

At that time there was conflict between what might be called the military or service mentality, and the civilian mentality. This conflict arose largely out of the question of the medical treatment of soldiers, but was found in some degree through the whole programme.

The report of the committee is too long to read in full, but if hon. members are interested in this phase of the matter I commend to their attention the report of the pension committee of 1917, at page 466 of volume XIII. There is the military point of view, but I believe in what I shall read will be found sufficient of the alternative or civilian proposals to permit the committee to understand what was being discussed. This is what we find:

In dealing with the question of the enlisted soldier, the end immediately in view must be borne in mind. All agencies brought to bear upon the citizen recruit have but one object, namely, ultimately to place a trained, disciplined fighting man on the firing line. It is therefore unquestionably admitted that the preparation of the soldier for active service should be in the hands of experienced military men.

When, however, the citizen soldier has become unfitted for further military service, or when the need no longer exists, it is desirable that he be returned to civil life with the least possible friction or delay. His goal now is a normal civil life, and all measures taken on his behalf should be with the purpose of making him once again a producer and a self-supporting citizen. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that his restoration to civilian status is an undertaking likely to be best accomplished under civilian guidance. That is to say, as men of military experience are judged most capable of making soldiers out of civilians, so men of civil experience may rightly be regarded as best adapted for remaking civilians out of returned soldiers.

Then they go on to deal with the civilian point of view in respect of wounded and disabled men in connection with the following matters:

- Hospital care and treatment.
- Functional restoration and artificial limbs.
- Vocational training and reeducation.
- Casualties' pay and allowances in Canada.
- Soldiers' homes.
- Cooperation with provincial employment bureaux.
- Any relief or disablement fund which may be found necessary.

And in respect of fit men:

- Cooperation with the military authorities, with provincial governments and other agencies upon all matters affecting their return to civil life.

- Supervision of voluntary organizations of and on behalf of returned soldiers.

That was the civilian point of view. The report continues:

Your committee, unable to reconcile these two divergent views in such a manner as to secure agreement, is reluctantly compelled to leave the

[Mr. Power.]

question of the control of the agencies for the care and treatment of returned soldiers without a recommendation on its part, having endeavoured in the previous paragraphs to state, with fairness to both contentions, the arguments in support of each view.

That report was made in July, and in February, 1918, the government set up the Department of Soldiers' Civil Reestablishment to do the specific things that were laid down here as the things to be presented from the civil side of the argument. After that, veterans' affairs and soldier problems were dealt with by the Department of Soldiers' Civil Reestablishment.

It is easy for anyone to set out a theory and say that this can be done easily and rapidly. We hear the cliché that we should put our service machinery into reverse in order to solve our rehabilitation problems. It is easy to say, for instance, that one could take the recruiting officers, the men who went into industry to get the men to be put in the army, and use them to put the men back into industry. It may be said that we could use the recruiting offices with their selection boards and trade test boards for the purpose of selecting and trade testing men for a particular industry, and so on all down the line. This all looks well and I suppose it could be made the theme of an excellent speech. I realize that I may be subject to considerable criticism when I say that I do not think it will always work. It is quite possible that we may have to go beyond just simply putting our engines into reverse.

Then there is another cliché commonly used—that we should keep our men in the army until we find them jobs. I have no objection to that as a theory, but I fear that it will not work out in practice. For instance, I have been told that it would be a good idea to use the manning depot at Toronto, which is capable of taking care of from two to three thousand men. It is said that this depot could be used for the accommodation of young men attending Toronto university. They would be kept under our control until such time as they had finished their courses. Again I realize there may be a difference of opinion, but I suggest that this might not work out. You would have two or three thousand boys still in the air force. If they are still in the air force they would retain their uniforms. They would be drilled in order to justify their use of the uniform. After morning drill they would go up to Toronto university. The lowest man in the military hierarchy, the LAC, might be first in the class in law and he would be taking orders from his wing commander, who might be just barely getting by with his examinations.