

BANKING PROFITS IN CANADA*(Continued from page 307)*

other class of the community, and they have some ground for the argument that if the Business Profits War Tax is to be removed from the business community at large, this special taxation should also be removed. These things, however, are at present on the knees of the gods. So far as the other influences upon banking earnings upon total resources are concerned, the outlook at present is that there will be little relief in this direction for some time to come, and it would not be surprising if banking earnings upon total resources continue to gravitate to a somewhat lower level.

SOLDIER SETTLEMENT.

The Honorable Arthur Meighen, Minister of the Interior, has announced that the Government purposes to extend the scope of its Soldier Settlement legislation at the current session of Parliament. Existing legislation looks chiefly to the settlement of returned men on Dominion crown lands and to assisting them financially to begin farm operations thereon. Provision is also made for rendering financial assistance to men who own or have procured farms of their own and are able to give first-mortgage security. It was early found that the amount of Dominion crown lands suitable and available for the purpose of soldier settlement was insufficient, and that while by great public expenditure additions could be made to available land, the entire problem could only be taken care of by the acquisition of privately owned lands. The desirability of acquiring lands privately owned arose not only from the fact that available crown land was too limited but also from the circumstances that Dominion crown land was to be found only in four provinces. It is manifest that federal activities in soldier settlement should be carried on vigorously in all the provinces. It further seems economically sound that the State should for these purposes so direct its policy as to bring into production areas of land now privately owned but for one reason or another not under cultivation.

It is, therefore, proposed that at the approaching session of the Dominion Parliament legislation be enacted giving the Soldier Settlement Board power to acquire privately owned lands by expropriation or otherwise for the purpose of soldier settlement. The Minister of the Interior has also urged upon representatives of the provincial governments that in any cases where land is acquired by such governments for general settlement purposes a preference should be given in the disposition of such land to the returned soldier. It is requested that any lands so acquired be first available for purchase by the Soldier Settlement Board at the price of acquirement and for a limited time. In this way the principle of preference would be clearly and firmly established.

A reference to the plans of the Department of

Immigration and Colonization, looking to an aggressive general land settlement policy will show that such plans invite and urge the co-operation of provincial governments and legislatures by the enactment on their part of such legislation as will prevent speculation increases in the value of idle lands. The success of these efforts will, of course, enure to the benefit of the soldiers in keeping to the lowest limit consistent with fair dealing the cost of their farms.

The Soldier Settlement Board has expressed the opinion that it would be in the interests of the returned men and would tend to the success of soldier settlement generally if they be given power to acquire not only land but also stock and equipment such as is required for farming operations. To what extent the exercise of this power will be found necessary cannot, of course, be stated. It is believed, however, that by this means the Board will be enabled to be of considerable help. The amendments submitted to Parliament will, therefore, extend this power to the Board.

The assistance of the Board will be available to a soldier settler in selecting lands, in order to enable him to get the best value possible in land and to ensure that the land on which he may settle will be of such fertility as with the exercise of reasonable perseverance and skill will return a comfortable living for himself and family.

If the settler is to make good, either on an improved farm or a piece of raw land to the extent of making it pay for itself he has to fit in with his surroundings. He and his family must be satisfied with the life. His capital, his physique, and his preference should fit his farm. Therefore, in order to start him right, qualification boards, comprised of men who have practical knowledge of farming, are being inaugurated in the various provinces. Courses are being instituted at agricultural training schools or experimental farms in every province of the Dominion. He will be assisted by the board to locate suitably. After he has located, he will still be helped and supervision will be given as to his initial expenditure, and efforts are being made to arrange with the Department of Agriculture of the provincial governments to give him definite direction during the early years of farming.

It must be pointed out that in order to benefit by any soldier settlement scheme, the man himself must be prepared to make farming his life work. The precedent set after the South African War, when men were rewarded with a grant of land for their service, is not being followed.

The great object sought is this: to add to Canadian agriculture by a comprehensive scheme of State assistance a substantial proportion of our army and thus to build into the industrial structure of Canada in its most vital sphere the best body of our citizenship. In this way the soldier is helped and the nation grows stronger.