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Catholic Land Federation of England and Wales

The Cross & the Plough

The Organ of the Catholic Land Movement of England and Wales

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THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

THE CALL OF THE PROPHET

Fathers and mothers, see to it that your children understand how sacred is the bread and the land that gives it to us. Our generation did not sufficiently realise that an honest simplicity of life had deteriorated into the quest and fulfilment of unhealthy pleasure and fictitious needs. God, by making His bread a rare gift, means to call us back to the right path through a hard lesson. May this lesson foster the establishment of a better economic and social order. Death, during the war years, passed along the battle-front, penetrated deeply into all lands, mowing down innumerable victims. Now we see it ready to carry out a work of extermination incomparably greater than that already caused by weapons and fire. All of you, individuals or peoples, who are in a position to help your brothers, listen to the call of the prophet: "Your bread belongs to him that hungers."

—Pope Pius XII. Broadcast of 4th April, 1946

URBANISM GONE MAD

It cannot be said that the events of the past few months have convinced our urban-minded people that they are not fully entitle to demand and to receive food from somewhere else. Their conviction that they are so entitled is shared fully by a Government which has a purely urban tradition.

It *must* be emphasised that what we are witnessing now is not a process, but the beginning of a process. We shall obtain food this year, and possibly next, but the real famine is then likely to start.

FOOD FROM FAIRYLAND

It can be no more than a question of time before the wheat-mining on which our industrialism is built exhausts the rest of the new lands, as it has already exhausted large areas in the United States, Canada, Australia and elsewhere.

During the war, these new countries have intensified, without regard to the future, the same policy as has been so disastrous in the past. Our own Government, in particular, shows no sign whatever of preparing against the coming famine. It has allowed its advisers, bemused by, or guilty of, the ramp which assumes that all losses can be made good by chemists, to talk of livestock as though it were a somewhat disreputable alternative to arable production, and not, as is the inescapable fact, an integral part of it.

More to the point, Government spokesmen are repeating the fantastic and ridiculous Astorian thesis that we should confine ourselves, in England, to the production of milk and such-like "protective" foods.

FAIRY GOLD

At the moment, it may be said confidently that the "famine" is real as to about fifty per cent., and artificial as to the rest.

The conviction that the war would emasculate the Money Power seems to have been valid as regards this country. As regards the United States it was premature.

What has happened is that the effective money power has now been taken over by America. As in many other economic respects, the American financiers are several generations behind their defeated European colleagues. In so far as the present shortage is artificial, that is, as to about fifty per cent., the responsibility must be shared equally by the American financiers and by Russia.

THE HIGHEST LEVEL

It would be of some interest to know whether the distinguished persons who handed the wheat lands of Germany to Russia knew what they were doing.

Our own guess is that they had no notion of what they were doing. But Russia certainly had. Nothing would please her better than real famine in Western Europe.

But what sort of leaders have we, if food is not permanently at the front of their minds?

They learn nothing and forget nothing. In *The Times* of 13th May, for example, details are given of a public project to destroy a good farm of 227 acres, in order to construct a ring road at Chilwell, Notts. Much useless land in the vicinity, it is stated, has been ignored for this purpose.

They should worry. Food comes from the ends of the earth—not from Chilwell, Notts.

WHITE PAPERS AND WHITE BREAD

The White Paper presented to Parliament on 3rd April by the Minister of Food is notable because it does not suggest anywhere that our *sources* of food are in danger of drying up. Food just comes.

On the other hand, the Combine Millers have rectified a mistake of which they were guilty a year ago. On the earlier occasion, they acted behind the scenes to secure whiter flour without any preliminary propaganda. On this occasion, the rise of the rate of extraction to 95% has been met by an expensive barrage of newspaper propaganda, which seems to be succeeding. Our unintelligent and uninformed urban people do really see some logical association between civilisation and dead white flour.

BRITISH BULLDOZING CAMPAIGN

As is well known, the B.B.C. exists not to enquire or to substantiate, but to propagand. The highly tendencious nature of its lectures was never better exemplified than in the long series on *Farming To-day,* which came to an end in March.

Throughout, Professor H. G. Sanders chose large farms and large farmers, who took for granted all the moneyed shibboleths. It is of great interest that in the whole series, the only really small farms described were in Ulster and in Aberdeenshire. In the latter case, the best was made of a bad job by selecting a farmer who ran a small farm of 85 acres, but who also managed 500 acres.

All the same, Mr. Eric Buchan, the farmer concerned, proved a shrewd farmer, and he knocked the whole case endways by saying, when asked why he did not buy cattle cake, *"What you don't buy, isn't to pay for."*

BRASS TACKS

It will be agreed that our increased production of food during the war has been achieved almost entirely by ploughing up pasture land. We have not only ignored small derelict plots all over the country, but we have farmed, on the whole, so as to produce most per man rather than most per acre.

That is, we have used mechanised methods which are wasteful of land and which are incapable of taking in small areas.

It is of some interest to know what has been achieved by this inefficient method in the way of increased net production. The N.F.U. discusses the matter in its *Information Service* for May, 1946.

As it says, there are five different standards by which to measure food production. They are money value, calories, proteins, shipping space saved, and crude weight.

Eliminating the effect of changed prices, the increase of money value over 1938 in 1944 is 30 per cent. In calories it was 70 per cent., in proteins 80 per cent., in shipping space 120 per cent., in crude weight 75 per cent.

It will be remembered that at the end of 1944, the late Minister for Agriculture stated in the House that our domestic food production had risen from one-third to two-thirds. Presumably this was on corrected money value. The others seem to be more realist, and are much greater than one-third.

Can we make good the gap by using our still neglected land which the tractor will not and cannot touch? And can we increase production *per acre* by pressing for livestock and smaller farms?

THE DANCE OF DEATH

To the prospect, or lack of urban prospect, offered us by the Atomic bomb, we must now add the statement, released by Washington at the end of May, that there has been perfected a germ spray capable of destroying cities.

Surely among the authorities, religious and secular, there exists authorities whose duty it is to safeguard the future generations of mankind.

UNELECTED PERSONS

It is announced in the Press that when re-registering this month, citizens may change their butcher and grocer, but not their milkman.

This disgraceful attempt to make permanent that big business Perry Report which was turned down by public opinion, should be resisted by all citizens as a matter of course.

Whether they want to change their milkman or not, they should insist on their right to do so.

The weight behind this ridiculous restriction is, of course, that of money, whether it is Co-op. or Combine money. Small men are still being bought up with the active help of public officials. Service men returning are not being allowed to compete with (and show up) the Big Business.

TAILPIECE

The following remarkable statement appeared from the pen of Mr. Rhys J. Davies, M.P., in the *Manchester Guardian* of 3rd May:—

"Denmark is predominantly an agricultural country, and we must bear in mind that even in Britain the poorest peasant living on the soil fares better for his food than the well-to-do townsman."

To comment would be to spoil: but the *Manchester Guardian* of all papers! Daniel comes at last to judgment.

EDITORIAL NOTE

The special attention of readers is drawn to the highly important analysis and exposure by Mr. Broadbent on another page.

It will be continued and concluded in our Michaelmas issue.

HAVE WE ENOUGH TO EAT?

By K. L. KENRICK

IN most languages there seems to be a proverb to the effect that "God never sends a mouth into the world without sending food to fill it." In modern sociological jargon this would presumably read "The productive resources of the earth's surface are sufficient to provide adequate nutrition for all its present and prospective inhabitants." Is this statement true in either of its forms? Can it be supported by overwhelming and irrefutable evidence, or is it merely a piece of sentimental wishful thinking? It sounds very easy and comforting to say, "I cannot believe that the Almighty would bring into being creatures for whom he had made no adequate provision", or to say that such a thing would be "contrary to what we know of the laws of nature". But what have the "cans" and "cannots" of our private personal beliefs to do with the real objective facts of existence? Dr. G. G. Coulton declares that he cannot believe in the eternal punishment of the damned. But what possible interest or importance can Dr. Coulton's private and personal inabilities or disabilities have for any other single person in the world? Or what relation can they bear to the question at issue, which is whether the eternal punishment of the damned is or is not an objective fact? The answer to this does not depend on anybody's sentimental make-up. I may be quite unable to fall in love with the prisoner in the dock, but the question I have to decide is whether he did, or did not, commit the crime with which he is charged.

So it is with food. Is it for us to dictate to the Almighty exactly what forms His justice and providence and dominion shall take? Are we in a position to say to Him, "I will allow you to slay human beings by disease or fire or flood but I will not allow you to kill them off by famine, for that would be inconsistent with your justice and providence". What peculiar sentimental quality has famine that it should not be as much an instrument of divine visitation as plague, storm, or battle? We cannot therefore deduce, either from

science or from theology, that scarcity and famine ought never to be or to have been.

We must therefore fairly face the question whether there is or is not, in actual fact, enough to eat for everybody. It depends on what we mean by "enough to eat". It can scarcely be doubted that there is prison fare for everybody. In a debate with communists some years ago I suggested that a given area planted with "inferior" grains such as rye or millet produced more actual human food than the same area planted with wheat. My communist friends were highly indignant and insisted that they would never be a party to imposing what they called a "peasant standard of living" on anyone. Nothing but the "finest" white wheaten flour would do for them. I feel practically certain, even without consulting the statistics, that nature can never rise to this dizzy level. How many people have the faintest idea what is really involved in the proposal to feed even the population of Asia alone on white wheaten bread?

There is an extensive movement on foot to-day to pool all the world's food-resources and to make a juster and more equitable redistribution among the whole human race. The leaders of this movement make no explicit claim, but I am practically certain that the impression they leave upon the vast majority of their hearers and readers is that this process would result in raising the standard of nutrition for all men throughout the world to something higher than the present American standard. "At long last we shall all have as much to eat as we want, and that of the best and choicest". This is impossible.

But there is a far graver objection to the proposal. So far from being an act of justice and equity, it would be a monstrous crime against humanity. Sooner or later, and soon rather than late, the pool would fall into the hands of the world's greatest scoundrels, who would be able to make "corners" in food which would make all monopolies and black-markets, past and present, look like old-fashioned gunpowder alongside the atomic bomb. I know the answer. "Such an idea is the product of a disordered brain". More so or less so than the atomic bomb itself? Can frenzy itself produce anything madder than the realities of to-day?

Does not every man you meet tell you that the whole world is going mad, and that not with the warm comic comfort of " 'Tis a mad world, my masters", but with all the accents of a cold dreadful despair? Frankly, dear reader, have you in the course of the last twelve months, met a single person who has volunteered you the unprompted statement that "the world is gradually recovering its sanity" or any words to that effect? And this is after four centuries of protestant reformation, scientific enlightenment, and the "breaking of the iron fetters of ecclesiastical tyranny and domination".

What is the moral? It is this. The prior claimants on all food-stuffs are the people who actually produce the food by bending their own backs and soiling their own hands. What justice and equity really demand is that the maximum number of people shall be given such access to the land as will enable them to produce their own food. Until that is the case, the supplying of food to people who refuse to produce it by people who actually do the producing is a pure act of charity. When all the agricultural areas of the world are crowded to capacity with actual producers, *then*, and then only, will the non-agricultural populations be able to make a just claim to a fair share of the world's food. There is perhaps a further point. If your land produces first class wheat, whereas mine produces only poor millet or rye, I must be satisfied and content. I have no just claim on you. If on a Feast-Day, you of your bounty send me a present of your wheat-flour, I shall thank you for your Christian charity. On some such conditions as these I believe the theological proverb with which I began this article would be found to be not very far from the truth, although I can produce no evidence to that effect.

If some of the large farmers produced as much on their land as some of the small farmers did on farms of under 100 acres, we should be exporting food to-day.—*The Earl of Portsmouth to the Town and Country Planning Association, on 5th April, 1946.*

People unacquainted with agriculture quite forget that land is a destructible material, and its productive powers more easily squandered than a pocketful of loose guineas. —*Lord Dufferin (Quoted by R. H. Elliot in "The Clifton Park System of Farming," 1892).*

ORDER OF BATTLE: XXVI

THE SUPPORT LINE

WE have shown already, and we repeat here, that strong action for land settlement on sound lines is urgent and imperative in these islands.

There is another need which is only less imperative than the first. It is much less expensive, much easier to start, and is little realised. It is discussed here.

It is not realised generally that the whole farming and technique here *assume* large units. This is true of implements and methods of cultivation, which in modern times have assumed a unit of hundreds or thousands of acres. It is even more true of all kinds of livestock. The classic breeders of the eighteenth century revolutionised the breeds of British cattle and pigs. It is those same breeds which modern breeders and large farmers are doing their best to spoil and destroy. But they were all types suitable to the increasing size of holdings. The same is true of horses, sheep and even poultry.

The universities and the agricultural colleges, without exception, have carried on the good work. One and all of them, in every respect, assume the large unit and foster methods and types which will fit into the large unit but not into the small one.

It is well-known that the small man—the man farming fifty acres or less, has the scales weighted very seriously against him. Rents, taxes, costs, paper-work and markets are arranged deliberately to favour the large man and hamper the small one. This, as we say, is well known. It is not realised so well that in the very incidence of husbandry the scales are also weighted against the small man.

The cow to be obtained at the average market fits into the large farm but not the small. So do the pig, the plough, the very horse.

The colleges and the publicly paid experts cry aloud for artificials and tractors. They are discreetly silent about what is best for the small man. They tinker, as with the spate of inoculating. They do not entertain remedies!

Here is the immediate need. We want one or more research and training stations which will not take for granted that the present megalomaniac trends are right. We need stations which will start at the other end. They should start with the principle that a small country needs small farms, so that as many as possible of the citizens may gain a dignified livelihood on the land.

They will continue and persevere with the principle that what they are concerned with is not the profits of external shysters, but the greatest happiness of the greatest number of families living on the land.

They will experiment with the smaller wiry horses which the peasant cannot get, rather than with the large hairy beasts which serve the pride of the squire. They will investigate tractor working on a basis of subsistence farming, rather than on a basis of balance sheets. That is, on a basis of the welfare of men and the land, rather than that of the banks. They will analyse the use of implements, and the nature of seeds, on the same basis. In particular, they will keep, and indulge such modest experiments as may be possible without damaging the breeds, such types of livestock as are favourable to small men.

In spite of breeding gone mad, there are still plenty of cattle breeds much more suitable to small men than the Friesian and the Shorthorn. There are, besides the Channel Island breeds, the Kerry, the Welsh, the Gloucester and others.

Compost farming will take an important place, because anything that may be had for nothing is better for the small man than anything costing money.

But the important thing, in this as in many other respects, is to reverse the trend, *and to keep it reversed.*

It would be quite easy to draw up the constitution for such a college or station. Anything contrary to present practice is likely to be good.

Failing State action—and the Ministry of Agriculture out-herods Herod in favouring the large man—failing such action, no wealthy man could do more good to this country than by establishing such a college. That it must be so established is certain. That it is established soon must be our fervent hope.

We shall do well, in the meantime, to keep one point constantly and firmly in our minds. The whole modern outfit of research and tuition is unconcerned with happiness or good husbandry. It is concerned, solely and frankly, with paper profits. It is that attitude which must be destroyed.

THE BISHOP OF THE LAND MOVEMENT

By THE EDITOR

ONE by one, the leaders of the first offensive are passing from us. Chesterton is dead, Gill is dead, McNab is dead. It is now our unhappy duty to record the passing of one who, in a sense, was identified more closely with the Land Movement even than these.

The Right Rev. James Dey, D.D., D.S.O., died after very painful illness, borne with characteristic courage and cheerfulness, on Victory Day, 8th June, 1946.

He was born in 1869, and after a few years at Cotton and St. Edmund's, Ware, he spent many years as a Chaplain in the Army and the R.A.F. His military career appeared to end when he retired from the office of Principal Catholic Chaplain to the R.A.F. in 1929.

In that year he became Rector of Oscott College and a Domestic Prelate, and it is characteristic of him that in spite of ill-health which would have broken any smaller man, he brought Oscott's efficiency and reputation to a point higher than it reached before or since.

In 1931 he became first Chairman of the Midlands Catholic Land Association, a position he retained to his death. In that year also he became Chairman of the Standing Joint Committee which advanced the cause of all the Land Associations, and in 1934 Chairman of the Catholic Land Federation which succeeded it. In all these posts he did work for the Land Movement so distinguished and substantial that the whole movement will remain always in his debt. He would have hated to have it said; but he threw, and was glad to throw, the prestige of the Roman Purple over a movement which lacked nothing else but crude beastly money. That we lacked nothing else was largely his doing.

He gave the hospitality of Oscott to every conference of the Land Movement held from 1931 until it was driven to suspend its active career at the end of 1935—pregnant years, the fuller history of which remains to be written.

In 1935, at an age when most men think their work at an end, the Holy See called him to be Bishop in Ordering to H.M. Armed Forces. He sustained the great weight of that Office through the greatest war in our history, and was still in harness when he died. We know, but not from him, what burden he carried during those eleven years; and we must applaud without stint the man who allowed neither desperately poor health nor advancing years to stand in the way of a fitting consummation to his life.

It is characteristic of him that in June, 1945, at the age of 76, he sent a cheerful and vigorous letter to the present writer in which he asked about the prospect of starting the Land Movement again, and added *"I am prepared to get into the movement to the best of my ability."*

The present writer had to reply (most unwillingly) that the moment would not be ripe until the fighting men had returned, but the Bishop's example must encourage the young men who, beyond doubt, will make another start.

Of his kindness the present writer must not speak here. Many memories of five years closest association leave him unable to be coherent. Of the Bishop's devotion to Distributism and the Land Movement there can be no doubt. He was convinced—even passionately convinced—that they were the only hope for England and the Faith.

His distinguished and somewhat aloof presence concealed real shyness and a real humility. He had a fund of good stories, but he was never known as the hero of one of them. Others are left, to prove the heroic element in him which he concealed, in some cases, too successfully.

The present writer can testify only to his conviction and to his stature. Let him not be forgotten, and may his gallant soul now rest in peace.

MARKETS AND MARTYRS

By THE REV. H. E. G. ROPE, M.A.

THE steps of Nemesis, if slow, are, as the wiser Greeks knew, unfaltering. Those who live by reflection and not by "propaganda" had long foreseen that the dearth of food would sooner or later reach industrial Britain, whose allies of Moscow are the greatest famine-makers on record. Millions of Ukrainian peasants, long before the second world-war, were deliberately destroyed by engineered famine (a weapon already used by the Orleans faction in promoting the French Revolution), to make the world safe for the ghouls of the Kremlin, to whom our politicians delight to grovel. Eviction of vast populations from countries invaded by Stalin has brought the menace of famine on the Continent to a pitch that staggers thought, while solemn international conclaves prate about war criminals and search for fatuous formulas wherewith to bemuse us. To-day (February 6th) we have at last the public avowal of a "world shortage" of food, and if the disastrous politicians persist in mechanizing English tillage, drawing English manhood away from the land, and substituting the fear of Mammon for the fear of God, we may be certain that we too shall suffer famine. In all justice those who for their own gain have deliberately ruined "husbandry ordained by the Most High" (which is *not* land-mining) ought to be the first to starve. Humanly speaking, there is no likelihood of their present dethronement in any industrial country, and yet, until this comes about, the word "freedom" is a mockery and a delusion. In the "propaganda" of acceptable falsehood they have a weapon which they have perfected at leisure, while "the intermingling and scandalous confusion of the duties and offices of civil authority and of economics have produced crying evils and have gone so far as to degrade the majesty of the State. The State, which should be the supreme arbiter, ruling in kingly fashion far above all party contention, intent only upon justice and the common good, has become instead a slave, bound over to the service of human passion and greed" (Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno*, C.T.S., pp. 47-8). Finance, the Secret Societies, the forces of Bolshevik Revolution, work together for the world-wide reign of Antichrist. What, if any, the precise links between them may be is known to very few. It is not even necessary to suppose a common organisation uniting them under some secret antipope; they are natural allies against the Church of God.

No Catholic, sure'y, will doubt that slavery to Mammon is our punishment as a nation for the apostasy under the Tudors,

"When God was stolen from out man's mouth
Stolen was the bread."

National self-worship, proud self-reliance, the quest of wealth and power, there were the spirits we took for guidance when we defaulted from the mild yoke of Christ and His Church. Not to us, said the nation's prophets, could the words of Isaias apply: "the nation and the kingdom that will not serve thee, shall perish" (ix, 12). Could they not? Our proudest Imperialists, who have so long spoken such brave words against the "foreign" supremacy of the Pope, kowtow to-day to the Sultan of Moscow, to say nothing of financial dictators who are not English or British. Our "Prosperity" stands revealed in the bondage of enormous debt, our poisoned fields (and "foot-and-mouth disease" ensuing),, our tinned substitutes, disnatured and imported food, our lifeless white bread, our "enlightenment" in our barbarised cities, a very nightmare of scrambling, scuffling, herded mindless servitude to hustling machinery. Our law and liberty is now by-passed by Hitlerian decree and ministerial ukase, our "brighter Britain," so often promised, is expected to come, by God knows what miracle, from the free traffic in birth-prevention devices! "Can a nation go mad?" asked Butler in the eighteenth century. The answer is not far to seek to-day. In over-weening pride official Russia to-day, like official Germany yesterday, has become yet madder, it would seem, than ever official England was, and now over a war-wrecked and desolated world broods the spectre of unexampled famine. The accepted guides of the last age scoffed, the "philosopher" Balfour among them, at the very notion of a return to hus-

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

bandry as fantastic and Utopian. To-day it is not only "practical politics," but the only practical politics, unless we prefer national starvation, following close upon race suicide. Sheer necessity may bring about servile and wasteful work on the land, but not a free generation on the land, nor abundant and continuing yields therefrom. For that a national change of heart is needed, which means in fact a return to the Faith, which alone gives the "freedom spacious and unflawed" which is his "who is walled about with God." Fatima is the explanation of that new birth of Portugal, about which public "propaganda" is discreetly silent, and Fatima also teaches us that the same way of recovery is open to all nations, to all the world, if they will but take it. The world's leaders, to say the least, have utterly failed to find any other way! It is too often forgotten that our martyrs, in sealing their Faith with their blood, were also in fact withstanding the then beginning tyranny of Mammon, so clearly perceived by our greatest lay martyr, St. Thomas More, one of the wisest as well as holiest among all mankind. It is he, surely, more than any other, whose example and teaching alike are calling upon us to leave Babylon and to seek out Nazareth, the refuge of all who remember that the Almighty "made the nations of the earth for health" (*Wisdom*, i, 14). If we seek not first the Kingdom of God and His justice, we lose our pains, but once we learn to put first things first, the other things are added unto us. Industrialism promised us peace, freedom and plenty; it has brought such wars as the world had never known, card-indexed slavery, and the prospect of a famine that dwarfs all former ones.

Nearly a hundred years later another martyr, Blessed Edmund Arrowsmith (+ 1628), said to the crowds at Lancaster from the gallows ladder: "The day will come when far from repenting your return to the Catholic Church, you will find it your greatest comfort and advantage."* The martyr was of a yeoman family, like several other Lancashire martyrs. It is often overlooked that Catholic Lancashire of the penal and subpenal times was the Lancashire of manor, farm, and craftsman's cottage, and hearth and home and altar. May she return to her old heritage and lead England's return to God!

* See the excellent life of him by Fr. George Burns, S.J., *Gibbets and Gallows*, which is also incidentally an indictment of Industrialism.

Some people, under this state of things, consoled themselves by saying that things would come about again; they had come about before, and would come about again. They deceived themselves. Things did not come about; the seasons came about, it was true; but something must be *done* to bring things about. Instead of the *neuter* verb (to speak as a gramarian) they should use the *active*; they should not say things will *come* about, but things must be *put* about.—*Cobbett, Rural Rides, 23rd September, 1829.*

TARMAC ON THE GREEN

This is Our Green,
At least it was until the Blankshire Highways Committee started to intervene,
With twelve personnel, two spades, four long-tined forks, some minced granite and a cauldron of tar,
And an expert, or kommissar,
To indicate, strategically, with pegs,
The paths made by the villagers' own legs
To Jakes' farm for the milk and to the pillar-box with its historic "V.R."
And to the Red Cow (augmented by the local Air Force) which has a particularly well-frequented bar.
We don't mind paths rambling ourselves—in fact, after 10 p.m., rambling rather describes our own position;
But the Blankshire Highways Committee does—and hence the tarmac and the technician.
Never again on Our Green will there be anything like a pensive stroller,
But only brisk pedestrian traffic on strips of tarmac rolled by a roller.
For departmental levelling is not done by a villager, like the bowling green in the parson's garden,
But by a little black Puffing Billy, before the tarmac has time to harden;
And *that* as the kommissar says, with professional pride,
Is why all the paths on Our Green have to be four feet wide.
Even the one originally made by old Mrs. Trivett's khaki duck,
On its way pondward, has had to be quadrupled, with a tactical diversion, before it stuck
In the pond's non-co-operative margin, to the dryer purlieus of the Red Cow.
And how will the duck, accustomed to free range,
Take the change?
We shall see. As for me,
They keep the Red Flag flying on the particular bit of green I have always mown,
Not, I am assured, because it is something I think I own,
But as a prelude to providing even a bourgeois reactionary with a fresh hold
On life, in the shape of a tarmac path from my own threshold
Across what, now they have dug most of it up, they rightly assert
Is dirt.
When I decline, they are not really offended—only a little hurt.
The Red Flag is struck; and I, it is pleasant to reflect, have got my way,
And shall continue to rejoin the highway
Over Cotswold turf and clean gravel, greener and more golden in rain than in sun,
While the rest, every one,
"Grampie" Buggins, Joe Smith and that lively young piece
His niece,
Mrs. Trivett, Reg. Green and the brothers Howe,
A large family—and—friends contingent from the Red Cow
And chubby Bill Jakes from the farm and his skinny "Ma"
Will be able to reach the cinema
Without once touching English soil on their way to the city,
Thanks, not to their own uppish notions—for they were not asked—but to the Blankshire Highways Committee:
Which has had
The foresight to purchase some bituminous lake in Trinidad
And, in a happy hour,
Stake a claim to what is left of the summit of Penmaenmawr:
So that the paths across Our Green—though never again will they figure
As component parts of a "Cotswold Beauty Spot" in *Country Life*—will be something better and bigger.

—H.P.E.

FOOD

APART from the work of Sir Albert Howard, and those whose names are associated with him, there has been little real research work on nutrition in England. What passes in England for research is tied up too closely with money. As we point out on another page, the pasteurisation ramp is a case in point.

The elementary logic of present facts is appreciated better in America. We do not suggest that money is not hampering research there as in England, but honest men are at least able to state their findings.

There are two recent American publications to which our attention has been drawn by a valued correspondent.

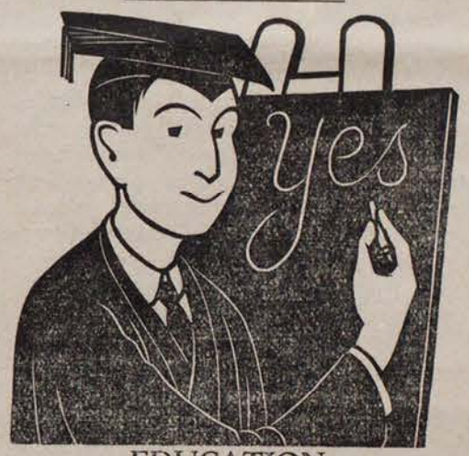
A booklet entitled *The Special Nutritional Qualities of Natural Foods* has been published by the Lee Foundation for Nutritional Research, Milwaukee, Wis. Copies are available at 5 cents. A valuable feature is a lengthy schedule showing the incidence of diseases associated with deficiencies of butter and whole wheat. The analysis is compiled from 118 recent medical treatises on various diseases.

A more recent and more substantial work is *The National Malnutrition*, by D. T. Quigley, M.D., F.A.C.S., also published by the Lee Foundation. It may be obtained thence for 1 dollar 50 cents.

There is much documented proof in these pages which we commend heartily to our readers. We can best indicate the courage of Dr. Quigley's analysis if we permit ourselves to quote at some length from his introduction.

"Since the first use of the word 'vitamin' the problem of nutrition has been more or less confused. With the discovery of new vitamins confusion increased. When minerals were added to the necessary articles required for good nutritution the bungling and muddling connected with pontifical pronouncements from supposed high places made it more difficult for anyone, doctor or layman, to get at the truth. The matter would not have been so hard to untangle had not the whole question been saturated with the poison of commercialism. The selling of bad food had become one of the biggest, if not actually the biggest, of business enterprises. The usual scientific discussions which always follow the introduction of new ideas in medicine were not allowed to proceed as usual in an unbiased way, but commercial interests began in a most insidious way to combat scientific fact with ridicule, endowed research (endowed in one direction), and other well-tried and tested methods. As the purveyors of good food were practically unorganised and had smaller investments, errors were allowed to go unchallenged, the general confusion on the subject of nutrition increased and the sabotage on the health and well-being of the American people proceeded apace. Under the stress of war the will to better health has been developed. The bad qualities of certain foods were admitted. It was conceded that white flour and sugar were producers of the most dangerous diseases. An unsatisfactory compromise was made and the false statements foisted on the people to allay general unrest. In effect the bad food purveyors now said: our product was bad but now it is good. As a matter of fact, white flour has been improved very little, sugar not at all and canned goods have the same reduced amounts of vitamin B that they always had (the B largely killed by heat).

The only good flour is whole-grain flour and as this must be fresh (it spoils in a few weeks) the white flour milling business would be affected in an adverse way if fresh whole wheat flour were to become universally used."



EDUCATION

COMPOSTING IN CAT-RUNS

By CAPT. H. S. D. WENT

THERE may be other readers of *The Cross and The Plough* whose "gardens" are, like mine, mere cat-runs in which it is not possible to find room even for the smallest New Zealand Box and who are Compost enthusiasts who are thus prevented from becoming the Enthusiastic Composters they would like to be. If there are such people, my experience may be of some use to them. I was a bad case of Compost Frustration until I found the solution of my problem—on the last subsection of the last Appendix to "An Agricultural Testament." The Sub-Section is entitled "Composting Night Soil and Town Wastes in Small Pits" and reads as follows: "Night soil can be composted in small pits without the labour of turning. These pits can be of any convenient size, such as 2-ft. by 1½-ft. and 9-ins. deep, and can be dug in lines (separated by a foot of undisturbed soil) in any area devoted to vegetables or crops. Into the floor of the pits a fork is driven deeply and worked from side to side to aerate the subsoil and to provide drainage after heavy rain. The pits are then one-third filled with town or vegetable waste, or a mixture of both, and then covered with a thin layer of night soil and compost from the pails. The pit is then nearly filled with more waste, after which the pit is topped up with a 3-inch layer of loose soil. The pit now becomes a small composting chamber, in which the wastes and night soil are rapidly converted into humus without any more attention." I, of course, saw at once that the great advantage of this method of composting was that it could be adapted to any garden, however small, and I decided to try it. I started on a small enough scale, for my first pit was about eighteen inches square. I filled it to a depth of about four inches with mixed vegetable wastes, added a layer of about two inches of poultry manure and horse droppings, added another four inches of vegetable waste and topped up with the prescribed three inches of loose earth. From experience I afterwards found that it was better to fill the pit up to earth level before adding the loose soil, to avoid too much sinking. I gave the pit about six months before disturbing it and then found that, about four to six inches below the surface, I had a thick layer of rich dark brown humus. As I said above, the method is capable of a great number of variations. If you like, you can set aside one little patch for your composting operations, applying the compost from it to any part of the garden you wish; or you can make a row of pits, using the undisturbed earth between them the following year. Or, if you prefer it and have sufficient wastes—you can dig a trench (or trenches if you have room) instead of a row of pits. If you live in a large town you may find that getting sufficient wastes is something of a problem, but it is not an insoluble one. First of all, you will get some vegetable wastes from your own garden—however small it may be. Then you can cadge garden wastes from your neighbours. You will have quite a considerable quantity of wastes from your house—the outer leaves of greens, artichoke skins, such potato skins as you don't eat, tea leaves, coffee grounds, the contents of the vacuum cleaner bag and dozens of other bits and pieces. You will find enough if you look for it. Animal refuse may present rather more difficulty, but here again it is only a question of finding a way. If you don't know anyone who keeps a pig, or fowls, or pigeons, or rabbits, remember that there is quite a lot of horse transport even in the big cities nowadays. United Dairies use a lot of horses and there is nothing to prevent you sallying forth "when shades of night are falling fast" armed with a dust-pan and shovel—even if you are not registered with them for milk! Every now and then you probably have fish of some sort. Fish guts, bones and skins are excellent composting material. You will sometimes find, when you come to cook the Sunday joint, that some blood has come out on to the plate. Soak it up with the breakfast tea leaves and put it in the compost bucket. And don't forget that—although we are nearly all cursed with water-borne sanitation—a little contrivance will enable you to use your own night soil and, above all, don't forget the bedroom slops. If you are prejudiced against vegetables grown on compost made from night soil (a very different thing from vegetables manured with raw night soil) you can grow flowers on your pits the first year and vegetables afterwards. The benefit of the pits will be felt for several years. Give the method a trial. You will not be disappointed.

A SCEPTIC ENQUIRES

By H. R. BROADBENT

A FRESH stream of advice on agriculture is shortly to rise. It is of considerable interest therefore to have the suggestion* of an influential chemist in the artificial manure industry as to what constitutes the present orthodox attitude towards the problem of manuring. It is not possible to say whether he is the spokesman for his industry, but it would appear that he is approved.

The author addresses himself to laymen; and by a layman he means "the ordinary man who is interested one way or another in the care of the soil and the raising of crops." It is as well, therefore, that his thesis should be examined by a layman. In setting his standard of accuracy he invites us to take the research work of chemists and biologists on trust. So we should. It is not the work of the scientist which will be questioned, but the direction in which that work has been oriented. There is no questioning of the facts produced by the research worker, but there is some doubt as to whether all the facts are brought to our notice, and, if they are, of the construction which is put upon them.

We are due for more advice. Where will it come from?

"Sceptical readers," says the author, "will have to refer to other books in which the evidence has been set out." We have taken his advice; but in what follows there is no criticism of the men who patiently gathered the facts. There can be no quarrel with men whose living is dependent upon a detail in a whole. Nor is it certain that the directorate, taking into account the background of our industrial growth, could be expected to have the necessary foresight to hold aloof. But we are now to have fresh advice.

Advocates of organic farming will be greatly encouraged by this book, for they will find that their voices have penetrated. It should be made clear that the extent of agreement between the author of this very pleasantly written apologia and Sir Albert Howard is amazingly high. "When Howard deduces that chemicals alone are inadequate, he is 100% right." "Humus," he says, "is an essential member of the soil fertility system. It is possible to meet the demands of crops with (organic) manures alone." "Anybody who is still not convinced about the essentialness of humus should air his scepticism by reading some of the books that are devoted exclusively to humus considerations. But is there anyone really so sceptical? The catholic functions of humus are all too fundamental."

The field has narrowed. Humus is "vital" for satisfactory plant-growth, but——. Here is the author's "but." Organic manures are insufficient. "Humus manures can be all sufficient *if enough can be applied* to cover both humus and N.P.K. needs." "You can supply all plant needs with manures so long as you can get enough." The author contends that it is not possible in this country to produce the yield of crops at which we aim without artificials. Humus—yes. But it is his opinion that "it is impracticable to look to composting for the soil's total NPK needs as well."

The case is argued in detail and is backed by tests at experimental stations. Rothamsted is the backbone of the argument and Broadbalk field results the most quoted. The most devastating case which he makes is that of nitrogen supply, and on this point the author affirms that "the issue is perhaps the most vital of all issues we have to consider." Certainly the conclusions of his argument on nitrogen colour the rest of the book, and it is proper therefore that it should be examined with the care which it deserves. Since the matter is important, indeed the crux of the affair, the basic figures from which he deduces the gap in the organic manure case are quoted in full.

After calculating the nitrogen demands of crops for the selected year, 1934, and discoursing on the need to replace what we take from the soil, he proceeds to a further consideration.

"Next," he goes on, "we must add to our figure for nitrogen loss by cropping, the serious loss by leaching. Going back to the data in chapter five for the leaching loss we have research figures measuring this loss for arable land as follows:—

With heavy F.Y.M.—loss of 143 pounds per acre per year.

* "Chemicals, Humus and the Soil" by Donald P. Hopkins. Faber & Faber. 12/6.

With normal fertiliser N—loss of 51 pounds per acre per year.

With no treatment—no loss but very poor crops.

Rich soil—68 pounds loss per acre per year.

Now these are the losses of *known* addition of nitrogen and of nitrogen inherently present in the soil."

The unknown contribution of *azotobacter* is then referred to and the argument continues—

"Taking a conservative view of this loss, let it be assumed that the average loss per arable acre was 40 lbs. of N per year *plus the azotobacter gain*" (author's italics in both cases).

On this figure of 40 lbs. per acre per annum is finally built up a "leaching loss" of 125,000 tons per annum and through a series of linked factors, a deduction that "we shall need some 40,400,000 tons of compost manure even if all the nitrogen contained is effective, or twice this, some 80,800,000 tons if the nitrogen is no more effective than that of F.Y.M." The author comments: "This seems a very large amount."

At a later stage he concedes with smaller requirements due to greater effectiveness of compost the figure may be reduced to 55,000,000 tons but he says, "it still seems a very high figure to me."

He is prepared to extend the argument to greater crop demands but always as a basis, is the 40 lbs annual "leaching loss' of nitrogen plus azotobacter gain. And this is "conservative" compared with the results at research stations.

Let us consider this "leaching loss" of 143 lbs. per annum per acre with F.Y.M. (Farm Yard Manure). We return to Chapter V. It is explained that we are dealing here with "a non-biological factor." "The active forms of nitrogen—ammonia or nitrate forms —are very soluable in water." "Very poor 'chemical' arrangements exist for the soil retention of soluble nitrogen." Unless the active nitrogen forms are taken up by plants they are likely to be washed well down into the soil and then right out of the soil by rainfall. The drainage ditches of fields are carriers not merely of surplus water but of lost nitrogen."

"Some idea of the kind of loss we are up against" is given by a forty-nine year experiment at Rothamsted. A balance sheet for the F.Y.M. plot is produced and at the end appears the figure per acre of "an average loss of 143 pounds of nitrogen per year."

This is a serious loss because about 200 lbs of nitrogen are supplied annually in F.Y.M. To make doubly sure he asks himself the question "Is this loss due entirely to drainage removal?" For answer he quotes the nitrogen balance sheet of a special drainage plot at Rothamsted, which showed that, between 1870 and 1917, loss of nitrogen from this plot, which was kept free of weeds, could be accounted for in the special cemented drainage ditches.

Throughout the book one meets references to this leaching from arable land. It is to the author a dominating point. To him it seems that if you supply F.Y.M. you lose a high percentage by leaching. For him there is proof enough in the figures obtained from the balance sheet of the Rothamsted tests on the F.Y.M. plot of Broadbalk field and the special drainage plot.

Now as a fact, there is practically no leaching from the F.Y.M. plot. There is leaching from the unmanured plot and leaching from the plots manured with artificials, but very little from Plot 2B, the F.Y. M. plot. Indeed in some years the drains carry no water at all. At the foot of this page are figures of the number of days when the drains ran on the F.Y.M. plot and as a comparison the unmanured plot.

The figures are quoted from Sir E. J. Russell's *Soils and Manures,* where the comment is made: "So great is the water-holding capacity of the soil that the rain water rarely gets down to the drains in sufficient quantity to cause them to run."

The retention of water is, of course, the explanation of some of the advocacy of linkage of organic with artificial manures. It is a part of the explanation of the plea of the

	1903	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	Average 12 years
Dunged Plot	2	3	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0.7
Unmanured Plot	27	20	11	14	10	9	10	20	20	32	39	20	19.5

author that we should throughout his book hang on to the idea of chemicals and manures being complementary, hang on to it, as he says, "like a lifebelt." One can begin to see which part of the partnership, if it is a partnership, is the lifebelt.

This is not to say that there is no loss from the F.Y.M. plot. There is; perhaps not quite so great as is calculated, but nevertheless sufficiently great to warrant the term heavy. If this does not occur through leaching, what is the cause? Everyone knows what happens when a baby is overfed. The late Sir Daniel Hall supplied this answer in somewhat more technical terms: "In the Broadbalk wheat field," he wrote in his *Account of the Rothamsted Experiments,* "the plot which receives farmyard manure is supplied annually with far more nitrogen than is removed in the crop. During the earlier years of the experiment there was in consequence a rapid rise in the proportion of nitrogen in the soil, but this rise has diminished and has been latterly by no means equal to the annual increment of nitrogen. A state of equilibrium is eventually attained when the destructive agencies find the conditions so favourable for their development that the quantity of nitrogen compounds broken down to a state of gas becomes equal to the surplus of combined nitrogen that is added year by year."

It may be suggested that it does not matter how the loss occurs. There is a loss and a heavy loss. Let us take that as a fact and get on with the rest of the argument. That is a possible line to take, and it will be followed, but "leaching loss" will be referred to again later. For the present there is this consideration: If the symptoms of an animal suffering from undernourishment, despite a liberal diet, were described to a vet as an excessive voiding, he would most certainly require further details before prescribing.

It may also be mentioned, in passing, that this farmyard plot on Broadbalk, in spite of its uncomfortable condition, is the only plot which, at any rate up to 1940, had shown "practically no deterioration." On all other plots (unmanured—and manured with artificials in varying degrees) there has been falling-off in yield (Imperial Bureau of Soil Science, Technical Communication No. 40).

(TO BE CONCLUDED IN OUR NEXT ISSUE)

REVIEW

MONEY IS STERILE: by G. Jansen, O.P. (Blackfriars, Oxfords; 1/- net)

This booklet of 60 pages is a very useful, if belated, analysis and exposure of the modern banking system, in terms of the permanent Catholic teaching on money.

Like many other writers on Currency, however, the author tends to isolate money and interest from other factors which are more primary to production and consumption. It cannot be done. The whole problem of money is now bound up (e.g.) with the existence of Industrialism and the Limited Liability Company. That is, the problem of property: that is, of control, is inseparable from the problem of money. I indicated this in *The Sun of Justice* eight years ago. It has never been met, and must therefore be taken to hold the field.

Unless means are found of solving the problems thus conjoined, nothing has been solved in Catholic morals.

Fr. Jansen has made a very good start. It is to be hoped that he will proceed on the only perennial lines. —H.R.

ABBEVILLE (AS RUSKIN SAW IT IN 1835)

For here I saw that art (of its local kind), religion, and present human life, were yet in perfect harmony. There were no dead six days and dismal seventh in those sculptured churches; there was no beadle to lock me out of them, or pew-shutted to shut me in. I might haunt them, fancying myself a ghost; peep round their pillars, like Rob Roy; kneel in them, and scandalise nobody; draw in them, and disturb none. Outside, the faithful old town gathered itself, and nestled under their buttresses like a brood beneath the mother's wings; the quiet, uninjurious aristocracy of the newer town opened into silent streets, between self-possessed and hidden dignities of dwelling, each with its courtyard and richly trellised garden. The commercial square, with the main street of traverse, consisted of uncompetitive shops, such as were needful, of the native wares: cloth and hosiery spun, woven, and knitted within the walls; cheese of neighbouring Neuchatel; fruit of their own gardens, bread from the fields above the green coteaux; meat of their herds, untainted by American tin; smith's work of sufficient scythe and ploughshare, hammered on the open anvil; groceries dainty, the coffee generally roasting odoriferously in the street, before the door; for the modistes—well, perhaps a bonnet or two from Paris, the rest, wholesome dress for peasant and dame of Ponthieu. Above the prosperous, serenely busy and beneficent shop, the old dwelling-house of its ancestral masters; pleasantly carved, proudly roofed, keeping its place, and order, and recognised function, unfailing, unenlarging, for centuries.—*Præterita, ch. ix, ¶ 181.*

LIVING TO WORK

By HIS GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF BOSTON
(extracted from a long article in *The Catholic Art* Quarterly)

LARGE-SCALE industry is the sheltering framework within which most of our population (labourer and professional man alike) must find the means wherewith to live. But can a man find a fully human life within this framework? Can he live to work, to make, to create? Can he create in the secure knowledge that what he makes will benefit society? The present pattern of our industrial system is a pyramid with responsibility allocated in a diminishing scale from top to bottom. Creation, making in its truest sense, work in the Christian sense, belongs in fullest measure only to the manager, to the executive, to the man at the top. He has responsibility, not only for his own actions, but for those of thousands of employees under him. Creative making belongs only in its most truncated, diminished form to the man at the bottom—the man at the assembly line—the man who has responsibility only for a single minute and highly simplified mechanical operation.

Two things militate against a fully human life within this framework. First, it condemns large numbers of people to hard, uncreative work—to drudgery. Not the drudgery of physical work, which the machine eliminated, but the mental drudgery of endless monotony. Second, it assigns human labour to an inferior place in the scale of human values.

There is a great difference between drudgery and hard work. Drudgery is hard work, without the joy of accomplishment; and nothing more. If that is all we have, we are in a sorrowful plight. Making things is hard work, too; only it is fascinating, because at the end you can say: "That is my handiwork; that is my creation." That sort of hard work is stimulating and therefore good for us. We hear a great deal nowadays about the danger of developing tensions; about the value of relaxing. Yet—after all, when you're totally relaxed you're dead; to win a baseball game, to run a mile, to beat last year's sales record, to plan next year's production peak—you have to be FULL of tensions; alive, living to work.

In earlier days, man was concerned with the making of the necessities of life. The doing of those necessary works called forth the creative and contemplative faculties of man. The old-fashioned maker of bricks who made them one by one with the simplest of apparatus, had to have in his mind an image of the brick he was about to make, and, strange though it may seem, that image had to be called up afresh each time. In the days when nails were made one by one, the same applied even to nails. But—the demand for bricks and nails and such things increased. Brick-making and nail-making became routine work. Brickmakers and nailmakers used less and less imagination. Creative making gave way to the physical drudgery of the first factories.

Machinery destroyed physical drudgery; it replaced it with a mental drudgery which is no less irksome. To reproduce thousands of copies of a newspaper in the days before the steam printing press was undoubtedly a grinding toil; but, if your physique would stand it, it is probable that you would rather spend twelve hours a day sawing wood than twelve hours a day pushing one button in and out. It is hard to imagine anything more stultifying, more demoralizing than a prolonged routine mechanical operation. It makes people as depersonalized as the man in the production line who was interviewed by a reporter. The newspaper man was visiting one of our large mass-production industrial plants to gather material for a human interest story. He walked beside the long conveyor belt and chatted with each man in turn. He asked their names and the nature of the small operation that each man was performing. Finally, he came to one fellow and asked him who he was. And the man replied "I'm NUT 39." To-day one hears much about the ideal of the Leisure State; if that means abolition of drudgery, it is indeed an ideal, and let us hope that it may come about; but if it means the abolition of personal "making" it would be practical slavery, because we should soon be half-dead; half-dead from boredom, half-dead from standing watch at a belt-line.