

CANADA

House of Commons Debates

OFFICIAL REPORT.

Saturday, May 28, 1921

The House met at Two o'clock.

REPORTS AND PAPERS

Draft conventions and recommendations of the International Labour Conference at Washington, 1919, and the International Labour Conference at Geneva, 1920, with memorandum from the Labour Department.—Right Hon. Mr. Doherty.

Papers, correspondence and copy of Order in Council in connection with the sale of His Majesty's Canadian ship Niobe and submarines.—Hon. Mr. Ballantyne.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PRINTING

On motion of Mr. J. A. Currie (North Simcoe), the second report of the Joint Committee of both Houses on the Printing of Parliament was concurred in.

PRIVATE BILL

FIRST AND SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 218 (from the Senate) for the relief of Susan Lee Johnson Bell,—Mr. McMaster.

SOLDIERS' RE-ESTABLISHMENT AND PENSIONS

Mr. HUME CRONYN (London) moved:

That the third and final report of the Special Committee on Pensions, Insurance, and Re-establishment be considered and that the recommendations contained therein be commended to the consideration of the Government.

He said: In rising to make this motion I must reaffirm the difficulty expressed on a similar occasion last session. After being immersed for ten weeks in practically one subject, although with an infinite variety of detail; after listening to evidence which will fill a large volume; after wrestling with problems which although world-wide nevertheless affect, and in some respects vitally, the position of the returned soldier in Can-

ada, and after finding oneself baffled despite the fullest discussion and consideration in reaching a full solution of these, it is hard to know how to present the case to the House.

Believing as I do that the report will receive the approval of the great majority of the members, it seems almost futile to weary them with explanations, but perhaps it is due to the country, to the returned man and to the committee itself that some expansion of the report should be made.

After the usual opening which recites the facts of the committee's deliberations, and the many suggestions submitted to it, the report gives an epitome of what this country has done for the returned man since he bade good-bye to his fighting unit. This summary mentions first the amount expended on war gratuities, including those paid to Canadians who fought with the Imperial forces, and indicates that at the end of the last fiscal year there was paid out on this account, without including cost of administration, in the neighborhood of \$164,000,000. This money was expended by the Department of Militia and Defence and apparently no separate account was kept of the cost incurred in disbursing so large a sum among many hundreds of thousands of applicants.

Next on the list are placed the pensions paid since the beginning of the war, which with the cost of administration have amounted to the large total of about \$90,000,000.

The expenditures connected with re-establishment have been even greater than that on pensions, nor will this appear surprising when the list of the activities of the Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment are considered. Starting with medical treatment from the inception of the Hospitals Commission and continued to the present day there come in review: Vocational training, pay and allowances to those