

# SUPPLEMENTARY ORDER PAPER.

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Wednesday, the 23rd Day of August, 1905.

### LAND TENURE AND SETTLEMENT.

The Right Hon. Mr. SEDDON to move, That this House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to deal with the report of the Royal Commission on Lands, and to consider and determine the following and other matters, so that a Bill may be introduced this session:—

1. That the present law permitting lease in perpetuity be repealed, and that in respect to leasing land in the future there be substituted, in respect to rural lands, a lease for not less than fifty or more than ninety-nine years with the right of renewal from time to time, on revaluation, for not less than twenty-one years or more than fifty years, or, failing which, tenants to have full compensation for improvements,—

(a.) Occupation with right of purchase ;

(b.) The present system of purchase for cash ;

(c.) And the other existing tenures to continue—viz., Village settlements ; special settlement associations, improved-farm settlements, occupation leases under “ The Mining Districts Land Occupation Act, 1894,” small grazing-runs ; and in respect to small grazing-runs of Crown land, as provided in “ The Land Act, 1885.” Further, it be a condition that in the future all Crown lands should be thrown open subject to optional system to lease, occupation with right of purchase, purchase on cash payment, irrespective of whether the Crown land contains minerals or not. That in parting with land the State to retain all mineral rights.

2. That, in respect to lessees who now occupy under lease in perpetuity and who have acquired land under “ The Land Act, 1892,” whether they are to have the right to acquire the freehold of their sections at the present market value.

3. That, in respect to lessees who now occupy under lease in perpetuity and who have acquired lands under “ The Land Act, 1892,” whether they are to have the right to acquire the freehold of their sections at the capital value upon which they originally selected, and upon payment of 1 per cent. difference between 4 per cent. and 5 per cent. plus compound interest on 1 per cent. from day of selection, or may the said lessee change the tenure to occupation with right of purchase.

4. Shall lessees under lease in perpetuity of lands acquired under the Land for Settlements Act be allowed to acquire the freehold of their sections, and, if so, shall they so acquire at the present market value, or at the original value, and subject to the other conditions stated in resolutions numbers 2 and 3 hereof. If lessees allowed to purchase, the moneys to be expended in the purchase of other lands for close settlement.

5. That all lessees under the right-of-purchase option or lessees under lease in perpetuity be permitted, after ten years' occupancy and fulfilment of conditions, to pay off one moiety of the capital value of their lands in sums of ten pounds or any multiple of ten pounds upon the first day of January and the first day of July in each year during the currency of the said purchasing clause or leases, the rentals being proportionately reduced.

6. That, should the right to acquire the freehold be granted to lessees under lease in perpetuity, either under “ The Land Act, 1892,” or the Land for Settlements Act, then, in such case, the sections and the areas at present held

by them shall remain as at present, and that no alteration of boundaries, unless it be for cutting up into smaller areas, shall be made unless done by an Act of Parliament passed specially in that behalf. That at all times the owner, or a lessee of the owner, shall reside on the said section and comply with the residential conditions as provided under existing lease in perpetuity, and it shall be unlawful for the Registrar of Deeds to register any transfers that contravene this express condition, or, if done, the title thereto shall be invalidated.

7. That, in the case of Crown lands, the capital value of which does not exceed £1 per acre, the same to be dealt with under conditions that previously existed and which were known as the homestead system.

8. That Native lands be classified the same as Crown lands; that greater facilities be granted for individualising the titles and exchange as between Native owners of land, and that the Land for Settlements Act be applied to surplus land owned by Natives, and that the Native land, like Crown land, be leased for fifty years with the right of renewal from time to time on re-valuation for not less than twenty-one or more than fifty years; and that the law generally in respect to leasing Native lands be amended by extending the period for leasing from twenty-one to fifty years; and that monetary assistance be granted to Natives to enable them to go on their lands, and every effort be made to settle Natives on their lands.

9. That it shall be unlawful for any person, or corporation, or company holding 5,000 acres first-class rural land, or 10,000 acres second-class rural land to purchase and acquire the fee-simple of any more land or to increase the areas owned. If any land in excess of the areas herein limited shall fall in by way of mortgage or by will, the same may be held for five years; if not disposed of by that time the State to have the right to acquire the land at the land-tax value of such lands plus 10 per cent. It shall be unlawful for the Registrar of Deeds to register any transfer of lands to persons, corporations, or companies owning, at the time such transfer is sought, lands to the extent of the areas hereinbefore mentioned, and, if transferred, the title thereto shall be invalidated.

10. That it shall be unlawful for any person or corporation, individual, or company owning urban or suburban lands to the unimproved value of £50,000 to purchase and acquire the fee-simple of any more lands. If any land fall in by way of mortgage or by will, the same may be held for five years. If after that time the same be not disposed of the State may acquire the said land at the then land-tax value. It shall be unlawful for the Registrar of Deeds to register any transfer to any person, corporation, or company owning land to the value hereinbefore stated, and, if done, the title thereto shall be invalidated.

11. That the present system of nominated Land Boards be adhered to, and that each land district be divided into ridings, and a member residing therein and having local knowledge be appointed a member of the Board, and that there should be at least one Crown tenant on each Land Board.

12. That cropping restrictions be relaxed, and Land Boards should have statutory power to relax cropping conditions whenever necessary, and that for overcropping, in lieu of forfeiture Land Boards to have power to impose fine.

13. That residence be continuous for six years under any tenure including land sold for cash. No residential condition to be enforced until reasonable road-access has been provided.

14. That the present ballot system, being the fairest mode of determining who shall become the owner when more than one applicant, shall continue. The present system of grouping and second ballot shall be retained, and the grouping of sections with the means required for the successful occupation be instituted. That a ballot should be taken for first choice of any section on the group. That married men with families shall have preference, and that persons who have in their own right been tenants of the Crown or who parted with the freehold of lands held by them shall be ineligible for ballot for three years.

15. That, in respect to tenants occupying pastoral-runs, tenure for at least twenty-one years should be favourably considered, and that a liberal construction as to improvements be conceded, and that at intervals during each year some portion of the run should be kept free from stock so as to allow the native grass to recover; and in respect to lessees of small grazing-runs at Cheviot, that they be placed on the same footing as tenants on Crown lands holding similar tenures.