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Further information and sample copies sent on request

British Agriculture After the War

The British Reviewed by J. R. Donaldson, Formerly of the Staff of Farm and Dairy

J. R. DONALDSON was live stock representative of Farm and Dairy when the war broke out, and in that capacity became personally acquainted with many of Our Folks. With the commencement of hostilities he immediately enlisted with the medical corps for service in which he was peculiarly qualified. Donaldson is of an economic turn of mind and his letters are full of conditions as he finds them across the water. His latest letter comes from France under date of March 29. It reads in part as follows:

"The feeling out here regarding the war is most optimistic. Everyone expects that there is still hard fighting to do, but no one seems to doubt that the result will be peace with victory in 1917. Events in Russia during the month are perhaps the most hopeful that have occurred since 1914. Democracy seems to have gained a definite victory. If the people of Germany vastly by the example, the prospects of a genuine European peace will have rapidly improved. The only cure forever is a fuller recognition of brotherhood, and democracy is a step in that direction. Only a step of course, but just a few more steps will probably prevent the re-appearance of the present hideous spectacle as far as Europe is concerned.

French Agriculture.

"The weather out here is of the usual March and early April variety, a good deal of rain and drizzle, a little sun and sharp alternatives from frosts to hard sunny sunshine. The farmers are worn at work plowing. They all use a single furrow, but double mould board-plow and by reversing, do away with ridges. They often plow with three horses, a rather rare sight in England. In fact, rural France offers quite a contrast to an English countryside. Instead of hedges, there are broad unfenced acres, but the effect of farmness is prevented by the trees that do not cluster, but are planted in regular rows around the farm houses and along the roads. The impression that we gather from the passing train is that farming is a much more important business on this side of the channel than in England. For quiet beauty, nothing I have yet seen can be compared with the winding roads and green hedges of southern England. But you always seem to feel that the farms are only part of the landscape pattern and farming a very secondary consideration in the scheme of things. The war has altered that state of things to some extent and it may work decided and permanent changes in English agriculture.

To Encourage British Agriculture.

"I read a small book last fall by A. H. Hall, entitled "Agriculture after the War." It was published in February, 1916, and brought forth considerable comment from all sections of the press at the time. Mr. Hall was until lately, at Rothamstead Experiment Station, and is an authority on agricultural matters, both from the technical and from the sociological standpoint. He was a member of the commission appointed in 1915 to investigate agricultural conditions. His thesis is that the production of wheat in Great Britain can be very largely increased without any diminution of the amount of live stock kept. He points out that before the Napoleonic times that followed the Napoleonic wars, England raised a much larger amount of food stuffs than at present and that during the hard times that followed, the farmers adopted the plan of reducing labor and expenses to a minimum and

turning the plowed land to grass. That policy has been followed ever since, with the result that England has placed herself at a perilously short distance from starvation and that rural life has suffered from stagnation. The latter fact is painfully evident as far as the agricultural laborer of the south is concerned. It is some time since I read the book, and I have forgotten, the accurate figures and percentages. Briefly, however, he claimed that as long as the farmer was left to compete with the cheap wheat of the new world, these conditions would continue. He based his plea for protection of the farmer, not on financial grounds, but on the ground that it was as essential a measure of protection as is the British navy. He proposed to offer bounties for the reclaiming of land and also to guarantee to the farmer a fair price for his produce and the laborer a minimum wage. He recognized clearly enough that under any such scheme it would be the landowner and not the cottager farmer that would benefit by increasing the rent, and he said provision would have to be made for that, but, of course, as a servant of the state, he had to steer off from the logical solution. For the land tax happens to be, as was, a highly controversial subject.

Small Holdings and Industrial Farms.

"On the much discussed subject of small holdings he was in favor of giving the real chance that they have not yet obtained and at the same time he thought experiments should be made in the nature of large farms in the industrial system. In short, he was in favor of giving as much diversity as possible to agriculture.

"Now the interesting fact is that Mr. Hall has lately become permanent secretary of agriculture, and therefore will have a good deal of influence on matters agricultural, while the Secretary of the Board of Agriculture in the Lloyd George ministry is, for the first time in many years, also a man of extensive first hand knowledge of agricultural conditions. He is the author of at least one book on the history of British agriculture. But in politics he is a strong conservative and was one of Lloyd George's chief opponents in the land tax campaign. Already the farmers have been guaranteed fixed prices for seven years on a number of crops and the farm laborers have a minimum wage, and it is quite possible that the prospects for the men on the land will really undergo a change for the better."

Make This a Land of Smiling Plenty

"In this war we are learning that the antithesis between the plowshare and the sword is more a matter of poetic fancy than of actual fact. The wielders of the sword, however numerous they might be, would have to quit the field if there was not behind them an army of men to drive the plow and raise the crops and keep the commissariat flowing. The machine must be backed by the agricultural machine. Trench mortars, field guns, and "tanks" are served by men who depend upon gang-plows, tractors and other farm implements operated by farm workers. In this country we have the soil, and we have hands enough to put in crop a greater acreage of that soil than we ever cultivated before. It is the boulder duty of every man who is not in military service to lend what help he can to the task of increasing the food output.—Mail and Empire.



We Welcome Trade

Trade increases

VOL. XXXVI

The

IS sweet clover a Ontario farm?

Dairy has been men report an ungrateful seed. Agricultural mental Farmers other plant than any other to-day receiving the a few years ago was alfalfa crop has now stage, and is one of liable to do likewise? missing the agriculture Farmer, B.S.A., who a cultural study than after in O. A. C. Bulletin "AYS. In a general sub wherein sweet clover we cannot but conclude gives much promise of plant which is widely adaptable. By publications on the a responsiveness by con different farmers and agricultural work and servation and experient plant to be growing in and on all types of soil in addition to its growth we find it actually to place on the farm in countries and in a few try. Not only has this a knowledge of this time in the province of farmers are trying out on farms in order to determine whether or not it has the experimental stage ready, and these, who have farms for several seasons enthusiastic for its future more widespread knowledge cultural value of this plant.

As a Soil

"Up to date sweet clover value as a soil crop, lies its main virtue on very poor soils, soils or which have become a tive cropping or otherwise would otherwise produce such as alkali soil and prising yields. Not only where otherwise there would, but is just as important as these same soils into fertile and tilth that were impossible can be produced. This will be of