

ceed unless the settler to whom the land is sold by the Government has himself a substantial amount of capital which will represent his stake in the property. Given settlers such as we get from the United States, who have capital of two or three thousand dollars, to whom loan might be made by the Government under some general scheme of land settlement after the war, the adoption of such a suggestion might result very advantageously to the West, and consequently to the whole of Canada. It is a matter to which we should be glad to give consideration.

Mr. OLIVER: I do not want the minister to take what I have said as a suggestion that the Government should go into a general scheme of expropriation of prairie land. I only suggested that, in so far as it might be applicable to this Bill, under which we are really taking hold of a special class of people and giving them special privileges, the expropriation of this unused land, if made would be in order that the land might be acquired at a fixed and reasonable price. But I think the Minister of Finance hardly caught my suggestion, which was that the purchase price of the land would be in addition to the cash amount advanced which would be for the working of the land. Suppose we paid \$20 an acre, which would be a very high price for raw land. That would mean \$3,200 for a quarter-section. That, of course, would add very considerably to the obligations of the Government, but it would, I contend, add to the security of the total investment, and, besides, bring a return very much more quickly than could be expected where the settler spent his \$2,500 and spends four or five years of his time in bringing into production a part of a wooded quarter-section which might be ten, fifteen, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty or seventy-five miles distant from a railroad over roads which might be very difficult. Surely the man who has a quarter-section in open prairie within ten or fifteen miles of a railroad, with good roads leading to it, and who is given an advance of \$2,500, will produce a greater and quicker result to the country and to himself than the man who has to spend \$2,500 in the improvement of a bush or brush farm.

Mr. TURRIFF: I quite agree with the suggestion made by the hon. member for Edmonton (Mr. Oliver.) The Saskatchewan Government, at the last session of the local legislature, took power to do this very thing—that is, to purchase unoccupied lands held by speculators. Their idea is to pur-

chase those lands at their value, or as cheaply as they can, and to re-sell them to adjoining settlers or to any other settlers who are prepared to go on the lands, and to give them thirty years for repayment of the purchase price. The object of the local Government is to get more people into the province and more land brought under cultivation.

Mr. MARCIL: I was not in the House when section 2 was passed, but I understand that my suggestion was adopted and the Bill amended accordingly. I must thank the minister for having accepted my suggestion. I have had the opportunity of learning in Montreal, since this matter was mentioned in the House, that those who did take part in the war either for France or for Belgium would have thought an injustice had been done to them if they had been left out. Although I have never been west of Winnipeg, I have for twenty years been legislating here on matters connected with the West. Since this matter of land settlement has come up, I have had the advantage of being a member of the Returned Soldiers Commission and attending meetings at Montreal, Toronto and Ottawa, and the impression gathered was that unless very substantial inducements are given to the soldiers to go on to the land, very few of them will do so.

In Toronto, we were told that out of six or eight hundred men at that time who had been asked as to what their future intentions were, only two per cent declared their intention of going on the land. The same thing might apply in Montreal. It is no exaggeration to say that the great bulk of those who enlisted in the military forces of Canada came from the cities and towns, and that a relatively small number came from the rural parts. If those returned soldiers are to go on the land, we shall have to give them good inducements. Some valuable suggestions have been made here to-night by the hon. members for Edmonton and Assiniboia. It strikes me as most extraordinary that the Dominion Government should allow large tracts of land to remain unoccupied and uncultivated along the line of any railway in any part where the Government can exercise jurisdiction, and thus compel settlers to go long distances from railroads. The idea of expropriating lands and of giving the soldiers first choice is an excellent one and one well worthy of being looked into. I am sure the House will agree that anything that can be done for the returned soldier will be