

Newfoundland

moved to Hull. I think it was Disraeli who coined the phrase Hull, Hell and Halifax. I would like to know how many of these members of the merchant marine are affected.

Mr. Gregg: I am sorry I have not the figures showing how many there are. I can answer the hon. member in this way, however, that after April 1 the merchant marine of Newfoundland will receive exactly the same benefits as the merchant marine in Canada at that time, and will receive the benefit of any changes which may be made with regard to them in the future.

Mr. Gillis: The hon. member for Royal asked the minister a moment ago if any representations had been made for the lowering of the land requirements under the small holdings section of the Veterans' Land Act. Let me remind him that the house passed a bill, as recommended by the last committee on veterans affairs, in which the land requirement was fixed at one acre. After that was done the provision was rescinded, and the land requirement was stepped up to three acres, a procedure which turned out a lot of veterans in Canada. I thought the hon. member might have forgotten, and I am reminding him, as well as the minister.

This section is giving to the veterans of Newfoundland exactly what our veterans are getting. There is something however I should like to bring to the minister's attention, and that is the provision whereby the Canadian government will bring up to Canadian standards the rates received by veterans who were taken care of under United Kingdom or allied-countries veterans legislation. That is all to the good, so far as Newfoundland is concerned.

However, it also poses a problem which has been before us for many years, with respect to imperial veterans who have been resident in Canada for twenty-five or thirty years. We are now going to extend to Newfoundland veterans all the benefits Canadian veterans have fought for and have received over the years—and I am all for it. It will benefit those who are becoming Canadian citizens on March 31 of this year. But we have in Canada a large number of imperial veterans who came here after the first war. They have been residents of this country; they have been producers and they have been taxpayers. But we have never seen fit to extend to them the rights of Canadian citizenship, so far as veterans legislation is concerned. I suggest the house should give serious consideration to that condition, because it was one of the chief problems before the veterans affairs committee.

Now that we have become generous enough to extend those privileges to people who just now are about to become citizens of this

[Mr. Church.]

country, I think the house should give serious consideration to extending the same privilege to residents of this country who were imperial veterans and who, as I stated earlier, during all those years have been taxpayers and producers. Many of them served in the second war with the Canadian army, either in the veterans guard or in other units.

By accepting pensioners who served in the imperial service and whose pensions were paid by the British government, we are now setting a precedent which should be extended to those imperial veterans who for the last twenty years have been fighting for those things now being written into this agreement.

Mr. Pearkes: Tribute has already been paid to the glorious record of the men of Newfoundland in two world wars. However, I wish to call attention particularly to the application of the war veterans allowance to the men of Newfoundland. What I shall say will tie in with the remarks just made by the hon. member for Cape Breton South. The provision of the War Veterans Allowance Act, in so far as men who served with what is commonly called the imperial forces are concerned, applies in two respects.

In the first instance it applies to those men who were domiciled in Canada some time prior to the outbreak of world war I but who before the outbreak of that war moved from Canada and went to live elsewhere, perhaps in the old country, perhaps in the United States, perhaps in Newfoundland, and then joined the imperial forces. They had left Canada perhaps twelve months before, but they served with the imperial forces and then came back. Those men were Canadians.

Many men from Newfoundland served with the unit which eventually became known as the Royal Newfoundland regiment, but there were also many others who served with the Royal Navy, the Royal Air Force and the Imperial Army. I presume that if they had left Newfoundland to serve in the Royal Navy they would be in the same position as men who had left Canada to serve in the Royal Navy; they would be eligible for war veterans allowance.

Now what happens to the Newfoundlander who left Canada under the conditions prescribed last night by the hon. member for Cape Breton South? The hon. member pointed out that many Newfoundlanders come to Canada at certain seasons of the year to find temporary employment. Is the Newfoundlander who was living in Canada six or twelve months—the actual time does not make any difference—and who went from Canada to join the imperial forces, entitled to a war veterans allowance?

Mr. Mutch: He is now.