

Mr. ARTHURS: Do these prices apply to purchases by soldiers who are not taking advantage of the Soldier Settlement Act?

Mr. MEIGHEN: All that a soldier has to do who is buying his own land is to go before a qualification board and he is passed and entered upon our list and is then entitled to all these advantages.

Mr. MORPHY: Would that apply to a soldier at home with his father?

Mr. MEIGHEN: No, the soldier has to be a settler. I shall conclude what I was dealing with and come back to that. We purchase, through the best experts we can obtain at each point, horses and stock, each animal being examined and passed as sound and fitted for the purpose for which it is required. It is then sold to the settler at the price of purchase. The Board believe they have extraordinarily efficient means for purchasing this class of stock. Indeed, that has been proved. The purpose is to guard the returned man against any possibility of imposition at the hands of shrewder men than himself. We do not prevent a man from buying his own but the soldiers are coming more and more to buy through the Board and that fact indicates their belief that they get better results.

Mr. W. H. WHITE: Have you a maximum price for horses?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Yes, the maximum I think is \$200. The average prices that have been paid for horses in each province are very interesting. In Calgary in the month of April the number of horses purchased and sold to settlers is 118; milch cows, 39; cattle, 60; swine, 9; poultry, 79. The average cost per head of horses is \$145.79. In Saskatchewan, where a great deal more has been done in the way of stock and equipment, particularly in stock purchases, the average price for horses is \$133.82; milch cows, \$108.62; and for other cattle, \$49.58. The average for horses in Vancouver has been \$180; the average at Victoria office, \$174; the average at the Saskatoon office, \$177.51; at the Regina office, \$160.73; at the Winnipeg office, \$179.86; at Halifax, \$161.43.

We did the same to all classes of stock as we did in regard to horses. There is a point that I omitted to note as I went hurriedly past. While our maximum of \$7,500 is the total liability as respects the individual soldier—a high maximum indeed—we have a special provision whereby men who have had adequate and successful farm experience in Canada and are qualified by

the possession of equipment, or other special qualifications—we have always so far required them to be married—may acquire land without paying the ten per cent, and may secure a loan up to a maximum, in those special cases, of \$8,000. While the maximum in general is \$7,500 and in special cases \$8,000 the actual fact is that the average loan is \$3,394.

Mr. CAHILL: And the average acreage?

Mr. MEIGHEN: I have not the average acreage. The average loan to 4,262 men is \$3,394. As a man's security gets better and he demonstrates the fact that he is succeeding, he can come back and his application for a further loan will be considered.

Mr. MICHAUD: What is the limit of the loan?

Mr. MEIGHEN: On improvements, stock and equipment the limit in general is \$7,500, but in the special cases that I have described, of which there are very few, the limit is \$8,000. Such has been the operation of the board up to this time. I think I have covered the major part of the work.

I should have said, however, that we have been assisting the soldier in the building of his house. We have provided him with suitable plans free and information which will enable him to build his house at the price fixed in the plan. We have had plans of two or three types of houses prepared and we give such information along with the plan as will enable the soldier to erect the building within the limits fixed thereby. However, we are expanding that branch of the service and, under the direction of Colonel Foster of British Columbia, a returned man, we are arranging to assist the returned soldier in the erection of his house by co-operation with firms engaged in the actual work. We believe that in doing that we can still further reduce the cost to the soldier of building his home.

That covers, in the main, the activities of the board. From this on we will engage more largely than we have in the past in encouraging the small holding farm because we feel that we have now got to the stage where we have sufficient information to enable us, without too great risk, to launch upon this phase of our work.

Mr. FRIPP: Before the minister takes his seat, would he be kind enough to tell us what the Government propose to do for