

nation's activities essential for winning the war must be maintained. Thus, the only new feature proposed is in the method of selection. The compulsory clauses in this Bill are precisely of the same character, and based upon the same principles, as those which have been in force in this country since 1868.

It is further asked why the new method of selection could not have been accomplished by an amendment to the Militia Act. We considered that very carefully. It would have been necessary to amend, perhaps, a dozen or a score of clauses, so many at least that the legislation would have been less effective, less clear and more confused. The same course has been taken in Great Britain and in New Zealand.

The provisions of the Bill have been very carefully considered. We desire that they shall be most attentively studied. I do not doubt that on some matters there may be room for argument and suggestion. We are prepared to listen most carefully to all suggestions, provided they are reasonable and do not affect the efficiency of the measure.

The first provision to which I ask the attention of the House is section 13, subsection 4, of the Bill, which provides that the reinforcements to be raised under this Bill shall not exceed 100,000 men, between the ages of 20 and 45. The number of men in Canada between these ages, by the census of 1911, and other information of a like character, in respect to the possibility of raising 50,000 or 100,000 men, will be communicated to the House on the second reading. I hope that the information can be presented to the House in a form which will carry conviction. It is certainly apparent to me, from the information which I have already obtained, that there ought to be no difficulty in providing reinforcements of at least 100,000 men, and probably a number even in excess of that. Before proceeding with the explanation of section 1, perhaps I should give to the House the recital, or preamble, on which the Bill is based. It is as follows:—

Whereas by section ten of the Militia Act, chapter forty-one of the Revised Statutes of Canada, 1906, it is enacted as follows:—

"All the male inhabitants of Canada, of the age of eighteen years and upwards, and under sixty, not exempt or disqualified by law, and being British subjects, shall be liable to service in the Militia; Provided that the Governor General may require all the male inhabitants of Canada, capable of bearing arms, to serve in the case of a levée en masse."

And whereas by section sixty-nine of the said Act it is further enacted as follows:—

"The Governor in Council may place the Militia, or any part thereof, on active service anywhere in Canada, and also beyond Canada, for the defence thereof, at any time when it appears advisable so to do by reason of emergency."

And whereas by the said Act it is further enacted that, if at any time enough men do not volunteer to complete the quota required, the men so liable to serve shall be drafted by ballot;

And whereas to maintain and support the Canadian Expeditionary Force now engaged in active service overseas for the defence and security of Canada, the preservation of the Empire and of human liberty, it is necessary to provide reinforcements for such Expeditionary Force;

And whereas enough men do not volunteer to provide such reinforcements;

And whereas, by reason of the large number of men who have already left agricultural and industrial pursuits in Canada to join such Expeditionary Force as volunteers, and of the necessity of sustaining under such conditions the productivity of the Dominion, it is expedient to secure the men still required, not by ballot as provided in the Militia Act, but by selective draft.

That is the preamble, or recital, upon which the Bill is based. The only important part of section 1 to which I need call attention is that which provides that the Act will be under the administration of the Minister of Justice. It will be under his administration for the reason that there are to be inquiries as to selection and as to exemption or otherwise, and it is not desirable that these inquiries should be conducted by the department which is to take charge of the men when they are once enrolled. These matters are rather of a judicial character until the question of exemption or liability is finally determined. Therefore, the administration of the Act is placed under the Department of Justice.

Section 2 deals with the application of the Bill. No change of any importance is made. The section provides that:—

(1) Every male British subject who comes within one of the classes described in section three of this Act, and who,—

(a) is ordinarily resident in Canada; or

(b) has been at any time since the fourth day of August, 1914, resident in Canada, shall be liable to be called out as hereinafter provided on active service in the Canadian Expeditionary Force for the defence of Canada, either in or beyond Canada, unless he

(a) Comes within the exceptions set out in the Schedule; or

(b) reaches the age of forty-five before the class or subclass to which he belongs, as described in section three is called out.

Such service shall be for the duration of the present war and of demobilization after the conclusion of the war.

(2) Nothing in this Act shall prevent any man from voluntarily enlisting in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, so long as voluntary enlistment in such Force is authorized.