

CHAPTER II

TO-MORROW

Four million soldiers are returning home. Other millions are being released from industry. The problem is further complicated by the fact that during the war period the services of one and a quarter million women were requisitioned by the government for work formerly done by men. As the men come back for their jobs, what is to be done with these women?

What shall we do for the worker? What shall we do for the soldier?

There are some who say we can do nothing but let them go home. Others will say: "To provide work, to build homes, to open up the land and opportunities for an independent life is contrary to our history and traditions. It is socialistic. Moreover it is quite impossible; you cannot change economic laws or human nature. We must let men take care of themselves. Business must be free to follow its own laws and instincts. The war is over now, and any attempt to continue governmental control over industrial laws is impossible."

There is no longer such a thing as the impossible, and we are already a semi-socialistic state. We are feeding, clothing, and housing nearly 5,000,000 of our adult male population in the military establishment, and, including the worker engaged in some form of war activity or transportation, the government supports directly or indirectly one-third of our people. There are at least 8,000,000 people in the government service.

A Dream of Homes.

Twenty years ago a book appeared in England, entitled *Tomorrow*. It was written by one Ebenezer Howard and it described the garden suburb. It awakened little interest. Those who read it said: "An idle dream. People must live as they live to-day. We shall always have slums and tenements. We shall always build houses for profit. We must gratify individual tastes, permit private initiative. Anyhow people wouldn't live in made-to-order villages, spotless towns, model suburbs. It is contrary to human nature. Moreover, who would supply the money?"

Following the appearance of the book, a

garden village was somehow financed and built, the money coming from private sources. The houses were attractive, and the rent was low. Each house had a little garden about it. There was no unearned increment for speculators—no profit for any one. The best of architects contributed their services, as did town-planners and engineers.

People came first to look, then to live. Workers grew strong and healthy. The death-rate fell. Children thrived, and the men worked better than they did before in the factories. Private capitalists observed. They wanted better workmen. They built villages of their own, and they paid.

To-day there are at least a hundred such villages and suburbs in Great Britain. And the government has enacted a town-planning act which compels all cities to plan their suburbs in a sanitary, beautiful, social way. France, Belgium, Germany, and Switzerland followed. The garden village became a reality.

America's War Communities.

Individualistic America, confronted with the necessity of housing thousands of munition,

ordnance, and ship-building workers, planned to build barracks to meet the emergency. Some public-spirited architects went to Washington, and told the story of the garden cities of England. Somehow or other an appropriation of \$40,000,000 was secured. It was followed by \$150,000,000 more. Instead of bunk-houses and barracks, real home communities arose. Architects, town-planners, and educators working at one dollar a year united in a joyous competition. To-day eighty-five such communities are being built, scattered from Massachusetts to the Pacific Ocean. When completed they will accommodate 275,000 people. They involve a cost of \$200,000,000. They have schools and churches, recreation-fields and club-houses. They have comfort and charm. They are owned by the government and stand out in marked contrast to the jerry-built contractors' houses built for profit in the neighboring cities.

America, like England, has found a way to end the house famine and abolish the slum.

The dream of Ebenezer Howard, obscurely published twenty years ago, has become an international reality. There is no longer any housing *problem*. Only a willingness is needed

to enable all people to live in comfortable, beautiful homes of their own.

The Farm Village.

The farm village is the rural expression of the garden suburb. It is a community organized for production as well as life. That is the only difference. It includes the addition of a farm for the man to work upon and make a living from. The government advances the money. The architect plans the community. The farm expert lays out the land and aids the individual farmer.

The object of the farm colony is to free men as well as to produce food; to create a new kind of agriculture in place of the old which fails to produce enough food, enough farmers, enough of that which we call civilization. Unlike the garden suburb, however, the farm colony is not an experiment. It was the accepted form of farm organization for centuries all over Europe. It is the distinguishing thing about the agricultural prosperity of Denmark, of Ireland, of Australia to-day. It is the plan that Great Britain is urging for the redemption of her rural life and the settlement of the returning soldier.

The farm colony should invite the soldier in every state. It should lure him back to his own home. It should be planned, financed, and developed by the government. A pioneer colony has already been started in California.

A new agriculture, a new kind of farmer, and an opportunity for a free life to the worker of the city and the tenant of the country, should be one of the contributions of the war.