

shall, notwithstanding any statute to the contrary, be paid his salary as a judge and a per diem allowance of fifteen dollars."

Right Hon. Mr. GRAHAM: Has this any relation to the rumour that the present Chairman of the Pension Commission is likely to be appointed Chief Electoral Officer? It would seem to be paving the way for him to resign.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: As I do not know anything about the rumour, I know nothing about its relations. It is quite apparent that the retirement of the present chairman is contemplated; and inasmuch as only a judge may be appointed in his stead, the Bill is another evidence of the Government's exalted sense of duty rather than its desire to serve its friends.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: My right honourable friend has spoken of Colonel Thompson resigning the chairmanship of the commission.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: He is still chairman, I understand.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I have occasionally heard criticism of the chairman by people who thought he was somewhat stern in protecting the Canadian treasury against applicants who came before the Commission. I may say that for a number of years I had relations with the Commission and its chairman, Colonel Thompson, in connection with amendments made to the Pension Act, and I found Colonel Thompson to be one of the most zealous officers I met during the time I occupied the position which my right honourable friend now fills. I have always felt that his qualities especially fitted him for his position, and I should be sorry to see him displaced by someone who would have less courage than he has displayed during his career as chairman of the board.

Hon. Mr. SHARPE: Hear, hear.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: I have a great deal of sympathy with the view expressed by my honourable friend. I hope I did not intimate that Colonel Thompson was being removed. I do not believe that is the case. I should be very sorry if it were so. Not only has Colonel Thompson had a distinguished career as a soldier, and held an honoured place in the record of great names in Canada, but in guarding the Canadian treasury he has been, I think, one of the most zealous officials we have ever known. He has frequently been attacked from all sides of politics. I think I can say that over a period of fifteen years he has maintained

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an unbrokenly consistent record of refusing every single thing I ever asked of him.

Some Hon. SENATORS: Hear, hear.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: I think that for a decade and a half I have had nothing but a stern and unwavering negative to every appeal. Nevertheless, I regard Colonel Thompson very highly. I know he is actuated by nothing but the sternest rectitude, and I can accept a negative from him better than I can from most officials. It may be that continued attacks have altered his disposition. I hope not. I do not know the facts relating to his retention or retirement.

Right Hon. Mr. GRAHAM: I had the pleasure of presiding over the Department of Pensions for many months, as, indeed, I have had the pleasure of presiding over almost every department of the Government at one time or another.

Colonel Thompson is not the austere, distant man one might take him to be; on the contrary, he is a most genial man. When a friend came to us to enlist our help we were all inclined to think we had a case, and it was necessary for Colonel Thompson to become a second edition of himself, a sterner man than he is by nature, in order to enforce the law. If the law was unfair, the fault was ours, not that of Colonel Thompson. I sometimes thought he was a little too strict; but one must remember that a weak man in his position would have allowed our pension expenditures to reach proportions far in excess of the legal requirements.

I used to enjoy sitting down and being abused by Colonel Thompson—

Some Hon. SENATORS: Oh, oh.

Right Hon. Mr. GRAHAM: —and abusing him in return, as well as I could. I may say that I always had the utmost confidence that Colonel Thompson would go as far as the law permitted him, but not one inch farther. If he has never acquiesced in any requests of the right honourable leader of this House, I may consider that fact as an additional qualification for the other office that we expect him to take.

Section 1 was agreed to.

The preamble and the title were agreed to.

The Bill was reported.

THIRD READING

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN moved the third reading of the Bill.

The motion was agreed to, and the Bill was read the third time, and passed.