

Civil Service Superannuation

benefit from the act after having contributed for great numbers of years. That is well dealt with in the bill, as well as a great number of other matters that experience has shown needed correction.

I do not want to approach this measure in any partisan spirit, but it is a matter of considerable pride to me as a follower of this party to know that the act of 1924 was brought in by a Liberal government under the leadership of the present Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) and that this extraordinarily beneficial legislation has been a Liberal measure. I feel that my party can justifiably take pride in that, because the act, with this amending bill, constitutes the most advanced piece of legislation in any country dealing with this aspect of the relationship between government as employer and its employees. That is something I hope Canadians, when they think about other countries, will bear in mind with respect to this legislation.

My only regret about the whole matter is that we have not as yet schemes of this sort in force in all places of employment throughout the country. I for one, and I am sure it is the desire of every hon. member here, wish that all employees wherever they may be found in Canada could have similar rights in their own employment. I think that experience generally has shown that such schemes as are in force in many large companies have been most beneficial. Our Superannuation Act is a perfect example of what can be done by many working together, all contributing their portion to the fund, and the employer doing likewise. The many can do so much that is utterly impossible for any one to do by himself. I appreciate the desire of the house to get on with its other business and I shall not, therefore, further extend my remarks at this time.

On motion of Mr. Boucher the debate was adjourned.

At one o'clock the house took recess.

The house resumed at three o'clock.

FAMILY ALLOWANCES

PROVISION FOR PAYMENTS IN RESPECT OF CHILDREN UNDER SIXTEEN

The house resumed from Thursday, July 27, consideration of the motion of Mr. Mackenzie King for the second reading of bill No. 161, to provide for family allowances.

Mr. G. E. WOOD (Brant): Mr. Speaker, last night at the adjournment of the debate I was discussing some of the reasons why I

[Mr. McIlraith.]

believe that the family allowance legislation would be beneficial, and examining some of the criticisms of those opposed to this bill. If I were inclined to offer a suggestion, it would be that this type of legislation should be extended by associating with it a scheme of contributory old age pensions, the income derived from which might serve in some degree as a revolving fund for payment of children's allowances. In my opinion the fact that the state has undertaken to provide for family allowances obligates those who are to enjoy that privilege to contribute, through some appropriate measure and suitable machinery, towards their own social security at the time when they retire from the activities of life. I have always believed that every man should provide something for his own security, and that it should not be left to the state to bear the cost of old age pensions without the individual making some contribution through his own efforts to reaping this reward when he comes to the time of retirement.

We have heard objections from those who think that this will be an expensive scheme. The important principle is to see that the wealth of our country is well and reasonably spent. The fact that Canada expends \$350 million annually on intoxicating liquors is enough to silence those who think we cannot afford to expend \$200 million upon the nation's greatest resource, its children. At any rate there cannot be a valid objection to this measure from the people who condone an indulgence which in my belief often impairs natural ability and dethrones the God-given gift of reason.

I remember reading somewhere about a deputation which waited upon Lord John Russell to voice their objections to certain taxation. His reply was, "You may rely upon it that the government of this country does not tax the working classes to anything like the extent to which they tax themselves in their expenditure on intoxicating drink alone."

As regards the element of thrift which is involved in the requirement that people shall do something to provide for their own security, it may be remembered that Richard Cobden once said there were two classes of society; those who have saved and those who have spent, those that are thrifty and those that are extravagant. All our great institutions, all our mills, our factories, our homes, have been founded by those who saved their money and, in building these institutions, provided labour with the means of employment.