

—must be passed by the qualification boards as fit settlers before they come in for the benefits of the Act.

Mr. PEDLOW: I understood the minister to say before that they were not entitled to these benefits.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I did not say they were not entitled. I think even in this Act they are still included in the term "settler," but the practice has been not to admit them to the benefits of the Act for the reason that they cannot qualify for the rough and strenuous duties of settlers. Even in the case of widows the very greatest difficulties are encountered. Frequently they are very anxious to enter upon the land and it is hard to refuse them, but it is only one in a large number that should be encouraged to go upon the land, and that may succeed if she attempted to do so. There is another grave difficulty in the case of women. A woman may shortly marry and we find as a fact that they do. More widows than one who came under the Act and got all its benefits married soldiers. In each of these cases there was one family with double benefits.

Mr. PEDLOW: That is quite right.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Yes, but I think it is much better to distribute the help which the State is able to give and which is going to be heavy enough, we all admit. I rather believe in a fair system of distribution than doubling in this manner. If such a woman's husband died and he left her an estate she might marry another soldier and double up again.

Mr. PEDLOW: There is nothing more wrong in a nursing sister marrying a soldier and having two grants of land than there would be in a family having five sons each obtaining a grant.

Mr. MEIGHEN: The hon. member must surely perceive that where you have one soldier married you have only one settler. The purpose of the Act is to encourage settlement on the land, and where you have four sons you have four potential families and four distinct settlers. There is all the difference in the world between that and the proposition of the hon. member.

Mr. PEDLOW: The hon. member for Victoria (Mr. White) suggests that this is one example of collective bargaining which the Government might very well endorse.

Mr. BLAKE: Will members of the Royal Air Force, especially those who did not get away from Canada, come under this Act?

Mr. MEIGHEN: All those who got away although they were members of the British Royal Air Force were included, but those who did not get away from Canada are just in the same position as others who did not get away: They are not included.

Mr. BLAKE: I think that is a matter that should be given consideration. A lot of men are kept in Canada not because they wanted to be but because they could not help themselves. Their hearts were just as right as those of the boys who went over.

Mr. MEIGHEN: That applies to the hon. member himself.

Mr. BLAKE: They should have the same right. They have lost their time, and their business is wrecked. If they are qualified and prepared to go on the land, they should be given the same consideration as those who did go over.

Mr. MEIGHEN: They did lose some time, but they were not really taken from their business in the same sense as the men who went overseas. In the order of dealing with these men, the most deserving class must be taken first. Those who find it most difficult to rehabilitate themselves are usually the most deserving class.

The CHAIRMAN: Shall the section be adopted?

Mr. MAHARG: I thought I heard the minister say that he was prepared to let this stand?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Yes, that stands.

On section 3—Soldier Settlement Board continued:

Mr. McKENZIE: Perhaps the minister might tell us what demarcation there is between his own department in dealing with the returned soldier and the Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment Department?

Mr. MEIGHEN: The Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment Department deals with disabled soldiers. This has to do with land settlement and the qualifications of soldiers for it.

Section agreed to.

On section 5—officers, clerks and employees:

Mr. PEDLOW: What salaries will be paid to these officials?