

necessary. They claim that it puts the men under a certain amount of obligation to the employer. Whether that is so or not, has scarcely been determined in actual practice; we hope, however, that it is not so, but in any case it is no part of the idea which I am discussing. This scheme of erecting villages in each of the provinces as a beginning, whether they are a success or not, has very little to do with the housing scheme mentioned in the speech from the Throne and which will shortly be before the House, because the Government's housing scheme does not contemplate the erection of new villages in certain communities, but rather the improvement of certain parts of our towns. Consequently, it has not the features which I think should be approved of and put into practice by this House, for instead of reconstructing an anomaly of a settlement, clumsily erected in the beginning and grown without any regard to design or moral considerations, we should try what we can do in virgin soil to improve the condition of the people. In America this distinction was pointed out very recently at a meeting of the American National Housing Association by a prominent New York architect, who said:

"We are not here to prepare the plans and specifications for repairing our ill-begotten cities and our sordid industrial areas, nor to frame compromises, nor to perpetuate fallacies. We are here for the purpose of formulating a statement embodying no less than an ideal with respect to the physical conditions under which men live, to indicate the nature of the problem confronting us in attempting to realize that ideal, and to discuss in broad outlines that policy which will make it possible for every man, woman and child of the nation to live in an environment which will neither stifle nor crush their spirit and make them impotent to render national service in times of war or in times of peace."

So the idea underlying this motion is not to improve or reconstruct, but to start out on a new project untrammelled by former mistakes. Since this motion has been on the Order Paper I have had dozens of letters from the provinces approving of the idea, for there are many in this country who, although we do not hear much of them because they do not like to get into public print, keep themselves informed of current ideas throughout the world, and it is only when a motion like this comes up that they are heard from. In addition to receiving many communications from private individuals, on the whole approving the idea most heartily, I have also received an expression of opinion from that important body of men, the Great War Veterans'

[Mr. Mowat.]

Association, who favour the idea. I do not know of any particular resolution—I have not invited any—but the president of one of the principal branches of that association wrote to me enclosing a copy of a resolution passed by the executive of the Great War Veterans' Association for the city of Toronto, which I think it would perhaps be well to read:

Whereas, the housing situation in Toronto and the large cities is such that satisfactory accommodation at a reasonable cost is nearly impossible to obtain, and that the returned soldiers are feeling the effect of this most severely in their efforts to adjust themselves to civilian life,

And whereas, the housing situation after the war will be rendered still more acute by the return of large numbers of our soldiers and also a large influx of ex-Imperial soldiers.

And whereas, those returning from England have seen the great and obvious advantages derived from citizen's gardening the allotments, almost universally allotted to tenants, where they can produce a large proportion of their vegetables.

And whereas, many returned soldiers (a large number disabled), are eager for an opportunity to produce part of their own supplies and to benefit by the work in the open.

And whereas, considerable time is required for the provision of housing accommodation and arranging for garden allotments and supplying transportation facilities.

Therefore, be it resolved, that in the opinion of the York County Executive of the Great War Veterans' Association, the Dominion, Provincial and Municipal Governments should at once seriously consider how the housing problem for returned soldiers can be solved.

As a rider to this resolution, a statement was made that at that meeting that the Veterans did not approve of these communities being confined to returned soldiers only. I myself do not think that they should be. It is true that the motion on the Order Paper does mention them as the persons chiefly to be held in mind, but apparently there is a difference of opinion among the soldiers on this matter. There are soldiers who, by reason of their disablement, have a certain degree of shyness and indisposition to enter society, and who prefer to meet with those who have been afflicted as they themselves have been. But these matters can easily be adjusted in different places. I simply mention the fact to show that I would not argue here that these communities should be confined to returned soldiers. I think it is very well for those who are able to pay the prices of these houses, and who are of like mind, that is, who enter with the intention of making a new community and of being themselves part of a new movement for the betterment of the people. I think these people, and even civilians, should very well