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"BE BRITISH," COLUMBIANS!

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THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF RETURNED CITIZENS IN CANADA

By Leon J. Ladner.

NOTE—The following article from the notes of an address given by Mr. Ladner at a recent big Rotary Convention in Victoria attended by over 1,200 members, gives such an informative review of what has been done in the matter of re-establishment that we think it well worthy of a place in the literary records of the B. C. M.—Ed.

It is my privilege as spokesman of Vancouver Rotary Club to address you on the subject of the re-establishment of our returned citizens. I shall endeavour to explain what Canada has done for her noble sons who, from the first day of the terrible war until her boys entered Mons in Belgium on the 11th of November, 1918, carried the Flag of Canada and the Empire from one victory to another. You will recall that from August 1918 to the signing of the Armistice that four Canadian divisions met and defeated at different times no less than forty-nine German divisions, a feat unexcelled in the entire war. Their valor and fame were such that when the great French General, Marshall Foch, looked about to find the steel for his spear-head in the final drive from Amiens in September, 1918, he selected the soldiers of Canada, and to the everlasting credit of those heroes and to the glory of our fair country, the spear-head of Canadian soldiers drove swiftly and fatally into the heart of the famous Hindenburg line.

A Nation Among Nations.

By the blood and valor of those brave men, who died by the thousands for their country, Canada's name has been placed among the great nations of the world. Our country, composed of peace loving and industrious people, entered this terrible maelstrom of human destruction as a colony of unknown military value, and by the magnificent and victorious accomplishments of her Sons on the bloody field of battle she has emerged a nation among nations with a profound sense of appreciation of her men and a full understanding of her responsibilities to the world. Today Canada takes her seat at the Council Table of the League of Nations qualified in every sense of the word.

Canada's Record.

Let us recall some of the facts which have made it possible for Canada to accomplish these things and at the same time given to the country the problem of re-establishment. Out of a total male population under forty-five years of age of 3,700,000, 600,000 men took arms, of these nearly 500,000 were volunteers. Of these 56,000 were killed in action, almost one in every ten, and 150,000 were wounded or maimed

for life. In other words one-third of the entire enlistment were killed or wounded. Such have been the sacrifices and the foundation on which the World's standing of our country has been won. To care for, assimilate and re-establish half a million of sturdy citizens constitutes the problem which has faced the Dominion during the past year and a half, and it may be of interest to know that during the past winter throughout the entire country, only about 30,000 men were on the Government lists of unemployed, and, in order that the greatest generosity and consideration should be extended, the sum of \$40,000,000 was voted by Parliament to look after the unemployed and their wives and families during that time.

Two Aspects of the Problem.

The problem of re-establishment has two aspects. One is largely a question of psychology resulting from the half a million of men overseas being absent five years and coming back more mature in their judgment with a life's experience jammed into those five years and a somewhat different attitude of mind on the many social, economic and political questions of the country as compared with the civilian population, who during those five years have been engaged in the work of production and support of the men overseas. From these two divergent points of view I believe that Canada will emerge a better and finer country when time has provided an opportunity for contact, association, study and exchange of ideas between these two great bodies.

The other aspect of the question, which I shall call the "re-establishment of our returned citizens," has reference especially to bringing the man home from the war and placing him in some useful occupation, or, if wounded, providing him with a generous compensation and fitting him for something to engage his mind and attention. When I tell you that often within one hour from the time the train reaches the man's home town that he had been discharged and reached his home, you will understand the efficiency of our demobilization system.

Under our Constitution all questions of war, Militia and Defence, come under the jurisdiction of the Dominion or Federal authorities at Ottawa, but nevertheless the Provinces, Municipalities and Cities of Canada from East to West have consistently rendered a helping hand in the question of re-establishment.

Land Settlement in British Columbia.

In British Columbia the Province has purchased or otherwise acquired many acres of agricultural lands for soldiers desiring to engage in farming. Under a system of loaning through a competent board responsible to the Government, men are formed into what are known as "Community Area Settlements." Under a plan of co-operation great blocks of land are cleared, the men working on the same receiving a reasonable wage from the Government, and the total cost of clearing and preparing the land is charged up pro rata on the basis of acreage. When the land is ready for farming so that the soldier can make a living he is then allowed a certain number of acres, paying for the same over a number of years a sum of money based on the cost per acre to clear the land under this co-operative system.

A Housing Scheme Which Merits Commendation.

As in other countries, it was found when the men returned that there was a great scarcity of houses. The Dominion Government accordingly set aside \$25,000,000 for the construction of homes, the moneys being borrowed by the different Municipalities and Cities through the Provincial Government and loaned to widows and returned citizens repayable by monthly instalments over a period of twenty years. The Municipalities supervise the construction of the houses and wholesale dealers generously supply the material at the very lowest cost. The result is that little homes are being