

be advisable to get all the information possible in connection with this matter, because quite a number of people are interested in it. There is considerable mystery about it, and this item should stand until it is cleared up.

Mr. NESBITT: I have not seen any item in the Estimates providing for an increase in the pay of the soldiers. The conscription Bill is now in force, and there is no doubt that the pay received by soldiers is not in any sense equal to the pay of labourers employed in this country at the present time. When I spoke on the conscription Bill I expressed the opinion that the pay of the men should be increased. I know that many of the men are anxious to get an increase of pay; it need not be given them while they are in France or in England; it would be desirable that they have something more coming to them when they return to this country. I know that this would mean increasing the cost of the war, but it is an added expenditure that the public would be very willing to meet. I am quite sure that there would be no objection on the part of the people if the men were paid at least fifty cents a day more than they are getting now. The average labourer throughout the country is getting from \$2.50 to \$3 a day. Although the price of munitions has been very materially cut down, I understand that in some of the munition factories the men are earning from \$3 to \$8 a day. The last time I was home I heard about a man who was getting \$8 a day. Ordinary mechanics in factories get a great deal more in proportion than the men who are asked to risk their lives for our country. I appreciate the fact that the men do not go for the purpose of drawing pay; they enlist for the purpose of defending their country. At the same time, there is no reason why the country that they are defending should not pay them more than they are getting now. I hope that the minister will take this matter into consideration, and that if he does decide to increase the pay, he will make the provision retroactive in respect of those men who have enlisted since the outbreak of war. The result would be that they would get a good start when they came back to Canada—it would not be necessary to pay the money to them while they are in Europe—and they would not be depending upon the public for assistance. They do get three months' pay when they are discharged, but that is not anything in proportion to what they could save if their pay was increased at least fifty cents a day.

Mr. CROTHERS: Would my hon. friend have every soldier paid the same salary that he was receiving when he enlisted?

Mr. NESBITT: No.

Mr. CROTHERS: Why not?

Mr. NESBITT: I would have every soldier paid the same amount.

Mr. CROTHERS: That would not be fair; some men might have been earning more before they enlisted.

Mr. NESBITT: That would be perfectly fair. It does not matter what the men were earning before they enlisted; after they join the colours they are all in the same service.

Mr. CROTHERS: It is just as fair now as it would be that way.

Mr. NESBITT: I think not. The men are being paid for what they are doing now. A private is a private, a corporal a corporal; one man is supposed, so far as the defence of the country is concerned, to be as valuable as another. I think their pay ought to be equal.

Mr. CROTHERS: They are all paid the same now.

Mr. NESBITT: Yes, but I want their pay increased.

Mr. HANNA: How much?

Mr. NESBITT: Fifty cents a day.

Sir EDWARD KEMP: Although the Canadian soldier is paid at a higher rate than the soldiers with whom he is fighting side by side, no one would say that he can possibly be paid in money for the services that he is rendering to his country.

Mr. NESBITT: You could not pay for his services in money.

Sir EDWARD KEMP: No. The service which the Canadian soldier is rendering to his country by fighting in France is beyond payment. The ordinary private soldier's income, with his pay of \$1.10 a day, taking into consideration a certain amount per month for clothing and subsistence, and, if he is a married man, taking into consideration, also, his separation allowance and the amount given by the Patriotic Fund to his family if his family needs it, comes to about \$95 per month.

Mr. NESBITT: The amount of the income depends upon the number of children a man has. He would have to have a number of children for his income to reach that amount.