

A HOME ON A FARM

"Hey, There! Red Cross".

The call came from a group of doughboys to whom I had nodded a moment before. The morning was balmy, - rare thing in Paris in March of 1919, and I was going to my desk at Red Cross Headquarters through the Garden of the Tuilleries. The boys, evidently on leave, had been glad though to find a bench in the sun in the rare old place.

They surrounded me as I turned back, holding up a little pamphlet - its title was their salutation!

"Hey There!"

Below was a subtitle -

"Do you want a Home on a Farm?"

It was the subtitle about which they wanted to question me. Did I know anything about the scheme? Did the government mean it? Was it possible they would be given a chance to buy a farm?

As it happened, I did know a little of it. I could tell them of the faith, thoroughness and enthusiasm with which Secretary Lane had worked out the plan, - that both President Wilson and ex-President Roosevelt, wide apart as they usually were in their views, had heartily approved it; that I believed Congress could not refuse to agree. How could it? A plan so

simple, wise, just.

There was an elderly man in the group. "It doesn't always follow, you know, " he said cynically, "that because a thing is simple, wise and just Congress agrees."

We cried him down.

"But this - why Congress can't help doing this. It would be great for the whole country. Anybody can see that."

And we were right - the little pamphlet outlined a plan of land reclamation and settlement by soldiers which was a masterly piece of common sense, practical in every detail. It had been before the country almost a year and had been warmly approved. The opinions of the men themselves were being sought - both overseas and in the camps at home. The little pamphlet was merely one item in a widespread campaign to make the scheme known and to sound out the interest it provoked.

If the war ~~The war was over~~ *the situation* - with Secretary Lane's proposition for meeting it ~~as it is~~ -

The war was over - 4,000,000 men would soon be released to civilian life. It was already clear that many of them could not and many did not want to take up the activities the war had interrupted. Things had changed; they had changed. The government which had interrupted their orderly existences should in justice do its utmost to restore them. A fair proportion of the men were land-minded. The farm was the place for them. In the United States there was at that time more than 200,000,000 acres of land which by irrigation, drainage, or

clearing could be made fit for farming of one kind or another. In all the states there were tracts of abandoned lands, once rich in yield, still capable of restoration. Not all of it belonged to the United States; much of it belonged to states or individuals, but by cooperative effort enough and more could be easily obtained to satisfy the discharged soldier needs.

It was proposed that the men themselves do the work of redeeming the land and making it ready for settlement and crops - do it on good wages paid by the government and under the direction of skilled engineers, builders, farmers.

"Do just what we've had to do over here" said one of the boys, "without any shells playing the deuce with you."

While this work was going on the men were to live in cantonments of the kind to which they had become accustomed - have the amusements, instruction, the opportunities of a community life.

When the land was cleared, ~~dams~~ and canals built, roads constructed, houses, creameries, ice plants, packing houses, schools, churches ready, tracts were to be sold practically at cost to those veterans that wanted farms of their own.

It was expected that ~~many~~ of the men would save out of the wages they received in the period of preparation enough for a first payment - and be able to meet the succeeding long term payments out of their crops. Money for implements, stock and seed was to be advanced by the government and repaid on easy terms. Expert advice was to be always available.

The pamphlet concluded:

"Remember that this means work. This is not a bounty scheme. It will give a chance to own a farm only to those who want to work a farm."

As we talked it over there in the Garden of the Tuilleries we all agreed, even the cynic, that it ought to work, and while I sat with them three boys announced their intention to fill out the postal card which was attached to the little pamphlet.

This was the card:-

There is many a heartache today when that card turns up! What hopes it awakened! What an answer it was to concealed anxieties - what a host of boys filled it out!

"Forty per cent of the men would willingly pass direct from the Army into this work," wrote an officer who had been sounding out the men, to the Reclamation Bureau in Washington.

"Every soldier I have talked with thinks the plan splendid," wrote another.

As for the boys themselves, they flooded the Bureau with questions - bits of personal stories - rejoicings. It was not enough to fill out the card, they had to spill over.

In their frank letters were often revelations of what the war had done to them. It had brought to many a one a revolt against cities - above all against the life of the counting room, the shop. They wanted more reality after their terrific grapple with reality.

"I have done a lot of hard work in the Army and if I should go back to the city would have no ambition to work there at all. I want to be on a farm, and neither my wife or myself would have any ambition at all to live in the city."

Now and then there was a trace of doubt in the letters. Not doubt of the plan, that looked easy to them all, after the experience that they had gone through, so revealing in the possibilities of organized cooperative effort. The doubt was as to whether Congress would see it.

"Could you please advise me," wrote one man, "how the government is going to take care of a fellow like myself, that has a very little experience in farming and has no capital to start with, but am willing and able to work even a few years so as to get a footstep for a farm proposition which would be a sound basis for advancement by good work and energy - by that I mean something that will give a fellow a start and help him along until he can take care of himself. Do you think it is advisable to figure on such proposition, or is it just a momentary thought of action which will never come true?"

It never came true! Congress failed the boys! But the plan dies hard. The guardsman at the door of the Veterans Bureau in Washington, housing its thousands of clerks and accountants, tells me that every now and then he has to send a boy inquiring for land over to the Reclamation Bureau and at the Reclamation Bureau they tell you with infinite regret that even now, after seven years, the little card comes back to them from some still unplaced boy, begging for a chance on the land, "as the government promised."

Why was the "National Soldier Settlement Act" - for that was what the plan outlined in the little pamphlet - was by the Committee on Public Lands, which recommended it, called ~~X~~ why was it thrown aside by Congress? An attempt to explain what Congress does or does not do must always begin with politics. It's a rule of that great game that your opponent must not be permitted to pile up credit marks. No matter what the National emergency, a good suggestion originating in his mind must be defeated, if possible. If it is very good and there is insistance on it from the country, a way must be found to appropriate it. 1244919

Only in war do you agree with your opponent, and even then it is permissible to foul his play, if it can be done without immediate disaster. But while an investigator must agree that the politics behind Congressional action is first to be considered in this as in most other ~~ills~~ills, he must not stop there.

No little honest opposition to the Soldier Settlement Act came from the fact that it proposed something quite outside

the experience of many, perhaps most of the members of Congress. More than one man in as well as out of Secretary Lane's party exploded in disgust when the measure was put before him. It was "paternalistic", "socialistic" - "that was not the way this country was settled - look at the pioneers - the homesteaders!" They did not come under skilled direction to clear the land. They did not have credit to help them build and stock, or to help them out of tight places. Nor did they have expert advice on planting and marketing. ^W That is true. But the original homesteader used tallow candles which he made himself, - Should the settler of today therefore make and use tallow candles?

He also traveled to Nebraska and Oregon with ox teams, Must the settler of today therefore travel by ox team? Because a lone man in the past cleared out over tracts by himself - grubbing out *rocks* ~~even~~, should any man be asked to do so today when there are machines for the purpose - as well as dynamite and tools? ~~Is it not a wicked waste of time and energy to expect the individual to spend his time and strength on such tasks - when co-operative effort extended by nation or state - would assist the new settler to become at once a production unit? The balking Congressmen appealing to the methods of pioneers as models for settlers today forget that settlers practiced co-operative clearing and building as soon as they numbered even 2 or 3. It was the practice to gather from far and near to help a new man - in "bees" and "raisins". There was a logging bee, to help him quickly to a piece of land to cultivate; there was a raising bee to give him his house and barn.~~

sheet

Since the days of the first homesteader we have become a rich nation; we have developed a system of credit which should be at the command of would-be producers as well as credit handlers-- particularly those who are starting in life on the land and who are without other resources than their youthful energy. Moreover credit should be available to those who for reasons they cannot control have been unable to accumulate capital, but who long for independence and believe that they can best win it from the soil.

Just as we have learned to make machines which pull stumps and level humps and cut ditches, saving men's backs and time, just as we have learned to substitute credit for cash where there is reasonable backing of brains and experience, and savings, so we have learned the usefulness of combining ^{for} buying, purchasing, selling. The bundle of sticks is stronger than the single fagot -- whatever the operation. The very life of the modern farmer depends upon it -- particularly is it necessary at the start. How well the pioneer understood this! Let there be but two or three in a neighborhood and they far apart - and they made "bees" to help a newcomer "log" a tract, to put in a crop to see him through his first season -- a "raisin" to give him at once the ^{home} farm for his house and barn!

What Secretary Lane proposed in 1918 and the Committee on the Public Lands recommended to Congress in 1919 was so to apply the approved methods of modern wealth-production that the returned soldier with a longing for a farm could have a chance to earn one in a reasonable time - and do it without public dole or subsidy. The government made a 4% investment which is supervised in the interest of the boys.

But Congress refused to approve the plan. It was enough for some of its members that it would have credited those whom they wished discredited; but it was also beyond the experience of most of them, and they had not the imagination to see that those principles which they took as a matter of course ~~very regularly~~ in industrial and commercial affairs, were equally applicable to land colonizing.

They had not the imagination to "see" it and they were ignorant, or at least indifferent to what had been done on these lines in this and other countries. They did not realize that they were not being asked to try out ^{new} theories - but to apply a set of principles already as well as established as the principles of scientific management are in industry.

Among those who had aided Secretary Lane in the development of his plan was the present head of the United States Reclamation Bureau - Mr. Elwood Mead. Mr. Mead could tell Congress how under his direction Australia had already demonstrated the entire practicality of the Principles of Scientific Colonization - he could tell them how the State of California impressed by what Mr. Mead had done in Australia, had bought a tract of 6500 acres and set aside \$250,000 with which he (Mr. Mead) was then establishing a similar settlement - one now famous - Durham.

But it was not necessary to go so far away - there was a really brilliant demonstration not 200 miles from where Congress was sitting - 6 prosperous settlements, all within 50 miles of one another - built up by Hugh MacRae of Wilmington, North Carolina, through twenty years of experiment - experiment finally reduced to

a set of irrefutable ~~examples~~ *examples* If Congress had asked Mr. McRae to tell it how he had succeeded, he would have given *led* them ~~the rules~~ *this way*:

1. Sell no land which you have not proved fit to give *grow* what you tell your settler it will grow - that is sell only certified land - and have at least an acre or two ready for a crop.

2. Pick your settler - Be sure he loves the soil - has had experience on it - will work ~~it is~~ thrifty - ambitious.

3. Furnish expert advise as to soils - crops, diversification-methods. *Be a friend to the new-comer*

4. Supply credit when wise.

5. Place your settlers in *groups where they can build* social life - community interests - schools, roads - amusements. *up*

6. Encourage cooperation. *X*

The National Soldier Settlement Act is dead - The men who would have so gladly and understandingly taken hold of the enterprise are scattered - their hope and probably their enthusiasm for a farm is gone - though not their resentment at the failure to carry out that came to them as a promise.

But though *the* great opportunity of successfully undertaking scientific colonization on a large scale was lost in 1919 when Congress refused Secretary's Lane's plan, the *principles themselves* *will* *not* *down*. Indeed

Indeed, today they are being forced on Congress as the only practical solution of a *great* *quiet* of economic and human problems

which threaten to put an end to one of its favorite - and very expensive - undertakings - that is reclaiming of the arid lands of Western states by building dams, impounding enough water to give the steady and sufficient irrigation. It is now 24 years since this policy was adopted. In that period 24 irrigation projects - scattered over 13 states - have been undertaken, and over \$200,000,000 spent in them. More than \$100,000,000 is needed for their completion.

As engineering projects they are magnificent. The Roosevelt Dam in Arizona, the Arrowrock Dam in Idaho, the Elephant Butte Dam in Texas, and many others are worth long journeys simply to look upon. The system of handling the hundreds of thousands of acres of water impounded is not less wonderful, including as it does more than 15,000 miles of canals, ditches, and drains - 1,000 miles of roads, over 3,300 miles of telephone lines, a dozen power plants.

Numbers of people have gone the last twenty years onto the reclaimed lands. The enthusiastic over the enterprise will tell you that there are today 13,400 individuals living on the thirty thousand and more farms that have been developed from sage brush desert through irrigation. They will tell you that last year nearly \$78,000,000 worth of crops were harvested from these reclaimed lands. All of this is true. But what the enthusiasts do not tell you is that more than one of the projects yielding a rich return is no longer owned and tilled by a group of independent individual farmers, but has become the property of an individual or company who carries it on as a business, employing tenants usually Mexicans, in the South West - Russians in the Middle West, and North. That is, both the economic and social end of the irrigation policy is being defeated. This transition from the

individual small farmer intended, to the absentee landlord or corporation has been slow. Crop after crop of settlers - six to eight sometimes have tried to convert the land to build homes and communities, and failed. ^{The} Speculators or the land company gathered in the holdings one by one until there was a tract sufficient for his purposes. The system of tenancy is threatening in more than one project - the hope of the few settlers who have hung on, of finally establishing a satisfactory social life for themselves and children. They cannot do it in a community of low alien standards.

Nor do the enthusiasts tell you that more than 60,000 acres of one much heralded development are still untouched; that on another 500 settlers left in two years, utterly discouraged - their hopes and capital gone. They do not tell you that these settlers again and again have been unable to meet their payments to the government -- that while there are projects which have paid all the money they owe, others have not even covered the operating expenses. When the government undertook reclamation it was with the expectation that in 20 years the money it had invested would be returned to it by the settlers' gradual payments for land and service. The original investment was to become a revolving fund to be used over and over in further reclamation. The failure to meet payments sets back the entire undertaking.

The wise men of the Reclamation Bureau havenot glossed over the facts. They have been digging them out and putting them frankly and firmly to Congress. Reclamation, they have been insisting, is more than an engineering problem. Economic and human problems must be mastered before the land can be made to yield. Congress has been willing to take the first step - furnish water - but that is not enough under present circumstances of life.

They have insisted that the plan which the government has followed in choosing settlers must be changed. It has been little better than a lottery.

There is in Nebraska a reclamation project - the North Platte. Six years ago 80 farms were opened to settlers, 3298 people applied for them and spent their money to be on the ground at the drawing - it has been estimated that it cost them fully a million dollars. Now the probabilities are that in the 3298 there were 80

good farmers - men fit for the settlement, but the government had no way of picking them out. It gave the tracts to those who drew the lucky numbers. The result is to-day that the majority of North Platte farms are in the hands of Russian tenants. Those who received them were either not fit for the struggle that necessarily followed to make them livable and profitable, or else they were out and out speculators, filing claims to hold in the hope of future rise in value.

The head of the department of Reclamation Economics in the Reclamation Bureau, Mr. G. W. Kreutzer, a man of long experience, having served with Mr. Mead both in Australia and at Durham, Calif. had the curiosity to look up the occupations of those who secured land in one Dakota project. He found one of them to have been a deep sea diver, - another an itinerant base ball player - another a missionary in China. No doubt ^{each} ^{was} good at their trades, but obviously ^{his} their trade was not farming, and after they made a first ^{in each} effort they disappeared.

The folly of unselected settlers on reclaimed land finally penetrated Congress, for a bill was passed a year and a half ago, changing the lottery to intelligent selection. Applicants for irrigated farms must be in good health, must have had two years experience at farming, must prove that they are fairly industrious and of fairly good character. Also that they must have at least \$2,000 in money. These requirements go a long way toward lessening the risk the government has always taken before in getting settlers, but they do not go far enough. For what is a settler's problem on so-called reclaimed land? What has the government done for him? It furnishes water - for which he pays - nothing more. His land is

desert. It must be levelled, cleared, planted, ^{land} He must build, stock, find a market. Often he has no road save the trail across the desert. He must wait for schools, churches, shops, - build a community from the raw soil up. Even if he have the grit, the patience, the faith in the soil to hold on, the chances are that his capital will be exhausted before his first crop is ready for the market - that he will have no where to turn for credit - no friend to advise. Here is how such a situation would be met in a colony under modern scientific direction. It is an actual experience from the Durham (California) settlement.

A man, 32 years old, who had never done anything but farm, and who wanted to do nothing else, with a wife of like mind, and a capital of \$4,000 - bought a 40 acre tract. Mr. Kreutzer, the Manager of the Durham project, was particularly pleased with the new settler, thought him a sure thing. Then one day, in passing he saw thirty acres of alfalfa going to seed. Now, one of the cardinal principles of the Durham Manager was to prove to the new settlers at the start that he was ^a their friend. He wanted to be the first friend they made in the enterprise. The result was that when he scented trouble he had a claim for confidence and received it. He quickly found in this case that the young couple had used all their capital in building and stocking and that the man, frightened by the lack of cash for temporary needs, had taken a job in town. It is an old story in colonization and one that can only be met by giving temporary credit.

"Your problem is as quickly as possible to get an income from your farm," Mr. Kreutzer told the man - "not let it go to ruin."

You have no debts. Our scheme allows you to borrow 60% of your equity. You have food for cows here in your alfalfa -- but you have only one cow - too much for two persons, and not enough for the creamery. Borrow from us enough to buy ten, and the week after they come on the place you will have an income, more than you are earning at daily wages."

And so it turned out. The ten produced an income of \$200 the month they were bought. The terms of the loan required a payment of about \$38 a month. The man was saved by friendly, practical help at the critical moment which comes to nearly all settlers on new land - saved by intelligent advice, and a reasonable advance of money.

One serious difficulty in settling the government's irrigated projects has been the lack of masons, plumbers, mechanics, *skilled & unskilled* laborers. How are you going to get ^A laborers, mechanics, into a community of this kind?

It's a popular fallacy that the craftsman has no love or sense for the land. The tradition in this country is contrary. As a matter of fact, practically all of our pioneers were both craftsmen and farmers. Take the family of Abraham Lincoln. His great-great-great-great-grandfather was a weaver, and a farmer; his great-great-great grandfather an iron master and a farmer; his father was a good cabinet maker for his day - as well as a poor farmer!

The nation has not been able to kill this long-grown instinct in men. There are land-minded tradesmen of all sorts, - land-minded laborers - but the difficulty has been to work out a system by which it is practical for them to own land and ply their

trades. Under the plan of scientific colonization this has been arranged. Take Durham, - it took from its 6500 acres thirty tracts of two acres each for this class of man. They were selected like the settlers - for experience, character, love of land - and they had to have at least \$200 in pocket.

The tracts were snapped up, - all but two which Mr. Kreutzer was keeping for what he called ^aland-minded plumber and mason - then suddenly a man appeared demanding one of the laborer's tracts. Everything was against him. He was 62 years old - he was not a plumber or a mason. He had only \$2 capital, but he put his case with such energy and intelligence, he explained so satisfactorily why he had only \$2. that Mr. Kerutzer took a chance on him. "They are picking pecans over there", he told the man. "If you come back at the end of a month with \$25 to make your first payment, I'll give you ^athe 2-acres ^{tract}." At the end of three weeks he came back with \$38 and was accepted. He became one of the most satisfactory settlers in the community, finally building a house and bringing on an elderly sister, an educated woman as housekeeper - a living proof that the best results can not be secured by inelastic rules. Study Hugh MacRae's colony near Wilmington and you will find proof after proof of this. It is necessary to have rules - so much money in hand - such an experience, but a wise manager will know when they can be safely stretched.

Growing familiarity with the private and public efforts at scientific colonization coupled with the unsatisfactory showing of many of the irrigated projects, has finally brought the Senate

to a determination to test the principles. In March it passed a bill authorizing an appropriation of \$ 500,000 - all to be returned to the government with interest at 4% for what it called "aided and directed settlement", on not more than two projects and in settlement of not less than one hundred farms. "Aided and Directed" means giving settlers what Durham gave them and what Hugh MacRae gives them.

But the Bill never reached the House. It was killed in committee - although the same committee recommended that \$12,000,000 be spent on more dams. Millions for engineering, but not a cent for putting the results of the engineering within the reach of energetic farmers unblest with money.

Scientific colonization has little hope of Congressional backing at present.

Probably the best chance for the demonstration of our principles lies with private colonizers, as the best chance for the principles of scientific management has always lain with the individual factory owner or owners. All over the country men of means or groups of men with means own great tracts of land - they are ambitious to make them productive. No doubt the majority of them would like to realize their ambitions by hired labor - labor they could employ on the same terms as they once did factory labor. They are finding, however, just as the factory managers have, that labor has come to the point where it has something to say about terms. - Unless they are met they will not work. The farmer today on big or little scheme is very much in the situation of the housekeeper. He has not applied to his business modern labor principles, and like the housekeeper, is finding that he can not get efficient help.

The problem of developing land, generally speaking, is the problem of getting men on land which they can in time own.

Every state in the Union faces this problem. Seventy-five percent of the rich agricultural land of the Middle West and South today is owned by absentee landlords and farmed by tenants who usually have no hope of ever owning a foot of it, - and farmed accordingly. But give them a chance and see what they do. Here is an experience of a Florida Banker, M. B. Anthony of Jacksonville, who gave such a chance in Georgia twenty-five years ago, and what came of it.

He was a young man who had been stirred by the sins of big business and wanted to do something to help the small man, - wanted to do it in Georgia.

"I did not have much money," he will tell you, "but I succeeded in getting hold of a big tract of fertile land near where my family had always lived, bought it at \$3.75 per acre, put a mortgage on it, and decided I would start a new system, persuading people to buy it on credit in small lots and pay off as they earned the money. I advertised all over the State, in true Lawson style: -

"Homes free, not in Oklahoma or in Klondike, but in Georgia in the best county, the best State and the best country in the world, Pay rent for five years and own your own farm."

"I put it up to them that they should pay yearly no more than the rent they had been paying for the tenant farms on which they had raised cotton. The Lord was with us for cotton went up that year. They paid, some of them, as much as \$75.00 on their ^{tracts} farms and I got a bigger interest than I had dreamed. The effect on those men was just what I thought it would be. When they got it into their heads they were going to own the land, they began to

ditch, to fertilize, to put on improvements, - the land which they bought at \$6.00 per acre now is worth \$200 and \$300. That is the kind of colonization we must have in Florida. Put it up to the men, give them a chance to pay out of their crops on land which we know will grow things and give it to them at a moderate price."

Florida has a wonderful opportunity to apply scientific colonization for she is more awake to its necessity for her future growth than any other state is at the moment. Indeed, how to get people to grow things on her vast undeveloped tracts - is the subject one hears more discussed by steady-headed Floridians than any other. She is aware too that she has a bad reputation for shady land transactions to live down.

The first two rules of Scientific Colonization have been violated again and again on her part. She has sold or allowed to be sold, land which could not in a life-time of hard work be made fit for human habitation, and cultivation and she has not picked her settlers.

One of the most picturesque scandals the tourist encounters is based on a violation of this second rule. It goes back to the brief occupation of Florida by the English in the 18th Century. The Englishmen who came over were greatly disgusted with what the Spanish had failed to do in settling the country and went vigorously to work according to their usually practical notions. One of the most important private undertakings was a colony on the East Coast near the town of New Smyrna, founded in 1763 by a Mr. Andrew Turnbull, and abandoned when the Spanish took over the country in 1778. According to the story the guides in New Smyrna tell you - and their story is founded on the earliest history of Florida - Dr. Turnbull took from their beautiful homes in Monaca, where he had found his wife, and out of

pleasant places in Italy and England, some five hundred colonists and brought them to a bleak and desolate coast where he practically made slaves of them. They suffered every deprivation, were starved, flogged and mistreated until finally some of them ran away and reached St. Augustine where they told their tale.

When this story appeared Dr. Turnbull, who was living in Charleston a respected citizen, defended himself with spirit, and in defending himself he showed the weakness of the structure on which he had built. Who, according to him, were these innocent people he was said to have dragged from comfortable homes? To begin with one hundred of them were single men whom he had picked up in the streets of Leghorn, Italy, where they were about to be banished because their idleness and wretchedness made them a nuisance; "vagabonds", he calls them. As for the families from Monaco, he declares that they had begged him to take them where they might have food. "I only asked vagabonds and the indigent and took such as could have no reason to look back or regret leaving their own country." Now what does the doctor do, but take this boat load of riff-raff to an untouched Florida coast, pine jungle and mangrove swamp down to the water's edge. Men are conquering thousands upon thousands of acres of that kind of land in Florida today, and doing it with ease, but it was a terrible proposition to be put up to a boat load of people with little to work with but their hands and who, according to the doctor's own story, could have had no great interest or skill in using them. They were not only unskilled but probably terrified by the wilderness that confronted them! Some were lazy and would not work and others were vicious. The latest researches seem to show that Dr. Turnbull did do as well as he could with the

material that he had brought over. The severest criticism against him is that he should have so little sense as to attempt to colonize with such material. Right there has been from the start in Florida, as in other parts of the country, a primary weakness in colonizing. Anybody that would go would be taken, a pair of hands with nothing in them or behind them - only a desire to make a change because life has become so hopeless and unsatisfactory where they are.

The conviction that settlers must be picked in colonization projects is as strong today in Florida as the conviction that land sold for settlement must be certified.

The State through its Immigration Bureau is actively interesting itself in bringing in settlers, and they are not left to the land sharks when they arrive, for there are excellent agencies for looking after them. I do not know where you will find a better market commissioner than Florida has, or one who gives more cordial and personal service. There was some misgiving when, fifteen years or so ago, it was decided to create a Market Commission. It might so easily become a political job. They were lucky in their choice, for they have a man - his name is L. M. Rhodes, who - so his associates declare - does not know that politics has anything to do with his work. His only thought is and has been from the start how he can get more useful information to the tillers of Florida land. From him newcomers can get information about soil, be put in touch with markets and receive daily and nightly marketing reports.

The Agricultural College, of which I have already talked in these pages, gives splendid service. That is, the individual coming to Florida is not left alone. The difficulty is that the lone farmer

does not always know that in every well regulated state there exists today more or less efficient agencies created to guide him, and he does not demand the service, which the State pays large sums to provide.

A multitude of private - large scale land settlement projects are on foot - more or less well thought out and nearly all of them giving some attention to our principles. Many of the city builders control a big back country, which they are planning to develop as they did their towns - building roads - putting in water - lights - and sewers, and then selling in what Young of Hollywood, who is opening some tens of thousands of acres in this way, calls "little ranches".

Boca Raton - elegant and exclusive as it promises to be - proposes a like addition. At Venice on the West Coast where the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers is investing money, some 20,000 acres have been set aside for "little ranches", which are not to be sold until the soil has been tested and the essentials for work and living provided. The Brotherhood might very well consider the practicality of credit in connection with its project. It might make a fine contribution to solving the problem of many workers - particularly those who lose much time in the winter months because of bad weather. This is true of construction men of all classes and not a few have been finding their way to Florida, where in the boom plenty of work awaited them. When the season opened in the north they returned.

The truck farm in Florida is a winter proposition largely, and can be easily combined with a trade which in the north is seasonal. It is practical, too, for Northern wheat and potato and vegetable growers who can do little or nothing from December to April. Not a few farmers are finding this out. On a tour of observation in Florida

last winter I ran across an Idaho potato grower looking for land which he could cultivate, while his northern tract was under the snow. - Again it was a Montana wheat grower - who found himself with too much idle time on his hands in the long Montana winters and wanted to try his luck in growing truck in Florida in those wasted months. Probably half the truck grown on the drained Everglades land is by seasonal labor - Georgia Crackers who come down in November and return in April. In five months they make enough from beans to keep the family for the rest of the year.

There are several large co-operative developments on foot in Florida. One of the most notable is Floridale in Escambia County - notable both for the unhurried way in which it is developing and for the ample capital and experience behind it - and you find it is a well thought out business - not a hope, or "vision" as the Floridians like to call their hopes. The land at Floridale - some 80,000 acres - is one of those great cur-over tracts which are such a problem to their owners. These acres were owned by a Kansas lumberman, Senator E. F. Porter.

~~Porter of Independence.~~ Senator Porter was a public spirited and far-seeing person. He had a feeling of responsibility toward the acres he had denuded - believed they were capable of redemption and that his sons could not devote their fine training and talents to ^a better end than proving that such development was practical and profitable. He ^{advised} asked in his will that the lands be kept together - cleared - made productive.

It was a man's task he put up to these college bred youths and their wives, and they knew it and grasped it. It has meant isolation, double experiments; patience, but the today is exciting and promising. Although the Porters are growing successfully a large variety of fruits and vegetables on their land - grapes - blueberries (trees - not bushes!) pecans - figs - and are prepared from their own nurseries to plant and sell 5- 10- 20 acres groves and vineyards, they are specializing on the delicious Satsuma orange - a Japanese citrus fruit, resembling the tangerine, introduced into this country 12 years ago by our energetic Foreign Plant Bureau, and by experiment found to thrive especially well in Northern and Western Florida and Southern Georgia and Alabama. The Satsuma matures in the fall and as it can be put on the market before the earliest of the round oranges, there is a growing demand for it.

It is only another example of the large number of products new to the United States that intelligent and patient experiment has proved can be grown in what the Floridians love to call "our last frontier".

All over the state you find young men tackling the same difficult problems the Porters have - Land in big areas has come

to them or their families. They are setting themselves to its development, bringing to their tasks modern methods of cultivation - financing - selling, but they all are seeing more and more clearly that their ultimate success will depend on combining modern colonization.

The most original and promising large scale colonizing scheme in the state so far as I know is that which has been undertaken by J. C. Penney - The founder of the Penney Chain Stores. I had not been long in Florida last winter before I was advised to "see what Penney was doing?" The reports were vague - one man thought it "nothing but a philanthropy" - another "the impractical notion that you can make farmers out of superannuated preachers" - another that it was "something socialistic" but the men and women who had been over the ground were enthusiastic. "He's started something", they insisted, and that was my conclusion after a day with Mr. Penney going over his project.

He is attempting to colonize scientifically - no doubt of that - but not as an end - rather as the means ^{by} which he hopes to demonstrate the soundness of an idea. Mr. Penney believes he has a contribution to make to our muddled ^{economic} agricultural situation and he is testing it out in Florida. All this comes out as you follow him through the town of Green Cove Springs, 30 miles south of Jacksonville on the St. John's River, 6 miles out to the farms.

The town cannot be passed by in considering the undertaking for Mr. Penney is making it an adjunct to his enterprise. Most Florida developers begin by building a town and then opening

a back country as a second thought. Mr. Penney has reversed the process. He bought his land and then seeing the relation to it for good or evil of a watering place but 6 miles away, he bought springs - hotels - and some 800 lots - a beautiful spot it is, too - facing through a fringe of moss draped ^{oaks} ~~was~~ a river 2 miles wide, its center one of the mysterious Floridan boiling springs. ~~Green Cove Springs deserves the skilled attention it is going to get in the enterprise.~~

On the edges of the town one finds the explanation of the rumor pretty general in Florida that Mr. Penney is settling with broken down preachers. The people who spread that rumor don't know Mr. Penney/.

When he bought, a little over a year ago at a foreclosure sale, the land which he is colonizing, he took over with it a defunct saw mill and an abandoned industrial village made up of 40 or 50 comfortable but dilapidated cottages. Mr. Penney's thrifty soul revolted at the idea of destroying these houses. There were so many people in the world who needed them. He told me, with tears in his eyes, as he drove up to the place, that he believed that the solution of the problem was an inspiration from the Divine.

"All my life," he said, "I have wanted to do something for broken down preachers and missionaries. I wanted to do something in memory of my father, who was a Baptist Preacher, working without salary and supporting his family by farming. In his old age his Church excommunicated him because he advocated Sunday Schools, a salary and education for Ministers. Those things have

come in all the churches, but salaries are usually low. The minister comes to old age without enough income to care for him decently. Often he is tired out, needs a change, a year in another climate. It was revealed to me that I could put these cottages in good condition, and say to the boards of different churches and missionary societies - "Here are comfortable houses, close to a good town and a beautiful river, live oaks all around them, rooms for gardens. I will give them rent free to any tired out people you wish to send here."

He immediately carried out his scheme, painting the forty or fifty houses inside and out, ~~had~~ ^{put in} electricity, and making things comfortable, if simple. As soon as they were ready they were filled. There is no time limit. If you like it and are a good neighbor, you can stay on and on.

We went from house to house, calling on these people, - a young man broken down, - two or three missionaries, women, one who had spent forty years in Persia, another as long in China, the rugs and hangings and bric-a-brac that they had brought home about them. Several of the men had gardens. Others had gone fishing. Everybody seemed as happy and care-free as the larks singing in the live oaks.

Mr. Penney's joy in this enterprise is genuine, but he is too good a business man not to see that, eventually, this tract of land must be used for something besides frame cottages, so he has taken a square in town and is building there three hundred small apartments to be used in the same way as the lumber

cottages, as a permanent memorial to his father. The location is so beautiful, the town so pleasant, the Springs so health-giving, that this is bound to be a blessing to a large number of broken down people.

This visit over, we started for the land.

"In order that you may understand what you are going to see", Mr. Penney told me "I will have to tell you something about myself. I do not usually talk about myself, but I want people to understand my idea. I think it a ~~useful~~ ^{useful} sound one. It is the idea behind the Penney Chain Stores. These stores were born from my experience. I have told you about my father - you see that with a large family he never had much money. When I was eight years old, he told me from that time on I must earn all the clothes I had, - and I did. For a number of years I clerked in stores in one state or another, finally in Wyoming, where I had been some time my employer said to me, 'Jim, I want to start a store? If you put in *your savings* and take charge I will give you a half interest'. That was my chance! My wife and I had saved \$500.00. We put that in, borrowed a little more and I became a partner. Finally I was able to buy the store. Then we began to think about our obligation to pass on the opportunity that had been extended to us. I had a clerk, who was honest, energetic, reliable, thrifty, so I looked around and found a town that needed a store and I made him the same proposition that had been made to me. He jumped at it. But I had other clerks coming on, just as good men - all they needed was a chance and so I made it my business to find a way to give it to them. The idea developed until now there are six hundred and

in that town
will

seventy-six Penney stores and last year they did a business of \$91,000,000.00.

A great many of these stores are in the farming communities and the difficulty of the farmers in recent years set me to thinking that perhaps the Penney Chain Store idea could be ~~applied to~~ ^{used in} farming. I couldn't get it out of my mind, but I saw no chance to apply it until about ~~two~~ ^a years ago when I learned that 120,000 acres of land, five or six miles from Green Cove Springs, 10,000 of it cleared and fenced, was to be sold at a Receiver's Sale. Here was my opportunity, I immediately bought the land, I am trying by colonization to pass on opportunity - to give people who are willing to work a chance to own a farm and a home."

The land which Mr. Penney had bought for his demonstration was a tract with a history - a history only too common in this country, alas. Originally in pine it had been timbered and turpented until nothing but second growth of little value was left. But the soil itself was fertile. It would grow anything suitable to the latitude if cleared. The first attempt to use it was by a cattle and feeding company which cleared and fenced 10,000 acres - built a modern dairy, started a herd of thoroughbreds. It all took money and to help out they combined land settlement, offering 20-acre tracts for sale. They sought buyers among foreigners - particularly Hungarians in mining districts. It was not long before there were 100 families in the neat cottages the company had built on the little ranches. The community center with its Inn and offices overflowed with activity - but all the

except two or three of the settlers were miners. From the start they were at a disadvantage, and the first year was a year of crop failure ~~in that section~~. Their capital was exhausted, they were unable to meet their payments - nothing was coming in to pay living expenses, and moreover the company itself was in trouble, It was rumored that it had been using money from stock sales to pay dividends that it might sell more stock - that bankruptcy faced the enterprise, bankruptcy and legal proceedings. Alarmed and discouraged, the Hungarians stampeded - "disappeared in a night" as those who watched the debacle tell you. Only three families were left on the tract, and they were staying because they could not get away! It was an abandoned settlement - a bankrupt company, A receiver was appointed - a sale ordered and at this sale Mr. Penney bid it all in - 120,000 acres of land - 100,000 fenced ready for the plough - 100 ~~on 200~~ cottages ~~made~~ a community center - a dairy - a herd. To be sure on everything was the devastating stamp of failure - but this was only skin deep. All that was needed was men with ploughs, and paint ~~brushes~~ and hammers, - women with children to restore the place to life, and these Mr. Penney set out to find.

His first step was an organization. A man who has been able to find partners fit for developing six hundred and seventy-six stores and carrying on the tremendous business of supplying them with goods and supervising their methods can be trusted, if anybody can, to find partners for such ^{an} ~~new~~ enterprises as he now proposed. It looks as if he had succeeded admirably for you rarely find an organization, even in Florida, more devoted to ^{an} ~~the~~ undertaking than these Penney associates.

Mr. Penney had a definite idea of the kind of farmers that he wanted on his tract. It was not the broken down, the failures, the runaways from hard situations at home - he wanted only men and women who had the intelligence and character to carry through what they undertook. He began to get them at once. Nobody comes on any misunderstanding, as the following out-and-out statement of plan and qualification shows:

"We are seeking for this tract only those who have had farming, poultry, trucking or fruit raising experience. We would prefer to have folks who do not use tobacco and ones who are connected with or in sympathy with some church. The community as it is now made up is composed of people of the very highest moral standing and we seek others like them. There is a Sunday School, Christian Endeavor Society and a Grammar School located now upon the tract. We hope to make some provision next year for a high school. We are establishing, to begin ~~with~~ fall, a Vocational School, the purpose of which will be to enable young men and women of very moderate means, who wish to work one-half day and go to school the other half, to obtain a practical education which will fit them for home keeping and the various phases of agriculture. An excellent faculty already has been selected. We have buildings available for dormitories and class rooms as well as machine and carpentry shops. There will be every opportunity for practical work and demonstration in connection with the instruction to be given in this Vocational School.

"Our plan is to ask no one to pay anything down when they select their farm. We allow them free use of the farm for one year.

The only thing we ask the farmer to do is to insure the house for at least \$750.00. This will cost approximately \$8.55 for one year. The price of the farms range from \$4,500 for farms which will be on the highway, to \$3,000 for those located some distance from the highway. This price includes the house, the land cleared, fenced and plowed. It also includes in some instances outbuildings, such as shelter for mule and tool shed.

Upon the completion of the first year it is our intention to sit down with the farmer and agree with him upon the amount which he can and should pay at the end of each year, so that at the end of a certain period he will have paid for his farm out of the profits taken from the place. This is the plan which Mr. Penney has operated for so many years in connection with his store managers, who pay for their stock interests out of the profits obtained from the operation of their store under their own management."

When I made the rounds with Mr. Penney in April of this year 40 settlers had joined the community. They were working eagerly, hopefully and co-operatively. Most of them were young under 35 - All of them had had either practical experience ^{at} ~~as~~ farmer or had the land-^{tradition and} ~~intention~~ mind.

As pretty a farm as you could see was the twenty acres of a slender young woman, who was tilling it herself. ~~and~~ She declared that it has not only brought her interest and happiness, but health in the few months she has been at it.

There are many touching things in the ^{settlement} ~~new undertaking~~ -

none more so than ~~the case of~~ an Italian farmer, who had been a settler in the previous undertaking, - had paid \$6,000.00 on his land - but he had no title. When the concern went into bankruptcy he lost all he had. Mr. Penney heard of him, sought him out. "I consider that I have lost what I put in", the man said, "I know that the land belongs to you, I have no claim." Mr. Penney replied "Legally, perhaps, but we would like to have you stay. We'd like to make adjustments with all the people who ~~had~~ invested here if it were possible - unhappily they have gone, nobody knows where - unhappily, too, they were unfit for farming. You are fit for it - go back and we will help you work it out." The man has risen splendidly to Mr. Penney's faith in him. There is no more beautiful farm or more profitable one in the colony. It is a demonstration to all those ~~that~~ come of what can be done, so that, in itself, it is richly repaying Mr. Penney's desire to play fair. The thing that touches you most as you look about the place, which has been made gay with paint and trellises in true Italian fashion, is the name on the archway over the front gate "New Hope Farm."

There are various co-operative features to the undertaking which might well be copied everywhere. One of the heavy drains on the small farmer is investing in tractors, wagons, heavy machinery, mules. No farmer here need own tractor or mule. The company has bought a sufficient number of each and hires a sufficient number of drivers and laborers of all kinds to supply the farmers - that is, you rent your tractor when you need it - you hire a mule or a laborer by the hour. The rates are strictly at cost; that is, there is no attempt by the company to make a commission on this investment.

Many colonies fall down because of the dearth of social, educational and religious life. These features are being very carefully and zealously cultivated in the new colony. Socially, there is an admirable chance, - the people are young, more or less flexible, enjoy one another. The colony already contains a goodly number of women from Berea College, excellent training for such an undertaking as this. While I was there they were casting up accounts to see how many people they could find who might be available to help in the proposed vocational school. There were twenty-two that were fit for high school or college positions. There is lively interest in the community church and enough good organizing ability, good musical ability, good talking ability, to support it, - that is, the Penney colony is not simply a group of men and women with hoes. Hoes, yes, they have to keep them busy, but there is song and talk of good books and discussion of problems in the air - all things essential if a colony is to live and grow.

But the living force in the colony is the feeling on all sides that there is opportunity for independence. Mr. Penney himself is that rare person, a man of wealth - very great wealth I believe - who has not forgotten that an essential factor in his career - his first opportunity - came from outside. He seized it and built on it, but he did not create it. He believes there is an obligation to do for others what was done for him, and he believes the world is full of young men and women who are as ready to act when the opportunity comes as he was in his day. And here he differs from many men of self-made fortunes, who seem to think their success due to qualities the common run of human beings do not

possess

possess, or possessing cannot be trusted to exercise.

This idea as well as the principles of scientific colonization are not exclusive to wealth and power; that is, it does not require a Penney or a United States Government to put them to work. The man of moderate acres and moderate means can pass them on, if it be to but one individual. "One good citizen" says a Westerner experienced in settlers, - "is of more value than a dozen herded in to increase the census count". There are great numbers of men in this country in a position to give one right man the opportunity to earn a home on a farm. It is done. A recent issue of the bulletin of the Reclamation Bureau contains a letter recounting how one land owner in Wyoming is doing this very thing. He had been reading Mr. Mead and Mr. Kreutzer's speeches and articles. He couldn't finance an irrigation project, but he had land and money enough to help one man ambitious to earn a farm - and he is doing it - doing it generously and intelligently.

The great industrialist - employer of many men - always concerned about their attitude towards the industry - their failure to understand his problems as they believe he fails to understand theirs, has in Mr. Penney's idea and in these principles of land settlement a tremendous opportunity to spread knowledge of ~~a~~ sound ^{economics} ~~science~~. Let him help his men to these 2 or 3 acre tracts - within reasonable distance of his factory or mine - which in hundreds of places the country over is practical - and he will establish the greatest labor college in existence - for the farm is the greatest of teachers - There is none so insistent that you know all about

the thing you are undertaking, that you leave nothing to guesswork. Do that and she's sure to punish you. She forces you to find out her secrets. There is no better teacher of patience, nor none so sure to reward, if you find her ways.

If all industrial managers and workers served a turn with the land there would be a quick decline in industrial disputes. The director of a large group of factories, some of them in the south where white labor is largely from the agricultural sections - some of them in the north where the factory bred workers alone are available, tells me that in times of stress and dull markets and low prices it is always possible to explain conditions to workers who have raised and marketed their own crops. In 1920 the corporation was forced to go on half time, lower wages, or close altogether. The workers were called together in Georgia and the exact situation laid before them. "Just what happened in such a year in cotton", one of the men said, "we kept our crops on the front porch all through the season. If there is no market there is no money. It's better to take what there is than have nothing." And they accepted the situation.

But the explanation did not work in St. Louis, in Cleveland, Brooklyn, The workers there had had no experience in producing and selling. They saw only the machine. If it was in good condition and they wanted to run it, that was all there was to the problem, and they struck rather than adapt themselves to a situation which in this case was honestly and fully explained - which unhappily is not always true.

The soil teaches the relation of capital and labor; that capital is the seed which must be saved if we are to have future crops. Russian peasants fleeing from famine starved rather than touch the seed corn which they carried with them. The land too, has a mysterious way of teaching the dignity and worthiness of labor. Nothing else seems quite so honest as wresting wealth from the soil. "I don't like our fortune", a woman told me not long ago, in Florida, "I worked with the land so long that to leave it and to take all this money made by a speculative turn seems uninteresting and a little dishonest to me. Money to be really sweet and clean, must be the fruit of my labor."

The home on a farm is not only a road to economic independence, it is a school in reasonableness, patience, understanding.

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