

## WHAT NOT TO DO IN PIONEERING.

NO. I.

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[The views expressed in this article are the views of the writer, and the Editor accepts no responsibility for them.—ED.]

To intending settlers my first advice would be, "Keep out of debt." Second, "Keep out of debt." Third, "Keep out of debt." Having suitably emphasised these three points one might proceed to suggest a few others.

But how, it will be asked, is one to harmonize this adjuration with the Canadian Government's plan of loaning money under the provisions of the Soldier Settlement Act? I don't know. To be quite candid, I fear the loan plan will entail widespread disappointment. At a recent meeting of our U.F.A. Local I had the honour of bringing forward a resolution urging the Government to give all the returned soldiers a pension averaging, say, one thousand dollars per capital but depending somewhat upon length and conditions of service, the grant to spread out over a few years in periodic payments in diminishing ratio, under conditions designed to guard against injudicious expenditure. The same resolution urged a policy of the utmost caution in respect to saddling the soldier settlers with a discouraging burden of debt. The concluding paragraph reads:—

"Approving the manifest desire of the Administration to deal wisely and liberally with the returned men, we offer the foregoing suggestions respectfully by way of constructive proposal, based upon intimate personal knowledge of settlers' conditions and problems."

### All to the Men.

Adopted unanimously, this resolution commands solid and growing support in discussion. The plan set forth would cost the country nearly half a billion dollars but the levy would not come all at once. The money would practically all go to the men, with very little wasted on red tape and expense of administering. It would be fair to all soldier settlers and others alike. It would certainly not be excessive compensation to those whose life plans have been upset and whose productive careers have been interrupted by one to four years in the hell of war. Was ever a juster obligation acknowledged?

As to the matter of loans, this much may be said: A loan on land, suitably secured by mortgage, is common practice in the business world and sound financing when properly safeguarded. A loan on chattels is often very embarrassing and risky and the conditions of the tentative loan plan impose awkward impediments in respect to sale or exchange. If a soldier gets a balky horse, for instance, how is he to get rid of him and substitute a useful one? Dozens of similar snags will be encountered.

"Pay as you go" is the soundest maxim I know as applied to living, running expenses and chattels, even though it means going very slowly indeed. One's progress by that method may be inconspicuous for years but he is never likely to be swamped. Those who depart from the principle often are.

### Red Tape.

Some of the returned men, I daresay, are now being equipped with outfits of teams and implements when they might better be starting with an axe and a shovel to build a shack and dig a well. Expensive equipment represents expense, risk and interest (either present or ultimate) from the day it is obtained. The inexorable law of frugal necessity is the best guide to a settler in determining what and when to buy. An easy loan with its relentless approach of interest charges and pay day is one of the surest ways I know of ruining a homesteader—even an experienced one. And the red tape of official control is often more disadvantageous than help.

Three months ago, if asked what was the best way of dealing with the returned soldiers who desire to take up land, I should have been at a loss to answer. Certainly, then, we can have no fault to find with those who have endeavoured to work out the solution to a knotty problem. But in the light of discussion, certain facts begin to take shape. Through advancing imperfect plans we come to arrive at better ones. Hence my present suggestion would be to ensure the men, first of all, a grubstake until their homesteads commenced to return

a revenue. Money might be advanced toward the purchase of land and, possibly, in some cases for the purchase of live stock, bought at the soldier settler's own discretion and in his own time and way. But for the most part he should be left to his own devices in the matter of securing stock and equipment. This will enable him to make the countless thrifty turns which of necessity become instinct to a farmer. It will develop initiative, resourcefulness and self-reliance, and should help to ground him gradually in the bed-rock principle of thrift. Standardizing settler's equipment is a large order. It is a matter in which official supervision is fraught with difficulties.

Possibly before this appears in print some radical changes will have been made in the Soldier Settlement Act. It is a soldiers' concern, hence the propriety of bringing it to their attention through their own organs.

Correspondence from veterans who have already taken up land in the Peace River Country convinces me that some of them, at least, have but the most rudimentary idea, indeed, of what they will be up against. When they speak of breaking a hundred acres or so the first season and wonder whether a portion of it might be devoted the same summer to potatoes or roots, an experienced settler would be moved to smile, were his sympathy not touched instead. Where more or less scrub or rock is to be contended with, as is often the case, a man with a three or four-horse outfit will usually do well to break and prepare twenty acres the first season. And he will know he has been working, at that.

It is far from our purpose to discourage any likely pioneer. Only would we temper enthusiasm with discernment. It is always distressing to see hope dashed to earth by grim facts of experience. The prospective settler's true friend is he who depicts both sides of the truth. And no plan of subvention or assistance will obviate the sovereign, imperative need of frugality, industry and thrift.

(To be continued).

### 50,000,000 LBS. OF SUGAR.

Fifty million lbs. of sugar were made last year in the three factories maintained by the Dominion Sugar Company at Kitchener, Chatham and Wallaceburg, Ontario. This sugar, in the main, was made from 200,000 tons of sugar beets grown for the most part in Kent, Essex, Lambton and Waterloo.

The industry gave profitable employment to many workers in the three urban centres named, and the raw material used in making the sugar proved one of the most profitable crops grown by the farmers in south-western Ontario last year.

"It was the rule rather than the exception for returns of \$100 per acre to be secured by growers," said Secretary Houson, of the Sugar Co. "In not a few cases the net returns were \$100 per acre."

### OBTAINED NEARLY \$10,000,000.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Canadian Patriotic Fund, it was agreed that all branches be asked to continue their relief work for another year, at the end of which time it would be known definitely to what extent, if any, obligations could be continued. The total contributions reported to March 31st were \$47,115,241, and there was a balance at that date of \$8,662,941, with possible collections amounting to \$300,000 still to come.

## Information Service.

OFFICIAL information on all matters of interest to returning Canadian soldiers and their dependents may be obtained through the Information Bureaux, established at the Khaki College Centres at Buxton, Bramshott, Rhyl, Ripon, Sunningdale, Seaford, Witley, and The Beaver Hut, Strand, London.

Enquiries made by letter or in person to the Central Bureau of Information, 31 Bedford Square, London, W.C. 1, will receive prompt attention.

Every question asked will be given the fullest consideration.