

of selected areas, which will be cut up and offered for selection as soon as the land, with the assistance and co-operation of the experts of the Agriculture Department, has been brought into such a state that settlers can go on to it and get an immediate return from their farming operations. This means that, as an alternative to buying developed lands for settlement, the funds will be used to develop the waste lands that are already in the possession of the State. The cost of such development work will, of course, be capitalized.

Land Development  
Branch of State  
Advances Office.

In addition, it is proposed to provide for special assistance to those energetic and capable men with the pioneer spirit who are willing to take up sections of waste land and do the developmental work themselves. This will be done by setting up a special Land Development Branch of the State Advances Office, the funds of which will be used for advances on special liberal conditions to selected men taking up the class of land to which I have referred. The idea is that in lieu of buying land that is fully developed and loading the settler with the capital cost, the man will be allowed to have the land at a nominal cost and be given the opportunity of making the capital improvements himself, the necessary capital being advanced to him on suitable liberal terms by the State.

I may add that using the State Advances Office for this purpose is really a return to the original purpose for which the Office was established by me in 1894—and a great success it was, too—in conjunction with the land-settlement policy inaugurated at that time. Of late years the State Advances Office has developed overmuch along the lines of a straight-out investment corporation, and the real purpose of assisting new land-settlement has been allowed to fall very much into the background.

Cutting-up of  
large estates.

As well as developing and settling backward land in the ways that I have indicated, the Government also intend to proceed resolutely with the cutting-up of large estates suitable for closer settlement. Such estates will be acquired by voluntary purchase where the land can be obtained at a reasonable price. The Government, however, will not pay more than the true economic value of the land, and if sufficient suitable areas cannot be acquired at a reasonable price the Government will not hesitate in the interests of the Dominion as a whole to use compulsion. To facilitate such action where it is necessary it is proposed to amend and simplify the procedure at present governing the compulsory acquisition of lands under the Land for Settlements Act. The taxation adjustments I will deal with later will also have a bearing on this. A number of suitable properties have already been purchased, and some have actually been cut up and settled. A great number of properties are being investigated by the Land Purchase Board, but it is evident that the prices asked by many of the vendors are above the economic value from a production point of view, and the compulsory provisions may have to be resorted to if such an attitude is going to be maintained. The Government is not out to exploit anybody, and will pay a fair price, but it is not going to put settlers on to land carrying such a heavy loading of capital charges that they will have no hope of making a success of it. Settlers taking up lands that are purchased and cut up will, of course, be able to obtain all the necessary capital for development purposes from the Settlers Branch of the State Advances Office and the Rural Intermediate Credit Board without any delay.

As I said before, to get more men on to the land is a matter that takes time, but the policy I have outlined will be steadfastly pursued, and the full effects will be seen in a few years' time, when the increase in production and in the general prosperity of the whole Dominion will have caused unemployment and other present difficulties to disappear.

## AGRICULTURE.

Agriculture.

The organization of the Department of Agriculture will be used to assist the men on the land, and particularly the new settlers. To this end, the instructional activities of the Department are being steadily extended by means of personal contact with farmers, local field experiments, lectures, and publicity matter.

Research work.

Research activities are being given special attention, particularly as regards various diseases of dairy cows, certain sheep troubles, and the mineral content of pastures in relation to animal nutrition and deficiency diseases. A Plant Research