

in a number of towns and cities in western Canada and I distinctly remember at the moment a city in Saskatchewan where an old-time friend of mine, a couple of months ago when I was there, was talking to me about the change and wishing the old days were back again, because now he had nothing at all to do. He happens to be between forty-five and fifty years of age. But my experience in different places has been that the police have very little to do and do not like it. If what my hon. friend from Calgary (Mr. R. B. Bennett) throws out as a suggestion is correct, namely, that they have added duties because of the existence of aliens in our midst, it would be only right for the Government to tell us so as part of their explanation, rather than leave that to be suggested by the hon. member. During all these years this force has been doing the great work of policing the prairies, and now that that work is not laid on their shoulders, it necessarily follows that they cannot be as busy as they were before. If you have one hundred per cent as many men and remove seventy-five per cent of the work, your men are not going to be busy. There is no need of my saying I concur in all my hon. friend has said as to the good work the mounted police have done. That is not the question. The fact remains we are very much in need of man-power, and we have 800 of the most stalwart, the more ready, the best trained and most hardy men in the country, and I submit there is not sufficient work to keep them busy at present.

Mr. OLIVER: I think I will have to go a little further than any of the speakers have yet gone in discussing this vote. There are two sides to this question of the mounted Police in the West; one is sentimental, the other practical. I might be considered to be exaggerating if I said that the sentimental side is more important than the practical side. All my hon. friend from Calgary has said in that connection is true and more than true. This force has been identified with the development, the settlement, the progress and the maintenance of law and order in the Northwest ever since 1874. It has been looked upon by the people as an institution in that country, and as one of the institutions upon which they could absolutely rely, upon which they were always able to depend. When that institution has been taken away, and set aside as though it were a broken can, it strikes the people of the West very strangely. It hurts their feelings to think that this institution which has existed so long should be

[Mr. Knowles.]

set aside simply by the turn of a hand, without any reason being given to the public, and without any sufficient reason being given to Parliament. It impresses upon them the idea of a disregard of conditions in that country on the part of those in authority—a disregard of the responsibilities which rest upon them in the administration of affairs.

The practical side is that we are called upon to vote one and a half million dollars, a quarter of a million dollars more than we voted in past years, for the maintenance of a force which is not now employed in the work for which it was instituted. These are times when we are short of both men and money. My hon. friend from Mosejaw (Mr. Knowles) has drawn attention to the fact that we need man-power both in Canada and on the fighting line, and if we can afford to withdraw the Mounted Police force from the work which they have done for so many years we can afford to employ them in something more useful than the work in which they are employed now. A burden has been thrown upon the Provincial Governments by this action. They have been compelled to provide police administration which they formerly received through the mounted police, and for which they paid at a certain fixed rate. It is a fact, I think, that in the payment they made for the services of the mounted police, they had the best of the bargain from a financial point of view. It was thought advisable by the Dominion to have a force of men in that country under military discipline and control employed in maintaining law and order. Those men were engaged in that duty, and were fulfilling it last year surely as much as they are to-day. They were also providing for the requirements of the Provincial Governments in the administration of their laws. Why they should be withdrawn from that duty of assisting in the administration of the laws of the provinces, and still be maintained in the country, at an additional expense, is something that no man in the Northwest can understand from any point of view of good business either for the provinces or for the Dominion. The Provincial Governments did not want this change. They were satisfied with the arrangement that was in force with the Dominion Government. They were satisfied to pay their share of the upkeep of the mounted police and receive the services of those police as they were being rendered. I am informed it was a shock to those