patent that the very qualities which make these young men so valuable to the militia make them valuable to their employers as well, and make it all the harder for them to be spared from their regular employment.

If the Government service cannot accommodate itself to occasional absence of Civil Servants on military duty, neither can the mercantile community.

The abolition of the between match extra series shooting on the regular match targets met with general approval at the recent meeting of the Dominion Rifle Association, the sighting shot allowed forming a satisfactory substitute. But in order that chance, in the shape of a fortunate or unfortunate estimate of the influence of wind and light, should not interfere with the prospects of those new to the range, a couple of hours might very properly be devoted to extra series on Monday morning. It might be found feasible and advisable to receive entries for this as for a regular match, thus ensuring that every one shall have an opportunity to fire a ticket. The Macdougall Cup Match would then be less of a lottery, and the slim prospect of the trophy being finally placed this side of eternity would be a little broadened. The Minister of Militia Match last year and this affords an example of the possibility of a good marksman taking the same event two years in succession.