

11. Clause 12 (2) of the Bill : Resolved, That the words " exceeding ten acres in extent " be struck out, the committee being of opinion that an area of 10 acres is much too large to be subdivided without the approval of the Commission ; and, further, that every subdivision should be subject to approval.

12. Clause 20 : That the words " not exceeding £5,000 " be struck out, the committee being of opinion that a town-planning scheme having the public health, comfort, and amenity for its object, and after passing through all stages of inquiry and investigation as required by the Act, should not necessitate a poll of the ratepayers.

The committee, however, favours the retention of the safeguard provided by the Bill where 10 per centum of the ratepayers may demand a poll.

Wellington, 22nd May, 1919.

C. J. PARR, Chairman.

[NOTE. The words in italics were added by the Conference.]

COMMITTEE NO. 3 (IMPROVEMENT OF TOWNS AND CITIES) AND COMMITTEE NO. 5 (RESERVES, PARKS, DOMAINS, ETC.).

I have to report that Committee No. 3, appointed to consider the improvement of towns and cities, and Committee No. 5, appointed to consider reserves for public utilities, parks, domains, &c., amalgamated.

Considerable difficulty was experienced getting meetings of the committee together, but at a meeting held on Thursday evening the questions referred to the committee were discussed. It was felt that as these matters comprised nearly the whole of the scheme of garden cities and suburbs it was hopeless for the committee in the time at its disposal to discuss details.

The committee heartily approves of the general principles of town-planning, and trusts that legislation will soon be passed which will give local authorities power to deal with the various matters urgently required for the improvement of towns, the providing of adequate reserves for public utilities, parks, &c.

The question of providing small areas for playgrounds for children near the places of residence in addition to the larger parks and domains was brought up, and the following resolution was carried : " That on the passing of the Act it shall be compulsory, when any area exceeding 5 acres is cut up for subdivision, for the owner to make over to the local body as a public reserve 10 per cent. at least of the total saleable areas so subdivided."

Wellington, 23rd May, 1919.

CHAS. CHILTON, Chairman.

COMMITTEE NO. 4 (THE HOUSING PROBLEM) AND COMMITTEE NO. 10 (TOWN-PLANNING AS IT AFFECTS THE RETURNED SOLDIER AND THE WORKER).

1. The committee reports that there is ample evidence that a pronounced shortage of houses, numbering many thousands, exists throughout the Dominion.

2. That many of the existing houses are not up to a standard of civilized comfort, a fact which intensifies the acuteness of the problem.

3. We recommend that the Government recognize the housing shortage as one of pressing national necessity, and that the Government co-operate with the local authorities in carrying out housing schemes on town-planning lines ; that the State undertake to finance the schemes, while leaving a reasonable degree of initiative and subsequent full control in the hands of the municipalities.

4. That the Government subsidize local bodies up to one-third of the cost of approved building schemes.

5. That the Government be recommended to at once set aside the sum of £1,000,000 as a subsidy to carry out the above resolution.

6. That the Government be earnestly requested to undertake the building of a garden city on the lines laid down by Mr. S. Hurst Seager in his paper. We are of opinion that the housing problem can be materially assisted in this way, that the prosperity of the country will be increased, and the comfort and happiness of the workers secured.

7. That the Government should restore the pre-war railway service as early as possible.

Wellington, 23rd May, 1919.

J. T. PAUL, Chairman.

COMMITTEE NO. 6 (THE FINANCIAL ASPECT OF TOWN-PLANNING).

The committee appointed to consider the financial aspect of the town-planning problem have the honour to report as follows :—

1. That the total cost of the Town-planning Department, including the salary of a town-planning expert, should be paid by the Dominion Government.

2. That the cost of carrying out local schemes should be borne by the districts affected, but the money required should be provided by the Dominion Government at the lowest possible rate of interest, the local authorities concerned being only called upon to pay the interest and sinking fund.

3. That provision should be made for assistance from the Consolidated Fund for some of the smaller local authorities in exceptional circumstances.

4. That clause 24, subsection (2) (d), of the Town-planning Bill be amended to provide for the assessment of all rates required for the payment of interest and sinking fund on the cost of town-planning schemes on the unimproved value of the land.

[NOTE.—Paragraph No. 4 was struck out by the Conference.]