

would almost be without the means of support. Again, we have in the force non-commissioned officers who have been in it since its formation, and who are most valuable men in their particular department. These men, we know, have more than once been about to give up the service, as there seemed to be no future in store for them, but have been induced to remain, because they were informed that there was every prospect of Parliament granting pensions to the Permanent force. We all know how difficult it is to retain men in all the branches of our Military service. There has so far been little opportunity of their seeing even the various parts of our own Dominion, for the Force since its formation has been almost constantly kept at the same stations. Some of these, at all events, have no enduring attraction to the man who is possessed of those instincts which are presumed to be inherent in a soldier. With the Imperial soldier it is different, for in addition to the knowledge of a pension being in store for him—if he remains long enough in the service—he likewise knows that before that period arrives, he will have seen a considerable part of the world.

The Major General Commanding has drawn attention to the short time which the Canadian soldier serves his country, and the reason we have already given. As a matter of fact, it is becoming a little difficult to keep the Permanent force up to its strength, which is only a little over one thousand men. When we think that nearly forty years ago, the two weak provinces, Canada East and Canada West, which then formed Canada, presented to the British Government the 100th Regiment, about 900 strong, this difficulty must seem strange. But the reason is obvious, and we have already mentioned it. Indeed, as a matter of fact, the writer believes that to-day it would be much easier to recruit for the Imperial Service than for our own. Moreover, granting a pension to our soldiers would be in reality an economical measure. The number of desertions which take place yearly is very large, and it is this fact which explains the short term of the Canadian soldier's service. The men who desert in the majority of instances take with them much of their kit and their uniform, the value of which often amounts to nearly \$30. While we do not think that the certainty of a pension would stop all desertions, we believe it would very materially lessen their number,—sufficiently, at all events, not only to save a considerable sum of money to the Government, but to keep the best men in the force. Those who should know say such has been the effect of the pensions to the Northwest Mounted Police, and we believe the same result would follow similar treatment of the Permanent Militia Force of Canada.