

# SOLDIER SETTLERS AT KAPUSKASING CAUSE TO COMPLAIN

## Says Col. Carmichael in Report to the Ontario Cabinet

Toronto, Jan. 22.—"I have little hesitation in saying that if something is not done soon to relieve the situation we will have recruits for our insane asylums from the colony."

These are the concluding words of a report which Col. Hon. D. Carmichael, minister without portfolio in the Ontario Government, placed before the cabinet yesterday with regard to the conditions at Kapuskasing, the soldiers' settlement, which was established by the former Conservative Government.

Col. Carmichael is the representative of the soldiers in the Ontario Government. He recently visited the camp and made a careful investigation of many complaints that have been made for months past by the settlers living at Kapuskasing. While some of the causes of discontent among the settlers Col. Carmichael regards as trivial, his report undoubtedly substantiates in a general way many of the statements made both during the provincial election campaign and since relative to the conditions there.

"A great deal of discontent exists for various reasons," Col. Carmichael states in his report. "The majority of the settlers have grievances of one kind or another. The land is very difficult to clear, as it is densely wooded and covered sometimes to a depth of eighteen inches with moss. The timber is small, averaging about eight inches in diameter, and is not all suitable for pulpwood. When it is cut down the brush and moss must be burned and the ground stumped. The houses built for settlers proved very expensive, and in this connection a promise seems to have been made by Mr. Grigg (Deputy Minister of Lands and Forests) last October that a qualified valuator would be sent up to make an estimate of the material and labor involved in the construction of any house over which there was any dispute made. The only promise I made while there was that I would insist on that promise being kept. The system of loaning horses and implements to the settlers seemingly cannot be carried on in such a manner as to satisfy the settlers and the Department. Turning to climatic conditions we find that in every month during 1918 the temperature fell to freezing point, so that it was possible to harvest only very hardy crops."

When the larger areas were clear this frost danger would be minimized, but it was a serious handicap at present. The minister frankly admits that quite a large proportion of the soldier settlers are unfitted for pioneer life and many accustomed to city life cannot reconcile themselves to the monotonous and unremunerative toil and hardship. Some settlers, in fact, have arrived at the point where success seems so difficult of attainment that they are "lying down on the job."

"Some of the older settlers," he says, "finding themselves still with only small clearings, and unable to produce sufficient fodder for stock or foodstuffs for their own consumption and being, in many cases, in debt to the Department are discouraged and cannot see any future for themselves, or their families. It is to be remembered that few settlers have stock of any kind, their holdings (cleared) are too small to support even a team of horses, and a cow, even if they could afford to buy them. The prices of fodder are prohibitive. Many of the settlers are getting even deeper in debt by reason of credit buying at the colony store. The situation is becoming serious. Even settlers satisfied with their treatment cannot see any future for themselves. Some will leave as soon as the timber is exhausted. Only one pete-

has so far been granted to the widow of a settler, and incidentally all this has cost the province to date approximately \$500,000."