

To give effect to my proposals, large discretionary power would need to be given to the Land Board in deciding who should go to the ballot when more than one person applied for an allotment.

1. There would need to be an examination of applicants, as now, and that examination, in order to be effective, would require to be exhaustive, and the Board's discretion wide, particularly in regard to family relationships, &c., so that no more than one member of a family or interested friend should go to the ballot, unless the Board was very fully satisfied that another of the applicants was a *bonâ fide* one and "on his own." Once it became known that this procedure would be followed, and strictly enforced, the present practice of "stuffing" the ballot would immediately diminish, if not disappear altogether. We should then get equality of chances, instead of gross unfairness, as exhibited in the examples I have given.

2. I propose that the allotments should be grouped—*i.e.*, graded—in a somewhat similar manner to what is now done, only on broader lines, taking into consideration the size, capabilities, and rent of the sections, and the expenditure necessary to work them.

3. That the allotments be advertised in grouped form, with the area, rentals, &c., as now, and a person's deposit would be the required amount for the highest-rented section in the group which he considered himself qualified for, and which in his application he expressed his desire to select from.

4. The Land Board would decide, upon examining each applicant as to his means, &c., whether he should be entered for the group for which he applied, or, if his means were found insufficient for that group, it might relegate him to a lower group more suited to his means. This would still give him a chance which under the present regulations he does not possess if he is found to be insufficiently qualified for the group for which he has applied.

5. At the ballot each approved applicant would have a number assigned to him.

6. As many numbered balls as there were approved applicants for the whole of the sections, irrespective of groups, would be put into the ballot-box.

7. The representative of the first ball drawn would proceed at once to select his section, either from the group that the Board at the examination had assigned him to as his maximum, or from any lower group.

8. The representative of the second ball drawn would then make his choice in a similar manner, and so on until the whole of the sections were selected.

9. The unsuccessful applicants would be those represented by the balls left in the ballot-box after the last section had been taken up.

To illustrate the foregoing :—

Group A.	Sections requiring a capital of, say, £1,000 to commence with.		
" B.	"	£500	"
" C.	"	£250	"
" D.	"	£100	"
" E.	Small sections requiring, say, a capital of £20 to make a successful start.		

[Particulars in italic type are merely for the sake of illustration, and no indication of that nature would appear in the advertisement, but simply area, rental, &c.]

Thus an applicant with £250 capital would be assigned to Group C, and if his number were drawn in the ballot he would be entitled to select any section to his taste (not previously selected) in either of Groups C, D, or E; or a person in Group A could select any section he pleased from any of the groups. An applicant with a choice would be allowed to withdraw should there be no section left that he would care to take. In such a case an additional chance would be given to those whose numbers had not been drawn.

The effect of this would be that every one who drew a section would have one of his own choice, and have no grounds for subsequent complaint on that account. It will be noticed that the idea is to allow the applicant with a choice to select, not only from the group to which he has been assigned, but from any lower one also. The necessity for this is obvious, for whilst a person might prefer sections in a certain group, it might so happen that all the sections in that group had been selected before his number was drawn, in which case he would very possibly be content with one in another group rather than get no land at all. Under the present regulations such an option is not given him.

The disposal of lands under the Land Act requires slightly different treatment from that of lands under the Land for Settlements Act.

In the case of the latter, its usually improved character calls for a very careful and judicious selection of applicants, so as to secure, as far as possible, tenants capable, by their means and experience, of properly farming the lands, and preventing deterioration of either soil or improvements; whereas the ordinary Crown lands offered are almost invariably in their natural state, devoid of improvements, and are very often isolated sections widely scattered. Consequently, they will often bear—in fact, need—a relaxation of the stringent requirements which have to be insisted upon in connection with the selection of applicants for the other class of lands.

It will be seen that my "Proposals," and most of my "Comments," apply in the fullest degree to the disposal of land acquired under the Land for Settlements Acts. However, a very slight investigation of the particulars of the ballot that took place in connection with the disposal of a block of ordinary Crown land near View Hill, details of which have already been given, discloses the necessity for the application of similar proposals, though possibly in a slightly modified form, in the case of blocks of sectionised Crown lands disposed of under the provisions of the Land Act where numerous or conflicting applications are likely to necessitate a ballot.