

labourers as to whether allotments tend to reduce or increase cash wages. When the extension of the allotment system occurred in Oxfordshire, about 1880, the immediate effect was to retard a decline. Labour was superabundant, and could not migrate without great difficulty; by providing employment for leisure time, due to shortening hours of labour, allotments assisted the labourers in the maintenance of rates of wages. But now that the supply of labour is not in excess of the regular demand, allotments help to keep down the rates of weekly wages, though not necessarily the actual time rates. If labour becomes more scarce, farmers should consider the advisability of paying higher wages and demanding greater service, either in time or in rate of work, and simultaneously with such demand labourers should consider the industrial methods of providing for mutual protection and help. It is along such lines that the best use of labour will be secured, and social welfare most advanced, rather than by the present system of short hours, at a slow rate of work, weekly engagements at low wages, and allotments. Such a system might involve the establishment in Oxfordshire of a custom prevalent in other counties of providing the labourer with 'potato land' or potatoes, and possibly, as in parts of Lincolnshire, with bacon. The system of providing potato land ploughed and manured by the farmer, or a definite quantity of potatoes, differs in its characteristics from that of allotments, in that it does not make the same demands on the labourer's time and energy. The provision of bacon would remove many a smouldering grievance. In parts of Oxfordshire where roots are grown the crops are subject to considerable reduction by the quantities taken by the workmen; as one farmer said: 'I don't mind a turnip for dinner, but I draw the line at feeding three pigs I don't sell.' Also vague statements are made about the loss of corn and cake. This attitude of the farmer towards the labourer's pig has been clearly brought out by recent suggestions from various quarters that facilities for pig-keeping should be increased, for on many farms the men living in farm-cottages are forbidden to keep pigs