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## "The Digger."

FRIDAY, MAY 7, 1920.

### DISCHARGED SOLDIERS' SETTLEMENT.

The attitude of the Government in relaxing the administration of the Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Act will meet with widespread disapproval, and will shake the confidence of the people who have been promised that legislation effecting repatriative measures would continue unhampered until repatriation was effectively carried out. In replying to a deputation from the R.S.A. the Prime Minister stated that, "no legislation affecting returned soldiers would be suspended or declared inoperative or repealed until such time as those who were entitled to the privileges could avail themselves thereof." The plain facts are that the Prime Minister has failed to keep his word and shirked his responsibility to the men who are desirous of taking up land. The operation of the D.S.S. Act is generally understood as some decided benefit from the Government to the returned soldier. We should also ask ourselves whether or not this is a sound business proposition for the State, providing the men are placed on the land under conditions which will enable them to make good. This country is essentially one in which the primary industries stand pre-eminent, and if production is to be increased, then every man who will go upon the land should have that opportunity, and by increasing production, increase the wealth of the country. Possibly at no time in the history of the Dominion has there been such a demand for land, as the following extract from the "News" will show:—

#### ARDMORE SETTLEMENTS.

	Acres.	Applicants.
Section 1s	264	78
Section 2s	142	45
Section 3s	165	51
Section 4s	342	45
Section 5s	245	66

#### PUKENUI SETTLEMENT.

Section 1s	235	34
Section 3s	76	11
Section 4s	340	37
Section 5s	438	46
Section 6s	605	48

#### GLENN SETTLEMENT.

Section 1s	288	20
Section 2s	284	18
Section 3s	243	14
Section 4s	312	17

#### MOUTERE SETTLEMENT.

Run 590	7100	184
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This is no time to adopt the "go slow policy" in regards to land settlement, and money should be rendered available which will help settlement to proceed with haste. The R.S.A., locally, has protested against the Minister's action, and the Auckland Association has made a vigorous protest which should be echoed through every association within the Dominion, and, finally how is it that no announcement has been made of the present position in order that those in the country may know what the position is and save themselves the time and trouble of making applications and receiving them back from the Land Board?

## COUNTRY NOTES.

### OTAUTAU.

#### SCHOOL COMMITTEE.

There was a fair attendance at the schoolroom on Monday evening to elect the new committee. The following were elected:—Messrs G. H. Stevens, A. N. Holmes, E. Harrington, J. McGill, J. Walker, G. Sinclair, and T. A. Mooney, Mr G. H. Stevens was re-appointed chairman, and Mr T. A. Mooney was elected secretary. The chairman and secretary were appointed signing officers.

By invitation of the N.Z. Teachers' Institute the following resolution was passed:—That this meeting of Otago house-holders urges upon the Government the great necessity for reform in the national system of education in regard to: (1) The extension of the school age and reduction of the size of classes. (2) The securing of more trained teachers, and to this end, the paying of much better salaries, and (3) In order to give full effect to these measures a reform of the system of administration by establishing a National Education Board and local Education Committees.

It was decided that cocoa be supplied to country children during the winter. Messrs Holmes and McGill were appointed a visiting committee.

The headmaster's report was read, as follows: The roll number at present stands at 217—123 boys and 94 girls. The average for the month was 198 out of an average roll of 216, several very wet days spoiling what would otherwise have been a very good attendance. In connection with school garden, load of manure and a load of brushwood have come to hand. Owing to the dry weather and early frosts the potatoes did not yield well, but should bring about £1, which I would like to spend on the garden next season. As winter is with us again arrangements should be made to supply a cup of cocoa to the country children, if such a course be thought advisable.—Adopted.

The salary of the janitress was increased to 12s 6d per week.

#### OTAUTAU PROGRESSIVE LEAGUE.

The annual general meeting, held in the Board Room on Monday evening (says the "Otago Farmer"), was attended by Messrs W. J. Wesley (chair), G. Sinclair, W. Porteous, C. N. Lawless, A. N. Holmes, J. McGill, Jno. Fisher, G. Bates, and T. A. Mooney.

The balance-sheet, showing a credit balance of £278 10s 11d was adopted.

The chairman, in giving his report for the past year, said that in looking back over the first year's activities it was gratifying to know that many of the matters taken in hand have become accomplished facts. The League has proved a power in the district, taking in hand and accomplishing matters of importance to the district and town, having to a large extent broken down the barrier of strong opposition and proved to the pessimistic that a body such as the League is a decided benefactor to the community. The first matter taken in hand was that of the Aparima River protection, resulting in a deputation to the Hon. Guthrie and the ultimate sitting in Otago of the commission.

Following on this arrangements were made to meet the Member, Mr J. C. Thomson, in Otago, and to consult with him in conjunction with the Otago Town Board matters of importance to our town, this conference ultimately resulting in the almost completion of arrangements for the transfer of the Education Endowment to the Otago Town Board for a memorial site, the League having agreed to pay the purchase money. The following other matters came under his notice: Running the winter show, hiring of boring plant for coal, cattle pens, housing problem, pillar box in North Otago, erection of seats in recreation ground, concrete footpaths, finger posts, crane at railway station, stock yards at railway station, running of fete, tree planting, erection of pavilion at recreation ground, and the League has now under consideration an electric lighting system for the town. Some had said that they had made mistakes. If so, was it not better to try and do something even if mistakes did occur. The man who never made mistakes was the man who did nothing. He thanked the members for their past support, and asked that they continue same to the incoming chairman.

The election of office-bearers resulted as follows:—President, Mr W. J. Wesley; vice-president, Mr A. N. Holmes; auditor, Mr W. Porteous; executive; Messrs G. Sinclair, J. McGill, G. Bates, C. N. Lawless, A. N. Holmes, W. J. Wesley, L. Brown, J. Fisher, P. Brown, W. Donnan, G. Georgeson, F. Collier; Industry Committee, chairman and Messrs Holmes,

McGill and Sinclair; Beautifying Committee, W. Porteous, W. Donnan, C. N. Lawless, and L. J. Brown; River Protection, Messrs G. A. Burnett and P. Brown; Sports, Messrs R. Collett, L. J. Brown, McGill and Bates.

Letters were received from Messrs Spry, Ltd., and the Otago Timber Company reported on the visit to Winton to inspect the plant belonging to the Winton Borough Council.—It was decided that more information be obtained and that a deputation wait on the Town Board on Monday evening.

### TUATAPERE.

The Waiau Rovers journeyed to Riverton last Saturday, when a match was played with the Riverton team. The game was a most willing one, and was keenly followed by a large crowd of interested spectators. Mr R. Fluerty, of the Tuatapere team, and a member of the local R.S.A., had the misfortune to break his leg. The game ended in a draw, 12 points being registered on either side.

The Pipe Band held a very successful social at Orepuki last Friday night, when a good number of local residents made the journey with the band. The function was in aid of new uniforms, about £200 being now in hand.

Mr James King, who has held a seat on the Land Board for some years, will again be a candidate for the position.

It is a long time since such general interest was taken in a meeting locally as the annual meeting of householders. The schoolroom was well-filled, in spite of the stormy night. A feeling was abroad among a large section of the community that the headteacher of the school, and a returned soldier was not getting a fair deal on account of his religion—a sorry state of affairs in this enlightened age. Owing to some uncertainty as to the actual state of the finances, the meeting decided not to adopt the balance-sheet. The following were elected to form the committee:—Mr C. Duncan (chairman), M. Dowling (secretary), T. J. Harris, T. Ward, and Mrs Curov. All are new members. An appreciative vote of thanks to the headteacher and his staff was carried by acclamation.

### EDENDALE R. S. A.

The commemoration of Anzac Day at this centre opened at 10 o'clock a.m., at which hour a large squad of returned soldiers, under Lieut. P. Robertson (president local R.S.A. branch) assembled in front of the Soldiers' Monument. A magnificent wreath, 4ft in diameter, the loving work of women's hands was reverently laid on the monument, also a smaller one on behalf of the returned men. Short addresses in keeping with the solemn occasion were delivered by Revs. A. C. Swainson (Anglican) and W. B. Cuming (Methodist).

At 7 p.m. the Public Hall was packed for the united service, extra seating accommodation having to be provided. Mr W. H. Fortune (Presbyterian lay preacher) presided, and he was supported by Rev. W. B. Cuming (Methodist) and Mr H. E. Niven (Anglican lay reader). Rev. J. Pringle (Presbyterian) was absent, owing to a pressing engagement at Gore.

The interior of the hall was tastefully embellished for the occasion. A large Union Jack was stretched prominently on a trestle on the stage representing a grave, and the lovely wreaths which had lain at the base of the Soldiers' Monument through the day were deposited on the entwined crosses of Saints George, Andrew, and Patrick. Prior to opening the service, the returned soldiers under Lieut. P. Robertson, and the members of the Wyndham Pipe Band assembled in full strength at the monument, and marched therefrom to the hall, playing suitable music in slow time.

The following was the order of the religious service.—National Anthem; prayer, led by Mr Fortune; praise, Psalm 124 (2nd version), "Now Israel may say, and that truly," Scripture reading (Psalm xc), Mr Niven; hymn, "For all the Saints who from their labours rest," prayer, Mr Fortune; anthem, "The ransom of the Lord shall rejoice," Choir; collection; Scripture reading (Revelations, xii), Mr Niven; hymn, "Through the night of doubt and sorrow," address, Rev. Mr Cuming; hymn, "O God our help in ages past," Benediction; organ solo, "Dead March" ("Saul"), Mr W. Chaplin; trumpet call, "The Last Post," Sgt. R. Robertson.

A strong, well-balanced choir, directed by the organist (Mr W. Chaplin), led the singing. The large congregation included representatives from Brydone, Menzies Ferry, Mataura Island, Seaward Downs, and Morton Mains. The offertory amounted to £6 14s 1d.

## LATE SPORTING.

(By Telegraph—Special to Digger.)

DUNEDIN, May 7.

The winter meeting of the Forbury Trotting Club opened on Thursday under most favourable climatic conditions, but the track was heavy from recent rains. Princess Cole and Exmoor were the only Southlanders to win during the day.

Diggers, did you remember Delville Wood yesterday at Forbury Park. Those of you who did get a nice little double figure dividend to start off on. He made no race of the first Amateur Handicap, and when he strikes a good track and better company be on him again. He and his owner hail from Central Otago way.

Digger Dwyer has always maintained that Princess Cole would yet win a good race and he has persevered well with the black daughter of King Cole to not only win a good stake for her owner, but also get a good dividend. She races very gamely and at the finish always had the measure of Nellie Scott in the Beach Handicap (two miles, in saddle).

Delville Wood paid a penalty of sixty yards in the Innovation Handicap, and did not look to be busy. Morry Bingen, after waiting on the leaders for nearly a mile and a half, challenged W.D. and won nicely. He was the first favourite to score.

General Link, an officer I can't place on the any of the battle fronts, was always favourite for the Prince's Cup. He was favourite in all the wool brokers' charts and favourite directly the machine opened. We won fairly easily at the finish and landed his backers only a little better than an even money dividend. Vice-Admiral, another whose name should appeal to diggers, was a fair second and returned his backers a much better dividend. Partner and Legacy played up at the start and Little Albert Cling, who was third favourite, ran a good race to get fourth close up to Stockade who was third.

Thixendale won the Domain Handicap very comfortably from Quick Match, giving Andy Pringle his only winning ride during the day.

Exmoor scored nicely in the St. Clair Handicap from Parkfield.

Guynemer was easily the best in the Railway Handicap, and, after being interfered with by Chaos falling, he won comfortably at the finish from Topsy Dillon.

Digger Billy Muir and Royal Step provided a hot favourite in the Flying Handicap, but after a few furlongs had been covered it was quickly seen he had no chance with Trooper Dillon, who led all the way and won by four lengths, paying a nice double figure dividend in which quite a number of diggers participated.

### SOUTHLANDS' PART IN THE WAR.

The "Digger" would like to receive information from officers and other ranks regarding the above. Extracts from diaries and other items are urgently required for the writer of these articles. It is requested that all matter especially regarding early history be sent to the Editor as soon as possible.

### A "RUMOUR."

#### ATTITUDE OF RETURNED SOLDIERS

"A rumour has reached me," said Mr J. McKenzie at a meeting of returned soldiers held in Wellington, last night, "that the Prime Minister has appealed to the Returned Soldiers' Association for 'loyal labour,' so that he might be able to run the railways. I desire—

Voices: Rot! There are no "scabs" here.

Mr McKenzie: I desire to know if the Government or the Prime Minister has approached the Association, and, if so, what attitude the executive has taken up or will take up.

Members: We could not deal with it. It is not in the constitution.

Mr McKenzie: I want to know.

The newly-elected chairman, Mr W. Perry, asked Mr A. Curdson, a member of the retiring executive, if a communication such as that referred to had been received, and he was answered in the negative.

This did not satisfy Mr McKenzie, who wanted to know what the executive would say if the request were made.

Mr Perry: I do not see how it could concern us. It is a matter for the individual.

Voices: No "scabs" here—Mr Perry: But if the invitation is extended I will do my best to rule that the association cannot deal with it.