

GETTING MEN ON THE LAND

Dr. Creelman - Advises Closer Settlement Policy in Future

TRAINING FARMS ALSO PROPOSED

Government, He Believes, Should Do Some of Pion- eering Work

From the Ottawa Correspondent
of The Daily News.

Ottawa, Jan. 22.—In his address before the Civic Improvement League Conference, held here this week, Dr. Creelman, President of the Ontario Agricultural College at Guelph, advanced several practical suggestions in connection with the problem of immigration and land settlement. Especially in view of the problem of handling possible extensive immigration after the war, his speech is of national interest. Dr. Creelman said:

"I do not know how far the Dominion Government would care to undertake the responsibility, or how much should be allotted to the Provinces, but of one thing I am fully convinced, and that is, that our Land Settlement Policy could be greatly improved. It is lonely enough for the newcomer in the well settled farm districts of Ontario. What it must be in the West on an odd quarter section, here and there, it is hard to conceive. It is not the most exciting kind of life to live in an old settled portion of the country on a farm when you understand the business. We can hardly conceive of what it must be for a man without farm experience, to live by himself on a quarter section.

"It would seem then, that men coming out to this country without any knowledge of farming should be given an opportunity of learning the business before they acquire farms of their own. It seems equally desirable that farmers who come to us to take up land should have some of the pioneering work already done for them.

"It seems to me that the Government might take a tract of good land in each Province (or many tracts if needed), see that railroad facilities are available, that the town site is located in the proper place, and that wells are dug and roads constructed. Then, when opened for settlement, at a definite price per acre, for every lot it should be seen to that every parcel is sold before any of the block is occupied. By this closer settlement, neighbors are near by, co-operation is made possible, schools and churches are immediately accessible, and no one is at too great distance from the railway and local market.

The Inexperienced.

"For those who have had no experience, I think the Provincial Governments might now, without much sacrifice, set aside tracts of land, build inexpensive but comfortable dormitories, hire a few well-informed men as foremen and instructors and engage in teaching farming to those who have had no experience. It must be remembered that farming is a trade and must be learned before one can expect to make it a profitable business. Many men in past years have come from the Old Country and learned this trade with good farmers. But farming has changed so that the farmer himself has not now the time to teach immigrants as was the custom at one time. Improved and more complicated implements require more skilled labor, and the raw boy who does not know his business is often kept doing the chores early and late, until he is either disgusted with the life or fails to learn the real business of farming at all. Such farms might be nearly self-sustaining, for these green men should not be paid more than \$5 a month and their board while learning the business. During the growing season, they could be kept at work every day, but during the winter, half day's work in the bush or about the stables would probably all that could be provided, while the other half of the day could be profitably spent in studying methods through bulletins and other literature, under the direction of the farm instructors.

"I am not sure that it would not pay also for the Dominion Government or the Provincial Governments to maintain farms in Great Britain with a Canadian manager, where intending immigrants wishing to go into farming, but knowing nothing about it, might spend a few months using Canadian implements and Canadian methods, and so find out whether this is the life they want to lead. It is almost impossible for a young man to know whether he will like farming or not until he has tried it. It is expensive to have to break home ties and go from the old land several thousand miles to find out. Our towns and cities have in the past been filled with young men who come out to farm. They are needed on the land but are either not fitted for the life or "got in wrong" to start with. The most of these men are made of good material, but our present system does not tend to develop them. As well might we expect to make skilled physicians and surgeons by assigning a school boy to each of our medical men in practice and expecting each one to turn out a successful doctor.

Experiment Successful.

"Hon. Rupert Guinness, of Woking Park Farm, England, has tried this out on a small scale, and from the beginning has had more applicants than he could accept. I sent him a manager, and he afterwards got an assistant from Guelph also. Many of the young men who have come from that farm to Canada since have shown their practical ability to fit into our ways, and they have become good Canadian citizens and good Canadian farmers. Many, at the same time, I am told, have been advised to stay at home, as they showed neither the instincts nor the adaptability necessary to make Canadian farmers. After the war, I expect to see great immigration to Canada. We must expect to find many returned soldiers who will want to go upon the land. It seems to me it would be

wise, therefore, to look into these two questions at once—of training farms and of closer settlement.

"When we have settled back to normal conditions and can get these tracts of land ready for settlement, then I should like to see some of the very best lecturers from our agricultural colleges, from our Departments of Agriculture and from the Farmers' Institutes, go right into Great Britain and hold series of meetings in the best farming communities, just explaining how we are farming, throwing on the screen some pictures of our farms and farm products, and then quietly explaining our immigration laws and pointing out directly where the settler may go and get land at the mere cost of the improvements that have been put on it, where he would be assured of companionship for himself and wife and good schools for his children; where if he has capital he may buy the land outright, build his house, and stock it himself; but where, if not, he may secure the use of the land, be advanced money for the purchase of live stock and the building of permanent improvements.

"We cannot expect that Provincial agents, settled in offices in the middle of London, will get very close to any large number of first-class farmers in the counties far remote. We must reach these men personally, and I believe the men to do it are the men mentioned above."