

pended under the supervision of the board, and all expenditure made under the terms of this resolution to be paid out of such moneys as Parliament may appropriate for the purpose.

Hon. W. J. ROCHE (Minister of the Interior): I presume the House will expect some explanation in regard to this resolution, the subject matter of which, the members will agree, is of very great importance not only to the returned soldiers whom it is intended to benefit and assist, but also to the people of our country generally. Canada is essentially an agricultural country. We have millions of acres of unsettled and unproductive land and we require agricultural population in order to reap the benefit of our great agricultural resources. We have been holding out as an inducement to secure immigrants for our western lands a free grant of 160 acres of homestead land, together with an additional 160 acres as a pre-emption in what is known as the pre-emption district, namely, certain portions of Alberta and Saskatchewan, at \$3 an acre, subject to specified settlement conditions. This has resulted in attracting to our western prairies tens of thousands of settlers who otherwise might not have located in Canada. They have come from almost every civilized country in the world from which we cared to receive immigrants. They have, with but very few exceptions, unade good, law-abiding citizens and successful farmers. Fortunately for us, however, in this period of national crisis, we have had the preponderance of our population Canadian and British-born. It is therefore, in my opinion, of the greatest importance, not only from a sentimental but also from a national and economic standpoint, that we should maintain, to as great an extent as possible, the British element in our population. Those countries that have experienced great wars in years gone by have found that after the signing of peace a period of unrest has followed, which culminated finally in an emigration to a greater or lesser extent from these countries. Having this in view, the British Government, although most desirous to retain their own soldier population in their own country and with this object in view have in contemplation a land settlement policy of their own, are desirous, in order to retain the British population within the British Empire, of securing the co-operation of the overseas British Dominions. About one year ago, Sir Rider Haggard, in an honorary capacity, representing the Royal Colonial

[Mr. Roche.]

Institute visited the overseas Dominions for the purpose of seeing first-hand what facilities, if any, were to be afforded ex-service men of the British Isles for locating upon lands in the British Dominions; and while his mission was in no sense an official mission in so far as the Government was concerned, still it was undertaken with their knowledge and consent, and, personally, I am of the opinion that the report of his mission played at least some part in the calling of the recent Imperial conference wherein representatives of the various British Dominions and the Imperial Government conferred on questions of great Imperial importance, chief amongst which was emigration and the various policies for settlement of returned soldiers. After the Boer war, the usual period of unrest followed in England, which resulted in 1903 in 259,000 of her sons locating in other lands. Of this number 123,000 located in the United States of America and were lost to the Empire. When the bugle call resounded throughout the Empire after the outbreak of the present war summoning her sons to the defence of those principles for which the British Empire stood, a comparatively small percentage of those so alienated responded to the call. And why? Because they had lost, in the meantime, their British citizenship, because another country had claimed them, because they had entered into large business engagements and contracted family ties with those of a country other than their own, and so had lost either the inclination or the ability to do battle on behalf of the country of their birth. How different it was with those who had located in the British Dominions, in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the other British possessions! The splendid response made by Canada, especially in the earlier stages of the war, was largely attributable to the British element of our population, and so it was in the other British Dominions. While we all earnestly hope and pray that this may be the last great war in which our Empire will be engaged—and this one has been thrust upon it—still we must realize that, so long as selfishness and misguided ambitions direct men's actions, so long as world-domination and conquest are the guiding principles of the life of any nation, so long as the pernicious doctrine that might is right is inculcated into any considerable number of people having both the inclination and power to enforce that doctrine, so long must we look for disturbances of the world's peace, in which, perchance, our