

## CHAPTER XX

### WHAT OTHER COUNTRIES ARE PLANNING FOR THE SOLDIER

All of the warring countries are preparing to attract the returning soldier to the land. This is especially true of Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. It is true of Germany as well. Elaborate inquiries have been made by official agencies in Great Britain on the subject of land colonization, while the Australian colonies have enacted generous legislation, and provided substantial financial assistance for this purpose. A special committee appointed by the president of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries of Great Britain has made an elaborate report on the subject, which states:

“The demobilization of the Navy and Army at the close of the war will afford a unique opportunity for developing agriculture in this country. It is of the utmost importance to the welfare of the nation that this opportunity should be seized and turned to the greatest advantage. The men who have joined the

forces include representatives of all the best elements of our population; many of them possess a high degree of enterprise and intelligence, and if any substantial number can be attracted to seek a career on the land at home it will give a stimulus to the agriculture of the country."

The committee discarded any hope of keeping the soldier on the land as an agricultural drudge or a tenant. It saw little hope of up-building the agricultural life of the community or of affording a decent existence to the soldier under former competitive and isolated conditions. Rather it recommended a new agricultural programme along farm-colony lines.

The findings and recommendations of the committee include:

**(1) Expert Guidance.**

It is considered essential that any scheme of land settlement by the state should make provisions for both expert agricultural advice and business organization.

**(2) Settlement in Colonies.**

That any scheme of land settlement by the state should be on the colony system. This

colony is also to be desired in order to provide them expert guidance and social life to which the soldiers have become accustomed during their service with the colors.

**(3) Size of Colony.**

The ideal settlement should be a village community of at least 100 families. Speaking generally, the minimum aggregate to be taken for a fruit and market garden settlement should be 1,000 acres, and for settlement on a dairy or mixed holding, 2,000 acres.

**(4) Type of Cultivation.**

The type of holding which on the whole is likely to be the most suitable for men with little or no previous experience of agriculture is that devoted to fruit and market gardening. Inexperienced men can be trained more easily and more quickly to grow fruit and vegetables than is the case with any other form of cultivation. Small dairy-holdings devoted mainly to the production of milk might be increased in number almost indefinitely. The other type of small holdings, the mixed farm of from 35 to 50 acres, comprising both arable and

grass land, requires a varied knowledge and considerable experience, and consequently the committee is not of the opinion that ex-service men should attempt it until they have gained some knowledge and experience. The committee also suggests that pig and poultry raising should be combined with the types of holding mentioned above.

**(5) Ownership or Tenancy.**

The majority of the committee came to the conclusion that the small holdings should be on the basis of tenancy rather than ownership. The principal objection to ownership is that it is impossible for the state to exercise any effective supervision. Second, under the ownership system, the owner must find a purchaser for his holdings, and he may not be able to move without sacrificing a considerable part of his capital. Then, under the system of ownership, a small holder will have to sink part of his capital in the land instead of using it for stocking and working his holding. A system of ownership also offers facilities for mortgaging. Under any system of state-aided purchase, there must be restrictions on the

part of the owner during the currency of the loan, and few occupying owners created by a system of state-aided purchase could hope to become landowners during their own lifetime.

**(6) Selection and Training of the Tenants.**

It is considered necessary that the men with little or no previous experience should be given a preliminary training. The "best method of giving this training will be to employ the men temporarily at a weekly rate of pay on a colony established by the state." The land acquired will be conducted as a large farm under the control of a manager appointed by the Board of Agriculture.

Applications from ex-service men who desire to settle on the land will be carefully examined by officials acting on behalf of the board, and the men with no previous experience, but who were otherwise suitable, would be offered employment on the farm at a weekly wage together with a cottage and garden. As soon as any of these men had acquired sufficient experience and showed promise of being satisfactory small holders, a portion of the farm near their cottages should be let to them. Pro-

vision should be made in laying out the farm so that adjoining land could be added to their holdings, as they became capable of taking a larger area.

Those applicants who satisfy the board that they have the necessary experience and capital might be allowed to take holdings of their own at once without any preliminary training.

**(7) Equipment and Adaptation.**

The development of property acquired by the state should be prepared on the following lines:

A sufficient number of houses should be built for settlers who will be employed in the first instance at a weekly wage. Each holding, the committee recommends, should be equipped with necessary outhouses. The map annexed to the report illustrates the way in which an area of 1,000 acres might be developed so as to provide 112 small fruit and market garden holdings, together with additional land for extensions of the holdings, and a central farm. The cost might be reduced, if the government would hand over to the board, free of cost,

the military encampments erected all over the country. The equipment of the colony should also include a depot and store to be used in connection with the sale of requirements and the disposal of produce, a central clubroom, and other buildings, such as a jam-factory, creamery, or others that may be found desirable.

The necessary road-making, water-supply, drainage, fences, etc., should be taken over by the board. In the case of fruit and market garden colonies part of the land should be planted with fruit-trees and bushes as soon as possible after the land is acquired so that when the tenants enter into possession they will find their holdings ready stocked.

**(8) Settlers' Wives.**

The success of a small holder largely depends upon the co-operation of his family, and the committee is of the opinion that special consideration should be given to the capacity of men's wives to assist in the work, and to their willingness to settle on the land. It is considered advisable that country life should be made as attractive as possible to women

and include arrangements for instruction in the branches of work which they undertake.

The question of the provision of agricultural education for women has been considered by the Agricultural Education Conference appointed by the Board of Agriculture under the chairmanship of Lord Barnard, and the committee has presented its report on the subject. The report states that women should be instructed in such subjects as dairying, including butter and cheese making, in rearing young stock and in poultry-keeping, horticulture, bacon-curing, baking and fruit-preserving, jam-making, bee-keeping, and in farm book-keeping, as well as in domestic economy. The report further recommends the establishing of women's clubs or institutes, which have proved so successful in Canada in improving the conditions of home life, in raising the standard of living, providing the means of social recreation, and in giving women a greater interest in country pursuits.

The agriculture committee concurs in the recommendation made in the report of the Agricultural Education Conference, and is of the opinion that it should be adopted as far



as possible in connection with the proposals made here for the settlement of ex-service men on the land.

**(9) Social Amenities.**

All possible social amenities should be provided in the colonies, and women's institutes or clubs should be established for the settlers' wives. "We do not want to see a purely self-contained colony of agriculturists, consisting only of men engaged in cultivating their holdings by day and listening to lectures on co-operation at night."

It would be advantageous if village industry such as basketry, weaving, lace-making, and other handicrafts were established.

**(10) Provision for Expert Guidance.**

Great emphasis is laid on the need for expert guidance by a resident director and a horticultural instructor for the settlers in each colony. A resident director should be in each colony. He would be responsible for the management of the estate while farmed as a whole, for supervising the instruction of the settlers during their initial period of training, and for advising

the small holders as to the cultivation of their holdings, the purchase of their requirements and disposal of their produce. In addition, the plan provides for occasional instruction in the several branches of agriculture by a system of extension lectures. There is also recommended administration farms, run, as far as possible, on a commercial basis, so as to teach proper business methods as well as methods of good cultivation. Farm management, in fact, is to be one of the principal subjects of instruction, not only for the men but also for their wives, who frequently make the better book-keepers. In addition, the committee emphasizes the importance of bookkeeping being taught more systematically than at present by the local educational authorities, both in elementary schools and as part of the curriculum of all farm-schools and agricultural colleges.

**(11) Co-operation and the Disposal of Products.**

The committee recognizes that steps should be taken to encourage co-operation in all directions, each colony being provided with an establishment for sale and purchase under the management of the director. The train-

ing-farm of each colony, in addition to giving the principal training, should also provide facilities for the hiring out of independent settlers, horses, machines, and implements. Co-operation can be the result only of careful education and must have time for growth, that is why, in the case of a colony of men who are strangers to one another and do not possess practical knowledge of the provisions of marketing, it will be better to begin by starting under the control of the director who can control the produce and dispose of it to the best possible advantage. The committee, however, hopes that as the small holders acquire experience they will become capable of taking over the control of the organization and running it as a co-operative society.

In each fruit and market garden colony, a depot should be established for the produce of the colony. The depot should be under the control of the director of the colony who will be in touch with all the markets. It is not recommended that the small holders should be compelled to dispose of their produce through the depot but every inducement should be given them to do so, and they should be sup-

plied with full information as to the actual situation of the market. Provision should also be made for dealing with surplus products which could not be sold, by the establishment of a jam-factory, a fruit-drying plant, a creamery and cheese-factory, or other suitable means.

**(12) Provision for Working Capital.**

The committee came to the conclusion that there are serious objections to the advance of capital.

The need for capital arises from:

*First*, the payment from the tenant on entry to the holding in respect of tenant right and unexhausted improvements.

*Second*, the cost of maintenance for the small holder and his family until he begins to get a return for his holdings.

*Third*, the cost of purchasing the necessary stock and implements for the holding.

With regard to the first, the committee thinks that it is a sound rule to require payment on entry. In the view of the committee, the only safe course is to require the tenant to pay on entry for all temporary improvements of which he gets immediate benefit and which are seen

to exist, and for all produce which could be marketed. The committee thinks, however, that this burden of tenant right can be eased under the state colonies, as, for instance, the incoming tenant should not be required to take over hay or straw in excess of his actual needs. The director of the colony might be given a discretionary power to defer payment in cases where such a course is warranted.

With regard to the second point, it would be unwise to let a holding to a tenant unless he was in a position to maintain himself and his family until he got a return from the holding.

With regard to the third point, it is recommended that each colony should have a co-operative credit society which would be the principal means of capitalizing the individual holdings, and which is to be financed also by the state to the extent of 5 shillings for each acre.

**(13) Rents and Finance.**

Rents of the small holdings should be sufficient to recoup the capital outlay and the cost of management, except the salaries of

the resident staff and the cost of preliminary training, but, since the land remains in the ownership of the state, it is proposed that no sinking fund shall be charged.

In the first instance, a sum of 2,000,000 pounds should be placed at the disposal of the board for the purpose of land settlement, and further sums as may be needed should be provided.

**(14) Settlement by County Councils.**

Ex-service men possessing the necessary experience and capital, and who are not prepared to move to state colonies, or ex-service men possessing the necessary experience and capital who want holdings to be worked in conjunction with some other business, should be provided with small holdings by county councils.

**(15) Disabled Men.**

“So far as settlement on the land is concerned, we are strongly opposed to the segregation of disabled men, or to anything like the establishment of colonies for cripples.”

**(16) Propaganda for Land Settlement.**

A campaign in favor of land settlement at home should be undertaken by the Board of Agriculture with the assistance and co-operation of the Admiralty and War Office, prior to the demobilization of the navy and army. For this purpose, attractive literature, pamphlets and leaflets, should be prepared and circulated to the sailors and soldiers before their discharge from the Navy or Army. Every endeavor should be made to work in co-operation with such bodies as the National Organization for Employment of Ex-Soldiers, Incorporated, Soldiers' Help Society, and the Navy Employment Agency.

In conclusion, the report points out that it will be to national advantage to attract a considerable number of ex-service men to the land as small holders, which is far more likely to conduce to real success than anything that has hitherto been attempted in this country.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Final Report, Part 1, of the Department Committee, Appointed by the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, to Consider the Settlement or Employment on the Land, in England and Wales, of Discharged Sailors and Soldiers. 30 pp. Cd. 8182, 1916.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE REDEMPTION OF FARMING

Aside from the returning soldier, the redemption of farming and the opening up of the land to would-be farmers is one of the most important problems that confront us.

We must provide for an entirely new type of agriculture. It must differ from the old as the department store differs from the village shop.

We must build anew. Not by chance, not by accident, but by the use of the same kind of intelligence we have used in the building of ships, the erection of houses for munition-workers, and the integration of industrial life for the conduct of the war. There must be a vision of agriculture as a co-operative activity, a means of fuller life. And there must be protection to the farmer from the land speculator, the banks, the middlemen, the distributing agencies. In other words, the farmer as an individual producer cannot face modern



conditions which in other industries have passed into large-scale production with all of the aids of science and invention.

Moreover, the waste of agriculture is colossal. Each farmer is detached. He raises the same things and does the same things. He owns the same machines. He works twelve months a year in order that he may be profitably employed for six or seven. He keeps his horses and cattle for months at a dead loss. He markets alone, and finds his own customer. It is as though every man who made shoes had to find the individual person in the world who wanted his particular shoes. The farmer is still in the bartering age. But he does not barter with an equal chance. He must bargain with a world market and a highly organized system of monopoly that buys what the farmer sells as cheaply as possible and holds within its hands all of the marketing, warehousing, and transportation agencies of the country.

Agriculture cannot prosper under such obsolete conditions. The isolated farmer is an economic survival of the last century. And it is those countries that have recognized these