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**"The Digger."**

FRIDAY, JUNE 4, 1920.

#### T.B. MEN.

The amount of time spent by conference  
in discussing the position of T.B. men  
throughout the Dominion will meet with  
universal approval by all returned soldiers'  
associations and those who are anxious to  
see that these men receive proper treat-  
ment under favourable conditions. The  
war is now to some extent of passing note,  
and this is followed by a certain amount  
of apathy by returned men, and in par-  
ticular the general public. It is not be-  
cause the public are disinterested and are  
not anxious that these men receive proper  
treatment. It is because we become im-  
mersed in the conditions of other en-  
vironment to such an extent that we are  
apt to forget now that the question is  
again in the limelight it is essential that  
public opinion coupled with the united  
efforts of the R.S.A. be a force behind the  
essential requirements of these men as in-  
dicated by conference. The deputation  
which waited upon the Prime Minister and  
the Hon. Wm. Guthrie, received a very  
favourable reply and it hoped that there  
will be no delay in effecting some  
machinery of a concrete character. The  
number of men who are now requiring  
treatment must be considerable and it is  
reasonable to suppose that their ranks are  
being supplemented from time to time by  
men who are now beginning to feel the  
effects of standing in water and various  
privations associated with standing on the  
fire-step. In the interests of these men, and  
the public health everything possible must  
be done to restore them to health. The  
suggestion for the establishing of small  
farms for fruit and poultry keeping, etc.,  
is a good one. If these farms are estab-  
lished in a suitable locality and good cli-  
matic conditions it will be a great help  
to them and make them self-supporting.  
A good deal has been done in the past,  
but it seems essential as far as possible to  
couple treatment with repatriative mea-  
sures, and this would be done by the small  
farm system. As the Prime Minister  
stated, there are real difficulties associated  
with repatriation, and naturally enough  
they will exist possibly to a greater extent  
with T.B. men, but Mr Guthrie's assu-  
rance will be a big factor in minimising  
them providing they are carried into prac-  
tical effect. The Minister has stated that  
T.B. men or otherwise who are suffering  
from disabilities are given concessions.  
Rents, for instance, were postponed with-  
out interest, and after a man got on his  
feet one of three things was done. Post-  
poned rent would be taken in instalments

over two to five years, or the amount ow-  
ing would be capitalised, or, in special cases,  
the amount would be remitted. Altogether  
this is very good as a piece of machinery  
to benefit these men, but the difficulty is  
that those who administer these provisions  
do not always act in the true  
spirit of the act. The conference decided  
to urge the following recommendations:—

That T.B. men on being discharged  
from a sanatorium should be provided by  
the Defence Department with permanently  
suitable shelters, properly furnished with  
bed, bedding, etc. That where the patient  
owns a house having a verandah the De-  
fence Department defray the expenses of  
having the verandah glassed in and fur-  
nished with bedding, etc. That the per-  
sonnel of all sanatoria should, where pos-  
sible, be ex T.B. men and that compul-  
sory examination be made every six  
months of T.B. men, out-patients and dis-  
charges (not for pensions) by a specialist  
or by the specialists who treated the men's  
cases, and that the Defence Department  
be responsible for the transportation of  
patients to the specialist. That it be re-  
commended to the D.G.M.S. to send a  
chest expert through New Zealand to ex-  
amine all chest cases from N.Z.E.F.

#### THE DIGGER'S LETTER BOX.

In a previous issue we stated that we  
were not responsible for opinions expres-  
sed by our correspondents. If at any  
time, anything is incorrectly stated, or the  
opinions are not agreed with, these col-  
umns are open for a statement of the  
case. No one will receive any informa-  
tion, by calling at this office, as to our  
contributors or their contributed matter.—  
Editor.

#### ARRIVAL OF GENERAL BIRDWOOD.

General Birdwood has kindly accepted  
the invitation of the local R.S.A. to the  
smoke concert on the evening of the 15th  
inst.

#### A HOLIDAY VISIT.

WELLINGTON, June 2.

General Sir William Birdwood arrived  
in Wellington from Sydney this evening,  
accompanied by Lady Birdwood and Miss  
Joan Birdwood. An official party, includ-  
ing the Minister for Internal Affairs,  
Major-General Sir E. W. C. Chaytor, and  
Brigadier-General G. S. Richardson,  
boarded the Manuka in the stream from a  
motor launch, and extended a welcome to  
General Birdwood on behalf of the Govern-  
ment and Defence Forces of the Do-  
minion.

The President of the Returned Soldiers'  
Association (Dr Boxer) also welcomed the  
General on behalf of the returned men,  
and extended to him an invitation to at-  
tend the conference now being held in  
Wellington.

Sir William Birdwood makes it clear  
that he is paying merely a holiday visit  
to New Zealand. He hopes to meet as  
many as possible of the Anzac men, but  
he is not making in any sense a formal  
tour. A civic reception will be accorded  
him to-morrow evening.

#### OTAHUTI NOTES.

The Otahuti rugby team journeyed to  
Drummond last Saturday and met the local  
team, the game ending in a draw, A. S.  
McCrosbie scoring for Otahuti, and A.  
Crichton for Drummond, both tries being  
unconverted.

The ball was dry and the ground in  
fair order, with the result the game was  
fast from the kick-off. McLeod and R.  
Chilton of Drummond, held the backs  
together, amongst whom there was a fair  
amount of speculating, which must be re-  
futed if the team is to be efficient, also a  
failing with Drummond is the incessant  
talking which goes on, and at a distance  
sounds like a mixture of Gaelic and  
French, without the gestures of the  
latter.

The Otahuti team did not play up to  
their usual standard, although some fine  
individual work was done, but unless a  
team learns the true meaning of combina-  
tion, it can never be proficient in the art  
of playing first class football. Undoubt-  
edly this team has more players within its  
ranks who would be an acquisition to any  
town club than most country teams have,  
and if that most important work, practice,  
were indulged in to a greater extent, then  
we could look forward to something special  
in the football line. C. Donald made  
many energetic attempts to cross Drum-  
mond's line, but fate willed otherwise, and  
although of herculean strength he could  
not withstand the combined efforts of the  
eight opposing forwards, who all seemed  
desirous of boarding his broad back, and  
he was invariably brought down within a  
few inches of the line; A. S. McCrosbie  
played a hard game, and stood out promi-  
nently among the forwards from start to  
finish. Mr Frank O'Connell gave great  
satisfaction as a referee.

#### RETURNED SOLDIERS' CONFERENCE.

#### THE SHORTAGE OF HOUSES.

WELLINGTON, June 2.

At the Returned Soldiers' Association  
Conference to-day, the remits passed on  
the subject of land included the follow-  
ing:—That the Government be urged in  
land ballots to give preference to men  
who proceeded overseas as against those  
who did not; that discretionary powers  
be given to Land Boards to grant applica-  
tions for sale after the expiry of five  
years; that the Government be urged to  
remit stamp duty on transfers to soldiers  
who obtain loans under the Discharged  
Soldiers' Settlement Act; that legislation  
be passed for an immediate classification  
of lands; that district secretaries of the  
Association be supplied by the Land De-  
partment with a list of all Government  
leases falling due within the next three  
years; that the maximum advance for the  
purpose of felling bush on soldiers' sec-  
tions be increased in all cases to cover the  
actual cost of felling; that the Returned  
Soldiers' Association be represented on  
all Land Boards, and that Boards be em-  
powered to appoint local committees to  
deal with Returned Soldiers' Association  
applications for land; that Boards have  
power to make final decisions without re-  
ference to the Minister in order to expedite  
the business; that attention be called  
to the ineffectiveness of Land Purchase  
Boards, and that a clear statement be  
asked of the Minister regarding their duties  
and powers.

The following resolution was carried:—  
That this Conference is of opinion that  
the time has arrived when the various  
patriotic societies should earmark a por-  
tion of their funds for permanently totally  
and permanently partially disabled sol-  
diers, and for men who are breaking down  
from time to time as a result of their  
military service.

The Conference affirmed the principle  
that returned men should be given protec-  
tion against ejectment from rented dwell-  
ings for a further period of twelve months.

The Christchurch branch submitted the  
following remits on the matter, and its  
adoption was recommended by the Land  
Committee: "That in view of the acute  
shortage of houses, this conference urges  
the Government to continue the protection  
given to returned soldiers by the War Re-  
gulations Act of 1914 against ejectment  
from rented dwellings for a further period  
of twelve months as from August 2 next."

Mr W. Perry (Wellington) said there  
was a great feeling against the protection  
being extended to returned soldiers, which  
found its expression amongst land agents  
and landlords. They all knew how acute  
the house shortage was, and from his own  
knowledge he could state that every  
Thursday morning the business of the  
Wellington Magistrate's Court was taken  
up with tenement cases. He submitted  
that instead of soldiers being protected  
for a period of twelve months they should  
be protected so long as the house shortage  
existed. "If there is any individual in  
this country who ought to have a roof  
over his head and who is entitled not to  
be ejected from his house so long as he  
pays his rent and does not knock it about,  
surely it is the returned soldier who,  
during the last four or five years, has  
been standing up to his knees in mud in  
the trenches, while the owners of houses  
were lying in bed," declared Mr Perry  
amidst applause.

Mr W. Leadley (Christchurch) remark-  
ed that since the principle had been put  
on the Statute Book the protection to sol-  
diers had been a bugbear to land agents  
and landlords, but to the majority of the  
returned soldiers throughout the country  
it had been a veritable godsend. He  
hoped the conference would realise the  
importance of the remit, and see it was  
put through with no uncertain voice. He  
knew of a case where a man who left  
wife and children behind when he went to  
the war returned to find that his home  
was without gas and water. About six  
months before the man returned his wife  
was told to quit the house, which had  
been sold over her head. The landlord  
said that unless she got out within a cer-  
tain time he would have the gas and  
water cut off. This threat was carried  
out. Mr Leadley said he interviewed the  
landlord and told him that unless gas and  
water were laid on immediately the whole  
case would be published in the press, and  
the result was that next day the gas and  
water were reinstated. This was one  
instance which proved that protection was  
necessary to prevent returned men from  
being "bluffed" out and giving up their  
houses.

The Rev. W. Walker (Christchurch), in  
supporting the remit, mentioned the case  
of a Christchurch woman whose husband  
was in hospital awaiting an operation.

This woman had been ordered to leave her  
house by the Court, the ground of the  
landlord's application being that the pre-  
mises had not been kept in proper repair.  
All she had omitted to do was to keep the  
garden in order.

Mr D. S. Smith (Gore) opposed the re-  
mit, because he thought that returned sol-  
diers might have an unfair advantage  
over civilians. After all, the returned  
soldiers were now civilians, and they  
could be ejected now if they failed to pay  
their rent, committed a nuisance to a  
neighbour, or allowed their houses to fall  
into disrepair.

The remit was carried.

#### ADVANCES TO SOLDIERS.

WITHDRAWAL CAUSES CONSTERNATION.

WELLINGTON, June 2.

The Returned Soldiers' Conference to-  
day passed a resolution viewing with con-  
sternation the sudden withdrawal by the  
Government of loans to returned soldiers,  
under the D.S.S. Act and urging: (a)  
That immediate provision be made by  
Parliament to deal with all applications  
for loans which were lodged with Land  
Boards before April 25, 1920; and (b) that  
in view of the large number of applica-  
tions declined by Land Boards since the  
Government's withdrawal of loans Par-  
liament should authorise the continuance  
of these loans at the earliest possible  
moment during the coming session.

It was decided also to call upon the  
Prime Minister to redeem the promise  
made by him to the last conference that  
the Act will remain in operation until  
every returned soldier is settled on the  
land.

It was resolved further to ask all local  
Associations to place their case before  
their district members of Parliament; also  
that the Prime Minister and Minister of  
Lands be invited to attend the Confer-  
ence, failing which the Conference wait on  
them with the object of obtaining satis-  
faction.

#### NEWS IN BRIEF.

The Austrian Peace Treaty has been  
ratified by the United States.

It is understood that the Rev. Hector  
McLean, M.A., M.S.C., B.D., has received  
a call from St. Andrew's Congregation,  
Dunedin.

"The Otago Daily Times" reports that  
strong phrases were used by the Port  
Chalmers Council to condemn profiteering.  
This is about the only thing that is being  
done to stop profiteering.

The St. Kilda Borough Council have  
decided to cut off the water supply owing  
to non-payment of rates. The Council  
must expect a drought to impose punish-  
ment.

A Sydney message states that the auth-  
orities have promised a further inquiry  
into the Father Jerger case pending his  
deportation. The first inquiry must be  
like our Royal Commissions, "ineffective."

The Londonderry Corporation has re-  
moved Lord French's name from the Free-  
man's Roll. The mayor described him as  
a discredited politician.

"The National News" states that gen-  
eral warships are being fitted out at  
Shoerness to proceed to Ireland, where the  
situation is regarded as more serious than  
the reports indicate. It is believed that  
an attempt at rebellion is imminent.

The International Labour Office of the  
League of Nations resents New Zealand's  
non-representation at the Genoa confer-  
ence.

An Auckland message states that a  
postal official at Runciman was accosted  
by a man with a revolver, who seized  
a sum of money and rode away on the  
postman's bicycle.

Dennis Gunn has been sentenced to death  
for the murder of the post-master at Pon-  
sonby. Finger-print evidence played a  
prominent part in the prosecution.

The Soldiers' Conference passed the fol-  
lowing remits: "That a Bill be introduced  
to Parliament next session providing that  
Anzac Day be a statutory holiday; that in  
the opinion of the Association the present  
shortage of house property; the excessive  
prices thereof, and the scarcity of build-  
ing operations are largely the direct re-  
sult of the wholesale exportation of build-  
ing timber by most of the large timber  
co-operations throughout New Zealand,  
and that the Government be urged to stop  
such exportations and commandeer all  
available building material for the erection  
of homes." A resolution was passed to  
the effect that an efficient defence scheme  
is essential to New Zealand.