

Another of the paragraphs in the Speech from the Throne I desire to discuss briefly. It is that which is concerned with the question of re-establishment of our returned soldiers, and of their return to or taking up of agricultural life. This latter point has for me a profound interest. I must say that it was with sentiments of patriotic joy that I read that 46,630 disbanded soldiers had made a request to be settled upon the land. The Agricultural Gazette of Canada in its January number informs us that \$51,572,332 has already been lent to soldiers who desired to engage in agriculture. The Soldiers' Settlement Board has granted provisional titles to 869,000 acres of land in the Western provinces. Of 42,630 discharged men who have applied for certificates authorizing them to participate in the benefits of the legislation relating to settlement 32,363 have received them. I am aware that from this number there will necessarily be some deduction, because all men are not equally persevering, and there will be discouragements and abandonments. But if even sixty per cent or only fifty per cent of our soldier farmers remain on the land such a result will be highly gratifying. It is, you see, a response to one of the most urgent needs of the hour. All our far-sighted economists would seem to have taken as their watchword, "Produce, and again produce!" And of all our products those of the farm rank among the most necessary. The increase in the cost of living has become almost a public calamity. It has caused anguish to reign in many a household. It haunts like a nightmare an infinite number of firesides. It wrings the heart of many a mother and sears with lines of care the brow of many a father. In the presence of such a state of things a sudden accession to the ranks of the farming community may be hailed as a national benefit. The policy of turning demobilized soldiers into cultivators of the soil is one which merits general approbation. Moreover, it is a policy which may possibly have been inspired by the noble traditions of our early history. Such a policy was put in operation in Canada two and a half centuries ago. In 1667, in the reign of Louis XIV, with Colbert as Chief Minister of the Crown, and with Talon as intendant, the Government demobilized her soldiers to transform them into farmers. Permit me to read to you a few extracts bearing precisely upon this subject from a book entitled: "The Colonization of New France," written by M. Emile Salone, a distinguished Frenchman. We there see how history re-

peats itself and how true it is that there is nothing new under the sun. Referring to the disbanding and settlement of the soldiers who had taken part in the campaign against the Iroquois, it says:

With the decisive defeat of the Iroquois there would be no reason for any longer maintaining in Canada a garrison of a thousand men. The army of occupation was consequently reduced to four companies numbering in all three hundred men. The question was what to do with those soldiers who were no longer required for military duty. It was not unnatural that the idea should have occurred of attempting to retain in the colony as many of them as possible. . . . It was in 1665 that Talon met at la Rochelle the companies of the Carignan regiment which were to cross to America with him. He had a plan of his own. He succeeded in increasing their effectives by seventy supernumeraries, which would permit him, while still maintaining the companies at their full strength, to distribute among the inhabitants such as might possess some useful trade or public calling. Once in Canada, Talon modified these projects a little. With the assistance of Tracy, he reserved the conquerors of the Agniers and the Onneyouths for the task of colonization properly so called, and for the putting of the soil in cultivation. Both Talon and de Tracy had recourse to history to justify the excellence of their policy, and above all to the case of those two eminent races, the Romans and the Franks.

Officers and men manifested much enthusiasm in conforming to the plan of the King; (and he testified to his satisfaction on learning that the majority of the soldiers who composed the four companies who at first crossed to America under the command of Tracy, and the regiment of Carignan should exhibit so much disposition to take up their abode in the country.) Immediately this fair country exercised its charm upon them. They already knew also that the Government would recompense them for their zeal by showing them special favour and by aiding them in every way possible; that it would furnish them with large grants of land, with the necessities of life, with ready money for the establishing of homes, and with wives. The military operations were hardly finished when one witnessed the settlement of a great number of these soldiers. In the autumn of 1666, six captains of the Carignan regiment, and ten subalterns, lieutenants or ensigns, took up homes. The following year the intendant writes to the minister: "M. de Tracy told you that there was hope that several officers and soldiers would decide to settle in the country. He will not have told you of what has happened since his departure; that already two captains of the Carignan-Salières regiment have married two young women of the country, and that a lieutenant and four ensigns are conferring with their sweethearts with a view to the same end. . . . I regard them as already as good as engaged, and I desire to say that all those of whom I have spoken, whether married or unmarried are labouring at this moment to improve the habitations which I gave them; that the two captains employing on their property the best soldiers of their companies, and the subalterns those whom their superior officers assigned to them. . . . There will be much clearing done during the next winter. The soldiers imitate