

# 'GET OUT OF THE RUTS' A RELIABLE BUSINESS DIRECTORY

## Lord Shaughnessy Tells What Canada Needs — Brains and Boldness in Plans of Returned Soldiers—Suit the Work to the Man and Give the Man Skill for His Work.

Lord Shaughnessy may be best known now as President of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company. When the inner history of the war comes to be written he will be still better known as one of the effective organizers of victory. From the beginning he threw his energy, and directed the energies of many of his staff, into the national cause.

When asked for a statement as to Canada's greatest needs at this critical time, especially in making arrangements for returned soldiers, Lord Shaughnessy said:

"The return of our soldiers will be a tremendous opportunity for the country. Shall we seize it, or bungle and miss it? That will be the test of the quality of Canadian statesmanship."

"We have always wanted men to develop the country. Well, there they are, or will be—ready to our hand. Immigration is desirable, but uncertain. These men of ours will come home as a matter of course.

Have the Men Changed?

They will not come back exactly the same as they were, but some people have an absurdly exaggerated idea of the change we may expect. The slacker has been improved by discipline, and the downright steady man has certainly not been turned into a slacker. Taken as a whole, the men who return able-bodied will be found better men than ever, physically and mentally—more hardy, self-reliant and enterprising; their minds widened by experience. Some of them will naturally take a little time to settle down and get their bearings. But that will be only a passing phase.

I take for granted that the present system of getting ex-soldiers employment will be greatly improved and developed, for it is barely able to place the few thousands already with us. But even if the system is so improved that every man returning after the war gets some sort of a job, it does not follow that we shall have any great cause to boast. We shall have achieved a negative success; but we must aim at something higher, a more positive success.

Haphazard and Unsuitable Employment

There is too much haphazard employment, at the best of times; and with a flood of men having to be placed simultaneously there is a greatly increased danger of shoving them into places without enough regard to suitability. Putting "square pegs into square holes" does not pay.

Having still some time to prepare, there will be no excuse if we do not devise schemes of employment which will use a high percentage of each man's capacity, instead of a low percentage.

The man and his employer and the country at large will all gain by this. The man can make most by work that he is interested in, and has skill for. The industry that he is engaged in prospers by his good property or suffers according to the prosperity or depression of its various industries.

Make Country Life More Attractive

I am glad to hear that the National Service Commission is taking steps to discover the previous trade or calling of each man now under arms, and his intentions or capacities for his future career, at any rate in the matter of agriculture. That is the foundation industry of the whole country. Farming should be made so profitable, by educational and financial aid, and the social conditions of rural life should be so improved, that thousands of men with natural inclinations that way will be attracted to agriculture and will succeed at it.

But even when that is done, the great majority of the men will have to be provided for in other kinds of work. I should like to see thousands of them, not now highly skilled, given special training to equip them with the skill they lack. I am sure it would pay the country to give it them.

A Splendid Lead

We must use brains and ingenuity in forming our plans for doing the best that can be done for—and with—the returning men.

Good people often say to them, "Nothing is too good for you." It is easy to talk like that in vague generalities. But we have got to come down to particulars, and find out in detail what is best for the men—yes, and for each particular man, with his individual capacities and aptitudes.

By doing that very thing for men returning disabled the Military Hospitals Commission has given the country a splendid lead. This lead should be followed in dealing with the mass of men returning later on. The benefits of this system should finally be extended to our people generally, so that every boy on leaving school should be directed and helped into the occupation that he can do best in—and trained specially for it, whenever that is by any means possible. In some cases, of course, it is hard to tell what a boy will be most fit for, until long after he leaves school. But even in such a case a good deal can be done to keep him of work that he is positively unfit for.

Talents Discovered in Hospital

The commission, I notice, gives men a good deal of occupational and instruction while they are still under medical treatment. In fact, these occupations form part of the curative treatment—a really valuable part. But they also help to develop a man's technical skill. Often they reveal astonishing talents which even the man himself did not know he possessed.

This skill is developed, and these talents are discovered and trained, as they never would have been if the men had not become hospital patients. It is a striking case of getting good out of evil.

I am not surprised to find that many returned soldiers, simply through the training they have had in hospital, have gone out to take positions better than they ever occupied before.

Switching Over to New Occupations

An extra privilege is given to men who are so incapacitated that they

cannot take up their old line of work. They are given special training for a new occupation, in technical colleges or otherwise. And they are helped to choose the occupation most suitable and profitable for them, by the advice of medical and vocational experts. The cost of the training is paid for them, and so is even their maintenance and that of their families, for as long as the training lasts—and a month longer.

It is an admirable system, and I should like to see every man seizing the opportunity who has it offered to him.

Puck Wins Against Heavy Odds

It is good to know that even a great injury, such as loss of the right arm, is not now prevent a plucky man from earning a good living. I am not thinking so much of the ingenious artificial hands, gripping appliances and so on, that the government presents with it. These are most useful of course; but far more useful is the training a man can get for his remaining power, whatever he may have left.

I am glad to see there is plenty of variety in the list of occupations that the wounded are being trained for. So long as they are well chosen, avoiding those that are obviously unsuitable to the country, and such as would only supply a temporary and semi-charitable demand, the more variety the better.

We want to get out of ruts. We do our thinking in ruts, and that keeps us acting in ruts.

Take agriculture, for instance. People have a habit of thinking and saying that intensive farming is not suited to Canadians; and, accordingly, it is not developed. But Canadians pride themselves on their adaptability; and many of them might transfer their energies from extensive to intensive farming with great advantage to themselves and to the country.

This is a line of industry which suits disabled soldiers, with sufficient training, could carry on both easily and profitably.

It involves thorough co-operation, of course. But is it too much to hope that co-operation, or government organization of buying and selling—in other words, national co-operation—may be applied in the near future to the agricultural industry in general, intensive and extensive alike? While we must avoid impracticable schemes, we must not turn down a scheme of hand as impracticable just

because we have had no experience of it. Nor must we be scared of its things just because they are big. We must investigate all plans that seem to contain any promise of usefulness; experiment with those that still seem promising after being subjected to rapid examination; and boldly adopt those that stand the test of experiment.

At a critical time like this, with tremendous problems to solve, we must be bold without rashness, and not flatter our timidity with the name of caution.

I said just now that the Military Hospitals Commission had given the country a good lead by training men for the occupations they were found most suited to. And there is another very striking feature of its work that offers a good example for the whole country to follow.

When a soldier is found to have tuberculosis, he is given the most scientific treatment in a sanatorium, for as long as his case requires. He is taught not only how to conquer the disease in himself but how to avoid spreading it to others. If the same systematic care was applied to civilian consumers, the gain in health and wealth to the country would be simply enormous.

As many Canadians have been killed at home by tuberculosis since the war began as have been killed by the ravages of the war. If we stay in the rut, and let this enemy go on killing our people at home as fast as the Germans can kill them at the front, then the less we talk about our national intelligence and enterprise, the better.

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