

other way. The Government is convinced that such a method of selection would be unwise, and even disastrous, under present conditions and having regard to the number of men required. We propose not to change or enlarge the compulsory principle, but merely to provide that selection shall not be made by ballot, that is, by blind chance. We are convinced that the selection should be based upon an intelligent consideration of the country's needs and conditions. We must take into account the necessities of agriculture, of commerce, and of industry. Those who in their present occupations are rendering better service to the state than by enrolment in the Canadian Expeditionary Force must not be selected for military service. There is need for men at the front; there is also need for men at home. The nation's activities essential for winning the war must be maintained. Thus, the only new feature proposed is in the method of selection. The compulsory clauses in this Bill are precisely of the same character, and based upon the same principles, as those which have been in force in this country since 1868.

It is further asked why the new method of selection could not have been accomplished by an amendment to the Militia Act. We considered that very carefully. It would have been necessary to amend, perhaps, a dozen or a score of clauses, so many at least that the legislation would have been less effective, less clear and more confused. The same course has been taken in Great Britain and in New Zealand.

INVITES EARNEST ATTENTION.

The provisions of the Bill have been very carefully considered. We desire that they shall be most attentively studied. I do not doubt that on some matters there may be room for argument and suggestion. We are prepared to listen most carefully to all suggestions, provided they are reasonable and do not affect the efficiency of the measure.

The first provision to which I ask the attention of the House is section 13, subsection 4, of the Bill, which provides that the reinforcements to be raised under this Bill shall not exceed 100,000, between the ages of 20 and 45. The number of men in Canada between these ages, by the census of 1911, and other information of a like character, in respect to the possibility of raising 50,000 or 100,000 men, will be communicated to the House on the second reading*. I hope that the information can be presented to the House in a form which will carry conviction. It is certainly apparent to me, from the information which I have already obtained, that there ought to be no difficulty in providing reinforcements of at least 100,000 men, and probably a number even in excess of that. Before proceeding with the explanation of section 1, perhaps I should give to the House the recital, or preamble, on which the Bill is based. It is as follows:—

Whereas by section ten of the Militia Act, chapter forty-one of the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1906, it is enacted as follows:—

"All the male inhabitants of Canada, of the age of eighteen years and upwards, and under sixty, not exempt or disqualified by law, and being British subjects, shall be liable to service in the Militia: Provided that the Governor-General may require all the male inhabitants of Canada, capable of bearing arms, to serve in the case of a levee en masse.

*(See Page 22).