

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION, THE SOLDIER SETTLEMENT BOARD, OTTAWA.

Soldier Land Legislation in English Speaking Countries.

The salient features in connection with the Soldier Land Settlement Legislation in English speaking countries are outlined below.

Great Britain.

The Mother Country proposes to make available certain tracts of farm land and the Board of Agriculture has been empowered to spend \$100,000,000 in settling returned soldiers. The board has authority to purchase 60,000 acres in England and 20,000 acres in Scotland. Four small colonies totalling 6,000 acres have been established. The settlement is following largely the plan of colonies divided into small farms with a central demonstration farm which will supply instructors for the settlers in the colony and where implements for working the land will be available.

An educational qualification is exacted. The British scheme is designed to settle all ranks providing they are of suitable educational promise.

A limited number of scholarships and allowances, varying up to \$875 a year are provided for agricultural training. A man who has been a life-long agriculturist is required to put in at least one season on probation before the board will settle him in a colony. A longer period for less experienced settlers is provided.

The plan does not contemplate extensive credit to the occupiers of land in soldier colonies. A co-operative credit bank is to be established in partnership with the state and will extend credit for the purchase of stock and equipment.

It may be remarked that the difficulty over subdivision of estates in the United Kingdom will make this colony plan difficult to put into operation extensively.

Australia.

The Commonwealth of Australia grants no free land. It leases its Crown Lands and as well acquires privately owned lands and leases them to soldier settlers at a small annual rental.

Advances up to a maximum of \$2,500 are made to settlers. There is some discussion now as to the adequacy of this amount, and it is likely to be raised to \$3,750. Loans for permanent improvements extend over twenty-five years; loans for stock and equipment from three to six years. The general line of policy adopted by the Com-

monwealth may be summarized in the following terms: "The land will not be given away but will be made available on easy terms. Every acre of land will eventually have to be bought and every sum advanced to effect improvements or to be used as working capital will have to be repaid. The idea is not to start off as land proprietors but to provide the means of earning a comfortable living and ultimately owning a farm." It should be stated that the states furnish the land and the Commonwealth loans the money to the states to be in turn loaned to the soldiers.

As in Canada, each applicant is required to demonstrate his fitness and aptitude for farm life and those who require further training will be given this at Training Farms established in the different states, and allowances will be paid for sustenance during the period of training.

It is estimated that the sum of \$200,000,000 will be required for the establishment of soldier settlers in Australia.

There are several forms of land tenure. In New South Wales, South Australia and Queensland, no free-hold title is given. The settler pays a rental of about one and one-half per cent of the value of the land and receives a perpetual lease which is inheritable. At periods varying from 19 to 35 years the land is revalued. The Soldier Settlement policy of the Commonwealth and of the states is a modification of the general settlement policy which has been in active operation there for many years.

Union of South Africa.

There is no special provision by Government authority in South Africa for soldier settlers as distinct from civilian settlers. Under the Land Settlement Act of 1912, amended by the Act of 1917, Crown Land is made available for settlers in South Africa and leased usually for five years with an option of purchasing at the price fixed when the lease is made. No rent is payable during the first year; 2 per cent of the value of the land for the second and third years; 3½ per cent the fourth and fifth years. If the lease is renewed at the end of five years, 4 per cent per annum is charged as a rent. The purchase price of the holding may be paid at any time providing that all conditions of the lease have been complied with; but, notwithstanding such payment, the settler is not entitled to obtain transfer of his holding into his name until after a period of ten years from the commencement of the lease.

Settlers holding leases may obtain assistance in the way of an advance of \$1,250