

## INTRODUCTION

---

Those citizens of British Columbia, whose military duty to the Empire has called them beyond the Province's borders, would, under the ordinary Election Act, be debarred from voting. But recognizing that over 30,000 men from this thinly populated Province have given up their vocation and residence to answer the call of honour, the Government did not wish to settle the problems confronting the people of British Columbia without hearing from as many voters as possible. Accordingly, the Elections Act was amended to permit the **sailors and soldiers to vote**. The soldiers, therefore, are given the unusual opportunity of expressing their wishes on the various questions of the day through the ballot.

Not only has the Government retained for the soldiers their votes, however. An Act has been passed **preventing lawsuits against soldiers** from proceeding during the war; while mining men, lumber men, land holders and others have by special legislation been **protected from losing their holdings** during the war. Arrangements by special legislation have also been made for giving every returned soldier a **grant of land** on conditions not yet entirely drafted, but which will be specially suited to the soldiers' needs. In addition to this and other legislation in the interests of the men on military duty, the Provincial Government has appointed a **Returned Soldiers' Aid Commission**, which has been caring for the few soldiers returned so far, and is preparing to grapple with the situation which will arise when thousands of men return together at the end of the war.

Following is a summary of the principal steps taken by the Government in British Columbia in the interests of the men on naval and military duty. Wherever the word soldier is used in these Acts, a clause was inserted defining the word so as to include sailors.