

The International Re-construction League

Huge Organization Will Undertake World Relief Work

Announcement has been made of what is expected to prove the farthest reaching and most comprehensive war relief organization formed since the beginning of the European conflict. It is the International Reconstruction League. Its honorary president is Charles W. Eliot, President Emeritus of Harvard University, and in its National Committee membership at the present time are included five State Governors, four United States Senators, the Consul General of Serbia, ten heads of American universities and colleges, and editors, bankers, lawyers—all among the most prominent representatives of their professions in the United States.

Three great purposes have inspired the existence of the International Reconstruction League. These are as follows:

(1) Immediate relief work for the suffering war victims of Europe. This work is to be continued so long as the war may last.

(2) American aid for the stricken peoples of Europe when they turn from war to the task of rehabilitation of their devastated homelands.

(3) A plan to educate public opinion as to the practicability of a world-wide arrangement that will

insure a lasting peace, with a view to pledging America to its support.

But the League looks even farther ahead than this and is more widespread in scope and effect. It was the first of the war relief organization to inaugurate remedial measures for American troops called to service on the Mexican border. This took the form of an appeal for the equipment and maintenance of the Border Hospital at Brownsville, Texas. This hospital at present is a meagre institution kept in existence by the Misses Kelly, daughters of an army officer, but it is the only place of the kind within 100 miles of this southernmost border town. It is the purpose of the League to establish this hospital for any emergency that may arise. Also, the League already has arranged to hold a bazaar in New York City in December for hospital and relief work for Americans in Mexico, should conditions warrant it.

Still another future plan of this League is for permanent organization that will find it prepared to undertake relief work instantly in any part of the world where assistance, owing to war or any other disaster, may be necessary. It is hoped to have the President of the United States and all the living ex-

Presidents as an Advisory Committee, the Governor of each State automatically the Chairman of his State Committee and representative and closely co-operating Committees in the various foreign countries. Each State of the Union will be thoroughly organized with a State Secretary in active charge. Thus, in the event of fire, flood, earthquake or any disaster, the League machinery may be set at once in motion with quick and adequate response to meet any emergency.

The International Reconstruction League has been in existence less than a year. In that time, however, its efforts have been directed not only to preliminary and future organization, but to the relief of distress in the Allied countries. Its first appeal was for the children—the innocent, unoffending little victims of war. Its next appeal was for the soldiers blinded in battle. It is now in the midst of an appeal not only for these two classes but for men maimed for life in battle.

The idea of this League was conceived by John Moffatt, by whom the National Allied Relief Committee and the Committee of Mercy were formed. Mr. Moffatt also is an executive of the American Women's War Relief Fund, the Charities Committee and the French Heroes' Fund.

All contributions may be sent to Treasurer, The International Reconstruction League, 200 Fifth Avenue, Room 356, New York City.

Australia's Land Settlement Plan

Comprehensive Plan for Settlement of Returned Soldiers

Australian newspapers contain the details of the conference held in Melbourne recently between Federal and State representatives to consider a number of the aspects of the problem presented by the need for absorbing the returned soldiers. The conference adopted a complete scheme for the settlement of soldiers and their dependents on the land. The details of the scheme are given below in a series of resolutions, which were agreed to by the conference. It is estimated that the scheme will result in the placing of about 42,000 families on the land during the next three years.

The conference of Federal and State representatives adopted the following resolutions with regard to land settlement:

(1) The Government of the Commonwealth and the states should co-operate in the promotion of a scheme for the settlement of willing and suitable returned soldiers upon the land.

(2) The provision of the land will rest with the states. Such land is to be made available to those who were dependent upon soldiers, as well as to returned soldiers.

The Federal Government will provide the funds by way of loans to the states for the purposes of making advances, through the agricultural banks or similar government institutions, against improvements, and for stock and implements, the state institutions to advance to the soldier settlers such money at cost, plus reasonable working charges.

(4) With a view to meeting the special requirements of the soldier settlers, the state governments will be invited to liberalize their conditions, applying to the repayments for land and bank advances, and, if practicable, upon a uniform basis.

(5) In order to provide for the subsidiary requirements of the returned soldiers, the citizens generally will be invited to subscribe either in cash or kind to a special repatriation fund. This fund is to be raised by appeals from the federal parliamentary war committee, the state war councils and their associated local organizations, and is to be vested by an Act of the Commonwealth Parliament in a body of trustees. The fund is to be distributed subject to conditions to be prescribed to the federal parliamentary war committee, and advances from it are to be made to returned soldiers or their dependents for maintenance, or by way of general assistance to returned soldiers and their families as distinct from ameliorative aid. Such advances are to be loans without interest.

TRAINING FARMS

(6) Provision should be made where necessary for the immediate establishment by the states of training farms on which the inexperienced men might serve a probationary period, for the purpose of determining whether or not they have an aptitude for the work. Where the state authority is satisfied, such training may be arranged for an approved private farm.

(7) With a view to the elimination of men who are obviously unsuited for land settlement, applica-

tions should in the first instance, and within a prescribed period after discharge, be addressed to a central authority, constituted by each state government, the duty of which should be to classify the applicants into three groups, as follows: (a) Those who are immediately eligible; (b) those who may prove so after a probationary training; and (c) those who are unsuitable.

(8) Concurrently with the proposals, herein contained every encouragement should be extended to approved private efforts for the settlement of returned soldiers on the land.

LOANS TO MEN

(9) Loans to soldiers for land settlement pur-

poses, as provided by resolution three, will be advanced at reasonable rates of interest not exceeding 3 1/2 per cent in the first year, and increasing by 1/2 per cent each subsequent year, to the full rate of interest at which the money has been raised, plus working expenses. The difference between these rates and the cost to the Government of the money is to be borne equally by the Commonwealth and the state governments.

(10) Provided their military records are satisfactory, soldiers enlisted in the Australian Imperial forces, but not sent to the front, will be given the privileges extended to the returned soldiers. "Dependents" means the wife, widow, or mother and children of a member of the forces, who were wholly or in part dependent upon his earnings at any time during the period of the twelve months prior to his enlistment.

Enlisting the Small Savers

From the Boston News Bureau.

In Great Britain "economy and efficiency" have become very live terms. Both have reached a climax of vitality about the same time, after long incubation.

The efficiency is being demonstrated on the Somme river, as previously on the sea. The economy campaign reaches its height these seven days, in "war savings week", when every citizen is expected to share in some sort of war financing according to his purse power. The chancellor of the exchequer reminds all that in what is truly a "tug-of-war" all must pull,—home folk giving their counterpart to the soldiers' efforts, and that now "waste and extravagance are treason."

The national sense of the vital need of saving did not become awake till about the end of 1915. Trained writers had discoursed on the subject in many aspects from beginning of the war, but with little immediate effect. There was the need of a gradual realization, just as in the creating of an army; in fact even more need, so great was the collective trust in the national wealth and the individual tendency in many quarters to luxuriate in war profits or war allowances. Beside, cost of living had risen by two-thirds since outbreak of the war—in food-stuffs 80 per cent—and many thought they saw no great margin as well as no pressing need for economizing.

But the realization now seems complete. All England is fully attune to the utter need of effort of every sort, and resolved to exert it. Holidays are passed up, luxuries, also — with aid of government ban on imports—even labor union privileges waived. Women have by hundreds of thousands gone into the harness, even to the extent of woefully long hours of toil. The economic slackers are fast disappearing. The response of the holders of American securities in selling or lending them has been remarkable; and there is calm consideration of liquidating, if needed, other bales of home or foreign holdings. Tremendous taxes are cheerfully met. The country estates of Britain are disintegrating under

sacrifice. Now the campaign has reached a peak in propaganda for personal saving by all non-combatants, with various means therefor, and the turning of the savings to war use.

THE ECONOMY EXPOSITION.

In London, the first week of this month, there was held an economy exposition, illustrating ways and means, and featured by authoritative addresses on every phase of the national need for saving. The chancellor of the exchequer exposed the fallacy that free spending on home, contrasted with foreign, products was commendable as spreading prosperity; instead, goods, labor and services should be devoted to war essentials, and divorced from non-essentials. It was further pointed out by others that by "going without" many usual things, home labor is set free for needed export trade or even more needed war work. All which means, of course, one more of the many economic as well as social dislocations that are bred by intense war.

The first duty has been to teach and enlist the small savers. The first two war loans and the current treasury bills have been taken care of by bankers and big investors. On June 19 the city government of London arranged for organization of war savings associations all over the metropolis to collect war savings, thus supplementing the work of the financial City. About 125 similar central committees have been formed by the national War Savings Committee, and these in turn have formed subordinate associations, the number of which in the past three weeks have risen from 750 to over 1200. Hence are to come the little silver bullets for the financial machine guns.

The working classes had already contributed a good deal. Through postal and trustee savings banks the small savings from this source for war contribution reached \$88,500,000 in the quarter to June 30, and in preceding quarter \$81,000,000, the former figure contrasting with only \$30,000,000 a year before, and with actual excess of withdrawals

(Continued on page 11).