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LAND POLICY.

COMPREHENSIVE R.S.A. SCHEME.

The main plank in the land policy of the N.Z.R.S.A. has been, and still is, the compulsory acquisition of land. By that is meant that the large land-owners should have land taken from them by the Government until those in need of land have been satisfied.

Theoretically, this would seem to be the proper and logical method of obtaining land for closer settlement, but in practice it has proved a failure, since not a single soldier has been settled on the land by this method.

We still have about 4300 soldiers who desire to take up farms, but who remain without land, and in order to get them placed where they will do most good the R.S.A. Headquarters has put forward a "bustle-up" policy, of which the main features are as follows:

Since it is a national concern it is proposed to direct matters from a central Bureau at Headquarters, with the object of finding land for the soldiers, and soldiers for the land.

In order to find land it is proposed (a) To send circulars asking for information regarding suitable farms to chairmen and clerks of county councils, chairmen and secretaries of Farmers' Unions, managers of dairy factories, and schoolmasters in the back-blocks. (b) All replies (which it is hoped will be received monthly) are to be properly filed in a land book kept for that purpose. (c) A retired farmer, and one friendly to soldiers' interests, would be chosen in each land district to act as honorary adviser, to inspect the properties offered in his district, and to send into N.Z.R.S.A. Headquarters a report as to the suitability, quality and value of such properties.

To discover the soldiers for the land a circular will be sent to every R.S.A. and branch asking the name and number of every member of such association who requires land, and his experience, if any, as a farmer. The circular will also ask for names of two or more (mates to be encouraged to form themselves into syndicates) the land district in which the land is desired, and the class of land desired.

As soon as the Government has valued and taken over a property (one, say, suitable for the settlement of five men), headquarters will select a syndicate to apply for it. Men from a particular land district will, if they so desire, receive land in that district, in so far as it is possible to make such arrangement.

The men selected will be interviewed by the Honorary Adviser for their district, who will report to headquarters regarding their suitability and experience.

It is also proposed that the Land Bureau already existing in connection with R.S.A.'s should devote their energies mainly to the settlement of soldiers in homes, the Dominion Bureau to perform the larger task of settling the soldier on the land.

RUSSIAN PROVERBS.

MAXIMS OF THE PEASANTRY.

In the September number of "Discovery," the "monthly popular journal of knowledge," published by Mr John Murray, there appears an article on "Russian Proverbs," by Mr Louis Segal, M.A., head of the Russian Department in the University of Birmingham.

A number of Russian proverbs, says Mr Segal, have their equivalents in English and other languages, the thoughts being alike, but the expression differing in form. "More haste, less speed," becomes in Russian "Hurry, and you will become ridiculous." The English "In the land of the blind, one-eyed people are kings," has its equivalent in "Where there is no fish even crabs are fish."

Proverbs which indicate the popular view of private property are of interest in view of the attempts made by the Bolsheviks to abolish it, and substitute national ownership of the means of production and distribution. Proverbs such as "Every man is a king in his own house" indicates the complete right exercised by the owner over his property. The landowner had full right to all that came from the land; "Whose land, his corn," or "Whose forest, his timber," show the popular view of the question.

The general view was against leaving money to one's children. The dictum of the late Mr Carnegie, "I would rather leave my son a curse than a dollar," had several precursors in Russian folk-sayings. "Don't leave money to your sons; the silly will squander it, while the wise can make their own," expresses in somewhat milder form the same idea; while, "That is not property which one inherited from one's father, but what one earned oneself" expresses the same idea from a different

point of view. The popular belief that what is easily acquired (or inherited or won) brings no luck is also expressed in many sayings.

Russians are justly reputed for being very hospitable. "When a visitor is in the house, God is there," declares one adage. Another stamps the unsociable man as "evil." "He is evil who pays no visits and invites no guests." It is an overbold statement, but no doubt it reflects the general opinion in Russia.

Idle life is pointed out as the source of ill-health. "The poor man is looking out for disease, while the rich is sought out by it." "Idleness does not feed a man, but only makes him ill," is another truism.

A number of precepts advocate the necessity of being charitable. Charity is considered the essence of true religion. Stories like Tolstoy's "Where love is, God is," fully embody this national conception. Also in folk-lore we can trace the same ideal in sayings like, "Don't build a church, support an orphan"; or "Don't build seven churches, bring up seven orphans." One cannot help thinking, had the whole world been permeated by the principles dominating, to a large extent, the illiterate peasantry of Russia, this earth would now be a pleasanter place to live in.

WHEN THE WHOLE IS LESS THAN ITS PART.

Euclid tells us very emphatically that the whole is greater than its part. In fact this obvious proposition lies at the very basis of the geometry of space. But just as Mr Gladstone once solemnly declared that "in the arithmetic of the Customs two and two do not always four," so in the arithmetic of industry it does not necessarily follow that the whole is greater than its part. That this is no mere joke appears from a very interesting fact.

A few weeks ago, things being slack, a big firm of hosiery manufacturers in Leicester intimated that they could only find work for three days a week for a certain number of men. Unless this plan was adopted they would have to discharge some men altogether. To their credit be it said the workers preferred half-time for all rather than full time for half. At the end of the first week, the men, all of whom were paid by the piece, drew nearly as much wages as they had averaged for a full week before. In the second and following weeks they actually drew more, showing that in industry the half may be more productive than the whole. And the reason they gave was most interesting and very human.

Being on holiday for three days a week, they wanted more to spend so they promptly set to work to earn it. The results are noteworthy: the men got more money and more leisure, the employers got more leisure and a much more productive use of their machinery and raw materials, and the public got more hosiery.

WOMEN WHO KEEP SECRETS.

The theory that women cannot keep a secret is being destroyed by experience. The Grand Lodge of French Freemasons evidently thinks so, for it has declared itself in favour of the admission of women to Freemasonry.

Women in the business and professional world are no longer considered incapable of secrecy. A thousand important and confidential facts must come daily to the ears of Miss F. L. Stevenson, Mr Lloyd George's private secretary, who is able to hold her post. The secretary at the Spanish Embassy is a woman, and a young and charming one, but evidently one who can keep her own and other people's counsels.

Women doctors must hear confessions that they may not divulge, and must see interesting sides of their patients' characters about which they must not gossip. Telephone girls are sworn to secrecy about the conversations they overhear, and telegraphists and post office clerks must consider the messages that pass through their hands as sacred.

Women in every business are learning that it is not only "bad form" but dishonesty to repeat their office affairs to outsiders, and even the youngest shop girl is learning through business training to keep a secret as well as a man can.

There exists in the Cambridge School of Forestry a wonderful specimen of the oblong tree, which has assisted the discovery of a secret of growth. The trunk in question is about 30in by 2in. Its curious shape is due to no more than a little bruise or two which persuaded it to grow in one direction and not at all in any other. Other discoveries and experiments prove that an artistic bruise—it may be no more violent than strong pressure with the finger-tips—can make a tree expand in a desired direction.

REDUCTION OF DEFENCE STAFF.

AN OFFICER'S SURVEY OF THE POSITION.

Discussing the projected reduction of the Defence staff, a military officer in a responsible position said that the officers were hardly being treated fairly by the Government. Not only were they not being paid proportionately so well as before the war, but they had been kept in suspense for months, not being given an inkling as to whether they were going to be kept on or dispensed with. Since the war there had been a general cry for efficiency in all matters affecting defence. How were they to get efficient work out of officers whose attention was diverted from their duties by a threat of dismissal? It could not be done.

With every expert in the world saying that the next arena of war would be the Pacific, the Government had decided to cut down its military expenditure, because of the silly catch-cries of people who vapoured about the evils of the "military caste," when it was plain that such a caste could not exist in a democratic atmosphere such as we had in New Zealand. If such people only read a little more, and had imagination, they would see trouble glaring at them. That New Zealand was not in a state of military preparedness was the fault of the drastic cut in defence expenditure, and now 50 per cent. of the officers did not know where they were, and were looking round for opportunities outside the profession of arms. Despite the lesson of the late war, and the threat in the Pacific, nothing was being done that should be done. One of the greatest advances in the art of defence and offence, as demonstrated in the war, was the efficiency of the war-plane, either as a means of reconnoitring or destruction, but so far New Zealand had not even the beginning of an air force; and another was the use of submarines. New Zealand had been given exceptional chances to equip herself in both respects, but nothing had been done, and the Dominion was left naked to whatever enemies might develop at any time. A good deal was heard of the National Defence League, and it was doing good propaganda work, but at the back of it there should be at the very least a solid basis of a practical defence force. Instead of that the basis was a trembling uncertain structure, which scarcely knew whether it was required in the scheme of things at all.

MOTTOES.

DESTINY DETERMINED BY A MAXIM.

Many men who have left their mark on the world have been powerfully influenced by some motto or maxim. Many a great man owes his success in life to the inspiration of a single book, a chance remark, a lecture, or perhaps a sermon. A high ideal crystallised into a motto and constantly held up before a young man has often, says Orison Marden in "The Woman's Magazine," determined a whole destiny.

Ruskin always kept on his desk a piece of chalcidony inscribed with the word "To-day." This was to remind him of the preciousness of time, and of the possibilities of what could be put into a day in the way of achievement, of growth and of enjoyment.

Here is a motto which had a great influence upon Garfield's life: "There are some things I am afraid of—I am afraid to do a mean thing." Another was: "Things do not turn up in this world until somebody turns them up."

Not long since I saw this motto in a business man's office: "Be brief. We have our living to make, and it takes considerable of our time to do it."

Here are a few mottoes which have inspired men and women who have brought things to pass:—

"Don't worry, it won't last—nothing does."

"On the great clock of time there is but one word—Now."

"We get out of life just what we put into it."

"What is put into the first of life is put into the whole of life."

"We stamp our own values upon ourselves, and cannot expect to pass for more."

"Every day ahead of you is precious, the days behind you have no existence at all."

"The energy wasted in postponing a duty for to-morrow which ought to be done to-day will often do the work."

"You must take joy with you, or you will not find it even in heaven."

"The first thing to do, if you have not done it, is to fall in love with your work."

"A lazy man is of no more use than a dead man, and he takes up more room."

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