

Land Army have all played their parts in changing the face of the countryside—as I am assured it has been changed during the past three years.

Impressive Achievements

The achievements are impressive. The area additional to that of pre-war years under the plough in the past season reached a total of nearly 6 million acres, the output of agricultural lime has increased from 400,000 tons in 1937 to nearly 2½ million tons for this season, while the area of potatoes now being grown is in the vicinity of 1 million acres—an assurance of plenty for all requirements.

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You may ask how, in face of such accomplishment, there can be any major opportunity for the use of Dominion farming methods. To this I can only reply that a great deal remains to be done, and I consider that our efforts will be concentrated along three main lines:—

The reclamation of derelict, and semi-derelict lands.

The introduction of labour-saving methods.

The demonstration of economies in the farmer's purchased raw materials.

Land Reclamation

Dealing firstly with the question of land reclamation, I was astounded to find quite fertile land within 50 miles of London growing dense, waist-high bracken. There should be no great difficulty in the control of bracken, even on unploughable hill land, while much of this growth occurs on easy country, and is now in process of conversion to good cropping land under the direction of County Committees.

Hill country of a mossy or peaty type presents a more difficult problem than does similar country in New Zealand owing to the more severe winters, and the shorter growing season here. Salt marshes also are not easy reclaiming propositions on account of the very high rise of spring tides round Britain's coast line. Apart from these special cases there are millions of acres of indifferent pastures scheduled to be ploughed, many of these being virtually non-productive on account of the high percentage of weeds, thorn bushes, gorse, and ant-hills. Such land must be treated as a pioneer farming area and broken in by the use of powerful tractor-drawn machinery.

known here. As a small illustration of this, I have recently seen thousands of fields of oats or of wheat cut by the binder, but without a sheaf carrier, the use of which would save half the time now spent in stooking.

I think that the general introduction of the motor-lorry type of lime and fertiliser distributor would reduce the labour of spreading by at least 80 per cent., while the same might be said in regard to the sowing of ridged crops in favour of the introduction of the New Zealand ridger.

Economy

Lastly, on the question of economy of purchased materials, there can be little doubt that the use of the combine drill and the ridger would save 60 per cent. or more of the fertiliser by comparison with broadcast sowing, and this should mean a saving of very large sums annually to British farmers. Better methods of sowing land down to pasture could economise on the quantity of seed necessary, while better strains of grasses and clovers now available, and better management of pastures, could economise considerably on the provision of supplementary stock foods.

There has probably never before been a time when the farmer was so ready as at present to accept revolutionary changes in his naturally conservative outlook. He is now convinced that the agricultural scientist has something to offer him, and he is prepared to do his part in bridging the gap formerly said to exist between science and practice.

I feel that now is the time to 'cash in' on the accumulation of scientific knowledge in all branches applicable to agriculture."

Labour-saving Methods

Turning now to the introduction of labour-saving methods, I find that practices which are common-place in the Dominions seem to be virtually un-

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