

Improved Soldier Settlement Proposals.

There has been wide discussion of the new proposals of the Soldier Settlement Board and generous approval has been given by the Press, particularly those newspapers devoted to the interests of agriculture and the returned men. "Farm and Dairy," Toronto, observes that the Government's scheme is at last beginning to look practical and a great improvement on the original proposals. It will enable the soldiers to settle in their old home communities among the friends whom they have known in the past and under conditions with which they are familiar.

Quoting further: "The distribution of soldier farmers in settled rural communities will be of material assistance to the less experienced settlers in that they can get advice and assistance from their neighbors. The financial outlay on the part of the Government will be heavy, but if the committee in charge show a proper discrimination in selecting the men who are to be assisted, the percentage of loss on loans should be small."

The "Grain Growers' Guide," which is a reflex of western opinion, commends the proposals and observes that if the system is wisely administered it should place a large number of returned soldiers on the land under most favourable circumstances. The returned soldier who has previously had good farming experience will have, it says, one of the best opportunities ever afforded to a settler going upon the land. It considers the settlement scheme very generous, "and in that very generosity there is a great danger that the

soldier may not plan as wisely as farmers have to do in order to make a success of their industry. The farming industry only permits of success, generally through the greatest industry and frugality, and the future will find it harder than ever for the farmer to strike a proper balance at the end of the year. In addition to this generous financial treatment the soldier settlers should be given every assistance in the way of practical advice and information. This is where their farmer neighbors and local grain growers' associations can render the greatest aid to their new neighbors. It is at once a privilege and an obligation to render service to those men who have rendered service to us greater than can ever be repaid." As pointed out by Mr. Black, Chairman of the Soldier Settlement Board, it is one of the functions of the officers of the Board to see that soldiers settled on the land do receive every assistance in the way of practical advice and information; and it is gratifying to know that many farmers' associations and grain growers' associations have already expressed their eagerness to take a special interest in the individual settler and give him the utmost encouragement and help.

The "Edmonton Journal" discusses the financial terms in replying to criticism of a member of the Alberta Legislature. It points out that civilians in large numbers are investing in farm land in the west, having a reasonable expectation of making good, and it wants to know why anyone should consider that soldiers who have agricultural qualifications should not also make good.

WHO ARE THE SIKHS?

The story of the Sikhs is closely linked with British prestige and power in India. The Sikhs were the last to be conquered, and they made it possible for the British to make safe the permanency of their rule in India. They are one of the strongest pillars of the British Indian army, and, with their collapse, the entire edifice of the British Empire in India crumbles.

The Sikhs live in the Punjab, situated in the north-west part of India. It is a state as large as England and Scotland together, and much larger than the New England States. It is watered by the five great rivers—Indus and its tributaries. The climate is very similar to that of California.

The Punjab has been well known to the West for centuries, having been invaded by Alexander. From that time on there were a number of Indo-Greek princes living in the Punjab, the last of whom was Menander, popularly known as Milinda Raja, who embraced Buddhism and used to wear the yellow robe, the dress of the Buddhist monks. The Greeks and the Indo-Aryans on the banks of the Indus freely intermarried. There has naturally been an infusion of the Greek blood into the veins of the Aryans of the Punjab. The Sikhs, as they are constituted, are of the Aryan, Scythio-Hun, Tartar origin.

The majority of the Sikhs are Jats, who are mostly peasant farmers (says a Hindu writer in the Los Angeles "Times"). They are tall and well-built. They have pointed

but medium-sized noses and large, elongated eyes. They have plenty of hair on the face. As they are forbidden to shave, they have long whiskers which they twist around a string, the ends of which are held around the ears, just like the rims of glasses. Most of them wear European dress excepting the turban, which, according to the choice of individual taste, may be of various colors. Sometimes the blending of colors is incongruous, but nevertheless they look majestic, gorgeous and dazzling.

The main occupation of the Sikhs is agriculture. Though they lack the modern scientific knowledge of agriculture, they are known to be excellent farmers. They have to work hard in the fields owing to the defective system of irrigation. The Sikhs, where ever they have gone, have made splendid success in the farming business. If they are properly guided they can admirably adopt the conditions of new surroundings. Being of the farming classes, they are noted for endurance, patience and their ability to bear hardships.

The main food of the Sikhs is chapati and parota, made of wheat flour. Chapati is very similar to the tortilla of the Mexicans. Dough is made and baked on a pan like pancakes. In case of the parota, plenty of butter is used, and it tastes better than the plain chapati.

The Sikhs have no objection to eating meat, but shun beef. Pork is their favorite dish.

CHOOSING A FARM

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Look for a farm that is large enough to meet your labour requirements. Do not get one too large or too small but one on which you can do your best work. Examine carefully the topography or lay of the land. Steep hillsides are costly to work and frequently wash badly. If such land can be kept in permanent pasture or in growing wood and lumber, it may be very valuable in conjunction with sufficient arable land. See that the general layout or plan of the farm is good. That the number, size and shape of the fields are such that they can be worked and fenced economically. Look for a farmstead centrally located so as to avoid unnecessary hauling of manure and crops. See that you will have good shelter from the prevailing winds and storms and that it will be possible to make your surroundings comfortable, convenient and homelike.

What to Avoid.

Avoid land under dispute as to the title or boundaries. Keep away from a backward community unless you are a missionary or have the gift of leadership. The people make the place, and the one who introduces new methods has always had a hard row to hoe. Avoid poorly drained land whether naturally or artificially unless you have the capital to improve it. Avoid alkali soils in dry regions. Beware of land infested with noxious weeds, insects or plant diseases. Unless you have had previous experience in reclaiming neglected land, leave the run out farms for others. Never buy land because the auctioneer says it is cheap. Avoid land that is in poor condition containing swales, many stones or large stumps, as these are very costly to fill or remove at the present price of labour.

Summary.

1. Read books on choosing a farm. "How to Choose a Farm" (Hunt), and "Farm Management" (Warren) are recommended.
2. Take sufficient time in making your choice so that your business foundation may be solid.
3. Select your community carefully. Study its past; make sure you want to share its present; believe in its future and be one to make it the best in Canada. This will speed the day when we shall have a Greater Canada. A Canada more worthy of her sons "who sleep in Flanders' fields."
4. Knowledge is power. Know what kind of a farm you want and seek it diligently until you find it.
5. Avoid starting your business under a handicap. It will be time enough to experiment with avoidable difficulties when you have gained experience. Leave them for the Agricultural Colleges and Experimental Stations. By keeping in touch with the nearest of these institutions you will save much time and money.
6. Choose an opportune time to make your purchase. Your own commonsense, which is your most valuable asset in farming, will be your best guide.
7. If we can give you any further help, it is at your service. When in doubt, ask the Khaki University of Canada.

TRUTH IN JEST.

"The road to success is apt to be a long, hard one, my boy."

"Are there no short cuts, father?"

"Yes, my son. Our penitentiaries are full of men who took the short cuts."