

# Soldiers And The Land.

"NOT ENOUGH SETTLEMENT" SAYS R.S.A.

## THE LARGE ESTATES.

A report regarding the settlement of returned soldiers on the land was presented to the executive of the New Zealand Returned Soldiers' Association by the Lands Committee yesterday morning.

### "FAR FROM SATISFIED."

Lieut.-Colonel G. Mitchell, D.S.O., M.P., chairman of the committee, presented the report, excerpts from which are given below:—

"Your committee has dealt with a great deal of important matter connected with land settlement. But all points are subservient to the one big issue, that of getting soldiers settled on the large estates, in a reasonable time, and at a price which will assure them a comfortable living and protect the country from the danger of settlers becoming a financial burden when the prices of produce are more stabilised. In spite of all the efforts of the Minister and the expenditure of very large sums of money, your committee is far from satisfied at the number of soldiers settled and the general progress made. Up to the present some 6000 men have been settled.

"We estimate that at least one-fifth of the number have bought out single farms, and so provided 1000 small farmers with the means and opportunity of joining the land gamble. The information received from all our centres confirms our estimate that at least 5000 soldier land-seekers are yet unsatisfied, and are likely to remain so for a long time, unless there is a drastic change in the method of acquiring large estates. In the Wairarapa alone we have the names of 250 men now wanting land, and another 100 could be added to that number, yet only about 140 men have been settled in this district up to date.

### EFFECT OF INFLATED PRICES.

"Your committee is gravely concerned at the war inflated prices asked for their land by some of the large land-owners, for the purpose of soldier settlement; they are loading the State and soldier with debt, that they may have the inflated value which the State and the soldier created.

"Specific cases have been brought before your committee where the soldier's valuation for rating and taxation purposes is much higher than adjoining land; in some cases unimproved valuation increased 100 per cent. since 1916 and adjoining land of superior quality 96 per cent. We are making further investigations in this matter, and will place our recommendations before your sub-committee.

"The present demand for private farms by soldiers is due, we believe, to the fact that not sufficient large estates are thrown open. We deprecate the soldier replacing the small farmer. It aggravates the shortage, and encourages speculation, and inflation in value of small farms without in any way increasing land settlement or production. Your committee is convinced that the immediate compulsory acquisition and settlement of large estates under the 1908 Act is an urgent necessity, if we are to successfully settle our soldiers on the land under conditions which will assure them success, and free the State of grave financial loss should the price of produce fall.

### DETAILED RECOMMENDATIONS.

"We, therefore, submit the following proposals as the considered judgment of your committee:

(1).—That all large estates in the Dominion be tabulated according to their size and suitability for settlement.

(2).—That such estates as are necessary for the settlement of soldiers be compulsorily acquired under the provisions of the Act of 1908.

(3).—That the estates of £100,000 and over in value be reduced to £75,000; after those in this category are exhausted, those of £75,000 to be reduced to £50,000, and, if required, from £50,000 to £35,000; such a system to be continued until all soldiers are settled.

(4).—To expedite the settlement of these estates after acquisition, we suggest that the peg system of survey, as suggested by Mr Jardine, be adopted.

"The above is Mr A. P. Whatman's scheme, and has been adopted at the Wellington Farmers' Provincial Conference at Wellington, and later unanimously by the Dominion Farmers' Conference, held on July 24-29, 1917, forty delegates being present, farmers them-

selves, and representatives of the farming community of the whole of New Zealand. It will minimise competition in the purchase of land, stimulate (instead of reducing) production, and will provide sufficient land for settlement of all soldiers.

"The committee recommends further that:—

(5).—The principle of communal settlements (fruit farms and similar branches of activity) for T.B. and P.D. soldiers be approved, and the Government be urged to extend the system at once.

(6).—That Colonel Mitchell's scheme for the settlement by fit men of bush and Native lands be approved, and the Government be urged to put it into operation at once on the Urewera lands or other suitable country.

### HIGHER ADVANCES WANTED.

"(7).—It is proposed that the amount of advances for the purchase of stock and implements be increased to £1250.

(8).—That the loan to settlers for building a home (now £250) be increased as under: Single man £250, man and wife £400, for each child £50 extra.

(9).—To protest against the power of discrimination vested in the Land Boards, and to affirm that all soldiers be given equal opportunities to acquire sections of land, providing they have the ability and experience to work it.

(10).—That the attention of the Government be drawn to the great demand by returned soldiers for grazing leases and pastoral runs, and urged that this class of land be thrown open for such, and that where the leases of grazing and pastoral runs expire, no renewals be granted provided returned soldiers are prepared to take them up, and that all such leases falling in be advertised at least three months before becoming available.

(11).—That the Government be urged to transfer the administration of advances to returned soldiers for purchasing and building houses from the Land Boards to the Repatriation Boards.

(12).—That no section be loaded with cost of roading, draining, etc., and interest be charged to settler until the money has actually been spent.

(13).—Areas of any section covered with fern, scrub, manuka, shall be free from all part of rent, based on its carrying capacity, until such areas are made productive, but such remission shall not exceed three years.

(14).—That in all cases where a soldier is placed on land after its productive period of the year, the half year's rent be remitted.

(15).—That the Government be urged to make provision for a representative nominated by the executive of the N.Z.R.S.A. to sit upon the Land Boards throughout the Dominion.

(16).—That the valuation fee under the D.S.S. Act be reduced.

(17).—That the Minister of Lands be urged to give more prompt effect to the six weeks' option obtained to purchase of lands and houses in view of the numerous complaints received of options running out before the purchase is completed.

### ENFORCEMENT OF 1908 ACT DESIRED.

Colonel Mitchell, in explaining the committee's proposals, said there was a feeling of real bitterness among many returned soldiers at the manner in which they were being treated by the Government on this question.

Mr W. Pollock (Auckland) moved: "That the committee's report be adopted, and that the chairman of the Lands Committee, Colonel Mitchell, be asked to introduce a Bill in the House, covering the whole of this report."

Mr W. E. Leadley (Christchurch) seconded.

Colonel Mitchell urged that the Government should be forced to put the 1908 Act into operation for the acquisition of big estates. If they could only get the Government to do that there would be no need for local Land Purchase Boards at all.

The report was adopted, and, on the suggestion of Colonel Mitchell, Mr Pollock altered the rest of his motion to read: "That Colonel Mitchell be asked to move a motion in the House asking that the Government at once acquire all large estates for soldier settlement under the 1908 Act." This was carried unanimously.

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# Passing Notes.

BY JACQUES.

Laugh where we must, be candid wherever we can.—Pops.

In responding to the toast of "Mr and Mrs Bicknell" at a recent valedictory gathering, Mr Bicknell said that "he had been associated with what he considered the cream of the people during the last few years—those who, although they remained at home, were prepared to do their mite."—"Southland Times," May 5.

If it is true that we're the cream  
Who stayed at home and gave our mite;  
Why, then the skim milk, it would seem,  
Are those who went away to fight.

The House of Commons read for a second time a private Bill providing for registration of the alleged father of an illegitimate child. The father would be required to confirm or disprove paternity. —Cabled item, "Southland Times," May 10.

"That child is wise indeed that knows its father!"

We've quoted oft, and cynically smiled;  
But nowadays the reading should be,  
rather:

"That man's a Solomon who knows his child."

The advantage, from the point of view of the thrifter ratepayer, of having no Labour representation on the City Council was strikingly exemplified at the last meeting of that erratic body. There was a vacancy in the Electrical Department, the value of which was assessed at £156 per annum. Presumably the services required were worth that amount, otherwise the Council had no right to pay that price for them. Probably they were worth more, since, though the vacancy was advertised there was no suitable response. The Council, at length, decided to promote a junior from another department to the vacant position, but, mark you, on the motion of Cr McDonald, the salary was reduced from the original £156 to £130. True, the latter sum represented an advance on what the lad had been receiving, but that is beside the point. The whole thing lies in a nutshell. Either the appointee was not equal to the duties of the office, in which case he should not have received the appointment, or, on the other hand, he was so, and therefore entitled to the full value of the services required of him. In the latter case, the Council's action in reducing the salary was distinctly dishonest. But, then, what can you expect? We want a Labour man or two there—or, better still, a new Council.

WANTED (by good Christian gentleman), CORRESPONDENCE good Christian old lady, view matrimony.—Address Christian, Times Office.

(Recent Pecksniffian advt. in Otago Daily Times.)

I want it clearly understood,  
That I am very, very GOOD.

And, pray believe it if you can,  
I want a pious CHRISTIAN.

As part and parcel of my plan,  
I'm also quite the GENTLEMAN.

And (let me whisper in your lug)  
I'm looking for a bally mug.

Kennington sent some brave lads to the front, but has still some left. This

was shown at the recent Leap Year social given by the ladies (unmarried ones, mind you) of the district. Quite a number of these reckless daredevils accepted the challenges issued, and, feeling secure in their own strength, rashly entered the camp of the seductive enemy. Alas, some of these, it is said, have paid a terrible price for their temerity, while others, who escaped, after thrilling experiences, wear that same look now as was seen on the faces of the sailors of the "Emden" after the "Sydney" had finished with her, and other symptoms suggest something very like shell-shock. Among those captured, many are shortly, I understand, to be led to the gallows—I beg pardon, the altar. (But thr is, perhaps, after all, but little difference, if any; both are associated with the noose).

"Miss Ettie Rout." How many of our smug pietists and prudes have raised their hands and eyebrows in holy horror at the bare mention of that name! For years it has represented in the narrow minds all that was most evil and debased in her sex, the bearer of it anathema. To them, in their stupid ignorance of the woman and her mission, she ranked even lower than those street prowlers from whose dreadful infection she tried to save the sons of those who condemned her. Even those who were inclined to applaud her aim shuddered at her methods. But Miss Rout knew how necessary her own methods were. She did not, as so many of us do, close her eyes to obvious facts; she faced them fairly and squarely, and coped with them to the full extent of her powers and opportunities. She knew men as even their mothers did not know them. She knew of their appetites and passions, unsubduable as the tiger's lust for blood, and intensified a hundred fold by the brutalising conditions and evil associations of the war. She realised the strength of their temptations, and their own frailty in the face of them, and felt the utter futility of exhortations to self restraint—in the case of the large majority of them, at least. So she set about grappling the problem in her own way, and that it was a good way is shown by the fact of its adoption by the English and Australian military authorities, though without any acknowledgment to her. It remained for the New Zealand Government, at the instigation of our ignorant and myopic unco' guid, to repudiate her and her wicked ways—to its everlasting shame, be it said. Her whole plan was based on simplest commonsense, given the certainty of association between young fellows remote from home influences (I am speaking of the majority; many were, no doubt, continent) and the loose women who are to be found everywhere willing to cater to man's animal appetites; and given the almost equal certainty of loathsome physical consequences of that intercourse, the only sensible course is to accept the facts and endeavour to minimise, by any possible means, the evil results. This Miss Rout did, and to her system of prophylaxis many a New Zealand mother owes the fact that her son returned to her free from the dread taint of syphilis—though, in the very nature of things, she can never know it, and will, no doubt, continue to harbour in her mind a hor-

ror of her benefactress. But the Diggers know many things that their mothers and sisters do not, and what Miss Rout's self-sacrificing work has achieved is one of them. And because of what they know they, through the R.S.A., are going to give public expression of their gratitude and esteem to a heroine whose boots few of her detractors are worthy to clean. And it is good that they should do so. For, though Miss Rout entered on her self-imposed mission without hope or desire of praise, and with as little care for blame, yet it must prove pleasing to her worn tired soul to learn that the "boys" whom she loved and pitied, and for whom she laboured so hard and endured so much through the long years of her almost single-handed fight, still hold her and her work in grateful remembrance.

# POULTRY NOTES!

POULTRY IN THE NORTH.

POSSIBILITIES OF THE FUTURE.

INDUSTRY FOR SOLDIERS.

Among the industries more or less in the embryo in the North is that of poultry growing. Mr R. P. Greville, Commissioner of Crown Lands, states that during his recent visit to the North he noticed that many of the old residents in the Houhora, Waiharara, and Waipapakauri districts, settled on the gum lands, were going in extensively for this industry. He had always recognised that the stretch of country between Waipapakauri and the North Cape was particularly suitable for the poultry industry, and it was pleasing to see that the men in occupation were beginning to recognise the fact. Mr J. Leydon, of Waiharara, was the pioneer of the poultry industry in this district. He had gone into the matter in a thorough and systematic manner, and had, within two years, established his poultry farm on a lucrative basis. The good work done by Mr Leydon and the encouragement and assistance given by him to others had led to several others following his example. Mr Greville states he does not think there is any place in New Zealand where poultry farming can be carried on under better conditions than in this stretch of country. The position was that the Government owned large areas of land here well adapted for the business, it was easily accessible, in a good climate, and the conditions for a man making a start were very favourable in many respects. He hoped, as a result of his visit and from what he and Mr Wells had seen, that there would be established a chain of poultry farms from Waiharara to Houhora. He was quite convinced that proceeding on the lines Mr Leydon had adopted, men taking up poultry farming there had splendid prospects of success.

Mr Leydon had kindly offered to help any newcomer in every manner possible. It was a locality where any soldier desiring to go in for poultry raising could be placed under fairly comfortable conditions at no very great expense. With the exception of the extra freight on food supplies from Auckland, settlers in this district could live very cheaply; they could obtain their firewood from the kauri peat swamps and the timber growing on adjoining lands, and land would be available at a low price, while the roads were generally good.

Worms don't like carrots (raw), charcoal, koussou, camphor pills, kerosene. An English paper says a simple remedy is two ounces of raspberry leaves dried and steeped in 1½ pints boiling water, close covered. A big dose of olive oil or sweet oil, filling the crop, will clear them. Give the raspberry syrup when birds are thirsty, to drink. A santonine pill, two grains, with oil after. Areca or betel nut, four to six grains, in oil. The most certain and most severe is 10 to 15 drops oil of turpentine in oil, but if they have liver or heart disease it may kill them. Oil of male fern, six to eight drops, in a pill.