

if I did not, I desire to suggest now, that instead of a permanent reservation to continue until three years after the war being made, provision be made that reservations may from time to time be made for the purpose of giving soldier settlers priority, but that any such reservation shall not continue for a longer period than six months. That would give the soldier settler priority during the period of six months, but it would not hold back other settlement awaiting the time when the soldier settler might find it possible to take advantage of the provisions of this Bill.

Mr. ROCHE: I think the object is that this power should be exercised with discretion by the commissioners. They need not necessarily place the reservation on certain lands for three years. It was deemed advisable, however, to stipulate that no land should be reserved for a longer period than three years after the close of the war, because we were convinced that any person taking advantage of this legislation would do so within that time. Of course, it would not be wise to lock up any large reservation for a period of two or three years and say that nobody should go in there. I think the commissioners would be guided largely by the number of applications they received from returned soldiers to go on the land. For instance, after a certain number of applications had been received they would ask that a certain township, we will say, be reserved, and the soldiers would have priority for a certain length of time. I do not suppose that the commissioners, as soon as this legislation comes into force, would go out and select a large area of land and say that they were going to make a reservation of that land for three years for the returned soldiers. We set three years as the maximum, but of course it might be very much less than that. The commissioners will operate under regulations to be approved by the Governor in Council, and I think they will take the view that I have suggested.

Mr. OLIVER: The wording of the section places the matter under the direction of the minister, and after the minister's declaration of policy I have no objection to this power being given; but my understanding is that the policy of the department will be as stated by the minister a moment ago.

Mr. TURRIFF: What is the idea of the Government extending this privilege to returned soldiers from all parts of the Em-

[Mr. Oliver.]

pire? Why should Canada undertake the expenditure of the many millions of dollars that this Bill will entail for soldiers from other portions of the Empire? It seems to me that we shall have a pretty big job on our hands looking after our own returned soldiers without making ourselves responsible for the welfare of returned soldiers from other parts of the Empire.

Mr. ROCHE: As I stated when I introduced this legislation, our first duty will undoubtedly be to look after our own returned soldiers, and I fancy that for at least one year after the war we shall have very few returned soldiers coming to us from the armies of Great Britain or our Allies, because the transportation companies will probably require a year to bring home our own soldiers. I understand that Lord Shaughnessy said some time ago that it would take at least ten months after the close of the war to get our own soldiers back to Canada, so I think within that time we need not look for any immigration. I hope the hon. gentleman's expectations in one respect may be realized; so many of his colleagues, and many who are not his colleagues, have expressed the conviction that comparatively few of our own soldiers will go on the land no matter how attractive the inducements may be. At all events, it is certain that we will not be rushed into an expenditure of millions in looking after our soldiers in this way. They will have to show their bona fides to the commission, and the commission will satisfy themselves that the applicant has the experience in agriculture and the other qualifications set forth, before recommending that the loan be advanced by the Government.

Mr. TURRIFF: I would point out that returned soldiers from other parts of the Empire can get to Canada much more easily than they can get home in many cases, and I think many of them will come here direct instead of going home to their own country.

Mr. OLIVER: I wish to draw attention to the last two lines of subsection 3 of section 4:

The minister may grant a free entry for not more than 160 acres subject to such conditions as in the opinion of the Governor in Council are necessary to secure the use of the land for the purpose for which it is granted.

That is to say, the homestead regulations which are embodied in the Dominion Lands Act are to have no parallel in this Act, as the regulations are to be the subject of