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A Civil Service Model Suburb.

Editors of *The Civilian*: There seem to me three ways to deal with the question of the increased cost of living. One is to devote one's self to seeking the cause of present difficulties and trying to overcome them for the world at large or at least for a portion of the people. The second—at the other extreme—is to let the question take care of itself and to seek to so improve one's own financial position as to be able to defy the evils which afflict less wise or less fortunate people. The third—a combination of the other two—is to so unite the forces of a group or class as to lift not only one's self but also one's companions out of the trouble.

I say nothing here about the first and second plans, but it seems to me that the third offers opportunities to at least a large number of civil servants at this time.

It seems to be unanimously agreed that the main items of increase of the cost of living are two: (1) House rent; (2) Food. Other things also are higher in price than they were, but the increases do not seem to be so great, nor do they affect so intimately the mere question of existence.

As to the question of rents, this is in part due to a demand for more elaborate housing than we used to have. Plumbing was practically an unknown expense, except in the houses of the rich, when the civil service were first called upon to live in Ottawa. Other demands have arisen in connection with housing which undoubtedly do increase the cost of building houses for people of today as compared with the houses of our fathers. But the main ele-

ment in the increase of rents is in the higher price of land. Even quite young people in Ottawa can remember land which is now sold at \$50 a front foot was sold at not very much more than \$50 a lot.

If, then, we could find cheap food and cheap land, we should be in a very much better position than at present. Neither of these things may be procurable anywhere, but at least if they are to be had at all we must look for them in the country, not in the city.

Why not, then, go to the country? It is quite true that if each family went out by themselves and sought to make a home in the country difficulties might be so great as to make even cheap food and cheap rent dear in effort and discomfort. But if a hundred families could move to a given portion of the country, co-operative effort might eliminate all these difficulties and assure for each the advantages of the city, together with the advantages of the country.

To come down to the concrete, here is my proposition—(and I make it in all seriousness believing that it could actually be worked out, greatly to the advantage of those who now pay city prices out of inadequate salaries):—

Let us form an association or syndicate of civil servants—those with about the average salary preferred, for the reason that community of interest would probably be a help toward success—and establish a model suburb of Ottawa on the new "town planning" lines.

You cannot afford space for a full discussion of this subject but let me