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We Welcome Practical Progressives!

Trade increases the wealth and glory of a country; but its real strength and stamina are to be looked for among the cultivators of the land—Lord Chatham.

The Recognized Exponent of Dairying in Canada

VOL. XXXVII.

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NO. 43.

Do Canada's Soldiers Wish to Farm?

Of Some 230,000 Men Interviewed, 105,000 Expressed a Desire to Go on the Land—Land Settlement Scheme Submitted at Ottawa

THE settling of returned soldiers on the land may develop into the biggest problem of the reconstruction period. Of the men who have already returned, few have shown any inclination to go on the land. This tendency of returned men to fight shy of the farm is responsible for the general impression that soldiers do not want to farm. Statistics just made public from Ottawa, however, indicate that a large proportion of the boys "over there" are thinking seriously of the farm. More than 106,000 members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force have expressed the definite wish to take up farming in Canada after the war. This figure was obtained by interviewing 230,000 members of the forced overseas, and indicates that 45.9 per cent of these men wish to go on the land. The actual number of men returning after the war will be much greater. If it should be, for example, 345,000, on the assumption that the same proportion holds true, the number of men desiring to go on the land will be 157,600. These facts and a great many details bearing on them have been compiled by the statistical division of the Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment from the cards issued by the National Service Council to members of the Canadian forced overseas, and signed by them. The facts given represent the men's own statements of their intentions. The Provinces in which they wish to settle are as follows:

Ontario, 35,400; Alberta, 35,072; British Columbia, 15,125; Saskatchewan, 15,103; Nova Scotia, 3,533; Quebec, 2,339; New Brunswick, 2,331; Prince Edward Island, 816; Manitoba, 11,708; Province not stated, 4,518.

Previous Agricultural Experience.
Of these 106,000, the cards disclose that 78,000, or 74 per cent, have had previous agricultural experience. The number of men who have had three years' experience or more is 61,000, or 58 per cent, and the surprising number who have had twenty years' experience is over 11,000, or almost 11 per cent. That this declaration represents a substantial prospective increase in the agricultural population is revealed by the fact that of the 106,000 men who wish to go on the land, fewer than 41,000 were actively engaged in agricultural pursuits at the time of enlistment.

The men were asked to state whether they desired to take advantage of any scheme of assisted agricultural settlement, and almost 96,000, or 89 per cent, stated that they wished to avail themselves of such assistance. The number who declined to accept Government assistance was over 6,000, or about seven per cent. The remainder gave indefinite answers.

A further surprising fact was revealed that practically 60,000 of the 106,000 announced their willingness to work for wages to gain experience. The number who declined to work for wages was over 42,000, but this is easily accounted for by the fact already mentioned that 61,000 have had three years' experience or more. In reference to the distribution of these men it is noted that 72 per cent wish to take up land in the Province from which they enlisted.

Their Financial Condition.
Another question the men were asked to answer was how much money they expected to have at their disposal on their return to Canada. Only 35,000 men answered this question with a sum of money, more than \$6,000 either stating that they had no money or not answering the question. Nevertheless, it was revealed that these 35,000 men would have an aggregate of more than \$13,000,000 at their

disposal after the war. This would make an average for the 38,000 of approximately \$350, or an average for the 106,000 of \$130. These amounts are almost entirely exclusive of deferred pay, and as the cards were signed early in 1917, prior to the voting of three months' pay to every man on his discharge, another \$100 per man can be added, making a total of more than \$24,000,000.

Plan For Land Settlement.
Concurrent with the publication of the fact that 106,000 soldiers have expressed a desire to farm, comes a further announcement from the Government regarding the land settlement schemes of the Government. At time of writing the provincial premiers are in session at Ottawa, and land settlement is one of the questions up for consideration. Although not directly dealing with soldier settlement the memorandum submitted to this conference has the returning men in mind. It is first urged that census should be taken of lands available for settlement, including privately owned wild lands, abandoned farms, leased farms and Crown lands, and later the different Provinces should be divided into land settlement districts, comprising certain limits areas that are similar in character as regards soil, climate, agricultural products, etc.

From the returns received from land owners, lists of lands available for settlement in each district would be compiled, and pamphlets and maps dealing with each district prepared.

Selling Price Fixed.
The selling price of land would be fixed for a term of years by each Province, although a lower price

could be accepted. To prevent owners from fixing an unreasonable or unduly selling prices for their lands each Province should provide for a special Provincial tax on wild lands, abandoned and leased farms, based on the selling price fixed by the owner. Uniform legislation by each Province is suggested. For the purpose of making all wild lands and abandoned farms available for settlement each Province should take power to expropriate them when so required.

Settlers from other parts of Canada would be dealt with by Provincial agencies, but the Federal Government would maintain the agencies required to get suitable settlers from outside Canada, and each Province to state the number and classes of settlers it was prepared to receive and provide for.

To enable suitable settlers to get on the land, the Provincial and Federal Governments both would lend their credit. The Federal credit would be extended only if the regulations determining the class of settlers to be assisted and governing the terms of purchase were approved by the Federal authorities, and the credit would be extended either by direct cash loans, by guaranteeing Provincial land settlement bonds, by joint Federal and Provincial land settlement bonds, and by lodging with the Provincial Federal bonds as security for the issue of Provincial land settlement bonds.

Terms of Purchase.
It is suggested that the purchase price of the land shall not exceed \$4,500, varying a little with the Province; that the settler be required to pay 10 per cent of purchase price at time of sale, and add improvements equal to 10 per cent of purchase price in first year, five per cent second year, 10 per cent third year, and five per cent each in fourth and fifth years. The settler will not be required to pay any portion of purchase price until the third December following his occupation of the farm, and no interest until December of the second year, the rest of the amount due to be amortized and paid in 20 equal payments.

In connection with this policy, the Federal work would be entrusted to five distinct branches, the inspection, quarantine, foreign agencies, publicity and exhibition branches of the Department of Immigration and Colonization. The Provinces would prepare the required inventories of lands, approve the settlers to be assisted, purchase and reseed lands, inspect lands sold, collect moneys due, and insurance of buildings, etc., receive and care for settlers until placed on land, assist settlers with information in new homes and supervise them. The Federal Land Settlement Board suggested would consist of the Minister of Immigration and a representative from each Province, and it would be consultative and advisory, not administrative, meeting once a year.

Further Information Needed.
The suggestions advanced are merely tentative. They are subject to change on fundamental points, and would need to be approved by all the provinces and, before extensive expenditures are made on behalf of any individual, it is generally felt that some means should be approved of testing his probable ability to make good. There is also a chance that many of the 106,000 men, when actually back in Canada, may go back on their previously expressed intention, or it may develop that they merely had in mind the veterans' crisis following the Boer war and wanted to make sure of getting "all that is going." In any case the problem is beginning to assume large proportions.



A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS it seems to Us fitting that a day should be set apart as a day of solemn thanksgiving to Almighty God for the victories that have been won by the Allied Armies and for the Armistice that has been signed by the contending nations,—

Now Know Ye that We by and with the advice of Our Privy Council for Canada have thought fit to appoint and do appoint Sunday, the first day of December in this present year to be observed throughout Our Dominion of Canada as a day of solemn thanksgiving to Almighty God for the victories that have been won by the Allied Armies in the war against the Central powers of Europe and for the Armistice that has been signed by the contending nations involving a general surrender by the enemy.

And We do invite all Our loving subjects throughout Canada to set apart the said day for this purpose.

Of all which Our loving subjects and all others whom these presents may concern, are hereby required to take notice, and governing themselves accordingly.