

ada where farmers took up land years ago and where they still have the titles vested in the Crown. They will not take their title over because they do not want the land mortgaged. The term of residence in the West is altogether too short, and the tendency is for the settler to get rid of the land and to turn it over to a loan company, which will buy it by way of a mortgage for about \$2 an acre. The land lies fallow for years and after five or ten years there is a lot of good land unoccupied, and when any one wants to buy it, the loan companies charge \$20 to \$25 an acre for it. There is too much speculation. The land should go to the actual settler and he should be made to settle on the land. Many young men who took up homesteads three or four years before the war did so in order to get a piece of land, and as soon as they completed their residence and got their patent, they sold the land and left the district. Those are sections of the western provinces in which the people do not want to live continuously daily on their land, and we should have some regulation whereby the soldiers will be permitted to live in small communities and work their land.

Mr. BRADBURY: You do not seem to think the soldier should live on his farm.

Mr. CURRIE: I want the soldier to live on the land, but every settler, for the first two years after he goes out to that country should be given a certain amount of latitude so that he can hire labour to assist him in the improvement of his farm. After those two years are up, and after he has hired help to assist him in getting his land broken up, he should be compelled to settle on the land.

Mr. BRADBURY: The minister has the power to grant an extension of time.

Mr. CURRIE: I go out to the West two or three times every year, and I see thousands of acres of land lying vacant. That is not in the interest of the country. Many Americans and many men from Ontario have taken up homesteads, and after putting in three years' residence and getting their patent, they say: we will sell our homesteads for \$800 or \$1,000 and get out of the country.

Mr. ROCHE: The Soldiers' Settlement Act under which they can secure 160 acres is separate and distinct entirely from this Act.

Mr. CURRIE: I am quite aware of that.

Mr. ROCHE: After the soldier or any one else gets his patent, the Government has  
[Mr. Currie.]

no jurisdiction over what he may do with his own property. You cannot compel a homesteader who has got his title to reside upon his land or prevent him from selling that land. That would be interfering with personal rights and liberties in a way that nobody would tolerate for one moment. The homesteader who has got his title has just as much right to dispose of his property as the man who purchases land.

Mr. CURRIE: All I have to say is that as far as the soldier is concerned I think he will be looking after himself pretty well when he comes back, and any regulations we are making here at this moment will not count for much. The soldier will do what he thinks is right, and he will be represented here by those who will get that done.

Mr. W. H. BENNETT: Would the minister consider placing a provision in the Bill allowing entry to be made for soldiers by proxy?

Mr. ROCHE: That is already allowed.

Mr. W. H. BENNETT: The reason I ask is that I have received a letter from a young man in a corps now in France, who says that he and his chums all intend to take up land in the Northwest, and they want to be all together. If there is already such a provision in the Dominion Lands Act or in this Bill, I think it will be availed of to a considerable extent.

Mr. PUGSLEY: To my mind it is absolutely clear that the effect of the amendment would be to allow a man who had made entry for a homestead, to take up his duties at the end of two or three or more years if the minister and those representing him chose not to give notice of cancellation. I understand that under the law at present the homesteader must begin his residence duties in the year immediately succeeding the date of entry, and put in six months in each one of the three years.

Mr. ROCHE: If he does not, somebody will apply for cancellation of the homestead entry.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Under this amendment the minister need not cancel the entry, and with all deference to the minister I think that somebody must have had this provision put in with that intention, so that some favouritism might be shown. The minister is not a party to it, of course, but I cannot conceive of a law being framed in such a way as to allow of that being