

Empire may be involved in defence of its national honour. It, therefore, becomes the part of British statesmen, using the term British in the widest sense, to do our utmost, in order to provide against a recurrence of a possible contingency of this kind, to retain our own British population within the confines of the British Empire.

As to the best methods to adopt in locating our own Canadian soldiers on our lands—and this, of course, should be our first duty—there undoubtedly is a great diversity and an honest difference of opinion.

Having had the benefit of the views of some of the representatives of the various provincial governments who were assembled at Ottawa in a conference at the invitation of the Prime Minister of this country some few months ago, having a knowledge of the ideas of these gentlemen, having learned of the legislation that has been adopted by some of the provinces regarding the location of returned soldiers and the contemplated legislation on the part of others, the policy decided upon by this Government is, in concrete form, before the House in this resolution, which will be further elaborated in the Bill to be founded on it.

But, before going into the explanation, permit me briefly to refer to some of the legislation, and some of the policies that have been adopted by other British Dominions.

In the session of 1915 the Legislature of New Zealand passed an Act which was confined solely to the locating of New Zealand soldiers who, resident in New Zealand at the outbreak of war, enlisted in the New Zealand Expeditionary Force. In the session of 1916 that Act was amended and widened so as to include those who, resident in New Zealand at the outbreak of war, enlisted in the British Expeditionary Force. It did not go as far as our contemplated legislation, which includes the forces of the whole British Empire. Their legislation provided that the Act should be administered by a Land Board, the regulations recommended by which should be approved by the Minister of Lands. It is estimated that in New Zealand they have about 500,000 acres of lands available, or which may be made available by the expenditure of a certain amount of money, for the locating of returned soldiers. This land is to be disposed of by two methods, not, as in our contemplated legislation, by a free land grant, but by a long term lease or by a sale.

If a soldier in New Zealand, under their legislation, desires to secure his land by leasehold, he may do so by paying as a rental $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the total cost of the land as estimated by the Land Board. Should he desire to buy the land, he may do so by paying as a first payment 5 per cent of the total cost of the land, the balance of the payments to be spread over a term of years to be determined in each case by the Land Board, the unpaid balances to bear a rate of interest of five per cent per annum. There does not seem to have been any discrimination in the legislation of New Zealand as between the experienced and the inexperienced farmer, and no provision is made for giving agricultural education to the inexperienced farmer. While not at all desirous of criticising adversely the legislation of a sister dominion, I would go so far as to say that were we to introduce legislation by means of which we should grant money, \$1,500, \$2,000, \$2,500, or whatever it might be, to an absolutely green hand and put him on the land, we should be courting disaster and wasting public money. This, then, is the manner in which the returned soldier secures land under the New Zealand legislation: either by lease or by purchase. But their legislation provides for financial assistance by way of loan not to exceed in any one case £500. This money advance, in the words of the statute, is to bear a reasonable rate of interest to be decided by the Minister of Lands. It is for the purpose of providing equipment and improvements on the farm, and the soldier who purchases stock and implements will give as collateral security a bill of sale upon the stock or implements. Briefly, this is the legislation that has been enacted by New Zealand, the administration of which, as I say, is to be under a set of regulations.

Australia also has had in contemplation a land settlement policy for returned soldiers. In February, 1916, a conference was held at the city of Melbourne which lasted two days, in which all phases of the land settlement policy of returned soldiers were discussed. It was participated in by representatives of the various state governments and of the Commonwealth Government. They passed a series of resolutions setting forth the views of that conference and these resolutions became the basis of a subsequent conference which has recently been held, at which the state governments