

this out and see if we can satisfy the demand that has been made.

Mr. MEIGHEN: He cannot make a living on the one quarter section, but neither can the other fellow's son.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): Yes, he can, because he is not dependent entirely on the quarter section. Nine times out of ten they have a ranch, a leasehold and a considerable number of cattle; and there is no doubt that the ownership of a quarter section is a good influence upon the younger generation; it makes them feel they have a real stake in the country. I fancy that this will work out all right, but I would not want to extend it to any large area. You would find it difficult to discriminate, as we are doing here, if it were made of general application.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Suppose a man and his family are ranching in a purely ranching country, the father having taken a homestead there because he wanted to have a central point round which his family would gather. Within nine miles there is no homestead available; it is all ranch land, but twenty miles away there is. Now, another fellow is ranching within nine miles of that place twenty miles distant, and the first man's sons cannot get that other homestead. It is not fair.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): That is the general limitation in the act with respect to the son of a farmer.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I thought there was something under which a man within nine miles had some advantage over the rest, but I cannot just recall what it is.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): He did not need, for example, to build a home upon his land.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Certainly; that is reasonable, but that does not justify this. I knew there was a case in point, and I am now reminded of it: A man has a family of boys, and if one of them homesteads within nine miles he is not obliged to build a house, because he can live at home. But then he is not given a preference in the matter of selection of a homestead, over the family of another fellow who is only a few miles away. The one man gets a homestead in a purely ranching country. That is what he ought to do; that is where he ought to go to ranch; but because he went there his family is debarred from going into another district and taking a homestead of good land, while the farmers' sons who happen to be in that

[Mr. C. A. Stewart.]

district get it. I think the minister will find he will be in hot water over it.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): They are not debarred from going out and getting a homestead anywhere, but for this particular purpose they are.

Mr. MEIGHEN: They are in this particular.

Mr. EVANS: This land was pretty well settled at one time. When the people went away did they leave the land unpatented, or is it not very largely held by private parties now?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): A great deal of it that has been abandoned has never been proved up. I can quite appreciate the suggestion that men who are in there ranching or farming might want a privilege of this kind for their children in order to keep them in the district. A family can run a ranch at much less expense if they do not have to employ hired help. Of course it is as well to have the son in the vicinity, because he does not have to carry out all the improvements that are required to prove up if he goes out on his own account and leaves the locality in which the family reside. In many cases there may not be desirable land within nine miles of the ranch, and it is only where there happens to be land that will pass inspection that this provision will apply. I do not encourage the taking out of such land as homesteads; as a matter of fact, I think it would have been well if that country had been retained purely for the purposes of ranching and had not been given to homesteading at all. I am now speaking of areas that do not lend themselves to agricultural purposes.

Mr. KELLNER: Does the minister think a quarter of that land would be worth taking if the applicant had other lands, say seven or eight miles distant? Would one quarter of it be of any use to him?

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): I think in the cases we will recommend it will be, because they will possibly start the nucleus of a new ranch, possibly on a smaller basis. It will permit the working of the area by the family themselves. I think the men who are in the locality and know the situation fairly well believe that this is worth while trying out, and I have myself given it some considerable thought. I want to say frankly that I was very prejudiced about this at first, because I have been doing my level best in these particular areas to get them back into ranching as fast as possible, believing that that is the only occupation to follow in some