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How Canada's Veterans Are Faring

The Dominion's Carefully Planned Rehabilitation Program Includes a 'Farms for Soldiers' Act That Is Producing Real Farms

SECOND only to the part played by Canada on the battlefields of Europe is the magnificent spirit in which the Dominion has dealt with the returned soldier and with the fallen soldier and his dependents. From the time the war ended to the present, Canada has led the rest of the world in looking after her ex-service men.

When the men of the Dominion returned from Europe they originally got three months' post-discharge pay at their discharge rank. On second thought this was changed early in 1919 to a war gratuity basis, as follows: For one year's overseas service or more, four months' pay and allowances; for three years' service or more, six months' pay and allowances. From these amounts was deducted any sum paid out under the post-discharge system which had earlier prevailed. The men who had seen service in Canada only were not forgotten and received checks for one month's pay and allowances for each complete year of service in the army.

These benefits came after the war was over, but long before the end of the conflict was in sight the Canadian Government and the Canadian people had seen the need for a comprehensive system of dealing with the returned soldier and his manifold problems. This resulted in the temporary federal Department of Soldiers' Civil Reestablishment, which has been ably presided over by Sir James Loughheed. This department had charge of medical treatment of all disabled soldiers, attended to vocational training, conducted an employment service, supervised the manufacture and supply of artificial limbs, and directed the administration and paying of pensions and the payment of pay and allowances to all those undergoing treatment or vocational training.

At the close of the present fiscal year, in March, the permanent features of this work, such as the pensions commission and the care of permanently disabled soldiers, will in all likelihood be taken over by the Department of the Interior, which now superintends the Soldiers' Land Settlement Scheme.

The Department of Soldiers' Civil Reestablishment has initiated many features which have been adopted by

By OWEN E. MCGILLICUDDY



Norman A. Falkner, Western Canadian skating champion in 1916, lost a leg at Lens in 1917, and is now the world's champion (and probably, only) one-legged skater

other Allied countries. Not only has the Department looked after the hospitalization and treatment for one year after discharge of all ex-members of

the C. E. F. and Imperial forces resident in Canada, but it has also attended to the hospitalization and treatment of all ex-members of the American forces resident in Canada. It has made provision for the maintenance of institutions for the treatment of long-continued and presumably incurable diseases. It has provided for the re-training of all ex-members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force who, through disability incurred during or actuated by war service, were unable to return to their pre-war occupations.

One feature in which the Department has led all other countries was in providing for the training of minors, or of boys who enlisted under the age of eighteen and who, on account of war service, suffered severe interruption of their training.

Loans also are provided for purchase of equipment so vocational graduates starting in business allied to the training course will not be handicapped financially. Loans are provided for disabled men who have not had or are not entitled to vocational training but who wish to continue educational training which was interrupted by service.

The pay and allowances for all men undergoing treatment or training are in accordance with the pay of rank which these men received while in the C. E. F. If the man has a family he is entitled to a separation allowance for his wife and children. A single man receives \$75 a month, a married man without children \$100 and for the first child \$15 a month in addition, for the second child \$12 a month, and for the third and each successive child \$10 a month. In addition to medical treatment for ex-members of the forces, during which treatment pay and allowances are provided, free treatment is available for all those who suffer a recurrence of disabilities sustained while serving in France or any other zone of war.

Canada's system of pensions is looked upon as one of the fairest and broadest provided by any of the countries that participated in the World War. The total pensions in force at the close of the last fiscal year included 35,481 dependents, of whom 17,293 are children. The yearly liability for these dependents amounted to \$11,101,463.

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Colonial Press

Dainty occupation for a mere man, this, but he was doing rougher work three years ago



A bungalow-farmhouse in British Columbia tenanted by a former soldier



The barn that goes with the bungalow was built by the veteran himself

HOW CANADA'S VETERANS ARE FARING

The total number of disabilities under pension was 69,583. Wives totalled 29,313 and other dependents 42,658, making 141,554 persons for whom \$14,305,441 was paid. The total yearly liability amounts to \$25,406,904. The pensions included 10,371 widows and 17,293 children, and the disabilities included 29,313 wives and a large number of children.

The percentage of pensioners having children is 27. The number of wives with children who receive pensions is 65 percent, and the percentage of pensioned wives without children is 35.

What has already been written shows what the Government has done to prepare the physically and mentally disabled soldier for entering upon civilian duties. This brings us to the excellent work which has been performed by the Soldiers' Settlement Board throughout the Dominion.

This Board was created with the idea of helping the returned man to make a success of farm life on his own land. That the scheme is a success is evidenced by the following figures, which are for the calendar year of 1920:

Acres of new land broken in 1920 by soldier settlers in western provinces alone, 202,730; total acreage of land taken up by returned soldiers in western provinces, 3,100,000, of which some two million acres are free lands granted to veterans, of whom 8,192 have availed themselves of land grants.

In November the Board announced that loans to ex-service men who wanted farms of their own had passed the \$80,000,000 mark, which figure represented not quite 20,000 settlers' loans. These were distributed by provinces as follows:

| | Settlers | Loans |
|---------------------------|----------|------------|
| Prince Edward Island..... | 302 | \$814,957 |
| Nova Scotia | 395 | 1,287,928 |
| New Brunswick | 595 | 1,449,794 |
| Quebec | 459 | 1,890,434 |
| Ontario | 1,403 | 6,064,042 |
| Manitoba | 3,289 | 13,267,826 |
| Saskatchewan | 4,578 | 19,843,391 |
| Alberta | 5,710 | 22,529,040 |
| British Columbia | 2,941 | 12,557,021 |

At the same time the Board announced that of 58,811 veterans who had made applications for benefits under the Act, 41,906 had been pronounced "qualified to farm." Two hundred and ninety soldier farmers already had repaid their loans in full. Stock and equipment purchases made by the board in the interests of its clients totalled \$22,619,758, on which special arrangements had effected a saving of \$742,568.

The Soldiers' Land Settlement Act of 1917 provided that the returned soldier was entitled to an entry of Dominion lands of 160 acres in addition to ordinary homestead rights. The act went beyond previous legislation in providing a loan to the settler not exceeding \$2,500 on his land. This was the first time that a Dominion Parliament had ever ventured into lending to encourage settlers.

As time went on it became apparent that the area of available land suitable for agriculture in the western provinces was going to be insufficient. After thoroughly investigating the situation, the federal government passed an Order-in-Council on February 11, 1918, by which the Soldiers' Land Settlement Board got authority to acquire private-

ly-owned lands for sale to settlers as defined by the Soldiers' Settlement Act.

The Board was empowered to sell an acreage not greater than 320 acres with the provision that the land should be sold at the price at which it had been acquired and that the amount owed by the returned man on the land should not exceed \$4,500, he to pay not less than ten percent of the cost.

The Order-in-Council provided that the Board should have power to acquire the stock and implements and to sell them at cost to the veteran, \$2,000 being the maximum allotted to each applicant, and, further, to lend the man upon his improvements, or upon improvements to be made, a sum not exceeding \$1,000. The old Act of 1917 gave power to lend not only upon the homesteads of soldiers, but also to returned men who owned their land, a sum not exceeding \$2,500. By the terms of the Order-in-Council of February, 1918, land acquired by the Board must be resold to the soldier and the unpaid balance of the sale price made repayable in twenty-five annual instalments, including interest by amortization at five percent.

The \$1,000 maximum loan for improvements is to be repayable on the same terms, but the stock and equipment loan, as it is made on perishable articles, is to be repaid in four instalments, beginning in the third year, although the settler will be relieved entirely of any obligation for the first two years.

Last March further legislation was passed to provide that the loan on the stock and equipment of the veteran who bought land might also be made to the man who homesteaded under the Act of 1917. From that date onward he became entitled, if classified as qualified, to a loan of \$2,000 in addition to the \$2,500 loan.

The big problem with which the Soldiers' Land Settlement Board has had to deal has not been so much the acquiring of suitable land at a fair price as the selection of suitable men to go on the land—men, that is, who had a reasonable chance of achieving success. With this in view the Board has established a system of practical farming courses in every province and these courses of study, or rather of plain hard work, are of about three months. The work is designed to fit the veterans not to be experts in agriculture, but to be useful men on the land.

There is also a system by which selected farmers are listed to give special attention to veterans who work for them as a special preparation for actual farming. The married man who is recommended by the Board to go on land is entitled to \$20 a month in addition to the wages he gets on the farm and receives \$6 a month for each child. Corresponding rates which are somewhat more liberal are allowed to men attending agricultural colleges. The general purpose is to enable the man to conserve what money he has saved and so have it at his disposal when he becomes qualified and wants to buy land for himself. All the agricultural training is free, and those taking advantage of it also have free board.

Industrially and agriculturally, Canada has made her greatest strides since the signing of the Armistice. This has been largely brought about by her generous but careful treatment of the returned soldier.