

SOLDIERS OF THE SOIL.

Boys, Army Corps Strong, to be Enlisted for Needed Farm Service this Year.

The Soldiers of the Soil campaign for enrolment of boys for farm work during the coming season is well under way. Organization is rapidly being completed in all the Provinces. It is hoped and expected that 25,000 boys will be enrolled. They will form a boys' army corps for greater production of food for 1918.

The work is being directed by Mr. Taylor Statten, who has been appointed National Superintendent by the Canada Food Board. Co-operation is being given by the Provincial Departments of Education and Agriculture.

Method of Organization.

The National Superintendent in co-operation with the Provincial Governments has appointed Provincial Superintendents. In some cases, zone superintendents, responsible for groups of counties or districts, are being appointed. These in turn appoint city or town directors, who are high school or seminary teachers, Y.M.C.A. secretaries or other persons qualified by experience and sympathy with boys' work.

In Ontario the work of organization is being done in co-operation with Dr. W. A. Riddell, of the Trades and Labour Branch. The objective for Ontario is 15,000 boys.

In Province of Quebec.

Arrangements in Quebec are under way, the work having the support and assistance of Mr. J. A. Grenier, Deputy Minister of Agriculture. The Quebec Government has warmly endorsed the movement.

The Departments of Education are making arrangements so that boys who go to work on farms shall not lose their school standing under certain condition which are fair to the boys.

What the Boys Can Do.

The experience of thousands of farmers in Ontario last year refutes any suggestion that willing boys cannot give valuable service in farm work. There are a multitude of chores which they can do, releasing experienced men for other farm work. Boys can, with a little instruction, do hoeing, milking and much of the feeding, and, if they are able to drive horses, they can handle many of the simpler farm implements. The help of any strong, willing boy will be useful and he will be serving his country and helping to feed the fighting men and the Allies.

LABOUR OF OLDER BOYS IS RATED HIGH BY FARMERS.

BY TAYLOR STATTEN,

National Superintendent of the Soldiers of the Soil.

The following report was telegraphed by Mr. Statten while en route from Western Canada, where he has been completing the organization for recruiting Soldiers of the Soil.

I have just visited the four Western Provinces, where I found that the Provincial Departments of Education have already made satisfactory arrangements for releasing boys for farm work. The school teachers are giving hearty co-operation and Departments of Agriculture are eager to help and are pleased with the S.O.S. idea. The Provincial Premiers will issue proclamations regarding enrollment week. The farmers rate the labour of older boys as second to none.

I have appointed the following Provincial Superintendents:—

Ontario—Mr. W. R. Cook, 120 Bay street, Toronto.

Manitoba—Mr. D. R. Poole, 1106 McArthur Building, Winnipeg.

Saskatchewan—Mr. L. E. McCormack, Donahue Building, Regina.

Alberta—Mr. W. E. Galloway, Y.M.C.A. Calgary.

British Columbia—Mr. C. M. Wright, 607 Board of Trade Building, Vancouver.

Nova Scotia—Mr. L. A. Buckley, Y.M.C.A., Halifax.

Several zone supervisors have already been engaged and local committees organized.

Services to be Recognized

The Soldiers of the Soil will be paid regular wages and each boy who spends three months at farm work will be presented with a bronze badge of honor. The badges will be presented publicly in the fall on occasions of local gatherings.

The week of March 7 to 23 has been set aside as a special enrolment week. This does not mean that the boys will go to work at that date but their enrolment will mean that the farmers of Canada will be able to count upon them during the coming season.