

cerned; and thus we were able to facilitate the search of the applicant for land without any material expense.

I made reference to real estate agents. Mr. Chairman, I want to say that in this country, and I do not speak from the standpoint of any one province, there are real estate men, and real estate men, and there is a vast difference between them. In the latter class the manhood still dominates, the adjective is smaller than the man. We did receive very material assistance from a great number of real estate offices and many of the men in those offices have given their time and their services in order to secure settlers upon the land. I regret to say, however, that in a few cases it was necessary to discontinue operations with certain men who seemed to possess the spirit of the age to such an extent that they deemed it was up to them to get all they could, not simply out of the Government—but they seemed to think it was their chance to “do” the soldier and it was our business according to the best information we could secure, and to the extent of our ability to safeguard the interest of the returned man who was seeking a home upon the land.

The question has been raised as to the character of the land upon which these men went. I do not want any one to think that in every case the returned men are settling upon entirely new land. That is not the case, Sir. In some instances they are buying unimproved land, but more generally in the province of British Columbia they are purchasing improved land. It may be argued that this does not really conduce to an increased amount of production, but the reason for that, Sir, is this: In many sections of that province you will find a large number of farms and ranches held by elderly men. The explanation of that is that his boys have gone overseas and will not return.

He has a farm on his hands, he is too old to work, and he says: “I will sell it.” In many cases he offers his farm for sale at a cheap price to the returned man, and he himself steps aside and gives him the advantage of his years of toil. That is one reason, Sir, why in many cases they have bought improved property. I could cite instance after instance where that has actually taken place; the elderly father who is left on the farm is not able to carry on, and consequently his land is sold. Often it is subdivided into two, three, four, or more small holdings, and that means the nuclei of so many more families. As a result we have a

[Mr. Stacey.]

large percentage of returned men upon the improved lands of British Columbia. I am speaking now of the southern part of the province, where the majority of the settlers are locating. There are some who choose the pioneering life, but unless a man makes that choice we do not encourage or even go so far as to suggest it to him. Most of the men want their homes reasonably near centres, with all the advantages of social and business life that can be obtained in the older sections of the country. The result is that we are seeking more land in the southern part of the province.

Clause 8, as I understand it, looks towards compulsory purchase, and my amendment is along this line, Sir, that I would have the clause go a step further. I would therefore submit for the consideration of the minister and the committee the following amendment to clause 8, which would then read as follows:

The Board may, for the execution of any of the purposes of this Act, acquire by way of compulsory purchase, in the manner provided by Part III of this Act, such agricultural land as it may deem necessary from:

- (a) All persons, firms, and corporations in any part of Canada;
- (b) The Indian superintendent for the province of British Columbia.

I note in the Indian Act of 1906 a provision for the appointment of an Indian superintendent for the province of British Columbia. If that appointment has not been made, a change in the wording of my amendment I presume would be necessary. But I wish to call the attention of the Committee to two or three very important facts. In the province of British Columbia we have a large area of land held as Indian reserve land. A year ago I called the attention of the House to this matter, and again last spring. My attention has been directed to the same matter very frequently during the past two months, and I would not be performing what I believe to be my duty and taking the right course unless I gave some additional facts regarding this very acute situation in that province.

I presume that these Indian reserves were granted years ago on the principle that the Indian was the ward of the Government, that he was to be taken care of by the Government, that he was not in a position to look after himself; and that therefore a wide sweep of land should be given to him on which he could hunt and fish. In the course of time the Indian population has decreased, the hunting in the sections of the country to which I refer is altogether a thing of the past, and the result is that