

landlord can delay and effectively stop the progress of any particular scheme of settlement by excessive claims for compensation; (b) the inadequacy of the annual monetary provision for the acquisition of land; (c) the absence of mandatory powers to organise credit banks and co-operative societies; (d) the inertia which has marked the administration of the Act.

He then pleads for special powers for the purchase of land to establish colonies, and an increased grant to carry out the necessary development. Land purchase is indeed the pivot of Mr. Young's scheme, but he fears the landlords may exact too high a price to make the holdings profitable concerns. We quite sympathise with him here—albeit in an amused sort of way. So he wants powers to compel the landlords to part with their land at a figure which the land would be likely to fetch in the open market. This is indeed charming in its simplicity. What we would like to know is whether it is the market price with the State as bidder. If so the market price will be more than the land is worth.

Mr. Young's scheme is a hopelessly sad affair to ask us to discuss at this time of day. His land reform scheme provides simply for the setting up of a number of crofts of small holdings. He wants to arrange for fixity of tenure and fair rent. But that is not enough. He goes further. To make the holdings a success certain principles must be observed:—

- (1) The most modern cultural methods must be employed.
- (2) A small holding must not be an isolated entity, but one of a community of small holders working together co-operatively.
- (3) An adequate supply of working capital must be made available to the holder to enable him, irrespective of seasonal vicissitudes, to work his holding with a maximum of efficiency.

It is a pity that before appearing before the public as a land reformer, Mr. Young wouldn't sit down and study the elements of the question. It is futile to go and work out details as to the kind of shovels and hoes the smallholders are to use until you have first settled the first question—on what terms is access to the land to be given?

When you have settled that, if you have settled it properly, you will find that the other things have settled themselves.

We record with deep regret the death of 2nd Lieut. J. V. McLean, 6th Royal Berkshire Regiment, which took place at Endsleigh Palace Hospital, London, on July 17th, as the result of a wound received during the recent fighting in France. John McLean was a graduate of Glasgow University and was for a time a school teacher in Glasgow. He emigrated to Canada a few years ago and entered the Actuarial Department of the Sun Life of Canada Assurance Company, Montreal, where he was a general favourite both on account of his charming disposition and on account of his marked ability as a mathematician and as a business man. He enlisted as a private in the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, and after serving for a while in France obtained a commission in the British Army. He had laid the foundations of a good career, and, but for the unfortunate accident that cut his life short at an early age, would have been a powerful influence in promoting our movement in Eastern Canada. His wife, his father and mother, and our co-workers in Montreal, have the profoundest sympathy of his British friends in the loss of this good man.

BOOK REVIEWS

AGRICULTURE AFTER THE WAR*

Confident as we are in the enormous possibilities of greater production that would be let loose by the wider and better distribution of land, accompanied by the overthrow of land monopoly, we welcome Mr. A. D. Hall's frank recognition of conscious neglect and misuse of land on the part of those who now control it; that to us is the chief feature of the arguments he presents in this book. In proving that the existing conditions of agriculture are due to that neglect and misuse and to bad farming in every sense, he has sufficiently established a case which we can take out of his book and consider on its own merits apart from his strangely contradictory recommendations in favour of encouraging the cultivation of land by bounties and other expenditure of public funds.

The value of Mr. A. D. Hall's testimony is all the greater because he is an acknowledged authority not on the politics but on the business of agriculture, and he speaks as an expert to those men of "practical experience" who at aristocratic Farmers' Clubs and Chambers of Agriculture always warmly resent any suggestion that farm land in this country is, to any extent, culpably held idle. The landowner and the large farmer would represent the facts otherwise, if only to prevent more people having access to the soil, and in Mr. Hall's criticisms they have their answer. The student of the land question might usefully note these passages:—

"A given area of land will produce when under the plough, in addition to its usual yield of wheat and barley, just as much cattle food as the same area under grass. The number of men employed in agriculture has declined with the plough land; 100 acres of arable land will employ as many as four men, while 200 or 300 acres of grazing can be looked after by a single man. During the forty years under review three and a half million acres have passed from arable to grass, and 261 thousand men have left agriculture." (p. 24.)

"On the average farm the expert cannot say 'do this' or 'use that' and success will ensue: he sees instead a general low level both of knowledge and of management. In every district certain farms stand out, and if the neighbouring holdings, with the same class of land and the same opportunities, were only worked with equal intelligence and energy there would be no agricultural question to discuss. In many parts of the country it is clear that the farmer is occupying more land than he can properly manage with the capital at his disposal." (p. 27.)

"It is not too much to say that if the farming throughout Great Britain reached the standard, not of the best, but of the good farmers existing in every district, there would be an increased production of food of from 10 to 15 per cent. without any addition to the existing proportion of arable land." (p. 100.)

"We know that at the scale of prices prevailing during the years immediately preceding the war, with wheat about 35s. per quarter, arable farming was distinctly prosperous—so much so that it might with profit have been extended over at least as much land as had been under the plough in 1872." (p. 104.)

"It is not true that live stock can only be maintained upon grass land, or that an equal head of stock can be kept upon grass as upon the same land under the plough. All land is more productive under the plough and will maintain more cattle and sheep upon the crops that can be grown than upon the grass which is produced without cultivation." (p. 29.)

"The holdings in this country are very often too large for the occupier's capital, so that they are worked at a low productive level with a comparatively small expenditure on labour per acre. Not only is capital generally deficient, but in many cases where the occupier may be possessed of adequate means his standard of management is so low, his business organisation so imperfect, that he

* AGRICULTURE AFTER THE WAR. By A. D. Hall, F.R.S., John Murray, London. Price 3s. 6d. net.