

Mr. PUGSLEY: I did not limit it to the present pay of the soldiers.

Mr. NESBITT: That would create chaos in the labour industry of the country, which would be a very bad thing, and, furthermore, the men could not live on the wages now being paid to the soldiers at the front; but I very strongly recommend that, either in this Bill or by some other means, the pay of the men going to the front should be materially increased. I see no reason on earth why this should not be done, and I am quite sure that it is not in proportion to the pay of other classes throughout the length and breadth of the country. If there is any one class in the world, at the present time, that should be well paid, it is the men who go to the front. It is not necessary for them to have more money while they are actually on the fighting line, but the money could be saved for them so as to give them a start in life after they return. Now is the time to arrange that. We should not postpone it. I think the Government should take that into consideration at once, whether in connection with this Bill or not, I am not going to say, but provision should be made that the men who go to the fighting line should be more adequately compensated.

Mr. GRAHAM: The hon. gentleman from North Oxford (Mr. Nesbitt) has touched two very important points. Broadly speaking, we have to feed, equip, and finance the men at the front. We also have to feed and finance ourselves, and send as much food to the Allies, in addition, as we possibly can spare. Any measure that does not provide for all these contingencies is only a partial means of meeting the requirements of the situation. It becomes more and more evident to me, as the discussion of this Bill proceeds, that two things should have been done. First, there should have been a registration, or an inventory taken, of all our powers, including men and women, our financial, agricultural and industrial powers, and everything else. I have been supporting this Bill, and intend to do so, but if another measure is not introduced it will only deal with one phase of the requirements. I contend that another measure should be before the members of the House now, to enable them to intelligently discuss this Bill. Referring for a moment to the question of registration, in the United States they have a registration, not only of the men but of the women. The women of the United States between

[Mr. Nesbitt.]

certain ages have registered just as the men have, and each carries a card.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: Is that required by law?

Mr. GRAHAM: I think it is.

Mr. NESBITT: No, it is voluntary.

Mr. GRAHAM: They are all doing it, anyway. They are getting the combined strength of the men and women of the United States, for the purpose of this war. That makes it evident that there should be another measure put through the House almost conjointly with this one, in reference to food control, which, though perhaps not just as essential, is only secondary in importance to this measure. The women take a very important part, as the food controller has ascertained and recognized. With a Bill to provide for the registration of all other powers, as well as this manpower Bill, we would be in a position to know, at every step, what we were doing.

The reason for that assertion of mine has been made evident here today by the remarks of the members for Chambly and Vercheres (Mr. Rainville), St. John (Mr. Pugsley), North Oxford (Mr. Nesbitt), and Edmonton (Mr. Oliver). In fact, all the speakers referred to the necessity of having men spared for agricultural purposes. If we had a full inventory of our powers we would know just what we had to start with. At present no one knows what raw material we have to work on, even in respect to this Bill. It is true that we have information based on some old census returns, but we have no definite figures as to what our raw material is in the way of man-power.

The necessity for the Bill, which, as I have suggested, should be passed concurrently with this one, has also been made evident to-day. The man who cannot go to the front ought to do something else, and that something else ought to be found for him, or pointed out to him by statute. It will be idle for us to say to one man: you must go to the front, and then excuse another man and let him go home if there be some other place in which he can do better work. The ordinary principle of compulsory service could not, to my mind, be worked out in respect to farm labour. You can compel men to do almost anything within reason when they are under military control and gathered together in numbers under the authority of officers, but you cannot compel one or two men on a farm to do this