

head of nervous disorders resulting from shell-shock. What these men ask is "something light." In Ontario, up to the time of writing, only one man has asked to be placed on a farm. That man had never worked on a farm before. But of the many whose applications showed they had left the farm for the firing line, not one but specified that he wanted "work in a city or town."

ONE of these men gave me an inkling of his reasons for asking city work. Much of his meaning was conveyed in the varying expressions of his face and the lifting of his shoulders. But his words were something like this:

"Huh! . . . " he felt in his pocket with his one good hand and produced the last stub of a match. "Farmin's alright. . . . I got nothin' against it. . . . Huh! . . . Used to work on a farm m'self. Know everythin' about farmin' from milkin' up—and milkin' down, too. Both ways. . . . Kind of liked it, too.

"But I tell you what's the matter with me—I've got used to bein' with the boys. 'N'other thing, too: I like havin' a good off'cer. All us fellows like havin' a good off'cer. But workin' on a farm whatcha got? . . . " He shivered and made another search for a match. . . . "Thanks. . . . On a farm, I dunno, it's different. There's no fellas an' there's no off'cers and there's nothin'. . . . I want a city job. If they show me a decent boss, I'll work hard for 'm."

A long pause.

"Y' know . . . but I guess y' don't know unless y've been in the army, there's somethin' better in army life than in any of these—socialist notions. The army's the very best kind of socialism I ever heard tell of. It's true y' aren't all free an' equal in th' army—an' praise God for it, for don't any honest man know that all men ain't free and equal and never could be, and never ought to want to be. In th' army y' take orders from y'r sergeant because he's shown that he's got the stuff in 'm to be a sergeant, and he takes it from the lieutenant because the lieutenant's got the education and nerve. But what's the lieutenant have to put up? . . . Huh! Why, if he's a good lieutenant—an' if he ain't he soon gets out—he's got the hardest job of anybody. He's got t' be first up over the parapet, hasn't he? He's got to keep his nerve when us others is gettin' wobbly in the knees. It's up t' him to keep the rest 'v us MEN even when his own inurds is turned to water. So if he gets two pips 'n his cuffs 'n a servant 'n a better line o' pay than me—huh!—I sh'd worry!

"Dunno how they figure out the higher up officers. Lieutenants is the most I've ever understood—and captains. Captains 's alright. But the other ones carries responsibility. I guess that's their job. If I gets crazy and pops me head over the parapet, it's only me that suffers. But if the colonel makes even a measly mistake—huh!—or a General! My Gawd! I wouldn't be a General. . . . Gawd!

"But back here? . . . Hell! . . . The man that gives me orders rides in a private jitney of his own and smokes fine weeds—what for? Because he's a better man 'n me? Because he's more willing to show he's a real man and risk his neck for something where I'd be scared t' risk mine? Or is he like a general that's got to order a bunch of us guys into a hell of a hot place—and take the chance on bein' able to fergit the casualties resultin' f'm one of his mistakes—if he makes a mistake? Nuh! These guys in civilization don't hold their jobs by moral superiority, as the chaplain used to say, but because they got money.

"NO! No! No! I ain't kickin'. Lord! All's the matter with me is—I'm tired. So tired I ought'a be kicked. I'll work. Sure I'll work! Glad of a nice light job 'n enough pay to set up the vittles. An' I won't grouch, either. But between me 'n you, civilization don't look good t' me. God! In the armies there's dirt and there's heroes, an' war may be hell, but it's got its right side. In civilization, all the dirt's got a patent leather finish, 'n all the fightin' is done underhand, sneaky—every man f'r himself and God 'help the stragglers.

"Me? No, I tell y', I ain't kickin'. . . . I'm just homesick for a hog wallow 'n a bit 'v a fire on the side of the trench. . . . 'N' the lieutenant cursin' his servant. . . . Gawd! Why, there was a funny thing . . . Our lieutenant was the best curser I ever knew, and there wasn't a man in our platoon wouldn't 'a croaked for 'm. Last anybody see of 'm, he and Booby, that's his servant, was lyin' in a shell hole, him underneath, with a bit through his chest, coughing blood and cursing Booby because Booby was stretched across him every time a rum-jar came over—keeping the dust off the lieutenant. . . . Huh! . . . Booby was some Boob. Bimeby he tried to keep another rum-jar out 'a the hole 'n they both got it!"

I only quote that interview because I think it ought to do good among us people who think peace—as we have been practising it—is the great desideratum. It does not represent an isolated view either, but is generally true of most of the thoughtful men among the returned soldiers. It shows first of all their attitude of mind. It shows, secondly, that there IS something wrong with Peace. And in the third place, it indicates the reason why we are not likely to be able to place men back on the land unless our schemes are worked out to meet the social requirements of the returned fighting men.

It is easy to handle the returned soldier just now, because there is plenty of work and few men, and because the returns come slowly, in dribbles that are easily taken care of. But when great numbers have to be taken care of the manufacturers and other urban employers are not likely to be able to handle all the men wanting city employment, and we must then be able to turn some of this tide out on our fields. It is no reflection upon the Military Hospitals Commission to say this, nor a reflection upon the work of men like Mayor Waugh, of Winnipeg, who have striven without pause in the interests of returned men.

British Columbia has more trouble finding work for

returned soldiers, and has made better headway toward the final solution of the problem—and her own food problem to boot—than the other provinces. "Jobs" don't go round in motor cars looking for men either in Victoria or Vancouver, and though the Soldiers' Aid Committee in British Columbia has, at the time of writing, only 173 men in positions, out of 217 who applied, it has presented a report to the new Liberal Government in Victoria which shows that for once a public body has abandoned generalities for particularities. The report shows two things: first, that British Columbia is beginning to put the proper value on farming as a basis of wealth; and secondly, that the Soldiers' Aid Commission knows the mood of the returned soldier and has laid itself out to recommend a practical scheme for getting him on the land.

THE British Columbia scheme is based on the community idea. Blocks of land are to be surveyed and so laid out as to be grouped round a common centre. There will be not less than sixty farms in a block. In the centre is to be a Demonstration Farm and a Central Organization Plant, where tasks common to all the farms and requiring heavy machinery or special equipment can be done. There will be in this centre a general store, creamery, blacksmith shop, carpenter's shop, school and public hall, recreation grounds, and a residence where soldiers, coming out to look over the land, may be accommodated temporarily together with their wives and families, if they have such.

Any returned soldier may have one of these farms, without regard for his military rank or length of service, or the point where he enlisted. If the soldier is permanently disabled, his son may take up the land for him if he is eighteen years of age. In the case of a deceased soldier, his widow, or his son, or his daughter may take up his section, but only one section may be held between any or all of them in the one family.

These allotments cannot be sold to speculators. They must be settled on.

The government will assist in clearing and draining the land to the extent of five hundred dollars.

Money will be loaned the settler for the building of house and barns, or the buying of stock up to the sum of \$1,350, but such stock and equipment will be purchased under the supervision of the Government's experts and will really be the property of the Government until the amount is paid off. All these supplies will be bought by the central body, who will thus be able to secure advantageous rates from the manufacturers and from the railways.

No titles will be issued to the occupants of the land until the end of three years. Then a Government board will issue the patent provided the applicant has shown his bona fides as a soldier farmer.

Every provision is made for giving the soldier-farmer free instruction in agriculture, and in whatever branch of agriculture he seems best able to undertake.

THIS is a mere summary of British Columbia's proposals. Every detail seems to have been anticipated and anticipated wisely. It looks as though British Columbia would solve at one stroke both her farming problem and her returned soldier problem. Farming, and not mining or lumbering, is the industry that promises most toward giving British Columbia a settled and comfortable population. By adapting farming to the class of settler offering—the returned soldier—the province may achieve permanent prosperity before long.

The other provinces have something to learn from British Columbia in this matter. Even so, however, not all the returned men will accept farms. What, then, are they to be given? How are they to be fitted back into the economic fabric of the nation? It is for some one to give in the manufacturing field the lead British Columbia has indicated in the way of agriculture. Our imports of foreign-made wares should be reduced by increased home production in which returned soldiers would have their part. When we have succeeded in supplying our home market, then there are foreign opportunities to be taken in hand.



"AUTUMN."

SOFT is the voice that calls
From distant waterfalls,
And pastures where the downy seeds are flying;
And swift the breezes blow,
And eddying come and go,
O'er faded gardens where the flowers are dying.

Amid the shocks of corn,
Pipes the blithe quail at morn,
The wary partridge drums in secret places;
And pearly vapors lie
Across the western sky,
Where sun shaft with its cloud tent interlaces.

The late birds sing all day,
Oh fairest summer, stay!
The squirrel eyes askance the leaves fast browning;
The wild fowl fly afar,
Across the foamy bar,
To hasten southward ere the skies are frowning.

Yet, though a sense of grief
Comes with the falling leaf,
And war and blood this fall has never lessened;
Still, through our autumn dreams,
A future summer gleams,
Passing the fairest glories of the present.

—Reginald Gourlay.