

Enclosures.

Question.

SIR CLEMENT KINLOCH COOKE (to ask the Secretary of State for War), Whether the Government have considered the recommendations of the Committee on the civil employment of ex-soldiers in regard to emigration, and more especially the suggestion that it should be possible to make arrangements with the Governments of the great self-governing colonies to advance the moneys necessary to meet the expenses of transportation by insuring repayment from reserve pay or pension; and what steps if any, have been taken to carry out this proposal, and to ascertain the views of the colonies on the subject. (Thursday, 10th March, 1910.)

Answer.

Mr. Secretary HALDANE.—As regards reservists, emigration can only be permitted to a limited extent. As regards soldiers who have completed their engagements, the Army Council would be glad if employment with the Defence Forces of the oversea dominions could be guaranteed for a limited period—say, two years. This would enable the non-commissioned officers and trained soldiers to take up work for which they were fully qualified, and which would be of benefit to the dominions while they were settling down in their new environment. No advances of reserve pay can be made. Facilities for commuting pensions to a certain extent at present exist, but are only granted in cases where employment is assured. No definite steps have been taken to ascertain the views of the dominions and colonies.

SIR,—

War Office, London S.W., 14th July, 1910.

I am commanded by the Army Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 7078/1910, of the 31st March, 1910, on the subject of the emigration of ex-soldiers, and to inform you that the Council would be glad if communications on the subject could be made, as suggested, to the Governments of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. They accordingly take this opportunity of giving an outline of their views on the subject.

2. As regards men who have completed their period of colour service, but who are still serving in the Army Reserve, the Council regret that they are unable, for obvious reasons, to assist or encourage their emigration by offering any inducements (such as advances of reserve pay, &c.), or by countenancing proposals which would tend to hold out similar inducements.

3. A certain small proportion of these reservists have been permitted to reside abroad, under the conditions already put before you in War Office letter numbered 058/3529, dated the 31st December, 1908; but these arrangements can only be regarded as of a temporary nature, and as liable to revision in accordance with the state of the Army Reserve and the requirements of the army at the time.

4. As regards those men who are either by their conditions of service under no obligation to serve in the Army Reserve or who have already fulfilled that obligation, the Council have no desire to discourage their emigration, although in the case of ex-soldiers in receipt of army pensions the Council are unable to give facilities for the commutation of their pensions other than those prescribed in existing regulations.

5. Lord Crewe will doubtless agree with the Council in thinking that it can hardly be to the advantage of the men referred to in the preceding paragraph, or of the dominions in which they intend to settle, that they should be encouraged to emigrate unless there can be held out to them some prospect of employment for which their training in the army has fitted them, at any rate for the period during which they are adapting themselves to their new conditions of life and environment.

6. It must be borne in mind that during their army service they have been withdrawn for varying periods from civil life; and, though their general training may in some cases have fitted them to adapt themselves to changed conditions of life in new countries, such adaptation must necessarily take time.

7. The Council would therefore suggest that this difficulty might be overcome if the Governments of the dominions could see their way to guaranteeing the paid employment of these men in their Permanent Forces for a limited period—say, for the first two years of a man's settlement in the country.

Apart from the pecuniary assistance which such employment would afford at the commencement of their life under altered conditions, such a scheme would tend to identify them from the outset with the country of their adoption.

8. Moreover, the Council are of opinion that this proposal would be beneficial to the dominions concerned from a military point of view, as these men would form a valuable nucleus of trained soldiers, on which to found the more extensive systems of defence which appear to be foreshadowed by recent Imperial Conferences and local legislation. Such a nucleus would, it is thought, tend to improve the training and discipline, and to promote the cohesion and military solidarity of the local Forces.

9. The Council would be glad to learn the views of the Governments concerned on these proposals; and should such a scheme be welcomed, they would be prepared to assist by furnishing the military records and characters of any men selected for such employment, and by engaging to recommend only the best men for enrolment in the local Forces.

I am, &c.,

E. W. D. WARD.

The Under-Secretary of State, Colonial Office, London S.W.

SIR,—

War Office, London S.W., 31st December, 1908.

In reply to your letter, No. 45686/1908, dated the 21st instant, on the subject of enlistment into the Canadian Forces of army reservists residing in the Canadian Dominion, in addition to those reservists who belong to the Royal Engineers, I am commanded by the Army Council to inform you that they