

tarily, his retirement will be carried out nevertheless.

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Here is the position, hon. gentlemen, I did not know anything of Lt.-Col. Hamilton's political proclivities, but I had this report which said that unless there was a change at the head of that important corps there was a danger that it would be disbanded and I could not do otherwise than uphold the position taken by the general and approve of his report.

Hon. Mr. SMITH—If he did not resign would he have retained his rank?

Hon. Mr. DESJARDINS—If he did not resign voluntarily, I think he would. As Col. Otter says, there is nothing to make him amenable to any accusation or any court-martial. The main thing is this, that he has survived his efficiency in the corp.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—His usefulness is gone.

Hon. Mr. BOULTON—I am glad to have the explanation which the hon. Minister of Militia has given us, and the reasons for the action that has been taken. I was under the impression that it was on account of his length of service and a desire on the part of the junior rank for promotion in the regiment. I find it is another matter altogether, and that, so far as Col. Hamilton's military reputation is concerned, there is nothing against him at all. I may say that my father, who commanded the 3rd Regiment of Cavalry, the Prince of Wales Canadian Dragoons, for a number of years had overstepped his time for retirement and there was no pressure brought to bear for some time, but during General Herbert's term of service—although his reports were of the highest character with regard to the regiment—my father received a note suggesting that it would be just as well for him to retire. Col. Boulton did not take any offence at all at this, because he felt it was nothing but justice to the regiment and to the next senior officer that he should step down and out, and allow the major, who had served for a long time, to be placed in command. That is a precedent to that extent. In this case, the trouble which has arisen is evidently one of internal economy. Our militia regiments are differ-

ent from the regular regiments. The *esprit de corps* of our militia regiments is such that not only the officers but the privates of the corps themselves, devote the whole of their annual drill pay to their regiment. They do not take it for any personal or individual benefit, and, in that respect, they deserve a great deal of credit. It represents annually a large sum of money, and evidently it is the disposal of this fund or the business management of this large sum of money that has led to what you might call a disruption of the corps. Unfortunately, Col. Hamilton seems not to have taken exactly the position that an officer of the British army always takes in cases of that kind. The management of any regimental fund, such as band and messing, and everything of that kind, is left to a junior committee, and the commanding officer always holds himself aloof from the management of those funds, so that there may be no breach of discipline where his command is concerned, and that his influence may be properly felt in the interior economy of the regiment. This case is unfortunate for Col. Hamilton, but where the difficulties have occurred such as are present in these documents that have been brought before us, it does not seem that the general could have taken any other step than the one that he did take. It is gratifying to know from the general commanding that Col. Hamilton's reputation as a soldier is not at all at stake in the matter. The Queen's Own took a very distinguished part in the North-west Field forces of 1885, and they are desirous of maintaining that reputation. The country owes a great deal to the self-sacrificing spirit of our active militia and its *esprit de corps*. Where, however, discipline is undermined, it cannot be permitted to remain so. This regiment is no doubt desirous of continuing to contribute their annual pay, both officers and men; but they wish to have the proper business management and disposal of it which is an internal management. At any rate it is well to know, where the credit of our force is concerned, notwithstanding all the reasons that have led to the step that has been taken in the unfortunate circumstances, that Col. Hamilton will receive all the honours that he is entitled to, as if the resignation had been entirely a voluntary one.