

Mr. BUREAU: Twelve dollars a year.

Mr. MICHAEL CLARK: Just think of it: And that has actually happened to me since I came to Canada. Now I do not want to branch out on this subject or I shall be making another Budget speech and possibly a more practical one than I delivered last week. I do not want to go any further with this. Indeed, in speaking to the minister I am pretty well convinced I am speaking to a convert. He is a minister who comes from Western Canada, I have talked to him in private over the tariff and he is one who some years ago moved a resolution favouring a reduction in the duties on certain implements. But though he is himself in a measure converted on this question, I need not tell him, he knows too well, the stony ground he is operating on in Council; and I want him to bring the same ability, the same strength of character, and the same determination to bear upon that ground (in pointing out my final consideration) that he does to his general work in the political life of this country. Along that line I wish him also success, and I point out the only line on which his scheme can be made a success.

I want to close by once more saying that I wish the minister's scheme a most generous amount of success. It will cost a lot of money, and it requires some imagination to see what are the benefits which will compensate for the expenditure of that money. If we can succeed in settling any fair proportion, say 30,000 to 50,000, of the gallant men who with the rest of our Allies defended the world,—if we can succeed in settling those men upon the lands of this fair Dominion, what a foundation we are laying for a citizenship, what traditions of world service and national service we are building up for future generations to emulate. While it is easy to calculate the money that this scheme may cost, it is impossible for the human mind to calculate or to describe what benefits will accrue to Canada if we can embody these human elements,—the grandest in the world today, and the grandest that the world has ever produced—in the manhood which is to make the Canada of the future.

Mr. CAHILL: Could the minister tell us approximately what amount of land is owned by the Dominion Government in the area set apart and considered fit for soldiers' settlement? And another question while I am on my feet: Is it the custom of the department to pay cash for the land

[Mr. M. Clark.]

which they purchase before selling it to the soldiers?

Mr. MEIGHEN: As to the first question, I have not at present an estimate of the amount of land within the 15-mile area that is fit for soldier settlement.

Mr. CAHILL: Is that being inspected?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Yes. I think, though, that Mr. Roland of the board is able to give an estimate after inspection by himself, but I am satisfied that the acreage is not sufficient to take care of the number of men we have settled already. In this connection, let me say that although this plan has been in operation virtually only since March last, the Dominion of Canada has, up to the present time, actually settled more men upon the land than have all the other Dominions of the Empire and Great Britain together by, I think, approximately 50 per cent.

Mr. CAHILL: Is the consideration for the land paid in cash?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Yes, it is always paid for in cash.

Mr. J. H. SINCLAIR: Does the board invite holders of land in Western Canada to offer their land to the board for sale?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Yes, we invite offers for sale from everywhere. The number of sales that have been put through in Nova Scotia and in all the other provinces can be given. But where land is settled, as in the southern portion of Ontario, you cannot do very much more in the way of soldier settlement. We do not discriminate at all between the provinces; the soldier can go just where he likes, and the advantages of the scheme are applicable everywhere.

Mr. COOPER: The hon. minister has emphasized that this is a national undertaking and not especially for returned soldiers. Would he define what soldiers are entitled to the benefits of this Bill? There are a large number of men who proceeded as far as Bermuda. Are they to be considered overseas men? A large number proceeded to Siberia, which cannot be defined as the theatre of war. There seems to me to be a great discrimination against many good men who have served in Canada—men who have been retained in Canada for no other reason than their own efficiency. The greater benefits of this Bill, as of other legislation pertaining to soldiers, will go to the class of soldiers that deserve least of