

The Hon. J. M. Hunter, of Queensland, described what had been done for the soldiers by his Government. It was a description of the land that had been taken up, and the number of soldiers that had been placed upon the land. There was no attempt to form village settlements, but separate cottages had been erected, and the men were given financial assistance for tools and equipment, and for housing. The system is that practically proposed by our own Government. It is one with which I am not, nor was the Conference, in sympathy. The details of the scheme, which do not provide for the housing of the soldier in a garden city, need not, I think, be considered in detail.

The paper on Soldier Settlements, by the Hon. Frank Clarke, Victoria, also showed that the Victorian Government had as their prime scheme, the lending of money to soldiers up to £500, and he said that as the cheapest houses of to-day cost at least £300, very little of the £500 is left for other improvements and for the purchase of stock. In order to mitigate this situation, the Board has struck upon a plan of loading on to the cost of land some of the cost of the house, so that a man may build a £300 house upon his block, and yet have deducted from his £500 only the sum of £100, the rest being added to the land value for which he has 36 years to pay, but it can be seen that whatever detailed arrangements are made the fact remains that the soldier is burdened with a debt on which he must pay the interest and sinking fund.

Mr. Clarke acknowledged that in California as many as 50 per cent. of the original holders of blocks had been failures, and he, therefore, claimed that as the Victorian failures had only so far been 20 per cent., the settlement may be regarded as successful. His Ministry also proposed to found model villages, but although he sought the advice of town planning experts he did not feel justified in taking up the scheme, because the land had already been surveyed, and "it would be extremely expensive to throw aside the present work and commence all over again." This, of course, was felt by the Conference to be a very mistaken policy, that for the sake of a few hundred pounds in surveyors' fees, the success of the scheme should be jeopardised for all time.

Another paper was read by the Hon. H. N. Barwell, Attorney-General, Minister of Industry, and Minister Controlling Town Planning, South Australia, showing that they were working in South Australia on true town planning lines for the settlement of returned soldiers. They were not providing separate settlements, but were forming garden cities, in which the returned soldiers could be absorbed. This paper was of especial interest to me, as it bore out my contentions, and supported the scheme which I prepared, and which was published some time ago.

Mr. Charles C. Reade, the Government Town Planner of Adelaide, showed an illustration of Mr. Barwell's paper, the very fine garden city which he had designed, and which is to be carried out at Mitcham, a few miles from Adelaide. It was a splendid plan, and South Australia is very fortunate indeed in possessing a man of Mr. Reade's attain-

ments as its professional Town Planner, in charge of the Government Town Planning Department.

To test the feeling of the Conference in respect to these papers expressing such different views, I moved:—"That this Conference is of opinion that the best interests of returned soldiers will be served by founding and completing self-contained garden villages for all classes of the community, including returned soldiers, situated on good land on a railway line, where there is a good water supply, drainage, and electric power. That such villages shall be formed with all the attractions found in large cities in order that workers in all branches of industry may be induced to settle therein, and thus enjoy the amenities of city life while engaged in pastoral, agricultural, or other pursuits."

I am glad to be able to record that this resolution was carried unanimously. I can, therefore, return to New Zealand supported in my views by the members of this very representative Conference, and it is sincerely to be hoped that our Government will be influenced by the opinions of the experts gathered here, and will at once carry out a garden city scheme.

Eminent Doctor's Views

The principles of this resolution were very warmly supported by an eminent surgeon, Dr. Gordon Craig, of Sydney. Dr. Craig was in charge of Sydney's hospital ship, and had been led to give very careful consideration to the returned soldier problem, and in his speech on the question, he said that if they segregated all soldiers in one settlement, they would start talking over their grievances, and the whole thing would be magnified to a degree that would break the whole spirit of the settlement. These garden cities and rural settlements were commercial successes, quite apart from the repatriation question. He moved this motion: "That this Conference is strongly of the opinion that the segregation of returned soldiers is not as desirable as their incorporation among the ordinary members of the community in rural or industrial settlements."

Dr. Craig was very warmly supported by Dr. Price, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Re the "Grand Theatre," Queen Street, Auckland

The Council of the N.Z. Institute of Architects has had before it the evidence in the case of Johns and Son versus Webster and Tonks, which was before the Supreme Court at Auckland in August, 1916, and subsequently before an Arbitrator in 1917, and desires to inform the general public of the following facts:—

- (1) That the statement of defence filed in the Supreme Court alleged, in effect, that,—
 - (a) Architect Mr. B. C. Chilwell, of Auckland, had acted unprofessionally and (b) that the building of the Grand Theatre, Queen Street, Auckland, designed by him was structurally unsafe.