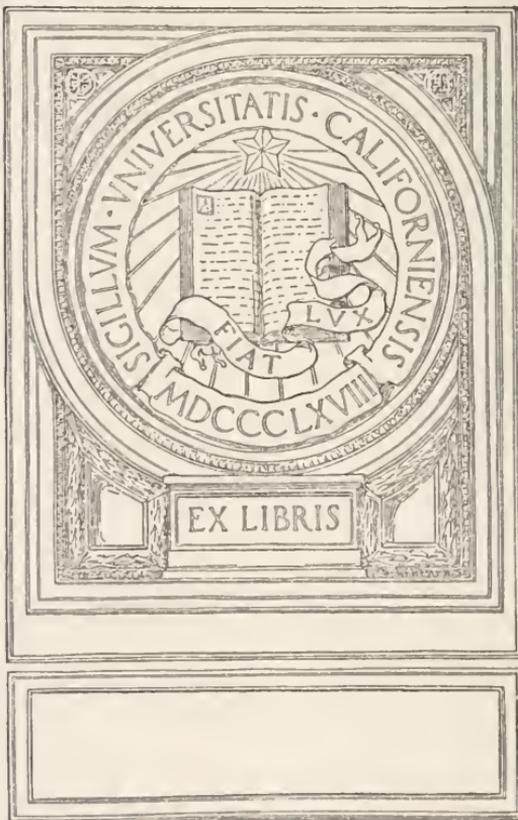


# THE RURAL PROBLEM

HENRY D. HARBEN M.A.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
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The  
RURAL PROBLEM



The  
Rural Problem

By  
HENRY D. HARBEN

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## PREFACE

**I**N the autumn of 1912 the Fabian Society formed a Committee to inquire into Land Problems and Rural Development, and to report to the Society upon the whole subject. The members of the Committee included men and women with a very special knowledge of certain aspects of country life. They heard the evidence of witnesses of varying shades of political and economic opinion, and consulted many of the leading living authorities on different branches of the subject.

It fell to my lot, as Chairman of this Committee, to draw up a Report, the original draft of which appeared in August as a special supplement to THE NEW STATESMAN. The draft, with some correction and modifications, and with the addition of numerous appendices, was afterwards adopted as the Report of the Committee; and it is this Report which is now made public in the following pages. One member, Mr. Oldershaw, disagreed with the Minimum Wage policy, especially as regards its effect on the farmer; the rest of the Committee were at one on all the main issues. It was intended to include a chapter on Women in Agriculture, but the facts were so difficult to obtain that we decided merely to draw attention to the crying need for further information.

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Although personally responsible for the Report, I am indebted to the work of my colleagues on the Committee for most of the information it contains. Where so many helped it is impossible to thank them all; but I feel bound to acknowledge the valuable memoranda prepared by Mr. and Mrs. E. R. Pease, Mr. H. R. Gledstone, Mr. C. M. Grieve, Mr. R. A. Bray, L.C.C., Mr. Hugh Aronson, and Mr. G. P. Blizard, parts of which have been incorporated in the present volume. I am particularly indebted also to Mr. Sidney Webb for many useful suggestions, to Miss Gertrude Westbrook for preparing the bibliography, and to the Secretary of the Committee, Captain A. Imbert-Terry, for his constant help, not only during the inquiry, but also in preparing the Report.

The Land Question is likely to be much discussed on public platforms and in the Press during the next few years. This volume claims to be a serious contribution to the discussion. We have tried to present in a handy form facts and figures up to date on many aspects of the question, and we hope that these will render the book useful even to readers who may differ from some of the conclusions we have based upon them.

(Signed) HENRY D. HARBEN.

*September, 1913.*

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE DECLINE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE.

SO much attention has been given, of recent years, by politicians and by social workers to the condition of life in our crowded urban areas, so much importance has been rightly attached to the development of our manufacturing industries, that the problems of country life and the interests of agriculture have been forced into the background. The reason of this is obvious. In England and Wales the population of urban districts\* in 1911 was 28,162,936, as against a population of 7,907,556 in rural districts. The total output of the agricultural land of Great Britain in 1907 was worth about £210,000,000, while in the same year the output of industry was about £1,240,000,000, or nearly six times as much.†

But although the comparative importance of the town may be increasing, the country still is, and ever must be, the home of millions of persons, the breeding-ground of millions of children. And although agriculture is now, and is likely to remain, of far smaller importance than the urban industries, it still employs far more people than any other single industry. Moreover, the problems of the country are not localised, nor confined to a corner; but are co-extensive with the whole area of the country, and are intimately bound up with our national life and health. The total extent of the land of England is 32,394,210 acres, and of Wales 4,749,651; total, 37,143,861 acres, of which not less than 28,565,861 in England and 4,283,318 in Wales are agricultural land—total, 32,849,179 acres, or 88·4 per cent. of the whole.‡

While, therefore, it is foolish to regard the decline of agriculture with the despair which fills the heart of a Suffolk yeoman or a Wiltshire farmer, it is equally blind to be

\* *Census of England and Wales*, 1911. Vol. I. (Cd. 6258, 1912.)

† See Appendix A.

‡ See Acreage and Live Stock Returns, Agricultural Statistics, 1912. Cd. 6597.

indifferent, as is the average town politician to-day, to the enormous importance, racial and financial, of rural problems, to the pitiful waste of life and wealth that is going on unheeded all over the countryside.

The main symptoms of this decline are twofold. In the first place there has been an actual decrease in the number of people engaged in agriculture. The report of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries on this subject, published in 1906, says: "The reduction in the number of persons returned as engaged in agriculture in Great Britain has been one of the most prominent features of the Census returns for the past 50 years, and it has never been more apparent than in the figures for 1901, when a decline of about 20 per cent. in the number of agricultural labourers during the preceding decade was indicated . . ."; and it goes on to say "the tenour of the majority of the reports indicates that since 1901 there has been some further reduction in the number of men employed in farms, but the diminution is proceeding at a slower rate than during the 10 or 20 years preceding that date."\*

It is not possible to give exact comparative tables for the past hundred years, because the Census returns before 1851 give the number of *families* chiefly employed in agriculture, whereas the more recent returns give the number of *persons*. The following tables emphasise the extent of the actual decline:

NUMBER ENGAGED IN AGRICULTURE, UNITED KINGDOM, 1831-1901.†  
Table 1.—Agriculture (England and Wales) (p. 40).

Census Year.	Males engaged in Agriculture.	Prop. per cent. of total males aged 10 and upwards.	Females engaged in Agriculture.	Prop. per cent. of total females aged 10 and upwards.
1831	—	31·51	—	—
1841	—	25·93	—	—
1851	1,544,087	23·5	168,652	2·4
1861	1,539,965	21·2	115,213	1·5
1871	1,371,304	16·8	85,967	1·0
1881	1,288,173	13·8	64,216	0·6
1891	1,233,936	11·6	51,045	0·4
1901	1,153,185	9·5	38,982	0·3

\* Cd. 3273, 1906.

† *The Progress of the Nation*, by G. R. PORTER. New Edition, up to date, by F. W. HIRST, 1912.

Table 2.—Proportion borne by Males engaged in Agriculture to total Male Population of 10 and upwards.

Year.	United Kingdom.	England & Wales	Scotland.	Ireland.
1881	18·8	13·8	14·4	46·0
1891	16·2	11·6	12·7	45·7
1901	13·6	9·5	10·7	44·3

The number of “Agricultural Labourers and Shepherds,” which affords a more precise index, declined in a still more marked degree.

1851	...	1,110,311	1881	...	830,452
1861	...	1,098,261	1891	...	756,557
1871	...	923,332	1901	...	609,105

Secondly, there is the accompanying decrease in the population of the rural districts. Again it is difficult to give exact figures, as almost every Census has had a different method of dividing its areas, and “rural” districts in the Blue Book are not always really rural. But the following table, even after making all necessary qualifications, tells a shocking tale, showing, as it does, a decrease of over a million in the rural population of England and Wales alone :

CENSUS RETURNS, ENGLAND AND WALES, 1851-1911. COMPARISON OF URBAN AND RURAL POPULATION, 1851-1911.\*

Table 4.—England and Wales and its Sub-divisions into Urban and Rural Districts, as existing at each Census. Population and Proportion per cent. to Total Population, 1851-1911.

	POPULATION.			Prop. per cent. to total Pop. of Eng. & Wales.	
	England and Wales.	Urban Districts (as existing at each Census).	Rural Districts (as existing at each Census).	Urban Districts.	Rural Districts.
1851†	17,927,609	8,990,809	8,936,800	50·2	49·8
1861†	20,066,224	10,960,998	9,105,226	54·6	45·4
1871†	22,712,266	14,041,404	8,670,862	61·8	38·2
1881	25,974,439	17,636,646	8,337,793	67·9	32·1
1891‡	29,002,525	20,895,504	8,107,021	72·0	28·0
1901	32,527,843	25,058,355	7,469,488	77·0	23·0
1911	36,070,492	28,162,936	7,907,556	78·1	21·9

\* Census of England and Wales, 1911. Vol. I. Cd. 6258, 1912. 5s. 4d.

† The figures for the aggregate of Urban and Rural areas for the Censuses of 1851-71 are only approximations.

‡ The figures for 1891 refer to the areas as they existed at the date of publication of the report.

The Census of 1911 shows a decrease in the population of the rural portions of several counties since 1901, as, for instance, by 2,725 in Cornwall, 1,138 in Herefordshire, and 1,286 in Radnorshire, amounting in this last case to a decrease of 7·1 per cent.\*

Private inquiries reveal an even more striking decline in the prosperity of individual villages. Cerne Abbas, in Dorsetshire, where no new cottages have been built for over half a century, presents an extraordinary instance in point.

CENSUS OF INHABITANTS OF CERNE ABBAS, DORSET.

1821	...	1,060	1881	...	925
1831	...	1,209	1891	...	834
1841	...	1,341	1912	...	585
1851	...	1,343			(including 46 in workhouse).
1861	...	1,164			

This decline in the rural population has been hastened by the miserable plight in which the workers of the land have found themselves, and which it will be the object of subsequent chapters to examine and describe. Owing to low prices and diminished capital, the farmers altered their methods of farming with a view to economising labour. The laying down of land to grass and the loss of two million acres of arable land threw out of work at least 60,000 to 80,000 labourers in the twenty years 1881-1901. A still greater displacement was caused by the extended use of labour-saving machinery on the fifteen million acres still remaining under the plough. The substitution of mechanical for hand labour in threshing machines, chaff-cutters, pumps, etc., and the greatly increased use of drills, mowers, binders, manure distributors, and the like, have more than counterbalanced any extension of dairy farming and market gardening.

Side by side with the displacement of labour in the country the ever-increasing demand for workers in the towns has attracted all the energy and enterprise from the villages into the urban centres. The career of the agricultural labourer offers at best little scope for ambition, and at worst a drudgery unequalled for its monotony and wretchedness. Not only is there little chance either for himself or for his children to raise themselves into a position of comparative

\* Cd. 6258, 1912.

security, but often the barest necessities of life are denied them. The wage of the labourer is scandalously low, his hours of work intolerably long, his chances of recreation negligible. His cottage often belongs to his employer, and however ramshackle, unhealthy, or overcrowded it may be, there is usually no other available for miles around. There is no milk to be bought for his babies, even could he afford to buy it. There is no opening for his sons and daughters. The condition of his existence is one of servility and dependence upon others, against which any relic of spirit he possesses must rebel in vain.

And yet he knows better than anyone else that much of his suffering is wanton and unnecessary. He can see that the land around him is either not fully utilised or is put to purely selfish uses which are of no benefit to the community as a whole. He knows that food could be grown on land which is now languishing for lack of capital or enterprise, that productive labour could be employed where now the gamekeeper wanders with his gun and dog. Not until this knowledge of his is borne in upon the convictions of the rest of the community, not until the nation (with its fuller powers and truer sense of proportion) determines to take the rural problem as seriously as he does, will his unnecessary wrongs be righted, and a weak point be made strong again in the armour of our national life.

Sir Horace Plunkett, the greatest agricultural reformer of our time, has maintained that the industrial revolution, as it has taken place in Great Britain and America, has destroyed the healthy relations of town and country populations, and that, in consequence, the civilisation of these countries has become dangerously one-sided. The tendency, as civilisation advances, for industry to displace agriculture, and for the mechanic to replace the peasant, is not necessarily regrettable, and it is a tendency which it would be futile to attempt to arrest. But it carries with it the need of new ideals. The picture of a country peopled with a prosperous peasantry must give way to that of a population mainly of well-paid mechanics and artisans with full access to the land, enjoying with their families the health and beauty which slum life destroys, the recreation and activities

which abound in mountain, field, and wood. And side by side with this picture must be one of a country life movement on the land itself which shall prevent agriculture and all that it represents in the national life being smothered by the neglect of our urban rulers. The status of the countryman must be raised and his opportunities increased, the methods of agriculture must be revised in the light of modern knowledge and requirements, so that the land may bring forth her increase; and some part at least of the organising energies of the modern community must be brought to bear on problems which have hitherto been left by our urban rulers to take care of themselves.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE POVERTY OF THE LABOURER.

#### § 1. WAGES.

**A**GRICULTURAL labourers are classed in the official returns\* under the following four headings, each class being paid on the average a little worse than the last :

#### WAGES AND NUMBERS OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS IN ENGLAND.†

Class of Labourer.	Wages.	Number.	Percentage of all Agriculturists.
	s.    d.		
Shepherds...    ...	19   7	25,366	2·6
Cattlemen...    ...	19   1	85,099	8·4
Horsemen    ...	18   9	154,382	15·6
Ordinary Labourers	17   6	356,221	36·0

It will be noticed that the worst paid class of labourer is also by far the most numerous. It must also be remembered that these are only average figures. 17s. 6d., the average of ordinary labourers for the whole country, is far higher than many of the county averages—*e.g.*, 14s. 11d. in Oxfordshire, 15s. 4d. in Norfolk. These figures include allowances in kind ; the *cash* wages are far lower : 12s. 11d. in Oxfordshire, 12s. 7d. in Norfolk, 12s. 5d. in Suffolk, 12s. 1d. in Dorsetshire.

And these county figures are again averages which reveal the existence of wages in individual cases far below anything mentioned in the returns. For instance, the late Miss Maud Davies, in her clever book, *Life in an English Village*,‡ gives

\* In the Board of Trade Fifteenth Abstract of Labour Statistics, Cd. 6228, 1912, the Board of Trade Report on the Inquiry into Earnings and Hours of Labour (*v.* Agriculture in 1907), Cd. 5460, is given as the authority, and may be assumed to contain the latest available statistics.

† Tables of wages in each county of England and Wales are to be found in Appendix B.

‡ Unwin, 1909.

between 14s. and 15s. as the wage in her Wiltshire village, as against the 16s. 9d. given in the official report as the county average. Mr. Mann found 14s. 4d. to be the average of a typical Bedfordshire village, as against the 17s. 5d. of the official returns.\* Mr. George Edwards, of the Agricultural Labourers' Union, has quoted 10s., 11s., and 12s. as the wages paid in Oxfordshire, as against the official 16s. 4d.

In quoting the official reports it is therefore well to remember that :

(i) They do not include casual labourers, though these are stated† to number a fifth of the total labour in agriculture.

(ii) They deal only with able-bodied adult men, and exclude old and infirm men, and also women and young persons.

(iii) They are calculated from information supplied by a small and picked minority of employers, under whom conditions of labour are probably most free from reproach. The method employed has been to send schedules to farmers who are known to the Department and to the Local Authority ; all of these are employers who would have least reason to wish to avoid answering questions about their workpeople. There are in Great Britain some 170,000 holdings over 50 acres in extent, and probably about the same number of large farmers. Yet only 45,000 schedules were sent out in the United Kingdom, and of these only 15,800 replies were received suitable for use, covering 50,459 labourers in all.

(iv) A large portion of agricultural wages are paid in kind, such as free or cheap cottages, potatoes or potato ground, fuel, beer, or even board and lodging for unmarried men. Special payments, known as Michaelmas money, harvest money, and lamb money, etc., are also made at times of excessive work, amounting in some cases to as much as £5 per annum.

In the case of ordinary labourers these extra earnings and allowances ranged from an average of 7s. 4d. in Westmoreland to 1s. 8d. in Middlesex. "They were greatest in those counties where large numbers of the men were pro-

\* *Life in an English Village*. P. H. MANN, Sociological Papers, 1904.

† Cd. 6277.

vided with board and lodging (*e.g.*, Cumberland, Westmoreland, and Lancashire), and in counties in which extra payments for harvest were high, or much piecework was done (as in Lincolnshire, Suffolk, Hampshire, and Dorsetshire).” In the case of horsemen, they ranged in 20 counties from 3s. to less than 4s., and in 16 others from 2s. to less than 3s. “In Wiltshire, Dorsetshire, the East and North Ridings of Yorkshire, and in Lincolnshire the average cash rate of pay did not reach 14s. per week,” and “the average total earnings in these districts was lower than the general average for England as a whole.”\* For cattlemen the value of extra earnings and allowances for England, as a whole, averaged 3s., and for shepherds 3s. 8d. The average cash wages for England, as a whole, were : Labourers, 14s. 6d. ; horsemen, 15s. 3d. ; cattlemen, 16s. 1d. ; shepherds, 15s. 11d.

It is therefore difficult to calculate the exact value of the labourers’ weekly wage, especially as employers tend to exaggerate the value of the payments in kind. “Further inquiry,” says Miss Davies, “revealed a strong tendency amongst some of the employers to estimate the extras given at a rather liberal rate.”

## § 2. HOURS OF LABOUR.

There is no definite official information as to the hours worked by agricultural labourers. The Board of Trade report quoted above estimates the working day for ordinary labourers as eleven or twelve hours in summer, inclusive of meal times ; while in winter it is generally limited by the hours of daylight. Half an hour is usually allowed for breakfast, and an hour for dinner. But the hours of horsemen, cattlemen, and shepherds are admittedly longer than those of the ordinary labourer. Horsemen begin their duties before the rest of the farm is awake, and are often at work when the other hands have gone home to tea. The first milking usually necessitates rising in the very early hours of the morning ; and all men in charge of animals, whether horsemen, cattlemen, or shepherds, have to bear a share of necessary Sunday work, for which, very often, no extra wage is paid. Calving

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\* Cd. 5460, p. xviii.

and lambing entail night work of a particularly tiring kind, in the course of which at least one labourer, and sometimes more, assists the farmer himself.

When all due allowance has been made for the uncertainty of the duties and the lack of positive information as to the number of hours worked, it is no exaggeration to say that an agricultural labourer may think himself lucky if he earns 3½d. an hour, and many do not even earn 3d. *Private inquiries in typical villages of each county revealed that in those villages the wages amounted to 4d. an hour and over in five counties of England, 3d. an hour or under in 29 different counties, while in Dorset and Somerset cases were actually found of horsemen working at 2d. an hour during the summer.\**

Holidays, except Christmas Day and Good Friday, are unknown in many parts of England and Wales, though the practice of granting Bank Holidays seems to be on the increase. Where men are engaged monthly or half-yearly, deductions are not as a rule made for short periods of sickness, though such deductions are by no means unusual. But where the engagement is weekly many employers pay only for time actually worked. And in the Eastern, Midland, and Southern Counties, where a large proportion of the farming operations are performed on piecework, sickness or wet weather means loss of pay altogether.

What is not generally realised is that in the matter of hours the labourer is far worse off than he used to be. *An eight hours' day for the agricultural labourer was actually the custom in England at the end of the eighteenth century.* William Marshall, the agriculturist, while mentioning that the ploughmen of Norfolk sometimes wrought as long as ten hours a day, says that in most parts of the kingdom eight hours a day was the ordinary custom for team labour.†

Indeed, in some counties the hours were even shorter. In Buckinghamshire, where labourers now work twelve hours in summer, the ploughmen of 120 years ago went out from Candlemas to Martinmas at 7 in the morning, and returned at 3 in the afternoon; and in the winter half-year they went

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\* See Appendix C.

† *Rural Economy of Norfolk*, W. MARSHALL (London, 1787), Vol. I. p. 138.

out at 8 and returned at 3. They had also, of course, to attend to the feeding and cleaning of the horses at home.\*

Marshall's *Review of Reports to the Board of Agriculture for the Midland Department of England* gives particulars of the working time in the various counties. In Bedfordshire it was from 6 to 2 or 7 to 3 in the summer, and from daylight till 1 or 2 in the afternoon in the winter, with an interruption for a meal about 10 called "beaver-time." In Warwickshire it was from 6 to 2 or 7 to 3 in summer, and in winter about 6 hours. In Hampshire the rural labourers seldom reached work in winter before 8 or 9, or even 9.30, and left about 3; while in summer they would generally be met returning from work about 5; the reason given being that they had a great choice of occupation there, and could not be got to work longer at day work on a farm than other labourers wrought at task work in the forests or at the salt pans, or on the canals, or at the variety of jobs to be found at Portsmouth.

In agriculture, as in other occupations, the very long working day seems to have been the gradual fruit of the industrial revolution. But whereas in many other trades there have been reductions of hours which have brought back the working day to what it was three or four hundred years ago, in agriculture there has been no swing of the pendulum.

### § 3. OTHER FAMILY EARNINGS.

In estimating the poverty of the labourer and his family it is only fair to take into consideration the possibility (1) of the wage-earner adding to his wages by extra work outside his regular employment, and (2) of other members of his family adding to his income.

These two possibilities—and it will be seen that they are sufficiently remote—do not detract from the folly, amounting to a national scandal, of leaving the workers of the largest single industry of the country sweated and underpaid. But they do mitigate, in a few cases at least, the individual hardships; and no picture of the agricultural labourer's position is complete until they have been taken into consideration.

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\* *Agriculture of Buckingham*, JAMES MALCOLM (1794), p. 39.

(i) It is commonly supposed that the agricultural labourer adds considerably to his wages by keeping pigs and poultry and by selling or consuming the produce of his garden. The description already given of the hours worked by the labourer for his employer must be sufficient to convince the most optimistic that there is not much time left him to work for himself. Not infrequently he lives some distance from his work; and it is not by any means certain that he has the necessary land. The demand for allotments is strong evidence of the insufficiency or lack of cottage gardens; and this demand is still unsatisfied in many villages.\*

Moreover, allotments are generally only available at some distance from the labourer's cottage, which still further limits his time of working there. Only a minority of labourers possess either pigs or poultry. Any calculation as to the amount labourers actually manage to earn apart from their wages must be largely guess-work; but the best information lends support to the belief that on the average only a few pence a week are added to the wage in this way, and in vast numbers of cases nothing at all.

(ii) With regard to the earnings of the members of the family, the older sons sometimes find work on the farm and contribute from their earnings to the family income. The wages of boys on farms are low, and the tied cottage is often the means of exposing boys to the necessity of accepting wages lower than usual, or even, in well-authenticated cases, of working for nothing at all.† But the fact that the agri-

\* See Appendix D for facts *re* Allotments.

† A, aged 15, works for a farmer who estimates his wage at 6s. per week, but pays him no cash, and says the cottage in which the boy's father (who is a cripple) lives is worth 6s. The boy fell off a cart, and was away from work 10 days. Rent had to be paid during this period; the family was too frightened to apply for compensation for the boy, who was not insured.

B, 16½ years of age, works for a farmer who values his work at 7s., gives him 4s., and takes 3s. as rent for cottage in which the father, who is a consumptive, lives. The farmer threatens to turn the family out if the boy does not work for him. The mother spent a week tramping round to try to find another cottage, but could find none. As result of drinking water from a pond adjoining the cottage, there was a case of typhoid (which cost the ratepayers £40 for treatment in an isolation hospital), so water is now carried to the cottage from a well 275 yards distant.

cultural labourer is often receiving his maximum wage as early as twenty tends to make early marriage popular, and this, combined with the steady emigration of the younger men to the towns, decreases the importance of the help which the family can expect from their sons.

The girls and their mothers, if in the neighbourhood of a town, may both earn something at laundry work, and the girls often go into service in the neighbourhood and send their wages home. But agriculture affords little opening for women at the present time.\*

It may therefore safely be assumed that in the majority of cases the whole of the family income comes from the one wage-earner, who is generally the father. How small that income is has already been shown; how inadequate to the needs of those dependent upon it can only be judged by a consideration of the cost of living.

#### § 4. THE COST OF LIVING IN AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS.

The best way of estimating the cost of living will perhaps be the quotation of weekly budgets of agricultural workers in a state of comparative comfort. Unfortunately such budgets are extremely rare. Few efforts have been made to tabulate definitely the expenditure of rural labourers, and such as have been made have generally been published to illustrate the expenses of the badly paid labourer, and are therefore useless for the present purpose of finding out what the labourer *ought* to be able to spend rather than what he *does* spend. The best authorities are again Miss M. H. Davies and Mr. Mann.†

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\* Official information fails us on this point, and it is imperative that the Board of Agriculture should furnish proper statistics concerning the employment of women. But, according to the Census Reports, female labourers and farm servants numbered in 1851, 143,475; 1861, 90,525; 1871, 58,112; and women employed in agriculture numbered in 1881, 40,346; 1891, 24,150. See also HASBACH, *The History of the Agricultural Labourer*, King & Son, 1908; and the *Englishwoman's Yearbook*.

† Since writing the above has appeared *How the Labourer Lives*, by B. SEEBOM ROWNTREE (Nelson, 1913), which is now the main authority.

Mr. Mann, with Mr. Rowntree's help, sought to find the minimum standard of cost of food, cost of rent, and cost of clothing and household sundries in the village of Ridgmount, 12 miles from Bedford, in the autumn of 1903. As a result he gives the following table :

Food.				s. d.	
Flour ...	...	...	...	1	8 per stone.
New Milk ...	...	...	...	0	1½ per pint.
Skim or Separated Milk ...	...	...	...	0	0½ „
Oatmeal ...	...	...	...	0	2 per lb.
Bacon ...	...	...	...	0	8 „
Cheese ...	...	...	...	0	7 „
Sugar ...	...	...	...	0	1½ „
Potatoes ...	...	...	...	0	0½ „
Margarine, Lard ...	...	...	...	0	6 „
Butter ...	...	...	1s. to	1	4 „
Biscuits ...	...	...	...	0	4 „
Cocoa ...	...	...	...	1	0 „
Tracle ...	...	...	...	0	3 „
Onions...	...	...	½d. to	0	1 „
Tea ...	...	...	...	1	4 „
Coffee ...	...	...	...	1	0 „
Currants ...	...	...	...	0	3½ „
Suet ...	...	...	...	0	6 „

These figures approach so nearly to those given by Rowntree that the author decided to adopt his standard of the necessary minimum cost of food for the maintenance of physical health :

				s. d.	
Man ...	...	...	...	3	0 per week.
Woman ...	...	...	...	3	0 „
Young person, over 16 ...	...	...	...	3	0 „
Child, 8-16 ...	...	...	...	2	3 „
Child, 3-8 ...	...	...	...	2	1 „
Child, 0-3 ...	...	...	...	2	1 „

Similar detailed calculations as to the cost of household sundries, due allowance being made for the fact that a certain amount of firewood and fuel could be picked up, led to the compilation of the following table, which repre-

sents Mr. Mann's view of the absolute *minimum* necessary expenditure per week :

Family.	Food.		Rent.		Household Sundries.		Total.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
1 Man or 1 woman ... ..	3	0	1	0	1	8	5	8
1 man and 1 woman ... ..	6	0	1	6	2	4	9	10
1 man, 1 woman, 1 child ... ..	8	3	1	6	2	11	12	8
1 man, 1 woman, 2 children ... ..	10	6	1	6	3	6	15	6
1 man, 1 woman, 3 children ... ..	12	9	1	6	4	1	18	4
1 man, 1 woman, 4 children ... ..	15	0	1	6	4	8	21	2
1 man, 1 woman, 5 children ... ..	17	3	1	6	5	3	24	0
1 man, 1 woman, 6 children ... ..	19	6	1	6	5	10	26	10
1 man, 1 woman, 7 children ... ..	21	9	2	0	6	5	30	2
1 man, 1 woman, 8 children ... ..	24	0	2	0	7	0	33	0

In York 21s. 8d. was considered by Rowntree to be sufficient for man, wife, and three children. In the case of the agricultural labourer, rent and the cost of fuel are lower.

Miss Davies gives the following figures as the very lowest on which efficiency is possible :

Food	...	3s. per adult, and 2s. 3d. per child.
Rent	...	Saved from proceeds of garden.*
Firing	...	1s. per household.
Sundries	...	2d. per head.
Dress	...	Adult 6d., and child 3d.

From these figures the following table is compiled :

	Food.		Dress, Sundries, etc.		Total.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
Amount required for 2 adults and 2 children... ..	10	6	3	6	14	0
Amount required for 2 adults and 3 children... ..	12	9	4	1	16	10
Amount required for 2 adults and 4 children... ..	15	0	4	8	19	8
Amount required for 2 adults and 5 children... ..	17	3	5	3	22	6

\* But see par. § 3 (i) above.

These groups probably include most families of an average size, and the amounts given probably represent with comparative accuracy the amount required for the maintenance of a labourer's family. In addition, the following more detailed budget may be compiled from statistics connected with the fiscal controversy, and published with additional information as an appendix to Cd. 2376 of 1905 :

						£	s.	d.
Food	...	...	...	...	...	0	13	6
Rent	...	...	...	...	...	0	1	6
Fuel and Lighting...	...	...	...	...	...	0	2	0
Clothes	...	...	...	...	...	0	3	3
						<hr/>		
						£1	0	3

In these estimates no allowance is made for smaller household requirements, beer, tobacco, amusements, or even the inevitable Sunday paper. The amount spent on beer and tobacco will obviously depend upon the character of the individual family. Two shillings, however, may be added to give an approximate amount for this expenditure, and fourpence for insurance, and the total then becomes 22s. 7d. It may, therefore, be accepted that a labourer with a wage of under 22s. 7d. a week, ten years ago, was not receiving sufficient to maintain a reasonable standard of comfort, and that one with less than 20s. 4d. per week, with a family of average size, was unable to obtain the barest necessities of life. And the cost of living has increased in the last ten years. But even if we take this pound a week standard as being the living wage when there is only one wage-earner in the family, and where his wages are the only form of income, a reference to the tables quoted in the Appendix will show that the wages of ordinary agricultural labourers are several shillings below this level in every area outside the Northern Counties, and that the earnings of the men in charge of animals are considerably less over most of the Southern and Eastern Counties not in close proximity to London.

It must be remembered, too, that the agricultural labourer has been more hardly hit by the decrease in the purchasing power of his wage than almost anyone else.

This decrease has been estimated by Mr. Chiozza Money at 20 per cent. from 1895 to 1911. In the first place, this affects the agricultural labourer especially, because, as he is not in receipt of a living wage, it all comes out of the bare necessities of life in his case. And, in the second place, he has not shared to the same extent in the counterbalancing rise of wages during that period. The rate of wage of the workers generally has risen  $12\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. since 1895, while the rate of agricultural wages has only risen 9·6 per cent. The Board of Trade Report above quoted gives the following tables :

AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS OF THE "SELECTED CLASS" OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS.

Country.	1907.	1902.	1898.	Increase in 1907 as compared with	
				1902.	1898.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
England ... ..	17 7	17 5	16 9	0 2	0 10
Scotland ... ..	19 7	19 5	18 2	0 2	1 5

Country.	1880.	1890.	1900.	1907.	1908.	1909.
*England and Wales (156 farms) ... ..	92·6	91·4	100·0	102·0	102·4	102·6
Scotland (98 farms) ...	89·5	93·3	100·0	104·3	101·9	102·8

### § 5. THE COTTAGE QUESTION.

In the estimates of the cost of living above quoted, rent is given as 1s. or 1s. 6d. per week. This is based on the Board of Trade Report of 1905, which gave particulars as to the highest rents, lowest rents, and usual rents in the districts where the inquiries were made. The usual rent given varied from 1s. to 2s., and 1s. 6d. was the most usual

\* Index Numbers based on Cash Wages only.

figure, the landlords generally doing repairs and paying taxes.\*

On page 44 of Chapter VII. Mr. W. C. Little, Senior Assistant Commissioner to the Royal Commission on Labour, reviewing the statements of the other Commissioners who had reported on typical agricultural districts in nearly every county in England, is shown as saying that the estimates of Assistant Commissioners and their informants as to the value of a cottage and a garden varied from £2 10s. to £5 4s. a year, the most usual sum being £4. Mr. Little further said: "Rent has generally no relation to the size of the cottage and cost of its construction, the accommodation it affords, the conditions as regards repair and sanitary arrangements, or to the earnings of the occupier."

A rent of 1s. or 1s. 6d. is low compared with the rents paid in urban districts. But this does not mean that the rural labourer is really better off in this respect. For, in the first place, the cottages often belong to the employers, who charge a low rent instead of paying a decent wage; and,

\* See, on the other hand, the following table given in the *Housing Handbook Up to Date*, by ALDERMAN THOMPSON (p. 175), King & Son, 1910:

NUMBER OF ROOMS AND WEEKLY RENT.

Rural-District.	Poorest Class.	Unskilled Labourers.	Ordinary Artisans.	Better-paid Artisans.
Norfolk ...	3 for 1s. 3d.	4 for 1s. 9d.	5 for 2s. 6d. to 4s.	6 for 4s. to 8s.
Sussex ...	3 for 1s. 6d. to 2s.	4 for 2s. 6d. to 4s.	5 for 3s. 6d. to 4s. 6d.	5 for 6s.
Lincolnshire	2 for 2s.	3 for 2s. 6d.	4 for 2s. 9d.	5 for 3s. 6d.
Cornwall ...	3 for 2s.	4 for 2s. 6d.	5 for 3s. 6d.	6 for 4s. 6d.
Somerset ...	3 for 2s. 6d.	4 for 3s.	5 for 4s. 6d.	5 for 4s. 6d. to 6s. 6d.

Rural-District.	Class of House most required.	Cost per Room of building existing Houses.
Norfolk ...	2s. to 2s. 6d.	£20 to £30
Sussex ...	2s. 6d. to 4s. 6d.	£20 to £40
Lincolnshire ...	2s. 9d. to 4s.	£35 to £40
Cornwall ...	—	£35
Somerset ...	5 for 4s.	£40

secondly, many of the cottages are often uninhabitable, being old, in bad repair, and far too small for the average family; thirdly, the dearth of cottages is so marked a feature of village life that most labourers have no choice of a dwelling, but are compelled to put up with anything they can get.

Overcrowding is as prevalent in the country districts of to-day as in the worst slums of our towns. The Select Committee above referred to reported in 1906 that the Housing Acts had always been a dead letter in country districts, and that while in the towns, where public opinion is more acute, the Acts have been in comparison more uniformly administered, the authorities entrusted with their administration "in rural districts have, generally speaking, deplorably failed in their obligations." Private inquiries\* amply bear out the reports of County Medical Officers of Health and the evidence so abundantly brought before Public Committees of Inquiry.† The Medical Officer of Health for Bedfordshire reported of Biggleswade: "One frequently finds a bedroom is occupied by three or four adult members of the same family of both sexes." In Billericay, in Essex, an inquiry by the Medical Officer revealed 44 cases of overcrowding, and, speaking of this county as a whole, he reported "that there is a general want of cottages with three bedrooms, and, in consequence of this, overcrowding from time to time occurs, immorality is fostered, and diseases spread." He also complained that "there are no better houses into which the tenants can remove." This complaint is repeated *ad nauseam* in the Medical Reports. "The occupier has been given notice to quit, but there is nowhere for him to go." ‡ "Many cases of overcrowding were observed, and considerable difficulty

\* An investigator reports the following case on the Dorset coast. A damp old house with 2 small, ill-ventilated bedrooms, a draughty small kitchen, and an out-scullery, inhabited by an old father and mother, a grown-up son and his wife and her illegitimate child, a widowed daughter with 4 young children, a very young unmarried girl and her illegitimate child, making 12 persons in all. No vacant rooms are to be had anywhere in the neighbourhood.

† See also *Our Village Homes*, by HUGH ARONSON, 1913; and *The Cottage Homes of England*, by W. WALTER CROTCH, 1908.

‡ Crowland, Lincolnshire.

was experienced in dealing with this condition owing to the fact that there was usually no choice of other and more commodious residence to the families concerned." \* "If a house is condemned, there is no other for the people to go to." †

The lack of cottages, as many Poor Law Guardians know, is sometimes the cause of families coming to the workhouse. In one case a man threw up his employment for this reason, and an inquiry by the Guardians proved that in the whole Union of some 40 villages there was not a single cottage available. In the next Union a similar case occurred. The Wroxham case, in which, owing to a change of landlord, several tenants were given notice to quit, brought this aspect of the matter prominently before the public in Norfolk some time ago. There were no houses anywhere, and some 40 persons were temporarily provided for, partly by their neighbours and partly in boat-houses, until an old railway carriage was purchased by public subscription, where most of them lived, huddled together, for nine months, until the local member of Parliament had built six new cottages, in default of any other solution of the question.

But what need is there of further witness? The Select Committee reported in the following terms:

"The Committee have had abundant evidence before them as to the insufficiency of cottages in rural districts. Cases have been brought to their notice in which people have had to leave a village because of their lack of house accommodation, while others have been prevented from coming to live in a district because no house or cottage was to be found fit to live in, and there was no one financially interested in meeting the demand by building. The house famine in town and country which often exists in regard to the working classes is incontestable. The many investigations, Royal Commissions on Housing and Labour, etc., Select Committees of the House of Commons, and official departmental reports have placed the fact beyond controversy."

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\* Grantham.

† Oundle, Northamptonshire.

Alderman Thompson, of the National Housing Council, calculated the shortage of cottages at 100,000, and this is a generally accepted estimate. But it was made some years ago, and the situation is yearly getting worse owing to the working of the Housing Acts.\*

It is not only that cottages are lacking, but those that exist are as a rule too small. It was given in evidence before the Select Committee on Housing that of 124,763 houses in the rural districts of Northumberland 118,907 had less than five rooms. An inquiry made in 17 different counties showed that in 44 villages there were 464 cottages with only one bedroom, and 1,852 with only two, and in many cases what was called a second bedroom was really a landing.

The County Medical Officer for Herts reported of one village that there was no cottage with more than two bedrooms, and in one case they were slept in by two parents and eight children. Dr. Armistead inspected 365 houses in the Linton Rural District in 1911, and found that 77 per cent. of the houses had not got three bedrooms; 57 of them had only one. There can be no doubt at all on the evidence that the majority of cottages in the country have only one or two bedrooms; they are in thousands of cases occupied by families of from 6 to 10 persons, and sometimes by more than one family. But even apart from these cases it is obvious that *the average cottage is overcrowded if inhabited by the average family.*

The *insanitary and, indeed, deplorable* condition of cottage property is again amply proved by Medical Officers' reports throughout the country,† and by reports of inquiries held under the Housing Acts (1890–1909). Houses with no fireplaces, with no water supply, with no sinks and no privies are quite common in our villages. The slop water is thrown in the road, and the closet is shared with other cottages. The walls are damp, the floors are laid directly on the earth and are rotten with moisture, the roofs let in the rain. And these things exist not in exceptional localities,

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\* See below p. 37, footnote.

† Report of the Select Committee, 1906, 376.

but practically all over the country.\* In one case a man gave evidence before a Housing Inquiry that he had to move his bed from side to side whenever it rained. Another spoke of putting up an umbrella to keep off the rain in bed at night. And at the same inquiry, where every kind of abuse had been proved up to the hilt, the Sanitary Inspector declared that he knew villages where the conditions were worse, and the Local Authorities gave this as their reason for refusing to act.†

An inquiry made in 1897, extending over 4,179 cottages in 78 villages, revealed that 25 per cent. were bad or extremely bad, 60 *per cent. had no fireplaces in any bedroom*, 15 per cent. no water supply or a very bad one.

Another inquiry, extending over 240 villages of about 10,000 cottages, revealed the fact that about one-half were "bad."

On this aspect of the subject the report of the Select Committee is quite definite.

"More than one witness has urged by way of excuse on behalf of the Medical Officers and their Councils that the reluctance to condemn insanitary property was due to the fact that sufficient accommodation was not available, that the procedure was complicated, that it would only accentuate the evil, and that building by the Council was out of the question because of the loss that would be incurred. The only alternative that appeared to present itself was either to render the inmates homeless or to allow them to live in the surroundings responsible for much misery.

"This contention, however, loses its force in view of the absence of any effort at adequate inspection. Nuisances may be suppressed and defects made good as they occur without any question of demolition arising at all. If Medical Officers and Inspectors of Nuisances had carried out

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\* "When the owners of village slum property find it a profitable investment there is a strong disinclination to attract attention to the need for more or better cottages, as in the event of these being provided the bad cottages would become unoccupied. On many Rural District Councils members may be found who are interested in property of this kind" (Report of the Select Committee of the Housing of the Working Classes Acts Amendment Bill, 1906, 376).

† Aronson, p. 22.

the existing law in bringing the facts before the owners from time to time by notices and summonses, much could have been done to prevent houses getting into a state of disrepair. By strict supervision houses gradually falling into an insanitary condition might at slight cost be made habitable in the early stages. This in turn would pay the owners of the property, because repairs carried out regularly can be done at small cost, whereas neglect entails considerable outlay at the best, and the demolition order at the worst. Whatever difficulties there may be in the way of building new cottages, keeping the existing ones in reasonable repair under the existing law, so as not to be a nuisance or injurious to health, is practicable, and ought to be insisted upon."

But however great the need of inspection may be, it is obvious that the real need is more cottages. People do not live like pigs because they want to; they would not put up with insanitary cottages if they had any possible alternative. There was a row of cottages in Buckinghamshire known as Hell Corner, whose inhabitants were living in a most degraded condition. A neighbouring landowner bought them up a few years ago as an experiment, and rehoused the same people in new, clean, and roomy dwellings, and in every case, with one exception, the new cottages are a model of cleanliness, and the tenants are perfectly satisfactory. There can be no doubt that had such cottages been available before, the families would have gladly moved into them. It is the dearth of cottages that is responsible for the fact that dirty, overcrowded, and insanitary dwellings are inhabited at all.

The same dearth is the direct cause of the tyranny of the tied cottage system, which has already been mentioned in connection with day labour. This tyranny is well known, but it is sometimes misunderstood. The cases of political persecution which come into prominence in the daily Press occasionally are really of small importance beside the constant pressure that is brought to bear on men to live in unhealthy places, drink unwholesome water, and work for wages even smaller than usual, simply by the fact that the cottage in which they live belongs to their employer, and they have nowhere else to go.

A good deal of public odium is attached to the employer

in this connection, but it must not be forgotten that he is not the only instance of a property owner taking advantage of the dearth of cottages to exploit the tenant. The village publican who owns property will sometimes compel his tenants to come regularly to his house; the village butcher will palm off upon them meat that he could not otherwise easily get rid of; no complaint can be made by the tenants, or out they go. If there were more cottages, these things could not be, and the village labourer would be a freer man. The lack of cottages is at the root of all the petty tyrannies of village life. It is the most terrible symptom of the poverty of the agricultural labourer, who cannot afford to pay out of his pitiful wage a rent large enough to make the building of new cottages a commercial undertaking. And so a whole generation of young country folk are caught up in the vicious circle which breeds out of present-day poverty further poverty and degeneration in the future. Born of fathers who are sweated and underpaid, whose hours of work are too long, to whom no chance of advancement has ever come, who are directly under the heel of others, and who are the victims, more than any other portion of the community, of petty tyranny and social wrong, the children of the countryside not only lack food and milk and the barest necessities of life, but are poisoned in the fetid air of crowded rooms, and are grudged the room to live.\*

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\* See Appendix E for description of a typical village in the West of England by an investigator.

## CHAPTER III.

### A MINIMUM WAGE FOR AGRICULTURE.

#### § 1. THE CASE FOR LEGISLATION.

**T**HE state of things just described points to the necessity that agricultural wages must be raised. On this at least all students of the rural problem are agreed; difference only arises over the method to be pursued in order to raise them.

Various round-about ways have been suggested. Tariff Reform and Land Taxation have both been urged, largely on the ground that they would raise wages; while others, and perhaps sounder thinkers, look either to the State Development of Agriculture or to the formation of Trade Unions among the labourers themselves as the surer way. But these things do not "raise" wages; all that even their advocates can claim is that they will lead to changes which will cause wages to rise. Economic predictions of this kind are at best slow and capricious, and when half the economists deny them they must be confessed to be uncertain.

There is a more direct and immediate method. If you want a thing done, just do it. If the nation wants higher wages for agricultural labourers, let it make a law to say so, and establish a legal minimum wage. Let those who doubt the practicability of this consider the numerous examples of minimum wage laws already existing.\*

It cannot, of course, be gainsaid that a minimum wage law for agriculture would be very different from a similar law, say, for the mining industry in this respect: that in the latter case the wages of a few were levelled up, but the total wage bill was not materially increased, whereas in the case of agriculture the wages of the great majority

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\* See Appendix F.

of labourers would be levelled up, and an enormous increase in the total cost of agricultural labour must inevitably result.

On the other hand, such an increase can quite well be borne. If fair wages can be paid in certain parts of the North of England, they could be paid in the Midlands or in the South. Take the case of Cumberland. In the west of that county we find 22s. and 23s. a week being paid, with no reduction for wet weather and for the shorter hours of winter. Five or six weeks' full pay is commonly allowed for sickness, and no distinction of wage is made between the different classes of labourers. The main reason for this is that close at hand there is employment to be had in the towns at 30s. to 40s. a week, and shorter hours withal. The competition of great industrial centres prevents the rural employer outside from sweating his men. What the natural law of competition can do for the North a minimum wage law could equally well do for the South.

It may be argued that in the North, and in other places where wages are high, it will be found that the very industrial centres which cause the competition for labour provide also the markets which enable agriculture to stand the strain of the higher wage. There is an element of truth in this, and it cannot be too strongly urged that, if agriculture is to be revived, there must be a more systematic marketing of the produce, on lines to be recommended in a later chapter. But, on the whole, the price of agricultural produce is fixed not by local but by world conditions. If that price admits of high wages in Cumberland or in Scotland, it will admit of them in Oxfordshire and Dorsetshire.

Another objection to a minimum wage law will come from those who look for reform not to artificial statutory regulation from outside, but to the spontaneous process of organisation among labourers themselves. There have been many attempts to form Trade Unions in the county districts, but up to the present they have met with scant success. The backward conditions of life and thought in the villages, the isolation of the labourers, and the tyranny of the tied-cottage system have combined to prevent the industrial movement from bearing fruit in the country.

No doubt at the present moment there are signs of an awakening; and even if left to themselves, the men who till the fields will not be long in claiming a fairer reward for their labour. But one of the strongest arguments for a minimum wage law is that it will stimulate that movement. Such a law would call into existence, in every district, a board on which the workers would be directly represented. It is impossible to overestimate the far-reaching effect of this upon the agricultural labourers as a class. If they have remained unorganised hitherto, it is because it has been found impossible to organise them under existing conditions, but the requirements of a Minimum Wage Act will provide just the necessary stimulus, and cannot fail to result in bringing them speedily into line with other sections of the industrial movement.

There are certain difficulties in applying the principle of the minimum wage to agriculture, of which the true solution must be found.

The first point to decide is whether there should be one uniform national rate applying over the whole country; or whether the minimum should be different for different districts. It is most important to have a uniform national rate, for the following reasons :

(1) If backward districts are allowed to remain backward, the object of the minimum wage would be largely defeated at the outset.

(2) The cost of living in rural districts does not vary much all over the country, the chief variation being in the cost of rent.

(3) Differences within a county area would often be as great as differences over the whole country. It is as easy to surmount the one difficulty as the others.

(4) By a uniform national rate the constant difficulties that would arise on the margins of areas would be avoided. A farmer in Hertfordshire would rightly resent being compelled to pay a higher wage than his competitor in the same markets across the Buckinghamshire border.

A similar point to be decided is whether to have the same rate for all grades of workers, or to have a separate minimum for horsemen, cattlemen, and shepherds. In some districts

where the wages are higher, as in the case of West Cumberland quoted above, there is no difference made between the different grades of workers. Moreover, the higher wages of horsemen and cattlemen frequently work out at a smaller rate per hour even than those of the general labourer, in view of the longer hours of work. In any case, it would seem to be no part of the business of a national minimum wage law to emphasise such differences as exist, and the object of the law would be achieved if there were only one general rate, applicable to all grades of workers, and raising the whole level of wages from below.

In view of the wide discrepancies that exist between the wages paid in different parts of the country, it has been suggested by those who have some experience of the working of Wages Boards that in the case of Agriculture the minimum fixed should not really be a minimum at all, but rather a mean figure, a sort of standard set up for the various localities to aim at. The argument appears to be that if a high minimum were fixed, it would be impossible of enforcement, whereas a low minimum would have a demoralising effect in those parts of the country where good wages are already paid. But any such juggling would, like a series of local rates, be running away from the problem. A minimum must be a minimum—it must be fairly high, and it must be enforced all over the country, the only modification possible being to allow in certain backward districts a short period of time to elapse before it comes into force.

## § 2. THE MACHINERY.

The most important question in connection with the minimum wage law for agriculture is the machinery by which it is to be administered. There is no need to discuss this in great detail here; it will be sufficient to sketch it in outline. The machine must include a National Board to deal with main principles, which are the same all over the country, and Local Boards to apply those principles to the circumstances of the various localities. Both the National Board and the Local Boards should properly consist of directly elected representatives of both the employers and the employed. In

the case of Local Boards there should be no difficulty about this. There would be presumably a Local Board for each county area, and periodical elections would take place in each village, in which the labourers would not fail to take considerable interest, seeing that their pockets would be so directly affected. Their class consciousness would thus be awakened, and the bonds of old servility and terrorism would be gradually cast off. But this could not happen all at once, and in many districts intimidation would still be a very real thing for some years. But Wages Boards have proved a boon in trades less favourable to freedom and representation than agriculture, and devices, such as voting by sides and not by heads,\* have been adopted to counteract intimidation.

In view of this danger, however, it is very doubtful whether it would be safe to leave to the chances of direct election such important matters as the national rate and current conditions, which the National Board would have to decide. The first National Board must therefore be formed in some other way, either by representatives from the Local Boards or by nomination. Experience proves that bodies composed of representatives of representative bodies are always incompetent. It will probably be best therefore to have a nominated National Board to start with. And this being so, why should not the national rate, for the first five years at least, be definitely fixed by Parliament itself putting figures in a Bill? The House of Commons, with all its defects, is not likely to be behind public opinion in a matter of this kind, and is at least as competent to judge of the cost of living of the agricultural labourer as any other body it could appoint.

The course here recommended would appear a reversal of the decision taken by the House of Commons on the Coal Mines Act. But a careful perusal of the speeches made on that occasion will show that none of the arguments against naming figures in that Bill apply with equal force to agriculture. Moreover, in the case of the coal mines, and also of the "sweated trades," the Boards are primarily interested in fixing wages to the satisfaction of those immediately

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\* In the case of the tailors.

concerned, and are dealing with circumstances peculiar to the particular industry. But in the case of agriculture the livelihood of hundreds of thousands of workers all over the country is concerned, the circumstances are, or should be, of common knowledge, and the interests of urban workers are directly involved, seeing that the low wages paid in country districts tend to provide the towns with a constant influx of cheap labour.

As to details, the rate should be fixed for a whole week, to be paid, wet or fine, with a provision that if the man works more than, say, fifty hours, more must be paid. Both piece rate and time rate per hour must be relatively high, and if the piece rate were higher than the time rate, it would tend to avoid loss by bad weather. Eventually all payment in kind in lieu of cash wages should be abolished. But until this is done (and it would interfere seriously with local customs) part of the business of the Local Boards should be to work out the values of payments in kind, and to secure that they are sufficient to raise the wage in every individual case above the minimum. The Local Boards would also have to regulate, in their districts, the amount and kind of work which could be performed by young or old persons, who would be exempted from the provisions of the Act, within certain limits laid down by the National Board.\*

Evasion of the Act would be made a criminal offence, and workers would be encouraged to send information to the Boards of any such evasion. The Board would then make its own inquiries, and no one need know from whom the information came.

In order to meet the peculiar circumstances of agriculture and avoid the breakdown of the scheme by reason of the intimidation of the labourers and their lack of cohesion, the suggestion has been made to abandon the system of Wages Boards altogether, and administer the Act through the County Councils. No one who knows the composition of the

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\* In the case of old men, not worth the minimum wage, but able to do a little work, a State pension supplementing the lesser wage might be paid, leading up to the full old age pension later. The Local Board would have to provide safeguards to ensure that this was not used by employers to enable them to evade the Act

average County Council would consider the interests of the labourer safe in its hands. It has also been suggested that the wage might be fixed, as rents are fixed in Ireland, by an independent tribunal of a legal character. But this would omit one of the most important features of the scheme. It cannot be too strongly urged that the periodical election by the men of their own representatives on the Local Boards is fraught with the greatest promise for the organisation and independence of the agricultural labourers of the future.

### § 3. THE AMOUNT OF THE WAGE.

It now only remains to discuss how much the minimum wage should be. The whole question of the minimum wage in any industry involves important issues of political theory. Should the wages be calculated to cover only the barest necessities of life? What are necessities? Is the wage to be on a family basis? If so, how large may the family be assumed to be? The average family of three children is really little more frequent than the family of four, five, or six. Are women to receive permanently lower wages than men? There are good reasons for believing that the ultimate solution of these difficulties in modern countries will be found in the direction of fixing generous wages for adults on an individual basis only, and looking to some other form of provision for the children, as for other non-working sections of the community, the aged and the sick. Indeed such provision is already being made in certain States of America. But as things now are in England, the family of the agricultural labourer depends for existence on the wage of the father, and the task of the moment is to raise those wages sufficiently to provide at any rate the minimum of civilised life for a family of the average size.

A reference to the tables given in the last chapter will prove conclusively that this cannot be done at present prices under 21s. a week, even calculating rent at the low figure of 1s. But the present overcrowding will not disappear until the dearth of cottage accommodation is removed by the provision of new cottages. It will be shown in the next chapter that if the new cottages are to be provided at economic rents, the rent

of cottage property will rise to 5s., which would necessitate a wage of at least 25s. a week for their inmates. In view of the difficulty of raising wages to this figure immediately, a scheme of state-aided cottage building is foreshadowed by which rents would not exceed 3s. a week, and if this scheme were adopted, a minimum wage of 23s. a week would meet the immediate needs of the case. To discourage casual labour, the wages should be 25s. a week if the engagement is for less than a year, and 5s. a day if the engagement is for less than a week. The week should be limited to fifty hours, and over-time should be paid at a higher rate.

This reform is pressing, and is immediately practicable; the only modification being, as already suggested, that backward districts might, if the Local Wages Board thought fit, apply for a short extension of the period before the law was enforced in their district. In the interim the Local Board would, of course, arrange for a local minimum at a reduced rate.

#### § 4. THE EFFECT ON THE FARMER.

In the long run it would prove true in agriculture, as in every other industry, that better pay means better work. The best authorities admit that in agricultural districts where a fair wage is now paid the work done is proportionately better, and the higher wage throws no extra expense on the employer. Mr. Christopher Turnor, for example, has given it as his opinion that the better-paid labour on his estate in Lincolnshire is less expensive than the far worse paid work of the labourers of Oxfordshire and Dorsetshire. But, however true this may be, the same result cannot be expected to obtain immediately if wages are raised by Act of Parliament. The process of improving the value of the work done to the same extent as the increased wage might take a generation, while the increased cost of labour would immediately fall on the farmer.

It is difficult to estimate with any degree of certainty what that increased cost would be. In any given case it depends on three factors—the wage at present paid, the kind of farming, and the number of acres per labourer on

the farm. Thus it would vary not only from district to district, but actually from farm to farm.\*

But be the increase great or small, it is quite obviously a burden that the tenant farmer cannot afford, and should not be called upon to pay. This leads us to the conclusion that any Minimum Wage Law for Agriculture must contain a clause giving the tenant the right at any time within 12 months of the appointed day to give notice (say, 3 months' notice) to terminate the tenancy at the next quarter day. He will thus have an opportunity of transferring the burden on to shoulders that can, and ought to, bear it. If he is already rented nearly as heavily as he can bear,† this will ensure that the bulk of that burden is transferred, while the competition of others anxious for access to the land will secure that not more would be transferred than the actual cost of the increased wage.

In cases where the land is at present let at a lower rent than the landlord could now obtain, or is in the occupation of a tenant whom the landlord dislikes, the effect of bringing the contract automatically to an end would be to enable the landlord to make a better bargain, or to get rid of his tenant sooner than he otherwise could. This is not a serious objection, as leases of farms are usually short, and

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\* The rate of wages now being paid in any district can be gauged roughly by reference to Appendix B. But the number of acres per labourer is not so easy to ascertain. An attempt is made, for what it is worth, to work out the county averages in Appendix G.

This calculation has at least a negative value, as proving that average figures are valueless, and that, even if extreme cases are left out of account, the number of acres per labourer varies so enormously that it is impossible to arrive at any general conclusion as to the increased cost of farming per acre which a minimum wage law would entail. In Durham, where the average wage is 22s. 9d., and the average number of acres per labourer appears to be 76·4, a minimum wage of 23s. would only make a difference of 2d. per acre per year. Whereas in Suffolk, where the average wage is 16s. 7d., and there are only 26·2 acres per labourer, the average increased cost of labour would be about 8s. 4d. per acre per annum.

† In spite of the large increase in agricultural values during the last few years there are considerable numbers of old tenants whose rents have not been raised, on the principle, held by many landlords, that rent should not be raised on a sitting tenant, even where economic conditions justify. But the number of occupied farm houses is greater now than it has ever been before, and when a tenant leaves there is usually competition for the farm.

the risk to the tenant would be correspondingly small. But it can be practically met by bringing the lease to an end at the option of the tenant only, and, the clause being entirely for his benefit, there would be no injustice in leaving it to his option to enforce it.

This opportunity might, of course, be taken for the establishment of fair rent courts, such as have worked well in Ireland. But there are strong reasons against such a course.\* Should fair rent courts be established for other reasons, the cost of the minimum wage might, and indeed would, be one of the factors to be taken into consideration. But there is a danger that, if the minimum wage law were connected in the minds of the farmers with any cumbersome legal process, this would be an additional source of unpopularity, with no corresponding benefit to any of the parties concerned. The farmer would be best able to calculate what the minimum wage law would cost him, and he would not require, and would very probably resent, the intrusion of third parties in the matter. Without rent courts the vast majority of cases would be easily and amicably settled. Both landlord and tenant would want to agree, because the one does not want to lose a tenant, nor the other to leave his farm. But if there are possibilities of litigation, the chances of settlement would be diminished.

#### § 5. THE EFFECT ON THE LANDLORD.

It is nearly as difficult to average the extent of the burden which would thus be borne by the landlords as it is to average the cost of the minimum wage to the employers of farm labour.

The rents of farms vary enormously, and there is no official information available.† Where the rent amounts to 50s. or 60s. an acre, to transfer the cost of a minimum wage of 23s. would not often reduce the rent by more than 10 per cent., and frequently by 5 per cent. or less. But there are cases where rents are low, down even to 10s. and 15s. an acre—these occur more frequently in districts where wages are also low, and the extra cost of the minimum

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\* See Report of Royal Commission on Agricultural Depression, 1897, pp. 103-117. <sup>1</sup>

† See Appendix H.

wage would be correspondingly great. It might well happen that in such instances the transfer would absorb 50 per cent. of the rent at present paid to the landlord.

This at least it is safe to say. Assuming the average number of acres per labourer to be 50, and the average wage per labourer 18s. 4d. in England, then the average effect of a wage of 23s. would be to add about 4s. 9d. per annum per acre to the cost of farming. Assuming again that the tenant can transfer the whole of this on to the landlord, and that the average rent per acre is at present £1 (as to which it is impossible to say, but £1 an acre is the figure that farmers themselves often quote as an average), then the minimum wage law would take about 24 per cent. from the rent of the average landlord. This 24 per cent. is, of course, the mean of cases where the burden would be far less or far more—less where the labourer is already fairly decently paid, more only when the landlord is receiving the existing rent at the price of the labourer's squalor and semi-starvation.

Proposals to "tax the landlord" are open to several objections, such, for instance, as that they spring from political hatred of this particular class, that they would act as a relief to the industrial capitalist at the landowner's expense, that they would confer no benefit on the countryside, but actually cripple agriculture, on the prosperity of which the agricultural labourer depends.

A legal minimum wage for agricultural labourers, though it would in effect tax the landlord right heavily, is open to none of these objections. It would achieve its object directly, and not indirectly. It would go, every penny of it, straight into the pockets of those who need it most, and for whom it is intended. It is the key to the whole problem of rural development, which without it cannot be, and which with it will come almost of itself. Not one class only, but all classes, not agriculture only, but the whole community, will share the prosperity which will ensue when a living wage abolishes, once and for all, the waste of material that is so pitiful a feature of modern village conditions, and brings at last the opportunity of civilised life to the children of the soil.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE SOLUTION OF THE COTTAGE QUESTION

IT has been made clear in the preceding pages that the rents of cottages are only low in many rural districts partly because many of them are old, insanitary, and overcrowded, and partly because they often belong to the employers who charge a low rent instead of paying a higher wage. There is no possibility of extracting from the present wage of the agricultural labourer a sufficient rent to make the building of new cottages a commercial undertaking. The result of this is that the natural expansion of the countryside cannot take place, and new cottages cannot be built except by philanthropic landlords in exceptional cases. But new cottages must be built, and rapidly, if the decline of the countryside is to be arrested. Before deciding on how this end can best be achieved, it is necessary to understand the state of the existing law, and what the financial problem is.

#### § 1. THE EXISTING LAW.

The two principal Acts of Parliament which deal with Housing are: (a) The Housing of the Labouring Classes Act, 1890; (b) The Housing and Town Planning Act, 1909.

The effect of the latter Act was: (a) To make it compulsory on Local Authorities to hold an investigation of all cottage property in their areas, whereas the former Act made such an investigation optional; (b) to give the L.G.B. greater facilities to force the local bodies to take action than had been the case heretofore; (c) to give Local Authorities greater facilities for building than under the Act of 1890.\*

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\* The principal sections in the H. & T.P. Act, which should be noted in this connection, are sections 1, 3, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 37, 73.

The Act of 1890 being optional was valueless, and hardly ever applied. From 1890 to 1909 only nine loans to six R.D.C.'s were granted for the erection of labourers' dwellings under the Act.

Under the Act of 1909 considerably more has been effected. From 1909 to August, 1913, 71 loans have been sanctioned in respect of 37 R.D.C.'s for application in 54 parishes, amounting to £87,662; whilst further schemes amounting to £110,000 were under consideration by the Board in August.

Thus 54 R.D.C.'s have been stirred into action under the later Act from 1909-1912, as compared with six R.D.C.'s under the prior Act from 1890-1909.\*

Taking the figures as comparative, the progress appears good; but in view of the enormous dearth to be made good, little has really been achieved.† The Act is virtually useless to deal with the rural housing problem, for the reason that the rents of cottages built under it are too high for the ordinary labourer. The rents have averaged between 3s. 6d. and 4s. a week, while in many cases they have been much higher, 4s. 6d., 4s. 9d., and even in some cases 6s.‡

## § 2. THE FINANCIAL PROBLEM.

There are one or two fallacies which have drifted into almost general acceptance in connection with cottage

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\* L.G.B. Annual Report, 1912-1913. Cd. 6981.

† In one respect the operation of the Sanitary clauses of the Act has only made the housing problem more acute. Up to March 31st, 1912, 23,667 houses in rural districts were represented, under Section 15, as not being in all respects reasonably fit for habitation. Of these 14,626 were patched up, but 722 were closed altogether, and 9,740 notices were still in abeyance, owing to scarcity of cottages in the neighbourhood. During the three years ending March 31st, 1912, 33,453 cottages were represented as being unfit for human habitation. Of these 3,270 were compulsorily closed, and 14,255 either patched up or closed or demolished voluntarily without the issue of an order. *Thus 3,992 cottages have been compulsorily closed, large numbers of others voluntarily closed or demolished, but up to October 31st, 1912, only 398 new cottages had been built in their place.* During the past year the same process of closing has gone on apace; but the loans at present sanctioned since 1909 only provide for the erection of 470 cottages.

‡ White Paper No. 293, issued by L.G.B. August 1st, 1912.

building, and these it is well to clear out of the way before investigating the question as to what a cottage costs. Some people, especially politicians, speak as if the landlord, by withholding land altogether, or by asking too high a price for it, rendered cottage building impossible. There are doubtless cases in which, for his own selfish purposes, the landlord refuses to sell land for cottages altogether, but they are certainly not very frequent where the land is wanted for agricultural labourers' cottages only, and they could, and should, be met by powers of compulsion.

Speaking generally, the high price of land cannot prevent cottage building. Let us take an extreme case. Let us suppose £100 an acre be asked for land that is only worth £25, and let us assume that only 4 cottages are built on that acre, £18 15s. will be added thereby to the cost of each cottage, a sum which would only add a few pence to the rent per week. The addition of £10, or even £20, to the price per acre would make less than a penny difference to the rent.

The same argument applies to the extra expense involved by rather stupid and inelastic bye-laws, and again to the high wages in the building trade. The difference in the cost of a cottage if you pay a trade union rate of wage to the men is very small, seeing that the wages bill is not more than 30 per cent. of the whole cost of the cottage, and the difference between high and low wages only a fraction of that again.

It is evident, then, that all the causes to which is popularly ascribed the lack of cottages, high price of land, expensive bye-laws, and trade union rate of wages, cannot, if taken together, involve 6d. a week addition to the rent, and, as a matter of fact, in most cases they simply do not exist. The dearth of cottages is due simply and solely to the low wages of agricultural labourers, who cannot afford to pay for them; aggravated perhaps by our rating system.

What, then, is the actual cost of cottage building at the present time?

The Select Committee, previously quoted, stated in their Report that they "felt justified in laying down the general proposition that cottages built in a pair can be erected at something between £150 and £175 each to meet all the

requirements of a reasonable code of bye-laws. But this could not include the cost of land, nor the provision of a water supply where none exists."

There is no doubt that, in certain localities, cottages have been built more cheaply than this. But it does not follow that because a building has been erected for a certain sum in one district it can be duplicated somewhere else for precisely the same price.\* Moreover, the cost of building rose 30 per cent. between 1887 and 1912, and is still rising rapidly. After the coal strike prices went up enormously, and have not yet come down to within 10 per cent. of their previous level.†

Experiments are occasionally made with special materials, and it is not unreasonable to hope that some cheaper kind of building may supersede brick, which up to the present holds the field as the most obvious material for cottage building.

In view of the evidence it is impossible to estimate the cost of 5-roomed‡ cottages, even when built in blocks of four, at less than £200 apiece. Now an ordinary person who builds cottages would want at least 5 per cent. on his money after paying all outgoings, and most people want 6 per cent., or more, owing to the risk of losing rent which is involved. Suppose the cottage (3 bedrooms) cost £200 to build with the land, rent would work out roughly something like this :

					£	s.	d.
5 per cent. on £200	...	...	...	...	10	0	0
Rates 4s. on, say, £8	...	...	...	...	1	12	0
Repairs, say	...	...	...	...	1	0	0
Water rate (if any)	...	...	...	...	0	8	8
Empties (none if good locality)	...	...	...	...			
Collection	...	...	...	...	0	13	0
Insurance	...	...	...	...	0	4	0
					<hr/>		
Annual rental	...	...	...	...	£13	17	8

This works out at approximately 5s. 4d. a week. Ignoring the collection and water rate, which might be avoidable, the lowest rent at which a cottage can be built to pay may be stated roughly as 5s. a week.

\* *The Cheap Cottage*. G. GORDON ALLEN. Garden City Press, Ltd.

† See Appendix I.

‡ One cottage in five could be built with only two bedrooms

## § 3. A GOVERNMENT HOUSING GRANT.

The calculations of the needs of the average family, above given, prove that if 5s. a week be paid in rent, nothing less than 25s. a week will provide even the necessaries of life, and any diminution of that wage will also render void the hope of bettering the housing of the labourer on economic lines. To anyone with a knowledge of agricultural conditions, an attempt immediately to raise wages all over the country at once to 25s. must appear fantastic. Some other method of solving the problem must therefore be found, and the only other possibility that offers is that of a Government Grant in aid of Cottage Building.

There are very serious objections to the policy of subsidising cottage building. Anything which tends to stereotype the present low wage is bad; and a Government Housing Grant of a kind which would enable the labourers to continue to accept their present wage would be a grant in aid of the owners of land, or of capital, or of both. Again, if really cheap cottages be provided at uneconomic rents, all other cottage building will automatically cease, and the State will find itself compelled to re-house Great Britain. Whereas, if the grant be given under conditions which compel the Local Authority to keep their rents as nearly economic as possible, this will prevent the plan from being immediately and widely effective.

On the other hand, the following weighty points must be borne in mind:

(i) The improbability that a minimum wage really sufficient to stimulate cottage building will come at once.

(ii) The terrible consequences in health and waste of life *every year* that the present overcrowding, and bad housing, and lack of housing continue.

(iii) The experience of Ireland,\* and the transformation

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\* *The Irish Labourers Acts (1883-1906)*. Labourers' cottages in Ireland are at present built under the Act of 1906, as amended by the Act of 1911.

Under these Acts 35,409 cottages have been erected, and 5,057 are now in process of erection, a total of 40,466 cottages in all, and the total loans granted for this purpose to date amount to £7,860,939.

Under the 1911 Act provision is made for the advance of a total sum of £5,250,000 by Article 12, Land Commission, by way of loans to

which experts and casual visitors alike describe as almost magical, which has taken place in the districts of Ireland where the need was greatest, and where cottages have now been supplied. Not only has the standard of life been swiftly and surely raised, and acute poverty been superseded by prosperity, but the character and independence of the population affected has been developed and strengthened in a truly remarkable degree. So far from pauperising the people and keeping them in serfdom, as theorists predicted, they have been put in a position to fight for themselves, and have begun to do so.

In view of this evidence it is clear that, in spite of any economic prejudices, something resembling the Irish policy must be adopted in England as well. A high minimum wage, if it could be obtained, would be the best solution; *and no policy of subsidy should be adopted without the passing of a minimum wage law to prevent the subsidy being a mere bounty from the National Exchequer to the employers of sweated agricultural labour.* But as practical people we must advance along both lines at once; and it may well transpire that the one policy, so far from frustrating, will actually play into the hands of the other.

And as for theory, municipal cottages, if accompanied by a minimum wage sufficient to enable a man to pay a rent which will cover the bare cost, should afford a magnificent

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the R.D. Councils for the purposes of the Acts. The State aid takes the form of a grant of 36 per cent. of the annual charge in respect of cash loan to a Council; and at the present moment a sum of £81,336 is thus paid annually from the Exchequer to Irish R.D. Councils. The rents charged for these cottages vary from 9d. to 1s. 6d. per week, and to many an acre of land is attached. If we take the average for the whole of Ireland, we find that the expense is borne in the following proportions: Rents, 44·5 per cent.; rates, 24 per cent.; State contributions, 31·5 per cent.; making a total of 100.

The cost of the cottages varies from £120 to £200.

The price per acre of land averages between £25 and £50, though it sometimes amounts to £100; it works out about 25 per cent. above the agricultural price.

The average rent is 1s. 3d., and varies from 9d. to 1s. 6d.

In some cases there have been grants from the local body to buy a cow, provided the milk is kept in the village.

It is remarkable that in County Cork, where an exceptional number of cottages have been built, the wage has increased more than elsewhere.

opening for a sound business on Socialist lines, conducted for use and not for profit by the Community itself, a business which might soon be developed so as to provide not only cottages, but larger houses as well.

The chief value of grants-in-aid is that they become a lever by which the central authority can force the local authority into action. And in this case the lever should be drastically used. For instance, the State should issue peremptory instructions for an expert survey \* by an officer of the District Council, acting with an officer to be appointed by the Local Government Board. No grants for any service should be receivable by the District Council, or Board of Guardians, after six months from the passing of the Act, until such survey is presented. It should also make peremptory provision that any deficiency in sanitary dwellings revealed by such survey shall be made good by new cottages, by whomsoever built, within a year from the survey. The District Council must build if no one else does, and should receive loans at the lowest rate of interest † from the Public Works Loan Board for the full cost, and sinking fund. It should also receive annual grants‡ equal to the whole paid for sinking fund and

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\* Such a survey, periodically revised, is in practice in Holland, Germany, France, and Belgium.

† The rate of interest is most important, as it is fixed periodically by a Treasury Minute, and has been as low as  $2\frac{3}{4}$  per cent., and as high as  $4\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. The difference, namely,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., would make a difference of 1s. 2d. per week in the rent of a £200 cottage. The Report of the Select Committee points out that the Post Office Savings Bank Depositors only receive  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on their money, amounting at that time to £150,000,000, and that the Official Trustees had £20,000,000 of charitable funds in hand at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. They suggest that there is no reason why this money should not be employed for so necessary a public undertaking as cottage building.

‡ The distinction between annual grants, as here advocated, and capital grants on the lines of the Irish Labourers Acts is important, and is well expressed in a memorial presented to the Prime Minister in July, 1913, by the Executive Committee of the National Land and Home League: "We do not advocate a capital grant on the lines of the Irish Labourers Acts, because a rise in agricultural wages, which we believe to be an urgent necessity, would result in a part of the capital expenditure passing into the hands of the local authorities should wages rise sufficiently to allow a payment of economic rents by the agricultural labourer. We therefore advocate instead an annual grant to meet a part only of the loss incurred by local authorities, in order that these authorities may have a motive to raise their rents as wages go up until the cottages are on a commercial basis."

half of any deficit on the annual account, if the Local Government Board is satisfied that such loss is inevitably or properly incurred. No grants-in-aid should be receivable for any service after two years from the passing of the Act until the necessary cottages are built.

The effects of these recommendations would be that in every locality cottages of a modern type would be readily obtainable at 3s. a week without any charge on the rates at all, and if for special reasons the locality thought fit to charge less rent still in certain districts, half the loss would be made up to them by State Grant, provided that the Local Government Board approved of the policy adopted. The total cost to the nation would be the amount of the sinking fund only, plus the annual grants-in-aid of rates in the special cases just mentioned. The fact that the locality would bear half the cost in these cases would prevent the Local Authorities from adopting such a policy except when necessary. Supposing 100,000 cottages were thus built by Local Authorities at an average cost of £200 each, and that the period of redemption was extended to eighty years (at present it is only sixty for the cost of erecting buildings, and eighty for the purchase of freehold land); then if the cottages were let at an average of 3s. a week, the annual grants would amount to £250,000. If 25 per cent. of the cottages were let at 2s. instead of 3s., the sum would be increased by £65,000 a year.

Here you have the policy of the National Minimum applied to rural housing. Defective cottages must be put right; sufficient new cottages must be built; otherwise *no grants for any service whatever* to be received by the Local Authorities concerned. But to enable these things to be done, every facility should be given in the form of new grants-in-aid on the conditions above laid down. A thumping fine for backward districts: a thumping bribe for progressive districts: thus making a forward policy, which is really the most economical to the nation as a whole, also the most economical to the locality concerned. This is the true business policy on this question.

## CHAPTER V.

### TOWARDS NATIONALISATION

#### § I. SENTIMENTAL VALUE.

IT is not possible to discuss satisfactorily any policy for rural districts without taking into account the three interests concerned—the interests of the landowner, the tenant farmer, and the labourer. Under the existing land system, with feudalism still a reality, the three interests are closely connected. By feudalism is meant the possession on the part of the landowner of peculiar privileges, power, and position, in return for which he is supposed to render certain services, such as providing cottages at uneconomic rents, assisting in paternal fashion the poorer tenants, and generally spending money in ways that provide a considerable amount of local employment. Feudalism is, no doubt, on the decline, and must disappear. But if we attempt merely to hasten this disappearance without having anything except individualistic enterprise to take its place, it is certain that there will be, at any rate for a time, no little suffering in rural districts. A constructive policy must accompany the policy of destruction.

Any constructive policy must satisfy two conditions. First, it must improve the position and increase the number of the rural population. More money, and not less, must therefore be spent in rural districts. Mere taxation, to be spent on increased armaments and the like, will not suffice. Secondly, it must lead on to Nationalisation. We do not want, for its own sake, the break-up of large estates and their sale to tenants. The fewer the owners the easier to nationalise and control.\*

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\* There are at present only 5,000 large landowners in England owning over 1,000 acres; and these 5,000 own nearly half the land of England between them. The whole of the soil is owned by about 1,000,000 persons altogether. In both Germany and France, on the other hand, the ownership is more equally divided among about 5,000,000 persons.

There are at this moment some 12,000,000 acres of poorly laid down, neglected, unproductive grassland, which could be put to much better use \* ; and this deplorable fact is not due, as is often supposed, merely to the selfish sporting instinct of the landowner, but rather, as has already been stated, to the extensive methods adopted to meet the period of depression, involving the employment on the land of less labour and less manure than the economic minimum. As a set-off against this consequent reduction in the economic value of the land, many estates have acquired what may be called a sentimental value. By this is meant the price the owner is willing to pay for feudal privileges, social position, and the like, and for the possession of a thing of natural beauty such as is many an old estate in this country. This sentimental value may easily amount to 40 per cent. of the total selling value of the estate, and part of it is actually due to the uneconomic way in which the estate is managed. If the pasture of a large park were cultivated intensively, each acre of that park might produce five or six times as much, but the total selling value of the estate would be considerably reduced.

Now, the fact of the existence of this large sentimental value is a strong argument against any extensive scheme of State purchase at present prices.† But there are signs that this sentimental value is destined to decline rapidly. The position of the landowner is less attractive than it was ;

\* *Land Problems*. By CHRISTOPHER TURNOR, p. 17. (John Lane, 1911.)

† Mr. Chiozza Money has rightly pointed out that, speaking generally, land is cheap in this country. One hundred pounds an acre, for instance, is really cheap, not dear, as compared with the price of money. If you build ten small houses on land worth as much as £500 an acre, the cost of each house would be as follows :

						£
Land	...	...	...	...	...	50
House, say	...	...	...	...	...	440
Roads and sewers	...	...	...	...	...	40
						530
Total cost	...	...	...	...	...	530

Now, if the land were worth nothing, the total cost would be reduced to £480, making a difference of about 1s. 3d. a week in the rent at the outside. But if the money were only 1 per cent. cheaper, it would make a difference of 2s. a week. Cheap money is much more important even than cheap land.

his feudal privileges are disappearing ; new taxes and threats of taxes are unpleasant.

A big drop in sentimental value is, in itself, all to the good. It is desirable that economic and selling value should approximate. But unless some care is taken, this process will entail considerable temporary suffering, both to tenant farmer and to labourers, especially where owners have no other resources than those derived from the land. The way this occurs is obvious. The Finance Act of 1909, for instance, not only increased the rates of the Death Duties, but also, which is far more important, changed the method of estimating the value on which they are based. The result of this has been, in many cases, to double or more than double the amount to be raised. In order to meet this extra prospective burden, a mortgage would probably be raised on the estate, and an attempt made to redeem it in fifteen years, thus involving an annual charge on the estate of a considerable sum. This annual charge would be met by the owner by a corresponding reduction in expenditure, involving primarily a reduction in the wages bill, and the consequent discharge of a large number of people.

The moral of this is that some constructive policy for the land must accompany the burden that is at present being placed on landowners, unless this is to involve a decrease in the amount spent on afforestation, buildings, cottages, and other improvements, and a consequent sudden and considerable reduction in the amount of wages paid.

## § 2. LAND PURCHASE.

Without a constructive policy similar undesirable results would also accompany the proposed minimum wage law. Such a law, followed by a corresponding reduction in the rent of agricultural land, would tend to strip such land of sentimental value, and reduce its value to an economic level. The landowner might feel himself obliged, in some cases, to allow land to fall out of cultivation. The time would then be ripe for a scheme of State Land Purchase, which would meet the landlord's complaint that he was forced to keep land on which all the profits had been wiped out, and

which would at the same time provide for development by the community of land that private owners could not cultivate. *The power to acquire land for the community at a valuation is the next most important step in the solution of the rural problem.*

The ideal of the single tax and the ideal of complete land nationalisation are both so far off as not to demand a searching examination here. But the first steps towards these ideals, viz., the proposal to tax land values, and the proposal to give the community sweeping powers of purchase for any purpose—except that of selling again to a private individual—are both immediate and practical; of these the latter is by far the more necessary of the two. In purely agricultural districts the site value is a negligible quantity.

The landlords of the country derive their chief wealth from the need of the workers to have room to live, and the need of industry to have space for production and distribution. The Land Taxer proposes to make the landowner pay heavily for the privilege of restricting these needs; and argues that such taxation will result in loosening the bonds of private ownership, and minimising the restriction of the needs. But this could be achieved more directly and effectively by giving to the community power to acquire belts of agricultural land round the towns, and the means of locomotion and transit for their full development; and in purely country districts by providing machinery to secure for the public all land which is not being properly developed, or which is required for housing, small holdings, or any other public purpose. If men are rich, whether as owners of land or any other form of wealth, tax them. If they are public nuisances, whether by holding up land or in any other way, coerce them. But to mix up the two processes only leads to confusion.

To what extent land is actually held in private hands which is either not fully developed or of which the community has need for its own purposes will subsequently become more evident. It is sufficient for the moment to know that such a position exists; and the fact of its existence fully justifies a free community taking steps to put an end to it. All that is required for that purpose is a short Act of

Parliament, on the lines of Section 10 of the Housing and Town Planning Act, applying to local conditions generally and to the development of land. This would give power to a few inhabitants of any district to call machinery into play which would bring about an inquiry into the management of the land in question, and secure it, if necessary, for the community at a reasonable price, based on the valuation now being made.

But though this simple proceeding could be thus simply carried out, the time is ripe for a far larger application of the principle that land, as the physical basis of all life, should be at the full disposal not of private individuals, but of the community as a whole. This principle has been recognised in successive Acts of Parliament compelling private individuals to surrender land for public purposes. What is now required is not merely, as above suggested, to extend the principle to cases where land is not fully developed or is immediately needed, but to prepare a way for securing to the land-users of the future that they shall be subject to no restrictions as to the use of their land except such as are imposed upon them as tenants of the public, for the sake of the public; and at the same time for placing all land at the disposal of the community, as landlord, with power to pursue a policy of national development. And for this purpose full powers should be given to the public departments and to the local bodies to acquire land not merely for present, but in anticipation of future uses.\*

These powers involve the creation of a National Board of Land Commissioners for the purpose of land purchase, to undertake the work of all the public authorities concerned. Such a Board should have power to purchase land compulsorily; and the present landowners should be safeguarded by a right of appeal to judicial authority, and also by the right of any landlord to sell land to the Commission at the approved purchase price. This right should be subject to one important restriction, without which the State would find

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\* Speaking generally, the local authority is the proper authority to purchase for special purposes, and the State for general purposes. A local fall in the value of land would severely hit a local authority; but there is no general fall in the value of land, so the State could not be a loser.

itself the owner of all the worst land, as this is what the landlords would be most anxious to sell. To avoid this, the Commission should be able to refuse to purchase unless the area is, in their opinion, suitable for reletting successfully. For instance, scattered small holdings are of less value than one area of small holdings which can be grouped together for purposes of co-operation. Therefore the Commission, if asked to buy one small holding, should be able to refuse until—either by use of their compulsory powers or by the landlord yielding—they could obtain a sufficient area for several.

There would be no difficulty in administering the land either by the local authorities or by the Land Commissioners themselves. They would in some cases hold it and work it by an agent, as other landowners do; but more frequently they would let it off for long periods, either in small holdings or in larger areas, retaining the power of redemption and guaranteeing a full compensation for improvements.\*

In answer to the fear of the financial magnitude of the above proposals, it is sufficient to point out that the nationalisation of the whole of the land of the country at once—which is not what is proposed—would not be a much bigger operation than the late Lord Goschen's Conversion of the National Debt.

As in the case of many of the Irish landlords, payment would be made with guaranteed land stock. The owners of the London Docks were similarly paid with Port of London stock, and many of the shareholders in the old water companies were compensated by receiving Water Board stock.

Private ownership of land has so long been tolerated by public opinion that it is only fair to the present owners that they should be bought outright, if they are displaced; at the same time, to buy the land at the sentimental value at present attached to it would be a very bad bargain for the community. The direct purchase of land by the Commis-

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\* "I have let over 7,000 acres in allotments and small holdings during the last five years. I have improved and adapted 28 existing houses, and built over 80 new smallholders' houses, and forty-four new sets of buildings have been provided, while, as the result of improved management and judicious economy, the net income from the property has increased by £10,000 a year" (from a speech by Earl Carrington, now Lord Lincolnshire, when he was President of the Board of Agriculture).

sioners, whenever it is actually wanted or appears to be likely to be wanted by the public for any purpose whatever, at a price based on the official valuation, is the fairest method that can be desired of gradually gaining for the nation, with the minimum of individual hardship, that which to the nation rightly belongs.

### § 3. THE IRREDEEMABLE MORTGAGE.

There is one other step that might be taken in the same direction. Under the Finance Act of 1909, the State may, with the consent of the owner, take a proportion of the estate as payment for part or all the duty. It is not, however, probable that much use will be made of this provision. It would be inconvenient to the State to have fragments of estates scattered all over the country. A development of this principle of payment in kind is quite feasible. Where the State does not take land it might, instead of requiring cash, accept from the owner a mortgage on the estate to the amount of the duty due. This should be obligatory on owner and State alike. The mortgage should be irredeemable, and would constitute a permanent charge on the estate. The owner could probably obtain a mortgage in the ordinary way at 4 per cent., and the State might require this rate of interest, or, if it wished to popularise the practice, might accept  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. It should be open to the State at any time to accept land to the value of the mortgage, but it should not be permitted to accept cash. The mortgage would be attached to the land, and if parts were sold, should, in due proportion, attach itself to these parts. The Government valuation would make the apportionment easy.

The advantages of this proposal are many :

(i) The owner, being unable to free the estate from the charge, would not find himself driven so hard to obtain an increased income from the estate by a sudden reduction of expenditure to meet a redemption fund. Of course the charge would be permanent. But we should avoid to a considerable extent the danger of such large reductions of staff and expenditure.

(ii) A permanent charge attached to land value would have

beneficial effects. It would tend to decrease the value of land by more than the amount of the mortgage. From the point of view of sentiment land would, in the circumstances, become a less desirable object. There would be a gradual decay of sentimental values. This is desirable. The price of land, an article of necessity, should not be enhanced by a 40 per cent. load of sentiment.

(iii) The State, by accepting a mortgage instead of a capital sum, would be temporarily a loser. This also would be desirable. There was always some ground in the objection raised in connection with large Death Duties that they were taking capital for annual expenditure. The irredeemable mortgage would not be open to this charge. It would also have the additional advantage of compelling the State to resort to a larger income tax.

(iv) But perhaps the greatest advantage of the proposal lies in the fact that it leads gradually to Nationalisation. It gives the State an interest, and a rapidly increasing interest, in the land. In any particular case the State might acquire an interest equal to, say, 12 per cent. of the selling value, and considerably more than this percentage of economic value, which will, when sentiment is dead, represent the ultimate value. As the mortgage is irredeemable, and as the rate of duty depends on the value of real and personal estate together, the State would, in a comparatively short time, possess a major interest in the land. By this time the sentimental value would have disappeared, and the selling and economic value be the same. It would then become a question whether the State, possessing so large an interest, should not on terms acquire the whole. This proposal of an irredeemable mortgage would represent a policy of gradually buying out the landowners with their own money.

## CHAPTER VI.

### SMALL HOLDINGS.

THE recommendations hitherto made have been aimed first at levelling up the standard of life of the labourers on the land, and, secondly, at securing for the community power over the land itself. It is now time to foreshadow a policy of development under which the whole position of agriculture would be transformed, and by which the countryside would inherit, though in different conditions, a double measure of its lost prosperity. It is hopeless to expect any policy of development while the work of agriculture is built upon sweated labour and an ill-fed population, or while the fount of rural wealth is drained by private interests. But, on the other hand, it is futile to remove these obvious impediments, except as a preparation for a definite national policy of land development. Such a policy to be complete must give free access to the land to all who desire it, and a fairer opportunity to all who have the access now; must create order out of the chaos and muddle that stamps the production and distribution of our agricultural produce; and must organise and bend to the service of the nation the full energies of the labourer, the small holder, the large farmer, and the State as well.

#### § 1. THE CASE FOR SMALL HOLDINGS.

At the time of the Norman Conquest, and for some centuries after, the whole of the peasantry—generally speaking—owned or occupied land. But in the thirteenth century,\* and perhaps earlier, the great economic movement commonly called the Enclosure of Commons began, and continued for over 600 years, until by 1850 it was practically

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\* Statute of Merton, 1235.

complete, with the result that large holdings and larger ownings had been substituted for small holdings and the complicated manorial system of owning.

There is no doubt that the main factor in this great agrarian revolution was economic. This is shown by the fact that consolidation and enclosure of holdings went on in all sorts of ways, and was promoted by all classes of people. In some counties—Kent, Essex, Devon, and Cornwall—it took place so early and so completely that very little is known about the process. Elsewhere it was brought about by exchange, by purchase and sale, and by general agreement amongst the peasant occupiers themselves, and \* later on by landlord aggression, by private Acts of Parliament, and, finally, by provisional order.

The old three-field system was wasteful of labour, prevented agricultural progress, and maintained a low grade of cultivation. It had to go. During the eighteenth century the growing population increased the demand for corn, which is best grown on a large scale, and until about 1880 all the efforts of the State to counteract economic pressure, efforts extending from the days of Elizabeth to the Allotments Act of 1887, proved vain. Big farms paid best, and the small farms and small holdings had to disappear.

But in 1880 the tide turned, † wheat began to fall rapidly in price owing to the reduction in the cost of carriage; the wheat farmers lost money, and the graziers, for a similar reason, were in no better case. The turn of the small holder had come. The home-grown produce which England wanted was fruit and flowers, vegetables and eggs, milk and butter, all things which can perhaps be produced best on a small scale, except indeed the last-named pair, which can be produced profitably by large holders and by small.

Small holdings pay because our big towns now demand what small holdings can best supply; and failing to get it, they import it from abroad. *Our soil is undercultivated!*

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\* See R. H. TAWNEY, *The Agrarian Problem in the Sixteenth Century*, 1912. See LEVY, *Large and Small Holdings*. Also JOHNSON, *The Disappearance of the Smallholder*.

† See LEVY, *Large and Small Holdings*. Also JOHNSON, *The Disappearance of the Smallholder*.

Our produce is under £4 per acre of all cultivated land, grass, and arable.\* Part of the 12,000,000 acres of pasture is not being turned to proper account. The sheep farming average is high enough, but this is not true of other stock. The head of stock has not increased of late years in proportion to the amount of land laid down to grass, which means that land is going out of cultivation. A far higher head could be carried.† We want the big produce per acre—£20, it is said,‡ in Belgium—which small holdings and intensive culture alone can produce. The interest of the country and of the landowner are not necessarily identical in this matter. The landowner prefers the largest net return, and the farmer also seeks the same thing. A big grazing farm, employing next to no labour and very little capital or supervision, may give only £3 an acre in produce and yet yield more profit to the farmer and rent to the owner than arable producing crops worth £12, whose cost of production in labour and capital is £10. But from a national standpoint, production of £12 an acre is obviously preferable to £3. And the small holder who is to make a living of 25s. or 30s. a week off twenty acres must cultivate intensively and produce per acre far more than the average farmer does to-day.

This is the justification of the policy of the Small Holdings and Allotments Act, 1908. But the main argument for small holdings is not, after all, an economic one. There are other and valid reasons why the State should deliberately set itself to increase the number of small holders.

In the first place, we want to put a stop to rural depopulation. It may not be true, though it is often asserted, that the family of a labourer in a big town dies out after three

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\* The yield per acre in Germany is £5 5s.; in France, £5 9s.; in Denmark, just under £6, and in Belgium, £20. See *Land Problems*. By CHRISTOPHER TURNOR.

† The *live stock* per square mile in the various centres of Europe is as follows: Belgium, 180; Denmark, 160; Great Britain, 133; England and Wales, 160; Scotland, 76; Germany, 117; France, 95. The milk cows per square mile are: Belgium, 76; Denmark, 71; Germany, 50; France, 36; Great Britain, 30. (See Mr. ROWNTREE'S *Land and Labour; Lessons from Belgium*. Macmillan, 1911.)

‡ On the authority of M. Vuyst, Inspector-General of Agriculture in Belgium.

generations. But it can hardly be controverted that a peasantry, if properly housed and fed, is physically stronger than a town population under any conditions likely to be universal within the next few years. All vital statistics, and emphatically those of infant mortality, point to the superiority of country life. Intellectually, the life of a large town is unnatural in this sense, that the human race and its ancestors, during all time up to a century or so ago, have lived in the country, or within a mile of it, and the life of a dweller in a city wholly cut off from the sights and sounds of what Mr. H. G. Wells rightly calls the normal life is a new and disquieting phenomenon.

For centuries past statesmen have at intervals legislated against rural depopulation,\* and there is no doubt that their instinct has been sound. Now this may be laid down without fear of contradiction, that enterprising and self-respecting men will not stay in the country if they can escape. They will not bring up their sons to be agricultural labourers whilst their only prospect is a hard and narrow life on a miserable wage of 10s. to 20s. for a long day, seven days a week, and nothing better than an old-age pension to hope for at the end of it. The life of the proletarian in the big industries is hard enough, and is ill recompensed with his wages of 20s. to 40s. a week. But it is better than the semi-serfdom of the farm labourer, who gets half his wages, and has at the same time to touch his hat, go to church, vote as he is told, and generally sell his soul as well as his labour power to his employer and the other rulers of the parish. If men are to be kept in the country they must have a chance to get land, to build up a permanent home for themselves in which they can bring up children and grandchildren, and to which they can look forward as a resting-place for old age.

Again, small holdings tend to raise wages and increase the prosperity, or rather prevent the decay, of village trade and industry. They raise wages because the small holder is often also a labourer, but a labourer who will only work for others if it is made worth his while to do so. Even allotments give a man some security against unemployment, some

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\* See Tawney, *passim*.

resource other than his weekly silver. Whatever makes the labourer independent tends to help wages up; and the smallest scrap of land, let alone a small holding with a county council cottage, turns the farm hand into a man.

As for village trade, it is scarcely necessary to point out that the small holder—at any rate till his co-operative society is fully at work—is a customer (and a good one) for all that the village tradesmen supply: he has horses to be shod, a cart for the wheelwright, baskets and string, pigs' food and hens' food, and better clothing for himself and his family. Even if he buys co-operatively, the carriage has to be done by existing methods. Far more money circulates through a twenty-acre small holding with farm buildings, a cottage and intensive culture, than is turned over by an agricultural labourer on 15s. a week and the same twenty acres in grass feeding cattle or arable growing corn.

Socialism has been defined as giving people what they want. Some who believe that good things are always disagreeable, and retain their faith in the inborn depravity of humanity, demur to the definition; but provided it be not pressed too far, or taken too literally, it is on the whole sound. Now there is no sort of doubt whatever that the people already in the country want land. Every village is full of men who are eager for the chance of hiring anything, from a little allotment up to a small farm of fifty acres. They want to stay in the country. They want to grow their own potatoes and keep their own pigs and fowls. They want to work for themselves the land they have spent their lives—so far—in tilling for others.

It is a grand thing to satisfy that widespread, deep-rooted desire for land,\* that genuine land hunger of the British peasantry—and not of the peasantry alone, but of the small tradesmen and artisans of the villages and country towns. The people of England will be healthier, wealthier, wiser if more of them are in contact with the soil, not as mere day-labourers toiling for others, but as occupiers at a fixed rent farming for themselves.

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\* Not a desire for ownership of land necessarily, as Mr. Belloc and his school mistakenly assert.

## § 2. THE SMALL HOLDINGS ACT.

The cry of "Back to the Land" may be very largely political cant, but it is based on a solid foundation of truth, of which the evidence is to be found in the working of the Small Holdings Act of 1908. The annual report of the Small Holdings Commissioners, published in May, 1913,\* gives full particulars of land acquired for small holdings under the 1908 Act. Briefly, to summarise, since the passing of the Act up to December 31st, 1912,

154,977	acres	have been	acquired by county councils, of which
104,533	„	„	purchased for £3,385,262, and
50,444	„	„	leased for £63,528 ;
124,709	„	„	let to 8,950 individuals ;
212	„	„	sold to 20 individuals ;
6,094	„	„	let to 49 co-operative small holdings asso- ciations, who have sub-let to 967 of their members.

In addition, 37,000 acres have been provided for 2,984 approved applicants by private landowners direct, mainly through the instrumentality of the councils, and 1,586 acres have been let to 192 individuals and 63 members of co-operative associations by councils of county boroughs.

The total number of applicants satisfied in five years is 15,176 and the number approved, but not yet satisfied, is 8,508.

The average price of the land purchased is £32 7s. 8d. an acre and the average rent of the land leased is £1 5s. 2d. an acre.

The average size of the small holdings is between 13 and 14 acres ; but this is a deceptive figure, as it varies very much in different parts of the country. The average for Worcestershire is under 5 acres, while that for Northumberland is 31 acres.

Small holdings are supplied, as the result of the Act, in three ways. The county councils either buy the land outright ; or they lease land under the Statute for terms of years, renewable under notice ; or, thirdly, in 2,984 cases applicants approved by the county council have obtained their land by direct arrangement with the owners. At present each of these methods seems to be necessary, though each has its drawbacks. Purchase of land is best from many standpoints—it nationalises a certain area, it secures

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\* Cd. 6790. Price 5d.

the small holdings for ever and allows the county council to build cottages freely. On the other hand, it tends to raise the price of land, it involves an increase of county loans and, most serious of all, it is almost impracticable where land has a substantial building value—that is, in the neighbourhood of large towns and, in the case of London, in the greater part of the Home Counties. Land at Limpsfield, for example, which lets at 20s. an acre or less, is worth anything up to £600 or £700 for building. It is practically impossible for the county council to buy and let to small holders at a possible rent for cultivating. But in purely rural districts county councils usually buy outright.

The most serious objection to statutory leasing is that the county council cannot build. This difficulty is got over by purchasing or hiring for 99 years a small area sufficient for building cottages. But this complicates the matter and in some cases is impracticable.

Direct arrangement with the owner has the advantage of rapidity and probably of cheapness, but the disadvantages that the tenant has not permanent security of tenure and is not relieved from the bondage of feudal tradition.

In spite of their respective drawbacks, it seems impossible, and on the whole undesirable, to make any change in this matter. County council purchase and hiring are each best in certain districts; and direct arrangement with the owner cannot be prevented even if we wish it to be.

That there is a real demand for small holdings cannot be denied. In the first year 23,000 applicants filled in forms but a considerable number were rejected on the ground of not having capital. Numerous approved applicants have lost heart owing to delays on the part of the county councils and have gone off to the colonies. Many applicants who have been approved for  $4\frac{1}{2}$  years are still without land. Many more would apply for land if they did not think the Act a dead letter.\*

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\* In Somerset there are 1,060 approved applicants for 13,536 acres still unsatisfied; in the Holland Division of Lincolnshire 774 for 16,000 acres. In this county the demand is described as "practically unlimited" and the arrears increase year by year. The unsatisfied demand in Cambridge is 504 applicants for 5,000 acres; in Lindsey 404 applicants for 6,500 acres; in Norfolk 433 applicants for 6,191 acres; in Cheshire 219 applicants for 7,800 acres, etc.

Why has more not been accomplished? Because county councils are mainly composed of landowning and farming classes, who, as a general rule, are hostile to progressive legislation. Very little interest is taken by country people in local elections; many of the seats are never contested. Landowners fear the formation of an independent class of working men and women. Farmers fear their best labourers will become small holders and prove rivals; also that wages will go up. Then there is the prohibitive price demanded for land.\* Cases are known where big landowners are co-opted on small holdings committees. They offer their land for small holdings at rents two or three times in excess of present figures. Lack of capital makes it often impossible for applicants to pay outgoing tenants for unexhausted improvements or to stock the small holdings. Men living

\* On a rough average the County Council of Dorsetshire charges to the small holder double the rent paid by the farmer, sometimes more. All small holders pay the County Council 15 per cent. for working expenses. Heath lands in Dorsetshire have been applied for and could be reclaimed; but they should be let free at a nominal rent for the first few years, whereas the County Council asks £2 an acre. The higher rent charged for land let as small holdings is well shown in a paper read by Mr. Lester Smith, the Oxford County land agent, before the County Land Agents' Society, in which he gives the following examples of increases in the rent of from 61 per cent. up to as much as 158 per cent.:

(1) *Land Leased Voluntarily.*

A. No.	B. Area.			C. Old Assessment Gross Estimated Rental.			D. Rent paid by Council's Tenants.			E. Increase D over C.  Per cent.
	a.	r.	p.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
1	16	1	11	14	5	0	23	0	0	61
2	118	0	30	103	7	6	180	0	0	74
3	96	2	32	69	0	0	110	10	0	60
4	64	1	2	46	6	6	85	10	0	84

(2) *Land Leased Compulsorily (Parts of Large Farms).*

A. No.	B. Area.			C. Proportion of Old Assessment Gross Estimated Rental.			D. Rent paid by Council's Tenants.			E. Increase D over C.  Per cent.
	a.	r.	p.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
1	91	0	22	74	12	0	192	13	0	158
2	55	2	27	37	1	5	72	5	0	95

in farmers' cottages are afraid of losing their work and home if known to be applicants for small holdings. The provision of cottages is optional, not compulsory. Councils often refuse to erect cottages or buildings and offer applicants land two or three miles away from their home.

Roughly speaking, there are two classes of men who require small holdings—the man who has hardly any capital and who wishes at first only one or two acres which he can work at odd times while continuing as a wage-earner, and the man who has enough capital to start straight away and make his living off the land. There are plenty of these men, but at present they cannot get what they want. The Act must be strengthened, and the *fundamental reform is that when the Government valuation is complete it must be made public, and be the basis for leasing and buying land by public bodies, or by the Land Commission above proposed.* Innumerable instances could be given of the high price paid by county councils for land, which involved a high rent and consequent high rates for the tenant. In cases where compulsory powers have been taken to acquire land the price fixed by the Arbitrator has frequently been so high that the council has decided to drop negotiations. The cost of these proceedings falls on the ratepayers, and naturally local boards hesitate about embarking on a course which may mean much legal and other expense and no land. With compulsory powers to purchase at the valuation price this obstacle would be removed.

Other amendments of the existing legislation dealing with this question are necessary if the Acts are to be properly worked. The chief of these are in connection with the compensation of the outgoing tenant. It is obvious that he should be put to no loss in the matter; and yet some part of the payment to him (for loss of prospective profits, cost of removal, etc.) may be of no value at all to the incoming tenant, and he should not be burdened with it in the form of extra rent. All such expenditure should be thrown on the small holdings account, as some of it is at present. The same argument applies to the sinking fund. There is no justice in making small holders pay for securing a freehold in perpetuity to the county council.

As regards administration, the Board of Agriculture should use to the full the powers it possesses under Section 20 of the Act, "in order to demonstrate the feasibility of the establishment of small holdings in any locality."

### § 3. THE LIMITATIONS OF SMALL HOLDINGS.

At this point three very serious objections to the unlimited extension of small holdings must be faced.

(1) In the first place, it is argued that all this increased production would create a glut; there would be no market for the stuff, at any rate at a remunerative price.

The answer to this is two-fold. First, it is a very long way off—so far as hardly to be worth attention at this stage. But, further, it is quite impossible that such a glut could ever be produced. A country in which agriculture became increasingly prosperous would consume more and more agricultural produce. Two hundred years ago quite small people used dishes which required 20 yolks of eggs, a number which would be out of the purchasing power of any but the rich at the present time. The consumption of eggs and milk in Germany per head of population is double that of England; the consumption of vegetables in France is three times that of England.

In a densely populated country like ours the cause of gluts in the matter of foodstuff is not, and is never likely to be, over-production; they are due solely to defective methods of distribution. Gluts due to our chaotic marketing occur even now, while people are starving on the one hand and foodstuff is wasted on the other. Marrows lie rotting in the country when the growers could make a profit if they sold them at a halfpenny apiece; at the same time they are priced at 6d. in the towns and are beyond the purse of the masses. This sort of thing is due entirely to dis-organisation, and with the adoption of recommendations to be made in subsequent chapters all danger of a glut would disappear.

(2) The second objection is more forcible. For some kinds of agricultural production, and perhaps for all, large

farming is probably more economical and more efficient than small farming. There is a good deal of dispute about this and there are distinctly two schools of thought among rural reformers. It is undisputed that crops, especially cereals, cattle, sheep,\* and in the future probably beetroot, are best produced on a large scale. It is also undisputed that fruit, vegetables and flowers, eggs and fowls, pigs, milk and dairy produce can be very efficiently produced by small farmers.

But there is a large school of thinkers who hold that even these things can be still better produced on a large scale. If this be true much of the economic case for small holdings falls to the ground. This school maintains that agriculture is no exception to the rule obtaining throughout industry of the greater economy and efficiency of large-scale production. It brings evidence to show that, however good the produce of highly-skilled small holders may be, large farmers actually produce something still better, and that this is so even in the case of fruit, fowls, etc., which are the small holder's *forte*. At the fruit shows the finest fruit is shown by the farmers, not by the small holders. The vegetables and eggs produced by the latter are largely the result of the work of the wives, who are unpaid and the value of whose labour should be taken into account in any fair comparison.

The best size for a holding, they say, has been proved to be between 300 and 500 acres. Estates with only a few farms of more than 300 acres have suffered less from reduction in rent-rolls than those where the farms were larger. But this is because few farmers have sufficient capital to support a large farm. With sufficient capital a farm of a 1,000 acres would usually give better results than if it were worked separately as two farms of 500 acres. One thousand acres, however, is probably about the maximum which one man can conveniently manage, and landowners employing experienced farmers to farm their land, instead of letting it out to tenants, have the best results when the farms do not exceed 1,000 acres in size.

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\* But the development of the co-operative management of herds might place small holders on very nearly the same footing as the large farmer even in this respect.

If this be so, and if, as is admitted, the small holder will need to be equipped, financed, and organised by the State, why bother about him at all? Why should not the State spend its money and organisation on large-scale farming straight away, employing more and more agricultural labour under better conditions and at higher pay? The success of the small holder in Denmark is attributed by this school entirely to the fact that they were first in the field and have the enormous British market close at hand.

After all, there exist in Germany a million holdings averaging 25 acres each and over a million averaging  $7\frac{1}{2}$  acres each. The small holder can give personal care, which is especially important in the case of live stock; his wife and children help; there is a saving of waste, a saving of wages, a saving of management expenses. As against this the cost of equipment is bound to make the rent of a small holding proportionately higher; the small holder cannot regulate the labour of his horses and his men as the large farmer can do; much of his own time is wasted in jobs which could be done equally well by an unskilled labourer. The truth is that small holdings have a distinct economic advantage in some districts and under favourable conditions.

It is therefore necessary for the success of a small holder—

(i) That he should be the right man, a man of experience and method, with a knowledge of the district.

(ii) That the soil of his holding should be favourable. Heavy land, or land where pasture is of low food value, is bound to lead to failure.

(iii) That he should choose the kind of farming which needs close personal attention. Poultry, milk, and small fruit have been found the most successful; large fruit and butter should be avoided; market gardening should not be attempted at all unless close to a market; and corn growing can only be carried on successfully on a large farm.

(iv) That the holding should not be isolated, but in a colony where the full benefits of co-operation can be obtained. An area of at least 2,000 acres is necessary for this.

Emphasis has been laid on these points to counteract, if possible, the danger of the widespread belief that almost any

man can make a living on almost any piece of land. Agriculture is not an easy business ; and yet people commit in connection with land follies which they would not dream of committing in connection with any other business. The Mayland Small Holdings experiment is a case in point. In the month of August, 1905, Mr. Joseph Fels, who is known throughout the whole world as a shrewd business man, bought an estate situated on the River Blackwater, in the parish of Mayland, in the county of Essex. Fired with the wholly laudable determination to use a portion of it for small holdings, he spared no expense in laying out the holdings and providing for some twenty-one men a substantial cottage each, with its own buildings and several acres of land. For lack of quite elementary business considerations the scheme broke down. In the first place there was no water at hand, and even for mixing the mortar for building pond water had to be purchased from neighbouring farms and carried to the site. The soil was heavy clay ; and, as there were no roads, carting became extremely difficult in wet weather, two horses being required to move half a load. The place was so isolated that during the building the workmen had to cycle six or eight miles to and from their work. The soil was expensive to work and unsuited to market gardening. It had been devoted from time immemorial to corn-growing and had suffered from recent neglect ; it was poisoned with weeds for gardening purposes, and, even after being repeatedly ploughed, the least neglect meant a jungle in which practically nothing but weeds could survive. Fruit-growing, which was the main business selected, is not remunerative for several years after planting, and it was found impossible for the men to make a living out of subsidiary gardening during the initial period. The men themselves were unsuitable, because, out of over 1,000 applications, very few possessed the £100 of capital which was a condition of acceptance, and these were mostly townsmen with little or no previous experience of the land. Even this £100 proved to be far too little to provide tools, seeds, live stock, as well as to keep the man in food until the first season's crops were harvested : and the income from these was so meagre that even the most thrifty of the men were left penniless in the second year. In

spite of extraordinary generosity on the part of Mr. Fels in remitting rent and advancing money, the men could not afford to be generous to the land. Apart then from the uphill struggle which, in the most favourable circumstances, small holders must always wage, against heavy railway charges, uncertain markets, lack of means of transit, and the general disorganisation and neglect of agriculture in England at the present time, the Mayland experiment was killed by the insufficient preparation before settlement, the inexperience of the men, the shortness of capital, bad situation, the unsuitable soil, and—in all fairness, it must be added—a run of unfavourable seasons.

The small holdings operations throughout the country generally must be conducted so as to avoid these numerous pitfalls and to fulfil the conditions of success above laid down. Otherwise a small holding, like a small beerhouse, or a seaside lodging-house, may in a brief period swallow up the savings of years and leave a man of worth stranded in middle life, broken in health and without a future. This is a real danger, and one that enthusiasts are apt to under-rate. Only by recognising it can it be averted, and a safe ladder be provided by which the small man can climb in agriculture, as in other industries, from the position of a weekly wage-earner to one of economic independence.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### TENANCY *VERSUS* OWNERSHIP

THE farmer as such has not yet figured conspicuously in our consideration of the rural problem, which has, up to the present, been preoccupied with the crying needs of the labourer, and with bringing into being that most desirable agricultural factor the small holder. And yet it is on the farmer that rural prosperity ultimately depends. Nothing that has been urged in these pages clashes in any way with his interests, and much of it will indirectly strengthen his position. The minimum wage for labourers, provided he be safeguarded against the possibility of being called upon to bear at the outset an undue burden of expense, will in the long run bring to his aid the labour of men more intelligent and more reliable than any that have worked his farm hitherto. The scheme of national cottage building will revive village life and increase the demand for his produce. The sweeping powers given to the public to acquire land will rid the country of his worst enemy, the bad landowner, and will result in greatly increasing his own sphere and security of tenure.\* Finally, the rise of countless small holders, whom he at present views with suspicion,† will surely create an imperative demand for many rural reforms which he has long desired, but desired in vain.

The interests of the farmers are, or should be, identical and co-extensive with those of the whole countryside. The

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\* The tenants of State farms in Denmark enjoy extraordinary security of tenure. In one case, for instance, the tenant of a £1,000 farm belonging to the township has not hesitated to build splendid stables on the farm at his own expense.

† This is partly due to the practice of taking a small piece out of a farm of, say, 200 acres to give to small holders, thus upsetting the whole equilibrium of the farm and damaging the farmer to a far greater extent than the mere value of the land taken. It cannot be too often urged that small holders should be as a rule grouped in large areas; the purchase of large tracts of land for the purpose would not be so unpopular.

tenure of land, the education of the rural population, the organisation of the market and the means of transit, the development of co-operation and credit banks, and last but not least the fairer adjustment of local taxation are all matters of vital moment to him. Anything that increases his present skill, anything strengthening his position in the world, is well worth doing for national reasons. Conversely he will participate—not alone, but chiefly—in the benefits accruing from those measures for the fuller development by the State of the resources of the country which are now about to be urged in the interests of all classes alike.

It may be taken for granted that the agriculture of the near future will be carried on by the two classes—*i.e.*, the large farmers and the small holders—whose respective spheres of industry were discussed in the last chapter; and behind any consideration of what is known as the Land Question there must be some clear idea as to what is the ideal form of land tenure in each case.

In present-day politics the ideal of ownership is urged by one of the great parties in the State, because it is claimed that the sense of property is so deep-rooted in human nature that in practice the average man will only put his best work into what is his own. The separation of interests between landlord and tenant is bound, they say, to prevent development; the tenant is hampered by restrictive covenants and the feeling that his position is ultimately insecure, which is a direct incentive to bad farming. On the other hand, the lack of capital is admitted to be a difficulty in the way of small ownership. The Socialist favours for national reasons the ownership of all land by the State, and claims that tenancy from the State can be so arranged as to give to the tenant freedom, security, and the use of capital, combining practically all the advantages of ownership with none of its disadvantages.

Theoretically the question is the same for the farmer as for the small holder; what applies to the one applies to the other. But in practice it is not so. For small holders are being called into being, and their position can be determined, one way or the other, without difficulty. But the tenure of land occupied by farmers is bound to remain as at present for some

time to come—that is to say, private individuals and not the State will continue to own the farms.\* Landowners will be burdened with death duties and super-taxes on the one hand, while on the other hand the community will continue to take constantly larger powers of acquiring land. As this process develops the farmer will more and more tend to become the tenant of the community rather than of the landlord. But any drastic expropriation of the landlord is unlikely to take place yet, primarily for the reason that confiscation of property in land is obviously impracticable while other forms of property are allowed to escape.

The politically urgent problem is therefore the position of the small holder.† From the public point of view ownership is undesirable for the reason, among others, that small owners are apt to divide their property at death, and this minute subdivision of land is recognised as a serious evil in countries where peasant proprietorship prevails.‡

From the point of view of the small holder the case against ownership is overwhelming. He is always handicapped by want of capital, and he prefers to invest such capital as he possesses in stock, farming capital, etc., which yield a good return, rather than in land which will pay him only  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. or 3 per cent. Virtually, however much capital he has, he prefers to rent a larger acreage rather than to purchase land, for the purchase of land ties him to one place and renders it difficult for him to increase his holding. A successful tenant can move to a larger farm, but the chance that a small owner can buy more land adjacent to his own whenever he wants it is remote. But there is another

\* Twelve per cent. of the farmers of England own their own land. In Denmark the proportion is over 80 per cent.

† The case against ownership is stated very fully and clearly by EDWIN PRATT in his book *The Transition in Agriculture*, Chap. 18 and seq., which was published in 1906, just before the question became a party one with the Act of 1907. Mr. Pratt is well known as a supporter of the Conservative Party in a general way and often writes from an extreme partisan standpoint. His strong opposition to peasant proprietorship is therefore valuable testimony from a source certainly untainted.

‡ *La Terre*, by EMILE ZOLA, is based on the evils arising from this in France.

reason, and one which the small holder is rather liable to forget. During the worst period of agricultural depression the man who was hit the hardest was the farmer who had borrowed money to buy his farm, because he had the fixed interest to pay all the time; whereas the tenant farmer could at least bring pressure to bear on his landlord to reduce the rent.

Of course, those who want ownership can get it. The Ownership Act of 1892 was a complete failure. The Act of 1907—now re-enacted by the Allotments and Small Holdings Act of 1908—has been, relatively, at any rate, a success. But although purchase is possible as before, only  $1\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. in England and Wales and in England alone only just over 1 per cent. of the applicants desire to purchase their holdings.

In this case, therefore, the course which Socialists believe to be theoretically correct is also that which is desired by the persons concerned, not one of whom is in the least influenced by the theory of the matter.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### EDUCATION.

**M**R. CHARLES BATHURST, M.P., secretary of the Central Land Association, in a paper read before the Prevention of Destitution Conference last year, said that in many parts of the country no man under fifty was to be found who had any real skill in laying a hedge, thatching a rick, using a scythe, shearing a sheep, or milking a cow; and he pointed out that estate carpenters and woodmen were increasingly difficult to obtain, though the wages offered to such men are generally high. Not only is this undoubtedly so, but any countryman who complains of it, whether he be the squire of the village or the sixteen-shilling labourer, ascribes it directly to the existence of the village school. "Too much eddication" has resulted in complete incapacity for the everyday work of the country. It is a striking comment on the work of our rural schools.

The universal demand of the ordinary village is that the boys should leave school earlier. The fact that this remedy is rejected with unanimity by all our educationists (mostly town-bred) throws upon them the onus of finding a remedy of their own. And in the course of their search they will discover that ignorance is not confined to the labourer, but that a large proportion of the farmers have but a rudimentary knowledge of the processes upon which their livelihood depends. Many of them do not even realise the value of education. In some districts, at any rate, quite three-quarters of the working farmers farming 100 acres and under have had no education at all other than that given at the village school, teaching them to read, write, and do a little simple arithmetic. Among this class of farmer there is an enormous trade in compound manures, many of which are sold at two or three times their value, because the purchasers have no knowledge of what they ought to look for in the

analysis of a manure and have never had any opportunity of acquiring it.\*

The lack of opportunity to acquire such knowledge is serious enough in its results to-day, but to attempt to people the countryside with small holders without at the same time providing the necessary educational opportunities would be the limit of folly. Education reform should have really preceded small holdings. But as it did not it is all the more pressing now. It should manifest itself in three distinct ways :

(1) In the elementary schools ;

(2) By the establishment of practical farm schools, with land attached ;

(3) In the appointment of agricultural instructors in every district under the county council.

(1) Reform should begin in the elementary schools. This does not mean that children should begin to specialise too young ; but it is quite possible to base a general education on lessons that are of special application to agriculture. In Lindsey three afternoons a week are given to practical work, as can be done under the code. In the school garden the children learn to watch scientifically the germinating of seeds, as well as to preserve and bottle the fruits that grow there. They are taught to use the needle in the mending of sacks, they cook their own dinners and make their own butter. The extra cost is small—about £5 to £10 a school ; and before grudging this it is well to remember that while the average cost per child of education in this country is 67s., in America it is £6, or nearly double.

(2) A boy destined for agriculture should leave the village school not later than fourteen, but his education should not stop—adequate continuation education should be provided. Evening schools cannot meet the demands of rural districts, though continuation day schools might be tried, which boys at work could attend two days a week on their bicycles. But what is really wanted in every district is a definite agricultural school, not for all the children, but for the

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\* The possible effects of scientific research on agriculture are well illustrated by the Mendelian experiments of Professor Biffen and others at Cambridge. See Appendix J.

promising ones who want to go on to the land. The course at such a school should last two years and should include drawing, mathematics, bookkeeping, and the chemistry of farming, besides the practical work of ploughing, hedging, etc. These small-holders' schools exist in Denmark and provide full maintenance for the poorer children. They are supported by Government grants and local county council scholarships, they charge fees to some of the students, and they make a considerable profit per acre out of the farm land attached to the school—in the case of the Karchave School the profit is about £7 per acre.

(3) The educational results that might be expected from the visits of travelling instructors in each district have been obtained in several counties, such as Lincolnshire, where such officers already exist; and young lads who otherwise would remain in the lowest ranks of labour learn the more difficult forms of work on the farm. But with the establishment of small holdings the sphere of the county council instructor will be enlarged and the work become immensely more important.

Two thousand acres has been suggested as the area necessary to give groups of small holdings their best chance. The holdings should be grouped round a farm belonging to the local authority, which should be the centre of instruction, experiment and organisation. This is not the place to describe in detail the work that would develop round such a centre, but in all that follows on the subject of agricultural development, the idea to be borne in mind is not that of scattered individuals, each keeping a precarious foothold on his own account, but rather that of a busy group of men and women organising themselves, with the help and encouragement of the State, into definite parts of one organic whole.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE ORGANISATION OF PRODUCTION.

**L**AND is perhaps the most difficult raw material in the world. An ordinary individual, however well educated, needs more than his own resources can furnish in order to make the most of his land. He needs capital, he needs machinery, and he needs to be in closest touch with the manufacturing processes which prepare his products for the consumer. Above all, he needs a market, for which purpose ready means of transit and transport must be at his disposal. The smaller the holding, the more necessary is co-operation for the holder; the larger the farm, the greater the possibilities which the organisation of production affords.

#### § 1. CO-OPERATION.

The farmers of England are supposed to be particularly reluctant to co-operate. This is attributed partly to their innate individualism and partly to the hostility of the local tradesmen, to whom they often owe money and who naturally look askance at anything which would tend to undermine the middleman's position. The largest farmers, who should be their natural leaders, do not feel the need of co-operation so keenly and are apt to hang back when any movement in that direction is afoot.

Whatever may be the cause, co-operation in agriculture is of quite recent growth in this country; although during the last few years it has made a marked advance, it is still far less extensive than is the case in most of the countries of the continent of Europe.

The number\* of agricultural co-operative societies abroad is:

In Germany	...	26,576, with 2,500,000 members
„ Russia	...	15,000
„ Austria	...	10,515
„ Japan	...	9,394, with nearly 1 million members
„ Italy	...	8,630
„ France	...	8,000 (about)
„ Switzerland	...	6,408, with 870,731 members
„ Hungary	...	6,772
„ Belgium	...	3,844
„ Holland...	...	3,100
„ Denmark	...	3,610, with 449,480 members
„ Servia	...	1,200, with 41,193 members
„ Sweden	...	3,321
„ Finland...	...	1,122, with 181,500 members

In 1900, prior to the formation of the Agricultural Organisation Society, there were in England and Wales only 12 societies, with a membership of 517. In 1907, six years after the Agricultural Organisation Society had commenced its operations, the number of societies had risen to 142, the number of members to 9,000. The last report of the Agricultural Organisation Society gives the total of affiliated societies on June 30th, 1913, as no less than 478, with a membership of 45,000. The value of the money transactions of the various societies is estimated, for 1912, at nearly £2,000,000.

These figures, however, are not the sole indication of the capacity for common action possessed by British agriculturists, since there exists a large number of other societies worked on more or less co-operative lines—*e.g.*, pig and cow insurance clubs, which are unregistered and are consequently outside the scope of exact enumeration†; and a still larger number of associations of one sort and another for promoting common objects, which are not co-operative in the strict sense of the term. But even if the disinclination to co-operate were still stronger in this country than it is

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\* Mainly from the International Institute of Agriculture (Rome) monthly bulletins. The figures are not strictly comparable nor accurate, being for different years and calculated on different bases; but in each case they appear to be the best and latest available.

† There are only 62 registered cattle insurance societies, but there is a large number of unregistered cow clubs and over 1,000 pig clubs, with probably 50,000 members.

alleged to be, the extraordinary achievements of Sir Horace Plunkett and his fellow-workers in Ireland, among a usually poor and often quite illiterate peasantry, would justify any amount of optimism as to the possibilities in the more favourable circumstances of England and Wales.\*

Moreover, the county councils have now, by virtue of Section 49 of the Small Holdings and Allotments Act of 1908, power to encourage and assist credit banks and other co-operative societies which have as their object, or as one of their objects, the provision or the profitable working of small holdings or allotments; and they may, with the sanction of the Local Government Board, give grants and guarantee or make advances to such societies. There is no official information available as to how far this power has been used.

It is much to be desired that the Development Commission should make experiments in production, such as tobacco growing and beet growing, in this country. For this purpose it would be necessary for them to have more money to spend and also to possess executive authority, which is at present in the hands of the Treasury and the public department concerned.

## § 2. THE AGRICULTURAL ORGANISATION SOCIETY.

It is probable that the backwardness of England is much more due to differences of conditions than to differences in the capacity for combined action of British farmers as compared with farmers abroad. When once the number of small holdings becomes considerable it is reasonably certain

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\* The agricultural co-operative movement in Ireland dates only from the early 'nineties, yet in little more than 15 years there had been organised, through the efforts of the Irish Agricultural Society, 357 co-operative dairies, with 42,404 members and a turnover of £1,726,596; 166 agricultural societies, with 12,999 members and a turnover of £87,045; 24 poultry societies, with 6,650 members and a turnover of £72,595; there were 268 agricultural credit societies, with a membership of 17,403 and turnover of £56,004; and 67 associations with miscellaneous objects, with 6,483 members and a turnover of £310,138. The complete trade turnover of these associations for that year was £2,252,380, and the membership totalled 85,939.—Evidence by Mr. G. Russell before the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Thrift and Credit Banks Bill, 1910.

that co-operation will spread much more rapidly than it has done hitherto, if only because the small holder cannot achieve any considerable results without an extensive adoption of the policy of combined action with his fellows. The main need at the present moment is to ensure that the advantages of co-operation are clearly and adequately brought to the notice of agriculturists and that skilled assistance in the initial stages of the formation of societies is forthcoming. How is this need being met ?

For some years the work of education and organisation has been carried on chiefly by the Agricultural Organisation Society, with the assistance of a Government grant,\* but the passing of the Development Act has caused a change in the situation. It was proposed by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries that the administration of the large grant which the Development Commissioners are prepared to allocate for the promotion of agricultural co-operation should be placed in the hands of the Board, to be by them handed over by way of grants in aid to county councils who were willing to appoint organisers to advise the small holders in the country on the best methods of purchasing their requirements and marketing their produce.† The Development Commissioners have, however, decided that the grant should be made to the Agricultural Organisation Society, strengthened and reconstituted to meet their increased responsibilities to the State. The society has been reformed and registered under Section 20 of the Companies (Consolidation) Act, 1908, under licence by the Board of Trade. This section possesses certain constitutional advantages over registration under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act, under which the former society was registered when it was a purely propagandist body. Provision is made in the Memorandum and Articles of Association for the preservation as heretofore of the voluntary character of the society and for the appointment of a larger governing body, which will contain representatives

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\* The first grant was £1,200, and was made from the Small Holdings Account in 1909.

† See Part I. of the Report of the Small Holdings and Allotments Act, etc., for 1911.

of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, the subscribers to and members of the Agricultural Organisation Society, the County Councils' Association, and the Co-operative Union.\* The work of the society will eventually be conducted under the direction of branch committees, whose operations will be confined to certain areas, thereby promoting local effort and enlisting local sympathy and support.

Opposition to this new movement may be expected from two quarters. In its early stages in Ireland there was considerable opposition from the country traders, whose resentment became all the more bitter when they saw the Government purse coming to the aid of their rivals. Now, however, the commercial and industrial leaders in Ireland have realised that, as the Dublin Chamber of Commerce resolved, "improvements in the business methods of those who conduct the chief wealth-producing industry of the country must increase their consuming power," and "that this will develop the home market and so benefit the trade of Irish manufacturers and wholesale merchants."

A more forcible objection will be raised by those who look askance at the idea of making Government grants to a private organisation. Without pretending that this is an ideal policy, it cannot be denied that the A.O.S. made out a very strong case for it, in view of the only apparent alternative. The business of organising agricultural co-operation is highly technical and requires just the experience which the officers of the society have acquired. The administration of the work by a voluntary body is a great saving of public money. The county councils have already as many duties as they are ready to perform; and, moreover, the task of organisation can only be conveniently performed by a central body.

The present time is singularly inopportune for making proposals as to what steps should be taken to improve existing arrangements for the spread of agricultural co-operation. The public, as consumers, should be much more directly interested in the production of foodstuffs than the present arrangements allow, with a view, among

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\* See Appendix K.

other things, to the standardisation of prices. Perhaps the most workable plan, and one which would protect against the shortcomings of officialism, while giving the public the control which it is desirable it should possess, would be some sort of co-partnership between the county councils and the farmers. But until the new society has had time to get to work little good can be done by any further recommendation. It is sufficient to say that whatever future trouble the adoption of this policy may have in store there is little doubt that it marks a great step forward in the present state of rural development.

The possibilities of co-operation can be gathered from a glance at the objects of various societies, of which particulars are given in the A.O.S. reports. Those which are most specially concerned with production fall conveniently into three heads :

- (1) Combined purchase of manures, food stuffs, and implements.
- (2) Co-operative dairies, bacon factories, etc.
- (3) Credit banks.

### § 3. CO-OPERATIVE PURCHASE.

There is scarcely a country in Europe where societies for the purpose of combined purchase do not play an important part in agriculture. Mr. Pratt gives a full account of these in *The Organisation of Agriculture*, published in 1908.

In Denmark the ramifications of the co-operative purchase system extend to practically every village, and agricultural necessities, such as seeds, manures, feeding stuffs, and machinery are obtainable everywhere at the lowest price and in the best condition. In Germany the Raiffeisen banks \* take up the business of purchasing as well, thereby hindering the formation of other purchase societies ; but in spite of this there were, at the end of 1912, 2,409 societies for purchase and sale, with 240,000 members.

In France a combination was first formed for the purchase of artificial manures in 1883. Others followed for seeds, feeding stuffs, and machinery, till in 1886 was established the Syndicat Central des Agriculteurs de France, which by

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\* See below, p. 85.

1908 effected purchases to the extent of £2,000,000 a year. In certain commodities the various agricultural associations control the market and have brought about a decrease of nearly 50 per cent. in the price of fertilisers, while enormously increasing their use.\*

In Belgium there were at the end of 1910 1,237 purchase societies, with a membership of 73,957; and, moreover, they invest large sums in costly machinery and let it out to their members. The total purchases in 1910 amounted to over 18,000,000 francs. In Poland the same is the case, the charge being from 2d. to 5d. for a plough, from 5d. to 2s. for winnowers, from 2s. to 2s. 6d. for drills. The societies in Poland buy manures and seeds at moderate rates and sell to members again on credit at only 5 per cent. advance on store prices. In Italy the first syndicate was formed in 1887 on the French model and others followed quickly, but their dealings are not nearly so extensive as in France. In Holland (1,400 societies in 1913), Sweden, and Hungary the purchase movement is on the increase; and even in Switzerland, where it roused the opposition of traders through dealing in domestic articles, the number of societies was 643 in 1912, as against 521 five years before. In Finland a Central Co-operative Commercial Bureau was started in 1901, and the movement spread even to Lapland, within the Arctic circle. In Servia the business of purchasing is principally undertaken by the agricultural credit banks, which not only receive deposits and make loans to the farmers, but act as supply associations as well.

Even the briefest sketch of the operations of the co-operative movement abroad makes it clear that there are few civilised countries where so much remains to be done in that direction as in England. But the following paragraph, taken from the last published report of the Agricultural Organisation Society, shows both the extent and the progress of the work of the trading societies here :

“ Among the larger trading societies the Eastern Counties Farmers’ Association, with a turnover of £258,378,† still

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\* The information obtainable about co-operation in France is noticeably incomplete as compared with other countries.

† £278,634 for 1912.

takes the lead, but other societies are rapidly increasing their trade, as the following figures will show :

	1910.	1912.*
	£	£
Southern Counties Agricultural Trading Society	87,845	121,169
Carmarthen Farmers' Co-operative Society ...	58,210	88,660
Newport (Salop) and District Agricultural Trading Society ...	46,551	50,221†
Midland Farmers' Co-operative Association ...	30,734	46,129
Clyndermen and District Farmers' Association	22,949	34,020
West Midland Farmers' Association ...	24,317	52,492
Framlingham and District Farmers' Co-operative Association...	18,136	29,038
Guildford and Mid-Surrey Farmers' Agricultural Co-operative Association ...	13,259	15,069

“ These are only a few of the societies which might be named, as steady improvement is to be noted in almost every direction, and the smaller as well as the larger societies show a most satisfactory rate of progress.

“ The largest of the above-mentioned societies, the Eastern Counties Farmers' Co-operative Association, Ltd., for example, was founded in 1904, with a membership of 158 and a share capital of £1,540. By the end of 1911 the membership had risen to 1,007 and the share capital to £7,102.

“ The first year's sales were £15,400, at a profit of £86 ; the sales in 1911 amounted to £258,378, at a profit of £2,457. The scope of this society's activities includes agricultural machinery, seeds, manures and fertilisers, pigs, and eggs.”

#### § 4. CO-OPERATIVE DAIRIES AND FACTORIES.

The home of the co-operative dairy system is in Denmark. It began with the establishment of creameries, to which farmers could take their cream to be made into butter. Then, with the invention of the cream separator, the farmer sent his milk to the creamery and the skim milk was returned to him. The first co-operative dairy was opened in West

\* The figures for 1912 are here substituted for those published in the 1912 report.

† Figures for 1911.

Jutland in 1882; within 20 years there was scarcely a parish in Denmark without one, and their members owned more than three-fourths of the cows in the country. The practice was for about 150 farmers in a particular district to raise, say, £1,200 by subscribing £8 each, which sum provided a dairy which could deal with the milk of 850 cows. The amount thus invested is over a million and a half of money.

This system has been copied by the farmers in the Charente district and the west coast of France.

In Holland the first co-operative dairy was set up in 1878, but it was only after the success of the movement in Denmark that the chief development began. In 1890 there were still only 19 co-operative unions in Holland, but by 1911 there were 729, and most of these were organised into six different leagues, which constitutes the Confederation of Dutch Co-operative Creameries. The purpose of this Confederation, which was established by Royal Decree, is to guarantee purity of butter and to maintain the reputation thereof in foreign markets, inspections and analyses being made and recognised trade-marks being affixed to consignments coming up to the required standard. This makes adulteration very difficult, if not impossible. The increased profits to Dutch farmers as a result of co-operative butter production, combined with precautionary measures, are estimated at from 10 per cent. in some cases to 30 per cent. in others. The co-operative creameries now produce thirty times as much butter as the proprietary factories.

In Belgium at the end of 1910 there were 556 co-operative dairies, with 57,400 members, owning 162,850 cows. In that year they effected sales to the extent of 40 million francs, an average of nearly £28 per member.

In Hungary the State makes large annual grants for cattle breeding and dairy farming, and has thus brought into existence 541 co-operative dairies. Similarly in Austria the whole movement has been the outcome mainly of official activity, supported by numerous and liberal subsidies.

In Sweden the co-operative dairies are rapidly supplanting proprietary dairies and produce the greater portion of the total output of butter in the country, and it is significant that at the fortnightly butter shows at Gothenburg and

Malmö they secure most of the prizes given for the first quality of butter shown. In Norway nearly all the creameries are co-operative. Finland, too, copied Denmark and used the co-operative movement as a set-off and response to the Russification of the country, with the result that the proprietary creameries are in a minority. Since the adoption of the co-operative principle in the Argentine and the establishment of central butter factories there, Argentine butter obtains a price in England second only to that of Denmark and Sweden. There were 3,488 co-operative dairies in Germany at the end of 1912, with 320,000 members, and scores of new societies were formed in 1912 alone for hydraulic works, for employment of machinery, for horse and cattle improvement, etc.

In Ireland Sir Horace Plunkett introduced co-operative dairies in 1889, without knowing that they were already a well-established institution in Denmark. At the end of 1911 there were 326 dairy societies, with a membership of 45,725. In England there is not the same scope for this form of co-operation, as it pays the English farmer better, as a rule, to send his milk into the towns to be sold as milk, and to leave the supply of butter to his Irish, colonial, and foreign competitors. But there are outlying parts of England where farmers cannot readily dispose of their milk in this way; and, in any case, there is an opening in England for the making of cheese. Yet the first co-operative cheese factory in England was registered only in 1903.

A thoroughly modern creamery can be fitted up at a cost of £1,300 to £1,500, most of which can be met out of subsequent profits, so that the actual call on members for cash amounts only to a few shillings a head. There are only five dairy societies affiliated to the A.O.S. at present, and though cheeses are made by societies in Leicestershire and by the Wiltshire Farmers, Ltd., the great bulk of the work done by the comparatively few co-operative dairies in England is distributive, not productive. There is probably no form of co-operation which puts so small a financial burden on its members.

Denmark again led the way in the establishment of

co-operative bacon factories when, in 1887, the German ports were closed against the pigs as a precaution against swine fever. The capital for building was obtained from ordinary banks on the joint guarantees of the farmers, who were therefore called upon for no cash subscription. By the rules of the society members are obliged to supply all their pigs to the factory on pain of a fine for each pig they fail to send. They subsequently receive a share of the profits proportionate to the number of pigs sent.

In England the procedure adopted has not been quite the same, the distributive co-operative movement dealing rather with societies than with individual farmers. Thus the Eastern Counties Farmers' Co-operative Association, for instance, last year supplied 1,294 pigs to industrial co-operative societies and received £6,182 6s. 7d. in return.

#### § 5. CREDIT BANKS.

A credit bank is a co-operative society usually consisting of persons in a small way of business which obtains advances of capital on the joint security of its members and lends out to them small sums of money from time to time for productive purposes. The question that arises in the formation of such banks is whether the liability of members shall be limited or unlimited, or limited by guarantee. In a small area of, say, one parish it is best for the liability to be unlimited, but the area can be further extended if it is limited by guarantee, and in the case of a whole county it must be limited. In this country credit banks are registered under the Friendly Societies Act of 1896 and the special authority granted by the Treasury in accordance with Section 8 (5) of the Act. A society registered under that authority must have for its object the creation of funds by monthly or other subscriptions, to be lent out to, or invested for, the members of the society, or for their benefit, and must have in its rules provisions that no part of its funds shall be divided by way of profit, bonus, dividend, or otherwise among its members, and that all money lent to members shall be applied to such purpose as the society or its committee of management may approve. A credit society registered in this way cannot, however, engage in trading

unless it forms itself into a separate society and registers anew under the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts, 1893 and 1895, which permit of the carrying on of both banking and trading, but not of unlimited liability. Trading and banking are said to be necessary complements to one another in order to provide funds for the payment of secretaries, etc., or for other reasons of convenience; and the Raiffeisen banks of Germany, of which the credit banks in this country are imitations, carry on trading in addition to banking. The object of the Thrift and Credit Banks Bill, 1910, was therefore chiefly to simplify procedure rather than to confer additional powers, except in so far as it is permitted credit banks to assist in the formation of central banks for the deposit of their surplus funds.

Another Bill was introduced the same year by the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, entitled the Agricultural Credit and Insurance Societies Bill, but this also was subsequently dropped. This Bill gave to the Board power (1) to employ officers to promote the formation of agricultural credit and insurance societies; (2) to pay the costs of formation; (3) to contribute to the expenses of management of newly formed societies; (4) to appoint and pay auditors; (5) if necessary to obtain an investigation into the affairs of the society and its winding-up and dissolution. The money was to come out of the Small Holdings Account, and the societies were to work on their own credit and not on State credit. The principle of unlimited liability was accepted, but it was proposed to use the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts with unlimited liability instead of the present limited liability, rather than to use the Friendly Societies Act under which liability is already unlimited.

The reason for the dropping of the Bill was probably the decision of the Development Commissioners to make the A.O.S. the channel for their grant instead of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries; but whether this be so or not, the matter rests in this stage at present, except that the Board has come to an arrangement with some of the leading joint stock banks which have branches in rural districts whereby the managers of these branches shall assist in the formation of credit societies among small holders and

allotment holders where the need for them is apparent. Advice is to be given to the officers of a society on matters of bookkeeping and assistance in the audit of the annual returns free of charge, and so long as they are satisfied that the society is being conducted on sound business lines managers may accept, when offered, the post of unpaid treasurer, provided it does not involve membership of the society. Interest is to be allowed to societies at the rate of 2 per cent. on the daily credit balance on current account and at the rate of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on a reserve fund deposit account. Facilities for loans are also to be given, but only on ordinary banking principles.

The present position cannot be considered very satisfactory, but here again much will depend on the work done by the re-constituted A.O.S.

The credit bank movement has been principally developed in Germany, where it began with the Raiffeisen banks, which are essentially local in character and based on the principle not only of co-operation, but of unlimited liability. In that country there are 17,300 societies, of which over five-sixths are of the Raiffeisen type, with 1,670,000 members. In France, where they receive subscriptions for initial expenses, and to meet the extra burden of bad years, there were on December 31st, 1911, 97 regional banks and 3,946 affiliated local banks, with 185,552 members. In Ireland, 268 societies and 17,403 members.

In Belgium there are also credit banks of the Raiffeisen type, numbering in 1913 738, with 21,892 agricultural members, apart from 16 agricultural comptoirs, which made loans amounting to three million francs in 1910. In Italy there are two kinds of village banks, (*a*) the Agrarian banks, which are in effect country branches of either a people's bank or a savings bank; (*b*) rural banks, which have complete self-government and can themselves utilise deposits for the purpose of making advances. In both cases the village banks can draw on the people's bank or on the savings bank for funds to lend out to their members, and in most cases the village banks are based on the Raiffeisen principle of unlimited liability. In Hungary there are 280 co-operative banks; and in Holland 582, mostly of the Raiffeisen type,

with a central organisation at Utrecht ; but in the south of Holland the Roman Catholic clergy have founded separate societies and separate banks for Roman Catholics only. In Italy at the end of 1911 there were 1,855 rural banks and agricultural co-operative societies of collective title. In Switzerland in 1910 there were 139 local credit associations, with 10,024 members,\* now increased to 195.

In Italy there are 740 banks on the Luzzatti plan (these lend rather to the larger and medium agriculturists); and for the rural banks proper (*casse rurali*) the figure is 2,003.

There are now some 46 registered credit societies in England and Wales, with 800 members and a total turnover of about £2,000. Only 21 of these societies granted loans during 1912, the total amount of the loans being £1,400. In 1910 the loans aggregated £1,390, they varied from £5 to £40, and averaged £12 per loan.† The smallness of their progress in comparison with that of similar societies in other countries, is, of course, very marked. But it must be remembered that in Germany it took 25 years to form the first 5 credit banks, whereas in England the A.O.S. has formed 35 in 11 years, and the movement here may be said to have now passed out of the experimental stage.

\* The most rapid strides have been made in India, as is shown by  
*India from 1901-02 to 1910-11*

	No. of Societies at close of year.	No. of Members.	Loans from Private Persons.	Share Capital.
			£	£
1911-12‡	8,177	403,318	1,325,824	337,202
1910-11	5,321	305,058	752,077	210,640
1909-10	3,428	224,397	432,488	143,310
1908-09	1,963	180,338	272,029	91,408

† Small Holdings Report, Part I., 1911.

‡ Cd. 7078.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE ORGANISATION OF DISTRIBUTION.

#### § 1. CO-OPERATIVE MARKETING.

**A**GRICULTURE carries more middlemen on its back than any other industry. If it is to flourish as it could were the necessaries of life brought to the vast masses of our population at a price within their purchasing power, the middlemen must be largely eliminated.

There is no more necessary article of food than milk. It is the only food for an infant; it means bone and muscle and brain in after life, and the consumption of milk should be universal in every household. Yet there are thousands of households in every large town where it is never seen at all, or only in a tinned form; while to find milk in a rural cottage is the exception rather than the rule. There is no greater tragedy in all the world than to see village children literally dying for want of the milk which their fathers help to produce.

Milk is sent off to the towns to be sold at a price often more than double what it has cost to produce. The high price of milk prevalent in England is due to two causes. First, the unscientific feeding of the cows on most farms and the failure of the farmer properly to test the milking capacity

the following table, given in the *Statistical Abstract relating to British* (Cd. 6637, 1913):—

Deposits by Members.	State Aid.	Reserve.	Loans issued to members and other Societies.	Loans repaid to non-members and other Societies.
£	£	£	£	£
433,846	62,311	66,164	1,803,376	645,565
278,932	48,564	36,755	1,131,522	269,255
166,201	48,028	22,041	692,608	183,825
107,016	45,700	12,729	514,159	142,167

of his cows, which may account for the milk of some farms actually costing four times as much to produce as that on others. This will tend to disappear with the fuller knowledge which a young generation of farmers will acquire from better education and the co-operative atmosphere. Secondly, the middlemen's profits, which average at least 100 per cent. in the case of milk in England: what the middleman sells for 14d. to 18d. brings the farmer only 6d. to 9d. That this enormous burden can be removed from the price is proved by the case of Denmark, where the selling price is only 30 per cent. above what the farmer gets, although his milk is hygienically handled and is absolutely free from tubercular taint.

The middleman's profit is responsible for a similarly high proportion of the selling price of other farm produce as compared with the cost of production. The following table of profits is given by Mr. Christopher Turnor:

						Per cent.
Mutton	...	...	...	...	...	27
Beef	...	...	...	...	...	16½
Milk	...	...	...	...	...	100-120
Bread	...	...	...	...	...	54
Peas, beans, carrots, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	100-180
Small fruit	...	...	...	...	...	100-150

It will be noticed that the burden is greatest on those articles which the small holder will mainly look to for his livelihood.

The future of small holdings lies not in the direction of self-supporting small holders, each taking in the other's washing and producing for local consumption only, but rather in their contributing co-operatively to supply a national and perhaps a world market. If then a glut is to be avoided their produce must reach the public at a price which will ensure an enormous sale among classes which at present cannot afford these things at all. This can only obtain when the markets have been systematically organised, when the cost of transit is cheapened, and when the producers themselves are assisted by the local authorities and the State to co-operate both for their own and for the public advantage.

The waste and overlapping that at present exist must be

brought to an end. Milk now comes from Scotland to Bristol, or goes from Cornwall to the North of England. In Brighton you can buy eggs that were laid in Anglesey. There are the same number of markets in London as in the days of Stowe—*i.e.*, eleven—although the population has increased by  $4\frac{1}{2}$  millions since his time, or, if Greater London is included, by over 7 millions.\* The markets themselves are actually a hindrance rather than a help, and the waste and loss is enormous. Empty carts block the way, the space is insufficient, the prices are unprofitable, the deliveries are bad. It has been estimated that in strawberries alone £100,000 a year is lost by the Home Counties through trading with London markets. The wholesale price of strawberries in London averages  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. per pound, whereas the retailers average 5d. Of £500,000 worth of strawberries retailed in one year the growers only received £250,000, and many only got 2d. for fruit that was sold at 6d.

With a little organisation all this can be remedied and millions of money saved. Each district should have its egg-packing and sale depôts, its fruit-storing and grading centres. The stuff must be sorted into first, second and third qualities and each quality must find its way swiftly to its appropriate market. There must be factories of by-products, the surplus fruit must be turned into jam or dried, surplus milk must be turned into cheese. How can English agriculture play any part in the world of modern industry unless it sets itself to adopt the methods which are the A B C of business and to which the agricultural success of other countries is due?

Co-operation cannot be forced, but it can be encouraged. Most of the necessary reforms could be brought about under the Development Act and no fresh legislation is yet neces-

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\* Population of London in Stowe's days—

Within the walls	...	...	...	...	130,000
In liberties and suburbs	...	...	...	...	102,000

Total	...	...	...	...	232,000
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Population at present time—

City of London	...	...	...	...	17,132
Administrative County of London	...	...	...	...	4,872,710
Greater London...	...	...	...	...	7,537,196

sary. But here again England still keeps far behind the rest of the agricultural world, and here again Denmark easily takes the lead.

The advantage of co-operative methods of sale to the countries adopting them can be clearly traced by comparing over a course of years the export figures of Denmark to some neutral market like our own with similar figures for other countries where such methods have not been adopted. In the last 17 years the export of butter from Denmark to the United Kingdom has increased enormously, while that from France has declined by more than one-half. Eggs from Denmark have multiplied threefold in that period; eggs from France have declined four-fold.\* Co-operation is undoubtedly the cause of the great advance made by Denmark in comparison with France in the export of dairy produce. In France the farmer makes his own butter and takes it to the local market, where it is bought by a commission agent, who disposes of it to the wholesale merchant. The merchant then blends in a mill the produce of a whole district. The price of the butter is thus loaded with the profits of the agent, the merchant, and the cost of blending, and the farmer has to be content with a smaller return. The Denmark farmers have no middlemen to pay; they do their own blending and reap the whole profits themselves.

In England, too, there is a marked move in the direction of co-operative sale.† The East Anglian Farmers, Ltd. (London), returned a bonus of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. to the members of the Covent Garden branch on the produce sold during 1912. The Pershore Co-operative Fruit Market, Ltd. (Worcestershire), held its first sale as recently as June 17th, 1909, yet for the year 1911 it showed a turnover of £10,799, paid 5 per cent. to the shareholders on capital invested, 25 per cent. to a reserve fund, 5 per cent. to employees, and a bonus equal to  $1\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. of the profits on the value of the produce sold. The Wiltshire Farmers, Ltd., had a turnover of £66,000 in the first half of 1912; and during that year seven new dairy and egg societies were registered.

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\* See Appendix L.

† See Annual Reports of A.O.S.

In the year 1911 the Framlingham (Suffolk) District Co-operative Society, founded by the A.O.S. in 1903, sold for its members 3,922,000 eggs for £16,000.

In the eastern division alone the A.O.S. reports for 1912 a sale of eggs by the affiliated societies to the number of 6,768,944; thirty-two societies in the country sold 11,000,000 between them. The total value of eggs and poultry sold by affiliated and unaffiliated societies during that year is estimated at £50,000. Societies have now been formed in every county in Wales except Radnor.

## § 2. THE NATIONALISATION OF RAILWAYS.

The high railway freights in England are more disastrous to agriculture than to any other industry, and there is probably no one reform which could affect the whole of rural life so beneficially as the reform in our railway system. The average cost in this country of sending a ton of goods one hundred miles is nearly double that in Germany or Austria-Hungary, is more than double that in Holland, and is more than three times that in the United States of America. And this British average includes the hundreds of millions of tons of imported goods which are carried at far lower rates than are available to the British trader.\*

The rate of a ton of apples from Normandy to London, or even from California to London is 15s. 8d.; for a ton of English apples from Folkestone to London it is 24s. 1d. The rates for walnuts, apples, plums, pears, etc., from Flushing (Holland) to London via Queenborough is 12s. 6d. a ton, as against 25s. from Queenborough itself. At a discussion in the Norfolk Chamber of Agriculture on May 21st, 1905, a member stated that he was charged at a rate of 93s. a ton for sending apples 32½ miles.

Foreign dead meat comes to London from Liverpool for 25s. per ton, British meat for 40s.

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\* The figures that follow are taken partly from the evidence given before the Railway Commission and the Agricultural Commission of 1905, partly from *Railway Nationalisation*, by W. CUNNINGHAM, 1906, and from *The Nationalisation of Railways*, by EMIL DAVIES, 1911. The rates are always being altered and are unlikely to be accurate at this moment, but the alteration is usually in an upward direction.

A ton of eggs from County Galway to London, Birmingham, or Nottingham would cost 90s. 10d., while a ton of eggs to the same three places from any part of Denmark would cost 24s., from Russia 22s., from Normandy or Brittany 16s. 8d. Mr. A. W. Munro stated on behalf of the Board of Agriculture before the Agricultural Commission that if rates in England were equalised with foreign rates it would considerably increase the egg industry in this country. He also handed in the following table :

—	Distance Miles.	Through Rate.			Sea Freight.			Proportion of Rates for Land Carriage		
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
<i>Cherries conveyed by pas- senger train :</i>										
Boulogne to London ...	—	2	0	0	0	18	0	1	2	0
Folkestone to London...	68 $\frac{3}{4}$	1	16	8	—	—	—	—	—	—
Canterbury to London	66 $\frac{1}{4}$	1	15	10	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ashford to London ...	54	1	13	0	—	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Eggs by goods train :</i>										
Boulogne to London ...	—	1	0	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	6	9	0	13	6 $\frac{1}{2}$
Folkestone to London	—	1	5	8	—	—	—	—	—	—
Canterbury to London	—	1	5	0	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ashford to London ...	—	1	1	3	—	—	—	—	—	—
Boulogne to Manchester	—	2	5	0	0	15	0	1	10	0
Folkestone to Manches- ter ... ..	263	3	0	0	—	—	—	—	—	—
Canterbury to Manches- ter ... ..	256	2	19	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Potatoes by goods train :</i>										
Boulogne to London ...	—	0	10	0	0	3	4	0	6	8
Wye to London ...	60	0	7	0	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ashford to London ...	54	0	8	7	—	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Dead poultry by goods train :</i>										
Boulogne to London ...	—	1	10	0	0	10	0	1	0	0
Folkestone to London...	—	1	5	8	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ashford to London ...	—	1	1	10	—	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Dead poultry by passenger train :</i>										
Boulogne to London ...	—	3	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0
Folkestone to London...	—	2	15	0	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ashford to London ...	—	2	9	2	—	—	—	—	—	—

The preference to foreign growers of grain varies from 5 to 25 per cent., and Mr. T. W. Barclay, M.P., said some time ago at a traders' conference, "I may bring the result

home to the minds of landlords and farmers by stating that the difference of rates charged between foreign and home grain is equal to a tax of 5s. per acre against the home growers." The rates for fruit have been estimated to give a bounty of 30s. per acre against the home grower.

It was given in evidence before the last Royal Commission on Railways that the farmers of the Midlands had to pay £400,000 on £1,000,000 of produce. The higher rates in themselves would kill agriculture by raising the price to the consumer and so limiting the consumption; but, accompanied as they are by lower rates to the foreigner, they operate also to spoil the chances of the British agriculturist in the market as it exists.

The rates from the principal ports are much lower than from other places, which injures agriculture, as the port is not an agricultural centre. Taking Driffield as a good agricultural centre in the north, and comparing the rates from there with the rates from Hull, we get the following results :

Destination.	From Driffield.		From Hull.		Produce.
	Distance Miles.	Rate per ton.	Distance Miles.	Rate per ton.	
Huddersfield ... ..	66	£ s. d. 0 10 0	65	£ s. d. 0 8 3	Grain
Leeds ... ..	51	0 7 6	51	0 6 3	Grain
Bradford ... ..	61	1 0 5	61	0 15 0	Wool
Leicester ... ..	125	1 16 7	117	1 4 0	Wool

The wool rate from Hull to Leicester works out at 1·488d. per ton per mile ; but from Selby to Bradford it works out at 5·419d. per ton per mile. The same difference occurs in the case of potatoes and roots, which cost only 1·318d. per ton per mile from Hull to Manchester, but 3·333d. per ton per mile from Goole to Doncaster.

The most extraordinary instance of preference to the foreigner was given by Mr. Chiozza Money in the House of Commons on February 11th, 1908, when he quoted the case of 100 tons of potatoes, which went from Dundee to New York and back again to Liverpool for £5 less than it would have cost to take them from Dundee to Liverpool direct.

The Agricultural Commission reported in May, 1906, as

follows : " The total imports into Great Britain in 1903 were £528,247,850. This trade came through 89 ports—70 in England and 19 in Scotland. But about 93 per cent. of this trade came through 15 ports as under :

	£
London imported ... ..	137,132,088
Liverpool ,, ... ..	129,000,840
Hull ,, ... ..	32,601,063
Manchester ,, ... ..	20,279,255
Harwich ,, ... ..	19,391,913
Southampton ,, ... ..	15,740,195
Glasgow ,, ... ..	14,408,658
Leith ,, ... ..	13,787,191
Bristol ,, ... ..	12,751,022
Newhaven ,, ... ..	11,349,840
Folkestone ,, ... ..	11,053,872
Grimsby ,, ... ..	10,148,431
Newcastle ,, ... ..	10,051,602
Dover ,, ... ..	8,272,691
Goole ,, ... ..	6,391,159
	<hr/>
	£488,359,816

" This shows that imports go in full train loads and home produce in small quantities, and the railways argue that the home traders are only entitled to similar rates under similar circumstances."

The circumstances of the home traders are not and never can be similar; the most that co-operation can do for agriculture is to minimise the enormous disadvantages which the British agriculturist labours under as a result of the argument of the railways to which the Commission referred. It may be a good argument, it may be the only possible argument from the railways' point of view. But this only emphasises the folly of leaving so vital a factor of national prosperity as the means of transit undoubtedly is in any other hands than those of the nation itself.

The grievance of the agriculturist is made greater by the fact that rates are not only high, but almost farcically complicated. *There are over 200,000,000 different rates in operation in this country.* In Prussia any trader can get the ordinary and special rates, and work out the cost of carriage of any load to any part of the empire in two or three minutes with the aid of a book issued by the State for 6d.; the Government keeps the preferential rate

up its sleeve for special occasions. In England it is practically impossible to find out what the rates are. The average station master simply does not know. In giving evidence on behalf of the Great Western Railway before the Agricultural Commission in 1905 Mr. Hennell, assistant goods manager, was asked, "On what terms could a single farmer put three tons of hay on a truck to Birmingham?" He answered, "You will understand that I cannot answer that, as I have not read all the 30,000,000 rates our Company have got." Before the same Commission witness after witness representing agriculture complained that farmers could neither understand nor even in many cases ascertain the rates. Mr. Bullen, representing the Midland Counties Agricultural Traders' Association, went so far as to say that a simple universal system of rates (such as prevails in Germany) would save farmers from 2s. to 5s. an acre on their arable land.

Since 1839, when Mr. Gladstone brought in a Bill to revise railway rates, there have been at least twelve Committees or Commissions bearing upon the subject, and the evidence has been overwhelming of the hindrance to trade. In 1893 the House of Commons passed a resolution that the railway rates, charges, and conditions of traffic were most prejudicial to the agricultural and economical interests of the country, and recommending the Government to deal promptly and effectively with the subject. But the hindrance still exists; the British rates are still the highest in Europe, although the circumstances are more favourable to low rates here than in many other countries.

The experience of nearly a century has amply proved the powerlessness of Parliament to deal with the question without taking over the responsibility for the finance and management of the railway system. To quote an extreme case, it might often happen that a loss over one transaction, or even a loss over one stretch of railroad, would be a gain to the nation as a whole. Some time ago the German nation carried hops from Bavaria to Hamburg free, in order to enable them, if possible, to capture our market, the dead loss to the railway system being more than counterbalanced by the profit on other pages of the national ledger. It is

unreasonable to expect private railway companies to suffer such losses ; it is impossible to make the most of our transit system while it is worked for profit and not for use, by different companies, with different boards, different methods, and different rates of carriage. The nationalisation of the railways must therefore be placed in the very forefront of agricultural reform.\*

### § 3, A STATE MOTOR SERVICE.

In the meanwhile it is high time that the State made some experiments of its own in transit other than railway transit. The great businesses are now using the roads for the purposes of motor conveyance, the G.P.O. has its motor vans, and there would be an enormous saving both of time and expense if a similarly speedy and simple means of transport could be organised in agricultural districts, more especially for fruit and stuff that deteriorates with time.

A country motor service is needed not for produce only, but for passengers as well. Going to market is very difficult in rural England; and village life as a whole is unnecessarily isolated. The farmer farms in a corner and is consequently ignorant of agricultural movements ; the labourer fossilises body and soul and is a political danger to the community. In parts of Germany the mails are taken from the village post office in motor brakes that also carry passengers, and twice a day, at least, the remotest villages in the Bavarian Highlands are brought into touch with one another and with the country town. For a few pence the labourer's wife rides to market with her basket on her arm and the carpenter goes to put in for a job in the neighbouring village. Local entertainments and educational facilities can thus reach a larger public ; the point of view of the villager is broadened and his sphere of activity enlarged, not financially alone, but socially and morally as well. Village life would be far healthier if the community would once and for all break down the barrier of prejudice that impedes collective enterprise, and seriously set itself to develop the possibilities of country life.

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\* Mr. Balfour Browne, K.C., in a paper read before the London Chamber of Commerce, February 10th, 1897, said : " I am not exaggerating when I say that the Agricultural Question . . . is nothing else but a question of railway rates."

## CHAPTER XI.

### GAME.

#### § 1. THE PROBLEM.

THE use of land by private individuals for the purpose of preserving game when England is under-cultivated and the bulk of the population is landless represents to many people the acme of waste and wickedness. To abolish the Game Laws and the "landed" class that administers them, to restore to the people the right both to till the soil and to enjoy the outdoor pleasures of country life, to turn our countryside from the pleasure-ground of the rich to the treasure house of the ordinary citizen, these are aims which figure largely among the stock-in-trade of a certain type of political orator, and appeal, as indeed it is right they should appeal, to the imagination of a proletariat that feels itself disinherited. The only pity is that those aims are usually lost in generalities, and that their advance is marked too often by ignorance of the main factors of the problem, which must be grasped and taken into account in any serious attempt to formulate a policy for the land.

Three considerations must be urged not as an argument in favour of private game-preserving, but in order to make clear that many of the natural features which are incidental to game-preserving must be preserved for their own sake, and that the displacement of labour and values involved in its abolition must be provided for in the new order of things. For a new order is imperatively necessary, in view of the damage and waste to the countryside and the cruel privation to the individual, due to the callous stupidity of a system which hands over the land of England as a plaything to the irresponsible few.

In the first place it must be recognised that, even from the point of view of agriculture, it is a good thing that there should exist all over the country those spots of wild beauty

where the pheasant is bred and the fox comes to make his home. Woodland and cover and copse and spinney, which to the town-bred statistician represent so much wasted possibility of cultivation, influence the climate of the surrounding country and harbour the life which preys on agricultural pests. Here live hawks, and the owl, arch-enemy of mice; hence come showers and dew. These places could not be ploughed up and intensively cultivated without materially altering the climate and destroying the balance of natural life. Even the game itself is not always injurious. The real damage is done by hares and rabbits, rooks and pigeons. Pheasants are a nuisance in the case of autumn-sown corn, but at other times do no hurt. Partridges are quite harmless. They never seek out grain newly sown like the rooks. It is the slugs, grubs, worms and insects they are seeking, the bits of weeds and their seeds, aphides, earwigs, and ants' eggs. The more the soil is worked, as by harrows, the more food they are able to find, and the more good they do by destroying insects and grubs that injure delicate roots.

In the second place the fact must be faced that any drastic interference with game-preserving would seriously affect the livelihood of our village population. The partridge brings the peasant many a good shilling for finding nests, the farmer sells stuff for the pheasants. Besides the keepers and underkeepers and persons regularly employed in the task of game-preserving, there are the ordinary villagers who turn out for many a day's enjoyment when the shooting season begins, and earn good wages as beaters and a hearty lunch into the bargain.

About 35 per cent. of the expense of keeping up a grouse moor consists of the wages of a permanent staff; for every £1 of rent another 15s. or £1 is spent in the neighbourhood in wages of villagers, hiring, carting, etc.\* If these estimates be correct, the abolition of grouse-shooting, for instance, would involve enormous displacement of labour. The approximate gross rental value of grouse moors in England and Scotland is about £1,270,000 annually; the wages bill

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\* *The Grouse in Health and Disease*; see Preface by LORD LOVAT, 1912.

is therefore about £444,500, and an additional sum of about £1,000,000 is spent in the grouse districts every year for purposes of the sport.

A third consideration is the fact that large tracts of country are actually worth more for sporting purposes than they are, or ever could be, for purposes of agriculture. It is true 5,500 square miles in Scotland alone is reserved for the pleasures of the rich. But it is also true that a large proportion of this is probably useless for anything else but a deer forest, and in the selection of waste land for cultivation good grouse ground is the last that would be chosen by practical agriculturists. The sporting rents of grouse moors average between five and ten times the grazing rents, and are higher than anything that could ever be paid for them for any other purpose.

The most frequently quoted example of the game evil is afforded by the deer forests of Scotland. In the crofting counties they have almost doubled their area in the last thirty years.\* The result has been a depopulation of the rural districts, a most glaring instance of which is Courie, where the extension of shooting acres was accountable, during the last intercensal period,† for one of the biggest decreases, farms being thrown out of cultivation and many men deprived of the hope of subsistence on their native soil. The extension is still continuing. But it is good to find from the latest issued report of the Scottish Congested Districts Board (now merged into the new Scottish Department of Agriculture) that during the year ended March 31st, 1912, portions of deer forest on the estates of the Countess of Cromartie, the Duke of Sutherland, Mr. W. E. Gilmour, and others were assigned for the extension of crofter holdings, a reclamation from sport to agriculture of over 3,000 acres. But this is but a tiny fraction of the 3,250,000 acres of Scottish land set aside for sport.

In England game-preserving injures agriculture in three distinct ways. First, too much is spent on it by landowners of limited means, who let their farms suffer rather than

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\* Parliamentary Paper, 220, 1908.

† Scottish Census Returns, 1911.

their shooting. Then again too much game is preserved for the land in many districts and the damage done to the farming is immense, reducing the value of farms in some cases by quite 4s. an acre.\* The economic loss is enormous, because shooting rarely commands an average of more than 2s. an acre all round. This damage is done not only by the game itself, but by the fact that all other interests are subordinated to the game. The keeper kills everything that will hurt his young birds and so deprives the neighbourhood of its natural scavengers, who would keep under vermin and pests. Thirdly, the individual farmer often suffers in uncertainty and discouragement, a damage for which nothing can compensate him. Mr. Turnor says: "I have been over farms on which not only a large proportion of the root crop, but every single swede and mangold had been damaged by hares. I have heard landowners, men who ought to know better, say of such-and-such a farm that it was only fit to rear game. There are very few farms of which this could be in any wise true, but there are many which are not fertile enough to support a big head of game as well as to produce paying crops."

As a matter of fact, the compensation, when paid, is generally inadequate. The damage done by fifty people galloping over a field of wheat in wet weather is irreparable, yet it cannot be fairly estimated or charged for; and, as a matter of fact, it does not often occur, as foxhunting people are more careful than they used to be and the farmer is often more frightened than hurt. But the loss of poultry owing to foxes is a serious item in the farmer's budget, and as a rule hunts do not pay adequate compensation. Forty or sixty head of poultry are stolen in a night; they may be pedigree birds, but the breeder is lucky if a £5 note is paid in settlement of his claim. As for the "reasonable compensation" which the farmer is supposed to receive under the Land Holdings Act of 1907 when he holds land adjacent to coverts, that applies only to pheasants. The farmer's chief damage from large coverts, however, arises from the rabbits, which pour out in hundreds on to his land, doing

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\* CHRISTOPHER TURNOR, *Land Problems*, p. 17.

damage for which the Act secures him no compensation. The small man suffers even more than the large farmer, because he is less able to take advantage of such modicum of protection as the Ground Game Act affords by employing a rabbit catcher to snare the intruders.

## § 2. THE ABOLITION OF THE GAME LAWS.

This state of things is intolerable and must be swept away. The remedy often suggested is the abolition of the Game Laws. What does this involve?

The laws affecting game fall naturally into three categories:

(i) First there are the laws making a close time for game. There is no suggestion for repealing these, which apply to fish as well as to game; and where the laws do not apply custom is often strong, as in the case of foxes.

(ii) Then there are the penal laws, which are very severe on persons who unlawfully take game belonging to other people; and game includes the eggs of some egg-laying species. As much as fourteen years' penal servitude may be awarded to three or more persons unlawfully entering land armed with any gun, crossbow, or bludgeon for the purpose of taking game. Some such laws must exist if game is to be preserved at all. The essence of the matter is that there is no private property in wild birds and beasts. A robin, or rook, or pigeon, or fox, or rat cannot be stolen—they do not belong to the person on whose land they live; they are free, and belong, like the lords of creation, to themselves. The hunter who captures them (in a lawful manner, and in some cases outside the close time) becomes the owner. If game is to be preserved at all, therefore, there must be special legislation. In the case of ground game the right to kill cannot, under any law, be disassociated from occupation. In other words, the farmer has the statutory right, out of which he cannot legally contract, to kill ground game. For other game it is the owner of the land who has the right to kill, which he may lease to the occupier or anyone else. Trespass in pursuit of game is made a criminal offence; trespass at night in parties in pursuit of game is subject to extremely severe penalties; the unlawful possession of game and the sale of game by unlicensed persons are also punishable.

The repeal of these laws would make the difference that poaching, now ferociously punishable, and trespass in search of conies, now a constant source of fine by the rural bench, would become simple trespass, which is not criminal, but only exposes the trespasser to action for damages. The keeper, if such continued to exist, would ask the name and address of the poacher and politely require him to leave. The man, when sued, would only be sued for damages to the herbage, not for the game itself. It is obvious then that the abolition of the Game Laws would involve the abolition of game-preserving, and, practically speaking, in most cases the abolition of game. Shooting as a pastime would cease.

The question arises whether this is, after all, desirable. What is wanted is not to abolish sport, but to prevent its clashing with the public interest, and, if possible, to enlarge the sphere of its enjoyment. If the recommendations made above in Chapter V. were adopted the question would practically solve itself. Were it open to any four people to complain that land was misused and to demand an inquiry, landowners would be obliged to keep their sporting proclivities within such limits as not to lay themselves open to the risk of having their land bought compulsorily and losing their sport altogether. Such as remained to them would not interfere with the interests of the locality; while on the tracts of land which would increasingly fall into public hands, parts of which could be afforested, sport in many forms could be organised for a wider public and be brought within the enjoyment of many to whom it is now an injury and an offence. The man who devotes wealth and energy to the rearing of hand-fed pheasants is useless, dangerous, and ought to be abolished. The man who can spend a holiday in natural sport is a source of health to the community and ought to be encouraged.

(iii) The third category of Game Laws is the system of licences imposed on persons who have lawfully to do with game. And as long as the Game Laws are not abolished these will remain. Hence the demand that they should be increased and amplified, and that to the other burdens which it is now rightly sought to put upon the rich there should be added a heavy tax on game-preserving.

## § 3. TAX ON GAME-PRESERVING.

Several methods have been suggested. A tax on land devoted to game is not so simple as it appears at the first blush. We do not want to destroy the coppices of the Home Counties; we must not penalise the devotion of waste land to the production of timber, with game as an accessory. Grouse moors may as well be used for grouse, since they must be generally useless for anything else, and finally the head of game reared and the damage done to agriculture bear no direct and often an inverse ratio to the acreage occupied therewith.

A tax might be levied on land exceeding a certain acreage in one parish devoted to sport, with the object of preventing land being kept uncultivated. Exceptions would have to be made either for certain counties or for land covered with heather or for land used as grouse moors—on these the charge should be very much lower. In any case it would be difficult to impose such a tax with complete fairness.

A progressive tax might be imposed on gamekeepers and other persons (if any) engaged wholly or mainly for, or in connection with, rearing and preserving game. The present tax is 15s. for a male servant and £2 for licence to shoot. A super-tax scale would be, say, £3 for the first gamekeeper, £4 10s. for the second, £6 15s. for the third, £10 2s. 6d. for the fourth, and so on. The chief objection to this proposal is that a tax on employment would not be popular in rural districts.

Probably the most effective form of tax would be that suggested by Mr. R. A. Bray, L.C.C., viz., a tax on the annual bag, to be paid in aid of rates in every parish. Every person who shoots keeps a game-book, or other humbler record of his success, and the size of the bag is a matter of local and occasionally of national emulation. The bag of all large game-preservers is known in the parish to a nicety, and if steps are taken to publish the returns locally evasion would be difficult. It is usually estimated that every pheasant killed costs £1. A tax of 2s. a head, or 10 per cent., could easily be levied on each game-bird killed. To avoid collecting small sums, and also to avoid taxing small people,

the tax might be remitted on the first hundred head of game shot.

There is no objection to such a tax on the score of its burden. The people who shoot can quite well afford to pay, and if it is sought to tax luxuries a Chancellor of the Exchequer could find no fairer prey. But there is a very serious theoretical objection to the multiplication of indirect taxes. However heavy the tax on game-preserving, it would produce a small sum at best, it would not affect to any extent the amount of game-preserving, and could only slightly alter the *personnel* of the game-preservers. The sound tax is the direct tax on income, which should be more heavily graduated; and if the super-tax were considerably increased it would fall on the same people as a game tax, and a good many more of the same kidney besides. Meanwhile the evils of game-preserving should be dealt with not indirectly by taxation, but directly by giving to the local authority the power to put a stop to them.\*

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\* It has been suggested that the local authority should have power to suspend the Game Laws. This is, of course, impossible. You cannot have criminal law different in different districts; they must be abolished everywhere or nowhere.

## CHAPTER XII.

### AFFORESTATION.

**I**N a previous chapter afforestation was mentioned as one of the means which the State should employ to develop the national reserves of the country. In fact, if afforestation is to be undertaken at all it must be done by the State. Private individuals cannot undertake it. It must extend over a larger area than the individual controls, and it is not immediately remunerative, so that few individuals find it worth while. So little, indeed, has forestry been in the minds of English people that practically nothing is known about it in this country and much that has been loosely spoken about it is wide of the mark.

Quite recently, in 1909, a Royal Commission issued a Report on the subject,\* containing the unanimous recommendation of 19 Commissioners of all political parties, all of whom were impressed with the need of State action. From this report it appears that there is less forestry in this country than anywhere in Europe, including Belgium where the population is much denser than ours. The percentage of land covered with trees in the various countries is as follows :

Servia	...	...	...	48	Belgium	...	...	...	17.3
Russia	...	...	...	42	France	...	...	...	17
Sweden	...	...	...	35	England	...	...	...	5.3
Hungary	...	...	...	35	Scotland	...	...	...	4.6
Austria	...	...	...	32.6	Wales	...	...	...	3.9
Germany	...	...	...	25.9	Ireland	...	...	...	1.5

In 1907 we imported 8,313,957 loads of timber, costing £20,127,943, from other countries of a climate similar to our own. This could well have been grown on 9,000,000 acres of land at home, and by a curious coincidence the inquiries of

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\* Second Report of the Royal Commission on Coast Erosion, Reclamation of Tidal Lands, and Afforestation in the United Kingdom. Cd. 4460. 1909.

the Commission into the amount of land available for afforestation revealed the fact that there exists in England six million acres, in Scotland two and a half million acres, and in Ireland half a million acres, exactly 9,000,000 acres in all, which are adapted for afforestation, but which at present produce practically nothing and employ hardly any labour at all. The Commission therefore recommended the purchase of this land gradually at the rate of 150,000 acres a year, as a remunerative scheme of scientific forestry, which would incidentally help to solve the unemployment question as well. They point out that the investment of £13 6s. 8d. an acre, with interest and management expenses in addition, and no return for at least 40 years, is not an investment for the individual, but may well be worth the while of the State, especially if the eventual result is to pay £3 16s. 8d. an acre yearly on the whole outlay from the forty-first to the eightieth year of the statutory period of repayment.

Whether or not the State will adopt such a scheme, it is quite clear that as the community acquires more land a certain amount of it would be put to the best use by afforestation. If this were undertaken under the supervision of a well-equipped forestry department of the Board of Agriculture it would not prove an expensive matter. A great deal of common land in Surrey, for instance, is highly suitable for the purpose and could be afforested without heavy outlay and without risk. The present value of the trees that are now growing on it is low and would involve no risk to the purchaser. The sporting value could be recouped if desired by letting the sporting rights; and, apart from these two things, £2 10s. per acre capital value is almost all on which interest would have to be provided until the newly planted woods began to yield. The value of the land for planting would be nearly doubled if temporary fencing were permitted against rabbits directly the property was acquired by the State. Legitimate rights (which are very little exercised) would not be interfered with, while the provision of extra winter work would prove most popular.

Afforestation is not a panacea, but it is a necessary part of the scheme of rural development. It improves the value

of surrounding land, it provides employment, it reclaims tracts which are nearly useless at present, and it gives the community control of sporting areas which it can, if it will, place at the disposal of any who cannot afford the highly preserved and expensive sport of the richer classes. Moreover, it will preserve for England the woods which are in danger of disappearing under the neglect and ignorance of their present owners. Disease is rife, notably among the beeches and the larches ; planting is being discontinued as the least immediately remunerative work of estate management. Without State action our woods are doomed ; with it they may gradually grow again into being, bringing added wealth to the people and forest beauty to the countryside.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### RATES.\*

**M**ANY of the most thorny problems of rural development have now been dealt with. But one portion, perhaps the most important portion, of the ground remains uncovered. No practical politician can approach the rural problem without being immediately confronted with a universal outcry against the rates.

After all, rural rates are at present lower than they used to be a hundred years ago. The extra cost of education, sanitation, etc., has been more than compensated for by the abolition of the Church rate and the decrease in the poor rate. "In 1803 the average rates throughout the then entirely rural county of Sussex were 8s. 7½d. in the £, and the average throughout the equally rural county of Monmouth was 7s. 11¼d. in the £. These were not even the most highly rated counties. Throughout all Carmarthenshire the average rate was 12s. 9d. in the £, and throughout all Pembrokeshire it was 11s. 8½d. in the £." † In fact, during the last 20 years the rates in rural districts have been lower than at any previous period for more than a century past, and the fall has been greatest in the agricultural districts. Yet here it is that the outcry is greatest, or, at least, has the most numbing effect on local government.

The average man hates rates and certain classes really suffer from them. Take any district you like and you will find a powerful section of public opinion willing to tolerate the existence of almost any evil, barbarity, scandal, or human suffering for fear of increasing the rates. In an Essex village at the present moment 950 inhabitants are asking for

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\* The main authority for the facts and figures given in this chapter is MR. SIDNEY WEBB'S *Grants in Aid*, 1911.

† *Grants in Aid*, by SIDNEY WEBB.

a water supply, which is resisted by a few farmers (mostly tenants of absentee landlords) because it would put a little less than a farthing on the rates. A district within 23 miles of London is without an isolation hospital. A case of diphtheria which occurred last year in a cottage spread to every member of the family, and there being but one bedroom and a landing, the village nurse could not come. The milk and bread were left on the doorstep in all weathers and whichever of the inmates was least ill took them in. In the result the whole family was *hors de combat* for months and other cases recurred in the same village. Another district within 30 miles of London is also without an isolation hospital. There were one or two cases of scarlet fever in the summer a year or two ago. The schools were closed; the richer residents fled the village with their children and left their houses unoccupied; the holiday tenant of the vicarage threw up his let and the vicar could not get his holiday; the village shopman lost hundreds of pounds in loss of custom. And all because the local authority is afraid of the rates. Shortsighted local economies result in widespread national extravagance. It is in the interests of all to make it worth the ratepayer's while to adopt a more far-seeing policy. How can this be done?

In the first place it must be realised that the taxation of site values and unearned increment cannot appreciably affect rural land as such. Again, any transfer of taxes, such as the inhabited house duty, from the national to the local exchequer is unsound. It would be unfair in its effect as between district and district, it would do nothing to stimulate economy, and, like anything else that artificially reduces rates, it would be in effect a bounty to the landlords in respect of all land that pays rent.

The only possible way of keeping the rates low and at the same time increasing the efficiency of local government is to extend and systematise the subventions that are paid annually from the national to the local exchequer. A national minimum standard of achievement should be set up in every department of local government, the grant in aid in each case being made conditional on the attainment of results coming up to that standard.

For the last 80 years there has been a gradual increase in the amount of the grants in aid. Mr. Sidney Webb has estimated them as follows: In 1830, under £100,000; 1840, under £500,000; 1850, about £750,000; 1860, over £1,000,000; 1870, nearly £2,000,000; 1880, nearly £5,000,000; 1890, nearly £12,000,000; 1900, nearly £16,000,000; 1911-12, about £30,000,000 (or 18 per cent. of the national revenue).\*

These grants amount to a reduction of the rates on the average by 2s. 4d. in the pound.

The proportion of the expenses of the various departments of local government borne by the national and local exchequers was as follows in 1908-9†:—

Services.	From National Sources.	Local Sources.
	Per cent.	Per cent.
Police ... ..	40	60
Education ... ..	56	44
Poor Relief (including Pauper Lunatics)	17	83

But these figures represent the total result only; the grants do not really operate in this cut-and-dried fashion.

The rates in the pound paid for the relief of the poor, for instance, are in some Unions over 12 times greater than in

\* See Appendix M.

† See Memorandum by County Councils' Association to Departmental Committee on Local Taxation, Cd. 6303, II. On January 6th, 1913, the President of the Local Government Board, in reply to a question in the House of Commons, gave the following table, showing the amount of expenditure on the five services named, which in England and Wales fell on rates and Exchequer grants respectively in the year ending March, 1911:

Services.	Rates.	Exchequer Grants
	£	£
1. Police and Police Stations ... ..	3,120,000	3,050,000
2. Lunatics and Lunatic Asylums (so far as not included in Poor Relief) ... ..	980,000	200,000
3. Education ... ..	14,260,000	13,330,000
4. Highways and Bridges ... ..	12,730,000	1,230,000
5. Poor Relief (including Pauper Lunatics maintained by Poor Law Guardians)	11,760,000	2,450,000

others.\* Yet it by no means happens that the national exchequer contributes in similar proportions. The amount of relief is haphazard and chaotic. The grant in aid of the Poor Law expenditure in the Fylde Union is equivalent to less than 1d. rate; in the Caxton and Arrington Union it is equivalent to a rate of nearly 1s. 6d.

The Union of Longtown is relieved of over 58 per cent. of its expenditure, but King's Lynn Union of 13 per cent. only. So with education. In Durham each scholar costs 56s. 10d. a year, of which the locality pays 30 per cent. In Middlesex the cost is 72s. 2d., of which the locality pays 53 per cent. In some of the poorest places the locality has to pay 60 per cent. of the cost of educating its children.

The grants then should be systematised and made conditional. They should be paid for each of the great local services, for education and for the children, for sanitation and the care of the sick, for the police, and for roads. When the national standard is not attained the grant would be not forthcoming, the locality would be penalised, and rates would go up. When it is, the locality would receive its grant and the rates would go down. And if larger grants still were given for the attainment of a still higher standard the really progressive communities would have the lowest rates of all. Lunacy, like crime, should be made a national charge. Vagrancy and unemployment should also be taken over entirely by the central government. All old persons and persons permanently disabled at whatever age should receive State pensions, as some do at present. The existing Poor Rate would be thus obviated and national burdens be borne as such by the national exchequer.

The adoption of this policy would remove the obstacle that blocks the way of progress in every rural district. It would relieve industry and popularise reform. After a course of years it would be followed by a still further relief, both of local and national taxation, as a result of the increased prosperity and health of the nation at large and the gradual elimination of all the waste and wreckage which at present clogs the wheels of national progress.

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\* Report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation. Cd. 638. 1896. Page 74.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. Minimum wage of 23s. for agricultural labourers. A fifty-hour week and one half-holiday a week. Sunday work to be distributed as far as possible.

2. Tenant farmers to have the option of bringing contracts with their landlords to an end within 6 months of the enforcement of the Minimum Wage Act.

3. A State survey of cottage accommodation. Local authority to be given two years to make up deficiency, failing which no grants in aid from Exchequer for any purpose.

4. Loans to local authorities for cottage building to be at lowest rate of interest, coupled with a State grant in aid of cottage building equivalent to the sinking fund, and half deficiency on annual rent account provided such deficiency is properly incurred.

5. Land Commissioners to be appointed.

6. Powers to Land Commissioners and to local authority to acquire land compulsorily at valuation whenever wanted for any purpose, or whenever insufficiently developed, or in anticipation of future uses.

7. An irredeemable mortgage on land in lieu of part of Death Duties.

8. Compensation to outgoing tenant of small holdings not to be charged to small holder when of no value to him. Sinking fund likewise.

9. Experimental farms to be formed by local authority in small-holdings areas.

10. Free farm schools in agricultural districts.

11. Travelling agricultural instructors.

12. More money and executive powers to be given to Development Commission.

13. Nationalisation of railways.

14. State motor service.

15. Afforestation.

16. Grants in aid of local services to be systematised and made conditional on a national minimum standard of efficiency.

17. Abolition of the Poor Rate.

## APPENDIX A.

CENSUS OF PRODUCTION, 1907.  
FINAL REPORT. (Cd. 6320.) 1912.

Introduction, p. 1: "The Census of Production Act, 1906, required that a census of production should be taken in the year 1908, in respect of the calendar year 1907. Power was given to the Board of Trade to vary this period in cases where it was found inconvenient to furnish the required particulars in respect of the calendar year 1907; and, accordingly, persons required to make Returns were informed that, if the financial year of their establishment was not the calendar year, they might furnish particulars for a period of twelve months, ending with any date not earlier than June 30th, 1907, or later than June 30th, 1908. It is believed that, taken as a whole, the Returns substantially represent the productive activity of the United Kingdom during the calendar year 1907."

The Census of Production Office Returns did not cover Agriculture, but by special arrangement a voluntary census of agriculture was taken covering the twelve months ended June 4th, 1908, in the case of Great Britain, and the calendar year 1908 in the case of Ireland. Many classes—*e.g.*, persons working on their own account (unless occupiers of workshops)—were not included.

Pp. 18-19: "The following table summarises the principal particulars returned to the Census of Production Office regarding the output of the three divisions of the United Kingdom, respecting which the Census of Production Act requires that separate statistics shall be published:

<i>Gross Output or Selling Value of Work done.</i>						£
England and Wales	...	...	...	...	...	1,490,749,000
Scotland	...	...	...	...	...	207,840,000
Ireland	...	...	...	...	...	66,777,000
United Kingdom	...	...	...	...	...	£1,765,366,000

## GROUP OF TRADES.

<i>Gross Output, Selling Value or Value of Work done.</i>						£
Mines and Quarries	...	...	...	...	...	148,026,000
Iron and Steel, Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades	...	...	...	...	...	375,196,000
Metal Trades, other than Iron and Steel	...	...	...	...	...	93,465,000
Textile Trades	...	...	...	...	...	333,561,000
Clothing Trades	...	...	...	...	...	107,983,000
Food, Drink, and Tobacco Trades	...	...	...	...	...	287,446,000
Chemical and Allied Trades	...	...	...	...	...	75,032,000
Paper, Printing, Stationery and Allied Trades...	...	...	...	...	...	61,308,000
Leather, Canvas and India-rubber Trades	...	...	...	...	...	34,928,000
Timber Trades	...	...	...	...	...	46,390,000
Clay, Stone, Building, and Contracting Trades	...	...	...	...	...	116,692,000
Miscellaneous Trades	...	...	...	...	...	8,288,000
Public Utility Services	...	...	...	...	...	77,051,000
Factory Owners—Power only	...	...	...	...	...	—
Total	...	...	...	...	...	£1,765,366,000

"The aggregate of the values returned for the gross output of the various trades is £1,765,366,000, which does not include the output of agriculture and fishery. This aggregate . . . involves a large amount of duplication."

P. 24: "Bringing together the totals already obtained, and adjusting for the transfer of butter and cheese from the industrial total to the agricultural, we have, for the value of the output :

	Million Pounds Sterling.	
Output of Industry ... ..	1,234	to 1,249
Output of Agriculture ... ..	About 210	
Output of Fisheries ... ..	About 12	

Or a total of £1,456,000,000 to £1,471,000,000.

P. 25: "In the following table there are presented figures comparing the value of the output of the United Kingdom (using lower figures of preceding estimates) with that of exports and of net imports—*i.e.*, imports less re-exports. The figures are arranged in groups, within which the effects of duplication have been eliminated, so far as each group by itself is concerned. Thus, in "Agriculture," the value of crops used for stock-food and of grain used for seed has been deducted, and in "mines and quarries" the value of coal used in the operation of the mines and quarries has also been deducted.

	Value at place of production £ Million.	Sold for direct use or consumption £ Million.	Sold as Materials for other groups £ Million.	Exported Value free on board £ Million.	Net Import* Value at Port of Landing £ Million.
1. Agriculture ...	210.0	165.6	40.0	4.4	208.1
2. Fishery ... ..	11.7	9.0	2.0	0.7	0.8
3. Mines and Quarries ... ..	128.6	39.0	47.6	42.0	64.0†
4. Manufactures, Buildings and Public Works ...	1,165.9	707.5	41.6	416.8‡	324.6
Total ...	1,516.2	921.1	131.2	463.9	597.5

\* *i.e.*, imports, less re-exports.

† Including net imports of unrefined gold bullion and of silver bullion for use in industry.

‡ Including export of gold and silver bullion refined in the United Kingdom, and exports (on balance) of British gold and silver coin, less the net imports of foreign and colonial silver coin (valued as bullion).

## APPENDIX B.

REPORT OF AN INQUIRY BY THE BOARD OF TRADE INTO THE EARNINGS AND HOURS OF LABOUR OF WORKPEOPLE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM. V.—AGRICULTURE IN 1907. (Cd. 5460.) 1910.

## ENGLAND.

P. xvi. : " Including the estimated value of food or board and lodging, when provided, and of all other allowances in kind, the average weekly earnings in 1907 of the four classes of workpeople are given for each district in the table below. The value of cottage has been taken as £4 per annum, and board and lodging has been computed at £20 16s. per annum (8s. per week). The average stated represents not the earnings during a given week, but an average of the weekly earnings during the whole year, and takes into consideration the effect of any extra earnings at the busy seasons, and of any reductions during the winter period, or when work was stopped by bad weather or other causes.

District.	Average Weekly Earnings in 1907 of				
	Ordinary Labourers	Horse- men.	Cattle- men.	Shep- herds.	All classes.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Northern Counties... ..	19 2	21 3	21 11	23 5	20 10
Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cheshire ... ..	19 6	19 5	20 3	20 6	19 8
North and West Midland Counties ... ..	18 3	18 6	19 0	19 9	18 7
South Midland and Eastern Counties ... ..	16 1	18 1	18 4	18 9	17 3
South-Eastern Counties ...	18 1	18 11	19 8	19 9	18 9
South-Western Counties ...	16 10	17 4	18 0	18 3	17 4
Total—England ...	17 6	18 9	19 1	19 7	18 4

" It will be observed that in all four occupations earnings in the Northern Counties, Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Cheshire, and the South-Eastern Counties were above the general averages for England, whilst in the South Midland and Eastern Counties and the South-Western Counties they were below those averages."

## ORDINARY LABOURERS.

P. xvii. : " The following table gives for each county and district, except Northumberland and Durham, the average weekly earnings in 1907 of ordinary agricultural labourers, and shows how

much is represented by cash rates of pay, and how much by extra earnings, whether paid in cash or in kind.

County.	Average Rates of Cash Wages per week.	Extra Earnings and Estimated Value of Allowances in Kind per week.	Average Earnings per week.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
<b>Northern Counties :</b>			
Northumberland ... ..	—	—	—
Durham ... ..	—	—	—
Cumberland ... ..	12 2	7 1	19 3
Westmorland ... ..	11 9	7 4	19 1
Total ... ..	12 0	7 2	19 2
<b>Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Cheshire :</b>			
Yorkshire, East Riding ...	16 5	2 10	19 3
„ North Riding ...	16 9	2 10	19 7
„ West Riding ...	17 6	2 6	20 0
„ Whole County ...	16 11	2 8	19 7
Lancashire ... ..	16 2	3 8	19 10
Cheshire ... ..	16 7	2 5	19 0
Total ... ..	16 7	2 11	19 6
<b>North and West Midland Counties :</b>			
Leicestershire ... ..	16 7	2 2	18 9
Rutland ... ..	14 10	2 2	17 0
Lincolnshire ... ..	15 3	4 2	19 5
Nottinghamshire ... ..	17 2	2 3	19 5
Derbyshire ... ..	17 5	3 0	20 5
Gloucestershire ... ..	13 11	2 4	16 3
Herefordshire ... ..	13 11	3 2	17 1
Shropshire ... ..	14 7	3 5	18 0
Staffordshire ... ..	15 10	2 10	18 8
Worcestershire... ..	14 6	1 9	16 3
Warwickshire ... ..	15 4	1 10	17 2
Total ... ..	15 3	3 0	18 3
<b>South Midland and Eastern Counties :</b>			
Middlesex ... ..	18 7	1 8	20 3
Hertfordshire ... ..	14 8	2 2	16 10
Buckinghamshire ... ..	14 10	2 1	16 11
Oxfordshire ... ..	12 11	2 0	14 11
Northamptonshire ... ..	14 6	2 3	16 9

County.	Average Rates of Cash Wages per week.	Extra Earnings and Estimated Value of Allowances in Kind per week.	Average Earnings per week.
South Midland and Eastern Counties— <i>continued.</i>	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Huntingdonshire ... ..	13 5	2 9	16 2
Bedfordshire ... ..	13 9	2 6	16 3
Cambridgeshire ... ..	13 3	3 0	16 3
Essex ... ..	13 7	2 9	16 4
Suffolk ... ..	12 5	3 4	15 9
Norfolk ... ..	12 7	2 9	15 4
Total ... ..	13 5	2 8	16 1
South-Eastern Counties :			
Surrey ... ..	16 8	2 1	18 9
Kent ... ..	16 4	2 6	18 10
Sussex ... ..	15 1	2 8	17 9
Hampshire ... ..	14 0	3 5	17 5
Berkshire ... ..	13 9	2 11	16 8
Total ... ..	15 4	2 9	18 1
South-Western Counties :			
Wiltshire ... ..	13 0	3 0	16 0
Dorsetshire ... ..	12 1	4 0	16 1
Devonshire ... ..	14 6	3 3	17 9
Cornwall ... ..	15 0	2 7	17 7
Somersetshire ... ..	14 0	3 3	17 3
Total ... ..	13 6	3 4	16 10
TOTAL, ENGLAND ... ..	14 6	3 0	17 6

## HORSEMEN.

P. xviii. : "The following table gives particulars of average cash rates of wages and average weekly earnings of horsemen, corresponding to those given on the previous page for ordinary agricultural labourers :

County.	Average Rates of Cash Wages per week.	Extra Earnings and Estimated Value of Allowances in Kind per week.	Average Earnings per week.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Northern Counties :			
Northumberland ... ..	17 11	3 3	21 2
Durham ... ..	18 0	3 9	21 9
Cumberland ... ..	17 7	2 10	20 5
Westmorland ... ..	18 0	3 2	21 2
Total ... ..	17 11	3 4	21 3
Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Cheshire :			
Yorkshire, East Riding ... ..	11 11	6 0	17 11
„ North Riding ... ..	12 6	5 9	18 3
„ West Riding ... ..	14 7	4 8	19 3
„ Whole County ... ..	13 0	5 6	18 6
Lancashire ... ..	20 6	1 9	22 3
Cheshire ... ..	17 1	2 10	19 11
Total ... ..	15 2	4 3	19 5
North and West Midland Counties :			
Leicestershire ... ..	17 5	2 7	20 0
Rutland ... ..	15 8	2 8	18 4
Lincolnshire ... ..	11 1	6 2	17 3
Nottinghamshire ... ..	17 9	3 0	20 9
Derbyshire ... ..	16 7	3 7	20 2
Gloucestershire ... ..	14 7	2 10	17 5
Herefordshire ... ..	14 6	3 8	18 2
Shropshire ... ..	15 4	3 6	18 10
Staffordshire ... ..	15 5	3 8	19 1
Worcestershire... ..	15 7	2 7	18 2
Warwickshire ... ..	16 5	2 6	18 11
Total ... ..	14 7	3 11	18 6
South Midland and Eastern Counties :			
Middlesex ... ..	19 2	2 6	21 8
Hertfordshire ... ..	16 3	2 10	19 1

County.	Average Rates of Cash Wages per week.	Extra Earnings and Estimated Value of Allowances in Kind per week.	Average Earnings per week.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
South Midland and Eastern Counties— <i>continued</i> .			
Buckinghamshire ... ..	15 9	2 7	18 4
Oxfordshire ... ..	14 1	2 10	16 11
Northamptonshire ... ..	15 8	2 10	18 6
Huntingdonshire ... ..	15 3	3 5	18 8
Bedfordshire ... ..	15 10	2 5	18 3
Cambridgeshire ... ..	14 8	3 7	18 3
Essex ... ..	15 2	3 3	18 5
Suffolk ... ..	14 2	3 1	17 3
Norfolk ... ..	14 6	3 3	17 9
Total ... ..	15 0	3 1	18 1
South-Eastern Counties :			
Surrey ... ..	17 7	2 6	20 1
Kent ... ..	17 0	2 7	19 7
Sussex ... ..	16 3	2 11	19 2
Hampshire ... ..	14 7	3 7	18 2
Berkshire ... ..	14 7	3 5	18 0
Total ... ..	15 11	3 0	18 11
South-Western Counties :			
Wiltshire ... ..	13 10	3 3	17 1
Dorsetshire ... ..	12 10	3 4	16 2
Devonshire ... ..	14 2	3 9	17 11
Cornwall ... ..	15 0	3 6	18 6
Somersetshire ... ..	14 6	3 4	17 10
Total ... ..	13 11	3 5	17 4
TOTAL, ENGLAND ...	15 3	3 6	18 9

## CATTLEMEN.

P. xix. : "The average cash rates of pay and the average total earnings per week of cattlemen in 1907 are shown in the table below for each county and district :

County.	Average Rates of Cash Wages per week.		Extra Earnings and Estimated Value of Allowances in Kind per week.		Average Earnings per week.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
<b>Northern Counties :</b>						
Northumberland ... ..	19	6	2	8	22	2
Durham ... ..	20	3	2	6	22	9
Cumberland ... ..	17	9	2	10	20	7
Westmorland ... ..	18	2	3	9	21	11
Total ... ..	19	1	2	10	21	11
<b>Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Cheshire :</b>						
Yorkshire, East Riding ...	15	7	3	10	19	5
„ North Riding ...	16	8	3	8	20	4
„ West Riding ...	17	7	3	2	20	9
„ Whole County ...	16	8	3	6	20	2
Lancashire ... ..	19	11	1	11	21	10
Cheshire ... ..	16	6	2	11	19	5
Total ... ..	17	2	3	1	20	3
<b>North and West Midland Counties :</b>						
Leicestershire ... ..	17	5	2	6	19	11
Rutland ... ..	15	9	2	4	18	1
Lincolnshire ... ..	14	8	4	1	18	9
Nottinghamshire ... ..	18	2	2	9	20	11
Derbyshire ... ..	15	8	4	2	19	10
Gloucestershire... ..	14	10	2	8	17	6
Herefordshire ... ..	14	10	4	1	18	11
Shropshire ... ..	15	4	3	10	19	2
Staffordshire ... ..	15	3	3	9	19	0
Worcestershire... ..	15	4	2	5	17	9
Warwickshire ... ..	16	9	2	6	19	3
Total ... ..	15	8	3	4	19	0
<b>South Midland and Eastern Counties :</b>						
Middlesex ... ..	19	0	1	7	20	7
Hertfordshire ... ..	16	11	2	10	19	9

County.	Average Rates of Cash Wages per week.	Extra Earnings and Estimated Value of Allowances in Kind per week.	Average Earnings per week.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
South Midland and Eastern Counties— <i>continued</i> .			
Buckinghamshire ... ..	16 2	1 11	18 1
Oxfordshire ... ..	14 7	3 6	18 1
Northamptonshire ... ..	15 11	2 8	18 7
Huntingdonshire ... ..	15 1	3 3	18 4
Bedfordshire ... ..	16 4	2 4	18 8
Cambridgeshire ... ..	14 7	3 7	18 2
Essex ... ..	15 11	2 11	18 10
Suffolk ... ..	14 4	3 0	17 4
Norfolk ... ..	14 8	3 1	17 9
Total ... ..	15 6	2 10	18 4
South-Eastern Counties :			
Surrey ... ..	18 6	2 3	20 9
Kent ... ..	17 11	2 3	20 2
Sussex ... ..	16 10	2 8	19 6
Hampshire ... ..	15 8	3 3	18 11
Berkshire ... ..	15 8	3 6	19 2
Total ... ..	16 10	2 10	19 8
South-Western Counties :			
Wiltshire ... ..	14 7	2 7	17 2
Dorsetshire ... ..	14 4	3 3	17 7
Devonshire ... ..	15 1	3 9	18 10
Cornwall ... ..	15 3	3 8	18 11
Somersetshire ... ..	14 8	3 2	17 10
Total ... ..	14 9	3 3	18 0
TOTAL, ENGLAND ... ..	16 1	3 0	19 1

## SHEPHERDS.

P. xx. : "Shepherds, though numerous in some districts, are a comparatively small class of agricultural labourers when England is considered as a whole. Their average earnings, however, of which particulars are given in the table below, were greater than those of any of the other classes of labourers.

County.	Average Rates of Cash Wages per week.		Extra Earnings and Estimated Value of Allowances in Kind per week.		Average Earnings per week.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
<b>Northern Counties :</b>						
Northumberland ... ..	19	8	3	10	23	6
Durham ... ..	21	0	4	3	25	3
Cumberland ... ..	17	3	3	10	21	1
Westmorland ... ..	19	4	3	11	23	3
<b>Total ... ..</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Cheshire :</b>						
Yorkshire, East Riding ...	16	8	3	1	19	9
„ North Riding ...	16	11	3	7	20	6
„ West Riding ...	17	11	3	4	21	3
„ Whole County ...	17	2	3	3	20	5
Lancashire ... ..	17	10	3	1	20	11
Cheshire ... ..	17	11	2	11	20	10
<b>Total ... ..</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>North and West Midland Counties :</b>						
Leicestershire ... ..	17	8	3	0	20	8
Rutland ... ..	16	8	3	6	20	2
Lincolnshire ... ..	15	3	4	8	19	11
Nottinghamshire ... ..	18	5	3	3	21	8
Derbyshire ... ..	16	10	3	8	20	6
Gloucestershire ... ..	14	8	3	8	18	4
Herefordshire ... ..	14	9	5	0	19	9
Shropshire ... ..	15	6	4	7	20	1
Staffordshire ... ..	16	1	4	0	20	1
Worcestershire... ..	15	6	2	5	17	11
Warwickshire ... ..	16	5	3	2	19	7
<b>Total ... ..</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>9</b>

County.	Average Rates of Cash Wages per week.	Extra Earnings and Estimated Value of Allowances in Kind per week.	Average Earnings per week.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
<b>South Midland and Eastern Counties :</b>			
Middlesex ... ..	19 8	2 0	21 8
Hertfordshire ... ..	16 11	3 0	19 11
Buckinghamshire ... ..	16 2	2 3	18 5
Oxfordshire ... ..	14 5	3 0	17 5
Northamptonshire ... ..	15 11	3 0	18 11
Huntingdonshire ... ..	15 6	3 2	18 8
Bedfordshire ... ..	15 10	2 6	18 4
Cambridgeshire ... ..	14 8	4 0	18 8
Essex ... ..	16 1	3 9	19 10
Suffolk ... ..	14 7	3 9	18 4
Norfolk ... ..	14 5	4 9	19 2
<b>Total ... ..</b>	<b>15 4</b>	<b>3 5</b>	<b>18 9</b>
<b>South-Eastern Counties :</b>			
Surrey ... ..	17 7	2 9	20 4
Kent ... ..	17 10	3 4	21 2
Sussex ... ..	16 5	3 2	19 7
Hampshire ... ..	14 10	4 1	18 11
Berkshire ... ..	14 7	4 0	18 7
<b>Total ... ..</b>	<b>16 2</b>	<b>3 7</b>	<b>19 9</b>
<b>South-Western Counties :</b>			
Wiltshire ... ..	13 10	4 0	17 10
Dorsetshire ... ..	13 3	4 7	17 10
Devonshire ... ..	14 10	3 8	18 6
Cornwall ... ..	15 5	4 3	19 8
Somersetshire ... ..	14 8	4 2	18 10
<b>Total ... ..</b>	<b>14 1</b>	<b>4 2</b>	<b>18 3</b>
<b>TOTAL, ENGLAND ...</b>	<b>15 11</b>	<b>3 8</b>	<b>19 7</b>

## THE RURAL PROBLEM

## WALES AND MONMOUTHSHIRE.

P. xxi. : "The following table gives the average cash rates of pay and the average total earnings per week, in 1907, in each county of Wales and in Monmouthshire, of all the men included in the returns received :

County.	Average Rates of Cash Wages per week.	Extra Earnings and Estimated Value of Allowances in Kind per week.	Average Earnings per week.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Flintshire ... ..	15 11	2 11	18 10
Denbighshire ... ..	13 11	4 2	18 1
Carnarvonshire ... ..	13 10	4 9	18 7
Anglesey ... ..	11 9	5 9	17 6
Merionethshire ... ..	13 3	4 11	18 2
Montgomeryshire... ..	12 8	3 11	16 7
Cardiganshire ... ..	11 6	5 0	16 6
Radnorshire ... ..	11 1	5 7	16 8
Brecknockshire ... ..	14 7	4 2	18 9
Carmarthenshire ... ..	13 9	4 4	18 1
Pembrokeshire ... ..	12 9	4 6	17 3
Glamorganshire ... ..	15 8	3 7	19 3
Monmouthshire ... ..	14 9	3 4	18 1
<b>TOTAL, WALES AND MONMOUTHSHIRE ...</b>	<b>13 9</b>	<b>4 3</b>	<b>18 0</b>

## APPENDIX C.

THE FOLLOWING IS A TYPICAL REPORT FROM AN INVESTIGATOR ON THE WAGES OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS IN THE MID-DIVISION OF OXFORDSHIRE.

The ordinary agricultural labourer works from 7 to 5, less  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours for meals, 6 days a week = 51 hours.

The usual rate of wages is 12s. per week, or under 3d. an hour ; but in some districts a fair proportion of the labourers get 13s., and a few 14s. per week. I know of three farmers who employ no man at less than 15s. per week, but it is alleged by other farmers that the men work longer hours, and probably this is true.

When the wages are over 12s. per week, it appears to be due to the employer being more generous than his fellows, or to the individual labourer being an exceptionally good workman. In some few instances the higher rate has been due to the inability of the employer to get men to work for 12s., but I am inclined to think that such cases are very rare.

Here and there one hears of men working for 11s. per week, but I have come to the conclusion that in such cases the men have some mental or physical deficiency which prevents them doing a fair day's work. (Low wages doubtless the cause of this as well as the effect.)

The wages mentioned are for "day-work," and some employers send their men home on wet days, and the men earn nothing. It is this "losing wet time" that accounts for the perfectly accurate statement of Mr. George Edwards that he heard of agricultural labourers in this county who only earned 10s. or 11s. per week, but the employers of such men would strenuously deny that they paid any man less than 12s. per week. This system of stopping the men on wet days appears to be a practice of individual employers rather than a general custom.

It is seldom that this class of labourer gets a cottage rent free. Usually he pays from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. per week.

Allowances of milk, fuel, etc., are exceptional, and it is only a small minority who get an allotment rent free.

It appears to be impossible to obtain an average of the "extra earnings" of these labourers, as custom varies widely in different parishes. In some parishes all the men get extra in hay and corn harvests is two or three pints of beer, or 4d. per day as its equivalent, although they work three or four hours longer every day. In other villages they get 15s. per week and 6d. per day "beer-money," or its equivalent in beer, for about ten weeks instead of their ordinary week's wage of 12s. In others they get 3d. per hour overtime plus 6d. per day "beer-money." In others a lump sum is paid at the end of the hay harvest, and a further

sum at the end of the corn harvest. When this is done the aggregate for both harvests varies from 25s. to £4.

It is still more difficult to ascertain what extra is earned by piece-work being substituted for day-work at certain seasons of the year. The men say that if more is earned it is only by working longer hours, and in the main I think this is true. Of course, they get nothing if the weather is such that they are unable to work.

After collecting all the information I could—from the farmers as well as from the labourers—I think that the “extra earnings” of the ordinary labourer from all sources—hay and corn harvest, piece-work, overtime, etc.—seldom exceed £5 per annum.

Carters, stockmen and shepherds are better paid but have some Sunday work, and their usual hours of labour are longer than those of the ordinary farm labourers. Their wages vary from 13s. to 17s. per week, and in most cases a cottage is found for them rent free.

Shepherds are usually allowed extra pay, and sometimes fuel during the lambing and shearing seasons.

Cowmen are allowed milk all the year round.

Carters earn extra money at harvest time, the amount being very much the same as that paid to the ordinary labourers on the same farm.

It is safe to say that the average earnings of a carter, shepherd or stockman of average ability are not less than 14s. per week with a cottage, or 16s. per week without one.

*General Remarks.*—While making this inquiry, I found myself continually wondering whether and to what extent the drift of the best workers to the towns or abroad, coupled with the low standard of living in the villages, has lessened the efficiency of the farm labourers in Oxfordshire. Two Conservative farmers have told me that Oxfordshire labourers at 12s. per week are more expensive than the labourers they had paid 15s. per week elsewhere, and although neither of them took kindly to my suggestion that they should try the experiment of paying 15s. per week in Oxfordshire, it is probable that there is an element of truth in their statement.

## APPENDIX D.

## ALLOTMENTS.

By E. R. PEASE.

The history of allotments goes back, in principle, to the Elizabethan period, when laws were enacted that every cottage built must have an acre of garden. In the Inclosure Acts of the eighteenth century, land was frequently allocated for allotments, and this was also provided for in the General Inclosure Act, 1845. The Poor Law Relief Act, 1819, and two Acts of 1831, empowered churchwardens and overseers to hire, purchase, or enclose land up to 50 acres for allotments. An Act of 1882 further requires any land held in trust for charities to be let for allotments.

The principal Acts are the Allotments Act of 1887, which was administered till 1907 by District Councils, and the Local Government Act of 1894, which empowered Parish Councils to acquire land for allotments. By the Act of 1907 (now 1908) district allotments and all powers in connection with allotments were transferred to Parish Councils, and the Act of 1908 embodied and repealed the Act of 1887. County Councils have default powers, and Urban Authorities can and do exercise the allotment powers of Parish Councils. Indeed, whilst small holdings are virtually a purely rural institution, allotments are of high importance for town workmen, and quite a large area is administered by Town and Urban District Councils for the benefit of more people than are concerned with state-provided rural allotments.

An allotment is a small piece of land let as a garden apart from a cottage. Everywhere considerable areas are so let by private owners, and indeed the Act does not allow a Local Authority to exercise its powers unless it is satisfied that land will not be provided by private owners. There is no record of the area of land let as allotments by the owners direct.

It used to be said that an allotment was a garden for a person who made his living otherwise; a small holding was a piece of land off which a man made his living. That is still, on the average, true, though not by any means invariably so. Some allotment holders earn their livings thereof, and many small holders use a holding as a subsidiary source of income. But by law a small holding is land provided by a County Council (or under the Small Holding Sections of the Act), and an allotment is land provided by a Parish Council, or under the Allotment Sections.

The Board of Agriculture Report on Allotments for 1912 (Cd. 6832) shows that 7,143 acres of allotments were owned, and 23,946 acres leased, by Local Authorities in England and Wales,

and the occupiers numbered 117,562 individuals and 21 associations. Of the total, 21,498 acres, 49,545 individuals, and 2 associations were rural; 9,591 acres, 68,017 individuals, and 19 associations were urban. The acreage acquired during 1912 was 1,259, providing for 8,532 applicants. The unsatisfied demand is by 11,789 individuals and 4 associations for 4,522 acres.

In five years—1907–12—4 compulsory purchase orders have been sanctioned and 29 compulsory hiring orders, and in the same five years loans for allotments amounting to £148,683 have been approved.

The Act of 1907 allowed Allotment Authorities to build cottages on allotments of not less than 1 acre. In early years a large number of cottages were applied for, but to this day not a single one has been erected. In 1912 Urban Authorities had applications for 29 cottages and rural for 27, but not one of these has been built, and the report does not disclose whether the veto comes from the Local Government Board or from the Board of Agriculture, or from the authorities themselves. The Board of Agriculture takes pride in seeking to ascertain if an applicant for a cottage on an allotment wants the cottage more than he wants the land. If it is satisfied that this is the case, it objects to the project on the plea that it is not a Housing Authority.

Reforms required in existing law are of small importance. The financial provisions occasionally cause hardships, and the fact that only the labouring population are entitled to claim the assistance of the law is a grievance for citizens who do not come within the legal definition of that singular phrase.

## APPENDIX E.

CONFIDENTIAL REPORT BY AN INVESTIGATOR ON A  
SOUTH OF ENGLAND VILLAGE.

A desolate deserted village; crazy houses, ill-kept, rarely repaired, with gaps in the streets where houses have fallen down. Each year some houses have been condemned. No houses built in the last 60 years. The houses stand as they fall into ruin, the heaps of stone, roofing, and timbers lying there. Grass is growing in the streets. The whole village and surroundings owned by —, typical of the worst form of landlord; he will not sell or lease land for small holdings, nor repair his houses, or do anything whatever to improve condition of the village. Wages on farms, 11s. to 14s. a week, more often 11s.; farmer charges 2s. 6d. for cottage and 1s. in some cases a lug for allotment land (8 an acre), paying 10s. on big farms themselves. Farms very large, very little labour employed, very poor cultivation. Every natural advantage for prosperity, except being 8 miles from train (the ancestor of present landlord refused land for Great Western Railway to go through); lies on main London Road to —; good soil, well watered in low lands; common lands on high downs still open; considerable number of men eager for land.

Sample cases of overcrowding.

Houses almost falling down; bedrooms and windows very small.

W. V., — Street; 3 bedrooms (originally 2, one partitioned off more like a cupboard). Father, mother, mother-in-law, sister-in-law, 3 grown-up sons, and 1 grown-up daughter.

L., — Street; 3 bedrooms (one a partition as above). Father, mother, 3 lodgers (labourers), son 21, daughter 15, son 6; grown-up daughter occasionally at home.

W., — Street; 2 small bedrooms. Father, mother, 3 sons, 1 grown-up daughter.

B., — Street; 2 tiny bedrooms. Father, mother, 7 growing boys and girls at school, 1 baby.

E., — Main Road; 2 bedrooms (one leading through the other). Father, mother, 3 grown-up sons, 3 children at school, 1 little one.

I saw Medical Officer of Health. Was told I should find him entirely in support of landlord, being dependent upon him, and living in one of his houses, as all in the village do.

Medical Officer of Health assured me that “— was no worse than other villages, perhaps not so bad.” Pressed him for a worse. He would not say. He considered health very good, overcrowding the natural habit of the people, same in all villages. They did not want houses because no employment, and people

always going left houses vacant. I asked if any decent labourer's cottage was to be had. He thought not ; none was wanted. Had any house ever been built ? Not in the 20 years he had been there. Did he consider houses sanitary and properly repaired ? He should say no worse than other villages ; come to that, all old houses were insanitary ; some repairs had been done of late.

Saw Clerk of Union Offices, who wished his name not to appear. Considered houses disgraceful ; poverty and unemployment bad ; people tied so much by dependence on landlord, ventured to ask for nothing. Land impossible to get ; farms so large, small holdings could easily be divided off. Considered if we secured inspection many houses would be condemned, but none would be built ; cause more hardship to people. Till land is opened, not much use for houses. Village undoubtedly dying out ; tanning and other trades have left it. Sympathetic to our efforts, but pessimistic under present Acts. Impossible to ask signatures in village, where all dread eviction and dependent on one landlord, but could get same, if advisable, in neighbouring parishes in same district.

## APPENDIX F.

## STATE ACTION IN FIXING WAGES.

By W. STEPHEN SANDERS.

Apart from the insertion of fair wages clauses in Government and Municipal contracts and the fixing of minimum rates for public servants and employees by central and local authorities, various methods have been adopted, especially in Australasia, to establish legal minima of wages for all workers. The following are the methods which have been adopted in that part of the world :

I. *Ratification of Voluntary Agreements.*—Under the labour laws of New Zealand and Australia, voluntary agreements arranged between the organised workers and organised employers may be ratified by the State. The effect of such ratification is to make the agreement binding on all employers engaged in the industry, whether they were parties to the voluntary agreement or not. It also gives the employees the definite legal right to receive the standard rate. It is to be noted that, under this arrangement, always implicitly, and sometimes explicitly, the employees are forbidden to strike for more than the standard rate.

II. *Arbitration Courts.*—Under the New Zealand Arbitration Act, passed in 1894, all industrial disputes which cannot be otherwise settled are referred to an Arbitration Court. Either party may refer any matter in dispute to the Court, whereupon the Court has power to give an award which has all the force of law. The Court can prescribe a minimum wage or a graduated series of standard rates, and can regulate the hours of work and all other conditions of employment.

Compulsory arbitration under the above-mentioned Act has been in operation in New Zealand for eighteen years, and although there has been considerable friction from time to time, many beneficial results have been achieved, and there does not appear to be sufficient dissatisfaction with the system to lead to any likelihood of its repeal. There are, however, many objections to compulsory arbitration, and under the conditions which exist in England these objections (especially the inevitable limitation of the right to strike) are likely to prove insuperable.

III. *Trade Boards.*—The most satisfactory and successful method of raising wages by State action which has yet been discovered is that of "Trade Boards," which were first adopted in Victoria, in 1896. The system was first applied to five trades, including clothing, furniture, shirt-making, and baking, in which the workers were indisputably underpaid. Since then it has spread to trade after trade, and from 1908 there has been a positive rush of trades, employers and workpeople showing almost equal

anxiety to get their industry brought within the operation of the Act. To-day more than nine-tenths of all the factory workers in Victoria (and a large proportion of the other workers) are employed under conditions as to hours and wages which have been legally determined by a Trade Board.

Any industry may be brought under the Act by application of the employers or workpeople to the Minister of Labour, who, if he approves, thereupon moves a resolution which must be passed by both Houses of the Legislature. The Minister then constitutes a Board with an equal number of representatives of employers and workpeople.

The Board has power not only to fix a minimum wage, but to deal with all the conditions of the contract between the employer and workpeople, wages, hours, overtime, holidays, proportion of apprentices or improvers, definition of different classes of employers within the same trade, etc., etc.

In every instance Trade Boards have brought about increase of wages, generally very substantial increases, and at the same time they have secured an almost universal eight-hours day for factory workers, besides preventing the exploitation of boy and girl labour. Yet there is not the least evidence that they have increased prices.

#### TRADE BOARDS IN ENGLAND.

The British Trade Boards Act of 1909 is based on the Victorian model. It applies, at present, only to four trades—slop tailoring, paper-box making, chain-making, and lace finishing.

All the four Trade Boards appointed have now issued determinations which, however, are not all yet in full force. They all, however, raise the average wages, the increase in the chain-making trade amounting to from 50 per cent. to 100 per cent. A still more important result in the chain-making trade is that *the women engaged in it have, as a result of their increased wages, become completely organised in a Trade Union*, whereas before it was found impossible to organise them.

The main weaknesses of the British Trade Boards are as follows :

1. The Boards so far have not yet as much courage as might have been hoped, and have been too ready to listen to the plea that large increases in wages would ruin the trades concerned. Consequently, the increases, although valuable, are not altogether satisfactory.

2. The application of the Act is too restricted. The Board of Trade has power to extend it to other trades, but only to those in which wages are "exceptionally low" compared to other trades ; thus, many trades that ought to be brought in are excluded merely because others are in a worse plight.

3. The Boards have insufficient power under the Act. They ought to be empowered to deal not only with wages, but, as in

Victoria, with hours and with all the other conditions of the wage contract.

The Trade Boards Act is now to be extended to the following trades, the rates of wages in sections of which are exceptionally low : shirt-making, sugar confectionery—fruit preserving, jam, pickles, sauces, etc., metal hollow-ware, linen embroidery, calendering and machine-ironing in steam laundries.

## APPENDIX G.

## AVERAGE NUMBER OF ACRES PER LABOURER EMPLOYED ON TENANT FARMS.

On pp. 74 to 77 of the Acreage and Live Stock Returns for 1911 (Cd. 6021) are shown the total number of holdings (above 1 acre) in each county, with the average size of the holdings, also the acreage of holdings occupied by the owners, and the proportion of such acreage to the total acreage. By multiplying the first two together, the total acreage for each county is obtained, and subtracting the acreage occupied by owners, we get the total acreage of tenant farms for each county.

On pp. 114 to 117 of the Report on the Decline in the Agricultural Population (Cd. 3273) are given the total number of shepherds and agricultural labourers employed in each county. Deducting a number in each case proportionate to the acreage occupied by owners, we get the number in each county of shepherds and agricultural labourers (added together) employed on tenant farms.

The average number of acres for labourers is found by dividing the number of acres of tenant farms in each county by the number of labourers employed.

It should be noted that the numbers shown in Cd. 3273 are those of the 1901 Census, and these are the latest figures available, those for the last Census not having appeared when the table was compiled. The latest figures may considerably affect the results arrived at.

In calculating the acreage, no account has been taken of mountain and heath land, as this is not included in the Return on pp. 74 to 77 of Cd. 6021. But as much of this land is land for which no rent or only a very small rent is charged, it was thought that for the purpose of this inquiry it might be neglected, more especially as it would be used for grazing, which would only employ comparatively few men.

Counties.	Acreage of Tenant Farms* (of 1 acre and upwards).	No. of labourers † employed.	No. of acres per labourer.
Bedford ... ..	217,585	8,183	26.5
Huntingdon ... ..	185,679	5,047	36.7
Cambridge and Isle of Ely	400,284	14,004	28.5
Suffolk ... ..	599,634	22,811	26.2

\* Pages 74-77, Acreage and Live Stock Returns for 1911 (Cd. 6021).

† Pages 114-117, Report on the Decline in the Agricultural Population (Cd. 3273).

Counties.	Acreage of Tenant Farms* (of 1 acre and upwards).	No. of labourers† employed.	No. of acres per labourer.
Essex ... ..	638,111	24,258	26·3
Hertford ... ..	268,718	8,911	30·1
Middlesex ... ..	76,110	3,322	22·9
London ... ..	5,874	627	9·3
Norfolk ... ..	921,842	30,077	30·6
Lincolnshire ... ..	1,354,958	32,392	41·8
York, E.R. ... ..	626,550	12,470	50·2
Kent ... ..	603,993	27,049	22·3
Surrey ... ..	177,972	7,051	25·2
Sussex ... ..	539,832	16,795	32·1
Berks ... ..	267,088	8,020	33·3
Hants & I. of W. ... ..	540,770	14,875	36·3
Nottingham ... ..	391,753	8,230	47·6
Leicester ... ..	428,615	7,432	57·6
Rutland ... ..	76,141	1,423	53·5
Northampton ... ..	494,544	11,217	44·0
Buckingham ... ..	346,126	9,590	36·0
Oxford ... ..	352,193	9,835	35·8
Warwick ... ..	443,273	9,766	45·3
Salop ... ..	658,671	11,650	56·5
Worcester ... ..	344,924	9,757	35·3
Gloucester... ..	563,096	12,140	46·3
Wiltshire ... ..	631,729	14,952	42·2
Monmouth ... ..	213,407	2,821	75·6
Hereford ... ..	400,081	7,809	51·2
Somerset ... ..	775,371	16,831	46·0
Dorset ... ..	424,372	10,036	43·2
Devon ... ..	1,076,183	18,328	58·7
Cornwall ... ..	551,104	9,167	60·1
Northumberland ... ..	646,110	8,511	75·9
Durham ... ..	399,300	5,222	76·4
York, N.R. ... ..	810,946	10,818	74·9
York, W.R. ... ..	1,095,978	18,608	58·8
Cumberland ... ..	494,757	6,140	80·5
Westmorland ... ..	219,666	1,995	110·1
Lancaster ... ..	740,327	19,317	38·3
Chester ... ..	495,706	13,647	36·3
Derby ... ..	451,108	6,769	66·6
Stafford ... ..	545,525	10,858	50·2
Anglesey ... ..	129,203	2,876	44·9
Carnarvon ... ..	152,624	3,026	50·4
Merioneth ... ..	141,138	1,778	79·3
Montgomery ... ..	254,238	3,209	79·2
Denbigh ... ..	242,630	4,095	59·2
Flint ... ..	117,977	2,178	54·1

\* Pages 74-77, Acreage and Live Stock Returns for 1911 (Cd. 6021).

† Pages 114-117, Report on the Decline in the Agricultural Population (Cd. 3273).

Counties.	Acreege of Tenant Farms* (of 1 acre and upwards)	No of labourer† employed.	No. of acres per labourer.
Cardigan ... ..	220,421	2,327	94.7
Radnor ... ..	144,021	1,414	101.8
Brecon ... ..	187,270	1,676	111.7
Glamorgan ... ..	247,596	3,398	72.8
Carmarthen ... ..	388,205	3,192	121.6
Pembroke ... ..	273,665	3,157	86.6
Nairn ... ..	22,852	585	39.0
Elgin or Moray ... ..	90,955	2,163	42.0
Banff ... ..	144,110	3,156	45.6
Aberdeen ... ..	586,645	11,711	50.0
Kincairdine ... ..	107,337	2,405	44.6
Forfar ... ..	224,757	5,208	43.1
Perth ... ..	275,327	5,102	53.9
Clackmannan ... ..	12,966	265	48.9
Kinross ... ..	24,350	326	74.6
Fife ... ..	206,296	4,703	43.8
Linlithgow ... ..	54,209	1,122	48.3
Midlothian ... ..	107,730	3,168	34.0
Haddington ... ..	97,318	3,460	28.1
Berwick ... ..	170,095	3,664	46.4
Roxburgh ... ..	154,334	3,263	47.2
Selkirk ... ..	25,417	578	43.9
Peebles ... ..	42,772	726	58.9
Shetland ... ..	50,132	249	201.3
Orkney ... ..	95,294	1,588	60.0
Caithness ... ..	104,386	2,040	51.1
Sutherland ... ..	28,846	835	34.5
Ross and Cromarty ... ..	120,211	3,187	37.7
Inverness ... ..	127,286	3,310	38.4
Argyll ... ..	108,623	3,514	30.9
Bute ... ..	24,476	606	40.3
Dumbarton ... ..	42,269	1,052	40.1
Stirling ... ..	95,955	1,934	49.6
Lanark ... ..	219,124	4,570	47.9
Renfrew ... ..	75,153	1,828	41.1
Ayr ... ..	291,427	4,870	59.8
Dumfries ... ..	224,543	3,795	59.1
Kirkeudbright ... ..	172,713	2,576	67.0
Wigtown ... ..	148,706	3,419	43.4

\* Pages 74-77, Acreage and Live Stock Returns for 1911 (Cd. 6021).

† Pages 114-117, Report on the Decline in the Agricultural Population (Cd. 3273).

## APPENDIX H.

## RENT PER ACRE OF TENANT FARMS.

There seem to be no proper official statistics on this point, and certainly no recent ones. The general opinion seems to be that the average value of agricultural land in Great Britain is 20s. per acre, but of course this varies enormously in different counties and in different parts of the same county. Consequently, it has seemed advisable to obtain as many facts as possible as to actual rent per acre paid on different farms and on as recent dates as possible.

The following information was collected in this way :

From the *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, Vol. 55 (1892), in an article on "The Accounts of an Oxford College" :

Farm in Oxfordshire (arable, 109 acres ; pasture, 78 acres). Rent per acre in 1890, 19s. (Tenant paying tithe.)

Farm in valley of Upper Thames, Berkshire (2,181 acres). Rent per acre in 1890, 20s. (College paying tithe.)

Farm near Banbury (824 acres). Rent per acre in 1890, 26s. 6d. (No tithe.)

Farm near Oxford (arable, 87 acres ; pasture, 88 acres). Rent per acre in 1890, 27s. (College paying tithe.)

Do., do. Rent per acre in 1890, 30s. (No tithe.)

Farm on a hilly slope near Bath (317 acres). Rent per acre in 1890, 24s. (Tenant paying tithe.)

Farm in Kent. Rent per acre in 1890, 16s. 6d. (College paying tithe.)

From an article "Agricultural Depression . . . its Effects on a Leading London Hospital," in the same volume :

Farm in Herefordshire (9,490 acres). Rent per acre on average of 3 years, 1889 to 1891, 23s. 3d.

Farm in Lincoln (6,891 acres). Rent per acre on average of 3 years, 1889 to 1891, 34s.

Farm in Essex (8,785 acres). Rent per acre on average of 3 years, 1889 to 1891, 14s. 2d.

From *Rural England*, by Sir H. Rider Haggard. He made inquiries in 27 counties in England in 1901 and 1902 :

## WILTSHIRE.

	Acres.	Rent.			Rent per acre.		
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
<i>Dauntsey Property :</i>							
One of the worst farms ... ..	130	130	0	0	1	0	0
” ” ” ... ..	180	200	0	0	1	2	2
Better farm ... ..	214	300	0	0	1	8	0
” ” ... ..	160	240	0	0	1	10	0
” ” ... ..	150	220	0	0	1	9	4
” ” ... ..	132	220	0	0	1	13	4
<i>Christian Malford Property :</i>							
Cheap farm ... ..	190	260	0	0	1	7	4
Larger farms ... ..	377	600	0	0	1	7	4
” ” ... ..	200	350	0	0	1	15	0
” ” ... ..	200	360	0	0	1	16	0
Bad farms ... ..	150	130	0	0	0	17	4
<i>Downs Property :</i>							
245 acres arable, 75 down, 220 pasture ... ..	550	430	0	0	0	15	7
<i>Overton Property :</i>							
Temple Farm (190 acres arable, 67 acres pasture, 130 acres down) ... ..	390	120	0	0	0	6	1
Wiek Farm (all down and very much out of the way)... ..	740	220	0	0	0	5	11
Clatford Farm (560 acres arable, 130 acres pasture, 200 acres down) ... ..	900	500	0	0	0	11	1
<i>North Overton Property :</i>							
Farm (530 acres arable, 360 acres down, 70 acres pasture) ... ..	960	490	0	0	0	10	2
<i>Avebury Property :</i>							
Farm (560 acres arable, 80 acres pasture, 200 acres down) ... ..	840	440	0	0	0	10	5

On an accompanying map the rents in Wiltshire were shown as from 5s. per acre for hill land to 35s. per acre for bottom pastures. The average per acre in one part of the county was shown as 25s., in another as 20s.

## HAMPSHIRE.

Rents from 21s. to 5s., tithe free. Sporting rights generally reserved. Mr. Butler, who had managed land in Wiltshire and Hampshire since 1882—*i.e.*, all his working life—put rent of ordinary land in good heart in Hampshire at about 15s. an acre.

## SUSSEX.

Rents, 20s. to 30s. per acre.

Rye Division, 12s. 6d. to 15s.

Map shows rent of marshland in East Sussex to go up to 40s., hill farms from 10s. downwards. According to the map, the average would seem to be 20s. to 30s.

## KENT.

Rent per acre, 30s. to 40s. (the latter for the best hop lands).  
Wye and Romney Marsh, average 20s.  
Marshlands, 20s. to 25s.

## DEVONSHIRE.

Average rent, 25s. per acre.

Farms of about 70 acres on the borders of Dartmoor (good arable and pasture) at a rent of 10s. to 14s. an acre.

In the South Hammers district Mr. Vosper estimated "that from 25s. to 35s. per acre would be a fair average for best mixed land of, say, half pasture and half arable, and from 15s. to 25s. for the poor ordinary lands, according to quality."

A farm of 400 acres between Honiton and Exeter was rented at a little over 28s. an acre.

Mr. Edgar Dudley, of Plymouth, said he had 15 years' experience in the West of England, and he put the present average annual rental value of agricultural land in Devonshire at 20s. an acre.

A large landowner put the average rental of best lands at 25s., and second-class lands at 17s. 6d. per acre.

## SOMERSET.

Rents (according to the map), 20s. to 50s. an acre.

Average rents, 20s. to 25s.

Vale lands round Taunton, 30s. to 40s. an acre.

Near Yeovil nice mixed grass holdings of 60 to 120 acres were rented at 45s. to 60s.; mixed farms of 120 to 160 acres, 35s. to 45s. per acre; large mixed farms, 20s. to 35s. per acre.

Hazelbury district, a farm of 534 acres was rented at 22s. 6d. per acre. In this district even adjoining fields vary very much in value; thus some lying close to this farm were worth only 10s. an acre.

## DORSETSHIRE.

Rents, 10s. to 50s., or in valleys even 60s. per acre.

## HEREFORDSHIRE.

Rents, 10s. to 50s. per acre. Good land, 25s. to 32s. per acre

## WORCESTERSHIRE.

Rents, 18s. to 30s. per acre.

Rent for small holdings is much higher than for large farms. Thus, in the Bewdley district a tenancy of 40 acres was let at 50s. the acre, while next to it lay one of 250 acres of similar land that brought in but 20s. the acre. Another small holding of 24

acres of poor land was let at 33s. per acre, whereas a large neighbouring farm of between 300 acres and 400 acres realised but 12s. or 13s. an acre.

*N.B.*—There is so much demand for small holdings that the rents of these are often put up much too high. Rider Haggard suggests that County Councils should take large parcels of land and let out in small holdings at proper rents.

#### GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

Freehold farm, cottages and land, 367 acres, rent 13s. per acre.

Two freehold farms, with cottages, buildings and land, 980 acres, rent 5s. 6d. per acre.

Freehold farm, with cottages and land, 219 acres, rent 10s. per acre.

A large area of the Cotswold land is let at rents varying from 5s. to 10s. the acre.

#### WARWICKSHIRE.

Near Nuneaton the average rent is 17s. 6d. per acre.

Between Coventry and Birmingham, heavy arable land, rents 10s. to 15s. per acre.

Kenilworth, 20s. to 29s. per acre.

Near Redditch the average rent is 25s. Dairy land, 20s. to 60s.

Near Alcester, rents 13s. down to 2s. 6d

Between Warwick and Stratford-on-Avon, 15s. to 20s.

Southern end of county, rents 17s. to 27s., and 35s. to 40s.

The following are the rents of 5 farms on the Earl of Camperdown's estate, their average size being just over 200 acres :

						s.	d.
A.	Rent per acre in 1901	...	...	...	...	20	7
B.	„ „ „ „ „	...	...	...	...	19	0
C.	„ „ „ „ „	...	...	...	...	24	0
D.	„ „ „ „ „	...	...	...	...	20	0
E.	„ „ „ „ „	...	...	...	...	22	0

#### SHROPSHIRE.

*Northern part.*—Hill land rents, 15s. ; mixed farm rents, 20s. ; rents (best farms), 26s. to 35s. ; average, 20s. to 30s.

*Southern part.*—Mixed farm rents, 21s. to 26s. ; pasture farm rents, 35s.

The gross rental of a large and typical Shropshire estate of 7,000 acres was, in 1901, 18s. an acre. It is an instructive fact that almost the entire loss (*i.e.*, from the previous gross rental of 23s. per acre) is due to the reduced letting value of farms over 50 acres, those under 50 acres having practically held their own as a source of income. This estate may be divided into three

classes—bottom lands, which fetch about 24s. an acre ; hill-side farms, estimated at 12s. ; and hill-top sheep runs, worth 5s. an acre.

## ESSEX.

Saffron Walden, rents 5s. to 20s.

Near River Stour, 40s. to 60s. ; high land close by, 5s. to 15s.

Epping, 11s. to 15s. 6d. ; pasture rent up to 40s.

Maldon, 15s. to 5s.

Near Southend, rents 6s. to 40s.

Chelmsford, 12s. to 25s.

## HERTFORDSHIRE.

North, near Royston, chalky land, 15s. ; pasture rents, 25s.

Near Buntingford, 10s. to 15s.

Near Hitchin, average rent, 17s.

Western side, heavy hill land, 7s. 6d. to 20s. ; low land, medium land, 17s. to 30s.

Near St. Albans, 20s.

Near Hatfield, rents on farms near rail, 26s. ; other rents, 10s. to 15s.

Near Watford, poor arable, 10s. ; pasture, 30s. to 40s.

Near Rickmansworth, 20s. to 30s.

## CAMBRIDGESHIRE.

Near Wisbech, rents of uplands, 12s. to 25s. ; fen, 15s. to 30s.

Eastern side, 20s.

Southern side, 7s. to 20s.

## HUNTINGDON

Rents, 20s. to 40s.

## OXFORD.

Near Bicester, average rents, 18s.

Near Banbury, average rents, 24s.

Near Henley, average rents, 18s. (hill land).

## NORTHAMPTON.

Near Rockingham, 35s. to 40s.

Near Market Harborough, up to 36s.

Near Northampton, 20s. to 36s.

Near Brackley, 15s. to 25s.

## LINCOLNSHIRE.

Near Banks of River Humber, 40s. to 50s.

Near Brigg, 20s. to 25s.

Near Caistor, 7s. 6d., 9s., 11s., and 12s.

Near Saltfleet, 40s. to 50s.

Between Lincoln and Market Rasen, 5s. to 10s.

South Lindsey or Horncastle district, 20s. to 60s.

Generally in Lincolnshire the rents vary from 10s. to 30s.

## LEICESTER AND RUTLAND.

Along the northern border of Leicestershire the rents of some farms go up to 40s. an acre, but the average is 30s.

Near Loughborough, rents 15s. to 25s. per acre.

Near Leicester the average rent is 23s., but in the case of farms of under 100 acres the rent goes up to 40s.

South-east of Uppingham, in the valley of the River Welland, rents from 35s. to 40s.

In Rutlandshire the average rent is from 15s. to 30s.

## NOTTINGHAM.

Bassetlaw district, rents 18s. to 23s.

Near Mansfield, rents 20s.

Near Newark, rents 60s.

Near Southwell, rents 18s. to 35s. in the case of farms of under 100 acres, and 12s. to 25s. in the case of farms of 200 acres and over.

In the Vale of Belvoir, rents 35s. to 40s.

North-east of Newark, rents 10s. to 25s.

## YORKSHIRE, NORTH AND EAST RIDINGS.

East of Northallerton, rents 12s. to 20s.

Near Thirsk, rents 20s. to 30s.

North of the River Derwent, the average rent is 27s. an acre.

South of the River Derwent, the average rent is 20s. to 27s. 6d.

In the Buekrose district, rents 12s. to 24s.

In the Holderness district, rents 16s. to 25s.

In the Howdenshire district, rents 20s. to 35s.

Near North York Moor, rents 17s. to 40s.

In the Richmond district, rents 10s. to 25s.

## YORKSHIRE, WEST RIDING.

In the Ripon district, rents of best land 30s., and of middle land 22s.

Near Ripley and Harrogate, rents 16s. to 30s.

In the Otley district, rents 22s. to 30s. for the best land.

Between Leeds and Selby, rents 18s. to 30s.

## SUFFOLK.

Near Beccles and Lowestoft, rents 40s. to 60s.

In the Valley of the River Waveney, rents up to 40s.

Eye Division, rents 10s. to 17s., and 15s. to 20s., good pasture 20s., poor pasture 5s.

Near Bury St. Edmunds, rents 7s. 6d. to 20s.

Near Long Melford, rents 6s. to 20s.

Near Woodbridge, rents 7s. to 25s.

## NORFOLK.

Near Wells, salt marshes, rents 20s. to 50s.

Near Castle Rising, rents 5s. to 20s.

In the Valley of the Great Ouse, rents up to 40s.

Near Fakenham, rents 10s. to 20s.

Near East Dereham, rents about 15s.

Near Downham, rents 17s. 6d.

Between Holt and North Walsham, rents 18s. to 25s.

Near North Walsham on the coast, rents 30s. to 40s.

Between Attleborough and Downham, rents 7s. 6d. to 15s.

Near Buckenham, rents 10s. to 20s.

Near Loddon, rents 12s. and 20s. to 30s.

Some information as to rental values may be obtained from an article in Vol. 70, for December, 1907, of the *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*. It is by R. J. Thompson, and is entitled "An Inquiry into the Rent of Agricultural Land in England and Wales during the Nineteenth Century."

On p. 596 he gives a table showing that for 399,043 acres distributed over England the average rent per acre in 1899 to 1900 was 20s. On the whole area of 482,000 acres, for which he has particulars for that year, the average rent works out at 22s. 2d. per acre.

On p. 612, Appendix A. The average rent per acre of agricultural land on certain estates in Lincoln, Hereford, Essex, and North Wales in 1900, of which the total acreage was 71,469, was 14s. 7d.

Appendix B. The average rent per acre of agricultural land on certain estates in Lincoln, Hereford, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Cambridge, Essex, and North Wales in 1900, of which the total acreage was 119,178, was 17s. 2d.

On p. 615 are given the rents of certain individual farms, as follows :

	Rent per acre.		
	£	s.	d.
Farm of 204 acres in Wilts, in 1907 ...	...	1	4 6
Farm of 225 acres in Norfolk, in 1905 ...	...	0	14 3

Four typical farms in the South Midlands :

	Rent per acre.		
	s.	d.	
Farm C, 359 acres ... ..	...	16	9
Farm D, 122 acres ... ..	...	16	4
Farm E, 417 acres ... ..	...	15	9
Farm F, 467 acres ... ..	...	17	11

Further information as to rental values may be obtained from the last Report of the Commissioners of His Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues, dated June 27th, 1911.

On p. 38, Appendix No. 2, there is a list of holdings and farms in different counties, giving the acreage and the rent paid, as follows:

	BEDFORD.		Rent per acre.		
			£	s.	d.
A smallholding containing 30 acres ...	...	...	0	17	4
A smallholding containing 5 acres ...	...	...	1	0	0
CAMBRIDGE.					
A smallholding containing 8 acres ...	...	...	1	19	0
A smallholding containing 23 acres ...	...	...	2	0	0
CHESTER.					
A smallholding containing 12½ acres ...	about	...	0	15	4
A smallholding containing 7 acres ...	...	...	2	17	1
A smallholding containing 5¼ acres ...	...	...	1	16	8
GLOUCESTER.					
A farm containing 87 acres ...	...	...	1	1	8
To be let as smallholdings, 25 acres ...	...	...	1	5	7
A farm containing 207 acres ...	...	...	1	4	1
LANCASTER.					
A smallholding containing 12 acres ...	...	...	1	11	8
LINCOLN.					
A farm containing 130 acres ...	...	...	1	4	7
A farm containing 75 acres ...	...	...	1	6	8
To be let as smallholdings, 224 acres ...	...	...	1	8	4
A farm containing 86 acres ...	...	...	1	7	10
To be let as smallholdings, 113 acres ...	...	...	1	15	4
A farm containing 366 acres ...	...	...	1	10	0
A farm containing 221 acres ...	...	...	1	9	0
A farm containing 689 acres ...	...	...	1	9	5
A farm containing 404 acres ...	...	...	1	7	2
A smallholding containing 10½ acres ...	...	...	1	10	5
A smallholding containing 11 acres ...	...	...	1	9	1
A smallholding containing 10½ acres ...	...	...	1	10	5
A smallholding containing 5 acres ...	...	...	2	8	0
A farm containing 478 acres ...	...	...	1	9	10
NORFOLK.					
A farm containing 364 acres ...	...	...	2	3	0
WILTS.					
A smallholding containing 7 acres ...	...	...	3	7	7
A smallholding containing 11 acres ...	...	...	3	12	4
A smallholding containing 6½ acres ...	...	...	3	1	6

Yorks.		£	s.	d.
A smallholding containing 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ acres ...	...	1	17	2
A farm containing 391 acres ...	...	1	10	11
A smallholding containing 38 acres ...	...	1	15	3
A farm containing 158 acres ...	...	0	15	2
A farm containing 97 acres ...	...	0	12	2
A farm containing 393 acres ...	...	1	3	2
A farm containing 225 acres ...	...	1	9	10

## APPENDIX I.

## COST OF BUILDING IN 1911 AND 1913.\*

Materials.	Old Price, 1911.	Present Price, 1913.	Increase	Increase per cent. about.
Fletton bricks ... ..	35/8 per 1,000 dlvd.	39/6 per 1,000 dlvd.	3/10	10
Stock bricks ... ..	30/0 per 1,000 dlvd.	36/6 per 1,000 dlvd.	6/6	20
Staffordshire blue bricks	90/0 per 1,000 dlvd.	95/6 per 1,000 dlvd.	5/6	7
Tiling ... ..	22/6 per sq.	25/0 per sq.	2/6	9
Lime ... ..	20/6 per ton	23/0 per ton	2/6	12
Cement ... ..	35/6 per ton	42/0 per ton	6/6	18
Leighton ... ..	8/3 per ton	8/8 per ton	0/5	5
Sirapiti plaster ... ..	36/6 per ton	38/6 per ton	2/0	5
Drain pipes, 4 in. ... ..	6½d. each	8d. each	0/1½	20
Drain pipes, 6 in. ... ..	9½d. each	11¾d. each	0/2¼	20
<i>Timber.</i>				
2 by 5 ... .. feet cube	1/5	1/6	0/1	7
4 by 5 ... .. "	1/11	2/0	0/1	5
¾ in. matching ... ..	9/3 square	9/6 square	0/3	3
½ in. matching ... ..	7/9 square	8/0 square	0/3	4
1 in. roof boarding ... ..	11/9 square	12/6 square	0/9	6
Feather edge, ditto ... ..	6/3 square	6/6 square	0/3	5
3 by 2 deal ... ..	6/0 100 ft.	6/6 100 ft.	0/6	7½
<i>Iron Goods.</i>				
Municipal stoves ... ..	60/0 each	68/6 each	8/6	20
Iron mantels ... ..	21/0 each	25/0 each	4/0	20
Iron mantels, registers				
24 in. ... ..	14/6 each	18/9 each	4/3	27½
Iron mantels, registers				
30 in. ... ..	20/0 each	25/6 each	5/6	25
Yorkshire ranges, with rustless pans ... ..	90/5 each	102/6 each	12/1	27½
<i>Other Iron and Brass Goods</i>	—	—	—	20 at least
<i>Wages.</i>				
½d. an hour, all trades, increase ... ..	—	—	—	5

\* These are taken from actual estimates tendered in a village 3 miles from a station, and 25 miles from London.

## APPENDIX J.

## MENDELISM AND AGRICULTURE.

*Extract from article, "Applied Heredity," by R. C. Punnett, M.A., in "Harper's Monthly Magazine," December, 1908.*

. . . So long ago as 1890 the National Association of British and Irish Millers called attention to the fact that the quality of English wheats had deteriorated. For milling purposes the foreign article with its strong glutenous grains was found to be greatly superior, and English wheats were selling at 28s. 6d. a quarter, while Manitoba hard was fetching 35s. The National Association endeavoured to interest the agricultural societies in the question, but found that they were more or less resigned to this unsatisfactory state of things, and despaired of competing with the superior quality of the foreign wheat. Indeed, many declared that grain of the highest quality could not be grown profitably in Great Britain. At this point the Association took a wise, and, for England, a courageous step. They decided to provide the funds for experimental research, and in 1900 Professor Biffen of the Cambridge University Agricultural Department started his remarkable series of experiments. It was just at the time of the rediscovery of Mendel's paper. Thanks to Professor Bateson, the extreme importance of that paper was at once recognised in Cambridge, and Professor Biffen organised his work upon Mendelian lines. He collected together all the varieties he could lay hands on, and by numerous crossing tests he laid the foundations of an accurate knowledge of the various unit characters that occur in wheat. He found the beardless character to be dominant to beardlessness, rough chaff dominant to smooth, red grain to white grain, thick stem to thin stem, and so on. Early and late ripening behaved as a Mendelian pair of characters, as also did heavy as opposed to poor cropping capacity. Professor Biffen's analysis further revealed Mendelian heredity in two characters of such importance as to deserve special mention. We have already seen that the poor quality of English wheat is due to poverty of glutenous matter. The grain is too starchy, and requires the admixture of a considerable amount of glutenous "strong" foreign wheat to give flour which will bake into a presentable loaf. Professor Biffen has been able to show that the highly glutenous grain is dominant to the starchy one. With this knowledge he has been able in a few years to produce a wheat combining the large cropping capacity of English wheat with the high gluten content of a foreign variety.

But the most important and the most fascinating of all Professor Biffen's experiments concern the inheritance of an entirely different character. In all countries the most serious enemy of the wheat farmer is rust. Early in their growth the plants are attacked by a parasitic fungus, whose presence is rendered con-

spicuous by an abundant outbreak of reddish-yellow pustules all over the foliage. In certain seasons and with certain varieties the outbreak may be so severe as to very greatly diminish the yield of grain. In the bad rust year of 1891 the loss due to this cause in Prussia alone was calculated at over £20,000,000, while a well-known authority estimates that the average loss from rust to the wheat crops of the world would not be covered by £100,000,000. No prophylactic against the disease has been discovered, and it is recognised that the only way to avoid it is to make use of varieties which are naturally immune. Unfortunately the few such varieties that exist are in other respects poor and unprofitable to grow.

Professor Biffen began his experiments by crossing a variety peculiarly subject to the attacks of yellow rust with an immune variety. The hybrids produced were all severely attacked by rust. In the following year such seed as could be collected from these plants was sown. The greater number of the resulting plants were much rusted, but some were entirely free from the disease, though growing up in the closest contact with their rusty brethren. It was found on counting that the immune plants formed almost exactly a quarter of the total number. In other words, the experiment proved susceptibility and immunity to be a pair of Mendelian characters, and consequently within the control of the breeder to combine with other characters according as he pleased. The fact that resistance to yellow rust is a unit character exhibiting Mendelian inheritance makes it a simple matter to transfer it to wheats which are in every way desirable except for their susceptibility to rust. From the knowledge gained through his experiments Professor Biffen has been able to build up wheats combining the large yield and excellent straw of the best English varieties with the strength of the foreign grain, and at the same time quite immune to yellow rust. During the present year several acres of such wheat coming true to type were grown on the Cambridge University Experimental Farm, and when the quantity is sufficient to be put upon the market, there is no reason to doubt its exerting a considerable influence on the agricultural outlook.

Besides the work on wheat, experiments have been undertaken with barley. As with the wheats, there are varieties of barleys with glutenous and others with highly starchy grains. The more starch a barley contains, the more valuable it is for malting purposes. Since Professor Biffen has been able to demonstrate that with barley, as with wheat, starchiness is recessive to glutenous quality, it should be an easy matter in the future to associate the starchy character with other valuable properties in barleys.

Nor is the work at Cambridge confined to plants. A start has been made with the object of investigating the inheritance of horns and of face colour in sheep, and Professor Wood has been

able to show that both these characters are inherited upon Mendelian lines. In this way he has been able to combine the hornless character of the black-faced Suffolk with the white face of the horned Dorset. Similarly, Professor Spillman has adduced evidence to show that the polled character in cattle is dominant to the horned state, thus making it possible to dehorn painlessly any breed of cattle where this is thought desirable. . . .

[The Cambridge wheat above referred to is named "Little Joss," and is now grown widely in the Eastern Counties. The average yield over a series of years appears to be about 4 per cent. in excess of "Square Head's Master," which it replaces. The University Farm sells it for seed at 60s. a quarter, which compares with 35s. or 40s., the price of ordinary seed wheat. This result is valuable, though perhaps the anticipations of 1908 given above have not been completely realised.—H. D. II.]

## APPENDIX K.

EXTRACT FROM ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION OF THE  
AGRICULTURAL ORGANISATION SOCIETY.

13. (1) The first Governors shall consist of the subscribers to the Society's Memorandum of Association (who have already been nominated for this purpose by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Development Commissioners jointly), and also such other persons (being or becoming within one month after their appointment members of the Society) as may from time to time be appointed by the said bodies, who make appointments under this clause in such numbers, and at such times, as they think fit. The first Governors shall remain in office until the first ordinary general meeting of the Society held after the first day of April, 1914. Any vacancy in the Governors shall be filled by a member to be appointed by the said bodies.

(2) The Governors other than the first shall, subject to the provisions hereinafter contained, consist of

- (a) Eighteen Governors to be elected in manner hereinafter defined.
- (b) Twelve Governors to be appointed by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries.
- (c) Two Governors to be appointed by the County Councils' Association.
- (d) Two Governors to be appointed by the co-operative Union.
- (e) Two Governors to be co-opted by the Governors.

Provided that all Governors shall be members of the Society at the date of their election, appointment or co-optation or shall become members within one month after such date.

(3) The Governors shall have power, with the consent of the general meeting, to increase or reduce the number of Governors other than the first, but so that the numbers of the Governors shall not at any time be more than sixty, and to provide for their election in manner hereinafter defined, or their appointment by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, or their co-optation; provided always that on any such increase the number of Governors to be elected, and the number to be appointed by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, shall not be less than one-half and one-third respectively of the total number.

## APPENDIX L.

EXPORTS OF DAIRY PRODUCE TO UNITED KINGDOM  
FROM DENMARK AND FRANCE, 1895-1912.*(Compiled from Annual Statements of Trade of United Kingdom  
with Foreign Countries and British Possessions.)*

FROM DENMARK.\*

Butter and cheese=cwts.

Eggs=grt. hundreds.

Year.	Cheese.	Butter.	Eggs.
1895... ..	—	1,162,770	1,279,013
1896... ..	—	1,228,784	1,566,623
1897... ..	—	1,334,726	1,748,800
1898... ..	—	1,465,030	2,019,508
1899... ..	—	1,430,052	2,266,030
1900... ..	—	1,486,342	2,438,858
1901... ..	—	1,597,186	3,019,414
1902... ..	—	1,703,032	3,518,212
1903... ..	—	1,771,654	3,851,557
1904... ..	—	1,708,619	3,602,326
1905... ..	—	1,630,363	3,858,135
1906... ..	—	1,675,761	3,823,942
1907... ..	—	1,818,811	3,800,376
1908... ..	—	1,800,169	3,787,670
1909... ..	—	1,764,027	3,428,200
1910... ..	—	1,726,091	3,647,139
1911... ..	—	1,707,178	3,992,986
1912... ..	—	1,618,048	3,623,815

\* Including Farøe Islands; also includes Iceland and Greenland prior to 1901.

## FROM FRANCE.

Year.	Cheese.	Butter.	Eggs.
1895... ..	56,393	454,843	2,730,332
1896... ..	45,676	467,602	3,275,776
1897... ..	36,358	448,128	2,675,667
1898... ..	33,086	416,821	2,115,096
1899... ..	34,307	353,942	2,288,558
1900... ..	35,110	322,048	2,276,850
1901... ..	26,833	311,601	1,805,196
1902... ..	36,801	414,240	1,680,433
1903... ..	36,004	454,088	1,601,930
1904... ..	44,268	371,061	1,698,614
1905... ..	48,884	348,442	1,565,572
1906... ..	43,244	319,401	1,491,219
1907... ..	47,036	281,303	1,232,107
1908... ..	22,522	394,365	951,285
1909... ..	23,404	413,306	1,047,850
1910... ..	20,911	361,249	907,599
1911... ..	17,977	171,080	632,036
1912... ..	16,030	246,652	669,687

DAIRY PRODUCE EXPORTED FROM DENMARK AND FRANCE (TOTAL AMOUNT EXPORTED), 1897-1911.

*Compiled from (Annual) Stat. Abstract for the Principal and other Foreign Countries.*

1 kilogramme = 2.204 lb. avoirdupois (French and Danish).

1 pund (Danish) = 1.102 lb. avoirdupois.

FROM FRANCE.

Year.	Cheese.	Butter.	Eggs.
	Kilog.	Kilog.	Kilog.
1897... ..	6,446,000	27,918,000	13,854,000
1898... ..	6,556,000	24,980,000	10,131,000
1899... ..	7,836,000	22,283,000	9,918,000
1900... ..	8,377,000	20,257,000	10,139,000
1901... ..	8,072,000	19,554,000	9,312,000
1902... ..	9,319,000	24,439,000	8,039,000
1903... ..	10,487,000	27,086,000	8,016,000
1904... ..	9,395,000	22,608,000	10,051,000
1905... ..	10,036,000	22,584,000	8,731,000
1906... ..	10,006,000	17,829,000	8,412,000
1907... ..	11,605,000	15,716,000	5,580,000
1908... ..	11,010,000	19,936,000	7,924,000
1909... ..	11,840,000	23,253,000	7,848,000
1910... ..	11,413,000	21,967,000	6,699,000
1911... ..	10,905,000	12,804,000	5,357,000

FROM DENMARK.

Year.	Cheese.	Butter.	Eggs.
		Pund.	Score.
1897... ..	—	102,262,000	12,227,000
1898... ..	—	117,974,000	13,201,000
1899... ..	—	118,819,000	15,057,000
		Kilog.	
1900... ..	—	54,466,000	16,612,000
1901... ..	—	64,737,000	19,014,000
1902... ..	—	67,550,000	21,530,000
1903... ..	—	78,282,000	23,244,000
1904... ..	—	79,626,000	21,416,000
1905... ..	—	77,681,000	20,733,000
1906... ..	—	77,178,000	19,765,000
1907... ..	—	83,157,000	20,106,000
1908... ..	—	87,039,000	21,254,000
1909... ..	—	87,060,000	19,207,000
1910... ..	—	85,947,000	20,363,000
1911... ..	—	86,924,000	21,511,000

## APPENDIX M.

Summary of Subventions to Local Authorities 1912-13, taken from "Finance Accounts of United Kingdom for financial year ended March 31st, 1913."

	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.	U.K.
	£	£	£	£
Money passing through Local Taxation Accounts ... ..	7,012,451	1,177,678	1,449,150	9,639,279
Education Grants ...	14,519,765	2,489,425	1,744,554	18,753,744
Reformatory and In- dustrial Schools ...	277,474	—	111,912	389,386
Grants under Unem- ployed Workmen Act, 1905 ... ..	—	—	—	100,000
Contributions in lieu of Rates, etc ...	—	—	—	798,000
	—	—	—	£ 20,680,409

The sums passing through Local Taxation Accounts were as follows :

	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.	U.K.
	£	£	£	£
Local Taxation Li- cense Duties ...	2,074,699	405,790	213,601	2,694,090
Estate Duty Grant ...	2,308,457	339,228	263,537	2,911,222
Local Taxation : Cus- toms and Excise Duties ... ..	1,107,260	152,248	124,566	1,384,074
Exchequer Contribu- tion under Land Purchase (Ireland) Act, 1891 ... ..	—	—	40,000	40,000
Agricultural Rates : Grants under Acts of 1896 ... ..	1,324,486	182,116	—	1,506,602
Agricultural Grant under Local Taxa- tion Account (Scot- land) Act, 1898 ...	—	98,296	—	98,296
Carried forward	6,814,902	1,177,678	641,704	8,634,284

	England and Wales.	Scotlan <sup>d</sup> .	Ireland	U.K.
	£	£	£	£
Brought forward	6,814,902	1,177,678	641,704	8,634,284
Agricultural Grant under Local Taxa- tion Account (Ire- land) Act, 1898 ...	—	—	727,655	727,655
Additional Contribu- tion under that Act	—	—	79,000	79,000
Moiety of Rates under Tithe Rent Charge Act, 1899 ... ..	157,549	—	—	157,549
Cost of Collection of License Duties ...	40,000	—	—	40,000
Cost of Collection of Motor-car Licenses in Ireland ... ..	—	—	791	791
£	7,012,451	1,177,678	1,449,150 <sup>1</sup>	9,639,279

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October, 1913.

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